

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

Date: Tuesday, 30 August 2022

**Committee:
Cabinet**

Date: Wednesday, 7 September 2022

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

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

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

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

www.shropshire.gov.uk/cabinet7september2022

Tim Collard Assistant Director - Legal and Governance

Members of Cabinet

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

Deputy Members of Cabinet

Your Committee Officer is:

Ashley Kendrick Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01743 250893

Email: Ashley.kendrick@shropshire.gov.uk

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Disclosable Interests

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

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2022, attached.

4 Public Question Time

To receive any questions from members of the public, notice of which has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 14. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Thursday 1st September 2022.

5 Member Question Time

To receive any questions from Members of the Council. Deadline for notification is not later than 5.00 pm on Thursday 1st September 2022.

6 Scrutiny Items

7 Budget Consultation and Alternative Budget (Pages 7 - 26)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, attached.

8 Annual Treasury Report 2021/22 (Pages 27 - 44)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, attached

9 Financial Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2022/23

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, to follow

10 Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2022/23 (Pages 45 - 68)

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, attached

11 Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2022/23

Lead Member – Councillor Gwilym Butler – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Report of James Walton, Executive Director of Resources, to follow

12 Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre (Pages 69 - 198)

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

Report of Mark Barrow, Executive Director of Place, attached

This page is intentionally left blank



Committee and Date

Cabinet

7TH SEPTEMBER 2022

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2022

In the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

10.30am

Responsible Officer: Amanda Holyoak

Email: amanda.holyoak@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257714

Present

Councillor Lezley Picton (Chairman)

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

29 Apologies for Absence

The Leader advised that agenda item 9 – Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements would be moved to the last item on the agenda.

Prior to the meeting, the Leader gave a statement on the CSE report which had been published and wished to emphasise that Shropshire Council had provided all information that was requested.

Apologies were received from Councillors Dean Carroll and Cecilia Motley.

30 Disclosable Interests

Councillor Gwilym Butler declared an interest in item 9 – Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements, and confirmed he would take no part in the discussion and would leave the room.

Councillor Lezley Picton declared an interest in item 9 – Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements, and confirmed she would take no part in the discussion and would leave the room.

Councillor Rob Gittins declared an interest in item 9 – Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements, and confirmed he would take no part in the discussion and would leave the room.

31 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

32 Public Question Time

A public question was received from Brian Ellory in connection with traffic calming measures at Oteley Road.

A public question was received from Mike Streetly in connection to the public inquiry related to the North West Relief Road.

The full questions and responses provided are available from the web page for the meeting: [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 20th July, 2022, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

33 Member Question Time

Two member questions were received from the following:

Councillor Julia Buckley – in relation to “Fix My Street” and the North West Relief Road expenses.

In a supplementary question regarding “Fix My Street”, Councillor Buckley requested a map to show where the backlog of repairs have been completed. The Leader confirmed that a map would be produced.

In a supplementary question regarding the North West Relief Road expenses, Councillor Buckley asked for confirmation that the £2.5million would be removed from the profile for 2022/23 as the work has already been carried out, and secondly, if the DFT grant would reconcile with the money taken in the interim from the capital receipt projections. Ben Jay, Assistant Director of Finance stated that the funding profile would be adjusted as the project progresses into its latter stages. He also confirmed that the DFT grant would cover the £2.5million currently being taken from projected capital receipts.

Councillor Gwilym Butler reminded Members that briefings on any financial matters could be arranged if members had any queries.

The full questions and responses provided are attached to the webpage for the meeting: [Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 20th July, 2022, 10.30 am — Shropshire Council](#)

34 Scrutiny Items

Councillor Claire Wild, Chair of the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee, provided an update from the ambulance task and finish group. The group would be looking at three main areas, spending a day on each. These were prevention, arrival at A&E and admittance to hospital, and discharge from hospital. The group would report their findings back to Cabinet by October. It was noted that the findings would also form the basis of the work programme for the Health & Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The meetings would be taking place in September and information gathered in the meantime due to the large scale of the task.

Councillor Joyce Barrow, Chair of the Place Scrutiny Committee, provided an update on issues discovered in new build housing estates and requested that Cabinet revisit the recommendations of the task and finish group with regard to A-boards and pavement licences. Members were advised that a task and finish group had been set up to look into the issues on new build housing estates and bring recommendations back to Cabinet. With regards to pavement licences and A-boards, the Leader advised that this would be brought back to Cabinet in the form of a report in due course.

35 Housing Supervisory Board - CDL Shareholder Update

Councillor Robert Macey, Chairman of the Housing Supervisory Board, presented the report to members which provided Cabinet with an update on the activities of the Housing Supervisory Board (HSB) and the operations of Cornovii Developments Limited.

It was confirmed that audit reports would come to the Housing Supervisory Board from Cornovii at their September meeting.

RESOLVED:

To receive and note the report on the activities of the Housing Supervisory Board and the operations of Cornovii Developments Limited in accordance with the Housing Supervisory Boards Terms of Reference.

36 Recommendation for Broseley Neighbourhood Development Plan to proceed to referendum

Councillor Ed Potter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning, presented the report which sought Cabinet approval for the Broseley Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) to proceed to referendum to determine if the Plan should become part of the statutory Development Plan for the neighbourhood area, and therefore to be used in the determination of planning applications in the neighbourhood.

Members noted that should Cabinet approve the Plan to proceed to referendum, the Council's Electoral Services will administer this process in line with Neighbourhood Plan Regulations with the referendum taking place between 1st September and 6th October 2022.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1. That the Broseley Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the 'basic conditions' and all the other legal requirements as summarised in the Independent Examiner's Report, subject to the modifications proposed in the Schedule of Modifications (Appendix 2)
- 1.2. That the required modifications be agreed, and that the final 'referendum' version of the Broseley Neighbourhood Development Plan (May 2022) (Appendix 3) proceed to local referendum.

- 1.3. That the referendum area be that as defined as the designated area to which the Neighbourhood Development Plan relates, i.e. the Broseley parish boundary.
- 1.4. That the Executive Director of Place be authorised to exercise all the relevant powers and duties and undertake necessary arrangements for the Broseley Neighbourhood Development Plan Referendum Version (May 2022) (Appendix 3) to now proceed to Referendum and for the Referendum to place asking the questions 'whether the voter wants Shropshire Council to use this neighbourhood plan for the Broseley Neighbourhood Plan area to help it decide planning applications in this neighbourhood area'.

37 Oswestry Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal

Councillor Ed Potter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning, introduced the report which outlined the background and outcomes of the first four years of Oswestry BID following its initial successful ballot, and the benefits and impacts to Shropshire Council of supporting the renewal process for the period from 2023-2028.

RESOLVED:

- 3.1 To note that Oswestry BID has served notice of their intention to seek a renewal ballot to the Secretary of State and Shropshire Council.
- 3.2 To endorse the draft Oswestry BID 2023-2028 business plan and renewal proposal (attached as Appendix 1).
- 3.3 To approve a vote in support of Oswestry BID's continuation in respect of the Council's voting rights for the Council owned premises in the renewal ballot and delegates authority to exercise this vote to the Assistant Director Commercial Services.

38 Financial Strategy 22/23

Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources, introduced the report which stated how the Council will deliver the objectives set out in The Shropshire Plan in financial terms. This latest update included the impact of current inflationary pressures (est. £8.3m) and the Council's action to identify appropriate mitigations for this and to maintain financial balance.

A request was made for more detailed information in future reports on ways in which money can be saved and ways in which we can analyse the way the Council provide services.

Concern was raised regarding increasing inflation rates and it was queried whether the inflation splits evenly across capital and revenue budgets and what implications that has for the budget going forward. It was noted that this would be monitored in the quarterly monitoring report which would be brought to members.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1. To note the action taken to mitigate the inflationary pressures identified since February 2022, and the further proposed activity to close the funding gap remaining for the years 2023/24 to 2027/28.
- 1.2. To note the proposed timetable for the development of the 2023/24 detailed budget, and the approach to doing this.

39 Council Tax Energy Rebate - Discretionary Scheme Approval

Councillor Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources, introduced the report to consider options for distribution of £0.584m discretionary fund made available by Government to provide additional support for households to supplement the council tax energy rebate scheme.

RESOLVED:

- 1.1. To progress both options B and C as set out in paragraph 2.4

40 Draft Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements

Councillors Lezley Picton, Rob Gittins and Gwilym Butler left the meeting at this point. Councillor Ed Potter took the Chair.

Councillor Ed Potter, Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration and Planning, introduced the report which sought Cabinet approval to implement a policy that will set out the Council’s approach to the enforcement and determination of financial (civil) penalties in circumstances where persons engaged in letting agency work and property management business fail to comply with legislative requirements.

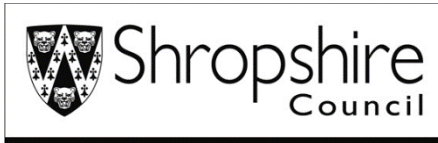
RESOLVED:

That Cabinet approves the Policy for the Enforcement and Determination of Financial Penalties for Breaches of Relevant Letting Agency Requirements as set out at Appendix A.

Signed (Chairman)

Date:

This page is intentionally left blank



Committee and Date

Cabinet
7th September 2022

Item

Public

Budget Consultation and Alternative Budget

**Responsible
Officer**

James Walton

e-mail: james.walton@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258915

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. The Council wants to ensure that our financial plans reflect our communities' priorities as far as possible. This report proposes improvements to the current budget consultation and alternative budget arrangements that will allow broader input to how we determine our budget.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. This report has previously been considered at Performance Management Scrutiny Committee (4 May). It incorporates feedback arising.
- 2.2. The budget consultation is an essential part of the budget setting process, however feedback was received from some Members and the public on the process followed for the 2022/23 budget setting process that identified that further improvements are required to improve engagement with the process in the future. A proposal for future budget consultations is set out in Appendix 2 for further comment and consideration.
- 2.3. An alternative budget process for opposition parties was trialled in the 2022/23 budget setting process, and whilst this worked well, it is recognised that additional time and an improved process for review of these proposals is necessary in the annual budget setting process. A revised process is outlined in Appendix 3 for review and comment.
- 2.4. The new processes for budget consultation and alternative budget proposals will be presented to Cabinet and Council, with any necessary amendments to the Constitution discussed and agreed at Council on 22nd September 2022 .

3. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- 3.1 Consider the information relating to the current budget processes and recommend to Council an approach for future budget consultations (Appendix 2) and an alternative budget process (Appendices 3a and 3b).

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 The development of the Council's Financial Strategy is a key process in managing many of the Council's strategic risks. The opportunities and risks arising are assessed each time the Financial Strategy is refreshed for Cabinet consideration.
- 4.2 The Financial Strategy and the detailed changes necessary to deliver the agreed budget for the next financial year will consider the requirements of the Human Rights Act, any necessary environmental appraisals and the need for Equality, social inclusion and health impact assessments (ESHIA) and any necessary service user consultation.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Assuming that the revised budget consultation process will be an in-house developed process, rather than purchasing a separate toolkit to undertake the activity, then there will be no direct financial implication as a result of the new processes being agreed and implemented.
- 5.2 Whilst it will be vital to ensure that all alternative budget proposals brought forward include robust financial estimates and assessment of their possible service delivery impacts, it will also need to be recognised that the resources available to support development of proposals are limited.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 There are no direct implications for climate change as a result of this report and full implications and considerations of climate change as a result of budget proposals will be considered in future Financial Strategies to be considered by Cabinet.

7. Background

Budget Consultation

- 7.1 Details of the requirements of the budget setting process, including budget consultation, in the Council's Constitution is set out in Appendix 1 for information. Appendix 1 also details the requirements of the Gunning Principles for public consultation exercises as detailed by the Local Government Association.
- 7.2 Consultation on the Council's budget plans is carried out following Cabinet's approval of the Leader's draft budget proposals. To enable this to take place, a draft financial strategy is developed and agreed by Cabinet in December to enable consultation to take place for a period of 6 weeks, as detailed in the Constitution. This ensures that the budget consultation can be completed prior to the final approval of the Financial Strategy by Cabinet and Council in February. A timeline of the current budget setting process is set out in Appendix 4 and details of the budget consultation carried out for the 2022/23 budget is provided at Appendix 5.
- 7.3 Feedback was received on the budget consultation exercise for 2022/23 with comments from the public and some Members regarding the ability to fully consider the consultation results considering the consultation closing so late in the budget setting process. Also a number of comments were received that more detailed information was required to enable them to fully engage in the process. An outline of the feedback received is provided at Appendix 6.

Alternative Budget Proposals

- 7.4 It was identified during the course of the 2022/23 budget setting process, that an approach for alternative budgets being put forward by opposition parties was not detailed in the Council's Constitution. Therefore a process was trialled ahead of Council on 24 February 2022 as shown in Appendix 8.
- 7.5 Feedback suggested that a revised and extended process was needed in future years, and that alternative budgets should not just be considered in terms of financial implications but also reviewed and agreed by service areas too.
- 7.6 A revised alternative budget process has been compiled in Appendix 3A for further consideration and comment. Key data to be collected for each proposal is summarised in Appendix 3B. The proposed process for this year is as follows:
- Begin on 31 October 2022, this allows four weeks for Councillors to prepare alternative proposals (with appropriate

officer support), followed by 2 weeks to review these with service delivery officers.

- Finalised proposals will be returned no later than 16 December 2022, allowing consideration at PMSC on 11 January 2023.
- This will lead to consideration at Cabinet on 18 January 2023, for possible inclusion in the financial strategy to be agreed by Council on 2 March 2023.

Summary

- 7.7 Revised arrangements for alternative budget preparation and the budget consultation process would allow all Councillors and residents to have a greater influence on the process by which the Council budget is set, in line with the Shropshire Plan, the Council constitution, and good practice.

8. Additional Information

- 8.1 Whilst local authorities are required to follow guidance such as the Gunning Principles when conducting public consultations, there is no recommended prescribed format for undertaking the budget consultation. Research has been carried out to examine the timing that other local authorities have undertaken their consultation exercises and the format that these have taken. As shown in Appendix 7, the format used ranges significantly, and the data gleaned from each different type of exercise will be different in terms of how that helps to inform the budget setting process. There are however some good procedures that we could build into our consultation process to address the feedback received.
- 8.2 An outline of a proposed budget consultation process is set out in Appendix 2, for further consideration and comment, which has attempted to build on the Council's current approach. Appendix 2 details how this proposed approach would ensure that the future budget consultation is in line with the Gunning Principles.

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

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Corporate Resources

Lezley Picton, Leader of the Council

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Budget Setting Process in the Council’s Constitution and External Guidance

Appendix 2 – Proposed Approach to Future Budget Consultation

Appendix 3 – Future Process for Alternative Budgets

Appendix 4 – Current Budget Setting Process

Appendix 5 – Current Budget Consultation Process

Appendix 6 – Feedback on Current Budget Consultation Process

Appendix 7 – How Other Authorities carry out Budget Consultation

Appendix 8 – Process Trialled for Alternative Budgets

APPENDIX 1

Budget Setting Process in the Council's Constitution and External Guidance

The Constitution sets out the process to be followed when setting the budget each year, and the key responsibilities:

Part 2 Articles of the Constitution

The full Council will decide the Council's budget and policy framework.

Budget - The budget includes the allocation of financial resources to different services and projects, proposed reserves, the Council tax base, setting the Council tax and decisions relating to the control of the Council's borrowing requirement, the control of its capital expenditure and the setting of virement limits.

Part 4 Council Procedure Rules

At the Budget Meeting in February, each Group Leader may have one speech up to a maximum of ten minutes and presentations from outside bodies at Council shall normally be limited to a maximum of 15 minutes, subject to the Chairman's discretion, followed by a 15 minute question and answer session.

BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK PROCEDURE RULES

1. THE FRAMEWORK FOR EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Council will be responsible for the adoption of its budget and policy framework as set out in Article 4. Once a budget or a policy framework is in place, it will be the responsibility of the Cabinet to implement it. NB – When the phrase 'budget and policy framework' is used here, it also refers to any constituent plan or strategy.

2. CABINET LEADS PROCESS; OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT WITHIN CABINET CONSULTATION PROCESS; DIFFERENTIAL VOTING ON DISPUTES REGARDING BUDGET AND POLICY PROPOSALS

(a) The Cabinet will publicise by including in the forward plan a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of any plan, strategy or budget that forms part of the budget and policy framework, and its arrangements for consultation after publication of those initial proposals. All Members of the Council, including the chairmen of scrutiny committees will also be notified. The consultation period shall in each instance be not less than 6 weeks.

(b) At the end of that period, the Leader will then draw up firm proposals having regard to the responses to that consultation. If a relevant scrutiny committee wishes to respond to the Cabinet in that consultation process then it may do so. It is open to the Scrutiny Committees to investigate, research or report in detail with policy recommendations before the end of the consultation period. The Leader will take any response from a Scrutiny Committee into account in drawing up firm proposals for submission to the Council, and its report to Council will reflect the comments made by consultees.

(c) Once the Leader has discussed his/her proposals with the Cabinet and Cabinet has approved the firm proposals, those proposals will be presented by the Leader to Council for decision.

(d) In reaching a decision, the Council may adopt the Leader's proposals, or may amend them, refer them back to the Cabinet for further consideration, or substitute its own proposals in their place.

(e) If it accepts the recommendation of the Leader without amendment, the Council may make a decision which has immediate effect. Otherwise, it may only make an in-principle decision. In either case, the decision will be made on the basis of a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting.

(f) The decision will be publicised in accordance with Article 4 and a copy shall be given to the Leader.

(g) An in-principle decision will automatically become effective at least 5 days from the date of the Council's decision, unless the Leader informs the proper officer in writing within 5 days that [he/she] objects to the decision becoming effective and provides reasons why.

(h) In that case, the proper officer will call a Council meeting within a further 2 days. The Council will be required to re-consider its decision and the Leader's written submission within 5 days. The Council may:

(i) approve the Leader's recommendation by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting; or

(ii) approve a different decision which does not accord with the recommendation of the Cabinet by a simple majority.

(i) The decision shall then be made public in accordance with Article 4, and shall be implemented immediately.

(j) In approving the budget and policy framework, the Council will also specify the extent of virement within the budget and degree of in-year changes to the policy framework which may be undertaken by the Executive (Cabinet), in accordance with paragraphs 5 and 6 of these Rules (virement and in-year adjustments). Any other changes to the budget and policy framework are reserved to the Council.

In addition to the Council's Constitution, public consultations are also subject to following the Gunning Principles as determined by case law. These specify that a consultation is only legitimate when these four principles are met:

1. proposals are still at a formative stage

A final decision has not yet been made, or predetermined, by the decision makers

2. there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'

The information provided must relate to the consultation and must be available, accessible, and easily interpretable for consultees to provide an informed response

3. there is adequate time for consideration and response

There must be sufficient opportunity for consultees to participate in the consultation. There is no set timeframe for consultation,¹ despite the widely accepted twelve-week consultation period, as the length of time given for consultee to respond can vary depending on the subject and extent of impact of the consultation

4. 'conscientious consideration' must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made

Decision-makers should be able to provide evidence that they took consultation responses into account.

APPENDIX 2

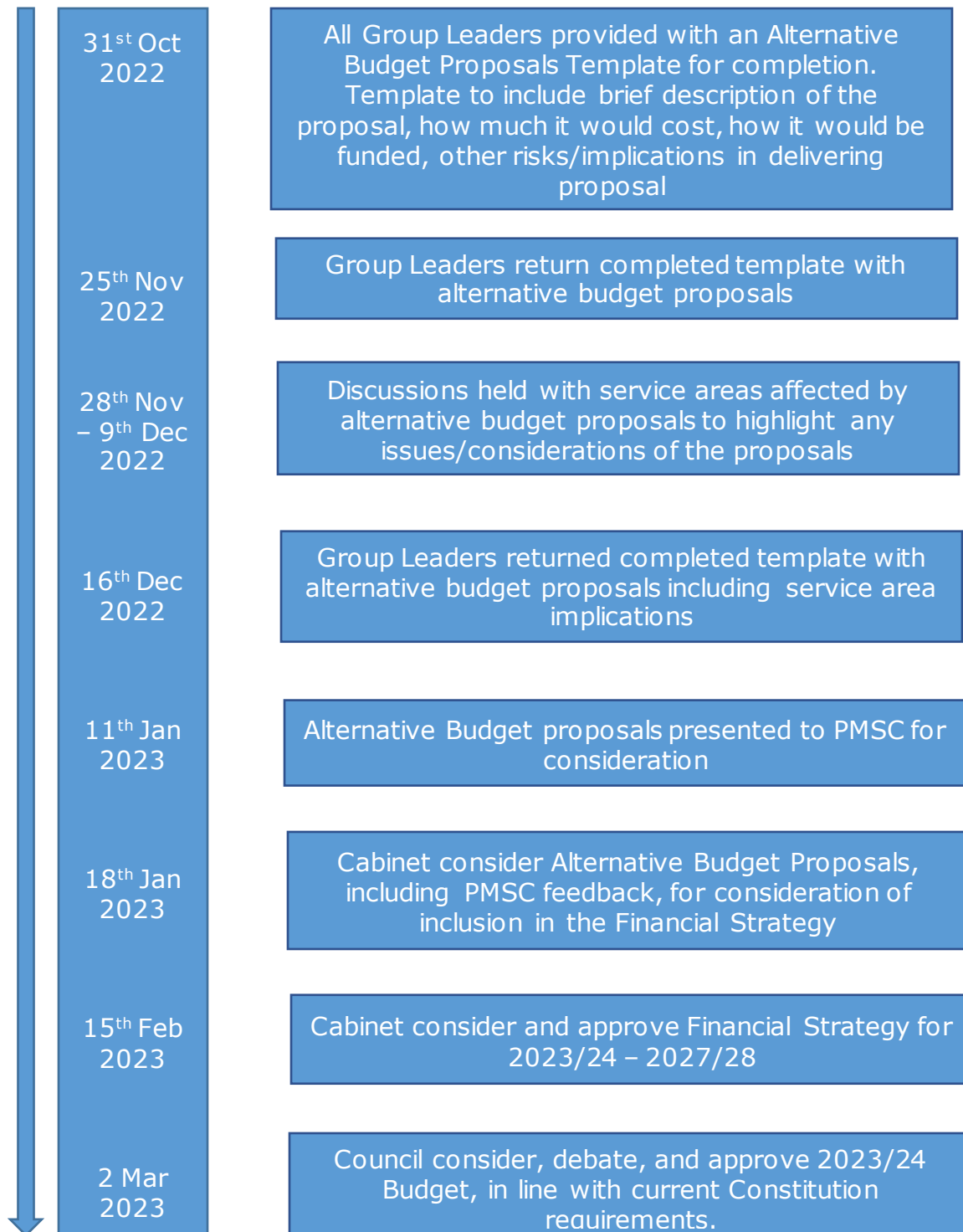
Potential Budget Consultation Exercise for 2023/24

Consultation Proposal	Gunning Principles			
	Proposals are still at a formative stage	There is sufficient information to give intelligent consideration	There is adequate time for consideration and response	Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses before a decision is made
<p>Timing: 15th December – 26th January</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Consultation to be held following approval of the Draft Financial Strategy by Cabinet in December. This will ensure that plans are sufficiently developed to allow informed consultation to take place. This will also allow the standard 6 week period of consultation as prescribed by the Constitution. Feedback will be received to allow for conscientious consideration in the final Financial Strategy approved by Cabinet and Council. 	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Content: Background information to be provided including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about Council priorities Summary of Council's financial position Linking draft budget plans to priorities Draft investment and savings plans across the 5 year strategy 	✓	✓		
<p>Survey: Feedback requested on draft investment and saving plans, including council tax plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide description of proposal and the business impact of proposal Detail amount of each proposal Allow users to agree, disagree or have no opinion on each proposal Allow for specific comments on proposals Invite general comments on proposals for service Directorates/Cabinet Portfolios 		✓		

APPENDIX 3A

Future Process for Alternative Budget Proposals

The proposed process for the consideration of Alternative Budget Proposals is as follows:



APPENDIX 3B**KEY DATA TO BE COLLECTED FOR ALTERNATIVE BUDGET PROPOSALS**

The proposed data to be collected for the consideration of Alternative Budget Proposals will include but not be limited to:

Name of Councillor making the proposal	
Political Group	
Political Group leader	
Financial year/s affected	
Summary of proposal	
What will need to change to deliver this proposal	
Financial implications of the proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation costs - Running costs - Funding source 	
Service delivery implications of the proposal	
Risk assessment of the proposal	
Proposal implications reviewed for accuracy by	
- Executive Director of Resources (s151 officer)	
- Service Executive Director	
Proposal endorsed by political group leader	

APPENDIX 4

Current Budget Development Process

Month	Budget Activity	Committee Dates	Committee Paper
Apr	New Financial Year Begins		
May	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> Roll forward Financial Strategy (FS) to next 5 years and highlight any known service changes/issues or Government announcements </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> Work up indicative savings plans to bridge funding gap </div> </div>		
Jun			
Jul	Discuss savings targets required over the term of the FS and produce detailed savings proposals	29 th Jun – Cabinet	Indicative Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28
		7 th Jul – Council	Indicative Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28
		13 th Jul – PMSC	Indicative Financial Strategy 2023/24 – 2027/28
Aug	Identify demographic pressures for the Council and any service pressures		

Page 18

Month	Budget Activity	Committee Dates	Committee Paper
Sep	Detailed budget build up for next Financial Year completed		
Oct			
Nov		30 th Nov - PMSC	Draft Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28
Dec		14 th Dec - Cabinet	Draft Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28 Setting the Council Tax Taxbase 2023/24
Jan	Budget Consultation takes place for 6 week period	15 th Dec - Council	Setting the Council Tax Taxbase 2023/24
		11 th Jan - PMSC	Draft Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28

Month	Budget Activity	Committee Dates	Committee Paper
Feb	Final Local Government Finance Settlement received	15 th Feb - Cabinet	Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28 Estimated Collection Fund Outturn 2022/23
Mar		2 nd Mar - Council	Financial Strategy 2023/24 - 2027/28

APPENDIX 5

Budget Consultation Process for 2022/23

Requirements of the Constitution

The Council's Constitution sets out the following arrangements for consultation of the budget:

Part 4, Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, para 2 (a):

The Cabinet will publicise by including in the forward plan a timetable for making proposals to the Council for the adoption of any plan, strategy or budget that forms part of the budget and policy framework, and its arrangements for consultation after publication of those initial proposals. All Members of the Council, including the chairmen of scrutiny committees will also be notified. The consultation period shall in each instance be not less than 6 weeks.

Timeline and Distribution

The draft budget proposals were considered by Cabinet on 5th January 2022 following the announcement of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. Cabinet approved the detailed savings proposals as part of this draft budget to enable the Leader of the Council to consult on the budget plans.

The budget consultation took place for 6 weeks, in line with the Council's Constitution, from 5th January until 16th February.

The consultation was advertised on the website, through the newsroom and via Twitter. Respondents were given the option of completing the survey online, emailing a response or posting feedback to the Shirehall.

Details Provided in the Consultation

The budget consultation provides a detailed summary of the financial position of the Council, which provides explanation of standard finance terminology such as revenue and capital expenditure, and how these are treated differently. Also it outlined the Council's financial position and the draft plans for balancing the 2022/23 budget, including a proposed increase in council tax and the delivery of proposed savings.

The survey that respondents were asked to complete detailed questions asking for people's views on the plans to increase Council tax precept and the Adult Social Care Precept. It also specified each individual savings proposal (58 savings proposals) to allow comments and feedback on specific savings proposals rather than generic feedback on categories of savings.

APPENDIX 6

Feedback on 2022/23 Budget Consultation Process

The budget consultation had 155 responses which is the highest response rate of the last 3 years, but still low considering the number of stakeholders in Shropshire.

In the main respondents were able to vote on proposals and provide comments on the proposals, however feedback was also received from members of the public and Councillors that the survey was difficult to respond to due to the technical language used, and also was not detailed enough in terms of what the proposals related to.

Specific comments included:

"I am sorry to say that I find the questions opaque in many instances. The descriptions seem to come from an internal document which does not convey meaning to those outside the Council."

"I have tried to fill in the budget consultation survey but find it almost impossible as I don't know what the questions mean. It seems to have been put together by a Council person for other Council people, who "speak the language". I was completely stuck on just the first question, as I don't know what TMBSS refers to! I think this is designed (perhaps accidentally) to put people off from having their say about the upcoming Budget"

"People simply do not feel they understand or have enough information to complete this."

"What do these proposals actually mean?"

"The consultation was not taken in line with the Gunning Principles, as the consultation closed when the budget was already set."

APPENDIX 7

Budget Consultation Carried out by Other Local Authorities

Research has been done across a number of local authorities to determine the process that other authorities follow for their budget consultation activity. It has been identified that the process followed varies significantly across authorities. A selection of different methods adopted by other authorities is shown below:

Local Authority A – 28 July – 19 September

Document produced providing details of the Budget, outlining the following facts and figures:

- how money is currently spent
- how the Council is funded,
- financial outlook for the future
- plans for council tax
- plans for social care levy.

The survey requests narrative feedback on themed saving areas rather than individual saving proposals and questions around council tax proposals

Local Authority B – 4 January – 14 February

30 page document produced detailing the priorities of the Council, details of the indicative budget by priority, level of investment planned for each year of the 5 year Financial Strategy and detailed savings plans, and council tax plans.

Each saving proposal then has its own business case produced detailing the level of saving, a detailed description of the saving, key milestones in delivering the saving, options and alternatives considered and the business impact of the saving. People are asked to complete an online form with comments on the proposals or contact through standard social media channels.

Local Authority C – 14 December – 25 January

An interactive webpage which allows people to prioritise where the Council spends its funds. The webpage contains a series of sliders which enable visitors to adjust the amount spent on key services provided by the council or alter the income generated via chargeable services or Council Tax. The toolkit needs to balance off before submission, therefore if they spend more on one service, they need to offset by reductions in other areas.

Local Authority D – 2 December - 4 January

Background document produced providing context of financial position of the authority, including council priorities, how council is funded, what is spent on council services, details of the budget proposals including savings and council tax plans.

Survey requests people to say whether they agree or disagree with proposed approaches to savings (themed savings headings rather than specific savings proposals). People were also asked to rank their top three preferred savings approaches. Opinions on the council tax increase was also requested. Finally,

people were asked to consider which of the council's priority they consider to be most important.

Local Authority E – 2 December - 4 January

Budget engagement document produced outlining:

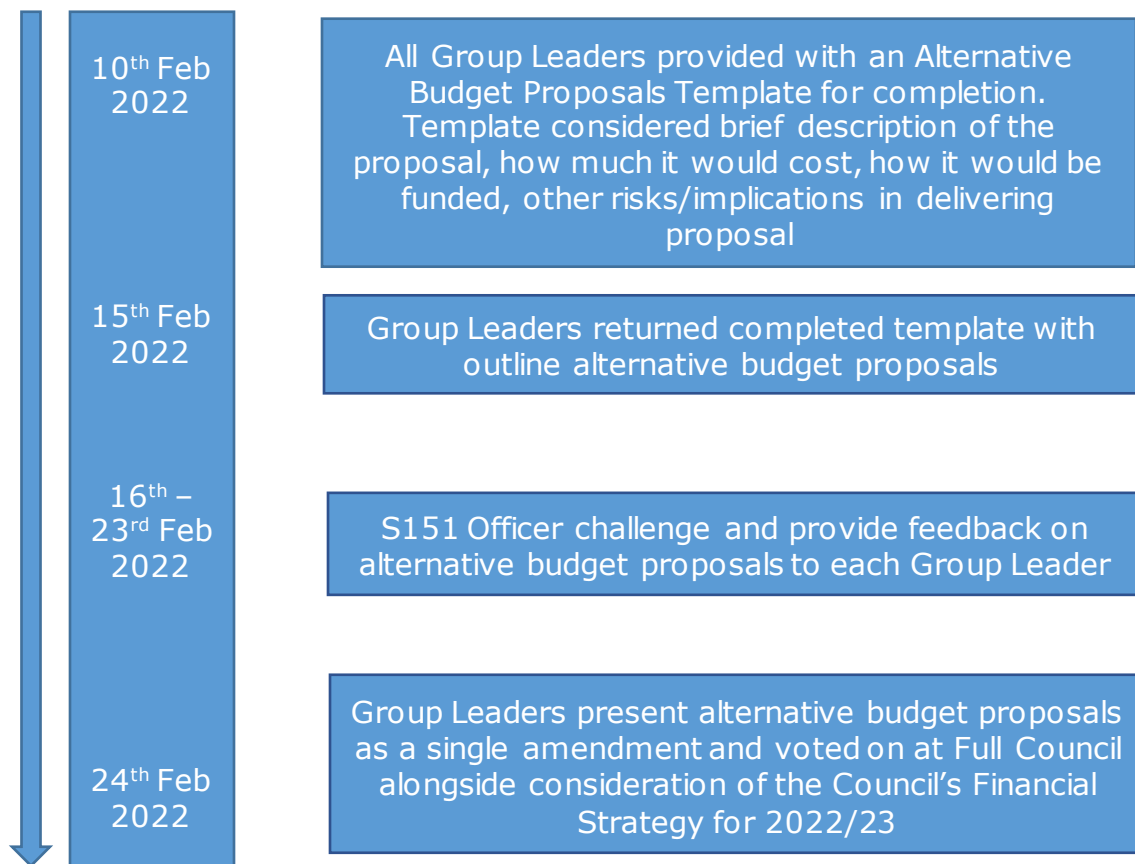
- the Council's corporate priorities,
- plans for spend against Council's priorities for the next year,
- the Council's summary financial position
- details of investment and individual savings proposals (providing brief description of how savings will be achieved) – requesting people select that they support, oppose, or have no opinion against each proposal and provide any additional comments
- details of any central budgetary/funding activity planned such as use of reserves or council tax increases - requesting people select that they support, oppose, or have no opinion against each proposal and provide any additional comments

APPENDIX 8

Process Trialed for Alternative Budget Process

It was identified during the course of the 2022/23 budget setting process, that the Council's Constitution does not set out a procedure for consideration of alternative budget proposals.

Therefore the following process was applied for 2022/23 budget with agreement with Group Leaders, in order that a formal procedure can be adopted within the Council's Constitution for 2023/24 budget and beyond.



This page is intentionally left blank



<u>Committee and Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
Cabinet 07 September 2022	
Audit Committee 15 September 2022	
Council 22 September 2022	<u>Public</u>

ANNUAL TREASURY REPORT 2021/22

Responsible Officer

James Walton

e-mail: James.Walton@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: (01743) 258915

1. Synopsis

As at 31 March 2022, the Council held £164m in investments and had £292m of borrowing. This report shows the borrowing & investment strategy for 2021/22 and outturn position for the financial year. It also shows the investment performance of the internal treasury team over 2021/22 and the last 3 financial years and confirms activities align with the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The report informs members of treasury activities for Shropshire Council for 2021/22, including the investment performance of the internal treasury team to 31 March 2022. The internal treasury team outperformed their investment benchmark by 0.24% in 2021/22 and performance for the last three years is 0.38% per annum above benchmark. Treasury activities during the year have been within approved prudential and treasury indicators set and have complied with the Treasury Strategy.
- 2.2. During 2021/22 the performance of the Treasury Team delivered an under spend of £2.195 million compared to budget as highlighted in paragraph 5.2 of this report. This was mainly due to Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) savings of £1.163m, net total savings of £0.573m in relation to interest payable, interest receivable and other financing arrangements, net overachievement on contributions from other local authorities and public sector organisations of £0.302m.
- 2.3. The Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2021/22. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury

Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Members are asked to accept the position as set out in the report.

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 4.2. There are no direct environmental, equalities or climate change consequences arising from this report.
- 4.3. Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance together with the rigorous internal controls will enable the Council to manage the risk associated with Treasury Management activities and the potential for financial loss.
- 4.4. The Council's Audit Committee is the committee responsible for ensuring effective consideration of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and policies. The Audit Committee will consider the report and appendices on 15 September before approval is sought at Full Council on 22 September.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The Council makes assumptions about the levels of borrowing and investment income over the financial year. Reduced borrowing as a result of capital receipt generation or delays in delivery of the capital programme will both have a positive impact of the council's cash position. Similarly, higher than benchmarked returns on available cash will also help the Council's financial position. For monitoring purposes, assumptions are made early in year about borrowing and returns based on the strategies agreed by Council in the preceding February. Performance outside of these assumptions results in increased or reduced income for the Council.
- 5.2. The 2021/22 performance is above benchmark for the reasons outlined in paragraph 2.2 of this report and has delivered additional income of £2.195 million which has been reflected in the final Revenue Monitor report for 2021/22.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1. The Council's Financial Strategy includes proposals to deliver a reduced carbon footprint for the Council therefore the Treasury Team is working with the Council in order to achieve this. There are no climate change impacts arising from this report. Shropshire Council's investment portfolio has no level 1, 2 or 3 emissions. It comprises of straightforward cash deposits with financial institutions and other Local Authorities.

7. Background

- 7.1. 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".
- 7.2. The Council is required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2021/22. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.
- 7.3. Changes in the regulatory environment place a much greater onus on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. Minimum reporting requirements are that the Council should receive the following reports:
- An annual treasury strategy in advance of the year.
 - A mid-year treasury update report.
 - An annual report following the year describing the activity compared to the strategy.
- 7.4. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management states that these reports should be scrutinised by a nominated committee. These reports were scrutinised by the Audit Committee before they were reported to full Council for approval. The Audit Committee has received two training sessions during the year from Link in 2021/22 and the internal Treasury team 2022/23, which is a requirement to fulfil their duties under the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management.
- 7.5. In addition to the minimum reporting requirements, the Executive Director's and Cabinet also receive quarterly treasury management update reports for information.
- 7.6. The Treasury Strategy for 2021/22 was approved by Council in February 2021, the mid-year treasury update report was approved by Council in December 2021. This Annual Report sets out our actual treasury performance for the year and shows how the

actual treasury performance varied from our estimates and planning assumptions.

8. Borrowing Strategy and Outturn for 2021/22

8.1. The Council's Borrowing Strategy and Outturn position for 2021/22 can be found in Appendix C.

9. Debt rescheduling

9.1. No debt restructuring was undertaken during 2021/22. Further information is included within Appendix C.

10. Investment Strategy & Outturn for 2021/22

10.1. The Council's Investment Strategy and Outturn position for 2021/22 can be found in Appendix C.

11. Compliance with Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators

11.1 Compliance with the Council's Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators can be found in Appendix B & C.

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

Council, February 2021, Treasury Strategy 2021/22.

Council, December 2021, Treasury Strategy 2021/22 Mid-Year Review.

Council, February 2022, Treasury Strategy 2022/23.

Cabinet, September 2021, Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2021/22.

Cabinet, December 2021, Treasury Management Update Quarter 2 2021/22.

Cabinet, February 2022, Treasury Management Update Quarter 3 2021/22.

Cabinet, July 2022, Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2021/22.

Cabinet Member:

Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Local Member

N/A

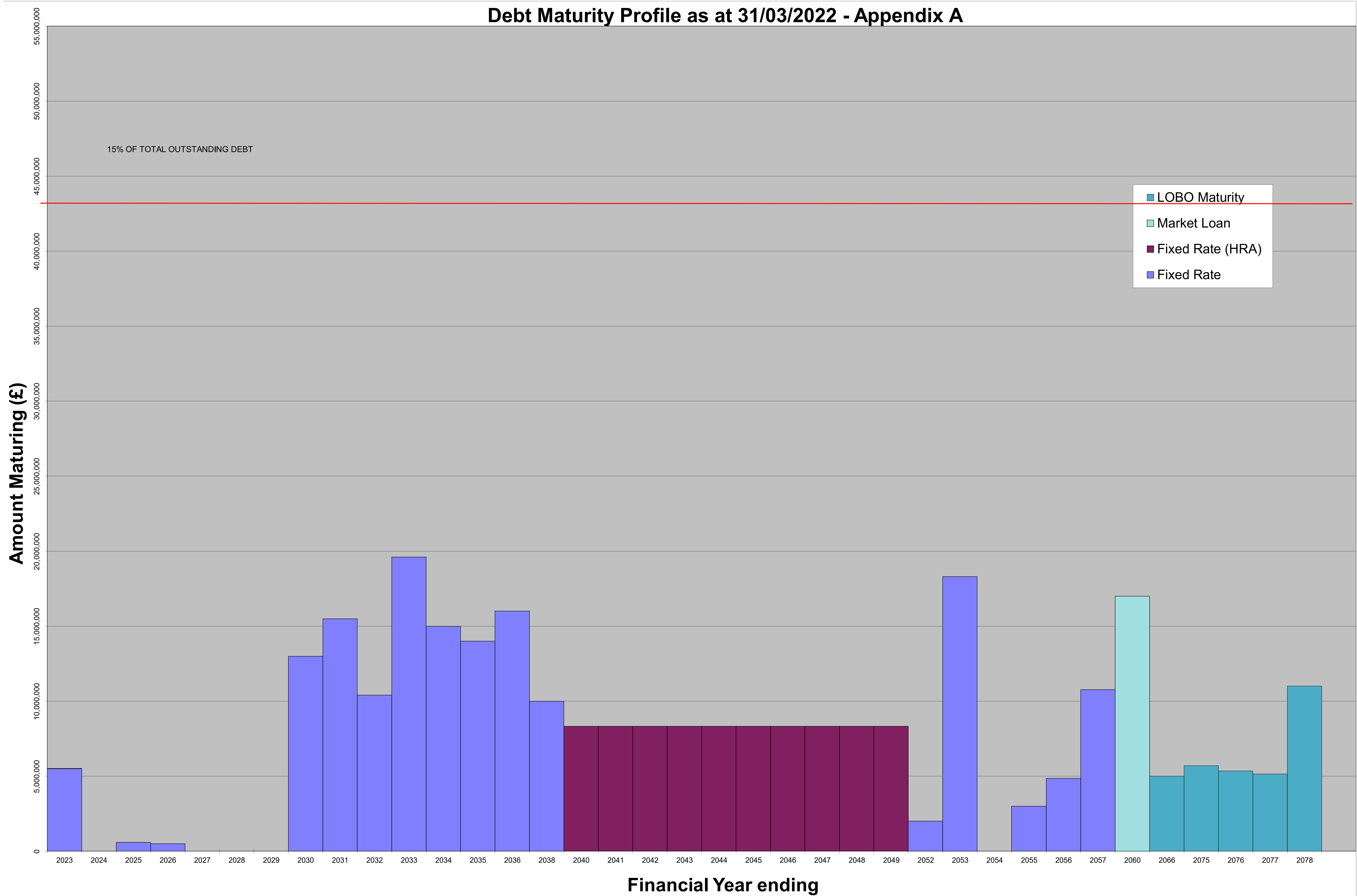
Appendices

A. Debt Maturity Profile as at 31 March 2022

B. Prudential Indicators 2021/22

C. Council's Borrowing & Investment Strategy and Outturn Position 2021/22

	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2038	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2060	2066	2075	2076	2077	2078	
Fixed Rate	5,000,000	0	600,000	500,000	0	0	0	13,000,000	15,487,000	10,400,000	18,600,000	15,000,000	14,000,000	16,000,000	11,000,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000	8,335,000			
Fixed Rate (HRA)																																						
Market Loan																																						
LOBO Maturity	11,126.5	0	1215	1013	0	0	0	26390	31454.097	21132.8	39846.8	30910	29490	32576	20980	17923.4	17211.726	17020.07	17028.406	17036.74	17045.075	17053.41	17061.745	17070.08	17078.415	4104	37599.8	0	6165	9979.1628	22168.289	30020	10330	11827.5	11106.6	10996.55	22856	
																																					291,967,893	



The page is intentionally left blank.

APPENDIX B

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2021/22

- C1. The Prudential Code requires the Council to set Prudential Indicators in the Treasury Strategy and report performance against those indicators in the Annual Treasury Report.
- C2. The ratio of financing costs compared to the net revenue stream of the Council was lower than expected in 2021/22 due to net revenue stream being higher than estimated.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2021/22 Actual
	%	%
Non HRA Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	7.6	7.1

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2021/22 Actual
	%	%
Non HRA Ratio of financing costs (net of investment income) to net revenue stream	7.2	6.8
HRA Ratio of financing costs to HRA net revenue stream	39.9	38.0

- C3. It can be seen from the tables that the authority was well within the approved authorised limit and the operational boundary for external debt for 2021/22.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
External Debt	£m	£ m
Authorised Limit:		
Borrowing	661	292
Other long-term liabilities	96	94
Total	757	386

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
External Debt	£ m	£ m
Operational Boundary:		

Borrowing	546	292
Other long-term liabilities	96	94
Total	642	386

- C4. Gross borrowing was as anticipated due to no general fund borrowing being undertaken in 2021/22. A key indicator of prudence is that net borrowing should not exceed the capital financing requirement. It can be seen from the following figures that the Council continues to meet this prudential indicator.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
Net Borrowing & Capital Financing Requirement:	£ m	£ m
Gross Borrowing (inc. HRA)	366	292
Investments	150	164
Net Borrowing	216	128
Non HRA Capital Financing Requirement	419	278
HRA Capital Financing Requirement	95	87
Total CFR	514	365

- C5. Non HRA was higher and HRA capital expenditure was lower than anticipated during the year. Explanations for these under/overspends were included in the 2021/22 final capital outturn report.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Revised Estimate	2021/22 Actual
	£ m	£ m
Non HRA Capital expenditure	114.2	80.3
HRA Capital expenditure	20.1	8.1

- C6. The level of fixed rate and variable rate borrowing were within the approved limits for the year.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
Upper Limit for Fixed/Variable Rate Borrowing	£ m	£ m
Fixed Rate (GF)	615	292
Variable Rate	308	0

C7. The level of fixed rate and variable rate investments were within the approved limits during 2021/22.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
Upper Limit For Fixed/Variable Rate Investments	£ m	£ m
Fixed Rate	250	124
Variable Rate	250	40

C8. No longer term investments were held at the year-end. Shrewsbury Shopping Centres are no longer held as long-term investments. They are now accounted for on the balance sheet as Property, Plant & Equipment (PP&E).

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Estimate	2021/22 Actual
Upper Limit for Sums Invested over 364 days	£m	£m
Internal Team	70	0
External Manager	30	0
Shrewsbury Shopping Centres	60	0

C9. The maturity profile was within the limits set in the Treasury Strategy.

Prudential Indicator	2021/22 Upper Limit	2021/22 Actual
Maturity Structure of External Borrowing	%	%
Under 12 months	15	0
12 months to 2 years	15	2
2 years to 5 years	45	1
5 years to 10 years	75	13
10 years to 20 years	100	34
20 years to 30 years	100	21
30 years top 40 years	100	18

40 years to 50 years	100	2
50 years and above	100	9

Appendix C

Borrowing Strategy for 2021/22

The Council's borrowing requirement identified within the Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2023/24 was self-financing prudential borrowing of £118.909m therefore no external borrowing was required but based on the prospects for interest rates outlined in the Treasury Strategy, the Council would adopt a pragmatic approach if circumstances changed when considering any new borrowing.

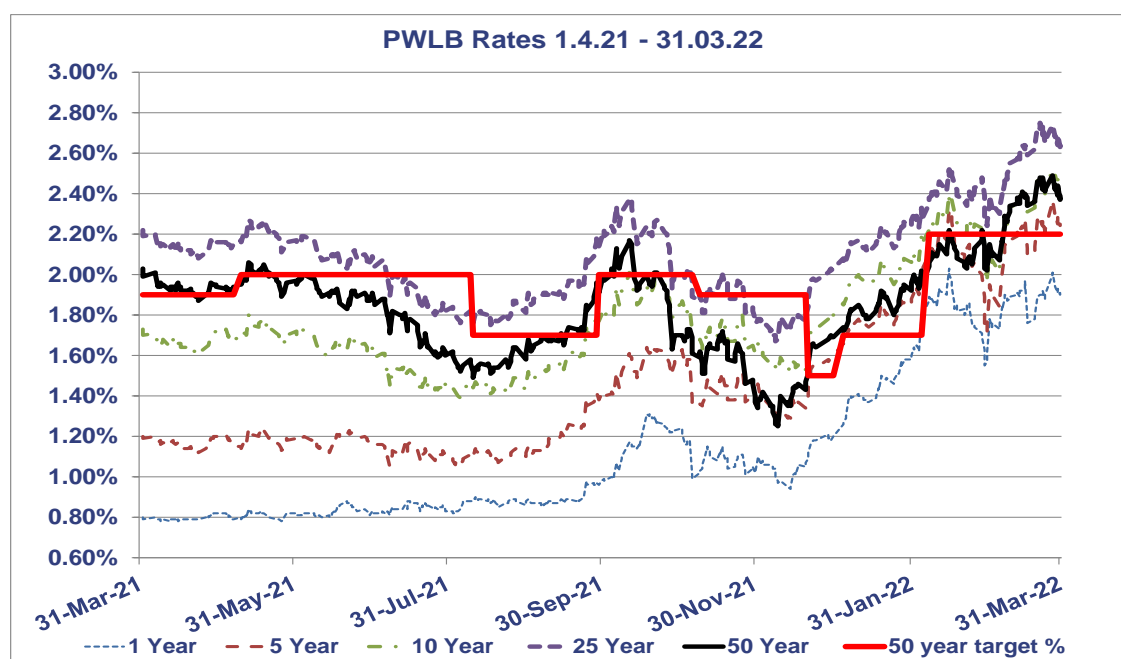
Short term Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rates were expected to be significantly cheaper than longer term borrowing rates during the year therefore borrowing in the under 10 year period early on in the financial year when rates were expected to be at their lowest would be considered. Variable rate borrowing was also expected to be cheaper than long term fixed rate borrowing throughout the year.

An alternative strategy was to defer any new borrowing as long term borrowing rates were expected to be higher than investment rates during the year. This would maximise savings in the short term and also have the added benefit of running down investments which would reduce credit risk.

Consideration of changing strategy would be taken if it was felt that there was a significant risk in a sharp fall in long and short term rates then long term borrowings will be postponed. If it was felt there was a significant risk of a sharp rise in long and short term rates then the portfolio position would be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates were still relatively cheap.

Borrowing outturn for 2021/22

The Treasury Team take advice from its external treasury advisor, Link Asset Services, on the most opportune time to borrow. Movements in rates during 2021/22 are shown in the graph below.



Members have previously been advised of the unexpected change of policy on PWLB lending arrangements in October 2010 following the Comprehensive Spending Review. In addition, in October 2019, the Treasury and PWLB announced an increase in rates of 1% across all borrowing periods. This made new borrowing more expensive and repayment relatively less attractive. That increase was then, at least partially, reversed for some forms of borrowing on 11th March 2020, but not for mainstream non-HRA capital schemes. A consultation was then held with local authorities and on 25th November 2020, the Chancellor announced the conclusion to the review of margins over gilt yields for PWLB rates; the standard and certainty margins were reduced by 1% but a prohibition was introduced to deny access to borrowing from the PWLB for any local authority which had purchase of assets for yield in its three year capital programme.

The table below shows PWLB borrowing rates for a selection of maturity periods. The table also shows the high and low points in rates during the year, average rates during the year and individual rates at the start and the end of the financial year.

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
01/04/2021	0.80%	1.20%	1.73%	2.22%	2.03%
31/03/2022	1.91%	2.25%	2.43%	2.64%	2.39%
Low	0.78%	1.05%	1.39%	1.67%	1.25%
Low date	08/04/2021	08/07/2021	05/08/2021	08/12/2021	09/12/2021
High	2.03%	2.37%	2.52%	2.75%	2.49%
High date	15/02/2022	28/03/2022	28/03/2022	23/03/2022	28/03/2022
Average	1.13%	1.45%	1.78%	2.10%	1.85%
Spread	1.25%	1.32%	1.13%	1.08%	1.24%

Following discussions with Link, as general fund borrowing rates were

significantly higher than investment rates during the year it was agreed that if any new borrowing was required during the year it would be deferred in order to maximise savings in the short term and reduce credit risk by reducing investments. No new external borrowing was required in 2021/22.

The Council's total debt portfolio at 31 March 2022 is set out below:-

Type of Debt	Balance £m	Average Borrowing Rate 2021/2022
General Fund Fixed rate - PWLB	159.02	4.90%
HRA Fixed rate - PWLB	83.35	3.51%
Fixed rate - Market	49.20	4.10%
Variable rate	0	N/A

The maturity profile of the debt is evenly spread to avoid large repayments in any one financial year. The average debt period for PWLB loans is 18 years, market loans have an average debt period of 48 years. The total debt portfolio has a maturity range from 1 year to 56 years.

The Treasury Strategy allows up to 15% of the total outstanding debt to mature in any one year. It is prudent to have the Council's debt maturing over many years so as to minimise the risk of having to re-finance when interest rates may be high. The actual debt maturity profile is within these limits (Appendix A).

Debt rescheduling

No debt restructuring was undertaken during 2021/22. The introduction of a differential in PWLB rates on the 1 November 2007, which was compounded further following a policy change in October 2010 and subsequent changes in 2019 and 2020, as outlined above has meant that large premiums would be incurred if debt restructuring was undertaken, which cannot be justified on value for money grounds.

Although these changes have restricted debt restructuring, the current debt portfolio is continually monitored in conjunction with external advisers in the light of changing economic and market conditions to identify opportunities for debt rescheduling. Debt rescheduling will only be undertaken:

- To generate cash savings at minimum risk.
- To help fulfil the Treasury Strategy.
- To enhance the balance of the long term portfolio by amending the maturity profile and/or volatility of the portfolio.

Investment Strategy for 2021/22

Our treasury advisor originally felt when the strategy was approved by Council in February 2021 that the bank rate would remain at 0.10% during 2021/22. These forecasts were based on the Bank of England assuming that the emergency level of rates introduced at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic would still be required to protect the economy.

The Governor of the Bank of England made it clear that he thinks that such a move would do more damage than good and that more quantitative easing is the favoured tool if further action becomes necessary. Investment returns were likely to remain exceptionally low during 2021/22 with little increase in the following two years.

The below forecast table was included in the Treasury Strategy report 2021/22.

Link Group Interest Rate View		9.11.20													
	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	
BANK RATE	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	
3 month ave earnings	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	
6 month ave earnings	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10	
12 month ave earnings	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	
5 yr PWLB	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
10 yr PWLB	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	
25 yr PWLB	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.70	2.70	2.70	2.70	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	
50 yr PWLB	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	

The below forecast table was included in the Mid Year Treasury Strategy report 2021/22.

Link Group Interest Rate View		8.11.21													
	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-22	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	
BANK RATE	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	
3 month ave earnings	0.30	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
6 month ave earnings	0.40	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.10	
12 month ave earnings	0.50	0.60	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	
5 yr PWLB	1.50	1.50	1.60	1.60	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.80	1.80	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	
10 yr PWLB	1.80	1.90	1.90	2.00	2.00	2.10	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.40	
25 yr PWLB	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.70	2.70	
50 yr PWLB	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.50	

In 2021/22 investment of surplus cash continued to be managed by the internal treasury team. The strategy for the in-house team was influenced by the need to keep funds relatively short for cash flow purposes. Lending continued to be restricted to UK banks, one overseas bank, three Building Societies, two Money Market Funds (AAA credit rating), Part Nationalised Banks, UK Government and other Local Authorities in line with the Council's policy on creditworthiness which was approved in the Annual Investment Strategy.

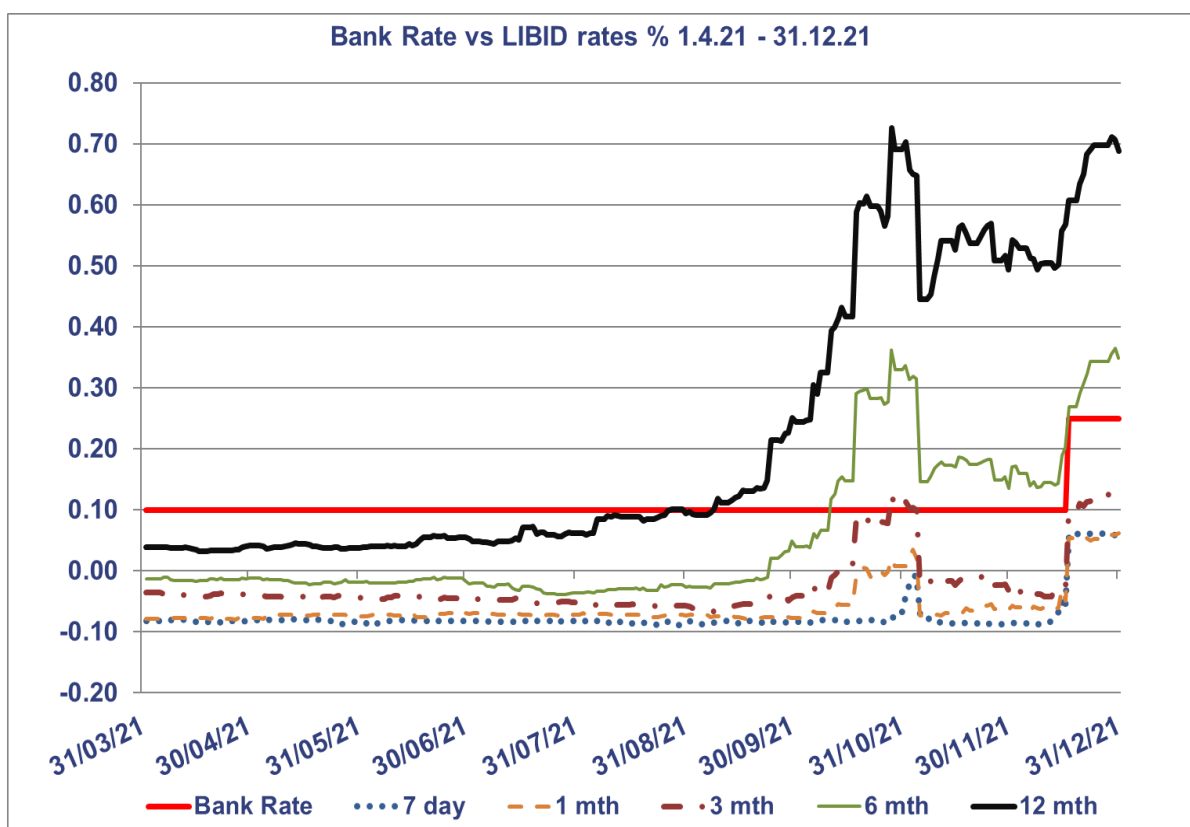
Investment outturn 2021/22

Over the last two years, the coronavirus outbreak has done huge economic damage to the UK and to economies around the world. After the Bank of England took emergency action in March 2020 to cut Bank Rate to 0.10%, it left Bank Rate unchanged at its subsequent meetings until raising it to 0.25% at its meeting on 16th December 2021, 0.50% at its meeting of 4th February 2022 and then to 0.75% in March 2022.

The UK economy has endured several false dawns through 2021/22, but with most of the economy now opened up and nearly back to business-as-usual, the GDP numbers have been robust (9% y/y Q1 2022) and sufficient for the MPC to focus on tackling the second-round effects of inflation, now that the CPI measure has already risen to 6.2% and is likely to exceed 8% in April. The Government also supplied huge amounts of finance to local authorities to pass on to businesses. This meant that for most of the year there was much more liquidity in financial markets than there was demand to borrow, with the consequent effect that investment earnings rates stayed suppressed for most of the year.

To counter the low investment rates and following advice from Link, use was made of direct deals with main UK banks, for various periods from three months to one year. Direct deals offered enhanced rates over the equivalent rates available through brokers. This provided opportunities to lock into higher, long term rates at times when it was thought they offered substantial enhancement over short term benchmark rates. Enhanced market rates when compared to bank rate has resulted in the total portfolio outperforming the benchmark. Use of instant access accounts with Svenska Handelsbanken was continued, together with use of Money Market Funds with Aberdeen & Insight Investment. These accounts offered instant access to funds, however they also saw suppressed yields in line with levels when placing short term deposits through brokers.

Movements in short term rates through the year are shown in the below.



Throughout the first half of the year, the average interest rate earned on investments was suppressed due to the low bank rate, in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, as detailed earlier, the MPC started to increase rates from December 2021 with a further two increases in February 2022 and March 2022. This resulted in the internal treasury team achieving a slightly higher level of interest on revenue balances than budgeted. This slightly higher than projected amount earned on investments was coupled with an under-spend on debt charges due to no long-term general fund borrowing being undertaken in 2021/22. The total £2.195 million underspend was mainly due to MRP savings following a review of the Council’s policy and interest payable savings.

At 31 March 2022 the allocation of the cash portfolio was as follows:

	£m
• In-house short dated deposits for cash flow management	104.5
• In-house long dated deposits (up to 1 year)	31.0
• Other Local Authorities	28.0
Total	163.5

The following table shows the average return on cash investments for the internal treasury team during the year and for the last 3 years to 31 March 2022. Recognising the need to manage short term cash flow requirements, the target for the internal team is the 7 day LIBID rate.

	Return 2021/22	Return 3 years to 31 March 2022
	%	% p.a.
Internal Treasury Team	0.17	0.51
Benchmark (7 Day LIBID rate)	-0.07	0.13

Due to the economic shock and historically low rates in 21/22, even though rates started to increase in the latter part of that year; the benchmark rate was in a negative position for most of the financial year.

The conclusions to be drawn from the table are:

- During 2021/22 the internal treasury team outperformed their benchmark by 0.24%.
- Over the 3 year period the internal team's performance has been 0.38% per annum above the benchmark.

Compliance with Treasury Limits and Prudential Indicators

All borrowing and lending transactions undertaken through the year have complied with the procedures and limits set out in the Council's Treasury Management Practices and Treasury Strategy. In addition, all investments made have been within the limits set in the approved counterparty list. No institutions, in which investments were made, showed any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the year.

Appendix B shows the Prudential Indicators approved by Council as part of the 2021/22 and 2022/23 (revised estimate) Treasury Strategies compared with the actual figures for 2021/22. In summary, during 2021/22 treasury activities have been within the prudential and treasury limits set in the Treasury Strategy.

This page is intentionally left blank



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Cabinet 7 th September 2022

<u>Item</u>
<u>Public</u>

Treasury Management Update Quarter 1 2022/23

Responsible Officer James Walton
 e-mail: james.walton@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 258915

1. Synopsis

The Council currently holds £129m in investments and £292m of borrowing. This report shows the return on those investments over quarter 1, the economic outlook for the next 3 years and confirms activities align with the Council approved Treasury Management Strategy.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report outlines the treasury management activities of the Council in the first quarter of 2022/23. It highlights the economic environment in which treasury management decisions have been made and the interest rate forecasts of the Council’s Treasury Advisor, Link Asset Services. It also updates Members on the internal treasury team’s performance.

- 2.2 During Quarter 1 the internal treasury team achieved a return of 0.67% on the Council’s cash balances, outperforming the benchmark by 0.03%. This amounts to additional income of £12,300 during the quarter which is included within the Council’s outturn position in the monthly revenue monitor. As previously advised in the latest Treasury Management update report and recent Treasury Management training undertaken, Members will be aware that from April 2022 the 7 Day benchmark rate was replaced by 3 Month Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA). Further details on this are provided in paragraph 10.4 of the report. The MPC increased Bank Rate to 0.25% in December 2021, and further increases were seen in February, March, May and June 2022 bringing the level to 1.25%. At the August meeting, the MPC increased the rate by 0.50% to 1.75% Further updates to interest rate forecasts will be included in the quarter 2 report, as further rate rises are expected this financial year. The latest forecasts as at 9 August are included in the table below.

- 2.3 Under the CIPFA Treasury Management Code, it is best practice to provide quarterly Treasury Management updates.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are asked to accept the position as set out in the report.

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1 The assessment and management of risk are key considerations for any Treasury Management approach. Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council's Treasury Policy Statement and Treasury Management Practices and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance together with the rigorous internal controls will enable the Council to manage the risk associated with Treasury Management activities and the potential for financial loss.
- 4.2 The Council's Audit Committee is the committee responsible for ensuring effective consideration of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and policies.
- 4.3 The recommendations contained in this report are compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 4.4 There are no direct environmental, equalities or climate change consequences arising from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Council makes assumptions about the levels of borrowing and investment income over the financial year. Reduced borrowing as a result of capital receipt generation or delays in delivery of the capital programme will both have a positive impact of the council's cash position. Similarly, higher than benchmarked returns on available cash will also help the Council's financial position. For monitoring purposes, assumptions are made early in year about borrowing and returns based on the strategies agreed by Council in the preceding February. Performance outside of these assumptions results in increased or reduced income for the Council.
- 5.2 The Quarter 1 performance is above benchmark and has delivered additional income of £12,300 which is reflected in the Period 3 Revenue Monitor.
- 5.3 As at 30 June 2022 the Council held £129 million in investments as detailed in Appendix A and borrowing of £292 million at fixed interest rates. The end of quarter investment balance was impacted by payment of Covid grant and Pension contributions, although the average balance for the quarter was £148m.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 The Council's Financial Strategy includes proposals to deliver a reduced carbon footprint for the Council therefore the Treasury Team

is working with the Council in order to achieve this. There are no direct climate change impacts arising from this report. Shropshire Council’s investment portfolio has no level 1, 2 or 3 emissions. It comprises of straightforward cash deposits with financial institutions and other Local Authorities.

7. Background

7.1 The Council defines its treasury management activities as “the management of the 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”. The report informs Members of the treasury activities of the Council between 1 April 2022 and 30 June 2022.

8. Economic Background

8.1 For wider context and consideration of the global financial outlook, an economic and borrowing update for the first quarter of 2022/23 is attached in Appendix D.

9. Economic Forecast

9.1 The Council receives its treasury advice from Link Asset Services. Their latest interest rate forecasts to 30 September 2025 are shown below. Bank Rate was increased in February 2022 to 0.50%, again in March 2022 to 0.75%, in May 2022 to 1.00%. Further increases saw Bank Rate increase to 1.75% in August 2022 and is forecast to increase further, reaching 2.75% in quarter 4 2022/23. This will impact on future investment returns and the consequent benchmark.

Link Group Interest Rate View 09.08.22													
	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25
BANK RATE	2.25	2.50	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.50	2.50	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.25	2.00
3 month ave earnings	2.50	2.80	3.00	2.90	2.80	2.50	2.40	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.20	2.20	2.20
6 month ave earnings	2.90	3.10	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.80	2.70	2.60	2.50	2.50	2.40	2.30	2.30
12 month ave earnings	3.20	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.80	2.70	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.40
5 yr PWLB	2.80	3.00	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.70	2.70
10 yr PWLB	3.00	3.20	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.80
25 yr PWLB	3.40	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.40	3.40	3.30	3.30	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.10
50 yr PWLB	3.10	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.00	2.90	2.90	2.90	2.80

10. Treasury Management Strategy

10.1 The Treasury Management Strategy (TMS) for 2022/23 was approved by Full Council on 24 February 2022. The Council’s Annual Investment Strategy, which is incorporated in the TMS, outlines the Council’s investment priorities as the security and liquidity of its capital.

10.2 The Council aims to achieve the optimum return on investments commensurate with the proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate, it is considered appropriate to:

10.2.1 Keep investments short term (up to 1 year),

10.2.2 Only invest with highly credit rated financial institutions using Link's suggested creditworthiness approach, including sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information provided by Link.

The Treasury Team continue to take a prudent approach keeping investments short term and with the most highly credit rated organisations.

- 10.3 In the first quarter of 2022/23 the internal treasury team outperformed its benchmark by 0.03%. The investment return was 0.67% compared to the benchmark of 0.64%. This amounts to additional income of £12,300 during the quarter which is included in the Council's outturn position in the monthly revenue monitor.
- 10.4 From April 2022 the 7 Day LIBID benchmark rate which the Treasury team were previously benchmarked against, was replaced by 3 Month Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA). The previous LIBID rate was phased out by the Bank of England during 2021 due to the role it played in worsening of the 2008 financial crisis as well as the more recent scandals involving LIBOR manipulation among the rate-setting banks. We have now moved in to a rising interest rate environment and therefore the benchmark rate has also increased sharply on the back of this. It should be noted that within the current investment portfolio, there are still several longer-term legacy investments fixed at much lower rates when the Bank Rate was at 0.10%, still to renew. These investments were placed when market rates were much lower. These will mature over the coming months and be replaced at much higher rates therefore the return of the investment portfolio will increase significantly, and the performance compared to benchmark will become more favourable.
- 10.5 A full list of investments held as at 30 June 2022, compared to Link's counterparty list, and changes to Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's credit ratings are shown within Link's Monthly Investment Analysis Review at Appendix A. None of the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were breached during the first quarter of 2022/23. Officers continue to monitor the credit ratings of institutions on a daily basis. Delegated authority has been put in place to make any amendments to the approved lending list.
- 10.6 Due to the MPC's decision to increase Bank Rate to 1.75% in August 2022, investment and borrowing rates have started to substantially increase on the back of this. The average level of funds available for investment purposes in the first quarter of 2022/23 was £148 million.

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

Cabinet, 6 July 2022 – Treasury Management Update Quarter 4 2021/22

Council, 24 February 2022 – Treasury Strategy 2022/23

Cabinet Member:

Gwilym Butler, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Local Member

N/A

Appendices

- A. Shropshire Council Monthly Investment Analysis Review as at 30 June 2022 (provided by Link Group)
- B. Prudential Indicators for Quarter 1 2022/23
- C. Prudential Borrowing Schedule
- D. Economic Background and Borrowing Update

This page is intentionally left blank



Shropshire Council

Monthly Investment Analysis Review

June 2022

Monthly Economic Summary

General Economy

The Flash (i.e. provisional) Manufacturing PMI tumbled to a 23-month low of 53.4 in June, below May's reading of 54.6 and market forecasts of 54.2. Conversely, the Flash Services PMI held steady at 53.4, the same as May's reading but beating forecasts of 52.8. Whilst manufacturing production growth eased further across the month, resilient business activity trends were seen across the service sector despite the slowing new order growth. Taken together, the Flash Composite remained unchanged on the month at 53.1 but beat market forecasts of 52.6. Finally, the Construction PMI was hit by a combination of a loss of momentum in residential building growth and rising input prices, dragging down June's reading to a 4-month low of 56.4.

UK GDP expanded 0.2% in the three months to April, below forecasts of 0.4% and slowing from 0.8% seen the previous month. Services and production were broadly flat across the month with construction contributing towards the 0.2% growth. The UK trade deficit narrowed to £8.503bn in April, from a revised reading of £11.552bn in the previous month. Exports rose 4.1% as good sales advanced 7.4%, pushed up by a 6.5% jump in exports to non-EU countries. Meanwhile, imports fell 1.1% as good purchases slumped 1.6% amid lower imports from non-EU countries.

UK employment rose to 177,000 in the 3 months to April, well above market expectations of 105,000. This trend continued with those in payroll employment reaching an all-time high, whilst the claimant count fell by 19,700 in the same month. In spite of the tight conditions, the unemployment rate actually edged up to 3.8% in the three months to April, below the previous period's reading of 3.7% although higher than forecasts of 3.6%. Meanwhile, average weekly earnings including bonuses rose 6.8% y/y in the three months to April, compared to 7.0% previously, and lower than market forecasts of 7.6%. Similarly, average weekly earnings excluding bonuses went up 4.2%, matching the figure seen the previous period and beating market expectations of 4.0%.

UK inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, edged higher to 9.1% in May from 9.0% in April, matching market forecasts. It is the highest inflation rate since 1992, driving further pressure on households amid the cost-of-living crisis with further policymakers voicing concerns that price rises well over the 2% inflation target are now embedded into corporate pricing policies and wage settlements. These concerns were somewhat reflected in the June Monetary Policy Committee meeting, which saw a majority of 6-3 vote to raise the key Bank Rate by 25bps to 1.25%. This was the 5th consecutive rate hike, pushing the rate to its highest since early 2009. The decision was in line with market expectations, although three members voted for a bigger 50bps increase.

Meanwhile, with affordability continuing to play a greater weight on the mind of consumers amid a cost-of-living crisis, retail sales dropped to -0.5% m/m in May, after a downwardly revised 0.4% increase in April and compared to market expectations of a 0.7% fall. Continuing this trend, the Gfk Consumer Confidence index dropped to a new low at -41 in June, adding to concerns of a pullback in consumer spending amid rising prices and adding to concerns over sluggish economic growth. This followed a reading of -40 in May but was a touch higher than consensus forecasts of -42.

The UK government recorded a £14.0 billion deficit in its public finances for May, £3.7 billion more than the Office for Budget Responsibility's forecast. This was also higher than market expectations of £13.4 billion, and the third-highest May borrowing since monthly records began in 1993. Public sector net debt excluding public sector banks was £2,363.2 billion, or around 95.8% of GDP, an increase of £170.1 billion compared with May 2021.

The US economy added 390,000 jobs in May 2022, the least since April last year but above market forecasts of 325,000. Despite this, the US unemployment rate was unchanged at 3.6% in May 2022, compared with market expectations of a modest decline to 3.5%. The US economy

Against this backdrop, price growth (as measured by the Federal Reserve's preferred Personal Consumption Expenditure deflator) eased further to 4.7% in May from 4.9% in the prior month, the lowest in five months and slightly lower than market expectations of 4.8%. Nevertheless, the Federal Reserve raised the target for the Fed Funds rate by 75bps to 1.5%-1.75% during its June meeting, the biggest rate increase since 1994. Fed Chair Powell signalled a similar move could come at the next meeting as policymakers look to bring inflation back in line with their 2% target. Flash estimates showed the Eurozone economy expanded 0.6% on the quarter in Q1 2022, above both market expectations of 0.3% and the previous quarter's downwardly revised reading of 0.2%. However, the economic outlook for the bloc remains subdued as the war in Ukraine continues, putting further upward pressure on commodity and fuel prices. The annual inflation rate in the Eurozone increased to 8.6% in June 2022, a fresh record high, from 8.1% seen the previous month and above market forecasts of 8.4%. Core inflation, which excludes prices of energy, food, alcohol and tobacco, edged down from a record high of 3.8% in May of 2022 to 3.7% in June. During the June 2022 meeting, the ECB left interest rates at record low levels but confirmed its intentions to raise the key interest rate by 25bps in July. Policymakers have also committed to ending net asset purchases under its APP as of 1st July 2022.

Housing

The Nationwide House Price Index eased to 10.1% y/y in June, coming below both May's reading of 11.2% and expectations of 10.8%. On a monthly basis, prices increased 0.3%, below forecasts of 0.6% but maintaining eleven months of consecutive increases. In a similar vein, the Halifax house price index edged down to 10.5% y/y in May following the previous month's reading of 10.8%.

Currency

Sterling depreciated against both the US dollar and Euro across June amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and surging commodity prices, which raised the prospect of stagflation.

June	Start	End	High	Low
GBP/USD	\$1.2497	\$1.2145	\$1.2582	\$1.2005
GBP/EUR	€1.1715	€1.1617	€1.1775	€1.1531

Forecast

Bank Rate was raised to 1.25% at the Monetary Policy Committee's meeting in June, with Capital Economics still pencilling in rates to peak at 3.00% by Q3 2023.

Bank Rate	Now	Sep-22	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25
Link Group	1.25%	1.75%	2.25%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.75%	2.50%	2.50%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%	2.25%
Capital Economics	1.25%	1.75%	2.25%	2.50%	2.75%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	3.00%	2.75%	2.50%	-	

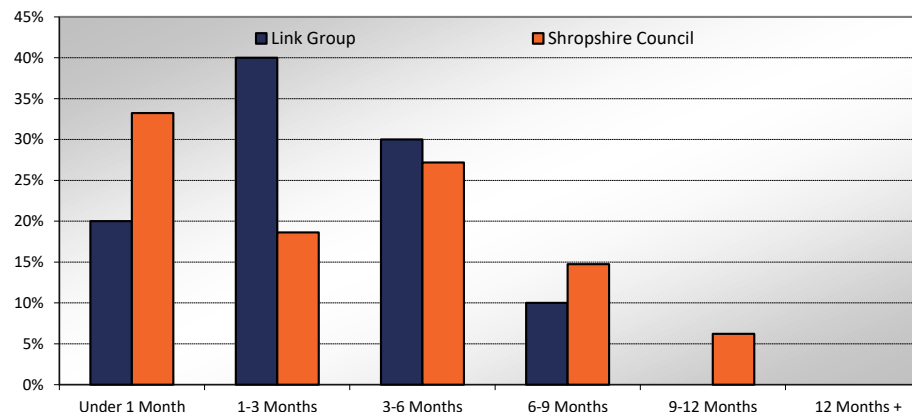
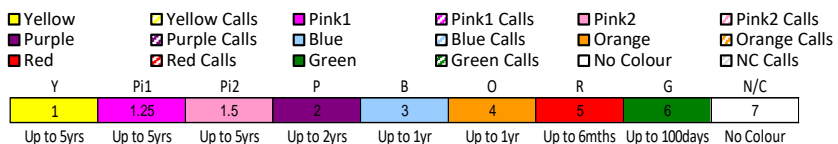
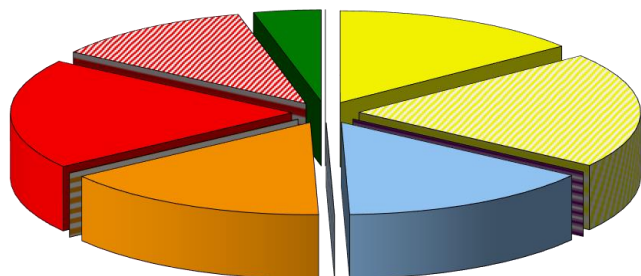
Shropshire Council

Current Investment List

Borrower	Principal (£)	Interest Rate	Start Date	Maturity Date	Lowest LT / Fund Rating	Historic Risk of Default
Santander UK PLC	15,000,000	0.99%		Call	A	0.000%
MMF Aberdeen Standard Investments	11,200,000	0.96%		MMF	AAAm	
MMF Insight	15,000,000	0.95%		MMF	AAAm	
DMO	1,600,000	0.94%	16/05/2022	29/07/2022	AA-	0.002%
Goldman Sachs International Bank	5,000,000	1.08%	18/05/2022	18/08/2022	A+	0.006%
Kingston Upon Hull City Council	2,000,000	0.08%	17/09/2021	22/08/2022	AA-	0.003%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.20%	24/08/2021	23/08/2022	A	0.007%
Oxford City Council	5,000,000	0.95%	08/03/2022	08/09/2022	AA-	0.004%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	2,000,000	0.22%	20/09/2021	19/09/2022	A	0.010%
Coventry Building Society	2,000,000	0.96%	24/03/2022	23/09/2022	A-	0.011%
Coventry Building Society	3,000,000	0.99%	30/03/2022	30/09/2022	A-	0.012%
Highland Council	5,000,000	0.10%	11/10/2021	04/10/2022	AA-	0.006%
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	1,000,000	1.35%	03/05/2022	03/11/2022	A	0.016%
Highland Council	5,000,000	1.15%	08/03/2022	08/11/2022	AA-	0.008%
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	4,000,000	1.46%	27/05/2022	25/11/2022	A	0.019%
Nationwide Building Society	5,000,000	1.35%	07/06/2022	07/12/2022	A	0.020%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.32%	09/12/2021	08/12/2022	A+	0.020%
Nationwide Building Society	5,000,000	1.48%	10/06/2022	09/12/2022	A	0.020%
Barclays Bank Plc (NRFB)	5,000,000	1.83%	15/06/2022	15/12/2022	A	0.021%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.51%	04/01/2022	03/01/2023	A+	0.024%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	3,000,000	0.66%	26/01/2022	25/01/2023	A+	0.026%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	0.94%	04/02/2022	25/01/2023	A	0.026%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	2,000,000	1.00%	18/02/2022	01/02/2023	A	0.027%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	4,000,000	1.01%	08/02/2022	07/02/2023	A+	0.028%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	1,500,000	1.61%	24/05/2022	23/05/2023	A+	0.041%
National Westminster Bank Plc (RFB)	5,000,000	2.00%	31/05/2022	31/05/2023	A	0.042%
HSBC UK Bank Plc (RFB)	1,500,000	2.18%	14/06/2022	14/06/2023	A+	0.044%
Total Investments	£128,800,000	0.99%				0.015%

Note: An historic risk of default is only provided if a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and is not provided for an MMF or USDBF, for which the rating agencies provide a fund rating. The portfolio's historic risk of default therefore measures the historic risk of default attached only to those investments for which a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and also does not include investments which are not rated.

Portfolio Composition by Link Group's Suggested Lending Criteria



Portfolios weighted average risk number = **3.20**

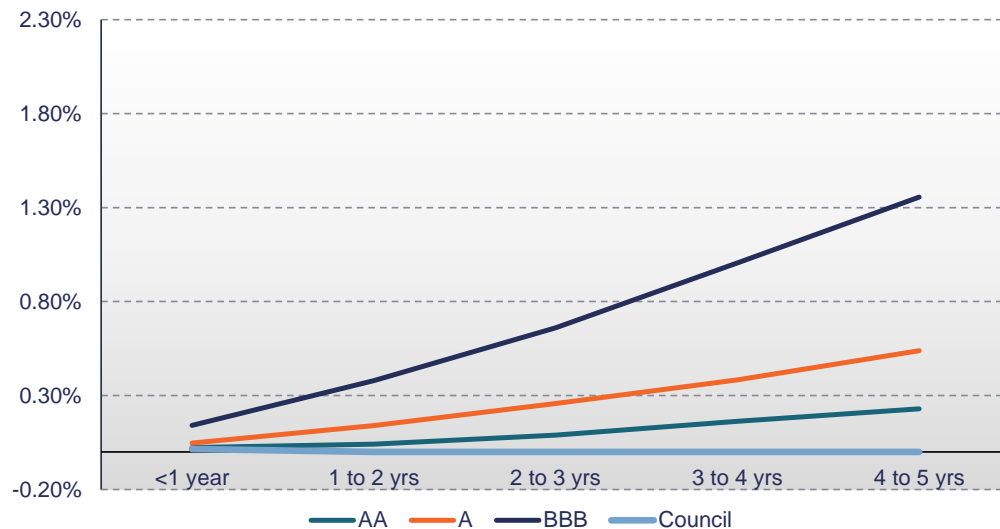
WARoR = Weighted Average Rate of Return
WAM = Weighted Average Time to Maturity

	% of Portfolio	Amount	% of Colour in Calls	Amount of Colour in Calls	% of Call in Portfolio	WARoR	WAM	WAM at Execution	Excluding Calls/MMFs/USDBFs	
									WAM	WAM at Execution
Yellow	34.78%	£44,800,000	58.48%	£26,200,000	20.34%	0.84%	37	106	88	254
Pink1	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Pink2	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Purple	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Blue	14.75%	£19,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.95%	189	360	189	360
Orange	15.53%	£20,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.79%	213	364	213	364
Red	31.06%	£40,000,000	37.50%	£15,000,000	11.65%	1.26%	90	114	145	183
Green	3.88%	£5,000,000	0.00%	£0	0.00%	1.08%	49	92	49	92
No Colour	0.00%	£0	0.00%	£0	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Total	100.00%	£128,800,000	31.99%	£41,200,000	31.99%	0.99%	104	185	152	273

Shropshire Council

Investment Risk and Rating Exposure

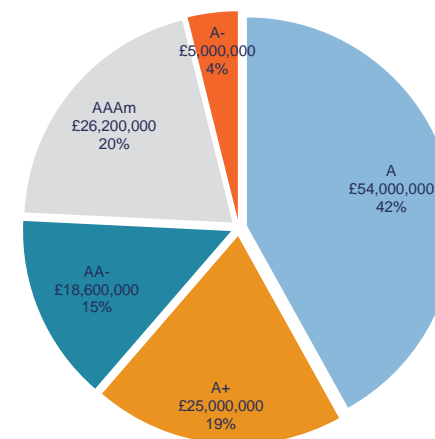
Investment Risk Vs. Rating Categories



Historic Risk of Default

Rating/Years	<1 year	1 to 2 yrs	2 to 3 yrs	3 to 4 yrs	4 to 5 yrs
AA	0.02%	0.04%	0.09%	0.16%	0.23%
A	0.05%	0.14%	0.26%	0.38%	0.54%
BBB	0.14%	0.38%	0.66%	1.01%	1.36%
Council	0.02%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Rating Exposure



Historic Risk of Default

This is a proxy for the average % risk for each investment based on over 30 years of data provided by Fitch, Moody's and S&P. It simply provides a calculation of the possibility of average default against the historical default rates, adjusted for the time period within each year according to the maturity of the investment.

Chart Relative Risk

This is the authority's risk weightings compared to the average % risk of default for "AA", "A" and "BBB" rated investments.

Rating Exposures

This pie chart provides a clear view of your investment exposures to particular ratings.

Note: An historic risk of default is only provided if a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and is not provided for an MMF or USDBF, for which the rating agencies provide a fund rating. The portfolio's historic risk of default therefore measures the historic risk of default attached only to those investments for which a counterparty has a counterparty credit rating and also does not include investments which are not rated.

Shropshire Council

Monthly Credit Rating Changes
MOODY'S

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
28/06/2022	1900	Clydesdale Bank PLC	United Kingdom	The Long Term Rating was upgraded to 'A3' from 'Baa1'.
29/06/2022	1901	KBC Bank N.V.	Belgium	The Outlook on the Long Term Rating was changed to Positive from Stable.

Shropshire Council

Monthly Credit Rating Changes FITCH

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action
07/06/2022	1897	Wells Fargo Bank, NA	United States	The Outlook on the Long Term Rating was changed to Stable from Negative. At the same time, the Support Rating was withdrawn.
10/06/2022	1898	DBS Bank Ltd.	Singapore	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
10/06/2022	1899	Oversea-Chinese Banking Corp. Ltd.	Singapore	The Support Rating was withdrawn.
29/06/2022	1902	Clydesdale Bank PLC	United Kingdom	The Support Rating was withdrawn.

Shropshire Council

Monthly Credit Rating Changes
S&P

Date	Update Number	Institution	Country	Rating Action

Whilst Link Group makes every effort to ensure that all the information it provides is accurate and complete, it does not guarantee the correctness or the due receipt of such information and will not be held responsible for any errors therein or omissions arising there from. All information supplied by Link Group should only be used as a factor to assist in the making of a business decision and should not be used as a sole basis for any decision. The Client should not regard the advice or information as a substitute for the exercise by the Client of its own judgement.

Link Group is a trading name of Link Treasury Services Limited (registered in England and Wales No. 2652033). Link Treasury Services Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority only for conducting advisory and arranging activities in the UK as part of its Treasury Management Service, FCA register number 150403. Registered office: 6th Floor, 65 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7NQ.

Appendix B

Prudential Indicators – Quarter 1 2022/23

Prudential Indicator	2022/23 Indicator £m	Quarter 1 – Actual £m	Quarter 2 – Actual £m	Quarter 3 – Actual £m	Quarter 4 – Actual £m
Non HRA Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	431*	366			
HRA CFR	95	95			
Gross borrowing	348	292			
Investments	150	129			
Net borrowing	198	163			
Authorised limit for external debt	528	292			
Operational boundary for external debt	460	292			
Limit of fixed interest rates (borrowing)	528	292			
Limit of variable interest rates (borrowing)	264	0			
Internal Team Principal sums invested > 364 days	70	0			
Maturity structure of borrowing limits	%	%	%	%	%
Under 12 months	15	2			
12 months to 2 years	15	0			
2 years to 5 years	45	1			
5 years to 10 years	75	16			
10 years to 20 years	100	31			
20 years to 30 years	100	22			
30 years to 40 years	100	17			
40 years to 50 years	100	2			
50 years and above	100	9			

* Based on period 3 Capital Monitoring report including Shrewsbury Shopping Centres.

This page is intentionally left blank

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix D

Economic Background

Since the last update, central banks in the developed economies have significantly quickened the pace of their monetary policy tightening. Although their policies are bespoke and reflect the economic backdrop in each of their countries, that is not to say there has not been a similar approach to dampening inflationary pressures that are still spiking upwards. In that respect, the US Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) has led with increases of 2.25% in the year to date, whilst the Bank of England's MPC has increased its Bank Rate by 1.50% to 1.75%.

The latest Bank Rate increase was implemented on 4 August 2022. After an 8-1 vote in favour, Bank Rate increased by 0.50% from 1.25% to 1.75%, but the MPC was careful to keep its options open regarding future decision-making (also note that one vote was for only a 0.25% increase). It tweaked its forward guidance in a couple of ways. First, it added that "policy is not on a pre-set path" and that the MPC will decide the "appropriate level of Bank Rate at each meeting". Second, it now says that "further changes" rather than "further increases" in Bank Rate "will reflect the Committee's assessment of the economic outlook and inflationary pressures". The first change suggests that rates will not automatically rise by 0.50% at the next few meetings and that the higher rates go, the more important the level. The second change appears to open the door to rate cuts further ahead.

In addition, the MPC surprised the market with its candidness in respect of its UK economic growth forecast assumptions. It stated that the UK is in for five quarters of recession starting in Q4 2022 and running all the way through to the end of 2023. In the interim, it is projected that CPI inflation will exceed 13% in Q4 2022. Half of this increase can be attributed directly to gas/electricity price inflation and a further 2% - 2.5% to the indirect knock-on effects of higher energy on production/services.

Furthermore, the MPC said that it is "provisionally minded" to commence gilt sales of £10bn per quarter from the end of September. That means the balance sheet will soon start to shrink at a faster pace.

However, that said, the MPC appeared also to be sending dovish signals further ahead as the forecast recession involves a 2.2% decline in GDP and if interest rates rise to 3.00%, as the markets currently expect, inflation will be below the 2% target in three years' time. That appears to imply that rates don't need to rise as far as 3.00% and/or that at some point in the next three years rates will need to be cut again to boost inflation.

The Bank also acknowledged it has not taken account of the prospect of a change in Government policy regarding the potential tax cuts

offered up by both Conservative leadership candidates vying to be the next Prime Minister. If this policy change occurs, regardless of whether it is to a lesser or greater extent, it is likely to add to inflationary pressures and will be an additional issue for the MPC to consider in full at its November meeting.

In the US, President Biden, and the Democratic party, have pushed through a huge programme of fiscal stimulus over the past couple of years, whilst the following factors were also in play:-

- A fast vaccination programme had enabled a rapid opening up of the economy during 2021
- The economy had been growing swiftly over the second half of 2021/22, whilst unemployment has continued to fall/spare capacity in the labour market has tightened.

It was not much of a surprise that a combination of these factors would eventually cause an excess of demand in the economy which generated strong inflationary pressures. This has eventually been recognised by the Fed and an aggressive response to damp inflation down during 2022 and 2023 is expected.

The flurry of comments from Fed officials following the mid-March meeting – including from Chair Jerome Powell himself – hammering home the hawkish message from the mid-March meeting makes it difficult to see how the Fed will not tighten aggressively through 2022 as a minimum with markets expecting the Fed Funds Rate to hit close to 2% by year end.

In addition, the Fed will soon announce an increasing series of caps on the value of assets they allow to run off the balance sheet each month.

In China, the pace of economic growth has now fallen back after the initial surge of recovery from the pandemic and China has been struggling to contain the spread of the Delta variant through using sharp local lockdowns - which depress economic growth. However, with Omicron having now spread to China and being much more easily transmissible, this strategy of sharp local lockdowns to stop the virus may not prove so successful in future; this strategy poses a potential renewed threat to world supply chains. The People's Bank of China made a start in December 2021 on cutting its key interest rate to encourage flagging economic growth.

A summary overview of the future path of Bank Rate

The Central forecast for interest rates was previously updated on 21 June and reflected a view that the MPC will be keen to further demonstrate its anti-inflation credentials by delivering a succession

of rate increases, including in August. Now we expect a further 0.5% increase in September: another 0.25% increase in November and a further 0.25% hike in February. But the timing and size of the hikes will be data dependent and, potentially, influenced by the actions of the US FOMC.

Further down the road, we anticipate the Bank of England will be keen to loosen monetary policy when the worst of the inflationary pressures are behind us – but that timing will be one of fine judgment: cut too soon, and inflationary pressures may well build up further; cut too late and the forecast recession may be prolonged.

The CPI measure of inflation will peak at upwards of 13% in Q4 2022 and the MPC will note the influence gas/electricity price hikes have on this number, and whether wages data is behaving itself. Currently wages are rising at above 4%, excluding bonuses, and above 6%, including bonuses. Despite the cost-of-living squeeze that is still taking shape, the Bank will want to see evidence that wages are not spiralling upwards in what is evidently a very tight labour market, where employers are out-bidding each other to ensure they have the pick of a limited labour pool.

Regarding the “provisional” plan to sell £10bn of gilts back into the market each quarter, starting in September, this will undoubtedly have an impact on the pricing of gilts to some degree, but we believe it will pale into insignificance against the other factors we have already outlined as influencing gilt yields.

Notwithstanding the MPC’s clear desire to increase Bank Rate through the remainder of 2022, negative real earnings, the upcoming 60%+ hike in the Ofgem energy price cap from October (to be followed by a potential 10%+ further increase from January), at the same time as employees (and employers) have incurred a 1.25% Health & Social Care Levy, growing commodity and food price inflation plus council tax rises - all these factors will hit households’ finances hard. However, lower income families will be hit disproportionately hard despite some limited assistance from the Government to postpone the full impact of rising energy costs.

In the upcoming months, forecasts will be guided not only by economic data releases and clarifications from the MPC over its monetary policies, but the on-going conflict between Russia and Ukraine, including the manner in which the West and NATO respond through sanctions and/or military intervention. Currently, oil, gas, wheat and other mainstream commodities have risen significantly in price and central banks will have to balance whether they prioritise economic growth or try to counter supply-side shock induced inflation. (More recently, the heightened tensions between China/Taiwan/US also have the potential to have a wider and negative economic impact.)

On the positive side, consumers are still estimated to be sitting on over £160bn of excess savings left over from the pandemic so that will cushion some of the impact of the above increases. However, most of those are held by more affluent people whereas lower

income families already spend nearly all their income before these increases hit and have few financial reserves.

Borrowing

It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the “Affordable Borrowing Limits”. The Council’s approved Treasury and Prudential Indicators (affordability limits) are included in the approved Treasury Management Strategy. A list of the approved limits is shown in Appendix B. The Prudential Indicators were not breached during the first quarter of 2022/23 and have not been previously breached. The schedule at Appendix C details the Prudential Borrowing approved and utilised to date.

In November 2020, the Chancellor announced the conclusion to the review of PWLB rates and subsequently all borrowing rates were reduced by 1%; but a prohibition was introduced to deny access to borrowing from the PWLB for any local authority which had purchase of assets for yield in its three-year capital programme. Link’s target rate for new long-term borrowing (50 years) for the first quarter of 2022/23 increased to 2.99%. No new external borrowing was undertaken in the first quarter of 2022/23.

PWLB debt	Current borrowing rate as at 09.08.22 a.m.	Target borrowing rate now (end of Q3 2022)	Target borrowing rate previous (end of Q3 2022)
5 year	2.61%	2.80%	3.20%
10 year	2.81%	3.00%	3.40%
25 year	3.23%	3.40%	3.70%
50 year	2.99%	3.10%	3.40%

Long term PWLB rates are expected to rise to 3.1% in September 2022 before increasing to reach 3.2% by March 2023.



Committee and Date

Cabinet meeting
7th September 2022

Item

Public

Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre

Responsible Officer Mark Barrow

e-mail: Mark.barrow@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743
258919

1. Synopsis

1.1 Following the outcome of the consultation exercise this report recommends to Council that the business case for the rebuilding of Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre is approved and added to the capital strategy.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 At its meeting on 27th April 2022 Cabinet agreed the following recommendations:

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

2.2 The public consultation has now been completed and added to subsequent engagement with key stakeholders, it demonstrated overwhelming support for a proposed new Swimming and Fitness Centre at Whitchurch. There were 286 respondents to the public consultation, with 89% agreeing with the location, and 73% agreeing that the proposed facility mix was adequate. 44% of respondents had previously used the swimming pool weekly, with 77% arriving by car, 59% by foot and 30% by cycle. A concern was raised about the potential loss of water vole habitat, which will be investigated. The full consultation and

engagement report is available at Appendix 1 and an updated Equalities, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 2.

- 2.3 The total cost of the facility is now estimated at £13.100m. The Feasibility Study for the new Centre is attached at Appendix 3. The report asks for Cabinet to make certain recommendations to Council to enable the rebuild to proceed as quickly as possible, bearing in mind inflationary pressures. If there are major issues or the capital budget is exceeded and there is a need for increased capital spend, a further paper will be taken to Council for consideration.
- 2.4 Providing development to the next stages goes as planned, building should start in 2024, with the new Centre completed in 2025.

3. Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- Agree the business case for the project, as set out in this paper, be presented to Council with a recommendation that the development of the Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre be included in the capital programme with an initial budget of £13.100m, funded from Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).
- Acknowledge the significant average annual revenue pressure of £0.509mm arising from approval of this scheme, reaching a maximum of £0.530m in 2028-29, and recommend that Council delegate resolution of this pressure to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism.
- Recommend that Council delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, to procure, negotiate and agree the terms of any agreements/contracts necessary for the delivery of the project including, but not limited to:
 - Agreeing the procurement strategy
 - Design Team procurement and appointment
 - Site Surveys and Investigations and relevant reports
 - Planning permissions
 - Tendering activities
 - Main contractor procurement and contract sign-off
 - Construction
 - Hand over

REPORT

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

4.1 Opportunities Appraisal - the need for a new facility in Whitchurch

- 4.2 According to a [recent report by Swim England](#), weekly swimming saves the NHS and social care system more than £357m each year.
- 4.3 They comment that *"It is vital there are appropriate facilities in the right locations to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of swimming and every child has the opportunity to learn an essential life skill."*
- 4.4 At the current rate of pool replacement nationally, it is estimated that there could be 40% fewer pools by the end of the decade.
- 4.5 This investment in a new swimming centre in Whitchurch, will help ensure high quality, cost effective facilities for the growing population in the area.
- 4.6 Built in 1972, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprised a 25m x 5 lane pool and changing facilities. The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the Covid-19 pandemic national lockdown. Structural problems were then identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building, and the Centre was not considered cost effective to repair.
- 4.7 The aim of this project is to improve health and well-being at all stages of life and that physical activity is an integral part of this.
- 4.8 This will be achieved through the creation of a new Swimming and Fitness Centre in Whitchurch, which will replace the existing facility.
- 4.9 Key aspects include:
- Support for the creation of a high quality and sustainable indoor leisure facility mix, which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all Shropshire residents leading to increased participation and active lifestyles, thereby meeting community need
 - Recognising the importance of leisure facilities as relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people

- A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.
- There is a collective priority (Shropshire Council, Health and Wellbeing Board, Energize (Active Partnership) to improve community health and well-being at all stages of life, and that physical activities are integral to this, with a focus on older and young people and families

4.10 County demographics

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

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

4.12 These demographic groups can especially benefit from swimming provision, which is an activity that can be enjoyed by all. There is a need to ensure that provision (services, activities and facilities) is relevant and sustainable for all groups.

4.13 Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM)

4.14 The Sport England Facility Planning Model (FPM) for pools in Shropshire was produced in July 2019.

- All three of Shropshire's main market towns – Ludlow, Oswestry and Shrewsbury provide a main swimming pool, or the equivalent of this (minimum 25m x 6 lane) and a learner pool or a learner function. All communities in Shropshire are within 30 minutes of one of these facilities, except for the communities in the north.
- Swimming pools in Market Drayton and, prior to its closure Whitchurch, addressed this gap in accessibility.
- Swimming pools offer more scope than any other indoor sports facility type, to contribute to an active and healthy lifestyle by residents. They are the only facility type which provides for participation by all age groups and from cradle to grave. Also, swimming is one of the few indoor activities where female participation is higher than male participation and it is also a family-based activity.

- The real issue in Shropshire is not the level of provision, but the age and quality of swimming facilities, particularly those providing for community access such as Whitchurch.
- Whitchurch Swimming Centre had an estimated used capacity of 82% in the weekly peak period, this was over the 70% 'comfort level' recommended by Sport England. This demonstrates that when open, Whitchurch Swimming Centre had a very high level of use. Accessibility to other facilities is a challenge in the area if one does not have access to a private car; bus services are limited and do not always enable sufficient time to access the next nearest pool.

4.15 According to the census, in 1971, 11,410 people were resident in Whitchurch Place Plan Area, compared to an estimated 15,728 residents from the 2020 mid-year population estimates. The census data from 2021 is not yet available but it is expected that the population has continued to increase.

4.16 When open, Whitchurch Swimming Centre had an estimated used capacity of 82% in the weekly peak period, this was over the 70% 'comfort level' recommended by Sport England. This demonstrates that when open, the Centre had high level of use. With a growing population, the demand is expected to increase.

4.17 Impact of not proceeding with the new Centre

4.18 The impacts of not progressing the project have been considered and are summarised below:

- The swimming centre remains closed which reduces the opportunities for the Whitchurch community to be physically active which impacts on long term health and social issues.
- To access pay as you play swimming facilities Whitchurch residents will have to travel some distance, this can have a negative impact on the Council's climate change agenda and carbon reduction targets. Residents without access to a car are disadvantaged as public transport routes to other facilities mean lengthy travel times.
- Visits by Whitchurch residents to other facilities adds pressure to already busy centres.
- There is a negative impact from young children not being able to learn to swim which is an important life skill.
- Primary schools have a statutory duty to provide swimming lessons for children up to Key Stage 2 Level which they will struggle to fulfil.
- Does not provide any opportunity to deliver the goals of the Shropshire Plan.
- This option is contrary to recommendations in the Council's adopted Indoor Leisure Facility Strategy 2020 – 2038.

4.19 Providing a new facility will:

- Encourage increased participation in physical activity, delivering increased health benefits (physical and mental) to more people as a result of taking part in physical activity
- Contribute positively to the Healthy People and Healthy Environment priorities in the Shropshire Plan
- Fully fulfil a recommendation in the Council's adopted Leisure Indoor Facilities Strategy 2020 – 38
- Contribute to a more active environment at local level, as people do not have to travel so far for facilities
- Be more cost-effective and efficient to operate than the existing facility as a stand-alone pool requires a high level of subsidy. The financial impact of developing a new facility is detailed in section 5 of this report
- Provide the opportunity for young people to be able to learn to swim and help fulfil the statutory duty of primary schools to provide swimming lessons for children up to Key Stage 2
- Require significant capital investment but secure the provision of a valuable community facility for the long term

4.20 A feasibility study has been completed, which illustrates an initial design for consideration regarding the future provision of this important community facility (Appendix 3).

4.21 The feasibility study proposes the following facility mix:

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

4.22 The rationale for the facility mix is:

- Increased participation and revenue impact from a larger pool; the previous operator has identified significant potential for increasing swimming lessons in the area based on demand. The old facility delivered 600 swimming lessons per month Equally, there is potential to increase the number of swim memberships.
- A facility offering both fitness and swimming is likely to appeal to a wider range of participants; this provides the opportunity to offer a new swim and gym membership and provide opportunities for revenue generation.

- Increased water space also facilitates an increased capacity for casual i.e., pay and play, swimming.
- The multi-purpose room can be programmed to cater for a range of dance, fitness and young people activities which increases throughput and income generation opportunities.

4.23 Risk Assessment

4.24 Full consideration of the risks have been undertaken. Key risks and mitigations are summarised in Table 1 below.

4.25 Table 1- Summary of significant risks

Risk	Mitigation actions
Inflationary pressures, material cost increases and availability is leading to greater contractor insolvency rates.	Procurement Strategy to consider mitigations and background checks.
Costs of the overall project are unaffordable in the current financial climate.	The capital and revenue costs will be reviewed to firm up cost certainty and explore where improvements can be achieved. If project not to proceed there could be abortive costs.
Car Park is leased to Tesco and access/ changes to car parking will need to be negotiated with them.	Early engagement with Tesco will be undertaken.
The consultation identified that there may be water voles in the brook on the site. Water voles are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They are also a material consideration in the planning process.	Further investigation around the issue of water voles will be undertaken. Proposals do not remove the habitat, but it will need protecting.
Timeframe for developing a new facility expands leading to significantly higher development costs through build cost inflation and fluctuations in interest rates.	Ensure realistic project programme, with key decision milestones identified and a project team suitably resourced in place to undertake the work.
Reputational damage as Whitchurch Swimming Centre is the focus of considerable public interest and announcements have been made on commitment to building a new facility.	Project team established to manage the new project. Clear communications plan developed to keep stakeholders informed.

4.26 Consultation and engagement feedback

4.27 The full consultation report is shown in Appendix 1. It brings together feedback from:

- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

4.28 The summary of findings is shown below:

Summary

The responses consultation were very helpful and despite some concerns, very described and communicated, most comments were positive and optimistic about the prospect of swimming facilities returning to Whitchurch.



Engagement: Feedback was provided from 274 survey respondents, 12 written consultation responses and 7 stakeholder meetings and workshops.



Location: 89% of survey respondents agree with the proposed location covering the existing site and closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre. The stakeholder meetings and workshops included some suggestions for a larger out of town site.



Ecology: 7 of the 12 written responses and 9 of the 274 survey respondents highlighted significant concerns over the impact the build could have on water voles living in the brook on the site. These concerns were reflected in conversations with stakeholders.



Travel: Survey respondents' preferred method of travel to the location is the car (48%) followed by walking at 37%. Cycle use was the third top preferred method of travel (9%). Active Travel was commented on throughout the engagement with stakeholders highlighting opportunities to improve cycling facilities on site and throughout the local area. Parking facilities were also commonly mentioned.



Facility mix: Feedback calls for a learner/child pool, large pool, private changing, family changing and child/youth facilities as priorities. There are mixed views on the gym and café.



Health: The main barrier to physical activity highlighted by 52% of all the survey respondents was a lack of easy access to facilities and inconvenience. 38% of survey respondents cited cost, followed by insufficient time (24%). The feedback included a wide range of suggestions for facilities and activities to address health and wellbeing.



Community: There was strong support for new opportunities to encourage wider community use of the new centre. Exercise on prescription, social prescribing community groups, sessions designed for older people and consideration of use by schools and young people were all highlighted within the suggestions from the survey and at stakeholder workshops.



Accessibility: 70 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of accessibility. Comments covered wheelchair access, pool and changing access, non-slip surfaces, lifts, hoists moveable floors etc. Other comments covered noise issues including design for people with hearing impairment and quiet sessions design for sensory needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.



Environment: 80 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of sustainability and minimising climate impact. Suggestions covered energy efficiency, solar power, heat pumps, green walls, recycling, natural planning and low impact methods to clean the water and centre, and healthy/local food provision.



Overall views: 82% of survey respondents were satisfied with the proposals and additional support was voiced by stakeholders. The feedback overall was very positive.

4.29 The feedback from the consultation and engagement was overwhelmingly positive and supports the redevelopment of the site.

4.30 **Equality, Social inclusion and Health Impact Assessment**

4.31 An Equality, Social inclusion and Health Impact Assessment has been carried out (Appendix 2).

4.32 The findings from the initial and second screening were that:

- The equality and health and well-being impacts across Protected Characteristic groupings in Shropshire, and within Whitchurch are anticipated to be positive. This is in line with the policy approach of the service area and the Council, and with consideration for Shropshire as a large and sparsely populated rural county in which market towns provide a sense of place and belonging as well as an access point for facilities and services, including leisure facilities. There are also positive impacts anticipated in relation to our tenth grouping in Shropshire, around social inclusion, provided that efforts are made to consider the needs of people in low-income households with regard to pricing structures.
- There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.
- Proceeding with the development of a new facility, will mitigate the current negative impacts of the swimming centre being closed, and promote social inclusion as well as physical and mental health and well-being. It will be necessary to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders

4.33 The results from the consultation and engagement report are positive and help demonstrate the positive equality, social inclusion and health impacts and have been included in the ESHIA second screening. In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- Opportunities to improve active travel options will be considered
- Environmental and carbon impacts will be addressed as an integral part of design and construction, as discussed in Section 6 of this report. This will include protection of water vole habitat. A preliminary ecological appraisal of the site was undertaken in December 2021 as part of the initial feasibility study. Shropshire Council officers will continue to take appropriate expert advice and ensure more detailed surveys are undertaken during subsequent stages of the project, with the aim of proceeding sensitively to

take full consideration of the need to safeguard the water voles inhabiting the brook.

- 4.34 Health impacts will be positive. It has been highlighted that, as reflected in the consultation and engagement feedback:
- There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.
 - Once the facility is completed, sessions that encourage health and wellbeing can be encouraged, including support for older people, school use and activities for young people
 - The design will consider those people with mobility issues and other impairments, enabling key improvements compared to the existing facility
- 4.35 It will be necessary to continue to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders. This should include engagement with adults with special needs, and young people, as part of the broader public.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 This report is written in the context of the Council's medium term financial strategy and on the assumption that the Council wishes to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Whitchurch for the benefit of the community, but that given financial constraints, it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible.
- 5.2 Various options for the facility mix of the proposed new development have already been considered and were presented to Cabinet in June 2021, with the recommended favoured option (Option 6 – summarised in point 4.17) now advanced to this point. Initial estimates had presented the option with a capital cost of £6.300m, however detailed feasibility studies as well as the changing economic environment mean that the same project is now estimated to cost £13.100m.
- 5.3 The breakdown of the £13.100m as included in the feasibility study report and required to deliver the facility is as below:
- | | |
|---|-----------|
| | £ |
| • Construction costs
(includes moveable floor, green technology & general fixed equipment) | 7,490,308 |
| • External works | 1,551,583 |

• Professional fees	855,983
• BREEAM Excellent	169,838
• Contingency	849,190
• Inflation	1,210,733
• Additional inflation to the inflation included within the feasibility to take total inflation up to 20% to safeguard and mitigate this project risk)	972,647 in addition
• Total	13,100,282

5.4 **Non controllable Costs**

5.5 Construction cost inflation (from feasibility date to tender return and mid-point of construction) as determined at January 2022 was estimated to be 11.05% based on the proposed construction programme included in the feasibility study. This equated to an estimated cost of £1,210,733. In the current climate, inflation is a significant project risk but difficult to forecast, alongside significant supply chain pressures and material availability. In order to acknowledge the significant inflationary pressures in the market currently, construction cost inflation has been increased to 20% by adding an additional £972,647 to the amount included in the feasibility study.

5.6 The feasibility study shows that to accommodate the scale of facility proposed the entire site area will be required. Preliminary geo-technical studies show that significant works will be required regarding piling and dealing with the sloping site. Estimated costs for this element are £0.400m.

5.7 The feasibility study also includes the provision of additional car parking which may or may not be a condition of planning. Estimated cost £0.624m.

5.8 **Controllable Costs**

5.9 Contained within the agreed facility mix there have been some additional controllable costs included, the provision of a second lift at £0.060m and the replacement of multi-use games area with active landscaped area and associated works at £0.211m. Whilst not strictly required as part of the previously agreed facility mix, the provision of these will make the facility more accessible, upgrade infrastructure to ensure current uses can continue, and will encourage future use.

5.10 Detailed revenue modelling has taken place, using operational income and expenditure forecasts provided by Strategic Leisure Ltd, taking advantage of their knowledge and experience of the market.

5.11 The feasibility study shows that the proposed facility mix, including the moveable pool floor, can deliver an estimated average annual operational surplus over its first ten years of £0.150m. However, when considering the financing of the project currently assumed to

be 100% Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) over a 40-year term, annual borrowing repayments of £0.662m must also be included in the model.

5.12 In the initial financial modelling contained within the April 2022 Cabinet report, the costs of borrowing were modelled at an interest rate of 2.5% and so were calculated at £0.486m per year. The current PWLB interest rate is assumed at 4%. This significant rise is a direct result of the national economic situation and in the longer term it is anticipated to rise further still.

5.13 Table 2 below summarises the projected income and expenditure position for the proposed development for the first 10 years following its proposed completion in 2025 and this highlights an average forecast revenue pressure of £0.509m each year, reaching a maximum of £0.530m in 2028-29, Further due diligence will also be undertaken on all figures contained within the model including regular updates at project board level, as areas such as energy costs remain extremely volatile. At the current moment there are no existing budgets that could plug the annual funding gap, nor are there options of significantly reducing the borrowing liability. Consequently, approval of this scheme will result in a significant annual budget pressure which will need to be addressed in future financial strategies.

5.14 Table 2- Projected income and expenditure

Whitchurch Swimming & Fitness Centre (£m)	Year 0 2025/26	Year 1 2026/27	Year 2 2027/28	Year 3 2028/29	Year 4 2029/30	Year 5 2030/31	Year 6 2031/32	Year 7 2032/33	Year 8 2033/34	Year 9 2034/35	Year 10 2035/36
EXPENDITURE		1.840	1.893	1.935	1.966	1.999	2.032	2.065	2.098	2.131	2.163
Borrowing Repayments	-	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662	0.662
Operational Costs	1.017	1.178	1.231	1.273	1.304	1.337	1.370	1.403	1.436	1.469	1.501
INCOME/SAVINGS	1.138	1.325	1.365	1.404	1.444	1.483	1.523	1.562	1.602	1.641	1.681
New Income	1.138	1.325	1.365	1.404	1.444	1.483	1.523	1.562	1.602	1.641	1.681
NET COST TO THE COUNCIL	- 0.121	0.515	0.528	0.531	0.522	0.516	0.509	0.503	0.496	0.490	0.482

5.15 The existing revenue budget for the Whitchurch Swimming Pool contract is £0.135m, this budget is currently surplus and has been used to offset immediate pressures in the Leisure service area and wider Place directorate. For this reason the saving has not been factored into the above figures.

5.16 Work has been carried out to explore potential funding sources that could contribute to the project in order to reduce the borrowing liability. These have included:

- Community Infrastructure Levy - there will be further consideration of CIL funding as the design process progresses.
- Grant aid from sources such as Sport England, the Levelling Up Fund and UK Prosperity Fund - these are not being pursued. Sport

England is unlikely to fund the single facility, and the design requirements to secure this funding are not likely to be affordable. Other priorities were agreed for the Round 2 Levelling Up funding and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund has a total of £12m for all priorities, with 80% revenue funding, so is not suitable for large capital projects. Applications will be submitted if suitable funding is made available within the timescales of the development.

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

5.17 Leisure Market

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

- *"Although the UK leisure operator market was significantly impacted by Covid 19 in Lockdowns, there has generally been good recovery across the sector; on average operators are now achieving circa 72% of pre- Covid income levels.*
- *Interest in new procurement opportunities, which obviously reduced during the pandemic period, is now on the rise again. Experience across consultants managing and delivering leisure management tender processes is that the forward market seems positive and buoyant with prices better in most cases than current business case estimates.*
- *Contracts which comprise at least some newer, or brand new, facilities are of considerably more interest to operators. This is because there is far less risk in the operational management of a new facility with the latest energy and other technologies, that has been designed as a fit for purpose building. Operators are willing to take responsibility for lifecycle maintenance on a new building, but not on older assets.*

5.19 The proposed timing of the development does not coincide with the Council's incumbent operator being able to contribute as the current management contract has been agreed for a further five years, which would not provide sufficient time for the operator to make a rate of return on any financial contribution.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

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

6.2 Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation

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

6.4 Energy and Fuel Consumption

6.5 Building to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and a DEC A rating. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. This will include the provision of a report to compare the sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement. This will have a positive effect, with early investment in the structure of the building consistent with Passivhaus principles helping to significantly reduce energy revenue costs over the lifetime of the building.

6.6 Renewable Energy Generation

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

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

6.9 Carbon offsetting or mitigation

6.10 Opportunities to capture carbon as part of the landscaping for the redevelopment will be considered as the design progresses. This could include tree planting and other measures.

6.11 Climate change adaptation

- 6.12 The new development means that measures can be taken within the design process that will help ensure the building is adapted for more extreme weather and improve resilience to increased risks to the health and wellbeing of Shropshire's residents.

7. Background

- 7.1 There are several Leisure Centres and facilities owned or managed by Shropshire Council across the county. These include:

- 7.2 Sites operated by Shropshire Community Leisure Trust, with Serco Leisure Ltd as their managing agent:

- Oswestry Leisure Centre - opened September 2011
- Shrewsbury Sports Village - opened 2005
- Quarry Swimming & Fitness Centre - opened 1864 – extensive modernisation in 1968/69 - refurbishment 1994
- Market Drayton Swimming Centre - opened 1995 – fitness suite extension built 2013

- 7.3 Sites operated by Teme Leisure:

- Ludlow Leisure Centre – opened 1995 – swimming pool built 1997
- Cleobury Mortimer Sports Centre – sports hall opened 1985 – additional facilities 2001 & 2007

- 7.4 Sites operated by Shropshire Council:

- SpArC (Bishop's Castle) - swimming pool opened 1972 – additional facilities 2006
- Church Stretton Sports Centre - managed on behalf of South Shropshire Academy Trust and St Lawrence CE Primary School - swimming pool opened 1980 – sports centre 2010
- Much Wenlock Leisure Centre - managed on behalf of William Brookes School - opened 2010
- Meole Brace Golf Course - management agreement with golf professional – opened 1976

- 7.5 Sites operated by Halo Leisure- these are not owned by Shropshire Council:

- Severn Centre, Highley – opened 2004
- Bridgnorth Endowed Leisure Centre – opened 1975

- 7.6 Whitchurch Swimming Centre, which was opened in 1972, closed in March 2020 initially as a result of the national Covid 19 lockdown. The closure continued after a major leak to the pool was found and further structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of the leak. The structural investigation work identified that it was not

viable to undertake remedial repair works due to the age of the facility and inadequate foundations.

7.7 This means that redevelopment of the Centre at Whitchurch has been prioritised to ensure the much-needed facilities are available to residents.

7.8 The recommendations in this report are made based on the evidence contained in the feasibility study, the consultation and engagement report and relevant strategies.

8. Additional Information

8.1 Shropshire Plan

8.2 The new Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre will help achieve the priorities set out in the Shropshire Plan 2022-25. These include:

8.3 Healthy people

- We'll tackle inequalities, including rural inequalities, and poverty in all its forms, providing early support and interventions that reduce risk and enable children, young people, adults and families to achieve their full potential and enjoy life.
- We'll support Shropshire residents to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, choosing healthy lifestyles and preventing ill-health, reducing the need for long-term or hospital care.

8.4 Healthy Economy

- We'll develop Shropshire as a vibrant destination that attracts people to live in, work in, learn in and visit.
- We'll deliver excellent connectivity and infrastructure, and increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.

8.5 Healthy Environment

- We'll deliver the council's Corporate Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, promoting the means to tackle climate change and reduce our carbon footprint, including the adoption of low-carbon energy for our assets and for communities.

8.6 Healthy Organisation

- We will communicate clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support, and listen to what communities say about their place and what they need.

- We'll put our resources in the right place using accurate data, insights, and evidence to support the delivery of the organisation's priorities and balance the books.

8.7 Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy 2021-31

8.8 The Centre will also help deliver the aspirations of the Cultural Strategy for Shropshire. These include:

8.9 Enjoy - Using culture to support people to be active, happy, healthy and connected

- Help deliver health and wellbeing programmes, including the Integrated Care System, social prescribing, exercise on referral, physical activity and mental health initiatives, working in partnership with the NHS and other health and care providers
- Transform leisure provision in Shropshire, so that there's a more joined-up, commercial approach that works with local communities for the benefit of all

8.10 Live - Harnessing 'ownership' and pride in local places for the benefit of all

- Increase accessibility to cultural attractions and activities
- Ensure existing venues are energy efficient and accessible

8.11 Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy

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

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

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

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The Feasibility Study (Appendix 3) provides detailed evidence and insight on the opportunities and risks of developing a new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch. It shows that a new development can be accommodated on the site and that the proposed facility mix improves the business case compared to the old facility.
- 9.2 The consultation and engagement report demonstrate public and political support for the Centre to be rebuilt, and Appendix 1 confirms the need for a new Centre.
- 9.3 The second screening ESHIA show positive impact for equalities, social inclusion and health (Appendix 2).
- 9.4 The new Centre would help deliver Shropshire priorities, as set out in the Shropshire Plan, Cultural Strategy and the Leisure Indoor Facilities Strategy.
- 9.5 As Whitchurch has been without the provision of a swimming pool for a lengthy period it is recommended that the development be given high priority. Due to the current and projected increases in costs, delegated authority is recommended to enable the project to proceed at pace.

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

Shropshire Council – A Vibrant Shropshire Cultural Strategy 2021 -2031

Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 – 2038

JSNA (Health and Well Being Board Shropshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan 2016-2021)

Energize Shropshire Telford and Wrekin - Actively Improving Lives 2022

[Cabinet Report- Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study, 27th April 2022](#)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Cecilia Motley - Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism

Local Member

Cllrs Gerald Dakin, Peggy Mullock, and Tom Biggins

Appendices

Appendix 1 Stakeholder engagement and consultation report

Appendix 2 Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)

Appendix 3 Feasibility Study

Whitchurch Swimming and Leisure Centre Public Engagement Report

August 2022



Background

Monday 6th June saw the start of an 8 week consultation designed to engage the community, partner organisations and other interested groups and organisations in the future of Whitchurch Swimming and Leisure Centre. The consultation set out the proposals for the new centre and encouraged feedback following agreement to consult by Shropshire Council's Cabinet on the 27th April 2022.

Shropshire Council announced the permanent closure of Whitchurch Swimming Centre in June 2021 following the discovery of extensive structural issues that were identified during the closure of the facility due to coronavirus. It's now a priority of Shropshire Council to provide a new facility for the community in Whitchurch with a projected opening in Autumn 2025.

Business case modelling and a facility mix study have been undertaken as part of a detailed feasibility study (led by Strategic Leisure Ltd) to provide a replacement facility in Whitchurch that will have the following core aims:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of Whitchurch residents through more physical activity/sport.
- Invest in a high-quality leisure facility in the town centre which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all.
- Engage people who may not traditionally engage in leisure and physical activity.
- Be operationally sustainable and environmentally sustainable with carbon neutral targets, and encourage users to adopt 'active travel' – cycling and walking.

As set out within the consultation survey, the proposed new facility will include:

- 6 lane x 25m swimming pool with a moveable floor for flexibility.
- 35 station fitness suite.
- A large multi-purpose room divisible into 2 studio areas for dance, fitness and youth activities.
- changing village plus dry side changing, incorporating a Changing Places facility to make the facility fully accessible.

- Reception/servery
- Café/vending area
- Outdoor activity area

Shropshire Council recognised the old centre had some limitations and was missing an accessible reception, adequate accessible toilet provision, good access through doorways and the building. As a result accessibility was a strong theme through the engagement and specific questions were included to try to ensure needs of all members of the community can be met. The feasibility study suggested the following accessible facilities:

- Accessible changing room
- Changing places (wet and dry access)
- Accessible toilet facilities
- Lift to first floor

The extensive feasibility work undertaken also highlighted issues of location. The preferred location for the new facility is on the site of the now closed Whitchurch Swimming Centre and the proposals are that the new centre will utilise the footprint of the also closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre.

The engagement feedback is presented within this report and the findings of the public engagement will inform decision making. Views were sought on location, facility mix, design requirements and any other community needs. This report brings together feedback from:

- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and the 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

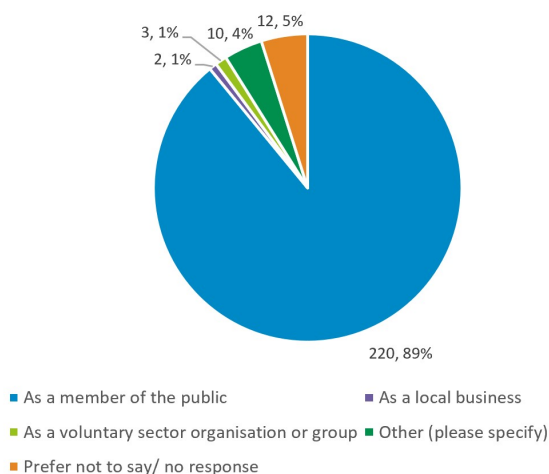
The next section of the report looks more closely at the survey response and the respondent characteristics.

Feedback response

The survey resulted in 274 responses and 12 written consultation responses were received. Important additional feedback was provided through workshops and meetings (all of which were written up to ensure key issues and feedback has been captured and will be considered in the next stage of work). Overall the combination of these methods has provided a lot of information to help Shropshire Council better understand priority issues and common themes.

Information about respondent characteristics was collected for the survey (allowing anonymous responses) but was not appropriate for the other forms of information gathering. Understanding the characteristics of survey respondents is helpful and can determine whether feedback is representative of the wider community or limited to people who share similar characteristics or backgrounds. Core questions are asked (these are all optional). The results highlighted that 80% of survey respondents were members of the public and only 15 surveys were completed by people representing businesses, voluntary and community sector groups and organisations and other bodies. Those who gave their group or organisation name included a range of local community groups and sports groups.

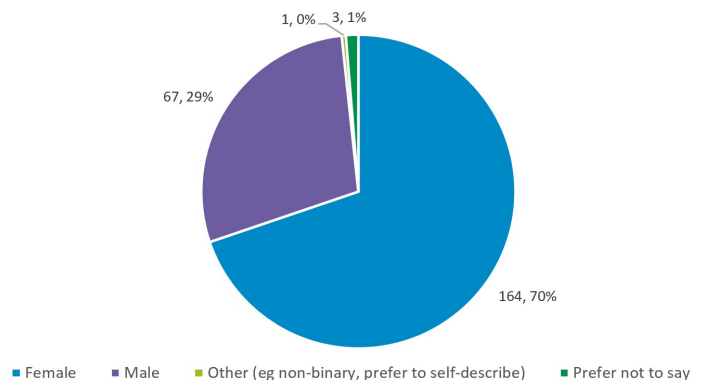
Type of survey respondent



The survey resulted in more responses from females compared to males and the comments highlighted that many women were keen to represent the needs of their children.

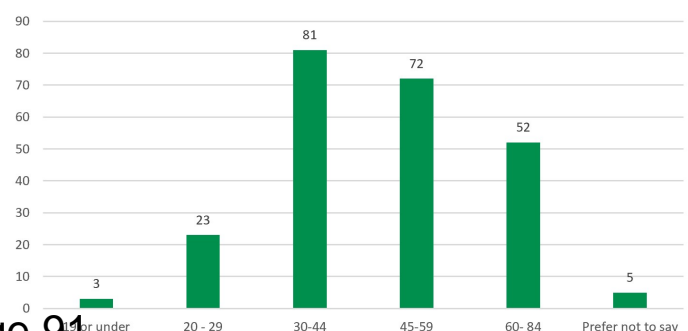
Overall 70% of feedback was from females and the comments highlighted that not only did more women describe the needs of their children but they also had more concerns about changing facilities, privacy and opening times (some commented on school holidays and sessions after school). There were also comments relating to children learning to swim and the needs of women with babies/ children in prams and pushchairs.

Gender of survey respondents



The survey was responded to by people from a range of age groups but the largest group was 40-44 year olds (34%). There was also a very good response from 45-59 year olds (31%) and 60-84 year olds (22%). Often the age group of survey respondents for Shropshire Council surveys is slightly older, on average, so this may again reflect the response from parents who wished to feedback for the whole family. All age groups were represented and it was encouraging to see responses from younger people. 38 of the survey respondents chose not to answer the question.

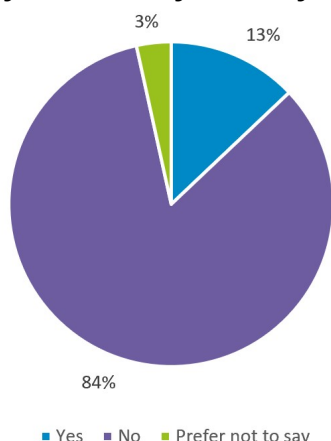
Survey respondent age groups



The survey respondents were asked about their ethnic background and the results show that 92% were from White British backgrounds. There was a helpful comment included from someone conscious of the different needs people may have depending on religion and belief. The comment made suggested women only swimming sessions and highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive sessions including hair products. This is something that could be explored further in future engagement as work progresses. Comments like this are helpful and sometimes more informal feedback methods or trial sessions may be planned to test demand once facilities are open.

Survey respondents were also asked 'Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?' 13% of the survey respondents answered 'yes'. Representation from people with different levels of mobility is particularly important within a consultation of this nature. Specific questions were included about accessibility but positively it was a theme that was included within earlier comments without prompting. The results suggested widespread community support for design that will meet a wide range of needs and this is explored in more detail later in the report. Within the comments there were survey respondents who also mentioned suggestions to meet the needs of dependents, relatives and friends.

Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?



The survey explained that Shropshire Council undertakes equality, social inclusion and health impact assessments (ESHIA) and asked for any comments on diversity, equality or social inclusion. Example comments are shown in the blue box.

Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact

Gender needs and changing facilities

- *“Please take into account that for many women, including those of particular religions, or women who might have experienced sexual or domestic violence, sharing changing facilities with men is unnerving and for some a complete barrier to attending fitness facilities. Whilst the village changing facilities are great for families, there is quite a bit of evidence that women can experience unwanted attention in these types of changing rooms. Please take into account the wishes of some women to have a female only space.”*
- *“Baby changing facilities in male changing rooms as well as in female changing rooms. Different membership options e.g. off peak use, gym only, swim only, gym and swim. Pay as you go or annual payment.”*
- *“Family change areas.”*
- *“Women only classes.”*
- *“Provide family changing areas to meet their social, cultural and privacy needs.”*
- *“Toilet facilities should possibly have male/female/other I don't feel children should mix in these facilities and parents are not always going to be with them.”*

Physical and sensory needs

- *“Provisions for accessibility for sensory processing and over stimulation individuals.”*
- *“Include all children in sensory sessions. Not just those who have an official diagnosis as that's a very long drawn out process.”*
- *“Kids, especially hypermobile ones, run around. Don't make the new centre too compact. They need space to move away from doors and desks!”*
- *“I have osteoarthritis but can't see that on this survey. Affects my mobility..”*
- *“I think having different sections dependent on level of experience in regards to fitness/gym would be a real benefit for those who feel self conscious or inexperienced. One of the common fears of people I spoke to within the community is participating in fitness around those who are experienced and that it deters them from going. I think having something to combat this would draw the most vulnerable in to feel safe and included.”*
- *“Please consult local adults with learning disabilities directly as this online survey is unlikely to be accessible to them.”*

The next page shows some more comments covering other issues of equality across a wider range of themes including location.

Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact cont.

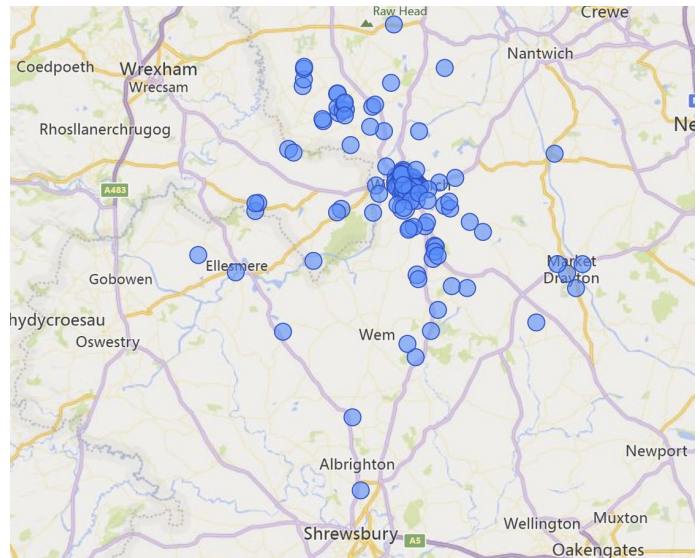
Other equality issues

- *“Just don’t forget those who are not part of the protected characteristic. They do get excluded sometimes.”*
- *“I think you’ve done enough. You need to make it work for the majority.”*
- *“The use of payment for lockers and car parking: Many young people no longer carry coins, which can make some lockers difficult to use. For example, my partner often has to take money out from a bank machine, then buy something in a shop, just to get change in order to use a locker at the swimming pool they go to. Many older people aren’t confident using non-cash technology (such as contactless payments). The parking arrangements and locker arrangements should be easily usable by everyone.”*
- *“Clear bias towards younger, fitter members of population i.e. active travel. Young mothers & older population will be main users of facility during the day. Location of facility should be on ring road.”*
- *“Think the council needs to start thinking about Equity rather than equality. Equality means that each individual or group is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognises that each person has different circumstances or starting points and therefore different resources and opportunities are needed to reach an equal outcome.”*
- *“No equality between money spent on Shrewsbury residents compared to Whitchurch. Older residents in Whitchurch not considered yet population demographics shows town has older residents. Know of people moving out of the county due to lack of leisure facilities. School leisure centre appropriate for younger residents only.”*
- *“This can’t happen soon enough. It’s a much needed centre for all in Whitchurch. Whitchurch is almost a forgotten town.”*

The responses to the question on equalities show real diversity of views as well as the importance of understanding a broad range of issues beyond the protected characteristic groupings. This information can be used to update the Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment for the Whitchurch Swimming and Leisure Centre as work progresses and it may also be helpful information for the staff members who will run the service when it opens.

There were two more important questions included in the survey: where people live and how often they used to visit the old swimming and leisure centre before it closed. The feedback can inform an understanding of catchment area and demand for the facility when it opens. The map below shows where the survey respondents live (approximate locations mean no one can be identified from the map shown and dots do not represent any accurate location/address).

Map of survey respondent locations (approximate)

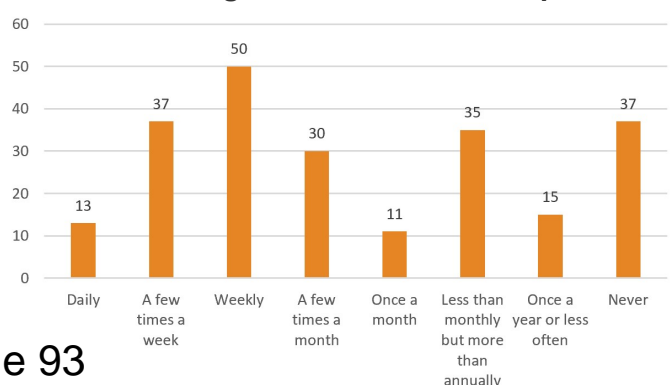


Map image based on Microsoft Bing Maps and MapPoint Web Service

The survey respondents predominantly live within driving distance of Whitchurch. Of the 214 survey respondents who provided a postcode, 167 (78%) live in the SY13 postcode area.

All survey respondents were asked how frequently they had visited the old swimming centre and the results are shown below (some commented they had moved to Whitchurch more recently). Of those who had used the old centre, there were a mix of responses with weekly being the most common (22%).

How frequently did you use the old Whitchurch Swimming Centre when it was open?

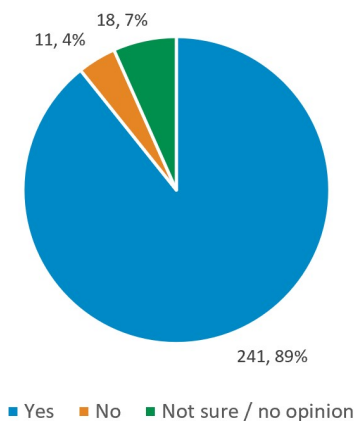


Location

Finding the right location for the swimming and leisure centre in Whitchurch is incredibly important. The feasibility studies undertaken highlighted that the preferred location for the new facility is on the site of the now closed Whitchurch Swimming Centre and the also closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre. Understanding whether members of the public agree with this proposal was a key objective of the consultation.

The chart below illustrates the results of the survey question on location. A huge majority (89%) agree that the current site is the best location for the new centre to be built. Only 11 survey respondents (4%) disagreed and 18 were not sure or didn't have an opinion.

Do you believe this to be a suitable location for a replacement swimming pool and centre in Whitchurch?



The survey provided space for comments on the proposed location of the site. The table highlights the main themes from the comments and examples are also included. 41% of the comments included some concerns about the site, including size, water voles, access from the road and parking space. Many comments didn't necessarily suggest concern about the location but there were comments highlighting that the size of the plot is limited so may not be able to accommodate everything. Many of the stakeholder workshops highlighted questions about the location. There were suggestions that Sir John Talbot's School, the Rugby Club and a site off the ring road could be alternative locations.

The feasibility study had highlighted challenges with other sites. The advantages of a Shropshire Council owned site were also a focus. The overall feedback from the survey and workshops suggests that although there are some size concerns and other suggestions, the majority recognise the benefits of a central, town location. Some feedback referenced the opportunity to consider youth facilities (replacing the old Enterprise North-East Youth Centre).

Theme from comments	Count	%
Concern about road and access to site	3	4
Site too small	6	8
Need adequate car parking	8	11
Suggest alternative location e.g. ring road, school	5	7
Concern: water vole impact	7	10
Importance of active travel to site	4	6
Support for proposed location/current site	23	32
General support	2	3
Importance of public swimming and leisure facilities	9	13
Opportunity to develop/combine the Youth Centre	2	3
Other comments	2	3
Total	71	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- "Would benefit from being somewhere else in Whitchurch with plenty of parking."
- "I'm not sure because I wonder if the site is big enough, as you mention Gym as well. I moved to Whitchurch in May 2019, and haven't used the old facility so can't imagine the pool is too large..."
- "Yes, if there is enough space for a gym, 25m pool and learner pool with viewing area for swim galas. If not, an alternative site should be sought."
- "The new centre needs to be considerably larger than the current pool. The population of Whitchurch and surrounding areas are far, far greater than when the original pool was designed and built."
- "Near bus station and shops so multi journey for a family."
- "It needs to be central and accessible by public transport, cars and local pedestrians. This is the best site."
- "Good central location that people can walk to. If it is further out of town people will drive. Being in town it will encourage people to use other local services."

Ecology was not a theme included within the consultation questions but the survey and written consultation responses highlighted significant community concerns over the impact the build could have on water voles living in the brook adjacent to the site. 7 of the 12 written responses focused on the issue (see extracts below).

Written consultation responses - Extracts

- *“In the brook, right where your cafe steps and again underneath your children’s play area, live a colony of water voles. Water voles are a legally protected species and you are not allowed to impact on their habitat. I and many others have been monitoring these water voles for nearly 20 years and have logged over 400 sightings. The colony has featured on Springwatch and West Midlands Today, and is well known and loved by many townfolk. Please revise your plans so that they leave the water voles in peace and no laws are broken.”*
- *“I am very concerned about your proposal to concrete part of the bank for a new swimming pool in Whitchurch which is occupied by water voles, including the children’s play area over the top of another section..... It is crucial that the design of the swimming pool is changed so that the brook’s wildlife, including the water voles, can thrive. To have a population of water voles in Whitchurch at such a critical time is admirable, they need your protection.”*
- *“Please urgently take into consideration impact on wildlife in all your proposals but impact on waterways in particular and their precious fragile habitats for rare mammals and invertebrates- the future of our ecology is in your hands and it’s destruction is a large price to pay for human’s ‘leisure’ pursuits.”*
- *“Whilst I like the design of the building and am delighted at the prospect of a swimming pool again in Whitchurch I am exceedingly worried about the area on the drawing over the stream which depicts plans for a children’s play area and cafe steps. This will impact negatively on the legally protected water voles in that area.”*
- *“...the brook which runs along the Tesco car park has been a breeding stronghold for Water Voles for at least 15 years and is a critical habitat for this nationally declining protected UK species.... I would like to know what is the proposed mitigation for the protected species on site?...”*

9 of the 274 survey respondents included comments about the water voles in their survey responses. Some example comments are below.

Survey responses - Example comments

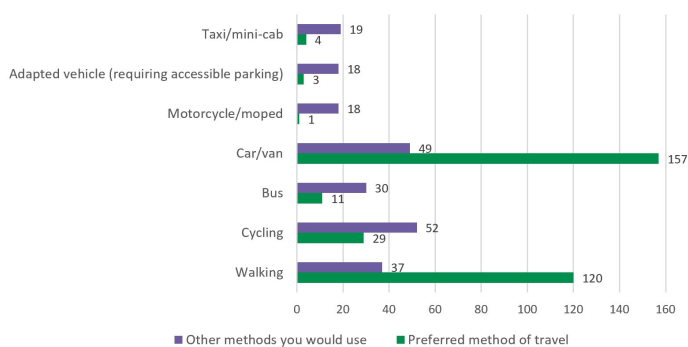
- *“I would just like to ensure the development does not impact the water voles in anyway. I would use this facility having a 3 year old son but I think it’s more important to him to grow up around wildlife which is conserved and protected.”*
- *“The brook adjacent to the site supports an important and well known colony of water voles [a protected species]. The brook and its banks need protection from disturbance both during construction and afterwards. The artist’s impression does not take account of this!”*
- *“...This is a well known habitat of protected species - Water Voles. The construction period must protect their habitat and no ‘management’ of the banks of the brook so the water voles are not disturbed Please plant more trees around all sides of the site.”*
- *“Development here would seriously impact an endangered species that is already on the Red List for England & UK.”*
- *“The current plans will impact the water voles in the stream. It looks as if you plan to concrete part of the bank and put a children’s play area over the top of another section. Please can you re think this to protect the water voles’ habitat.”*
- *“Impact on water voles will be an enormous worry for me if the proposed play area over the stream goes ahead. It is really vital also to ensure that they are not affected during construction.”*

Responses included feedback from people living much further away from Shropshire. The artists impression of the site caused concern with regards to the location of tiered decking over the brook to the south of the site. Although comments were made that Shropshire Council had not conducted an ecological survey, a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site was undertaken in December 2021 as part of the initial feasibility study. Shropshire Council officers will continue to take appropriate expert advice and ensure more detailed surveys are undertaken during subsequent stages of the project, with the aim of proceeding sensitively to take full consideration of the need to safeguard the water voles inhabiting the brook.

Travel and active travel

Travel to the new Whitchurch Swimming and Leisure Centre was a theme explored through the engagement and consultation. It had been highlighted as an important issue within previous engagement and the consultation provided the opportunity to explore the theme further and to build in active travel considerations. The survey asked how people would most likely travel to the centre and the results are shown below.

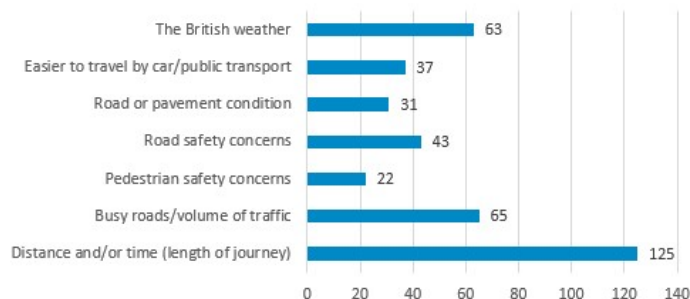
What forms of travel are you most likely to use to get to the centre?



Of the preferred methods of travel the car is the top choice with 48% of all responses followed by walking at 37%. The results suggest clear preference towards the car or walking but there were quite a few comments in the survey about cycle use and it was the third top preferred method of travel (9%). There were 11 other suggestions including electric car options, the train and the need for an accessible vehicle. 3 of the 11 comments highlighted lack of available public transport and 4 commented that car is the only option for those living further from the site.

The next question asked whether people would experience any barriers to prevent walking or cycling to the new centre (recognising the health, environmental and other benefits of active travel). A number of suggestions were provided within the question but there was also an opportunity to add other suggestions and comments. The results show that distance or time/length of journey was the main barrier and many commented that they live in surrounding villages. Busy roads/traffic and the weather were other top barriers.

Are there any barriers that would prevent you from walking/cycling to the new centre?



There were 55 comments provided in relation to travel and access, each was read and categorised into themes shown in the table below. The theme with the most comments was that the centre would be well located for walking and cycling, followed by concerns about the availability of buses and travel other than car. There were also comments about the need for parking space.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Active whilst at the centre	5	9
Mobility issues/accessibility important	1	2
Limited options other than car/lack of public buses	9	16
Awareness of travel options limited	1	2
Live too far away for active travel	5	9
Great location/ able to walk or cycle	13	24
Improve local cycle routes and facilities	4	7
Safety concerns	5	9
Provide electric car charging	1	2
Importance of adequate parking space	7	13
Other comments	4	7
Total	55	100

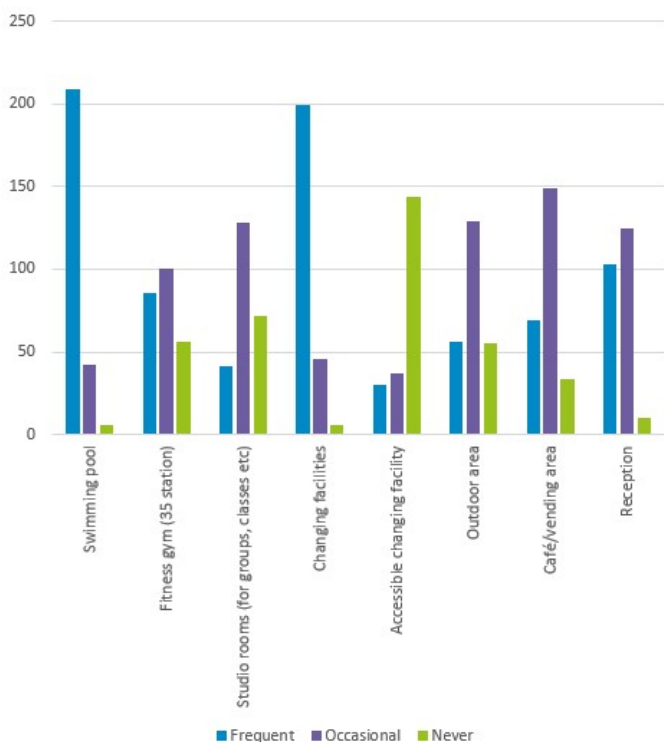
Survey responses - Example comments

- “Active travel not particularly relevant if users are going to be swimming or participating in fitness. Discriminatory policy for those who have an impairment of disability.”
- “Improve cycle routes and likely more people will cycle!”
- “If you live in town, with the proposed location it’s pretty easy to get to.”
- “It is central an easily accessible by active transport and by having a facility of the proposed standard should improve fitness, health and active transport likelihood of residents.”
- “The site is very close to the bus station and has ample parking too I can’t see any issues.”

Facilities

The survey and workshops gathered information on the facilities people would like to see at the new centre (the written responses tended to be more focused on particular issues and are incorporated into other themes within this report). The survey included a question which read ‘Thinking about this proposed provision, which facilities do you think members of your household would be likely to use, and how frequently?’ The chart below displays the results.

Anticipated use of centre facilities



The feedback shows that the swimming pool and changing rooms are the main priority for the survey respondents and they anticipate far greater use of this than the gym, studios or outdoor space. Most survey respondents expect to use the café/vending area more occasionally. 11% of the survey respondents suggested that they will need to use the accessible changing facility.

The next question within the survey asked whether the proposed facility mix was adequate and whether there were any other facilities people would like to see included. There were 89 comments in response. Some people provided comments covering more than one theme (these

were counted separately). The table below shows how diverse the feedback was and how many themes were covered. A shallow learning pool and warmer children pool was a common request and this was highlighted throughout the whole survey, suggesting this is important to many people. Other common requests included sauna/whirlpool and therapy facilities, sports courts and a larger pool.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Learning pool/ warmer children's pool	18	19
More thought to studio room proposals	2	2
Changing facilities for women and children/ privacy	4	4
Community meeting rooms or multi-use large space	3	3
Sauna, whirlpool, therapy and meditation space	9	9
Outdoor splash space and youth activity areas	4	4
Children's swimming slides/fun space/ equipment	6	6
Library facilities at the centre	2	2
Focus on the pool/provide larger pool	8	8
Gym facilities and free weights	4	4
Spectator area for the pool	5	5
Climbing wall	2	2
No gym space needed/ gym facilities elsewhere in town	6	6
Running track, triathlon training space	3	3
Courts: squash, badminton, tennis, indoor cricket etc.	8	8
Other comments and suggestions	11	12
Total	95	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- “I think you have the plans right.”
- “Whitchurch could do with a meeting room (say for 12-15 people) that voluntary organisations and local charities could book and use for free. The town is very short of such places since both the Wheatsheaf and the Dodington Lodge closed.”
- “An outdoor splash park/pool for children.”
- “Training pool/toddler pool.”
- “Slides, diving boards, fun swimming elements to encourage younger generations.”
- “Will there be a separate learner pool or one for young Children? A 6 lane pool is not very big for swimming if there are groups of children and parents of adult only times are usually limited.”

Example comments continued...

- *“Centre North east was a dedicated Youth Centre. This new development gives the opportunity to incorporate dedicated space not a shared space which has to be packed away after every session. The young people of Whitchurch deserve a better focus....”*
- *“The youth centre (what was Centre North East) could have space there too, and like in other areas a football/games area could be on top on the roof to maximise space.”*
- *“More focus on making the best possible pool. What about slides? Paddling area or pool for early swimmers. I'd sacrifice other uses for a more attractive swimming facility. Cafe great idea and outdoor area too. We have the civic and other rooms to hire elsewhere. There are gyms already. We don't have and never have had an amazing swimming pool!!”*
- *“Larger pool. Fitness gym not necessary there are several other facilities in the town.”*
- *“Viewing gallery for spectators for swimming galas.”*
- *“Please ensure segregated changing facilities but also family changing areas for parents with babies/ young children.”*
- *“Perhaps a small suite for a sauna and whirlpool to encourage a quiet space for mental health. Mental health facilities should be considered in today's society to coincide with physical health.”*
- *“The provision of an accessible warm pool that could be used for hydrotherapy/aquatic therapy would give you a facility that would benefit a large proportion of Shropshire residents who struggle to access these facilities. The Oval in Bebington is an excellent example of a truly accessible pool set up for those with disabilities.”*
- *“Small lockup to secure road bikes. Triathlon training. (Out of pool onto road bike.)”*
- *“Tarmac running track.”*
- *“The gym needs to have a range of pin and plate weight machines, as well as free weights, squat racks, deadlift stations. A variety of barbells and plenty of plates so people of all abilities can progressively overload.”*
- *“Flexible Sports hall where people can use facility during the day e.g. badminton, indoor cricket, netball, table tennis. Town's population has to travel outside the town currently which is ridiculous.”*
- *“No gym or dance studio needed. We currently have 5 gyms in town all competing to keep head above water. Same as dance studios 4 in town already!”*
- *“Sports courts are severely lacking in the area due to the school being the only location to hire and being unavailable quite often. A multi use indoor sports court would be of benefit as well and possibly the addition of outdoor courts as well.”*

The stakeholder workshops included a focus on facility mix and local groups and organisations were encouraged to highlight their priorities. Some example issues, themes and extracts have been pulled together below to give a flavour of the comments made. To retain anonymity, comments have not been attributed to the workshops or groups/organisations represented but the contributions of young people are helpful to consider separately in order to meet needs so those have been highlighted separately.

Stakeholder workshops - Facilities requested

- A shallow learner pool.
- A competition size pool.
- Design to allow hosting of galas.
- Spectator area and seating.
- Poolside storage.
- Adjustable starting blocks, electronic timing and display board.
- Question over moveable floor—will it be slow to move between sessions, unreliable and prevent diving?
- Swimming-specific training equipment in suites.
- An outdoor activity area to compliment the facility.
- A nursery/child area.
- A café is preferred to a vending area.
- Concerns about enough parking.
- A question of whether the fitness offer is big enough?
- Provision for youth sessions in the programme.
- Covered Multi Use Games Area with good lighting and drainage.

Requests from children and young people

- An area for young people in the Gym.
- A skateboard park by the new centre and a covered bench.
- Retain and improve the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
- A slide.
- Inflatables.
- A higher diving board.
- Car parking space was also mentioned in the feedback from young people.

The workshop feedback reflects the survey feedback and there are some common requests across the two sets of data. Centre facilities are also referred to in some of the following sections of the report. The next section covers facilities and services in relation to health and wellbeing.

Health and wellbeing

Through the consultation and different forms of engagement, the aim to improve the health and wellbeing of the community through physical activity and sport was communicated. The survey encouraged people to think about how the new centre could support improved health and a question was also included to better understand existing barriers limiting participation in sport and physical activity. The results are shown below.

Do you experience any barriers that limit your current levels of physical activity/sport?



The main barrier highlighted by 52% of all the survey respondents was a lack of easy access to facilities and inconvenience. The second main barrier highlighted by 38% of survey respondents was cost, followed by insufficient time (24% of all respondents). The barriers that may be considered more personal such as lack of self-confidence, no one to exercise with, lack of energy and lack of motivation were not selected in large numbers. This feedback suggests that barriers are much more practical than emotional and through provision of the new centre some of these barriers may be overcome.

An open comment box was included to encourage survey respondents to describe any other barriers limiting their current levels of physical activity. There were 53 comments provided and the comments covered a wide range of themes. The themes are all shown in the table with common comments describing that the centre has been closed, cost concerns, injury/health and disability barriers and comments calling for longer opening times.

Theme from comments	Count	%
No barriers - very active	7	13
Childcare facilities/ Mum and child activity	2	4
Access to a gym	1	2
Need extended opening times	5	9
Would like activities, classes, pool for older people	2	4
Need improved facilities and amenities	3	6
Sports centre has been closed - too far to travel elsewhere	11	21
Injury, mobility, disability and health	8	15
Cost issues important - need affordable facilities	8	15
Other comments	6	11
Total	53	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- *"There isn't a sports centre! It shut 2 years ago."*
- *"No swimming pool is very limiting, there is nowhere to train for triathlons."*
- *"No classes or sports available for age. What is the significance of concentrating of youth activities when there are plenty in Whitchurch via school and attached leisure centre and the town has an older population?"*
- *"My arthritic hips and knees like gentle exercise like swimming. I don't like walking far especially in cold winter so warm pool is ideal."*
- *"Gyms are expensive and not for everyone due to self confidence, whereas swimming is enjoyable and a cheap alternative to be able to do twice a week."*
- *"Local' swimming pools are in privately run clubs which are too expensive and usually require membership rather than 'pay and swim'."*
- *"There is no general gym in Whitchurch at a reasonable cost. "*
- *"Have long opening times as a lot of people work and there needs to be a lot of flexibility so people find time to use it."*
- *"I have my child with me at all times so we need to be able to exercise together."*
- *"Nothing in town for a disabled person."*
- *"Many of the council run facilities could be open later due to long / late hours in work I struggle to reach some places before closure."*

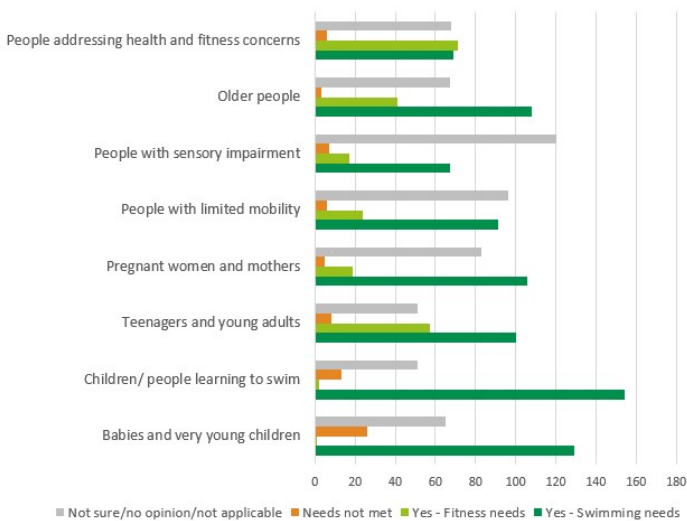
The next section on community use further builds the theme of health and wellbeing.

Community use

Health and wellbeing continued as a theme through the survey when people were asked if there were any opportunities they'd like to see developed at the new centre to increase wider community use. There was more feedback received from the written consultation responses and the stakeholder workshops and that has been incorporated.

Survey respondents were asked to consider if the proposals for the new centre were likely to meet the different needs of all ages and all abilities. The results are shown in the chart below.

Do you feel the swimming and fitness needs of different age groups and members of the community can be met by the proposed new centre and its facilities?



The feedback suggest that survey respondents believe the proposed new centre can meet the swimming needs of children, people learning to swim and babies/very young children. There is also some confidence that the swimming needs of other groups can be met including pregnant women and mothers, older people and teenagers and young adults. There is less confidence over whether the new centre will meet fitness needs but the comments suggest that more detail on the provision of activities is needed before people can have a more informed opinion. The orange column suggests concerns over whether needs will be met. On average only 9 people have concerns

each group listed but there were more concerns about whether the needs of babies and young children could be met by the centre than for any other group (this may reflect the fact that a smaller proportion compared to other groups will be able to swim, and swimming is more dependent on the engagement of parents and carers). The comments are much more helpful in describing the views of the survey respondents. 96 comments were provided and exercise on prescription and social prescribing were commonly suggested followed by more specific suggestions for community groups use, sessions designed for older people and consideration of use by schools and young people.

Theme from comments	Count	%
All ability classes	4	4
More activities for young children	2	2
Exercise on prescription and social prescribing	18	19
Sessions designed for older people	10	10
Mental health support and facilities	5	5
Space for therapists, coaches and alternative health	6	6
Mother and baby sessions	3	3
Swimming Club	2	2
Youth sessions and access for schools	9	9
Swimming lessons for all ages	4	4
Ideas for community groups and use	12	13
Accessibility and disabled swimming	6	6
Lane swimming	2	2
Affordable/ season tickets	4	4
Other comments	9	9
Total	96	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- "There could be facilities for chair exercise groups to get the folks who are lethargic to move and get healthier. Line dance groups, Pilates."
- "Exercise classes with a social aspect to improve mental health and loneliness, supported to achieve a healthy group mentality."
- "Older adult/ disability accessible and appropriate fitness classes and groups."
- "More clubs for the retired to use."
- "Definitely exercise on prescription."
- "Managing anxiety classes for mental health, relaxation etc."

Survey responses - Example comments cont...

- *“A mental health hub or rooms to rent for wellness coaches to operate out of.”*
- *“Having someone to coach and motivate.”*
- *“The usual classes but for all levels of ability.”*
- *“Classes that encourage all abilities to attend. Some can be seen as very competitive e.g. spinning & a gentle intro. to such classes may encourage more to attend.”*
- *“Children's and adults exercise/fun sessions such as gymnastics, dance, cheerleading etc. An indoor recreational area to include table tennis, pool etc.”*
- *“Activities for teenagers are desperately needed. A more attractive, fun pool would mean more of them visiting. If we must have a gym and rooms to hire, put on youth sessions for kids of all ages to benefit.”*
- *“Youth Boxing facility was discussed some time ago, linked to the possible renovation of Centre North East. This could now be part of the new development.”*
- *“Mother and baby classes. 'Walking' sports. Charity events. After school clubs. Soft play.”*
- *“It would be a good base for the local running club to meet and organise runs from.”*
- *“A home for Whitchurch Swimming Club.”*
- *“Design to allow swimming galas and competitions to be run effectively, including poolside space for teams and sufficient spectator/ viewing space and electronic timing equipment. Facilities to allow other water sports such as scuba diving, kayaking, water polo, inflatables, parties.”*
- *“I think learning from what Crewe has done is key. The facilities there are excellent except parking. They also do disability classes which my elderly father loves, for social and health reasons. It will certainly improve things for us as I won't have to travel to Crewe. They also link with the local CCG and provide exercise for health.”*

The written consultation responses and the workshops also included very helpful feedback on the theme of community use. Some extracts and key points from discussions have been used to illustrate the comments made. The feedback demonstrates a strong interest in maximising the opportunities offered by the new centre and working to ensure as many needs of the local community and groups can be met as possible (including health needs). The feedback also emphasises the importance of inclusion and working to ensure members of the community are not excluded on issues such as travel, cost, age or fitness. The next page includes more feedback on the theme of inclusivity gathered through the survey.

Written consultation responses - Extracts

- *“...in the context of the redevelopment of this site, Shropshire Council would propose to consider incorporating meeting rooms and exhibition facilities in this scheme, perhaps in a quasi self contained context ,to provide for use by different local cultural organisations...”*
- *“...I feel sorry for the children deprived at the moment of fun and the opportunity to learn to swim. Swimming is such a good way to keep them slim and healthy.”*
- *“I am SO happy to hear of proposed plans. I used the old pool two or three times a week as my arthritic hips and knees respond well to non impact exercise . Now that I cannot walk as far as I could when younger, I rely on swimming for my main exercise....Without a pool, I felt bereft. Not just for physical exercise but also for the mental health benefits.”*
- *“I absolutely appreciate that a development of this nature can't be everything to everybody. I also believe mental health and physical wellbeing go hand in hand. We're dealing with some big topics which with a genuinely caring holistic approach could make this concept pound for pound a fantastic facility for everyone in Whitchurch and become a really worthwhile investment for Shropshire Council at a time when money is very thin on the ground and we have growing needs with poverty in the mix.”*

Stakeholder workshops - Community use

- Multiple stakeholder groups highlighted the importance of making the centre affordable to use.
- Specific consideration was requested for low income groups. Ensuring people are not excluded from the centre on the basis of affordability.
- It was suggested that the centre could offer a community meeting place for free activities/groups to use to benefit low-income families.
- An opportunity for children to connect with others, keep fit and have a base for community activities.
- Stakeholders commented on the importance of providing some facility for a nursery/child area to allow mothers and parents to exercise.
- There were some concerns about anti-social behaviour locally and the need to offer young people opportunities for more positive activities.
- School use of the centre was raised in stakeholder workshops as an important issue.
- Although stakeholders main focus was on local residents, there were questions whether the centre could attract people from across Shropshire, North Wales and Cheshire.
- The needs of the wider swimming community and ability to host visiting swimming groups etc. for clubs was highlighted.

The survey stated 'We want to consider the needs of all ages and all abilities when working to implement the new centre. Do you feel the swimming and fitness needs of different age groups and members of the community can be met by the proposed new centre and its facilities?' There were 60 comments provided. The table below summarises the main themes from the comments. Some of the issues highlighted elsewhere in the survey were repeated but there were also other themes highlighted such as privacy, safety, membership and many comments about the importance of everyone having the opportunity to learn to swim at any age. Many comments related to the needs of different age groups. Example comments are shown to illustrate some of the points raised.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Privacy and safety issues	4	7
Lane swimming options	2	3
Design for Mums, babies and small children	2	3
Links to GP, Social Prescribing and health support	2	3
Age group designed sessions (young people, older people etc.)	9	15
Learner and small child pool	11	18
Accessibility (e.g. moving floor, hoist, ramp, non-slip)	6	10
Swimming lessons	6	10
Fitness classes and sessions	3	5
Opening hours, membership and information	5	8
Other comments	10	17
Total	60	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- "Good online information about what's available, pricing, booking and opening hours."
- "Open 7 days a week. Early open times (E.g. 6am) and late closing times (E.g. 10pm) to fit around working lives."
- "Warmer toddler pool for babies and young children learning to swim - allows the main pool to be used simultaneously."
- "Movable floor or learner pool with viewing area to encourage competitive swimming and help out Whitchurch on the map for future Olympic hopefuls. The Tri club has European champions as members who are currently unable to swim in the town!"
- "Structured swimming sessions for children who can swim well but don't want to be competitive."
- "Walk in pool (as like the sea shallow to deep), small pool for toddlers/babies and a slide/wave pool something for the older children."

- "Please make sure there is a deep end for diving and free diving training - potentially scuba dive training. The current local pool while the swimming centre is closed does not have a deep end and it's very limiting in terms of sports/higher end fitness training."
- "I have visited other centres that allow schools to use the pool to do swimming classes during the day. This allows variation for the children on exercise and gives them the ability to have swimming lessons parents may not be able to afford."
- "More swimming lessons with smaller class sizes and consistent teachers. Swimming club Masters swimming Aqua aerobic classes Baby and toddler swimming Youth swimming and fitness classes."
- "Gym time for children over 12 years. Single sex and age graded times for swimming and gym use."
- "One centre I used to live near had a couple of gym sessions for youngsters 15 to 17 at a slightly cheaper rate to get them interested in going."
- "Make it fun for children after missing out for so long it would be nice if it was actually worth the wait."
- "Viewing area poolside needs to be open so parents can reassure young children during lessons. Market Drayton is good. Vibration machines are great for rehabilitation from injuries and improving general fitness; include one in the gym please. Make sure the cafe serves healthy options!"
- "Please ensure that when the children are on half term break that it's open. Other local baths keep to normal timetables and it means it's empty when you could get children active and bring in money."
- Aqua natal, swimming lessons for children with appropriate temperature of pool, good swimming slots for just younger children. Healthy snacks available as a lot of gyms have just vending machines with sugary snacks. Appropriate changing facilities for babies."

In the same way as previous responses to the survey, people used the open comment box to highlight the request for a learner pool or pool suitable for smaller children. Other common issues mentioned within the comments included activities and sessions designed to meet the needs of different age groups, the importance of providing swimming lessons for the community, and the need to open the centre at a range of different times to allow people with different lifestyles to visit. Providing membership/payment options and good information about available activities was also highlighted. Another issue mentioned within this question response was the importance of privacy and feeling safe (mention was given to concerns such as mixed changing rooms and large windows allowing people to look in).

Accessibility and design

The importance of accessibility was raised throughout the consultation, through survey feedback, written responses and the stakeholder workshops. The survey had included a question to prompt feedback but the comments throughout the survey highlighted that members of the public were already very aware of the importance of accessibility in design and a wide range of very helpful suggestions were provided. The main question included read 'Are there any other specific design requirements you'd like to see considered in relation to accessibility and inclusivity of use of the facility (for example hearing and acoustics)?' There were 70 comments.

The comments have each been read and categorised into themes shown in the table below. Themes included the need for changing areas to allow family changing, and accessible design for wheelchair access, pool and changing access and non-slip surfaces. Lifts, hoists and other alternatives were also commented on. Other comments covered noise issues including design for people with hearing impairment and design for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (such as quiet sessions). The example comments are a more helpful way of understanding the accessibility issues expressed.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Hearing needs considered (e.g. minimise echo)	6	9
Wheelchair access pool and changing, non-slip surfaces	9	13
Pushchair and buggy access and spaces	3	4
Baby changing for men and women	5	7
Quiet sessions and autism awareness	7	10
Lift/hoist or equivalent facilities to allow access	6	9
Spectator area	3	4
Light and visual impairment aware design	4	6
Family changing	9	13
Gender neutral changing	2	3
Private changing facilities, men/women/family	5	7
Other comments	11	16
Total	70	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- *"I suggest consulting with a range of service users who have various access needs to ensure these facilities are sufficiently designed and positioned."*
- *"Disabled inclusivity in the grounds and facility areas."*
- *"Quiet swimming/quiet gym/class periods for those who are over stimulated by competing sounds e.g. those of a busy pool/loud music for a class."*
- *"Consideration of noise... Autism friendly."*
- *"Clear Tannoy. Audio loop."*
- *"Acoustics are very important for people with mild to moderate hearing loss. Hearing loop availability for exercise classes, not just at reception."*
- *"Less echo the better; should be calming not stressful."*
- *"Lighting and colour schemes suitable for people with compromised vision. As much natural light as possible."*
- *"Lighting, my daughter would not use the old pool due to 'scary' dark environment."*
- *"Hoist, autism friendly noise absorbing cladding, graded entry."*
- *"Lifting equipment into the pool for disabled accompanied swimmers."*
- *"Appropriate equipment to help less able people in and out of the pool."*

Written consultation responses - Extracts

- *"I am writing to ask if steps down into the water can be included as a ladder is OK for the fit and healthy but steps are the very thing that is needed as we all get older, when young you never think of these things. I have had to have a knee replacement and had to travel to Chirk twice a week for water aerobics.... A hoist is great for those who need it but many do not..."*

The Feasibility Study contained a robust focus on accessibility and inclusivity but this will need to remain a focus through the next stages of work, drawing on advice from experts, as more detailed designs are prepared and moved forward. The feedback obtained through the consultation was varied and a helpful addition to the work that has taken place to explore good practice examples from elsewhere in the UK and available guidance.

Environmental design

The stakeholder and community engagement carried out as part of the consultation highlighted the aim to ensure the new centre will be operationally and environmentally sustainable with carbon neutral targets. This aim was strongly supported in the feedback received and there was a lot of interest in the opportunity to apply sustainability through the design. Members of the public and other stakeholders made some very helpful suggestions and those are summarised below.

There were 80 comments provided within the survey. Some comments covered the issues that are most important to people (such as the facilities, ecology, private changing areas, accessibility and car parking) but a wide range of environmental considerations were also highlighted, as shown in the table below, such as energy efficiency and solar power, natural planning and low impact methods to clean the water and centre, recycling, healthy/local food provision and many other suggestions. Some comments related to the active travel theme covered earlier in the survey.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Electric car charging points	4	5
Easy to book classes and sessions (Inc. walk in)	6	8
Quality refreshments with local produce (not vending)	6	8
Environmental design and energy efficiency e.g. solar power	13	16
Plants, natural, clean environment (ozone treated water)	9	11
Recycling	4	5
Affordable	3	4
Consideration of ecology (water voles)	4	5
Garden space and outdoor facilities	2	3
Cycle parking	5	6
Disabled swimming and good accessibility	5	6
Private, clean showers and changing facilities	4	5
Central location, easy to get to	2	3
Car parking space	3	4
Other comments	10	13
Total	80	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- “Ozone treated water rather than chlorine. Better for us and the environment.”
- “Exeter Council have just delivered a Passivhaus level swimming pool. Please ensure you learn from their experience to achieve a similar result. The building itself should be designed to limit carbon emissions in the build fabric, and the use of Passivhaus will ensure you have a low carbon building operationally...Suggest use of ground source heat pumps for maximum COP gain with the heating you will still need.”
- “I would appreciate visible measures of how the centre is performing against its environmental targets....consideration should be taken with regards to future proofing the car park for more electric charging points to be installed (i.e. placing the infrastructure in the ground now, so it's easier/cheaper to add more charging points in the future).”
- “I would like to see heat pumps used to cool the gym areas and heat the swimming pool water, drives me mad to see so many gyms cooled with outside units dumping energy into the atmosphere when the pool water is an ideal heat sink. Roof should be covered with solar panels. I would not go for carbon neutral as it will just mean throwing money at tree planting of dubious quality, but go for good logical long term carbon and cost reducing solutions as above. You could consider working with the local supermarket to take away the waste heat from their fridges and freezers which normally goes into the atmosphere too.”
- “Provide recycling bins for customers and staff.”
- “Adequate bike storage, not just prioritising cars.”
- “It should be economically viable as well as environmentally sustainable - environmentally sustainable but not at the cost of residents who are already taking a hit from fuel and energy price hikes.”
- “Any Cafe/food outlet to support local producers.”
- “Low impact ventilation. Solar. Indirect lighting. No cash environment.”
- “Grass roof wildlife area, recycled water system.”

The feedback from the written survey responses and stakeholder workshops is considered on the next page.

The written (email and letter) responses to the consultation included some comments about the environment and suggestions for environmental design. Some extracts are shown below to illustrate the main points made.

Written consultation responses - Extracts

- *"I am very concerned about your proposal to concrete part of the bank for a new swimming pool in Whitchurch.."*
- *"...Some ideas to share:*
 - *External living Green Walls*
 - *A Grass Roof*
 - *Use of Wood and Glass in the Structure*
 - *Tree planting and imaginative seating giving a real welcome to the Building and connecting to the Outdoor area, stream etc*
 - *Possible public Art..*
 - *Imaginatively designed Recycling Bins which could continue out into the Town centre.*
 - *A cycling hub that offers both safe bike parking for folk to go shopping in town whilst connecting to the Towns Cycle routes (These are very underused and could form part of an holistic mental health/well being plan revitalising the routes so folk use their bikes more.*
 - *There's also a network of walks around Town.*
 - *These were being monitored by an Organisation involved with the LCWIP who look at Town Centre Walking and Cycling Networks.*
- *"....green walls. They're great for absorbing CO2 but also other particulates that can be damaging to our health. If this were introduced to the Swimming Complex....I've seen examples in London and other places they completely change a place. Greening our Towns and Villages is vital going forwards..."*

The stakeholder workshops touched on the importance of the environment and sustainability. It wasn't a main theme, because more attention was paid to community use and facilities, but where issues were raised these have been summarised in the following box.

The main points included energy efficiency and heating, protecting the surrounding environment (reflecting the section covered previously on the water voles living in the brook), and a range of comments about the location of the new centre and the benefits that would bring for active travel (comments included looking at more opportunities to improve cycle provision in the area).

Stakeholder workshops - Environmental design

- The stakeholder feedback highlighted the history of the area including some geology and environmental issues. These issues are known from feasibility work, but remain helpful feedback for the build phase, and emphasise the value and importance of local stakeholder involvement.
- The feedback from stakeholder workshops and meetings included the suggestion of primary heat source from either Air Source Heat Pumps or Ground Source Heat Pumps. These options will be explored within the more detailed design phase and work will take place with experts to understand the options - most appropriate for the site in terms of capital cost and operational benefits.
- The stakeholder workshops included comments on the value of PV cells to make use of solar power. This was also a common suggestion from survey respondents.
- Stakeholders suggested that the exterior of the new centre could add to wellbeing and suggested the idea of green walls.
- The stakeholders also highlighted the concerns from members of the community relating to the impact on the environment, particularly the book and its water voles.
- Active travel and cycle provision were commented upon in the workshops and opportunities for improved cycle provision on and off site were mentioned.

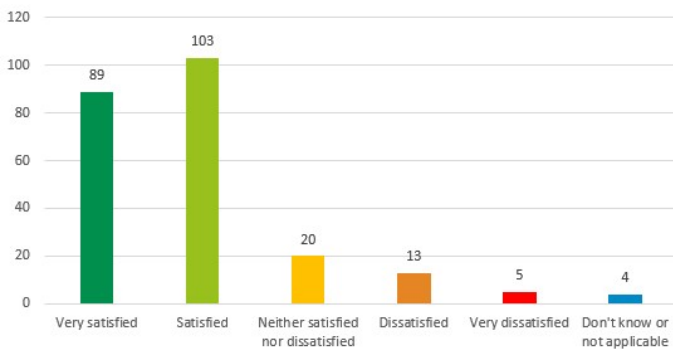
The next section of the report covers more general feedback. The survey was designed to gauge overall views and also included an open comment box at the end to gather any other feedback members of the community and stakeholders wished to highlight.



Overall views

The feedback obtained through the consultation was very constructive and appeared very positive overall, however, to test overall opinion, the survey asked 'Overall, how satisfied are you with the proposals for the new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch?' The chart below shows the result. The response shows that 82% of survey respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the proposals. 8% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied and the remainder felt neutral or did not have an opinion/didn't know. This is a very positive result.

Overall, how satisfied are you with the proposals for the new swimming and fitness centre in Whitchurch?



Closer analysis suggests that there are two main concerns held by those dissatisfied: concerns about the impact on water voles (including the assumption that an ecological survey hadn't been carried out) and concerns that more attention needs to be paid to maximising swimming pool provision rather than additional facilities such as the café, studio rooms, gym and other proposed facilities.

The last survey question was 'Are there any further comments or observations you'd like to make about the proposed new facility?' There were 96 comments and the table displays the main themes. The comments included comments that a café and gym may not be needed because these facilities exist elsewhere in the town. Another common comment focused on delivering the new centre as soon as possible and without delay.

Theme from comments	Count	%
Open centre as soon as possible	22	23
More information/engagement/updates	6	6
No external management e.g. Serco	3	3
Missed old pool	3	3
Water Voles and ecological impact	8	8
Need affordable use	6	6
Too small/larger competitions pool	6	6
Additional facilities e.g. gym/weights, running track, courts	5	5
Environmental design	2	2
Accessibility	2	2
Don't need a gym and/or café	8	8
Focus on children and youth	6	6
Healthy food, drinks and vending	2	2
General positive comments	7	7
Concerns and negative comments	3	3
Other comments	7	7
Total	96	100

Survey responses - Example comments

- "Swimming pools are never made long enough for fitness swimming 100ft is a good length."
- "My only concern is that the proposed site is quite small, limiting any future expansion ... open outdoor area for football, running, tennis, other sports and even community sport events that would be better."
- "A gym and a cafe isn't needed when we have both a 2 minute walk away."
- "We really don't need another gym or dance studios Why waste the money when it could all be spent on a fabulous swimming centre to save family travelling miles out of town every time. i.e. Wrexham swimming baths and Plas Madoc etc."
- "Keep it affordable for everyone, concessions for lower income/pensioners/disabled and local users of the facilities."
- "Can't wait to see the new facilities up and running, cannot come soon enough."
- "We desperately need this. In whatever form it takes. Our community and particularly our children have missed out on so much because of Covid and our old pool closing...."
- "I think it is a vital need in the town and the whole community would benefit from this proposal."
- "An excellent proposal. Great to hear of something so positive in the pipeline for the local community. Well done to all concerned!"
- "So far everyone I have spoken to is optimistic, encouraged and excited about the proposal."

Summary

The responses consultation were very helpful and despite some concerns, very described and communicated, most comments were positive and optimistic about the prospect of swimming facilities returning to Whitchurch.



Engagement: Feedback was provided from 274 survey respondents, 12 written consultation responses and 7 stakeholder meetings and workshops.



Location: 89% of survey respondents agree with the proposed location covering the existing site and closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre. The stakeholder meetings and workshops included some suggestions for a larger out of town site.



Ecology: 7 of the 12 written responses and 9 of the 274 survey respondents highlighted significant concerns over the impact the build could have on water voles living in the brook on the site. These concerns were reflected in conversations with stakeholders.



Travel: Survey respondents' preferred method of travel to the location is the car (48%) followed by walking at 37%. Cycle use was the third top preferred method of travel (9%). Active Travel was commented on throughout the engagement with stakeholders highlighting opportunities to improve cycling facilities on site and throughout the local area. Parking facilities were also commonly mentioned.



Facility mix: Feedback calls for a learner/child pool, large pool, private changing, family changing and child/youth facilities as priorities. There are mixed views on the gym and café.



Health: The main barrier to physical activity highlighted by 52% of all the survey respondents was a lack of easy access to facilities and inconvenience. 38% of survey respondents cited cost, followed by insufficient time (24%). The feedback included a wide range of suggestions for facilities and activities to address health and wellbeing.



Community: There was strong support for new opportunities to encourage wider community use of the new centre. Exercise on prescription, social prescribing community groups, sessions designed for older people and consideration of use by schools and young people were all highlighted within the suggestions from the survey and at stakeholder workshops.



Accessibility: 70 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of accessibility. Comments covered wheelchair access, pool and changing access, non-slip surfaces, lifts, hoists moveable floors etc. Other comments covered noise issues including design for people with hearing impairment and quiet sessions design for sensory needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.



Environment: 80 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of sustainability and minimising climate impact. Suggestions covered energy efficiency, solar power, heat pumps, green walls, recycling, natural planning and low impact methods to clean the water and centre, and healthy/local food provision.



Overall views: 82% of survey respondents were satisfied with the proposals and additional support was voiced by stakeholders. The feedback overall was very positive.

August 2022

Analysis and reporting by:

Feedback and Insight Team, Communications and Engagement, Resources

Shropshire Council

Email: TellUs@shropshire.gov.uk

Shropshire Council Lead Department: Culture, Leisure and Tourism



Appendix 1: Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre Feasibility Study



Page 109

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

APPENDICES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Architects



Roberts Limbrick Ltd

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

Quantity Surveyor



Press & Starkey

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

Structural / Civils



Furness Partnership

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

MEP / Sustainability



CGP | MEP

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

Ecology



Wildwood Ecology

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

Client objectives

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

Client vision

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

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

Other client project outcomes

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

- Carbon off-setting or mitigation: there may be an opportunity for tree planting within a landscaping scheme for a new facility
 - A commitment to quantifying carbon performance as part of any detailed design for a new facility will be included in a design brief
 - Climate change adaptation: building designed in such a way as to respond to climate change so will have a positive or no effect
 - Sustainability requirements
 - Carbon neutrality: Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and in 2020 adopted its Strategy for achieving net zero on carbon emissions by 2030. In line with this, this project should explore the potential for Passivhaus and ensure that the Council is able to track the lifetime carbon performance of the building
 - Building expected to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and will be subject to a formal assessment. The minimum standard accepted will be 'Very Good'
 - DEC A rating
 - Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. A commentary on the reasons for not adopting the full Passivhaus accreditation route for the design will be helpful as part of our sustainability audit trail for the project
 - Provision of an audit trail, including quantitative performance measures (including Sport England Sustainability Target Metrics, see link below for information), that provide documentary evidence on a design stage by stage approach, to minimising the carbon footprint of the facilities and climate change impact. Provides for tracking the journey of the development through a lifetime carbon performance study which demonstrates how the design and materials used have taken account of the carbon reduction and climate change agenda and that the performance of the building is operating within the design parameters
 - The design must incorporate Sport England design guidance on sustainable facilities: www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/sustainability
 - Providing a report comparing the sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement
 - Design must take account of the opportunity to be serviced by air or water source heat pumps and on site renewable energy generation such as PV
 - Focus on outcomes for customers
 - New facilities will provide greater opportunities for participation which supports living a healthy lifestyle
 - Value for money
 - Business modelling has been carried out on the new build option to compare the life cycle costings of developing a new facility against the costs of the current facility.
 - New facilities provide opportunities for generating significant operational surplus compared to the current subsidy levels required
 - Other aims
 - Social Value: The project will reflect Shropshire Council's Social Value Policy.
- The key themes to be reflected in this project are:-
- Support for the local economy through use of local contractors / sub-contractors; local employment; skills building through training and work placements; apprenticeships; supply chain spend
 - Carbon reduction initiatives through low- or no-emission vehicles; low carbon construction techniques and materials; building efficiency; travel schemes
 - Wellbeing schemes targeted at specific groups of people to increase participation in physical activity
 - Minimising non-recyclable waste from activities
 - A section of Shropshire Council's website is also dedicated to Social Value: <https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/social-value/>
- ### The Active Environment
- In line with Uniting the Movement, the 2021 Sport England Strategy the design proposals should comply with Sport England's published Design Guidance. Sport England Design Guidance is available for download at: <https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance>
 - PRINCE 2
 - The Council's preference is to follow the PRINCE2 approach and its principles for this project. The Council's Project Boards adopt this approach in terms of key roles and responsibilities; the structure and context provided by PRINCE 2 provides the basis for the Council's approach and decision-making

Feasibility study aims and objectives

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

Feasibility study output

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

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

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

Outcome

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

Timescale

Initial draft report by 14 February 2022

Final report week commencing 21 February 2022

Proposed facilities

Sports centre

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

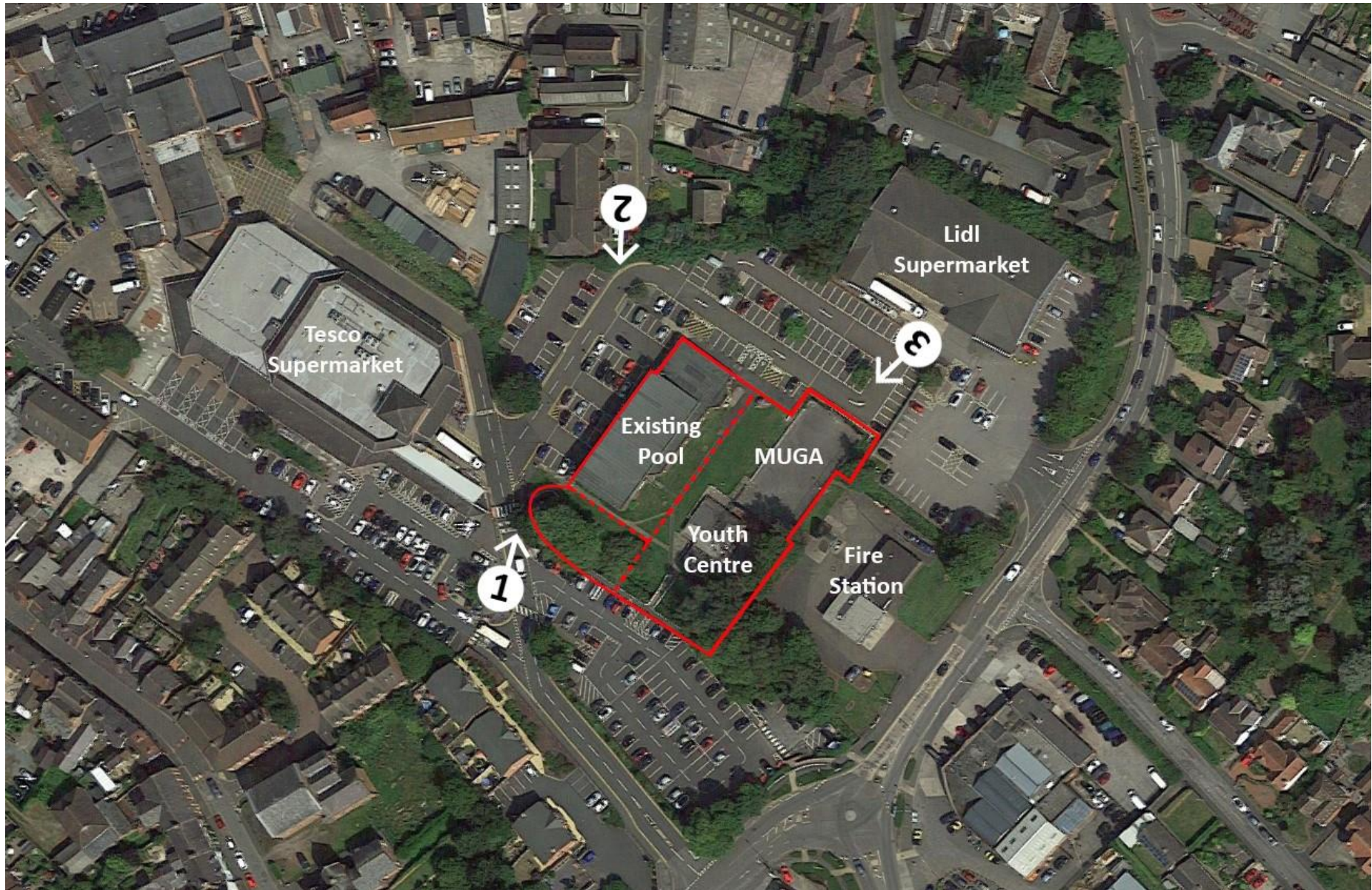
Library

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

Rationale for facility mix

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

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



Overview

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

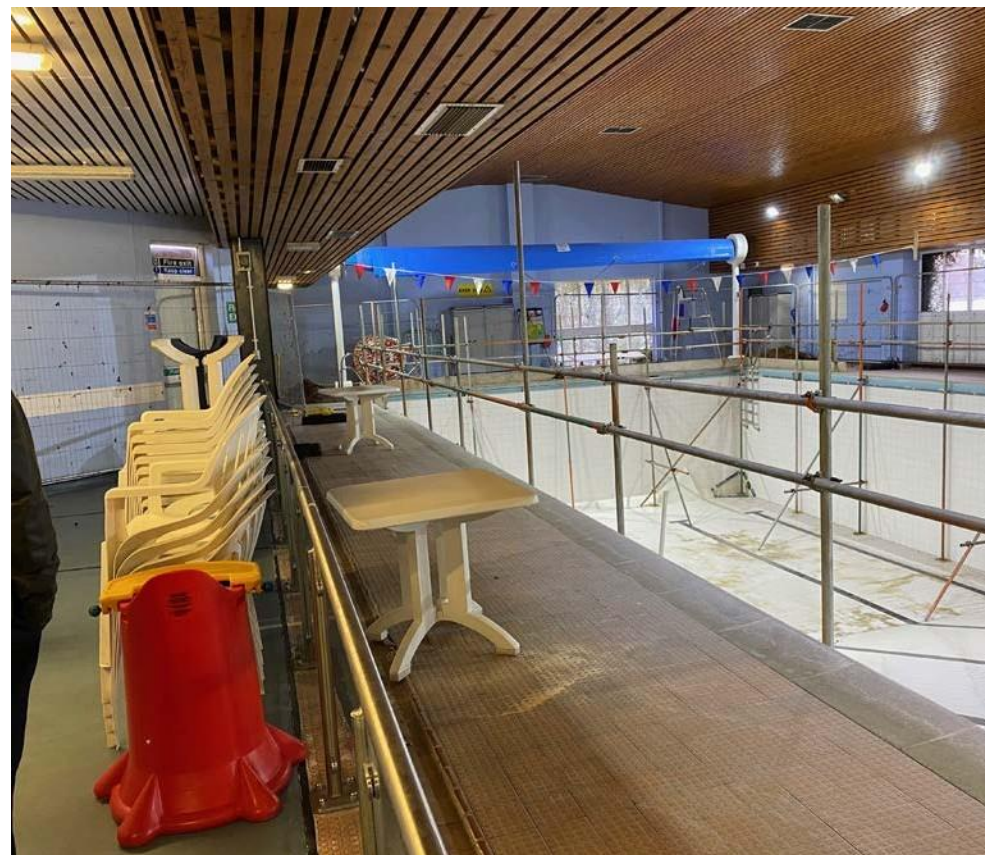
Page 19

Existing swimming pool

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

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

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



Existing pool interior

Existing site

Boundaries and ownership

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

Arboriculture

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

Acoustics

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



Site view ed from the south (view 1)



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



Showing existing MUGA viewed from the north (view 3)

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

Drainage

- Foul water

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

- Surface water

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

Ecology

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

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

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

Asbestos

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

Flood risk

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

Ground investigations

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

Topography

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

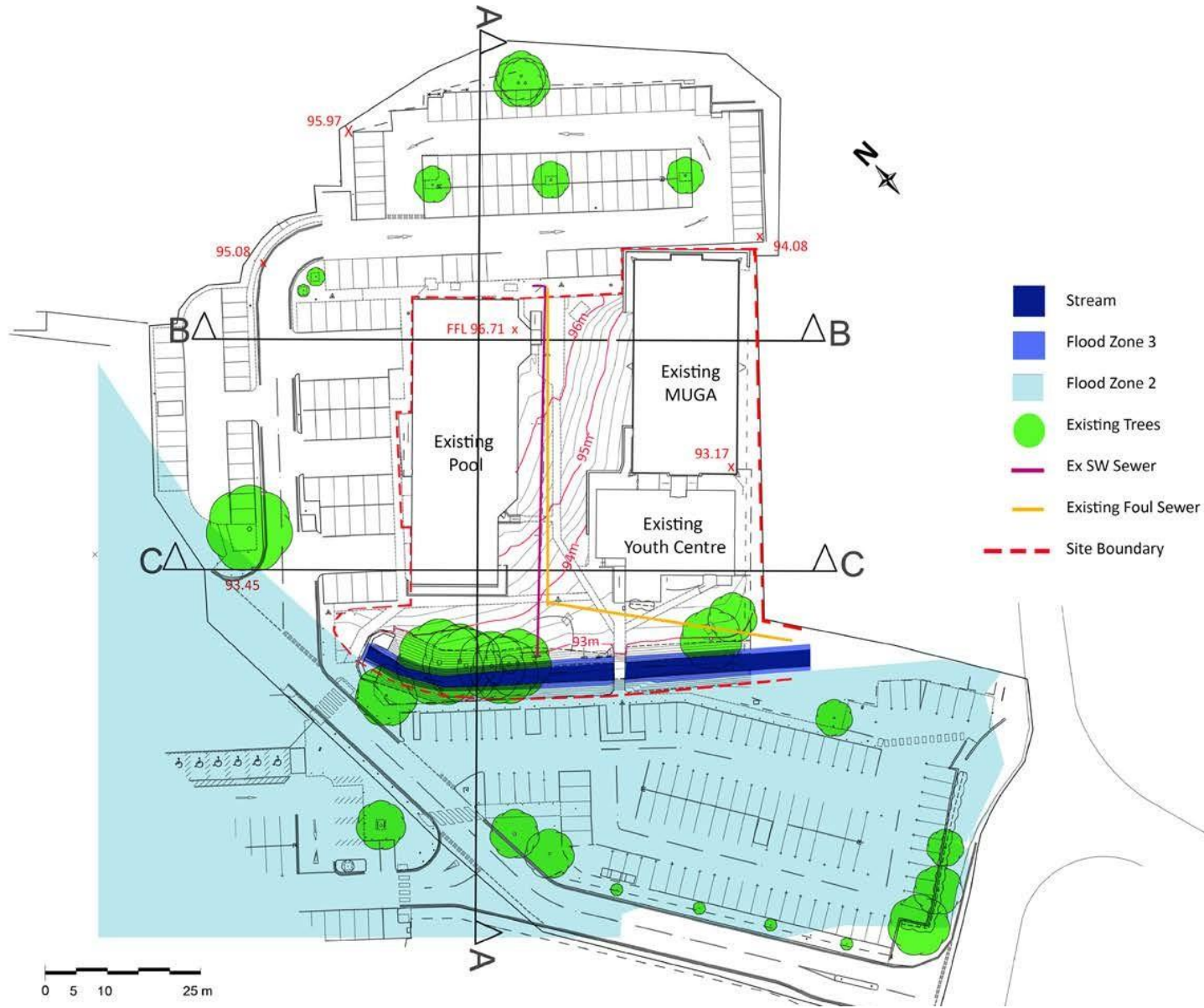
2019, which was used by the design team in the preparation of preliminary design proposals. A more detailed topographical and below ground services survey has been commissioned for the next stage of the design process.

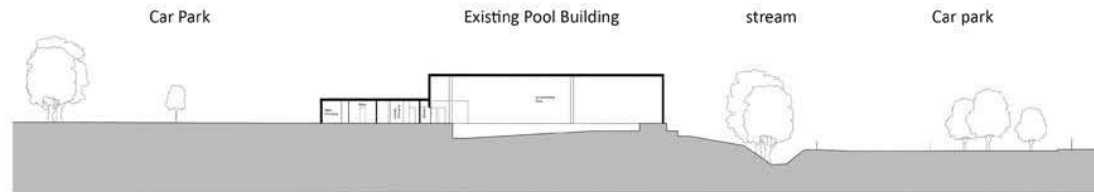
Traffic and highways

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

Utilities

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





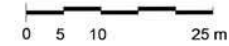
Existing Section A-A



Existing Section B - B



Existing Section C - C



Consultation

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

Summary of potential planning considerations

Access and transport

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

Proximity to conservation area

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

Environmental Impact Assessment

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

Arboriculture

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

Ecology

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

Impact on neighbours

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

External landscaping

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

Flood risk and drainage strategy

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

Signage

A separate external signage application is anticipated to be required.

Stakeholder feedback on public / stakeholder engagement / consultation exercise

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

Utilities

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

Building Control

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

Parent consultation

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

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

Whitchurch Library

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

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

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

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

Initial discussions with Shropshire Council Youth Services

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

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

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

Proposed leisure centre facilities and useProposed uses / users

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

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

Schedule of accommodation

Ground floor

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

First floor

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

Roof

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

Design strategies and layout

Site layout

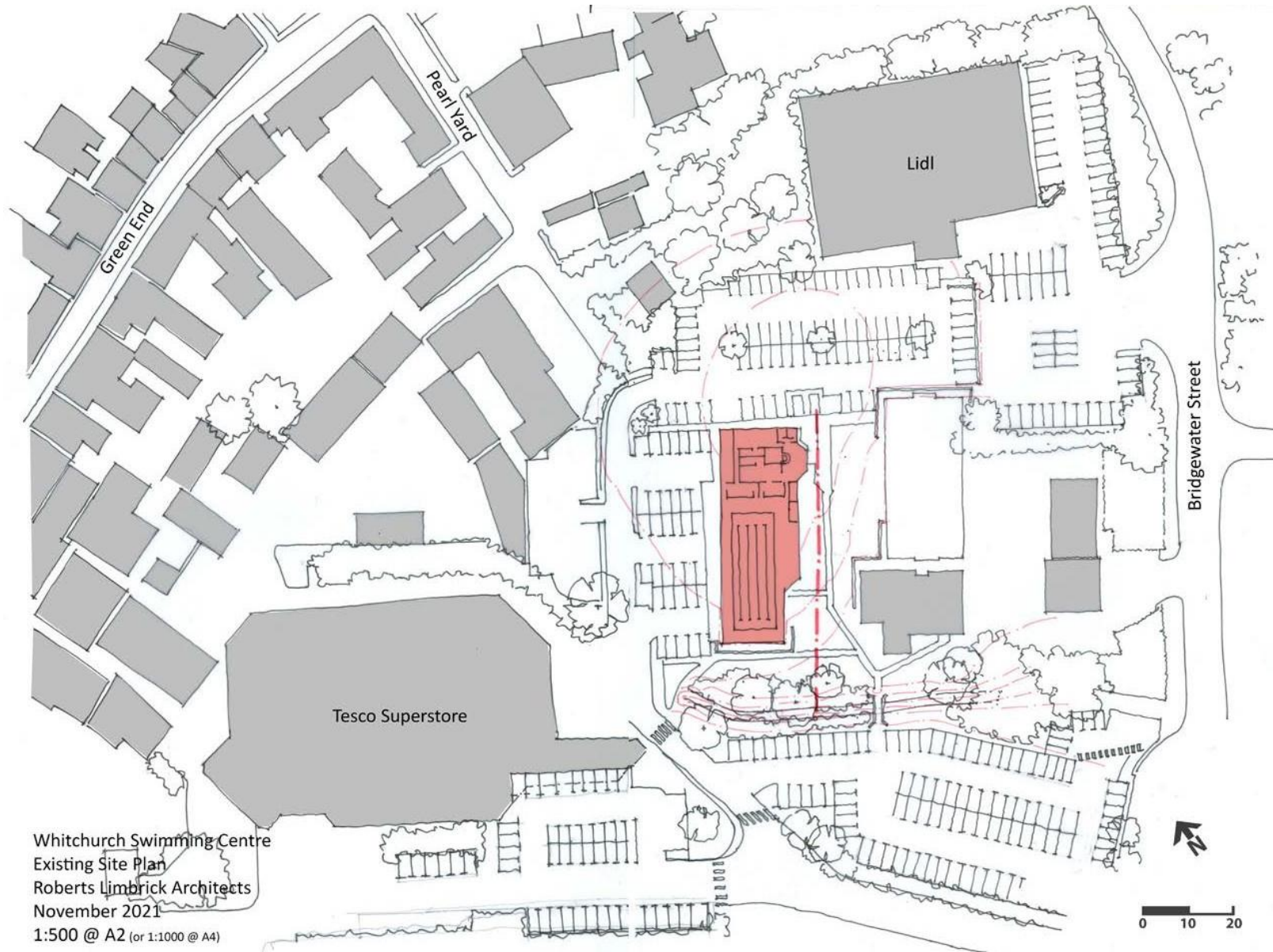
The building is positioned to the east of the site where the existing MUGA and Youth Centre are currently located, close to the boundary with the fire station. This location allows the maximum expansion of the Tesco's overspill carpark and the opportunity to create a drop-off and gathering area in front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

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

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

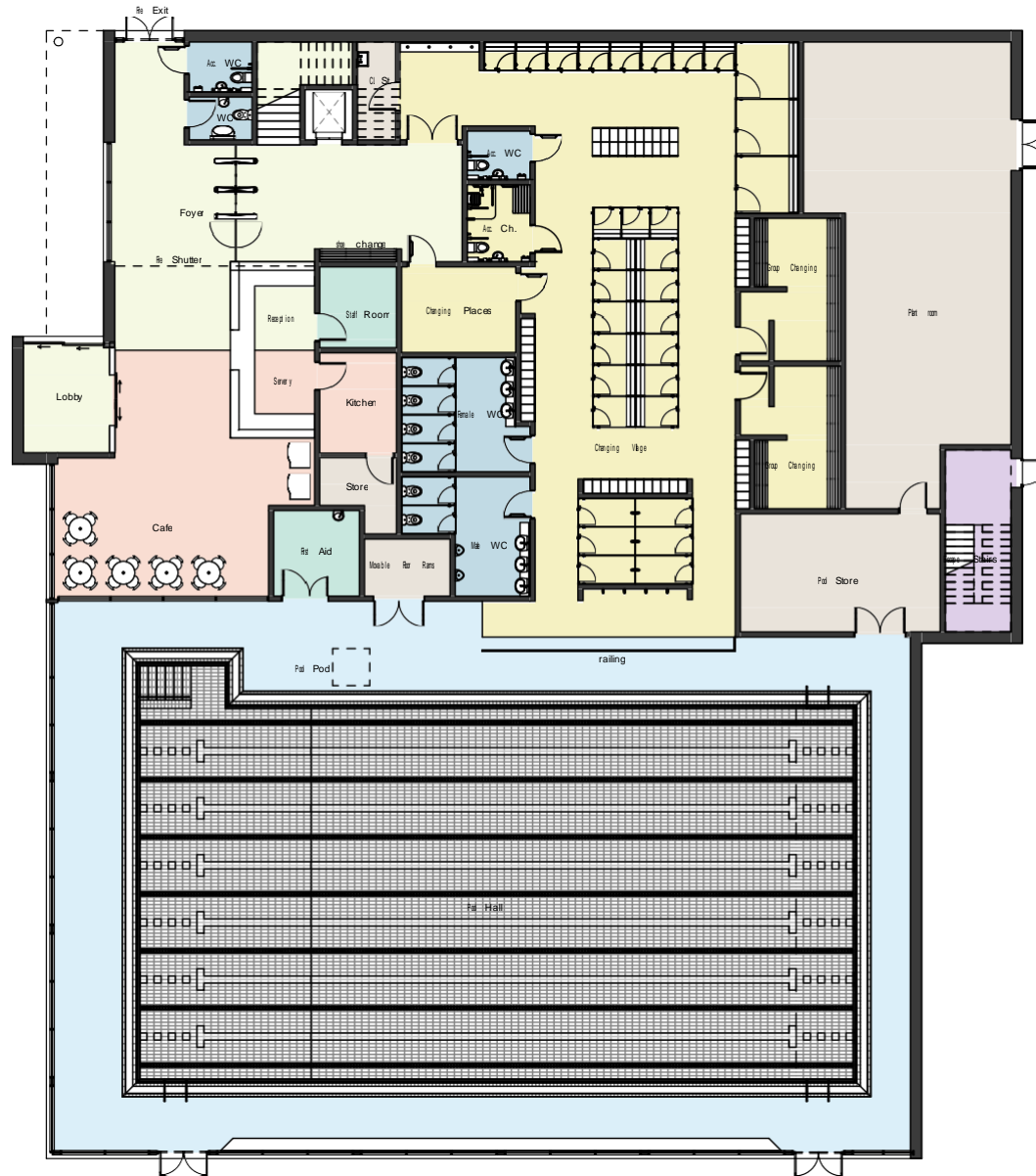
Parking

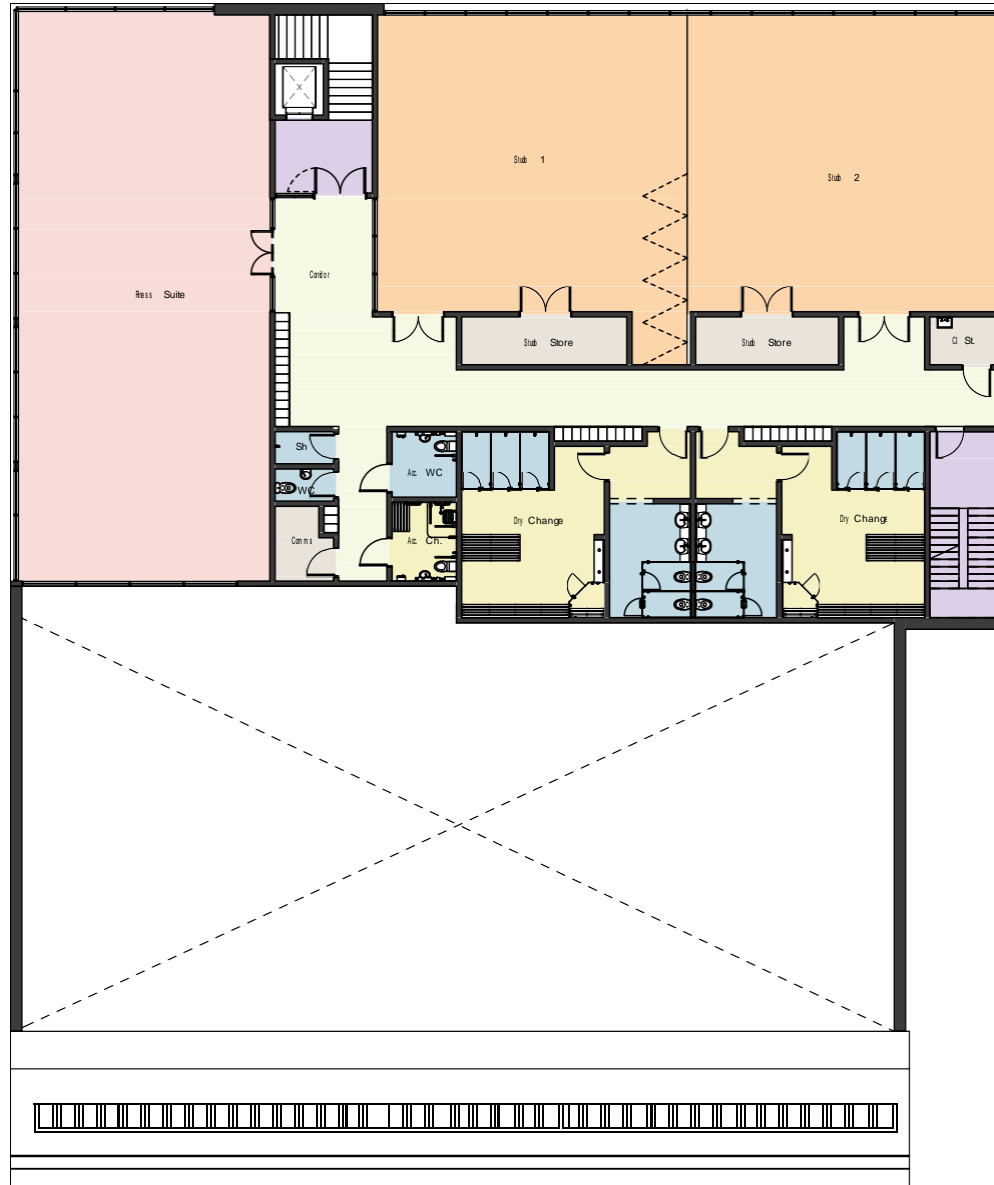
The proposed facility has a GIFA of approximately 1,680m², which is 960m² greater than the existing facility. Using a simple ratio of 22m² per parking bay, this would suggest an increase of 44 spaces from the current provision. Considering the

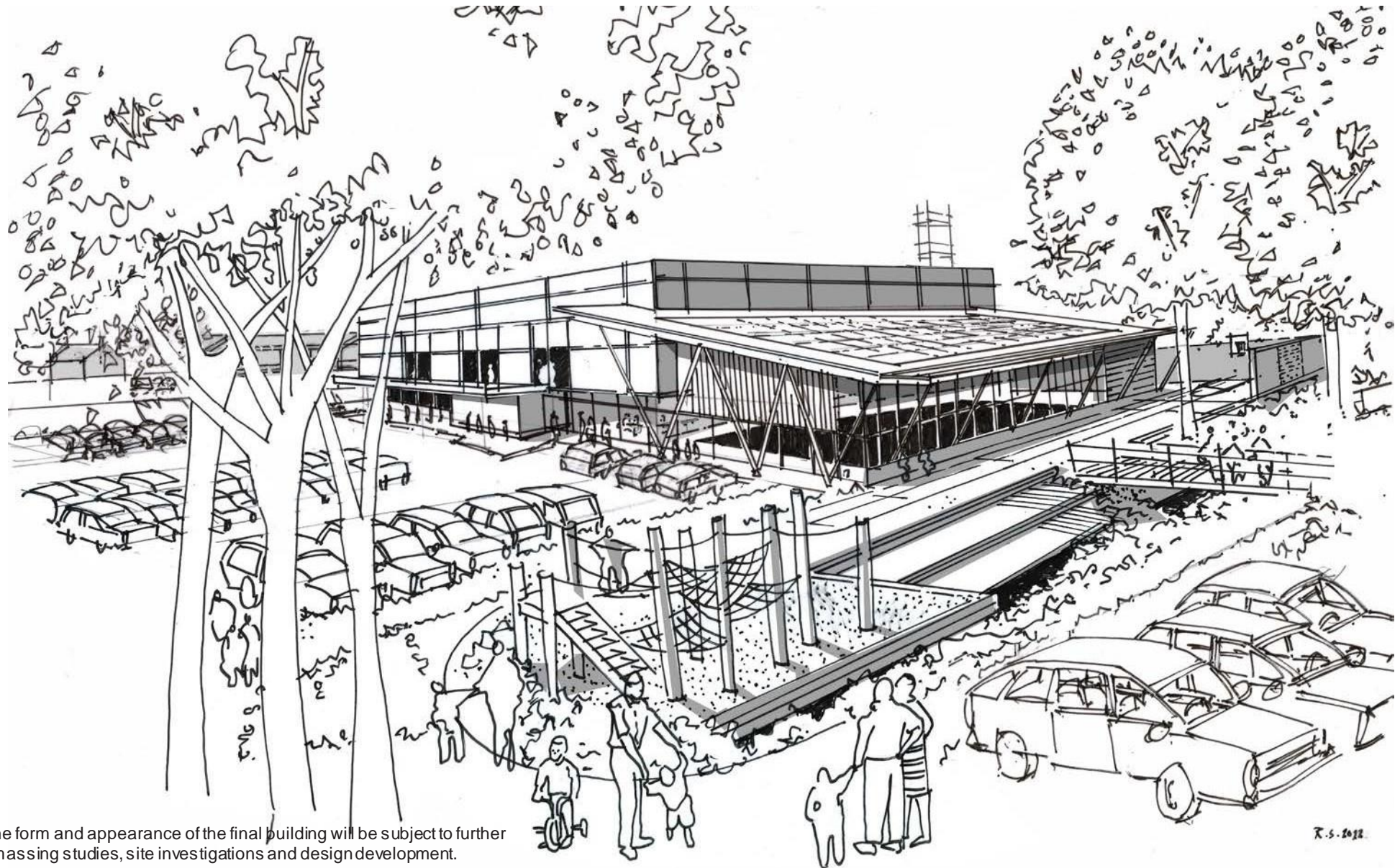


Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Existing Site Plan
Roberts Limbrick Architects
November 2021
1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)









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

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

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

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

MUGA / outdoor activity space

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

Internal layout

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

Ground floor

Entrance foyer and café area

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

Pool changing rooms

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

6-lane, 25m pool

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

First floor

Access to first floor

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

Fitness gym

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

Studios

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

Fitness changing

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

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

Plant space

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

Built form and appearance

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

Access / maintenance / inclusion

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

Acoustics

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

Sustainability

Minimising waste from activities

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

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

Low carbon building techniques

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

Building efficiency

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

Carbon off-setting / mitigation

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

Climate change

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

Sport England design guidance

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

Modular construction

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

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

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

i. Off-site

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

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

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

ii. Off-site / on-site

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

iii. On- site improvements

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

Modern methods of design

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

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

Adaptability

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

Fire

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

Option for co-location of the library

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

1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

2. SITE AND GROUND CONDITIONS

Site location map and boundaries

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

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

Site surveys

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



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

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

These include:

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

Ground investigation

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

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

1. Soil strata

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

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

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

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

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

2. Infiltration testing

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

3. Groundwater

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

4. Contamination testing

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

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

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

5. Ground gas

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

6. Concrete grade

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

Existing services

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

Topographical survey

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

Arboricultural survey

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

3. DESIGN STANDARDS

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

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

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

4. BASIS OF DESIGN

Structural design drivers

The main drivers governing the structural design solutions are:-

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

Design life

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

Substructure proposals

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

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

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

1. Typical foundations within the 2 storey building

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

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

2. Ground floor slab

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

Pool tank options

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

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

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

Superstructure proposals

1. Superstructure options

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

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

2. Roof structure

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

3. Corrosion protection

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

4. Vibration

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

5. Deflections and movements

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

5. DRAINAGE

Existing site details and proposed development

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

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

Flood risk statement

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



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

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

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

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

Surface water drainage

Existing

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

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

Proposed

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

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

Surface water discharge hierarchy

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

SuDS considerations

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

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

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

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

Design criteria

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

Foul water drainage

Existing

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

Proposed

Discharge method

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

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

Design criteria

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

Trade effluent

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

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

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

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

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

6. CARBON REDUCTION

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



Effective carbon reduction - leisure complex case study

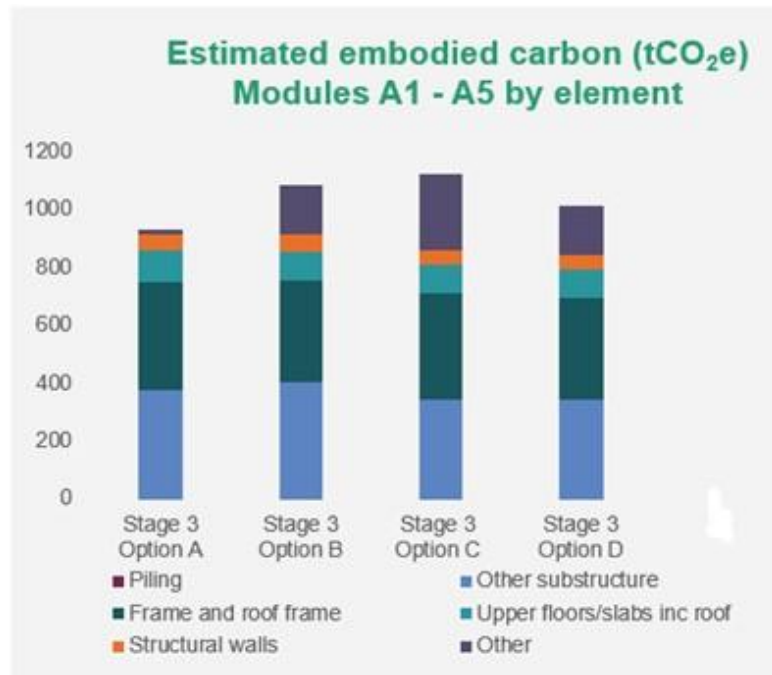
As part of the feasibility and design process we complete a calculation to determine the carbon with our designs and look to mitigate the impacts where possible. At the next design stage, once the structural form is completed for the proposed Whitchurch Leisure Centre, we will be including the assessment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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

7. CIVIL AND STRUCTURAL RISK ITEMS

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

8. FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIRED

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

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

1. SITE / INCOMING SERVICES

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

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

2. PERFORMANCE

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

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

which will be adopted everywhere possible.

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

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

3. BUILDING SERVICES STRATEGIES SUMMARY

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

4. PLANT LOCATIONS

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

Ground floor

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

Roof

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

External

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

5. ENERGY

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

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

6. BUILDING

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

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

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

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

7. ELECTRICAL SERVICES

The electrical services systems will include the following:-

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

8. MECHANICAL SERVICES

The mechanical services systems will include the following:-

- Heating and cooling
 - Air source heat pump generation
 - VRF to areas
 - Electric panel heaters
 - Ventilation system
- Central air handling units with heat recovery
- Local extract systems where required
 - Controls / building management system
- Public health services
 - Domestic water
- Above ground drainage
- Central cold-water storage and booster set
- Central hot water generation

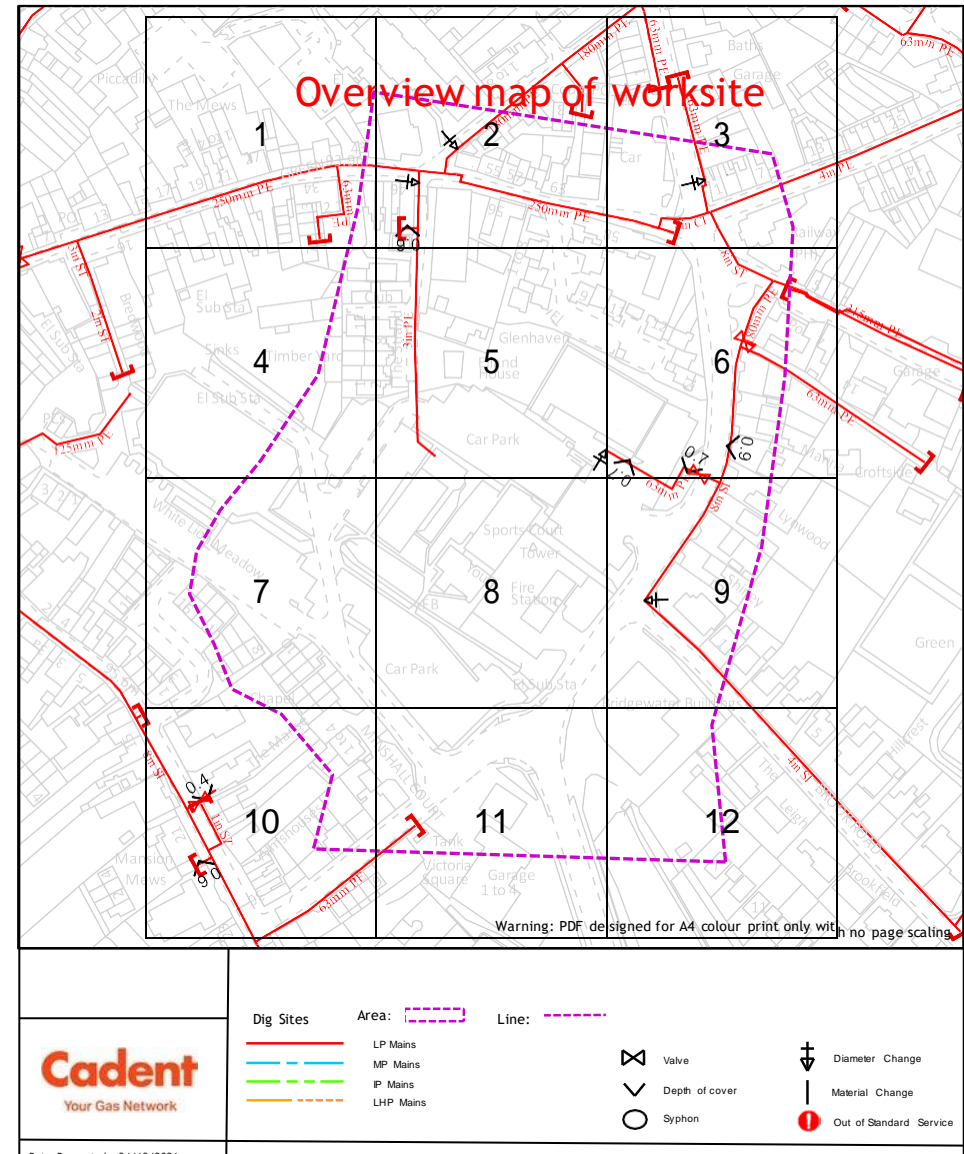
EXTERNAL

Externally with building will be provided with electrical vehicle charging points, external lighting and CCTV coverage.

10. BUILDING EFFICIENCY

The different options for each system will be assessed at the next stage of design to ascertain the most efficient and effective solutions for providing the mechanical and electrical services within the building.

As part of the assessment the performance and net carbon impact on the building will be reviewed to ensure all options are clearly defined and their impacts, positive and negative, documented for client review prior to any conclusion.



figy - Gas

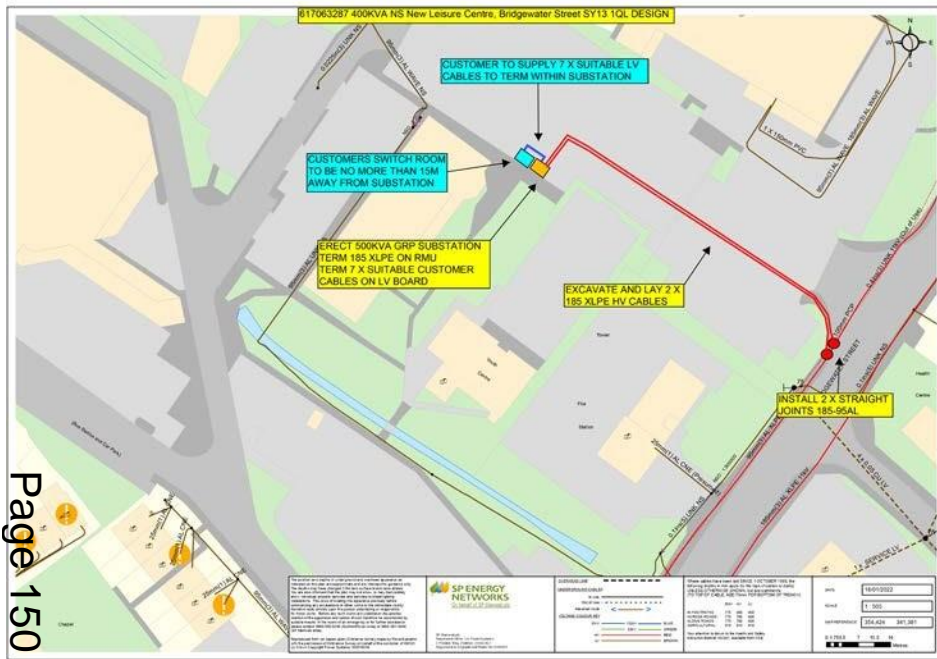


fig x - Electricity

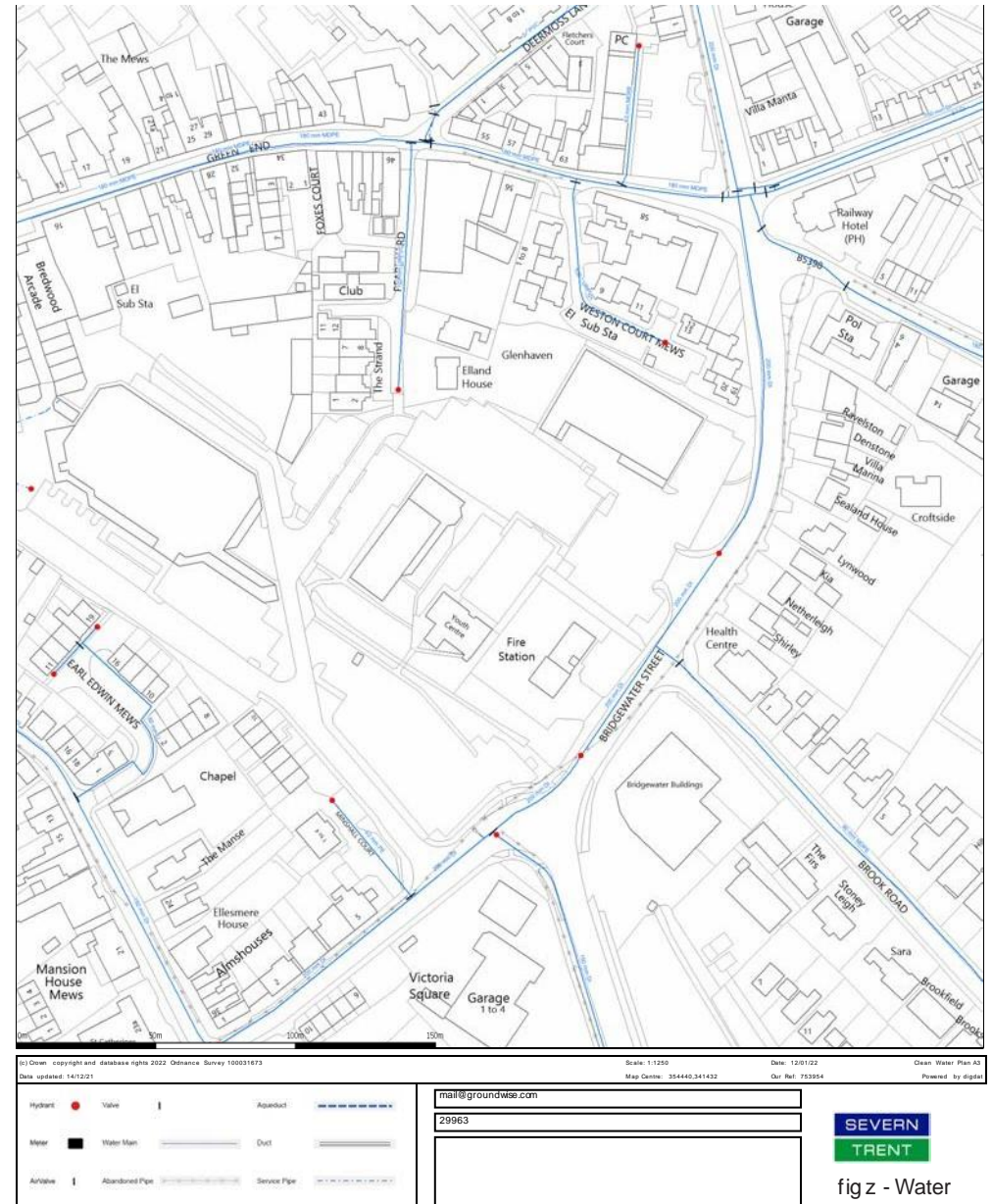
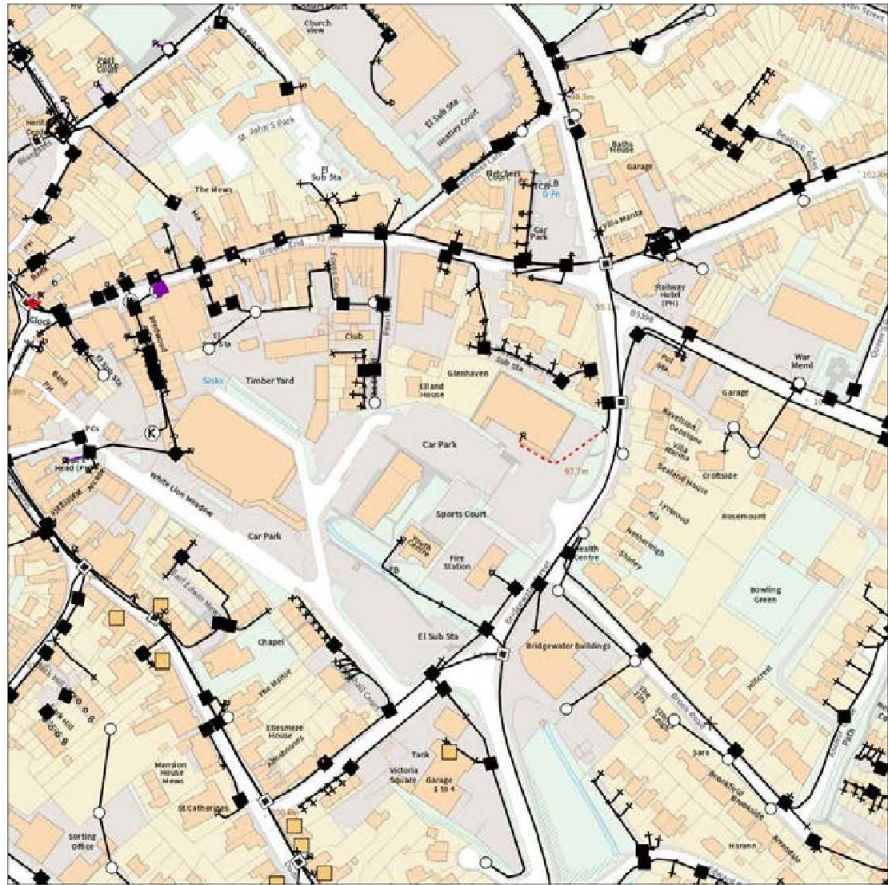


fig z - Water



IMPORTANT WARNING
 Information regarding the location of BT apparatus is given for your assistance and is intended for general guidance only. No guarantee is given of its accuracy. It should not be relied upon in the event of excavations or other works being made near to BT apparatus which may exist at various depths and may deviate from the marked route.

openreach
CLICK BEFORE YOU DIG
 FREE PROFESSIONAL SERVICE ON SITE ASSISTANCE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF EXCAVATION WORKS INCLUDING LOCATE AND MARKING SERVICE
 email cbyd@openreach.co.uk
 ADVANCE NOTICE REQUIRED
 (Office hours: Monday - Friday 08.00 to 17.00)
www.openreach.co.uk/cbyd

Accidents happen
 If you do damage any Openreach equipment please let us know by calling 0800 33 2023 (opt 1 + opt 1) and we can get it fixed ASAP

KEY TO BT SYMBOLS		Change Of State	+	Matchings	
Planned	Live	Split Coupling	X	Built	
PCP		Duct Tee	A	Planned	
Pole		Building		Inferred	
Box		Kiosk	K	Duct	
Manhole		Other proposed plants are shown using dashed lines. BT Symbols not listed above may be disregarded. Existing BT Plant may not be recorded. Information valid at time of preparation. Maps are only valid for 90 days after the date of publication.			
Cabinet					
Pending Add	In Place	Pending Remove	Not In Use		
Power Cable					
Power Duct			N/A		

fig q - Telecoms

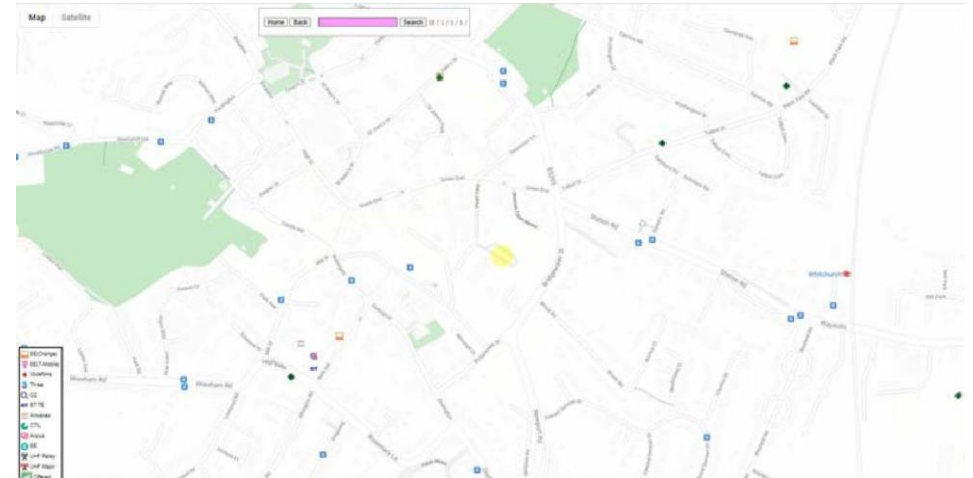


fig w - Mobile phone masts

NOTES ON APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE COSTS

1. The approximate costs in this estimate have been based on the proposed ground and first floor plans issued 19.11.21, the roof plan dated 12.11.21 and site plans dated 12.11.21. It has been assumed that the roof top plant room and access stair as shown on the original drawing dated 12.11.21 will be required. Assumptions on the level of specification required have been made which will require verification with the Architect and Client.
2. We have noted the comments in the brief regarding the problems with the foundations of the existing building, and include an allowance for piled foundations to the new Centre.
3. An existing asbestos survey has been provided which indicates that there is some asbestos present in the existing building. We have therefore included a provisional allowance for asbestos removal.

It has been assumed for the purpose of the estimate that a competitive price will be obtained for the works using a Design and Build procurement route.

The figures have been based at current price levels. An allowance for inflation has been included based on the proposed programme of a Commencement in the 3rd Quarter of 2023 and Completion in the 2nd Quarter of 2025.
6. We have allowed for a PV panel installation to the roof as shown on the roof drawing issued on 12 November 2021, together with an allowance for an Air Source Heat Pump primary heating source to the building with gas back up.
7. The project build costs have been benchmarked against recent projects that have achieved BREEAM VERY GOOD ratings and a further allowance has been made to upgrade this to BREEAM Excellent rating.
8. No other sustainability options or measures to achieve carbon reduction or a carbon 'neutral' project, other than those stated in item 6 and 7 above have been included in the estimate. Further confirmation will be required from the client during RIBA stage 2, to establish the extent of additional fabric improvements beyond Building Regulations compliance, to achieve the low carbon aspirations as proposed in section 7.

The figures exclude:-

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

10.0 Cost report, programme and procurement

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

AREA BUILD COSTS

		BASE AREA SCHEDULE				
INTERNAL WORKS	Area	Area m2	Total Area -m2	Rate (m2)	Cost	Cost
General						
Entrance, Reception and Office Areas						
	Entrance lobby	12		£2,400	£28,944	
	Cafe/Pool Viewing, Inc. Survey	66		£2,400	£157,920	
	Cafe Kitchen	7		£2,400	£22,226	
	Cafe Kitchen Store	6		£2,400	£13,440	
	Staff Room	9		£2,400	£18,168	
	Gamma Room	5		£2,400	£12,144	
	Foyer / Reception	80		£2,400	£191,136	
	Foyer WC	3		£2,400	£9,016	
	Foyer Acc. WC	4		£2,400	£9,440	
	First Floor WC	2		£2,400	£5,280	
	Cleaner's Store (Ground Floor)	5		£2,400	£10,824	
	Cleaner's Store (First Floor)	6		£2,400	£18,552	
	Sub total		286			£495,360
Wet Side						
Pool Hall						
	8 Lane x 25m Community Pool (ASSEMBLY - movable Room FF&E)	558		£3,800	£2,097,202	
	Pool Store	79		£3,300	£96,393	
	Movable Floor Ramps	6		£3,300	£18,767	
	Pool First Aid	9		£3,300	£28,941	
Changing						
	Village Changing	182		£3,300	£600,072	
	Group Changing	32		£3,300	£104,148	
	Changing Places	12		£3,300	£38,544	
	Changing Village Male WC	17		£3,300	£55,374	
	Changing Village Female WC	15		£3,300	£48,907	
	Changing Village Accessible WC	4		£3,300	£12,441	
	Changing Village Accessible Change	8		£3,300	£19,569	
Spectators						
	Spectator seating -NA	0		£3,300	£0	
	Sub total		868			£3,031,359
Health and Fitness						
Fitness Suite						
	Fitness Suite	167		£3,000	£502,260	
Studio						
	Studio 1 (part of divisible room)	112		£2,900	£324,207	
	Studio 1 store	13		£2,900	£38,279	
	Studio 2 (part of divisible room)	113		£2,900	£326,827	
	Studio 2 store	9		£2,900	£26,100	
	Gender Shower adjacent to Fitness Suite	2		£2,900	£6,426	
Dry Change						
	Dry changing (2 Dry Changing Rooms, including Lockers, Showers & WC's)	95		£3,100	£295,899	
	Accessible Changing	6		£3,100	£18,476	
	Accessible WC	5		£3,100	£14,911	
	Sub total		322			£1,550,694
Plant - see allowance below						
	Filtration / boiler/yard & Chemicals / rain room / pump pit - assumed GP Plant Room	98		£1,100	£106,200	
	Boiler plant room	111		£1,100	£121,961	
	Sub total		208			£277,913
Circulation - see allowance below						
	Circulation gl - inc. above	0		£2,300	£0	
	Main stair	16		£2,300	£36,938	
	Lifts	6		£2,300	£12,788	
	Fire escape stair / Roof Plant Room Stair	10		£2,300	£115,961	
	Circulation Floor Floor	97		£2,300	£223,146	
	Internal Works allowance			£2,300	£347,300	
	Sub total		309			£710,033
Total Internal Works						
	Total GFAm2	2113		£2,871		£6,643,308
Fixed Fixtures, fittings and equipment						
	General allowance for fixed equipment (excludes Fitness equipment & other loose equipment)			any	£150,000	
	Allowance for Air Source Heat Pump installation with gas back-up			any	£150,000	
	Allowance for rooftop PV			any	£75,000	
	Sub total					£375,000
Allowances						

	Allowance for asbestos removal			any	£50,000	
	Allowance for Flood Foundations / Sloped Site			any	£400,000	
	Provision of services fee			any	£60,000	
	Sub total					£550,000
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS (EXCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION)						
	Total GFA	2113		£3,285		£9,949,308

EXTERNAL WORKS	Building Ground Floor Footprint + Car Parking + Service Yard					
External Works (Drainage)			5144	£40.00	£205,763	
External Works (Lighting)				any	£30,000	
External Works (Landscaping)			320	£35.00	£11,200	
External Works (Allow for remedial works to bridge over stream)				any	£25,000	
External Works (Protection of existing trees)				any	£25,000	
External Works (Paths - assumed terraced)			582	£135.00	£78,520	
External Works (Provision of above Landscape Area including tanning beds, basketball practice and play areas)			611	any	£180,000	
External Works (Allow for provision of basketball hoops and running track markings)				any	£3,500	
External Works (Allow for works to stream)				any	£2,500	
External Works (Service Yard - assumed terraced)			60	£85.00	£5,100	
Car parking - Assumed mix of formal access ways and block paved parking spaces			4160	£150.00	£624,000	
Statutory Services / Utilities - Assumed re-connection of existing service connections				any	£200,000	
Sub Total					£1,391,583	
Demolition						
	Demolition removal to existing single storey Youth Centre Building		316	any	£70,000	
	Demolition of existing facilities and site clearance including breaking out of existing carpark and hard landscaped areas			any	£150,000	
Sub Total					£160,000	
Total External Works						
					£1,551,583	

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS INCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION						
	Total GFA	2113		£4,919		£9,491,891
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COSTS INCLUDING EXTERNAL WORKS, EXCLUDING CONTINGENCY, FF&E, FEES, SURVEYS, VAT & INFLATION						
				2.0%		£189,638
£9,681,252						

CONTINGENCY						
Design development contingency				5.0%	£424,595	
Client contingency				5.0%	£424,595	
Sub Total					£849,190	
FITTINGS, FIXTURES & EQUIPMENT (FF&E)						
	Allowance for losses FF&E / ICT not covered above			Excluded		
PROFESSIONAL FEES						
	Professional Fees & Surveys			5% of total construction cost and contingency allowances	£485,583	
Sub Total					£162,969	

INFLATION TO MID POINT OF CONSTRUCTION					
	Provision for inflation based on a Central Bank Point of 02/2024 - 02/2023 when contract start to Q2 2025 completion			11.85%	£1,145,181
Sub Total					£1,145,181

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (EXCLUDING VAT)						
						£11,912,081
Option for Movable Floor to Main Pool						
	Assumes floor to half of pool area only				£550,000	
	Allowance for inflation as above			11.92%	£65,552	
	Total Movable Floor Option Allowance				£615,552	

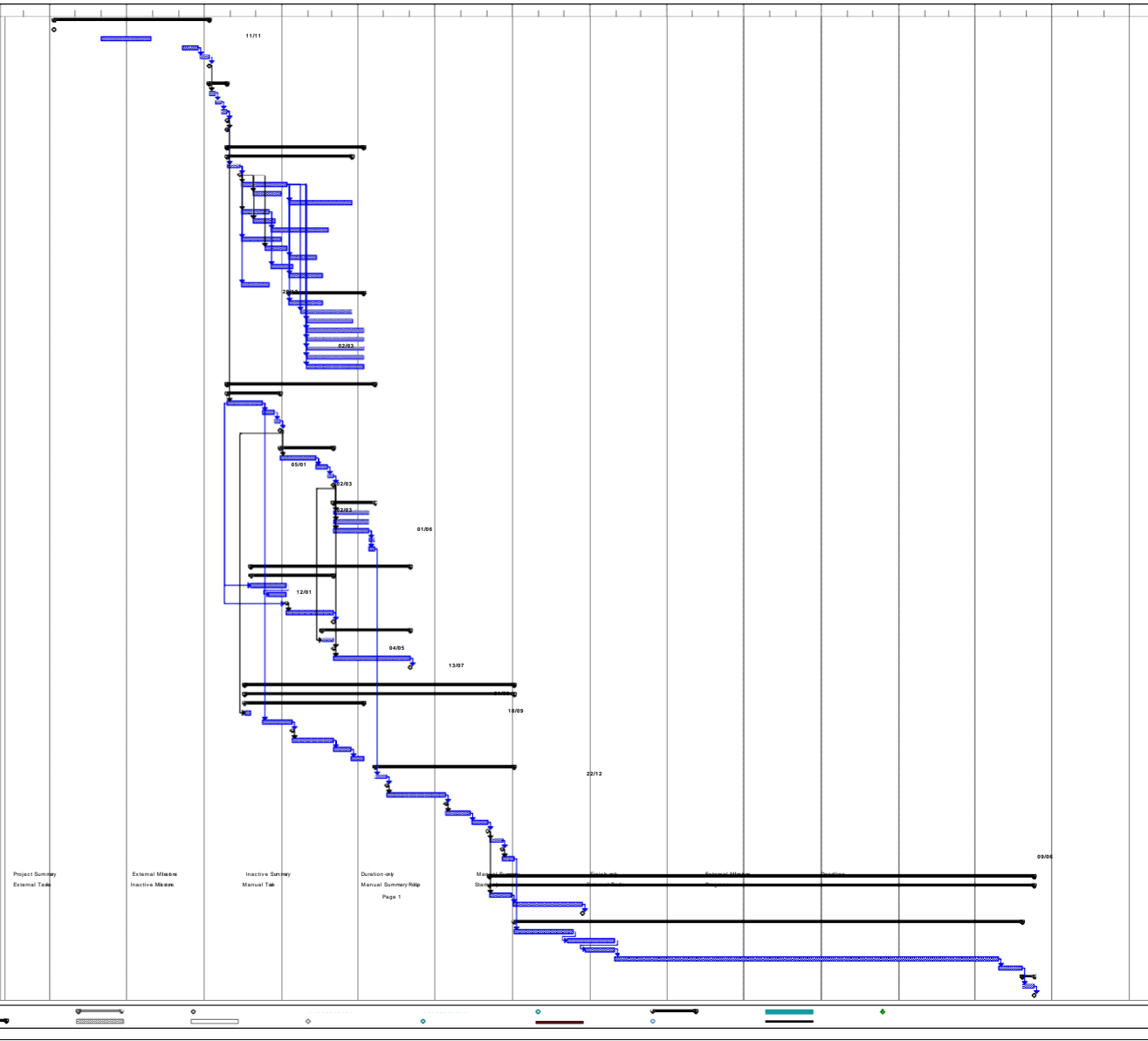
APPROXIMATE ESTIMATE SUMMARY		
Over Internal Floor Area	2113	m2
Total construction cost rate per m ² (excluding external works, FF&E, Fees, Contingency, Inflation & VAT)	£3,285	£/m2
Total construction cost rate per m ² (including external works, excluding FF&E, Fees, Contingency, Inflation & VAT)	£4,919	£/m2
Total construction cost rate per m ² (including external works, Fees, Contingency, excluding FF&E, Inflation & VAT)	£4,996	£/m2
Total project cost per m ² (including external works, FF&E, Fees, Inflation, excluding FF&E & VAT)	£5,448	£/m2
Typical Parking Standards = 1 space per 21m2 for D2 uses	101	

WINDFISHER COUNCIL
WINDFISHER SWIMMING CENTRE
PRELIMINARY DRAFT OVERALL MASTER PROGRAMME BASED ON SINGLE STAGE DESIGN & BUILD TENDER WITH SO

ID	Task Name	Date	Finish	Duration	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
1	CABINET REPORTS / PUBLIC CONSULTATION	Wed 04/04/22	Thu 04/04/22	132 days																

2	Feasibility/Outline Report	Wed 06/04/2024 09:42Z	0 days
3	Public Consultation	Wed 01/06/24 Fri 29/07/24	43 days
4	Report to Cabinet on behalf of Public Consultation (Pre-Dev)	Mon 05/09/24 Fri 20/09/24	15 days
5	Recommendation to Council to Capitalize Phase 2	Mon 26/09/24 Thu 01/10/24	5 days
6	Council Authorisation Proceeds RBA Stage 2	Thu 06/10/24 Thu 06/10/24	0 days
7			
8	APPOINTMENT	Fri 07/10/24 Thu 27/09/24	15 days
9	Agree Procurement Strategy for Design & M	Fri 07/10/24 Thu 01/10/24	1 wk
10	Design Team / PM Fee Proposal	Fri 14/10/24 Thu 20/10/24	1 wk
11	Authority Consideration / Approval	Fri 21/10/24 Thu 27/10/24	5 days
12	Design Team / Main Contract	Fri 21/10/24 Thu 27/10/24	0 days
13	Project Launch Meeting / Team	Thu 27/10/24 Thu 27/10/24	0 days

14	SURVEYS	Fri 28/10/24 Fri 09/11/24	114 days
15	SITE SURVEYS/INVESTIGATIONS	Fri 28/10/24 Fri 24/03/25	106 days
16	Review Information Summary/submit	Fri 28/10/24 Fri 11/11/24	11 days
17	Confirm Top of Survey/prepare	Fri 28/10/24 Fri 11/11/24	0 days
18	Prepare Brief / Obtain Survey Proposal	Mon 14/11/24 Fri 05/12/24	40 days
19	Demolition / Main Survey	Mon 28/11/24 Fri 30/12/24 09:50	25 days
20	Obtain Investigation Survey (Stage 1 & Stage 2 Survey)	Mon 04/12/24 Fri 20/12/24	15 days
21	Detailed Topographic Survey	Mon 14/11/24 Fri 01/12/24	25 days
22	Designing / Main Survey	Mon 28/11/24 Fri 23/12/24 09:50	20 days
23	Finalize Main Survey / Designing	Mon 01/12/24 Fri 20/12/24	40 days
24	Utility / Service / Substation Survey	Mon 14/11/24 Fri 20/12/24	35 days
25	OPN Services / Substation Survey	Mon 27/12/24 Fri 09/01/25 09:50	20 days
26	CCPV / Drainage Survey	Mon 01/12/24 Fri 03/01/25	20 days
27	Archeological / Tree Survey / Constraints Plan	Mon 18/12/24 Fri 03/01/25	20 days
28	Noise Survey	Mon 09/12/24 Fri 19/01/25	30 days
29	Ecology Survey	Mon 14/12/24 Fri 19/01/25	26 days
30	Archaeological / Desk Top Survey	Mon 09/12/24 Fri 19/01/25	30 days
31	Traffic Impact Assessment / Travel Plan	Mon 23/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	40 days
32	Daylight / Orientation	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	40 days
33	Energy Strategy Report	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	50 days
34	Air Quality Assessment	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	50 days
35	Fire Strategy Report	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	50 days
36	Sustainability Statement	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	50 days
37	BREEM Pre-Assessment	Mon 30/12/24 Fri 26/01/25	50 days
38			
39			
40	DESIGN	Fri 28/10/24 Thu 09/11/24	135 days
41	RIBA STAGE 2 DESIGN CONCEPT	Fri 28/10/24 Thu 28/10/24	40 days
42	Stage 2 Concept Design	Fri 28/10/24 Thu 08/11/24	6 wks
43	Stage 2 Cost Plan	Fri 08/11/24 Thu 20/11/24	2 wks
44	Report	Fri 20/11/24 Thu 20/11/24	1 wk
45	Authority Sign-off	Thu 20/11/24 Thu 20/11/24	0 wks
46			
47	RIBA STAGE 3 DESIGN DEVELOPED	Fri 30/11/24 Thu 29/03/25	45 days
48	Stage 3 Detailed Design	Fri 30/11/24 Thu 08/12/24	6 wks
49	Stage 3 Cost Plan	Fri 08/12/24 Thu 20/12/24	2 wks
50	Report	Fri 20/12/24 Thu 20/12/24	1 wk
51	Authority Sign-off	Thu 20/12/24 Thu 20/12/24	0 wks
52			
53	RIBA STAGE 4 (BIM) TECHNICAL DESIGN	Fri 03/01/25 Thu 28/04/25	35 days
54	Stage 4 Technical Design/Architectural/Managerial BIM	Fri 03/01/25 Thu 09/02/25	6 wks
55	Report Data Sheet	Fri 03/01/25 Thu 09/02/25	6 wks
56	Stage 4 BIM/Revit Model Creation	Fri 03/01/25 Thu 09/02/25	6 wks
57	Architect Review BIM/Creation	Fri 14/04/25 Thu 20/04/25	1 wk
58	OB Prepare Final BIM/Creation	Fri 14/04/25 Thu 20/04/25	1 wk
59			
60			
61	PLANNING	Fri 25/11/24 Thu 09/11/24	135 days
62	PLANNING PRE-APP PROCESS	Fri 25/11/24 Thu 09/11/24	70 days
63	Initial Planning Pre-application Consultation	Fri 25/11/24 Thu 08/12/24 09:50	6 wks
64	Prepare Planning Pre-application	Fri 16/12/24 Thu 09/01/25 09:50	3 wks
65	Submit Planning Pre-application	Thu 09/01/25 Thu 09/01/25 09:50	0 days
66	Pre-App Decision Made	Fri 06/01/25 Thu 02/02/25	3 wks
67	Pre-App Response	Thu 02/02/25 Thu 02/02/25	0 days
68	PLANNING APPLICATION	Fri 14/02/25 Thu 04/04/25	70 days
69	Prepare Full Planning Application	Fri 17/02/25 Thu 03/03/25 09:50	2 wks
70	Submit Planning Application	Thu 03/03/25 Thu 03/03/25	0 days
71	Planning Decision Made	Fri 03/03/25 Thu 03/03/25	0 wks
72	Planning Approval/Estimate	Thu 01/06/25 Thu 01/06/25	0 days
73			
74	PROCUREMENT	Fri 14/11/24 Mon 02/12/24	227 days
75	MAIN CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT (Single stage DBB with Prequal)	Fri 14/11/24 Mon 02/12/24	227 days
76	Pre-Selection Process	Fri 14/11/24 Fri 09/12/24	161 days
77	Agree Procurement Rules	Fri 14/11/24 Thu 21/11/24 09:50	1 wk
78	Prepare SO Document / Project Information	Fri 08/12/24 Thu 01/12/24	5 wks
79	Submit Contract Notes	Thu 12/12/24 Thu 12/12/24	0 days
80	SO Response Period	Fri 13/12/24 Thu 02/01/25	20 days
81	Score Responses	Fri 03/01/25 Thu 02/01/25	15 days
82	Shortlist / Interview / Interview & Site	Fri 24/01/25 Fri 07/02/25	11 days
83	MAIN CONTRACT TEAM PHASE	Fri 13/02/25 Mon 03/03/25	117 days
84	Finalize IT Package	Fri 21/04/25 Thu 04/05/25	19 days
85	Dispatch Tenders	Thu 04/05/25 Thu 04/05/25	0 days
86	Tender Point	Fri 05/05/25 Thu 18/05/25	50 days
87	Tender Return	Thu 13/07/25 Thu 07/07/25	0 days
88	Reveal/Score Tender Results	Fri 11/07/25 Fri 11/07/25	21 days
89	Interview Contractor/Client/Team	Mon 14/08/25 Fri 03/09/25	15 days
90	Select Contract	Fri 01/09/25 Fri 01/09/25	0 days
91	Contract Sign-off	Mon 04/09/25 Mon 04/09/25	1 day
92	Appoint Contractor	Mon 18/09/25 Mon 18/09/25	0 days
93	Formal Contract Execution	Thu 18/09/25 Mon 02/10/25	10 days
94			
95	CONSTRUCTION	Mon 04/09/25 Mon 04/09/25	461 days
96	DEMOLITION CONTRACT	Mon 04/09/25 Mon 04/09/25	461 days
97	Mobilisation	Mon 04/09/25 Fri 05/09/25	4 wks
98	Demolition Works	Mon 02/10/25 Fri 27/11/25	12 wks
99	Completion & Demolition	Fri 27/11/25 Fri 27/11/25	0 days
100	MAIN CONTRACT	Thu 01/12/24 Mon 02/12/24	445 days
101	Contractor Detailed Design	Thu 01/12/24 Mon 17/01/25	10 wks
102	Discharge Planning/Obtain	Thu 01/12/24 Mon 29/01/25 09:50	8 wks
103	Contractor Mobilisation	Thu 01/12/24 Mon 29/01/25 09:50	8 wks
104	Construction Period	Thu 20/01/24 Mon 28/04/25	65 wks
105	Testing & Commissioning	Thu 01/04/25 Mon 26/04/25	4 wks
106	CLIENT FIT-OUT TRAINING	Thu 27/05/25 Mon 09/06/25	19 days
107	Client / Operator Roll-out / Training	Thu 27/05/25 Mon 09/06/25	2 wks
108	Lease/Ownership Public	Mon 09/06/25 Mon 09/06/25	0 days

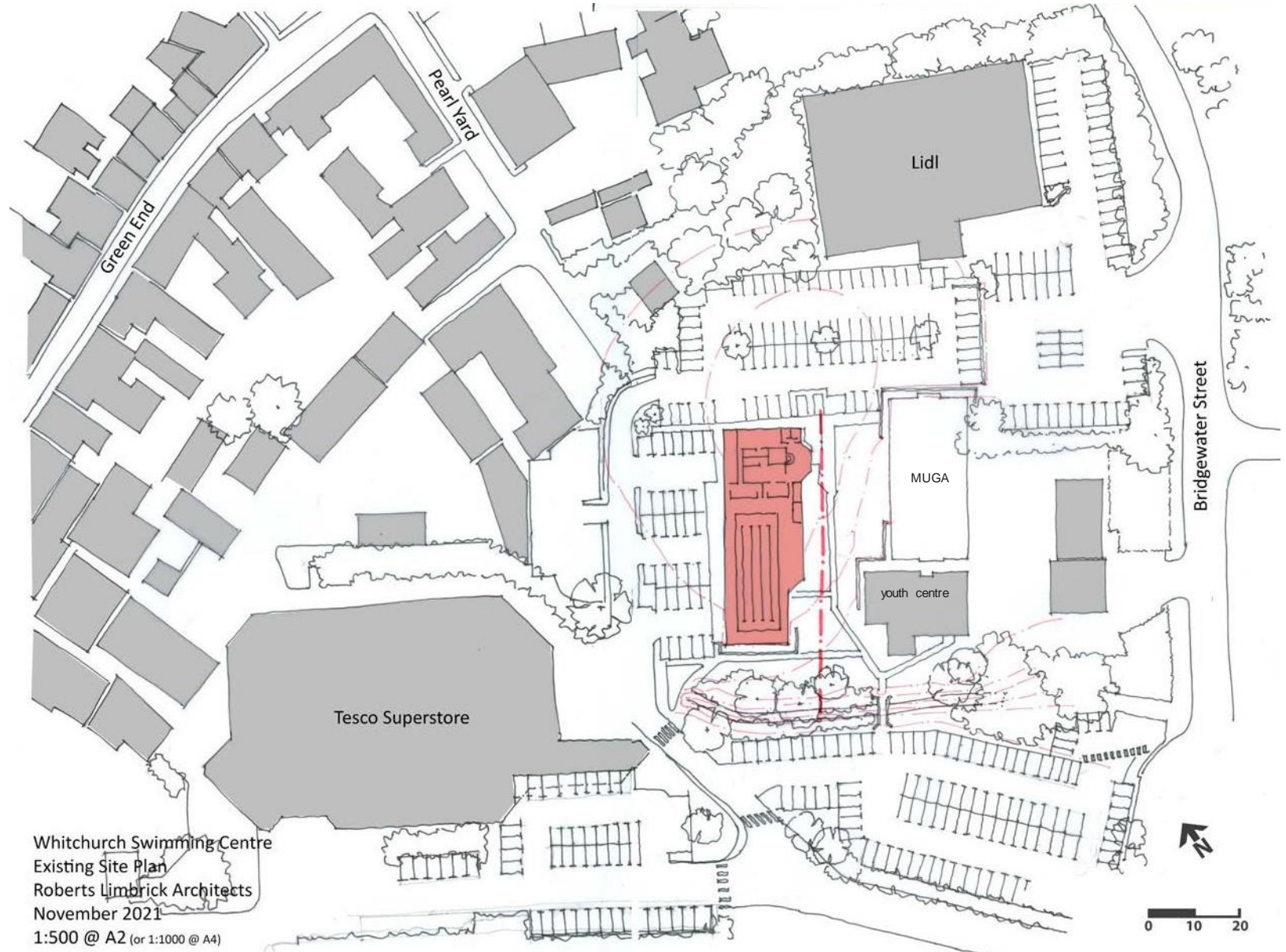


Appendix 1: Alternative site layouts considered during the design process

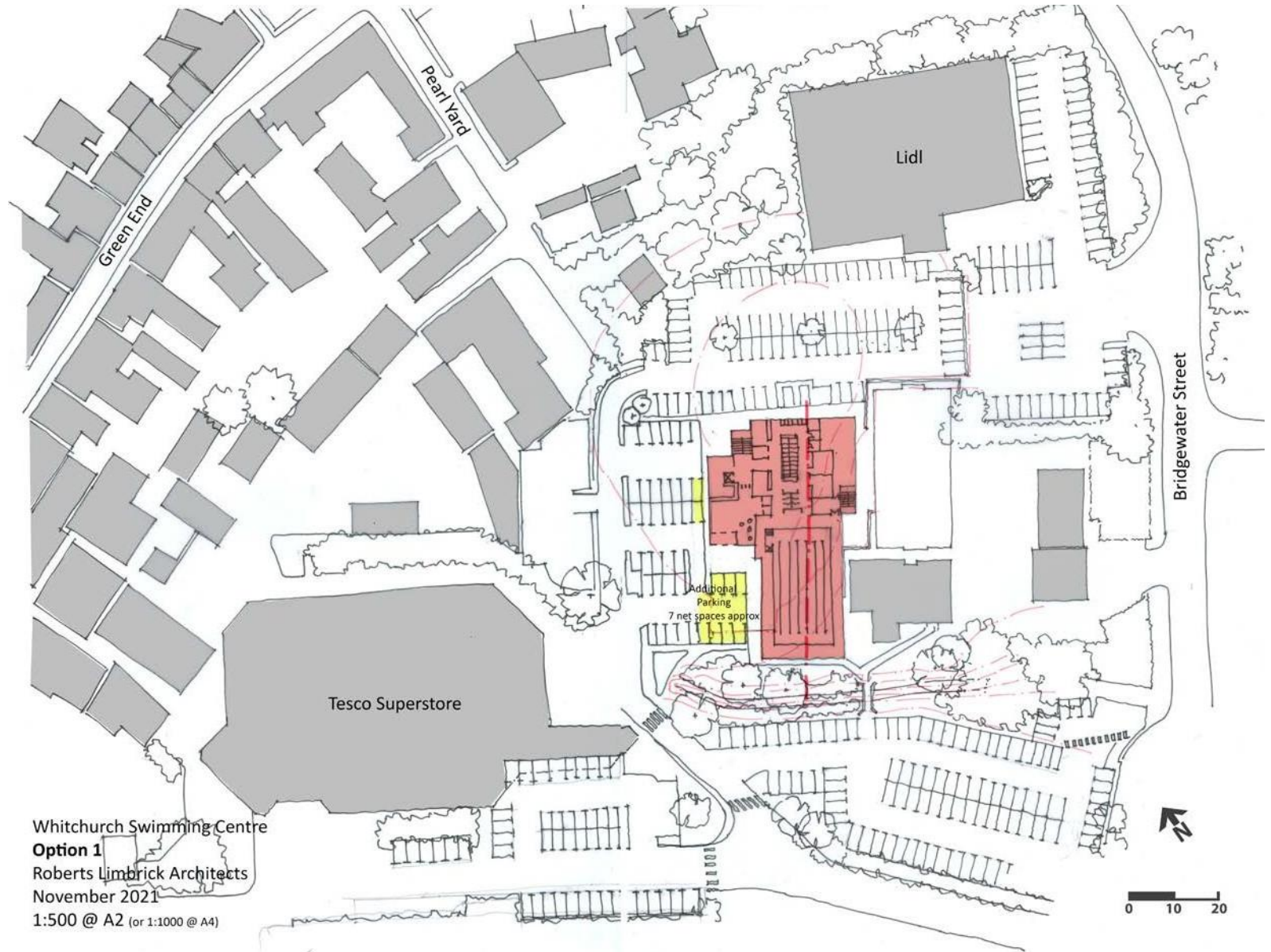
Appendix 2: Business case

Appendix 1: Alternative site layouts considered during the design process

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

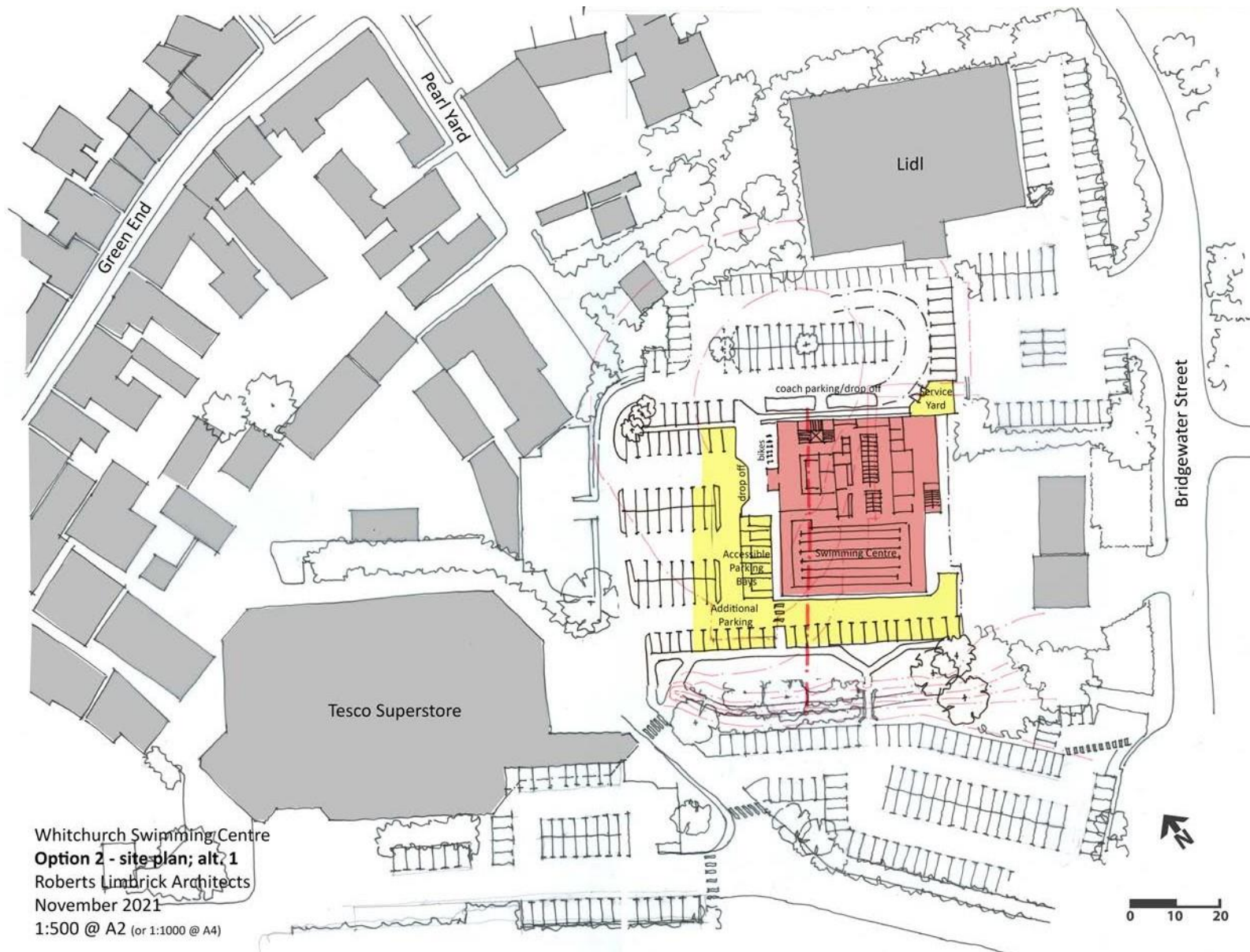


- This proposal places the new leisure centre over the footprint of the existing pool building and the existing disused MUGA and youth centre remain.
- The building arrangement is 'long and thin' and encroaches upon the bank to the stream and the flood zone.
- Very limited additional car parking is provided.



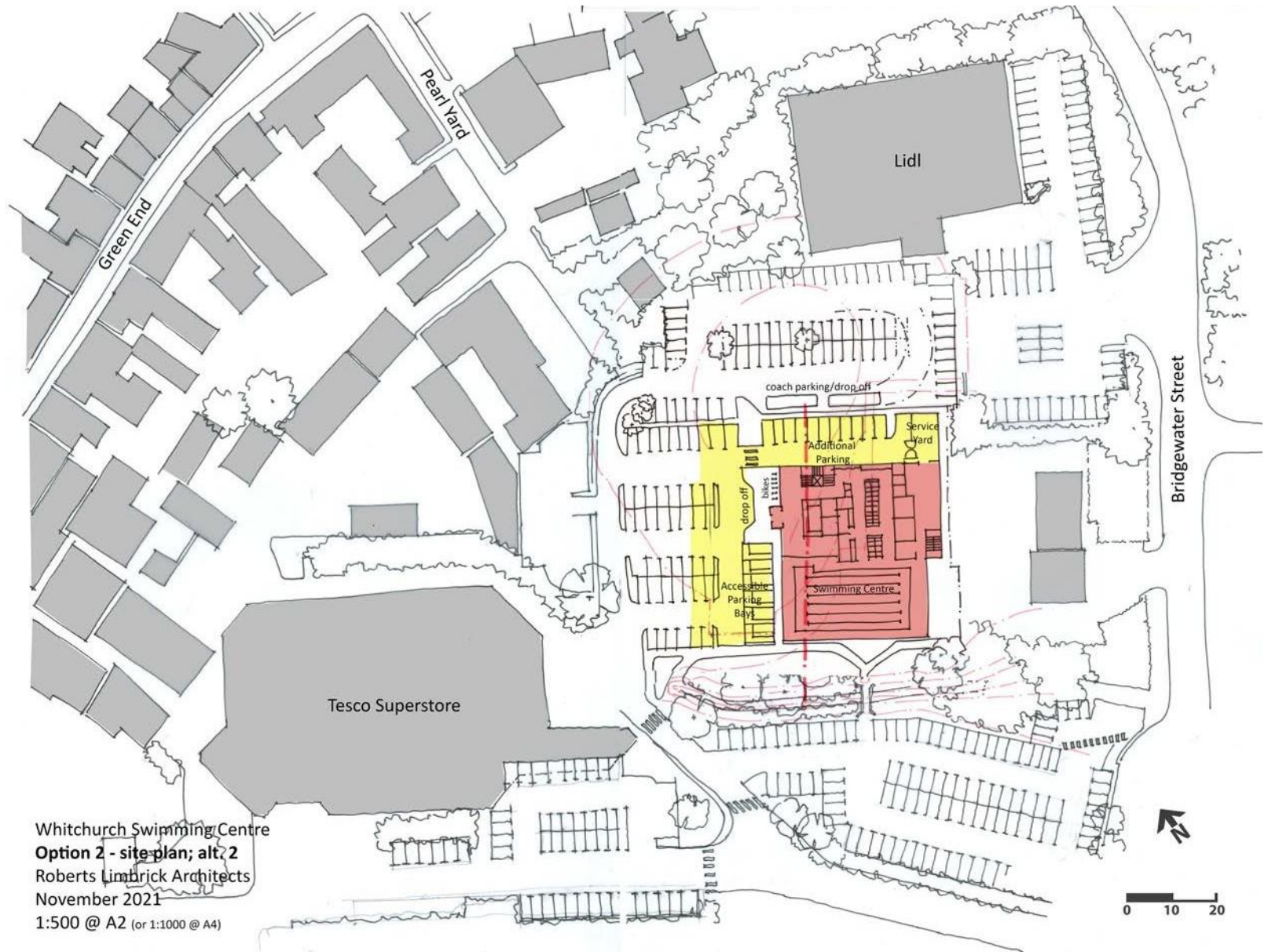
Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 1
 Roberts Limbrick Architects
 November 2021
 1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

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



Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 2 - site plan; alt. 1
Roberts Limbrick Architects
November 2021
1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

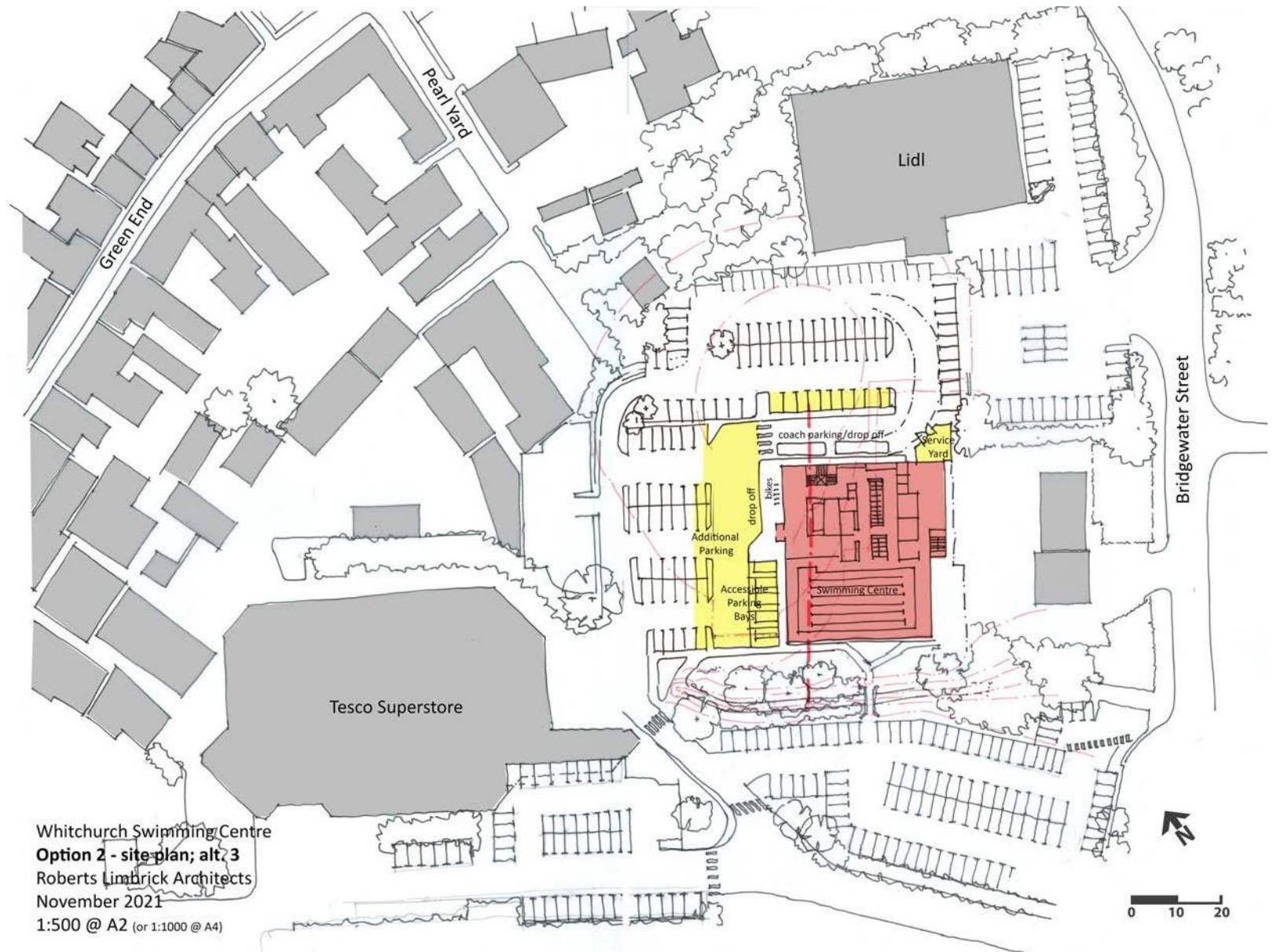
- As option 2 alt 1, but to the south of the site providing parking and service yard to the north.
- **This is the preferred arrangement adopted for the design** (see section 7.0 proposal).



Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 2 - site plan; alt 2
Roberts Limbrick Architects
November 2021
1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

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

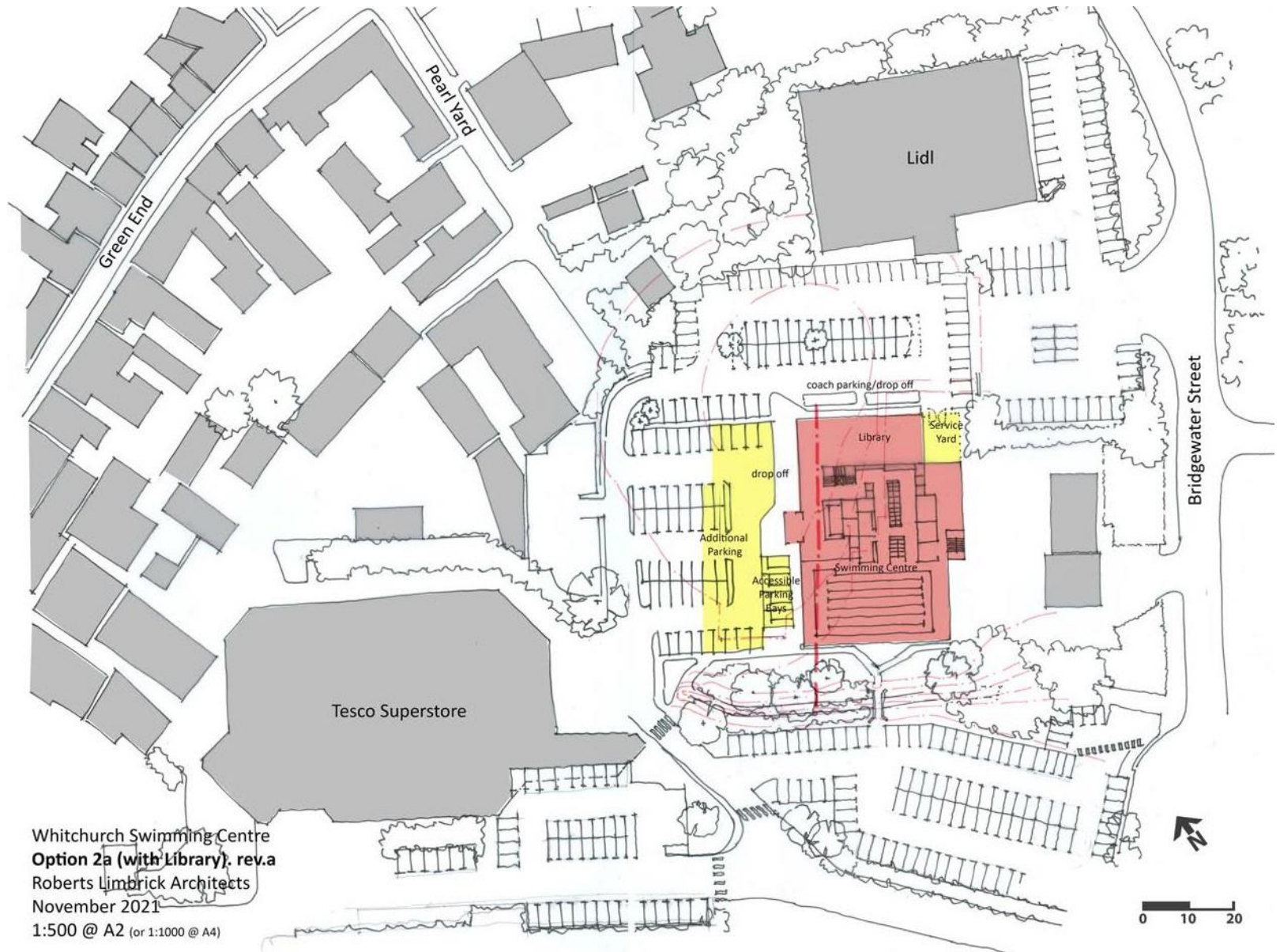
Page 166



Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 2 - site plan; alt. 3
Roberts Limbrick Architects
November 2021
1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

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

Page 167



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

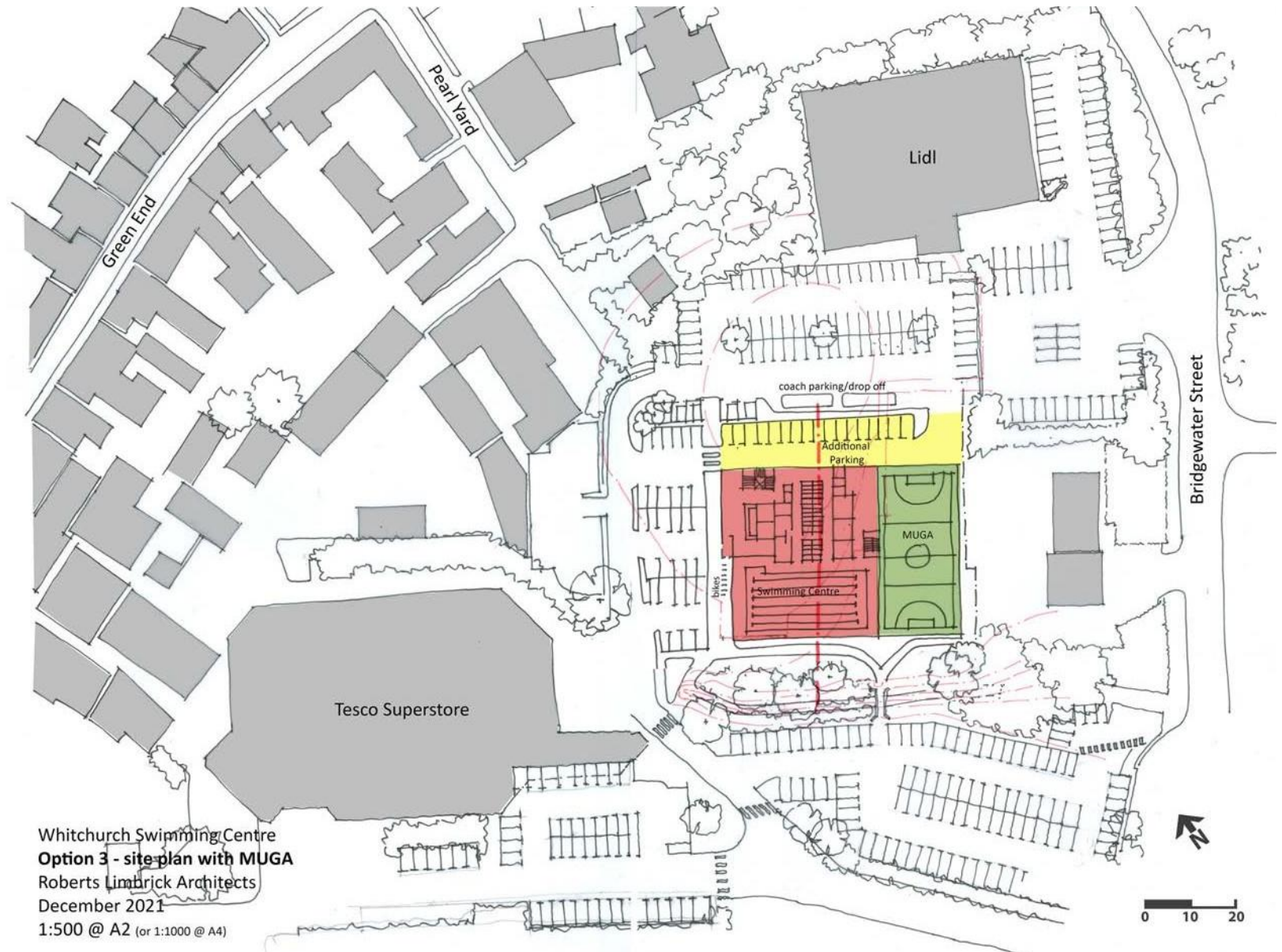
Page 168



Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 2 - site plan with MUGA on roof of pool
 Roberts Limbrick Architects
 December 2021
 1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

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

Page 169



Whitchurch Swimming Centre
Option 3 - site plan with MUGA
 Roberts Limbrick Architects
 December 2021
 1:500 @ A2 (or 1:1000 @ A4)

Appendix 2: Business case

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



Roberts Limbrick

The Carriage Building
Bruton Way
Gloucester GL1 1DG
T: 03333 405 500
www.robetslimbrick.com

Also at:
Newport, South Wales

ISO 9001 : 2015
ISO 14001 : 2015
ISO 45001 : 2018

**Appendix 3: ESHIA for Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre
Shropshire Council
Equality, Social Inclusion and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA)
Second Screening, following consultation August 2022**

A. Summary Sheet on Accountability and Actions

Name of proposed service change
Whitchurch Swimming Centre Feasibility Study

Name of lead officer carrying out the screening
Clare Featherstone, Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism

Decision, review, and monitoring

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

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

Actions to mitigate negative impact or enhance positive impact of the service change in terms of equality, social inclusion, and health considerations

The proposal is for a replacement swimming centre in Whitchurch, which is a large market town in Shropshire, and for which there has been no direct swimming provision since 2020, due to maintenance and structural issues with the existing pool.

The Shropshire Council priorities for sport and physical activity, as set out in the Indoor Leisure Facilities Strategy 2020 - 38 are identified as follows:

Our Vision is that:

Shropshire will be a county where healthier, active lifestyles are encouraged, supported and facilitated for everyone

Three core principles underpin the delivery of our vision:

- Support for the creation of a high quality and sustainable indoor leisure facility mix, which provides accessible and inclusive activities for all Shropshire residents leading to increased participation and active lifestyles, thereby meeting community need
- Recognising the importance of leisure facilities as relevant community spaces, accessible to all and offering opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of activities, services, support and entertainment to local communities and people
- A commitment to work with a wide range of partner organisations and individuals as co-creators and co-deliverers of leisure facilities so that they best reflect the differing needs of local communities.

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

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

Consultation and Engagement

Community engagement has included:

- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and the 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

The survey resulted in 274 responses and 12 written consultation responses were received. Important additional feedback was provided through workshops and meetings (all of which were written up to ensure key issues and feedback has been captured and will be considered in the next stage of work). Overall, the combination of these methods has provided a lot of information to help Shropshire Council better understand priority issues and common themes.

Summary below.

The full report is available as Appendix 1 to the Cabinet Report, 7th Sept 2022.

Summary

The responses consultation were very helpful and despite some concerns, very described and communicated, most comments were positive and optimistic about the prospect of swimming facilities returning to Whitchurch.



Engagement: Feedback was provided from 274 survey respondents, 12 written consultation responses and 7 stakeholder meetings and workshops.



Location: 89% of survey respondents agree with the proposed location covering the existing site and closed Enterprise North-East Youth Centre. The stakeholder meetings and workshops included some suggestions for a larger out of town site.



Ecology: 7 of the 12 written responses and 9 of the 274 survey respondents highlighted significant concerns over the impact the build could have on water voles living in the brook on the site. These concerns were reflected in conversations with stakeholders.



Travel: Survey respondents' preferred method of travel to the location is the car (48%) followed by walking at 37%. Cycle use was the third top preferred method of travel (9%). Active Travel was commented on throughout the engagement with stakeholders highlighting opportunities to improve cycling facilities on site and throughout the local area. Parking facilities were also commonly mentioned.



Facility mix: Feedback calls for a learner/child pool, large pool, private changing, family changing and child/youth facilities as priorities. There are mixed views on the gym and café.



Health: The main barrier to physical activity highlighted by 52% of all the survey respondents was a lack of easy access to facilities and inconvenience. 38% of survey respondents cited cost, followed by insufficient time (24%). The feedback included a wide range of suggestions for facilities and activities to address health and wellbeing.



Community: There was strong support for new opportunities to encourage wider community use of the new centre. Exercise on prescription, social prescribing community groups, sessions designed for older people and consideration of use by schools and young people were all highlighted within the suggestions from the survey and at stakeholder workshops.



Accessibility: 70 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of accessibility. Comments covered wheelchair access, pool and changing access, non-slip surfaces, lifts, hoists moveable floors etc. Other comments covered noise issues including design for people with hearing impairment and quiet sessions design for sensory needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.



Environment: 80 survey respondents and more workshop/meeting attendees highlighted the importance of sustainability and minimising climate impact. Suggestions covered energy efficiency, solar power, heat pumps, green walls, recycling, natural planning and low impact methods to clean the water and centre, and healthy/local food provision.



Overall views: 82% of survey respondents were satisfied with the proposals and additional support was voiced by stakeholders. The feedback overall was very positive.

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

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

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

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

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

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

It will be necessary to continue to work closely with the SC elected councillors for the area, as community leaders, as well as with all relevant stakeholders. This should include engagement with adults with special needs, and young people, as part of the broader public.

Associated ESHIAs

An initial ESHIA was attached to the Cabinet Report on 27th April. This can be found [here](#).

Other relevant ESHIAs include:

- A Vibrant Shropshire: Cultural Strategy 2021-2031
- Leisure Indoor Facilities Strategy 2020-2038
- Libraries Strategy 2018-2023
- Shropshire Great Outdoors Strategy 2018-2028

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

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- Protection of water vole habitat- a preliminary ecological appraisal of the site was undertaken in December 2021 as part of the initial feasibility study. Shropshire Council officers will continue to take appropriate expert advice and ensure more detailed surveys are undertaken during subsequent stages of the project, with the aim of proceeding sensitively to take full consideration of the need to safeguard the water voles inhabiting the brook.
- Environmental and carbon impacts will be addressed as an integral part of design and construction, as discussed below.

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

Carbon Offsetting or Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation

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

Energy and Fuel Consumption

Building to achieve a BREEAM Excellent rating and a DEC A rating. Design to provide for a passive standard of operation at the facilities, the aim being to achieve as low a carbon footprint as possible at a reasonable cost over the life cycle of the project. This will include the provision of a report to compare the

sustainability performance of the existing facility with the new development with the aim that this demonstrates a net improvement. This will have a positive effect, with early investment in the structure of the building consistent with passivhaus principles helping to significantly reduce energy revenue costs over the lifetime of the building.

Renewable Energy Generation

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

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

Carbon offsetting or mitigation

Opportunities to capture carbon as part of the landscaping for the redevelopment will be considered as the design progresses. This could include tree planting and other measures.

Climate change adaptation

The new development means that measures can be taken within the design process that will help ensure the building is adapted for more extreme weather and improve resilience to increased risks to the health and wellbeing of Shropshire's residents

Health and well being

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

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

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

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- The facility mix will be reviewed in light of the feedback to accommodate views where these are possible within the footprint of the site and the budget
- There is further potential for additional benefits for grouping such as those undergoing gender reassignment, and those for whom single sex swimming opportunities are necessary in order to ensure compatibility with and respect for the requirements of their faith. This may be maximised through attention to changing room configurations, and swim time opportunities.
- Once the facility is completed, sessions that encourage health and wellbeing can be encouraged, including Exercise on Prescription, school use and activities for young people
- The design will consider those people with mobility issues and other impairments, enabling key improvements compared to the existing facility

Economic and societal/ wider community

The Cabinet report has been written in the context of the Council's medium term financial strategy and on the assumption that the Council wishes to support the continuing availability of public swimming in Whitchurch for the benefit of the community, but that given financial constraints, it must be provided and operated as efficiently and effectively as possible.

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

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

In response to the consultation and engagement, the following will be incorporated into the development going forward:

- Opportunities to improve active travel options will be considered

Shropshire Plan

The new Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre will help achieve the priorities set out in the Shropshire Plan 2022-25. These include:

Healthy people

- We'll tackle inequalities, including rural inequalities, and poverty in all its forms, providing early support and interventions that reduce risk and

enable children, young people, adults and families to achieve their full potential and enjoy life.

- We'll support Shropshire residents to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, choosing healthy lifestyles and preventing ill-health, reducing the need for long-term or hospital care.

Healthy Economy

- We'll develop Shropshire as a vibrant destination that attracts people to live in, work in, learn in and visit.
- We'll deliver excellent connectivity and infrastructure, and increasing access to social contact, employment, education, services and leisure opportunities.


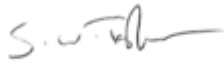
Healthy Environment

- We'll deliver the council's Corporate Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, promoting the means to tackle climate change and reduce our carbon footprint, including the adoption of low-carbon energy for our assets and for communities.

Healthy Organisation

- We will communicate clearly and transparently about what Shropshire Council delivers, signposting to the right places for services and support, and listen to what communities say about their place and what they need.
- We'll put our resources in the right place using accurate data, insights, and evidence to support the delivery of the organisation's priorities and balance the books.

Scrutiny at Part One screening stage

People involved	Signatures	Date
<i>Clare Featherstone</i>		18 th August 2022
<i>Amanda Cheeseman Public Health Development Officer</i>	<i>Amanda Cheeseman</i>	19 th August 2022
<i>Any external support** Steve Taylor</i>		19 th August 2022

Performance and Research Manager		
----------------------------------	--	--

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

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

Sign off at Part One screening stage

Name	Signatures	Date
Accountable officer's name Clare Featherstone, Head of Culture, Leisure and Tourism	<i>Clare Featherstone</i>	18 th August 2022

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

B. Detailed Screening Assessment

Aims of the service change and description
<p>Built in 1972, Whitchurch Swimming Centre comprises a 25m x 5 lane pool and changing facilities.</p> <p>The report prepared for Cabinet for 7th Sept 2022, for which this is the second screening ESHIA, provides feedback on the consultation and engagement, and sets out a business case for the new development.</p> <p>The centre has been closed since March 2020, initially due to the national lockdown as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and further to that as a result of the structural problems identified whilst investigating the cause of a leak from the pool tank which include underpinning issues and deterioration in the fabric of the building.</p> <p>Property Services Group has commissioned investigation work to identify the immediate, medium and, longer term maintenance requirements and costs associated with these to be able to re-open the existing facility and maintain it to an acceptable standard. Further structural investigation work has also taken place which has resulted in the structural engineer stating that due to structural issues repairs will not provide good value for money and will not provide a sustainable facility for the future.</p> <p>Alongside the maintenance investigation works an outline feasibility study was commissioned to review the business case for investment in a new facility to be able to compare this option with carrying out the necessary repairs on the existing facility.</p>

Full details of the feasibility study are contained in Appendix 3 to the Cabinet report for 7th Sept 2022.

Cabinet is to consider feedback from the consultation and engagement, and the business cases, as set out in the report, and is being recommended to:

- I. The business case for the project, as set out in the paper, be presented to Council with a recommendation that the development of the Whitchurch Swimming and Fitness Centre be included in the capital programme with a budget of £12.1m.
- II. There is a recommendation that Council delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, Culture, Leisure & Tourism, to procure, negotiate and agree the terms of any agreements/contracts necessary for the delivery of the project including, but not limited to:
 - Agreeing the procurement strategy
 - Design Team procurement and appointment
 - Site Surveys and Investigations and relevant reports
 - Planning permissions
 - Tendering activities
 - Main contractor procurement and contract sign-off
 - Construction
 - Hand over

Intended audiences and target groups for the service change

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

This list is not exhaustive and will be added to

Evidence used for screening of the service change

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

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

Consultation and Engagement

Community engagement has included:

- An initial key stakeholder exercise was carried out during March and April 2022.
- Emails and letters provided as part of the public consultation exercise.
- Survey responses gathered between 6th June and the 31st July 2022.
- Feedback from 7 engagement workshops and meetings (including Whitchurch Town Council, local businesses, schools and local sports and leisure groups).

The survey resulted in 274 responses and 12 written consultation responses were received. Important additional feedback was provided through workshops and meetings (all of which were written up to ensure key issues and feedback has been captured and will be considered in the next stage of work). Overall, the combination of these methods has provided a lot of information to help Shropshire Council better understand priority issues and common themes.

The full report is available as appendix 1, attached to the Cabinet Report, 7th Sept 2022.

Information about respondent characteristics was collected for the survey (allowing anonymous responses) but was not appropriate for the other forms of information gathering. Understanding the characteristics of survey respondents is helpful

and can determine whether feedback is representative of the wider community or limited to people who share similar characteristics or backgrounds. Core questions are asked (these are all optional). The results highlighted that 80% of survey respondents were members of the public and only 15 surveys were completed by people representing businesses, voluntary and community sector groups and organisations and other bodies.

Those who gave their group or organisation name included a range of local community groups and sports groups.

Overall, 70% of feedback was from females and the comments highlighted that not only did more women describe the needs of their children but they also had more concerns about changing facilities, privacy and opening times (some commented on school holidays and sessions after school). There were also comments relating to children learning to swim and the needs of women with babies/ children in prams and pushchairs.

The survey was responded to by people from a range of age groups but the largest group was 40-44 year olds (34%). There was also a very good response from 45– 59 year olds (31%) and 60-84 year olds (22%). Often the age group of survey respondents for Shropshire Council surveys is slightly older, on average, so this may again reflect the response from parents who wished to feedback for the whole family. All age groups were represented, and it was encouraging to see responses from younger people. 38 of the survey respondents chose not to answer the question.

The survey respondents were asked about their ethnic background and the results show that the response was not representative of a wide range of backgrounds. 92% were from White British backgrounds. However, 92% is representative of the community based on the last available data. 2011 census 94.7% were classed as White British.

There was a helpful comment included from someone conscious of the different needs people may have depending on religion and belief. The comment made suggested women only swimming sessions and highlighted the importance of culturally sensitive sessions

including hair products. This is something that could be explored further in future engagement as work progresses. Comments like this are helpful and sometimes more informal feedback methods or trial sessions may be planned to test demand once facilities are open.

Comments referred to the following:

Gender needs and changing facilities

- Single sex changing facilities
- Baby changing facilities in male changing rooms as well as in female
- Family change areas.
- Women only classes.

Survey respondents were also asked 'Do you have any long-standing illness or disability that limits your daily activity?' 13% of the survey respondents answered 'yes'. Representation from people with different levels of mobility is particularly important within a consultation of this nature. Specific questions were included about accessibility but positively it was a theme that was included within earlier comments without prompting. The results suggested widespread community support for design that will meet a wide range of needs.

Comments referred to the following:

Physical and sensory needs

- Provisions for accessibility for sensory processing and over stimulation individuals
- Include all children in sensory sessions.
- Include space for children

- Different sections dependant on level of experience and fitness
- Consult local adults with learning disabilities directly

Within the comments there were survey respondents who also mentioned suggestions to meet the needs of dependents, relatives and friends.

Other equality comments included:

Parking arrangements and lockers should be easily usable by everyone. Cash can be an issue for younger people, cash-free for older people

Location of respondents





The survey respondents predominantly live within driving distance of Whitchurch. Of the 214 survey respondents who provided a postcode, 167 (78%) live in the SY13 postcode area




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

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

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

Protected Characteristic groupings and other groupings in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two ESIIA required</i>	High positive impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Medium positive or negative impact <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>	Low positive, negative, or neutral impact (please specify) <i>Part One ESIIA required</i>
<u>Age</u> (please include children, young people, young people leaving care, people of working age, older people. Some people may belong to more than one group e.g., a child or young person for whom there are safeguarding concerns e.g., an older person with disability)				
<u>Disability</u> (please include mental health conditions and syndromes; hidden disabilities including autism and Crohn's disease; physical and sensory disabilities or impairments; learning disabilities; Multiple Sclerosis; cancer; and HIV)				
<u>Gender re-assignment</u> (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				Provided that changing room

			configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
Marriage and Civil Partnership (please include associated aspects: caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)				
Pregnancy and Maternity (please include associated aspects: safety, caring responsibility, potential for bullying and harassment)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	
Race (please include ethnicity, nationality, culture, language, Gypsy, Traveller)			 Provided that changing room configurations and other priorities reflect the needs of this grouping	
Religion and belief (please include Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Nonconformists; Rastafarianism; Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, and any others)			 Provided that changing room configurations reflect the needs of this grouping	

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

Initial health and wellbeing impact assessment by category

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

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

Health and wellbeing: individuals and communities in Shropshire	High negative impact <i>Part Two HIA required</i>	High positive impact	Medium positive or negative impact	Low positive negative or neutral impact (please specify)
Will the proposal have a <i>direct impact</i> on an individual's health, mental health and wellbeing?		Improved fitness and weight maintenance; Regular physical		

<p>For example, would it cause ill health, affecting social inclusion, independence and participation?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>activity; Regular social activity; Reduce risk of non-communicable diseases (obesity, diabetes (T2), CVD); Increased social interaction, social ties and networks; Reduce the risk of developing mental health illnesses; Therapeutic benefits for treating physical and mental illnesses including type 2 diabetes, depression, age related cognitive and physical decline</p>		
<p>Will the proposal indirectly impact an individual's ability to improve their own health and wellbeing?</p> <p>For example, will it affect their ability to be physically active, choose healthy food, reduce drinking and smoking?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>Healthy ageing and independence (mental and physical); Healthy childhood development: swimming is important skill to learn from a young age; Community involvement (volunteering)</p>		

		<p>Develop life skills of young people via interactions with peers, parents and coaches; Health equity: community leisure services are accessible for all population groups; Association with health promoting activities and choices; Young ages active play helps develop healthy habits, enjoyment of physical activity and physical literacy skills</p>		
<p>Will the policy have a <i>direct impact</i> on the community - social, economic and environmental living conditions that would impact health?</p> <p>For example, would it affect housing, transport, child development, education, employment opportunities, availability of green space or climate change mitigation?</p> <p>.</p>		<p>Safe play area for children and young people; Building healthy social and cultural norms; Healthy Communities and sense of belonging; Neighbourhood pride and improved aesthetics; Inclusivity of under-represented groups; Increased levels of</p>	<p>Medium positive: Reduction in loss of productivity from absenteeism or lower productivity due to ill health; Increases in skills and academic performance for young people; Employment and training opportunities</p>	

		perceived safety; Positive effect on educational outcomes, including psychological and cognitive benefits	Identifying talent and future athletes	
Will there be a likely change in <i>demand</i> for or access to health and social care services? For example: Primary Care, Hospital Care, Community Services, Mental Health, Local Authority services including Social Services? .		Reduced burden on health care services and savings from improved mental and physical health; Free up health resources to deal with non-preventable problems;		

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

Climate Change Appraisal

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

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

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

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

Health and well being

The development of the Swimming and Fitness project in Whitchurch can support priorities around healthy people, healthy economy, and healthy environment. It also support the Shropshire Plan, as set out above.

It also supports the vision of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy:
“For Shropshire people to be healthy and fulfilled’ and key priorities and focus areas be added - improving population health, building strong and vibrant communities, reduce health inequalities, CYP, mental health, healthy weight and physical activity”

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

Environmental impacts

A preliminary ecology survey has been carried out as part of the feasibility study. Further survey work will take place during the next design phases. Investigations to minimise the habitat for water voles will be a particular focus.

Guidance Notes

1. Legal Context

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

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

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

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

Service areas would ordinarily carry out a screening assessment, or Part One equality impact assessment. This enables energies to be focussed on review and monitoring and ongoing evidence collection about the positive or negative impacts of

a service change upon groupings in the community, and for any adjustments to be considered and made accordingly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The decisions that you make when you are planning a service change need to be recorded, to demonstrate that you have thought about the possible equality impacts

on communities and to show openness and transparency in your decision-making processes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Both the approaches sit with a manager, and the manager has to make the call, and record the decision made on behalf of the Council. Help and guidance is also available via the Commissioning Support Team, either for data, or for

policy advice from the Rurality and Equalities Specialist. Here are some examples to get you thinking.

Carry out an ESHIA:

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

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

Carry out an equality and social inclusion approach:

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

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

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

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

Health in All Policies – Health Impact Assessment

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

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

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

Individuals

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

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

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

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

An example of this could be that you may be involved in proposals for the establishment of safer walking and cycling routes (e.g., green highways), and changes to public transport that could encourage people away from car usage. and

increase the number of journeys that they make on public transport, by foot or on bicycle or scooter. This could improve lives.

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

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

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

Communities

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

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

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

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

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

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

Demand

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

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

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

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

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

This page is intentionally left blank