

# Public Document Pack

## Executive Board

Thursday, 12 November 2020

Time: 6.00 pm

Virtual Meeting

[Join Here](#)

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### AGENDA

**Information may be provided by each Executive Member relating to their area of responsibility**

1. **Welcome and Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  
**Executive Board Minutes September 2020** 4 - 10
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FORM** 11
4. **Equality Implications**  
The Chair will ask Members to confirm that they have considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on this agenda ahead of making any decisions.
5. **Public Forum**  
To receive written questions or statements submitted by members of the public no later than 4pm on the day prior to the meeting.
6. **Questions by Non-Executive Members**  
To receive written questions submitted by Non-Executive Members no later than 4pm on the day prior to the meeting.
7. **Youth MPs Update**  
To receive an update from the Youth MPs along with any issues they would like to raise.
8. **Executive Member Reports**  
Verbal updates may be given by each Executive Member.

**Leader**

**Adult Services and Prevention**

8.1	Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy Appendix1forHomelessnessRoughSleeperStrategy	12 - 23
Children, Young People and Education		
8.2	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 ChildcareSufficiencyAssessment2020 Appendix1CSA2020DataDashboard	24 - 29
Environmental Services		
Public Health and Wellbeing		
Digital and Customer Services		
Growth and Development		
8.3	Land at Holden Fold, Darwen, Masterplan Part 1 - Holden Fold AnnexALandatHoldenFoldDarwenMasterplan LandatHoldenFoldMasterplanConsultationStatement	30 - 140
Finance and Governance		
8.4	Corporate Revenue Monitoring Report - Quarter 2 2020/21 CORPORATE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 - FINAL Copy of Revenue Monitoring Appendix 1 QTR 2 2020-21 Copy of Revenue Monitoring Appendix 2 QTR 2 2020-21	141 - 152
8.5	Corporate Capital Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2020/21 CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET MONITORING REPORT 202021 Quarter 2_v2 Appendix 1 for CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET MONITORING REPORT 202021 Quarter 2 Appendix 2 for CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET MONITORING REPORT 202021 Quarter 2	153 - 163
8.6	Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 Mid-Year Review TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR STRATEGY REVIEW FOR 202021_v2 Appendix 1 for TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR STRATEGY REVIEW FOR 202021_v1	164 - 170

<b>9.</b>	<b>Corporate Issues</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	<b>Sale of Minority Shareholding in BSF Project Companies</b>	
	<b>BSF Part 1</b>	<b>171 - 173</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Matters referred to the Executive Board</b>	
<b>10.1</b>	<b>Petition: Yew Tree Drive</b>	
	<b>Yew Tree Drive Petition</b>	<b>174 -</b>
	<b>Appendix 1 - Yew Tree Drive(1)</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>10.2</b>	<b>Petition: Arkwright Fold</b>	
	<b>ArkwrightFoldPetitionv1</b>	<b>183 -</b>
	<b>Appendix1forArkwrightFoldPetition(2).pdf</b>	<b>188</b>

**PART 2 – THE PRESS AND PUBLIC MAY BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS**

<b>11.1</b>	<b>Land at Holden Fold Darwen, Masterplan</b>	
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	<b>AnnexB Land at Holden Fold Darwen MoU for Delivery Collaboration Part 2</b>	<b>- 200</b>
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	<b>BSF Part 2</b>	<b>201 - 203</b>

Date Published: Wednesday, 04 November 2020  
Denise Park, Chief Executive

## EXECUTIVE BOARD Thursday, 10th September, 2020

### PRESENT

#### **COUNCILLOR:**

Councillor Mohammed Khan OBE  
Councillor Julie Gunn  
Councillor Jim Smith

#### **PORTFOLIO:**

Leader of the Council  
Children, Young People and Education  
Environmental Services

Councillor Vicky Ellen McGurk  
Councillor Phil Riley  
Councillor Damian Talbot  
Councillor Quesir Mahmood

Finance and Governance  
Growth and Development  
Public Health and Wellbeing  
Digital and Customer Services

#### **EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

Councillor John Slater

#### **NON PORTFOLIO**

Leader of the Conservative Group

### **ALL IN ATTENDANCE:**

Zara Hayat  
Khalid Omar  
Muhammed Bapu

Youth MP  
Deputy Youth MP  
Deputy Youth MP

	Item	Action
1	<b><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></b>  The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mohammed Khan, welcomed all to the meeting and read out the statement explaining that this was a virtual meeting. Apologies had been received from Councillor Mustafa Desai.	
2	<b><u>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</u></b>  The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2020 were agreed as a correct record.	<b>Agreed</b>
3	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>  There were no Declarations of Interest submitted.	
4	<b><u>Equality Implications</u></b>  The Chair asked Members to confirm that they had considered and understood any Equality Impact Assessments associated with reports on the agenda ahead of making any decisions.	<b>Confirmed</b>
5	<b><u>Public Forum</u></b>  In accordance with Part 4 of the Executive Board Procedure Rules for questions/statements by members of the public, the following questions/statements have been received, details of which are set out below:-	



	Item			Action															
	<table><tr><th>Name of Person asking the Question</th><th>Subject Area</th><th>Response by</th></tr><tr><td>Ian Sykes, 4 Sunny Bower Road, Blackburn</td><td>Growth Programme</td><td>Phil Riley, Growth and Development</td></tr><tr><td>Ken Moulden, 3 Bank Hey Cottages, Blackburn</td><td>Growth Programme</td><td>Phil Riley, Growth and Development</td></tr><tr><td>Mark Russell</td><td>Growth Programme</td><td>Phil Riley, Growth and Development</td></tr><tr><td>Keith Murray, 34 Gib Lane, Blackburn</td><td>Solvency of Council</td><td>Vicky McGurk, Finance and Governance</td></tr></table>	Name of Person asking the Question	Subject Area	Response by	Ian Sykes, 4 Sunny Bower Road, Blackburn	Growth Programme	Phil Riley, Growth and Development	Ken Moulden, 3 Bank Hey Cottages, Blackburn	Growth Programme	Phil Riley, Growth and Development	Mark Russell	Growth Programme	Phil Riley, Growth and Development	Keith Murray, 34 Gib Lane, Blackburn	Solvency of Council	Vicky McGurk, Finance and Governance			
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	<p>Councillor Riley gave detailed responses to the questions and supplementary questions arising, advising that these responses would be sent to Mr Sykes, Mr Moulden and Mr Russell after the meeting.</p> <p>In respect of the question by Keith Murray, Cllr McGurk advised that the Council was solvent and was a going concern, and that legally the Council could not borrow money for Revenue spending. Mr Murray stated that written responses to such questions should be attached to the minutes of the meeting – the Leader of the Council advised that he would speak to the Council’s Legal Department to see if this was possible.</p>																		
6	<b><u>Questions by Non-Executive Members</u></b>																		
	No questions had been submitted by Non-Executive Members.																		
7	<b><u>Youth MPs Update</u></b>																		
	<p>The Youth MPs updated the Executive Board on their recent work, in particular, a focus on support and assistance for young people returning to school and college after so many months away due to the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Zara was due to virtually attend the Annual UKYP Conference at the weekend, discussing the Make Your Mark Campaign and also would be speaking on two Motions, which was a first for a BwD Youth MP.</p>			Noted															
8	<b><u>Executive Member Reports</u></b>																		

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	Item	Action
	<p><b><u>Leader's Update</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Mohammed Khan verbally reported on the current position relating to the Covid-19 pandemic and thanked all staff, residents and businesses for their efforts at such a difficult time.</p> <p>Councillor Khan also called on more support from the Government, advising that no funding was being made available to Councils for the recently announced Covid-19 Marshalls.</p> <p><b><u>Children, Young People and Education Update</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Julie Gunn verbally reported on the return to school for the Borough's pupils, advising that attendance had been above the national average and no schools had had to close due to a Covid-19 outbreak.</p>	Noted
8.1	<p><b><u>Fostering Service Quarter 4 Report</u></b></p> <p>A report was submitted providing information on the management and performance of the local authority's fostering service. The quarter 4 report included analysis of the past year's data.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> - That the Executive Board notes the Quarter 4 Fostering Service Report which is available on the Council's website along with supporting paper, Appendix 1.</p>	Noted
8.2	<p><b><u>Adoption Now End of Year Report for 2019/20</u></b></p> <p>A report was submitted, which had been compiled by Adoption Now (Regional Adoption Agency) with additional local information included by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's Service Lead for Placements. The report detailed a summary of the period 2019/20 with particular focus upon October 2019 to March 2020 with analysis, data and patterns to support service development.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED-</b> that the Executive Board notes the Adoption Now Annual report alongside Appendix 1.</p>	Noted
8.3	<p><b><u>Schools Capital Programme 2020-21</u></b></p> <p>The Executive Board received a report which presented for consideration and approval, the Capital Programme for Schools and Education for the 2020-2021 academic year.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b></p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approves the attached list of projects as detailed in Appendix 1&amp;2 for inclusion in the 2020-21 Schools and Education capital programme funded from Basic Need,</li> </ol>	Approved

	Item	Action
	<p>School Condition Allocation, Devolved Formula Capital, Healthy Pupil Capital Fund and SEN Capital Fund.</p> <p>2. Approves a change to the schools capital programme reporting in line with school academic year.</p> <p>3. Authorises officers to procure works in accordance with Contracts Procedure Rules as written in the Council's Constitution.</p> <p>4. Approves expenditure to be incurred on individual projects, in line with Standing Financial Instructions.</p> <p>5. Notes that reports will be provided for the Executive Member detailing any variations/amendments to programmes of work and seeking necessary approvals where these are required to ensure compliance with financial instructions and the Constitution.</p> <p><b><u>Public Health and Wellbeing Update</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Damian Talbot verbally reported that World Suicide Prevention Day had been observed earlier in the day in an adapted way due to the current circumstances, but that this was a major issue that needed to be highlighted, along with the support available.</p> <p><b><u>Digital and Customer Services</u></b></p> <p>Councillor Quesir Mahmood verbally reported on the work of the Department in improving the website to support the response to Covid-19, which had received excellent feedback.</p>	<p><b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p> <p><b>Noted</b></p>
8.4	<p><b><u>Growth Programme 2020/21</u></b></p> <p>A report was submitted advising that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council had an economic Growth Programme to support the creation of jobs, housing and infrastructure within the Borough, delivering on the strategy set out in the adopted Local Plan. The Council's strategy had delivered significant growth since 2015 by securing the delivery of over 1300 new homes and 5000 new jobs in the Borough.</p> <p>To deliver this Growth Programme the Council continued to identify and build a pipeline of projects which currently comprised over 200 sites across the Borough with projects planned to be implemented over the short, medium and long term. These projects utilised private or public sector land and covered employment, housing and town centre developments.</p> <p>The report provided a summary of progress to date and outlined the programme of projects for 2020/21.</p> <p>The report requested delegated authority to vary the Growth</p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>Programme for 2020/21 by adding or removing sites as required reflecting emerging priorities.</p> <p>Councillor John Slater voted against the recommendations in the report.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED –</b></p> <p>That the Executive Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approves the Growth Programme priority list to progress through to tender or procurement during 2020-21.</li> <li>• Delegates authority to revise the Growth Programme for 2020/21 (by adding or removing sites) to the Growth Programme Director in consultation with the Executive Member for Growth &amp; Development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Approved</b></p> <p><b>Approved</b></p>
8.6	<p><b><u>Update to S106 process &amp; Infrastructure Funding Statement 2019/20</u></b></p> <p>The Executive Board received an update on the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) produced annually and which provided a summary of financial contributions the Council had secured within the year via Section 106 agreements from new developments for off-site infrastructure works and affordable housing, in addition to highway works completed as part of new developments through Section 278 agreements. It also identified the projects that had been delivered as a result of the contributions across the Borough.</p> <p>This report presents the 2019-20 IFS, and the Council would begin to add a monitoring fee to any s106 agreement associated with planning applications received from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020. These fees would cover the costs involved in the monitoring and reporting on the delivery of these agreements. The IFS set out these fees which would be reviewed as part of the annual update to the IFS. Future updates to the IFS would report on the amount of monitoring fees received each year.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED -</b> That the Executive Board:</p> <p>Approves an update to the Council's s106 procedure to introduce a monitoring fee to any s106 agreement associated with planning applications received from <b><u>1st October 2020</u></b> (as set out in the 2019-20 Infrastructure Funding Statement) and to note the 2019-20 Infrastructure Funding Statement.</p>	<p><b>Approved</b></p>
8.6	<p><b><u>Corporate Revenue Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 1 – 2020/21</u></b></p>	

	Item	Action
	<p>Members received a report on the overall revenue financial position of the Council, highlighting any significant issues and explaining variations in the first quarter of the financial year.</p> <p>In addition to approving the report the Executive Board agreed a recommendation from the Executive Member Finance and Governance that the rent charged by the Council for the 3 months for the period of the lockdown for Market Traders be deemed irrecoverable, in line with decisions taken by other Lancashire authorities. Noting that this loss included within the figures in section 6.1.2 of the report, was to be included within the Council's claim to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government for financial support specifically to fund, in part, the losses in respect of Sales, Fees and Charges as promised by the Secretary of State in July.</p> <p>The Executive Board is asked to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The portfolio cash limit adjustments outlined in Appendix 1.</li> <li>• The Earmarked reserves position shown in Appendix 2.</li> <li>• The variations to revenue expenditure, as listed in Section 6, giving rise to a balance of £7.689 million in the unallocated General Fund revenue reserve.</li> <li>• The additional recommendation above.</li> </ul>	<p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p> <p>Approved</p>
10.1	<p><b><u>Petition regarding the use of No.8 Eden Park, Blackburn, to provide care and support for no more than three children and two adult carers resident at the property at any time.</u></b></p> <p>The Executive Board received a Petition from residents of Larmenier Village of Eden Park, Blackburn, in relation to the proposed use of No.8 Eden Park, as a home to provide support for no more than three children.</p> <p>Members were advised that since the report had been written, the applicants had withdrawn their application.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b> - That the Executive Board;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notes the petition.</li> <li>2. Agree to a process whereby any commissioning department within the Council require any commissioning applicant intending to use non-Council owned property to provide a declaration from the applicant's legal representatives confirming that there are no restrictions or covenants on the proposed property that could affect the commissioned service.</li> </ol> <p>Signed at a meeting of the Board</p> <p>on Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Approved</p>

	Item	Action
	<p>(being the ensuing meeting on the Board)</p> <p>Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were confirmed</p>	

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

**Members attending a Council, Committee, Board or other meeting with a personal interest in a matter on the Agenda must disclose the existence and nature of the interest and, if it is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or an Other Interest under paragraph 16.1 of the Code of Conduct, should leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the item.**

**Members declaring an interest(s) should complete this form and hand it to the Democratic Services Officer at the commencement of the meeting and declare such an interest at the appropriate point on the agenda.**

MEETING: EXECUTIVE BOARD

DATE: 12TH NOVEMBER 2020

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

DESCRIPTION (BRIEF):

NATURE OF INTEREST:

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY/OTHER (delete as appropriate)

SIGNED :

PRINT NAME:

(Paragraphs 8 to 17 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Council refer)

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Adult Services and Prevention

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Adults and Prevention

**DATE:** Thursday, 8 October 2020

**PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED:**

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** (All Wards);

**KEY DECISION:** N

**SUBJECT:**

Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To formally adopt the Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 and authorise its publication on the Council's website.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board: Makes the decision to adopt the Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy 2020-2025 as Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council's formal strategy for the next five year period. Strategy attached at Appendix 1

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the Homelessness Act 2002, the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and the Governments more recent Rough Sleeper Strategy each Local Authority has a duty to agree and publish a strategy document that details how the authority plans to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the following five year period.

3.2 The strategy is set against a backdrop of changes in social and fiscal policy at the national and local level and consequent budget cuts across all sectors.

3.3 The strategy has been developed following a comprehensive review of homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough. As well as a desktop review of current literature the reviewer carried out 'face to face' consultations with all of the key stakeholders within and outside of the Council along with service users and those with lived experience of homelessness.

3.4 Covid-19; the strategy was written and ready for formal adoption by the council as Covid-19 started to become a pandemic. This is a five year strategy and has not taken Covid-19 into consideration, however it has had implications for homelessness within the borough but these will hopefully be short-lived and only last the duration of the pandemic. More information on the impacts of Covid-19 can be obtained directly from the Housing Needs Team.

### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

#### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

4.1 Whilst there has been a significant general increase in those at risk of homelessness in recent years



the biggest increase in the Borough has been amongst single people, particularly those with substance abuse, alcohol dependency and those with poor mental health who are living or have a history of living in the numerous Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's). These chaotic individuals often find themselves forced to rough sleep due to their associated behaviour and the number of rough sleepers in the Borough significantly increased from 2 rough sleepers in 2017 to 21 in 2019.

4.2 The actions that need to be undertaken to deliver the Council's strategic aim and meet its objectives cannot be done without the buy in from partners and the strategy is linked to partner strategies including Vulnerable Persons Strategy, Adolescent Strategy, Alcohol and Substance Misuse Strategy, Community Safety Strategy, Domestic Abuse Strategy, Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Public Health Outcomes Framework and the Borough's Corporate Plan.

4.3 The strategy contains our vision to end rough sleeping and reduce homelessness across the Borough and also details our values that we believe everyone who is homeless has a right to expect. The strategy is split into four strategic objectives:

- Prevention and relief of homelessness
- Limiting the use of B&B and the provision of suitable temporary accommodation.
- Tackle and reduce the levels of rough sleeping.
- Addressing the over-supply of Houses in Multiple Occupation.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy does not stand in isolation; rather it has been designed to help the Council and its partners to achieve aims that cross boundaries and address issues of health, social care and community safety. Successful implementation of the strategy will therefore help to achieve some of the objectives of both our internal and external partners.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 No direct costs are associated with the strategy although indirect costs may result from some of the actions contained within the strategy these will be met from current financial resources and from additional funding that we will receive from Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There is a legal duty under the Homelessness Act 2002, The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 and the Governments Rough Sleeper Strategy to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy in place and to publish this strategy and make it available to anyone who requests a copy.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Any additional resources that are identified over the period of the strategy will be met from within current resources or secured using additional funding made available from MHCLG.

## **9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Please select one of the options below.**

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

As part of the review of the current homelessness and rough sleeping situation and also the production of this strategy a comprehensive consultation exercise was undertaken by the reviewer. As well as a desktop review of current literature the reviewer carried out 'face to face' consultations with all of the key stakeholders within and outside of the Council along with service users and those with lived experience of homelessness.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Stephen Richards, , <a href="mailto:stephen.richards@blackburn.gov.uk">stephen.richards@blackburn.gov.uk</a>
<b>DATE:</b>	21 September 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	None



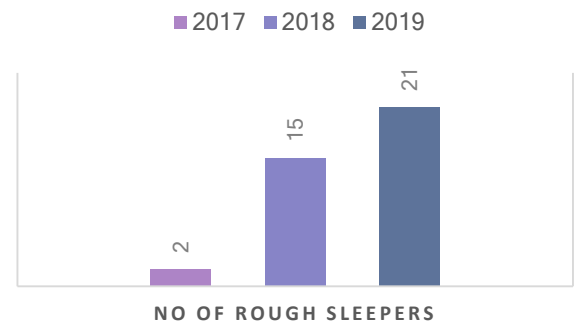
# BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN BOROUGH COUNCIL

## BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN HOMELESSNESS & ROUGH SLEEPER STRATEGY

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local authority to undertake a review of homelessness every 5 years and to publish a strategy based on the findings of this review. Our 2020 strategy is based on the findings of the review we have undertaken and developed in the same spirit as the previous strategy. Both reflect the need for joint working from a wide range of organisations to address the challenges of homelessness, particularly relating to prevention. Our 2020 strategy also recognises the context has been significantly changed by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA), which places further requirements on the Council's Housing Needs and Homelessness services and also other public agencies.

What is clear is the need for homelessness services has increased over the last 8 years for a range of reasons; the impact of austerity, welfare reform, the freezing of Local Housing Allowance, amongst them. Average rents in the private-rented sector have increased and demand for social housing has grown. In 2017, more than 300,000 people, the equivalent of one in every 200, were recorded as officially homeless or living in inadequate conditions. In Blackburn with Darwen 1,251 households requested help to prevent or relieve homelessness in the same year. This equates to one in every 47 households. The number of households seeking assistance is predicted to increase again this year. The reasons for such circumstance are varied with the most common being their family no longer able or willing to accommodate them, relationship breakdown and termination of a private rental agreement.

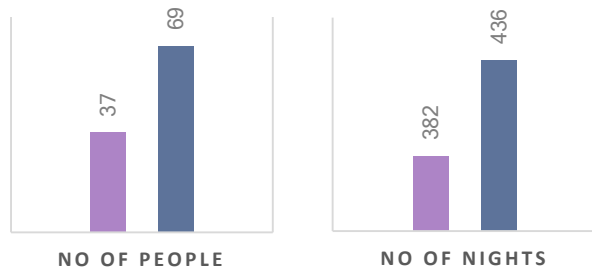
The number of people rough sleeping in England has increased year on year and this has been reflected in Blackburn with Darwen. In the 2017 count we recorded 2 rough sleepers, rising to 15 in 2018 and 21 in 2019.



The emergence of rough sleeping in the borough has become a real cause for concern from both the public and agencies working to prevent such occurrence. What is clear is this cannot be solved by the local authority alone. The prevention and relief of homelessness requires a partnership approach.

A good indicator of demand from the most vulnerable can be seen through the work of our emergency winter provision which is currently provided in partnership with the Salvation Army. While legally such support needs to be made available during adverse weather for example when the temperature is predicted to reach zero degrees for three consecutive days, we provide these service 7 days a week from November to March irrespective of the weather conditions. What it means is that no matter the circumstance there is always somewhere indoors for people to sleep, access warm clothes, and shower and have food.

In 2018 37 people used SWEP (severe weather emergency protocol) service for a collective 382 nights between November and March. In 2019 by the end of December 69 people have used the service for 436 nights; demand is up 50% in less than half the period the service is open for.

**SWEP Usage** ■ 2018 ■ 2019

This is a complex and challenging issue and Blackburn with Darwen are committed to working with its partners to support and protect those in need.

### **PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND STRATEGIC FIT**

This strategy aims to increase prevention activity in order to reduce the incidents of homelessness and where homelessness does occur to relieve it as efficiently as possible. This strategy acknowledges that a range of factors can affect homelessness – as such, it aims to complement other work streams in addressing these factors helping to protect our most vulnerable people.

This includes: -

- Homelessness as a cause and effect of physical and mental ill-health and an essential component in recovery.
- Offender resettlement acknowledging re-offending is more likely if settled accommodation is not made available.
- Suitable accommodation after admission to and discharge from hospital to help with recovery.
- Suitable move-on accommodation is essential for those who are in recovery from diagnosed substance addiction and following residential rehabilitation.

- Engaging with those who are rough sleeping to support them in accessing suitable accommodation helps reduce wider risk factors; to include begging and anti-social behaviour affecting businesses and communities and exploitation and victimisation of rough sleepers themselves.
- Provision of refuges and move on accommodation is essential to protect and support victims of domestic abuse to safeguard against homelessness Protecting young people unable to live with a carer or family to prevent homelessness and maintain education.
- Supporting care leavers as part of the transition to adulthood.
- Access to suitable housing is essential to help integrate refugees given leave to remain.

The breadth of local strategies that this work is going to engage with is testament to the partnership ethos of effectively responding to the matter of homelessness and achieving a positive outcome for those in need.

The partner strategies are listed below:

- Adolescents Strategy
- Alcohol & Substance Misuse Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Health and Well Being Strategy
- Public Health Outcomes Framework
- The Borough's Corporate Plan
- Vulnerable Persons Strategy

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy objectives and outcomes are also reflected in the cross cutting Transforming Lives programme and in commissioning, including the Supporting People Programme, Making Every Adult Matter and substance abuse commissioning.

## THE CHALLENGE LOCALLY:

Blackburn with Darwen has one of the highest rates of death amongst the homeless population with 8 recorded deaths in 2018. This places us the second highest in the UK; and in the top 5 consistently since 2013. Recorded deaths are not just for those sleeping on the streets: it also includes those that were living in direct access hostels and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The borough has over 800 bed-spaces in HMO's of which 550 are in 8 large HMO's close to Blackburn town center. This is an over-supply compared to our population with approximately 3 times the places available in comparable towns across the UK. The quality of such accommodation and the support offered is also a concern reflected in the importance placed on holding the owners of such properties to account in this strategy and those that complement it.

This Strategy is the product of reflective learning from other similar work and wider learning from adult reviews and housing programs including the Homeless Trailblazer Programme. Therefore, this strategy is grounded in providing a bespoke, user focused, ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) aware approach for service users

The collaboration between those who are homeless and respondent services demonstrates an expansion of the commitments made through previous iterations of our homelessness strategies.

The Strategy sets out a clear vision and values that have framed the work of the Partnership:

**VISION: To end Rough Sleeping and Reduce Homelessness in Blackburn with Darwen.**

## VALUES:

**We believe that everyone who is homeless have a right to:**

- A safe, secure home and appropriate support that is required to maintain that home.
- The full protection of the law and not to be subjected to violence, abuse, theft and discrimination
- Equality of opportunity to employment, education, training, volunteering and leisure activities to support their engagement with their community and wider society.
- Equality of access to information and services.
- Respect and a good standard of service.

We believe that those who work with the homeless have a collective responsibility to ensure that we have good communication and a consistent approach to all services that are delivered, and that the lived experience of homelessness remains central to our approach.



## Objectives:

The strategy has four strategic objectives:

- Prevention and relief of homelessness
- Limiting the use of B&B and the provision of suitable temporary accommodation
- Tackle and reduce the levels of rough sleeping
- Addressing the over-supply of houses in multiple occupation:

### Objective 1: Prevention and relief of homelessness

As noted, partnership working is vital in order to provide interventions at the earliest stage. Those who receive timely interventions are less likely to become homeless.

At the core of this objective is the need to address inequalities that may exist in accessing employment, education and health services across the borough all of which can lead to homelessness in the future. We need services to actively support the prevention of homelessness, acknowledging the links to their own services and the services offered by others.

#### We can promote prevention by:

- Ensuring that those who have experience of homelessness are involved in designing services that are accessible.
- Encouraging services across all sectors to work better together, not in isolation.
- Making sure that people are not discharged from one service directly on to the streets: particularly those discharged from prisons, mental health services and hospitals.
- Ensuring that we are good corporate parents to our care leavers, helping them access the correct services and pathways so that they are not at risk of becoming homeless when they leave care or as they transition to adult services.

- Working with the private rented sector and social landlords to establish new approaches to prevent evictions.
- Ensuring that there is easy access to specialist advice across the community where there is a risk of homelessness, and that day centres for the homeless can support people who arrive at a point of crisis

#### We will support people to maintain their tenancy by:

- Providing advice and information to support people to access services that could prevent them becoming homeless.
- Working across services and organisations to proactively prevent and reduce homelessness
- Early identification where households may be at risk of homelessness and supporting agencies to recognise at-risk families or individuals and refer.
- Engaging with private and social landlords to develop protocols that help to reduce the number of evictions
- Bringing in other services that might be needed where antisocial behaviour could put someone at risk of homelessness

#### We will support people who are required to move to do so in a managed way by:

- Creating opportunities for accessing suitable housing for their need(s) which is of the right quality.
- Working to reduce recurring homelessness, by identifying influencing factors for that individual and connecting people to appropriate local services.
- Ensuring that all discharges from the health sector are planned, with continuity of treatment and support where needed.

## **Objective 2: Limiting the use of B&B and increasing the provision of suitable temporary accommodation**

Since the commencement of the HRA, the reliance on B&B accommodation has increased particularly for single individuals. The use of this unsupported temporary accommodation is not ideal and so it has been, and will only be, used as a last resort in emergency situations.

In response to this issue the authority currently leases 22 properties made up of flats and houses from Registered Providers as an alternative to B&B placements. These are furnished and maintained to a standard above that expected in legislation and the 'Code of Guidance' and are managed by the Housing Needs Team who also provide the services of a support worker. 5 of these properties are specifically for use by victims of domestic abuse who may not be able to access refuge accommodation. They are supported by an additional specialist IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) from within the Housing Needs Team.

The borough also makes use of specialist temporary accommodation for families and single parents with access to a purpose built property containing 10 self-contained 2 and 3 bed apartments with 24-hour support.

Despite the availability of temporary accommodation, we remain committed to the ethos that this is a last resort and have adopted the following working practice:

- Where B&B is the only option we will ensure that it is of a good standard and keep in daily contact with occupants to ensure they are fully supported.

- Ensure that people placed in temporary and supported accommodation integrate fully into their community and that they aren't isolated or disadvantaged through being placed in this type of short term accommodation.
- Ensure that every family placed in temporary accommodation receives dedicated support from an experienced support worker.
- Minimising the need for temporary accommodation over time by preventing people becoming homeless.
- Understanding the current and future demand and unmet need for supported and temporary accommodation to influence the future commissioning of services and improving access to supported accommodation.
- Working with those who have lived in temporary and supported accommodation to design, commission and deliver future services that are accessible to all.
- Ensuring that specialist support (for example support for those who have experienced domestic abuse) is available and accessible.
- Engage with SERCO (holders of the asylum seeker accommodation and support contract) and the Home Office to monitor and effectively manage asylum trends and demands.



### Objective 3: Tackle and reduce the levels of rough sleeping

The emergence of rough sleeping in the borough has become a significant issue that cannot be solved by the local authority alone.

We have a good partnership approach to this issue and utilise various tools to help achieve a reduction in numbers and support the very vulnerable in our community. Blackburn with Darwen led a successful bid to secure Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding which has allowed us to employ 2 case navigators based alongside the homelessness team. They actively engage with rough sleepers and beggars supporting them off the streets and into suitable accommodation should they chose to. There remains a cohort of rough sleepers who for whatever reason choose not to take up offers of assistance and accommodation.

The borough has also commissioned the Salvation Army to provide our official SWEP accommodation. Under Government guidance SWEP should be provided during the winter months when the temperature is forecast to be below zero on 3 consecutive nights or when other extreme weather is prevalent. We believe this is unsatisfactory, so we have commissioned the SWEP service every night between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> March irrespective of the predicted temperature. This service provides overnight accommodation along with hot food and drinks and showering facilities for all irrespective of circumstance or previous issues and behaviour. A number of individuals have historically been too chaotic for the SWEP provision, putting other users and staff at risk: we have therefore commissioned security at the Salvation Army in order to allow those individuals to stay on an overnight basis.

**We are committed to reduce the level of rough sleeping and ensure that appropriate support and provision is available by:**

- Proactively engaging with the HMO's to find ways of reducing the evictions that lead to rough sleeping.
- Utilise the case navigators to engage with rough sleepers and facilitate pathways into suitable accommodation.
- Offer financial support as a means of accessing accommodation where there is a commitment to tenancy sustainment.
- Relocate individuals that are from out of area and do not have support networks in the borough or who need a fresh start away from people who do not act in the individuals' best interests.
- Engage with neighbouring boroughs about out of area placements of chaotic individuals ensuring they do not discharge their own statutory duty by placing individuals in this borough who do not have support networks or links here.
- Look at innovative ways to engage entrenched rough sleepers who consistently choose not to accept offers of accommodation and remain on the street.
- Always maintaining an open door policy no matter how many times they refuse assistance
- Ensuring the service is accessible and available all times of the day and night to everyone in the borough.
- Work with supported housing providers to develop pathways into accommodation that affords individuals a 'second chance'
- Provide temporary beds and bedding and any other support required for the provision of over-night accommodation for vulnerable single people.
- Scope the development of a vulnerable person's hub that ensures specialist support services are available in a 'one stop shop' to include housing, substance misuse, Probation, debt and welfare advice etc.

## **Objective 4: Addressing the over-supply of houses in multiple occupation:**

The HMO's in the borough fall within different categories; from those provided by registered social landlords and charities through to those operated by private individuals, businesses and families for profit. Collectively they present a significant challenge for a number of reasons:

Firstly, we are concerned for the welfare of individuals in a number of these properties. Given their vulnerabilities they are at risk of being taken advantage of by other tenants, and criminal networks whom target concentrations of vulnerable people.

There are now multi-agency arrangements that meet regularly to monitor and address issues faced by residents of HMO's. Membership includes Community Safety, Police, Safeguarding, DWP, Housing Needs, Probation, Planning, Housing Standards and case Navigators.

The above multi-agency partners aim to improve the standards in privately run, poor performing HMO's and where we can evidence malpractice, crime or safeguarding risks then all enforcement options will be made available.

Secondly, demand placed on support services by those residing in HMOs is significantly higher than those in other types of accommodation. The percentage of HMO occupants who have challenges around substance misuse, mental health and wider health and social needs is high when compared to users of other housing types.

The Select Committee report on Regenerating Seaside Towns and Communities (April 2019) looked at the wider issues regarding housing and suggested that local services were struggling to meet the needs of the population inhabiting HMO accommodation stating that:

"One of the major impacts is on local services in both the public and voluntary / community sectors

who are left to address the problems caused. Services across both sectors, with limited resources and budget cuts over recent years, have been stretched and struggle to address the problems in meaningful ways. One example is the reduction in Supporting People budgets and cuts to Adult and Social Care, which means that the wider support for tackling complex and challenging problems (mental health issues, drug and alcohol issues) is substantially affected"

Research conducted by Adele Irving (2015) into the health and wellbeing of those living in HMOS found that HMO residents typically have multiple needs, with alcohol dependency and mental health problems being most prevalent.

Thirdly whilst all HMO's are governed by fire and housing standards legislation the care and support provision is not dealt with in the same way. This is an issue and we need to constantly ensure that care and support in private HMO's reach an appropriate standard and landlords actually support the needs of their client group or customers.

In response to these challenges:

### **We will work to address the over-supply of HMO's by:**

- Closely examining all planning applications for new HMO's including both new developments and changes of use.
- Enforcing standards and taking action against those flaunting regulation and good practice.
- Finding ways to work with owners in order to ensure that those with a local connection are prioritised over others.
- Closing HMO's that pose a risk to their residents.

**We will improve the experience of those living in HMO's by:**

- Operating a targeted approach in managing poor performing HMO's.
- Providing outreach support to HMO residents ensuring that they are not excluded from specialist services.
- Developing move-on pathways from the privately run HMO's towards the supported projects and independent housing with support.
- Assisting individuals from out of area to fully reconnect back to their own borough with support to access suitable housing via the local authority
- Encouraging partners to deliver services in the HMO's and the owners to allow and encourage these services within their building
- Report any incidents of criminality to the relevant partner and ensure a robust response.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Children's Young People and Education (Please Select) (Please Select...)
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Director of Children's Services and Education (Please Select)
<b>DATE:</b>	12 November 2020

<b>PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:</b>	Children's Young People and Education	(Please Select...)
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	All	(Please Select...)
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**SUBJECT: Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020**

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To advise the Council's Executive Board of the outcomes of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 in respect of the Local Authority's statutory duties and functions as detailed in the Childcare Act 2006 and 2016.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:  
Notes the content of the report in relation to the 2020 review of Childcare Sufficiency across Blackburn with Darwen.

### 3. BACKGROUND

A Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is a detailed investigation and measurement of the nature and extent of the need for, and supply of, childcare within each local area.

The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment should not only look at the current position, but also have regard to trends or developments that are likely to affect demand and supply in the foreseeable future e.g. new housing developments or increases in childcare provision that may impact negatively on the childcare market due to over saturation/supply. The assessment should be kept under regular review to ensure that any assumptions remain robust and valid.

### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

The childcare sufficiency data shows that there is a significant oversupply of available early education and childcare places for children aged birth to 8 years to meet current demand.

#### Sufficiency of Early Education and Childcare places for children aged birth to five years

The Autumn 2020 data collection advises that 44% of the early education and childcare places across the Private, Voluntary, Independent (PVI) and Maintained sectors in Blackburn with Darwen are currently vacant. This is an increase of 10% on the previous year. The increase in vacancies is mainly

attributable to the impact of Covid-19 for those families that are paying privately for childcare to enable them to either study or work. Many parents either have reduced the number of hours that their child would have attended a childcare setting, sourced alternative childcare or do not now require childcare provision due to working from home.

The PVI sector has seen the greatest impact in respect of a higher number of vacancies for children aged birth to 5 years. This is even more concerning considering that there are 232 fewer full time equivalent childcare places than at the same time last year across all sectors alongside a decrease in birth rates.

The take-up of the early education offer for 2, 3 & 4 year olds remains similar to that of previous years, and although some children have not attended for early education sessions during the pandemic period, children have remained on roll for this service. On a borough wide footprint, the take up of 2 year old early education offer continues to be below the national average.

On a ward level basis the current position highlights that 12 out of 17 wards have a significant oversupply of vacancies and it is within these wards specifically where the PVI sectors are starting to report sustainability concerns.

At this time, there are no additional funding streams available to the Local Authority specifically targeted at the early education and childcare sector although settings have continued to be funded, to date, for 2, 3 and 4 year old early education places at the same level that they were funded at in the previous year.

#### Sufficiency of Out of School Childcare places for children up until the age of eight years.

Vacancies across the Out of School Childcare sector are also high, with an average of 35% of places being unoccupied.

#### Quality of Provision

Early education and childcare providers in Blackburn with Darwen continue to provide high quality services, with 93.4% of Ofsted inspected provision rated as good or above.

#### Cost of Childcare

Across all sectors, the average price of a 50 hour full time childcare place in Blackburn with Darwen remains lower than the regional and national averages reported in the 'Coram Family and Childcare - Childcare Survey 2020'.

The local authority has a duty to secure sufficient, high quality, affordable, flexible and available childcare places to enable parents to study and/or work. Throughout the pandemic period, businesses have been advised to explore the additional resources made available by Government including business rates relief, small grants and staff furlough schemes. These schemes have offered the sector some economic support to date, however the impact of the reduced need for the provision of childcare at this current time, and the imminent end of the Governments pandemic financial relief schemes will result in some childcare settings (particularly across the PVI sectors) becoming financially unviable and may result in them closing.

Given the current high level of vacancies across the sector, a small number of closures would not negatively affect the Councils duty to secure sufficient childcare, and could create a more financially stable market. A key risk however would be managing the number and timing of any such closures to ensure that should the Council need to be in a position to procure or provide alternative childcare provision that they have the time and resource available to do so. The sustainability of the childcare sector needs to be closely monitored.

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## 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Current oversupply across the borough is a cause for concern in respect of the ability for businesses to remain financially viable. There is a high possibility that some businesses will not sustain should the current economic climate continue.

If in the future the local authority finds that there are not enough childcare and early education places to meet demand there will be a statutory requirement for the local authority to either procure the provision of new places or directly deliver this service themselves.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Resource will be required from within the existing Early Help and Finance Teams to monitor the current and future position in respect of childcare provider sustainability.

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## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

**Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.**

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA link here*)

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. (*insert EIA attachment*)

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## 10. CONSULTATIONS

Early years and childcare provider sectors are consulted on a termly basis in respect of childcare sufficiency data

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## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

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## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

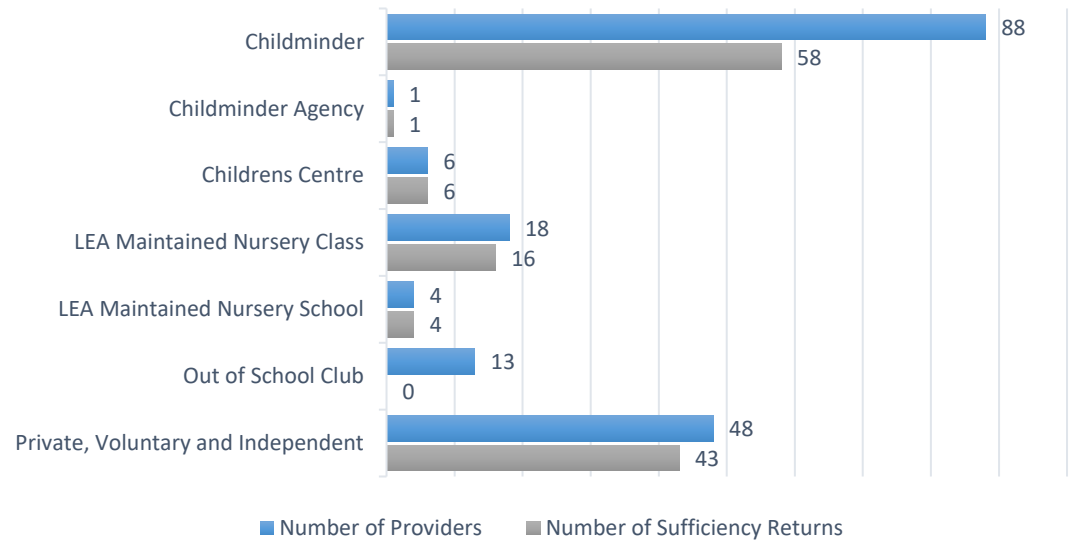
<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Maria Nugent, Early Help and Support Service Manager</b> <b>Carol Grimshaw, Service Lead, Education</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	24 September 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Appendix 1: Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020 Data Dashboard

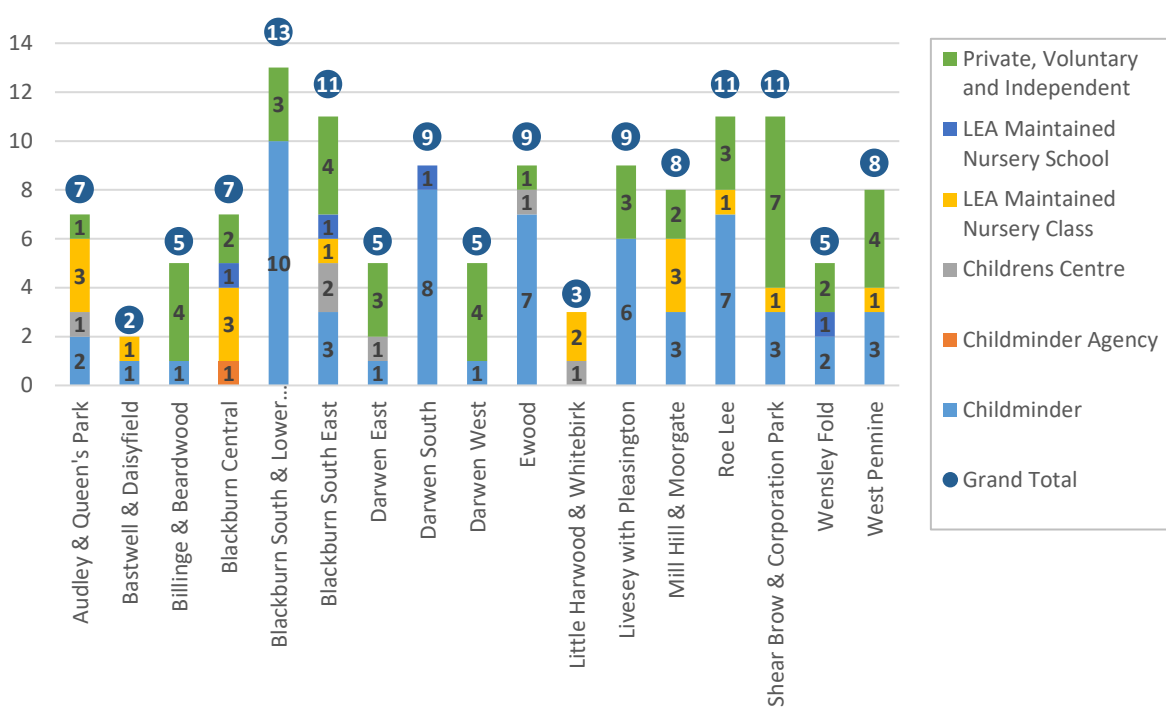
Childcare Sufficiency Assessment 2020  
Data Dashboard



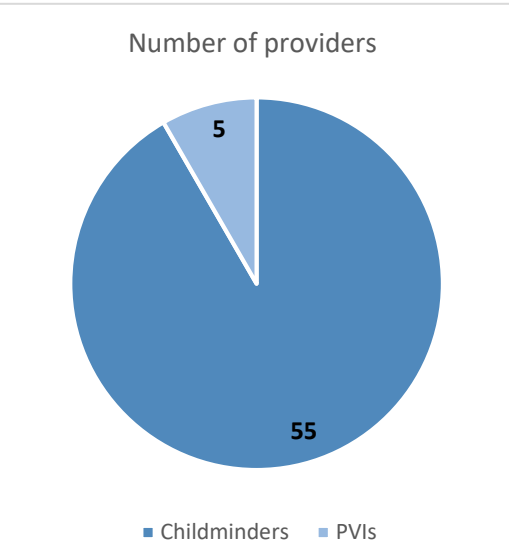
Numbers and types of childcare providers in Blackburn with Darwen  
Of the 178 childcare providers, 72% returned their vacancy data.



Number of providers by type and ward  
Location by ward of those who returned their sufficiency data



Before and After School Childcare  
Of the 128 provider who returned their sufficiency data, 60 provided vacancy data for before and after school care for those aged 5 and above.

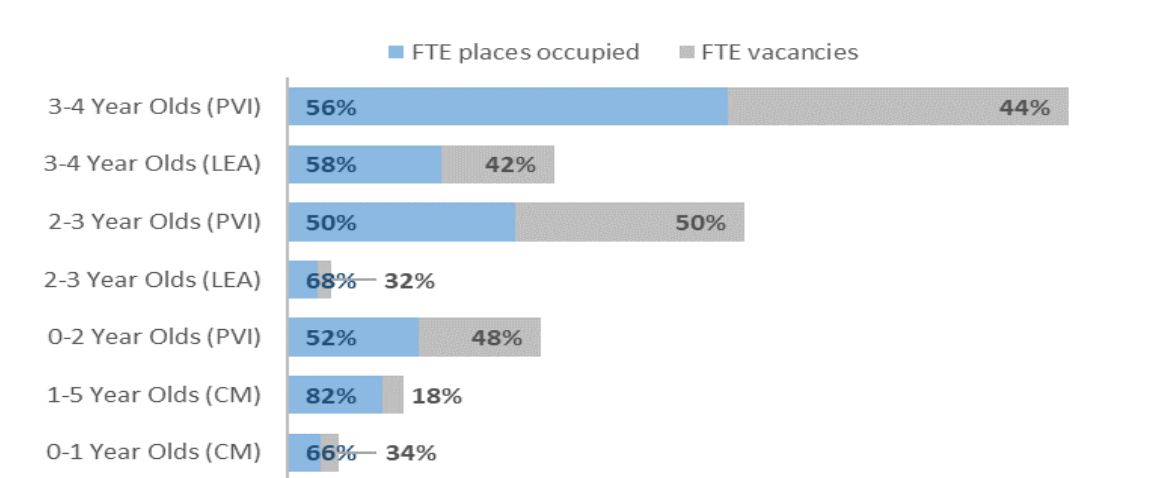


Childcare places available and vacancies age 0-5 by ward  
FTE = Full Time Equivalent (50 hour childcare place per week)

● = significant oversupply of vacancies  
● = oversupply of vacancies available  
● = healthy supply of vacancies available

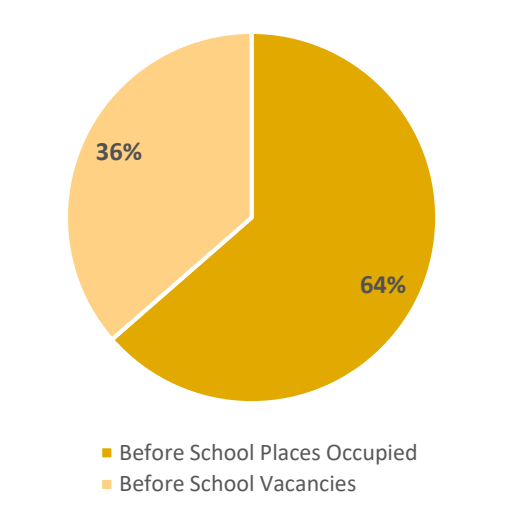
	Total FTE Places Offered	FTE vacancies	% vacancies to places offered	
Audley & Queen's Park	145.1	72.9	50%	●
Bastwell & Daisyfield	24.2	3.2	13%	●
Billinge & Beardwood	210.4	116.2	55%	●
Blackburn Central	169.8	97.0	57%	●
Blackburn South & Lower Darwen	300.0	138.6	46%	●
Blackburn South East	356.3	155.4	44%	●
Darwen East	178.6	91.6	51%	●
Darwen South	76.8	11.3	15%	●
Darwen West	131.1	36.3	28%	●
Ewood	134.3	67.5	50%	●
Little Harwood & Whitebirk	67.7	32.4	48%	●
Livesey with Pleasington	95.4	16.1	17%	●
Mill Hill & Moorgate	163.4	46.9	29%	●
Roe Lee	163.1	95.5	59%	●
Shear Brow & Corporation Park	473.9	199.9	42%	●
Wensley Fold	118.4	58.9	50%	●
West Pennine	175.5	59.5	34%	●
Grand Total	2983.8	1299.2	44%	●

Percentage of occupancy to vacancies  
By age band and provider type (LEA includes children's centres)

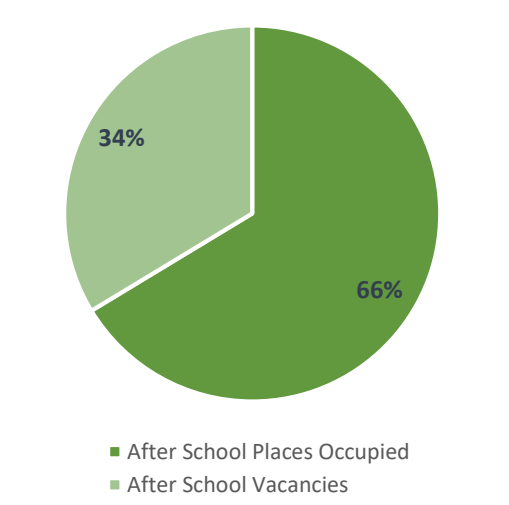


Age Group	Total FTE places offered	FTE places occupied	FTE vacancies
0-1 Year Olds (CM)	76.3	50.7	25.6
1-5 Year Olds (CM)	176.4	144.3	32.1
0-2 Year Olds (PVI)	383.4	198.2	185.2
2-3 Year Olds (LEA)	66.5	45.5	21.0
2-3 Year Olds (PVI)	692.6	345.2	347.4
Sub total 2-3 Year Olds	759.0	390.6	368.4
3-4 Year Olds (LEA)	403.9	233.0	170.9
3-4 Year Olds (PVI)	1184.8	667.8	517.0
Subtotal 3-4 Year Olds	1588.7	900.8	687.9
Grand Total	2983.8	1684.6	1299.2

Before School Childcare



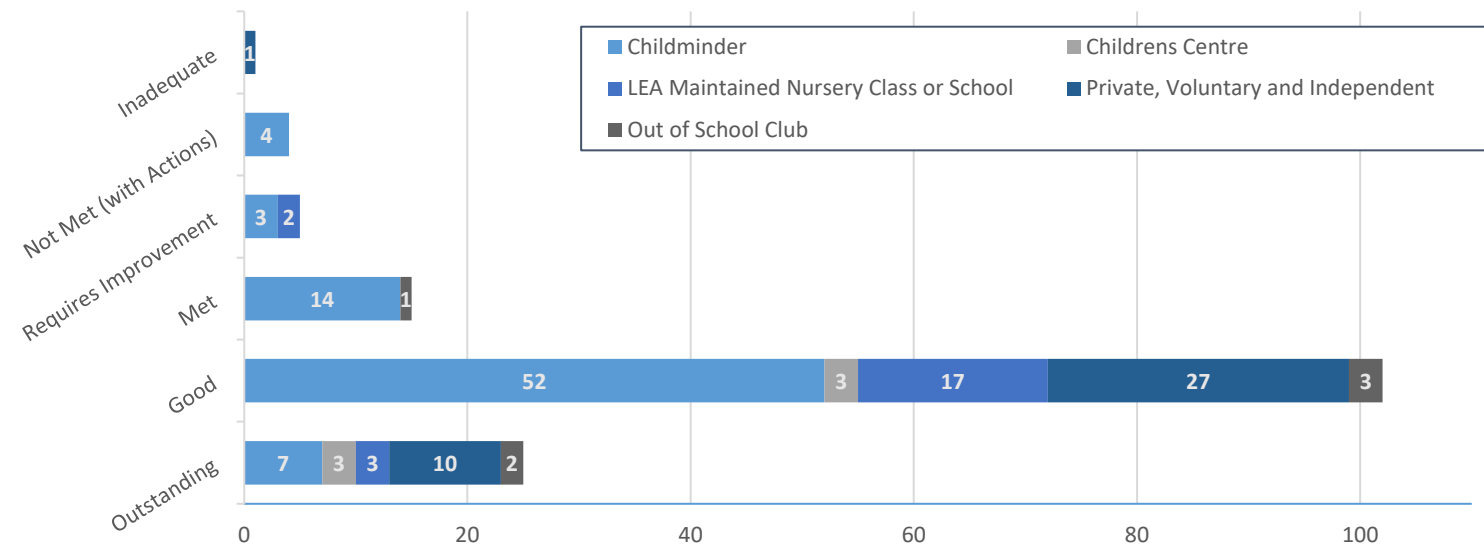
After School Childcare





### Quality of childcare

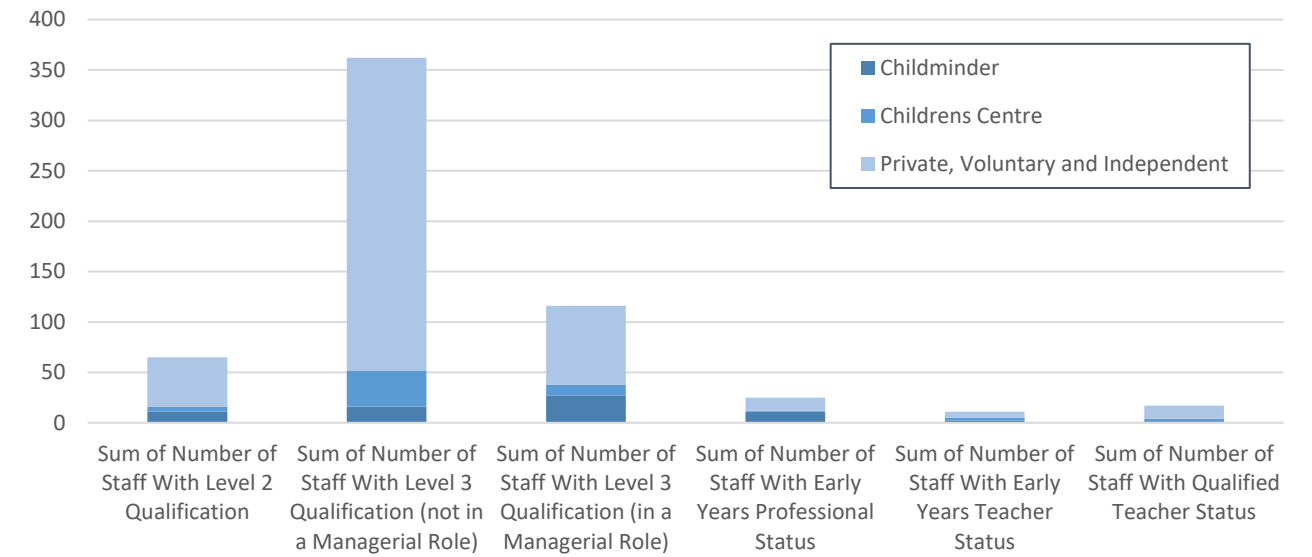
In Blackburn with Darwen, 93.4% of all childcare providers with an Ofsted grading\* are rated as good or above.



\*26 settings are awaiting their first inspection and currently do not have an Ofsted grade

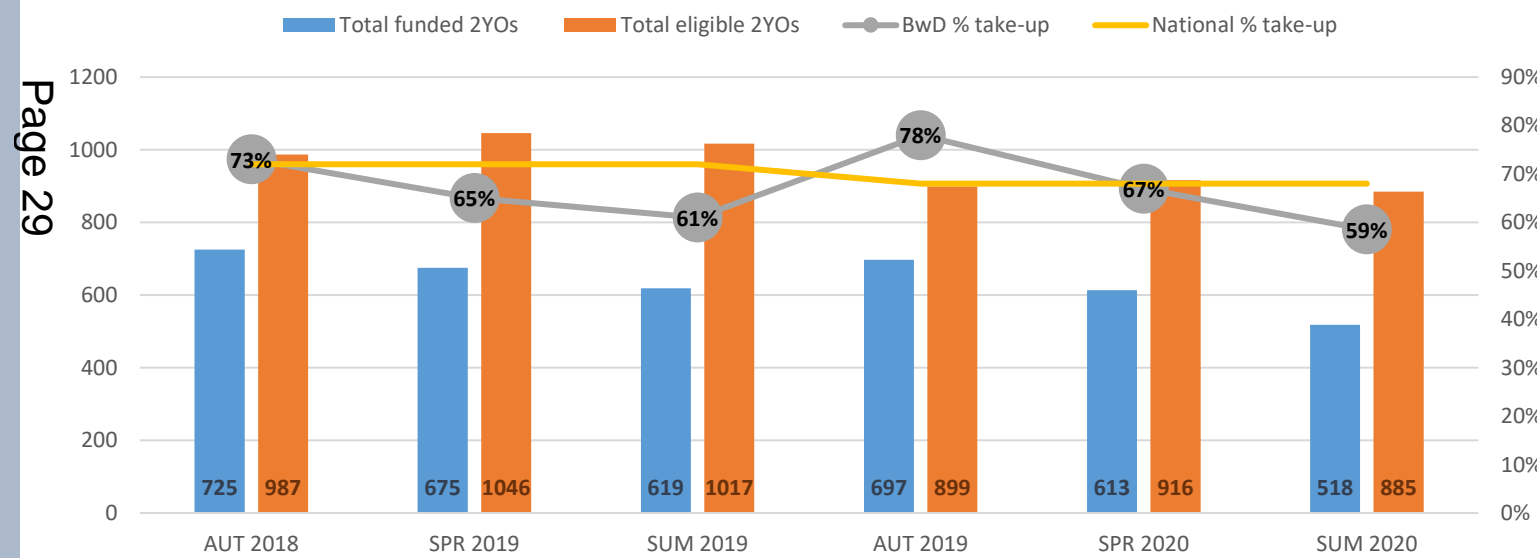
### Staff Qualifications

Early years census: January 2020



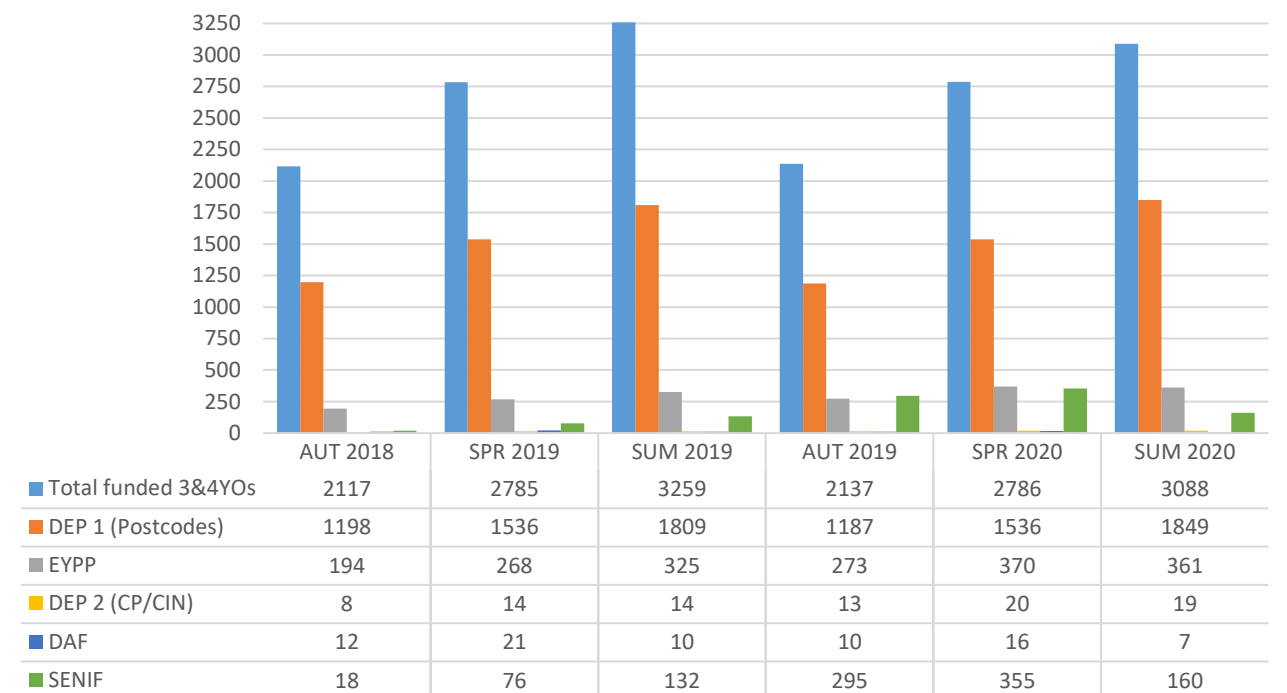
### Two year old early education

Take-up of funded places



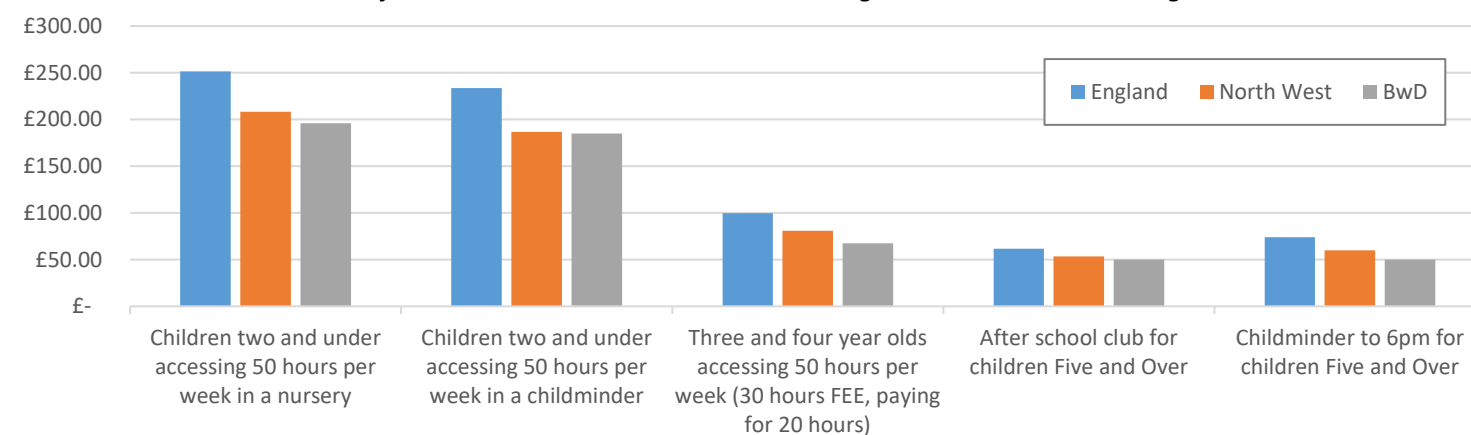
### Three and four year old early education

Number of children accessing FEE and those claiming additional supplements

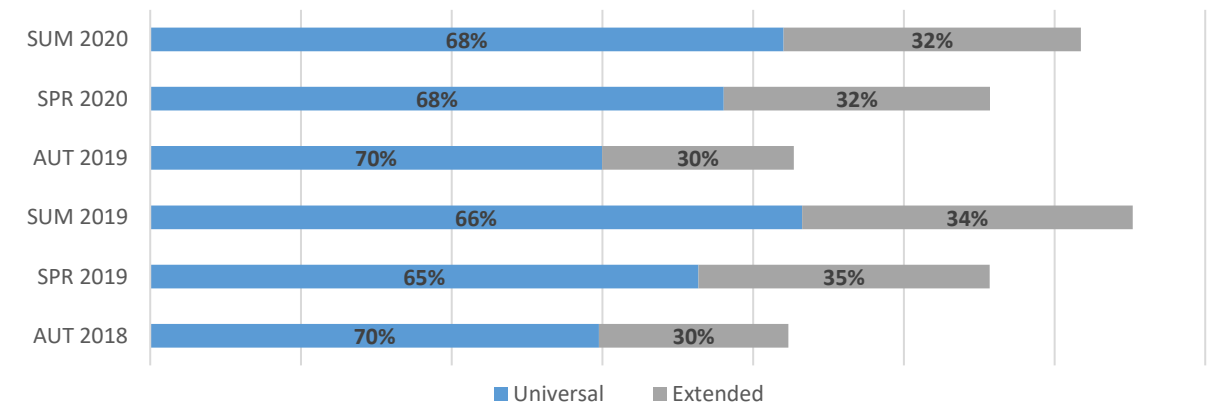


### Average childcare costs

Costs of childcare in BwD remain lower than Regional and National averages.



### Percentage of the total funded 3&4YOs accessing universal and extended entitlement



## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Growth and Development

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Growth & Development

**DATE:** Thursday, 12 November 2020

**PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED:** Growth and Development

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** Darwen East; West Pennine;

**KEY DECISION:** Y

### SUBJECT:

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen Masterplan

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Land at Holden Fold, Darwen Masterplan, Annex A, relates to land allocated for housing in Blackburn with Darwen's Local Plan Part 2 and is located at the northern edge of Darwen. The land is in multiple ownership and includes some Council owned land. Overall, it is estimated the site could accommodate approximately 430 new homes.

As part of the work to ensure the site is brought forward in a holistic manner, the landowners have been working collaboratively to prepare a masterplan which will guide the layout and form of new housing development on the site. The masterplan seeks to create a high quality, distinctive neighbourhood, identifying spatial principles for land use, transport, design and green infrastructure which need to be adhered to in bringing forward development on the site.

Fundamentally, it provides a framework to the development for the whole site and prevents it being delivered in a piecemeal and disjointed way.

An Infrastructure Delivery Plan has also been prepared to support the masterplan which sets out the necessary infrastructure requirements for each phase of development to ensure the site is brought forward in a sustainable manner and contributes proportionally to wider infrastructure.

All landowners, including the Council, have agreed to sign the Collaboration Delivery Agreement to approve the principles within the masterplan and to ensure the site is brought forward together in a comprehensive manner. The Agreement also ensures the required infrastructure contributions are provided for each phase of the development as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Phasing Plan.

In summary, both the Masterplan document and accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan are needed to bring forward the Holden Fold development site in a holistic manner. The Collaboration Delivery Agreement will primarily enable the masterplan to be realised in a cost effective manner for the Borough and landowners.

The draft masterplan was subject to a four week public consultation period between 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

1. Approve the adoption of the Land at Holden Fold Masterplan and accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan subject to all landowners signing the Collaboration Delivery Agreement;
2. Agree delegation to the Growth Programme Director and Executive Member for Growth & Development to make minor amendments to the masterplan following Executive Board approval; and
3. Approve the Collaboration Delivery Agreement between the Council and all other landowners and agree delegation to the Growth Programme Director and Executive Member for Growth & Development to finalise and sign the agreement on behalf of the Council.

### **3. BACKGROUND**

The Holden Fold development site is located at the northern edge of Darwen. It is made up of pastoral agricultural fields and the site of the former Darwen Moorland High School. The land is in multiple ownership, including land owned by the Council. The landowners have been working collaboratively to prepare a masterplan to ensure the comprehensive development of the site. Overall it is estimated that the site has capacity for approximately 430 new homes and identified in the masterplan.

The masterplan will guide new development on the site so that it is successfully integrated with the existing urban area, is delivered in a cohesive manner and creates a distinctive new neighbourhood. It provides spatial principles for land use, transport, design and green infrastructure. Fundamentally, it provides a structure to the development of the whole site and ensures that it is not developed in a piecemeal manner.

The masterplan will shape development on the site to achieve high quality design, to retain important features and assets and to be sensitive to its location. It also provides more detailed guidance on the anticipated built form in individual character areas and sets out a clear brief in terms of the quality of the development. It is a guide for the preparation of development proposals and a framework against which planning applications for the site will be assessed. It will be an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications on the site.

The masterplan seeks to create a high quality sustainable neighbourhood that is integrated socially and physically with the existing urban area. A number of detailed technical studies have been completed by the landowners, to inform the preparation of the masterplan. These include:

- Phase 1 Habitats Survey
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Transport Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Geo-Environmental Study
- Level 2 Utility Study

Another important role of the document is to coordinate the provision of critical infrastructure which is necessary for achieving the vision for the development of the Holden Fold site and the delivery of a successful, sustainable place. An Infrastructure Delivery Plan is included within the masterplan which sets out the required infrastructure for developing the site and the timeframe for its delivery.

All landowners, including the Council, have agreed to a Collaboration Delivery Agreement to approve the principles within the masterplan and to ensure the site is brought forward together in a

comprehensive manner. The Agreement also ensures the required infrastructure is delivered at each phase of the development as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Consultation on the draft masterplan and supporting technical studies took place over a four week period between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020. This included:

- Notification of the consultation on the Council's Consultation and Planning webpages;
- Letters/emails sent to relevant consultees/stakeholders;
- Letter and leaflet drop in the local area to approximately 370 properties;
- Copies of relevant hard copy documents (including technical studies) were made available at Darwen Library;
- Display / exhibition boards set up at Darwen Market;
- Details of the consultation were added to Social Media via the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages;
- Information posters displayed in public buildings in the area;
- The Consultation was advertised within the Lancashire Telegraph.

Consultation responses could be submitted either via email, post or through the completion of an online form using the Snap Surveys software. The Council received 56 responses to the draft masterplan. A summary of the key issues raised during the consultation is set out in the *Key issues* section of this report.

A record of all comments submitted through the consultation, in addition to the Council's response to these can be found in the Consultation Statement which accompanies the masterplan.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

A number of key issues were raised by consultees through the public consultation on the masterplan. The masterplan addresses these concerns as set out below:

- **Principle of housing on the greenfield site**  
The site is allocated for residential development in the adopted Local Plan Part 2 and as a result the principle of development has already been agreed. The masterplan ensures that development of the site happens in a comprehensive rather than piecemeal manner and that any development adheres to the principles included in the masterplan relating to transport, design, drainage and green infrastructure. It also sets out the infrastructure requirements across each phase of development, ensuring the delivery of a successful place.
- **Increase in volume of traffic and highway safety concerns**  
Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.
- **Loss of open space and impact on wildlife**  
Over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area. The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on page 22.
- **Requirements for additional infrastructure – concerns relating to schools, doctors, dentists etc.**

The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A to the Masterplan). Further infrastructure planning took place during preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 in which this site was allocated for future development.

- **Collaboration Delivery Agreement**

The Collaboration Delivery Agreement (“CDA”) is a non-legally binding agreement for all six landowners to work together collaboratively to address the following matters:

- 1) affordable housing delivery
- 2) enabling infrastructure delivery and apportionment of the enabling works costs
- 3) planning strategy and development timescales
- 4) marketing and disposal strategy
- 5) any outstanding reports, investigations or surveys
- 6) equalisation of costs

In summary, both the Masterplan document and accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan are needed to bring forward the Holden Fold development site in a holistic manner. The Collaboration Delivery Agreement will primarily enable the masterplan to be realised in a cost effective manner for the Borough and landowners.

## **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Once adopted, the masterplan will be a material consideration when determining planning applications for the site’s development.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of the Masterplan. A separate report will be submitted for disposal of the Council’s land once a formal offer has been made following the marketing and tender period.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The requirements of the masterplan will be a material consideration alongside local plan policies in the consideration of all planning applications for development on this site.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no resource implications associated with the adoption of this masterplan.

## **9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Please select one of the options below.**

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

The masterplan was subject to a four week public consultation between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020. A total of 56 representations were received which subsequently informed the final masterplan. A Consultation Statement, which summarises the consultation process, comments received and the Council's response to these, are appended to this report.

Once adopted, the masterplan will be available to view on the Council's website.

Consultation on the Council's draft Local Plan, scheduled to take place in January 2021 will provide a further opportunity to submit comments regarding the Holden Fold development site. There will also be further opportunities for resident and stakeholder engagement in the preparation and consideration of detailed proposals on the site at planning application stage.

## **11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## **12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Simon Jones, Growth Programme Director
<b>DATE:</b>	14/10/2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	None





**Land at Holden Fold, Darwen**

**Masterplan**

November 2020

Document Control	
Originator:	Checked & Authorised by:
<i>Name of person &amp; qualification:</i> Paul Silcock CMLI	<i>Name of person &amp; qualification:</i> Graham Trehwella MRTPI
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<i>Signature:</i> 	<i>Signature:</i> 

<i>Project Number:</i> 1470	<i>Report Reference:</i> MP-001-Rev E	<i>Issue Detail:</i> 03/11/2020
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## 01 Introduction

This document presents a masterplan for the major housing allocation at Holden Fold (Figure 1) and shows how new homes and the associated infrastructure specific to this site should be designed and delivered.

The land to the north of Holden Fold is one of five major housing allocations in Darwen which, collectively, are expected to deliver more than 1000 new homes in the period of the current development plan (2011-2026).

This new housing is one significant part of an agenda which aims to accelerate growth in Blackburn with Darwen. In order to support growth in Darwen in particular there is parallel investment in new roads infrastructure.

The package of infrastructure improvements is in the form of the Darwen East Development Corridor initiative. This is designed to mitigate the impacts of traffic on the highway network associated with the delivery of new housing and to bring about greater connectivity between neighbourhoods.



Photograph 1 - Holden Fold looking north

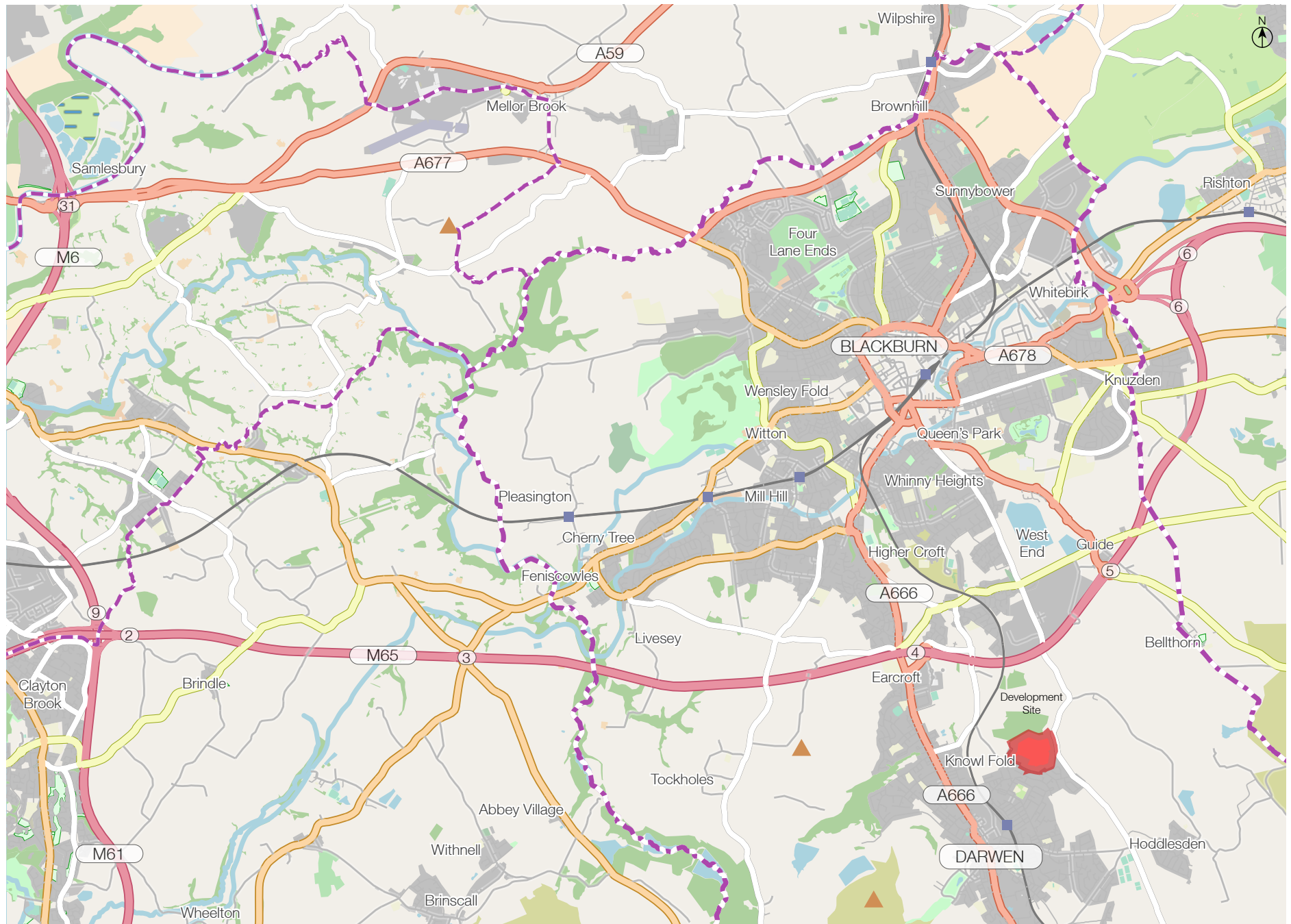


Figure 1 - Location Plan

# 01 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Masterplan

The preparation of a masterplan is essential for ensuring that development on the site is brought forward in a comprehensive manner. It will guide new development so that it is successfully integrated with the existing urban area, is delivered in a cohesive manner and it creates a distinctive new neighbourhood consistent with the Pennine countryside.

The masterplan provides spatial principles for land use, transport, design and green infrastructure. Fundamentally, it gives a structure to the development of the whole site and ensures that it is not developed in a piecemeal manner.

Another important role of the document is to coordinate the provision of critical infrastructure which is necessary for achieving the vision for Holden Fold and the delivery of a successful place.

The masterplan will shape development on the site to achieve high quality design, to retain important features and assets and to be sensitive to its location. It also provides more detailed guidance on the anticipated built form in individual character areas and provides a clear brief in terms of the quality of the development.

The masterplan bridges the gap between the strategic policy aspirations set out in the Local Plan for Blackburn with Darwen and the detailed development proposals that will be the subject of specific planning applications. It is a guide for the preparation of development proposals and a framework against which planning applications for the site will be assessed. It will be an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications.



Photograph 2 - Entrance to former secondary school



Photograph 3 - Looking east along Holden Fold





Figure 2 - The Site and its Context



Photograph 4 - Former school site after demolition

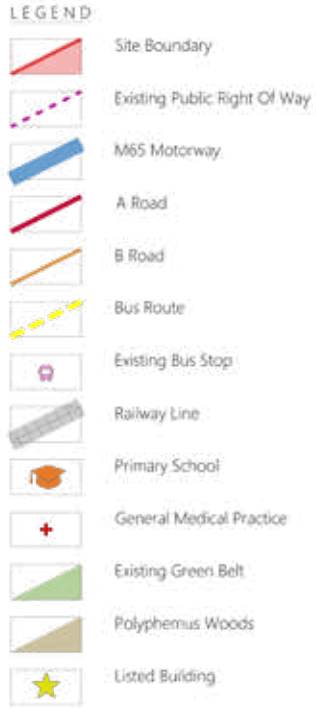


Photograph 5 - View north to Polyphemus Woods



Photograph 6 - View west looking towards Darwen Tower





9

# 01 Introduction

## 1.2 The Site and Its Context

The site at Holden Fold is located at the northern edge of Darwen. It is made up of pastoral agricultural fields and the site of the former Darwen Moorland High School (Figure 2). The school closed in 2008 and the buildings were demolished in 2016. There has been earthworks across that part of the site used for the school to create level areas for use as playing fields. Elsewhere reasonably small grazing paddocks are subdivided by hedgerows, walls and fencing.

The site is accessible (Figure 3) through a network of public rights of way which run across it and around its periphery. These form pedestrian links between Holden Fold and open land and between Holden Fold and Roman Road along the eastern boundary (Figure 3).

At the southern boundary is the urban edge of Darwen. There is semi-detached housing along the south side of Holden Fold, opposite the principal entrance to the former school. The route to the west of Holden Fold becomes Moor Lane where housing appears on both sides of the road together with a small industrial unit.

The western boundary of the site is formed by Knowle Lane, a narrow access route which serves a group of residential properties. For most of its length it is an unadopted road. A public footpath runs through the

collection of houses leading to Polyphemus Woods which is at the northern boundary of the Holden Fold site. This is a recently planted and diverse area of broadleaved woodland which is managed by the Woodland Trust. It covers an area of around 16 hectares and forms part of a visually prominent green wedge between Darwen and Blackburn. There is public access to the woodland from Knowle Lane and Roman Road and a network of permissive paths. A public right of way lies at the interface of the housing site and Polyphemus Woods.

The eastern boundary is adjacent to Roman Road. The housing land falls towards the hamlet of Eccleshill Fold at the north eastern corner. At this point Manor House Farm Cottage is an immediate neighbour. This is a designated heritage asset (listed Grade II). At the south eastern corner is Square Meadow playing fields - a community based sports facility which includes a changing pavilion.

There is a range of landowners at the Holden Fold site. The landowners are working together to ensure that housing is delivered in a comprehensive and co-ordinated way.

The land ownership interests are shown in Figure 4



Photograph 7 - Public footpaths around the perimeter of the site



Photograph 8 - Existing sports pitches on Square Meadow





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Figure 4 - Land Ownership Plan

# 01 Introduction

## 1.3 Opportunities and Key Constraints

This is a significant opportunity to create a new residential neighbourhood on the northern margin of Darwen. This neighbourhood will represent a point of transition from the established built up area to countryside around the town, including Polyphemus Woods. There is a particular imperative to demonstrate that the outer edge of new development is handled in an appropriate and sensitive way. The outer edge of the new housing neighbourhood is the interface with open land along its northern and eastern boundary and the interface with existing housing along the southern and western boundary. (Figure 5).

There are opportunities to gain an expansive aspect from new housing at the northern and eastern margins and to tie the new housing into the existing townscape along the southern and western edge.

There is also an exciting opportunity to form greenspace corridors through new development with recreational footpaths which will link the new neighbourhood and the surrounding communities to the network of paths into the countryside, including the permissive paths which run through Polyphemus Woods.

The Square Meadow sports complex should be considered alongside new housing development. There is a distinct opportunity to improve this facility by including a car park at the point where the new

housing and the sports field meet. There is a parallel opportunity to lever investment, through the medium of new housing, into upgrading the sports field.

One of the key constraints is the variable and occasionally steep topography of the site (Figure 4). There is a general fall across the site towards the northern and western boundaries (with a range from 210m OAD to 187m OAD). Bulk earthworks will be needed to create suitable platforms for new development.

There is a small cluster of trees towards the southern (Holden Fold) edge of the site (Figure 5). Every effort should be made to retain the limited tree cover that exists. This constraint to new housing is small in scale and range.

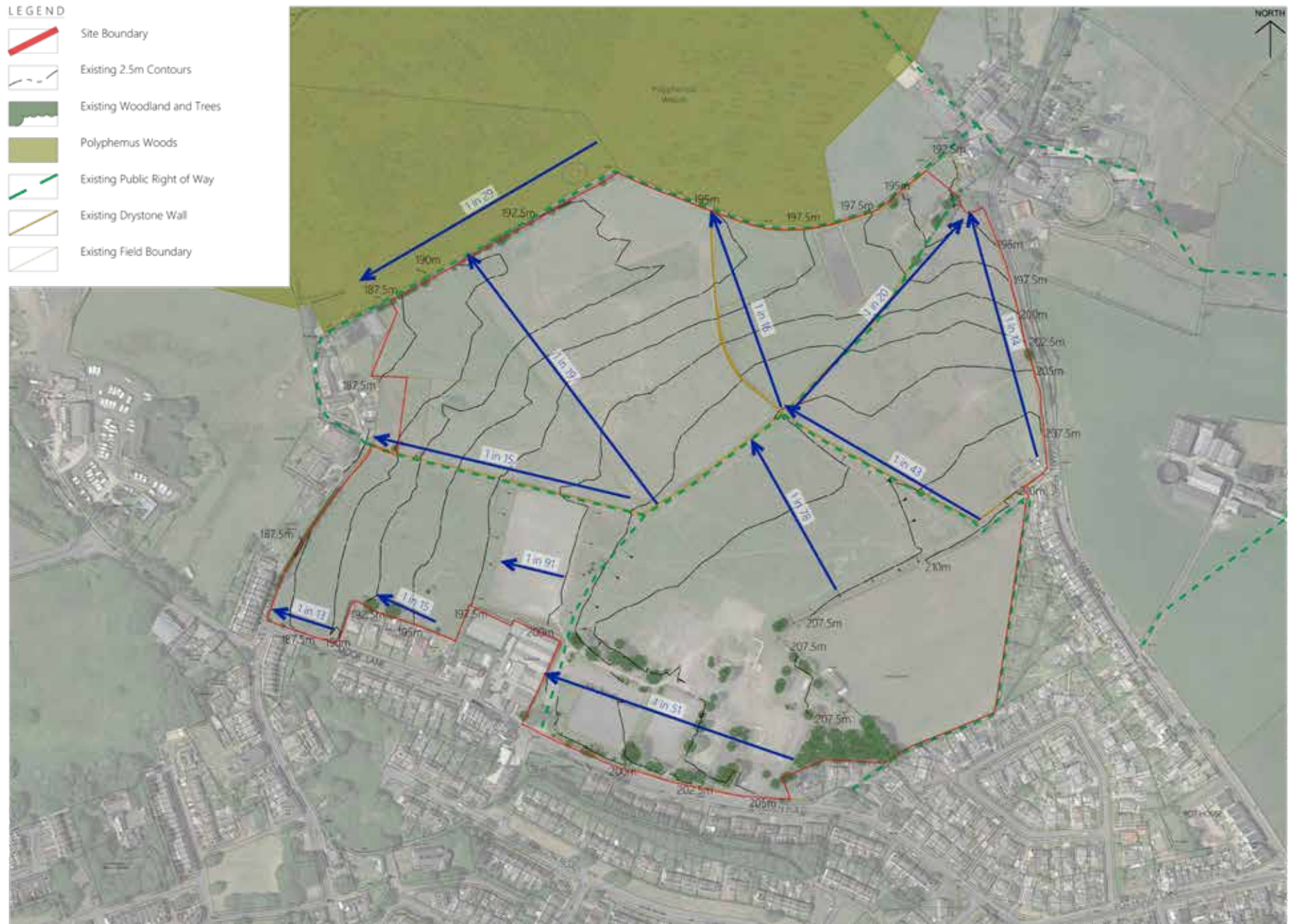
There are dry stone walls which are a distinct feature of the local landscape. Where possible dry stone walls should be repaired and extended in length to assist in providing a structured framework for new development.

The land at present is a mix of semi-improved grassland, ruderal vegetation and scrub. These habitats will be impacted by the new housing development. There will be a need to incorporate habitat mitigation measures to maintain the ecological value that the site provides.

The site has some significance in the context of The Lancashire Ecological Network (Wildlife Trust for Manchester, Lancashire and North Merseyside and LEARN, 2015). This focuses broadly on landscape integrity (i.e. areas that have lower levels of human modification and are in relatively natural condition). It is an approach which identifies ecological connections between areas that contain natural or semi natural habitats and have been identified as ecologically significant (i.e. as 'wildlife sites'). Across the site there are grassland networks identified which provide potential connections or corridors for wildlife. The northern part of the site is also a "stepping stone habitat" which also suggests a functional ecological connectivity role.

The site is at low risk of flooding. The nearest watercourse is located 500 metres to the north of the site. The soils are of low permeability and as such infiltration of surface water will be limited. In these circumstances it is anticipated that surface water from the site will discharge at a controlled rate into the adopted drainage network. The need to attenuate surface water flows from the developed site is likely to require the incorporation of detention ponds. These need to be an integral part of the greenspace network across the site.





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Figure 5 - Features and Constraints

## 02 Planning Policy Context

### 2.1 National Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

A core principle of the NPPF is to proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. It seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing and widen the choice of high quality homes and requires local planning authorities to identify key sites which are critical for meeting the objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in their area.

The NPPF also emphasises the importance of securing high quality design and recognises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and is indivisible from good planning. The Framework highlights the importance of planning positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes. It recommends that local character should be respected and reinforced to reflect local

distinctiveness whilst not preventing or discouraging innovative development which raises the standard of design within an area.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides further advice on securing high standards of design in new development. It emphasises the importance of successfully integrating new development with its surrounding context and encourages new development to be distinctive. It needs to respond to natural features and locally distinctive patterns of development, incorporate attractive and well-connected permeable street networks and integrate a system of easily accessible open and green spaces.

The Planning Practice Guidance also recognises that masterplans can be important tools for achieving good design. It notes that masterplans can set out a strategy for a new development including its general layout and scale and can be used to set the most important parameters for an area such as the mix of uses, requirements for open space or transport infrastructure, the amount and scale of buildings and the quality of buildings.



Photograph 9 - Junction of Moor Lane and Knowle Lane



Photograph 10 - Existing drystone field boundaries

## 02 Planning Policy Context

### 2.2 The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and provides an overarching planning document for Blackburn with Darwen. It sets priorities for the future development of the Borough for a 15 to 20 year period, including how much and what types of development there should be, where it should be focused, when it is likely to take place, and how it will be delivered.

The Core Strategy seeks to provide for the development of approximately 9,000 new houses between 2011 and 2026 and contains a Targeted Growth Strategy (Policy CS1) which seeks to direct the majority of new development in the Borough to the urban areas of Blackburn and Darwen.

The strategy does, however, recognise that there is a finite supply of land for development in the urban area and that the continued concentration of development in this area is unlikely to be sustainable. It also acknowledges there may be insufficient development sites in the urban area that are capable of supporting the Council's aspirations for delivering more high quality housing of a type which may require the use of land in attractive settings.

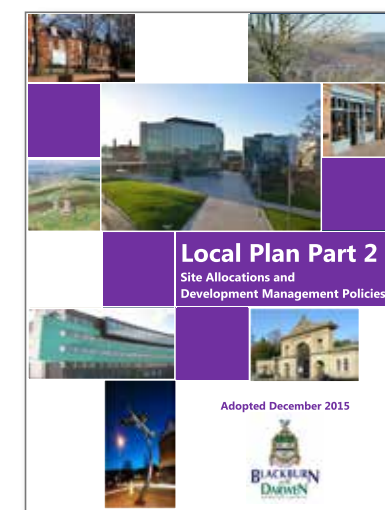
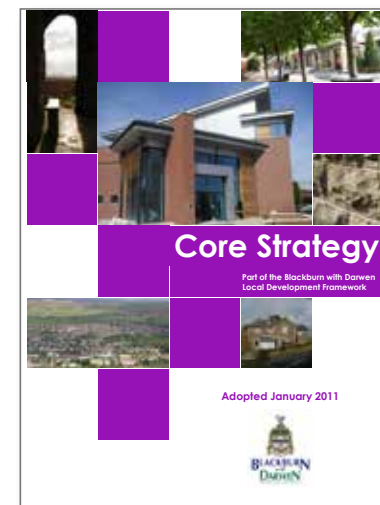
The Core Strategy therefore identifies a potential need for some growth in the urban area during the Plan period and, if necessary, a limited number of small scale urban extensions. The Core Strategy states that any changes to the urban boundary will be determined through a Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan.

### 2.3 Local Plan Part 2 : Site Allocations and Development Management Policies

The Local Plan Part 2 was adopted in December 2015. It is based on the development strategy contained in the Core Strategy and seeks to support its implementation by identifying strategic land allocations that are essential for delivering Blackburn with Darwen Council's objectives.

The Part 2 Plan identifies a series of sites which are considered to be central to the delivery of the Council's overall strategy for new housing, including key sites in urban regeneration areas, major urban sites and a number of urban extensions.

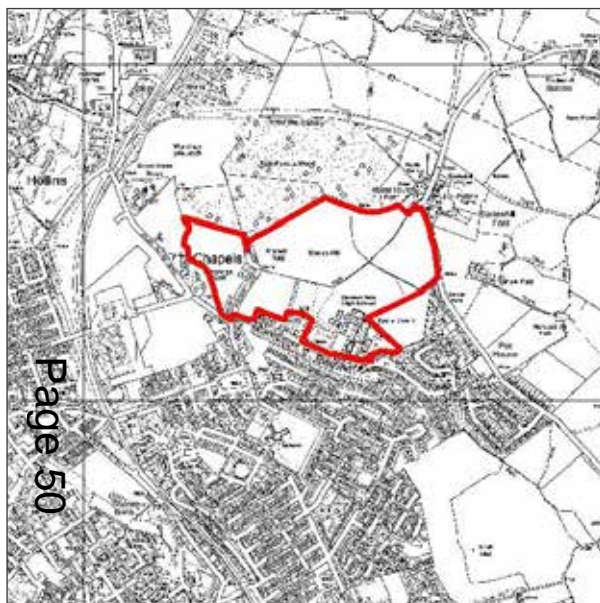
The land at Holden Fold is an urban extension site that has been identified in the Local Plan Part 2 as a housing allocation. It estimates that 315 houses could be built on the site by 2026 but acknowledges that housing development is expected to continue beyond 2026. A number of key development considerations are identified for the site, including the need for development to minimise impacts on the countryside, to protect important landscape features and to control surface water run-off.





## 02 Planning Policy Context

Site 16/12 - Holden Fold Development Site, Darwen



### Key Development Considerations:

1. A coherent design covering the whole site is required which identifies unifying characteristics and considers components including transport and site access, green infrastructure, landscape character and visual impact, drainage and ground conditions.
2. The allocation and subsequent development of the site will establish an amended urban boundary with the Green Belt. The proposed green infrastructure framework for the site should incorporate the creation of a robust Green Belt boundary that will be enduring beyond the plan period, be readily recognisable and create linkages throughout the site to enable beneficial use of the countryside/Green Belt.
3. The site is located within the West Pennine Moors. Development proposals will be required to be designed so as to minimise the potential impacts of development on the landscape character, ecological and recreational value of the West Pennine Moors.
4. Potential impacts of development on landscape character of surrounding countryside including protection of important landscape features such as areas of adjacent woodland.
5. The southern section of the site is within a designated Critical Drainage Area. Consider surface water management and the potential requirement to provide SuDs for on-site attenuation.
6. A network of public rights of way cross the site and run along the northern boundary. The development layout and scheme detailing should provide good connectivity to this established network including mitigation of any adverse impacts.
7. This is a key housing allocation on the edge of the urban area. The development should take full advantage of its potential to expand the housing offer in Darwen and the borough as a whole.
8. An area of green infrastructure/protected open space known locally as Square Meadow is located on the eastern boundary of the site. This area is used as a community sports pitch. The development should explore the opportunities to extend/enhance this use and create linkages with the on-site and surrounding network of open spaces.
9. Protection of adjacent designated heritage assets and their setting including Manor House Farm Cottage and church buildings at Lower Chapel and Church of St James'.
10. A contribution is required towards the provision of additional primary school capacity in Darwen.
11. Provide a contribution towards the Darwen Eastern Distributor Corridor.

## 02 Planning Policy Context

### 2.4 Supplementary Planning Documents

A number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) have been prepared to provide additional detail to policies set out in the Local Plan. These give more detailed planning guidance on specific issues. Those of relevance to the land at Holden Fold include:

#### Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (September 2012)

The SPD provides targeted advice to enhance the quality of new homes and residential places across the Borough. It seeks to ensure that new development reflects the area's special character and promotes the highest standards in design. The SPD also aims to ensure that the new homes and residential places in the borough are on a par with, or even exceed, the most attractive and popular historic residential areas in Blackburn, Darwen and the outlying villages.

#### Green Infrastructure and Ecological Networks Supplementary Planning Document (December 2015)

This relates to the protection, improvement and creation of green infrastructure and ecological networks. It aims to make the most of opportunities to enhance the natural environment.

The SPD identifies the neighbouring Polyphemus Woods as Stepping Stones. These are areas of local ecological importance and areas of priority habitat. The masterplan will need to recognise this ecological

role and maintain natural corridors which link the site to the woodland. Unbroken corridors of natural habitat which is suitably managed will go some way to an overall net biodiversity gain at the site.

#### Planning for Health Supplementary Planning Document (April 2016)

This examines how decisions made on the environment can impact on the health of the local population. It recognises that well – designed developments can support strong and vibrant communities. The living environment should engender healthier lifestyles. This is particularly pertinent to the new neighbourhood to be created at Holden Fold where there are opportunities to integrate new homes with diverse and fully accessible open spaces, Key consideration 1 of the SPD deals with community development and health and must guide the development of this site. Key consideration 2 relates to Health Impact Assessments. These could be required at later stages in the planning process. Key consideration 7 requires allotments and community growing spaces to be considered as part of large scale housing developments.

#### Other Guidance

##### 1. Borough Design Guide (March 2006)

Although this is no longer a formally adopted SPD as it hangs off former Local Plan policies, the information in it remains useful guidance which should inform planning policy. The guide outlines a series of principles for securing high quality urban design and provides general guidance to promote better design on individual sites/developments. The guidance is not intended to provide design solutions for every eventuality. Instead it seeks to raise awareness of good design and encourages an innovative design-led approach to development.

##### 2. Nationally Applied Guidance

Reference should also be made to design guidance that is applicable across the United Kingdom as a whole. Particular examples are Building for Life 12 and the National Design Guide which aim to secure new housing that is attractive, functional and sustainable. Also important is Secured By Design which aims to minimise the risk of crime through well-conceived developments.

## 03 Evidence Base

Technical studies have been commissioned to provide baseline information to inform the preparation of the masterplan. These studies explore many of the underlying characteristics of the site and highlight a number of physical and environmental constraints which will influence how new development is brought forward.

The evidence base has helped to shape the masterplan. A summary of the key findings and the implications these have for the masterplan are now considered under the following headings :

- Topography
- Ground Conditions
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Ecology and Biodiversity
- Traffic and Transportation
- Green Spaces
- Services and Utilities
- Heritage Assets

### 3.1 Topography

There is a general fall across the site from the southern boundary towards the north-west and the north-east. The lowest points on the site are along the western margin (Figure 6).

There are reasonably level plateaux to the north of the land once occupied by the school buildings. These were created through localised bulk earthworks and they were used as school playing fields. Beyond the plateaux the fall of the land is more pronounced.

There will be a need for a cut and fill exercise to create platforms suitable for new housing development but this should be designed with a view to minimising the degree of impact on landscape character.



Photograph 11 - View east showing undulating landform



Photograph 12 - View west towards Darwen Tower



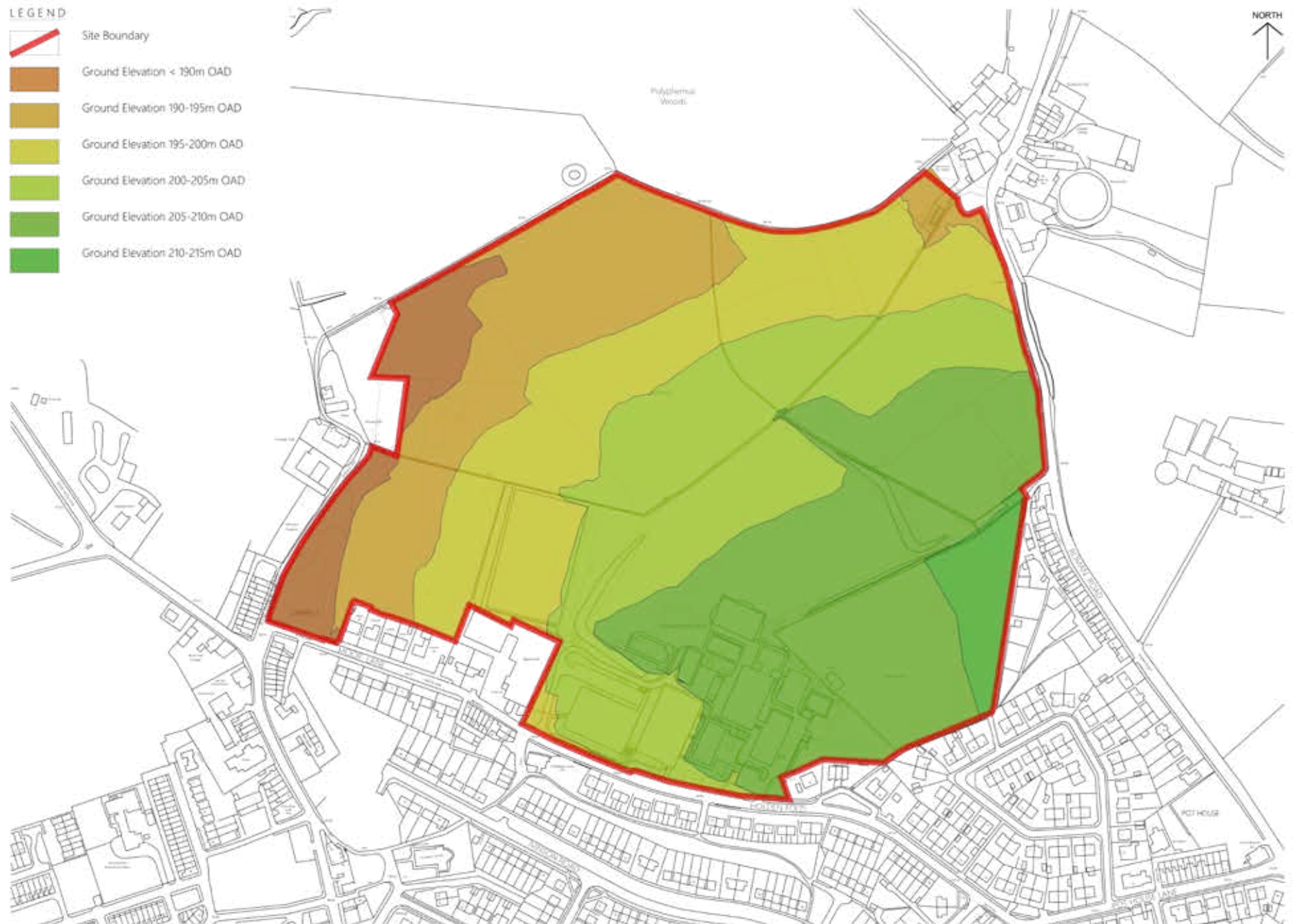


Figure 6 - Site Topography

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.2 Ground Conditions

Capita has issued a Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study (July 2017).

This shows that :

- Low level contamination could be present in Made Ground. There is also a potential for contamination hotspots. Intrusive ground investigation is recommended to inform a detailed strategy to address any contamination or ground gas issues.
- Soil and ground water testing is needed to assess any potential impacts on Controlled Water receptors.
- A Mining Report provided by The Coal Authority indicates deep mining in the area in the past. Associated ground movement should have ceased by now. There are coal mine entries on the site but no record of how these have been treated. A desk based Coal Mining Risk Assessment is recommended to expand on the preliminary appraisal.
- Further investigation into potential risks from past coal mining activity needs to be carried out as part of the preparation of planning applications.
- Development will need to be carried out in association with government guidance on building on or within the influencing distance of mine entries.

### 3.3 Flood Risk and Drainage

A Flood Risk Assessment Report (February 2020) by Westlakes Engineering identifies the following key matters :

- The site is located in Environment Agency Flood Zone 1. There is a low overall risk of flooding (Figure 7)
- There is not known to be a risk of flooding from sewers.
- The underlying geological strata indicates that there will be low permeability. Use of soakaways may not be feasible. Surface water attenuation should be provided through a combination of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) features and more traditional storage methods.
- The new site drainage system should be designed with capacity to prevent flooding during a 1 in 30 year storm event and to contain water generated from a 1 in 100 year plus climate change storm event.
- Foul water flows are proposed to be taken to the public network managed by United Utilities.

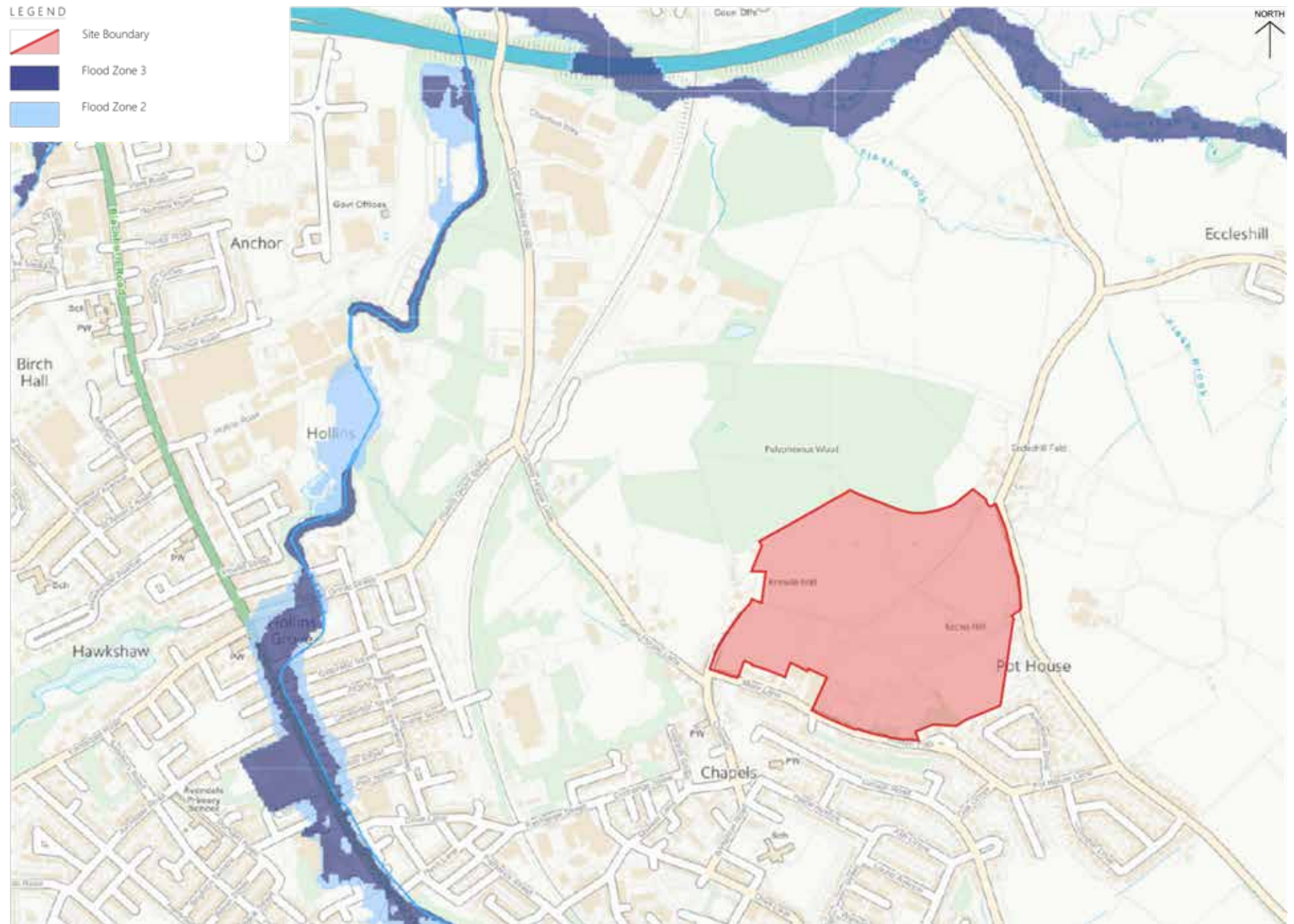


Photograph 13 - Existing ornamental trees on Holden Fold frontage



Photograph 14 - View south along Knowle Lane





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Figure 7 - Environment Agency Flood Risk Map

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.4 Ecology and Biodiversity

Pennine Ecological has carried out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (September 2019). The outcome is shown on Figure 8.

- There are no statutory wildlife sites within one kilometre of Holden Fold.
- The woodland on the site is a poor example of its type.
- Hedgerows are species poor and are of low value.
- Plant species that are present are common and of value only to the site itself.
- Notwithstanding their low value, new development should seek to incorporate existing trees and hedgerows and augment them where possible.
- The sub-station (retained when the school buildings were demolished) should be further investigated to determine if bats are using the building (bat activity survey).
- The pond at the north western edge of the site and a pond 110 metres to the west (beyond the site boundary) have the potential to support Great Crested Newt : A 'Presence and Absence Survey' is recommended to determine if there is a population of newts and to inform any mitigation strategy, if needed.



Photograph 15 - Rank semi improved grassland in south west corner of the site



Photograph 16 - Improved grassland in the northern part of the site with damp poor semi improved depression



Photograph 17 - Horse grazed improved grassland in the north east section of the site



Photograph 18 - Rank semi improved grassland



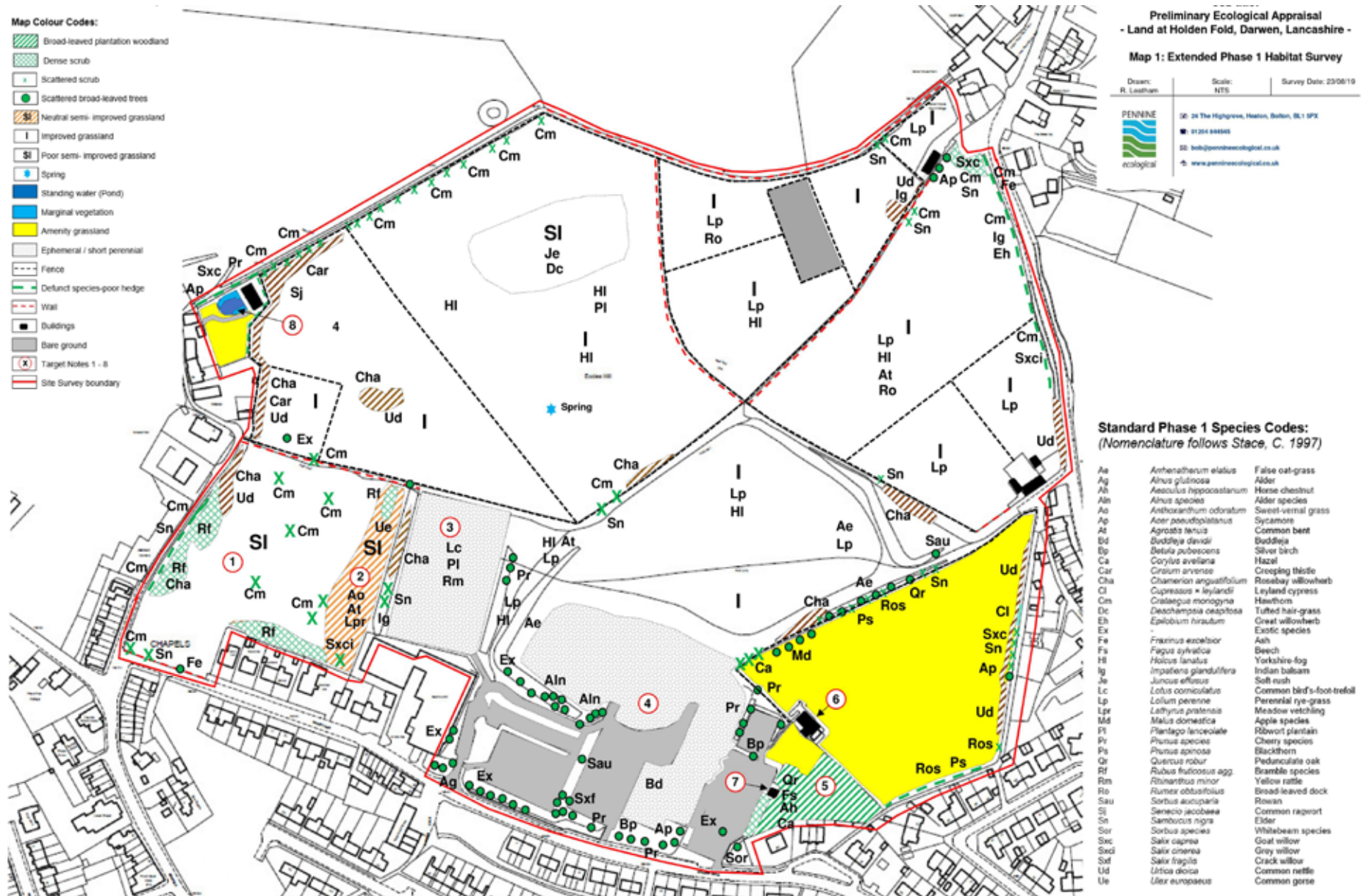


Figure 8 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.5 Traffic and Transportation Analysis

A Transport Assessment by SK Transport Planning (February 2020) shows that:

- Vehicular access to the site can be gained from Holden Fold, Moor Lane and Roman Road (Figure 9).
- There will be a need for localised improvements along Holden Fold and Moor Lane to accommodate the points of vehicle access. This will include the removal of the layby at Holden Fold.
- The access onto Roman Road has been considered as a priority junction and a mini-roundabout junction. For safety reasons the mini-roundabout is the preferred option
- There is a chance to improve footpath connections at the western end of Moor Lane and to the south of the site along Roman Road.
- There is potential for multi-modal trips : Darwen rail station is a five minute journey by cycle or 15 minutes on foot. There is also the potential to route buses through the site to provide a link to Darwen rail station.
- A robust assessment of traffic impacts shows that the development will not result in a severe impact on highway operation or an unacceptable effect on road safety. Notwithstanding this, a Framework Travel Plan and other measures should be introduced to reduce reliance on the private car.



Photograph 19 - Holden Fold looking east



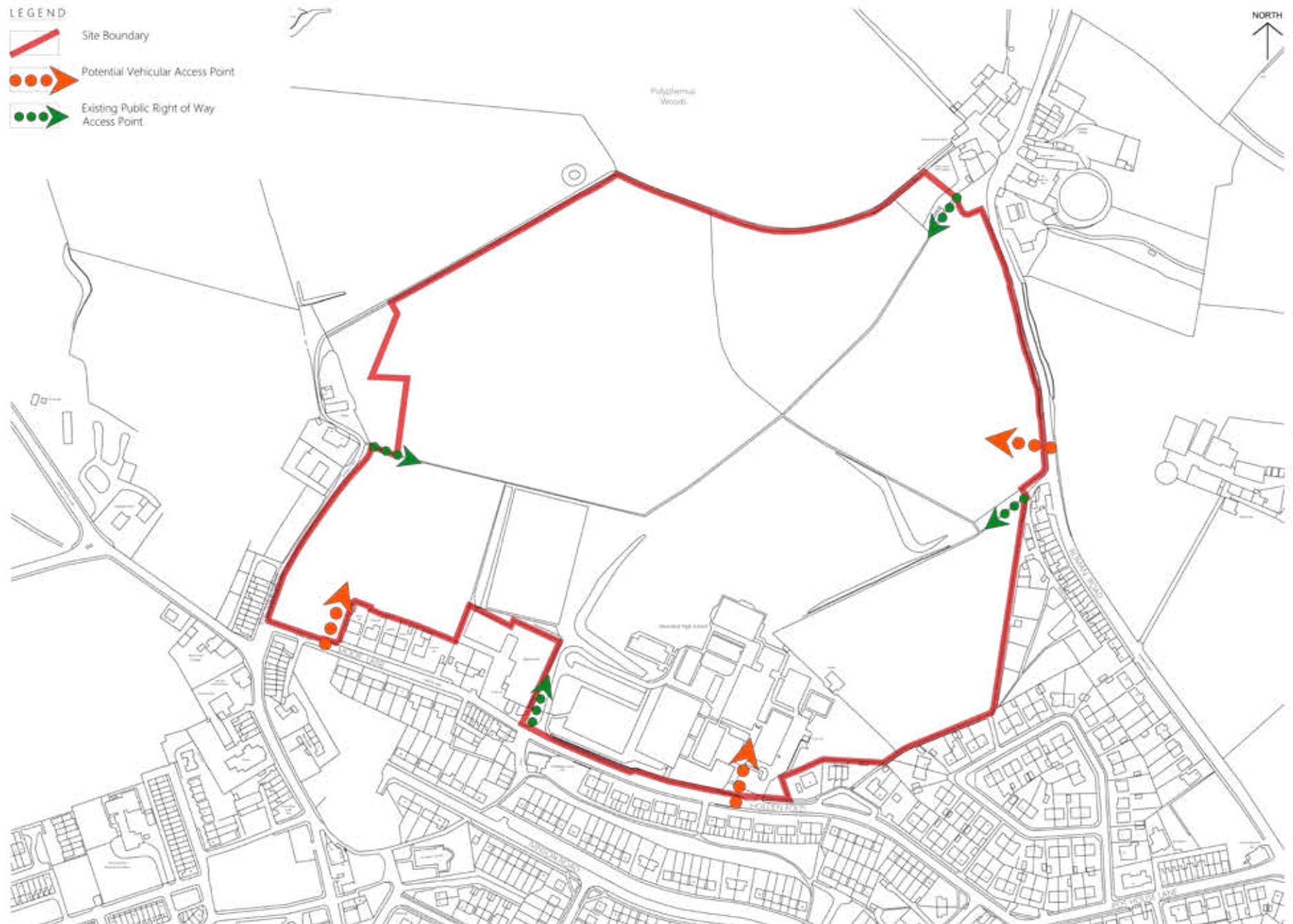


Figure 9 - Points of Access

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.6 Green Space

The principal accessible green space is at Polyphemus Woods to the immediate north of the site. This has value as a recreational and visual resource but it is also of ecological benefit. The latter is recognised through its Stepping Stones designation and the way it functions as part of a network of ecological corridors (Figure 10).

The Lancashire Grassland Ecological Network crosses the site. Green space corridors incorporated into the housing neighbourhood will have an important role in connecting habitats as well as providing an amenity for the local community. These corridors will, in part, link new development to the neighbouring woodland and will build on existing pedestrian routes.

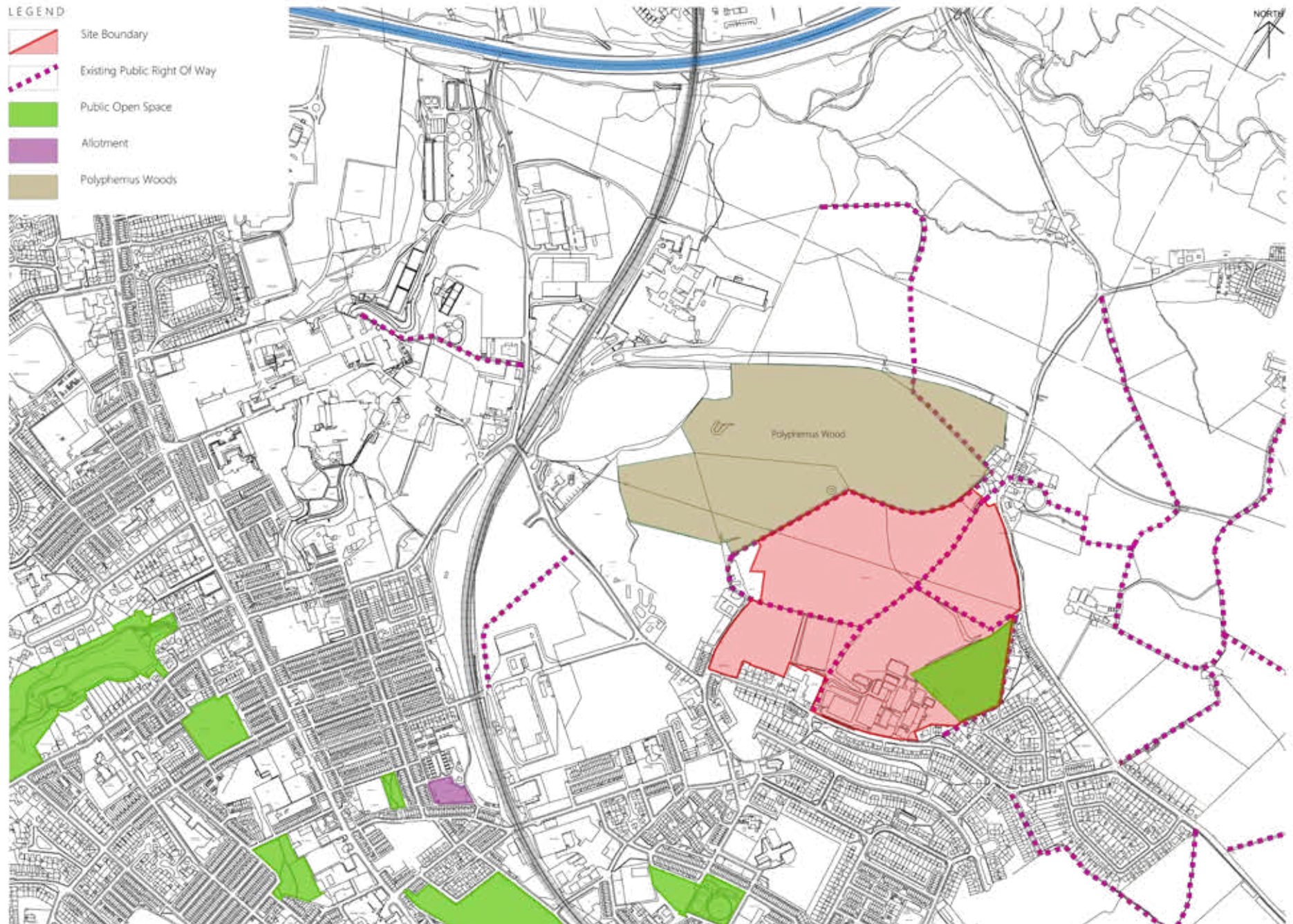
The community playing fields at Square Meadow are an important asset. The housing development should be integrated with the playing fields, making provision for better access to include a new zone of car parking near to the changing pavilion.

The public rights of way running through and around the site are also of community value. Any new development should embrace these routes as positive components of the landscape rather than impediments.



Photograph 20 - Square Meadow playing fields





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Figure 10 - Existing Public Open Space

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.7 Services and Utilities

A Level 2 Utility Study has been prepared by UCML. It provides a desk based overview of the electricity, gas, clean water and telecommunications statutory infrastructure in the vicinity of Holden Fold. The existing utility infrastructure networks are shown in diagrammatic form at Figure 11.

#### Electricity

In order to accommodate the full development of the Holden Fold site reinforcement works are not currently advised by the Distribution Network Operator (Electricity North West). The operator has suggested two Points of Connection. The first Point of Connection will be at a suitable position from a cable routed in the footpath at Holden Fold. The second Point of Connection will be taken from the Exchange Street Primary substation to the south west of the site. The new infrastructure will broadly include approximately 900 meters of offsite high voltage mains, provision of four substations within the site and low voltage mains and services to supply the new dwellings.

There is an existing substation near to the Holden Fold edge of the site. This served the former school. From this substation live high voltage and low voltage cables are routed southwards towards Holden Fold to provide services to the wider area. This could be accommodated in any new development or relocated.

#### Gas

The gas network in the immediate vicinity of the site comprises of gas mains and apparatus operating at medium pressure and low pressure. There is likely to be a need for the disconnection of gas pipes that supplied the former school buildings.

#### Water

The clean water network in the immediate vicinity of the site comprises distribution water mains and associated apparatus. United Utilities has advised the south western part of the site can take a connection from Moor Lane and that the remainder can take a connection from the water main in Roman Road. Interlinking pipes between Roman Road and Holden Fold through the new development will eliminate any need for booster sets to supply properties above a 207 metres Ordnance Datum (OAD).

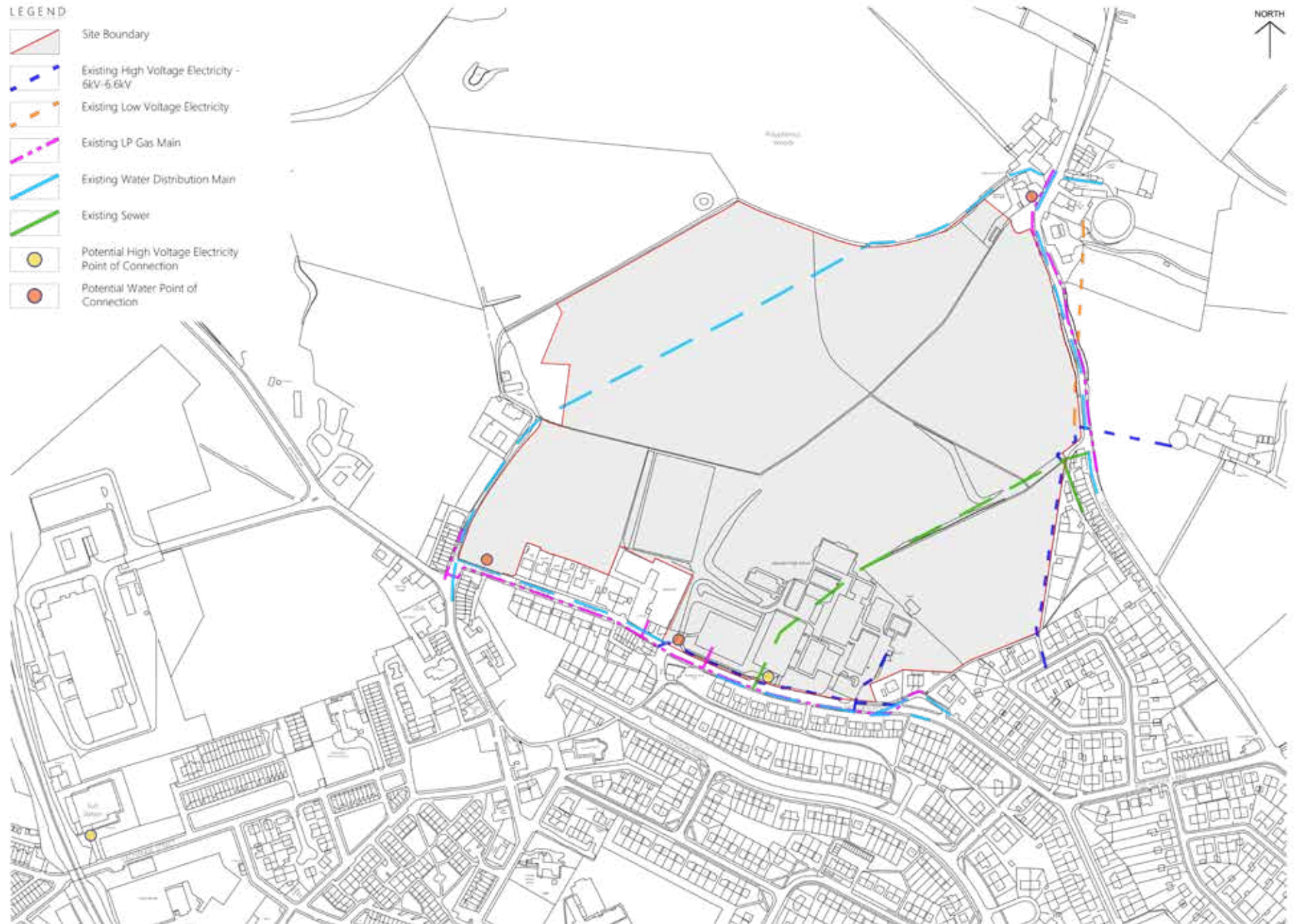
There is a cast iron distribution main which crosses the site between Knowle Fold and Roman Road. This is likely to be diverted as part of any new development and accommodated in either open space or the new road network.

(There is also a sewer in the south eastern quadrant of the site. This appears to have served the former school. If it can serve a useful purpose then detailed design of the drainage infrastructure could examine the option of incorporating this into the development.)

#### Telecommunications

The Openreach network in the immediate vicinity of the site comprises underground cables, overhead lines and associated apparatus. The development can receive Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) connections. These will provide ultrafast broadband speeds to each dwelling and deliver a level of future proofing for broadband as the demand for speed increases. Virgin Media has also confirmed that they own and operate telecommunications apparatus in the vicinity. New connections to the existing network in Holden Fold are likely to be feasible.





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Figure 11 - Existing Utilities Plan

## 03 Evidence Base

### 3.8 Heritage Assets

#### A Manor House Farm Cottage (Eccleshill Fold)

This is an immediate neighbour at the north-eastern corner of the site. It is a designated heritage asset (Grade II listed building). The list description details a seventeenth century farmhouse with later additions. Externally, it is of rendered and painted stone and has a slate roof. New development at the site will need to account for any potential to impact on the significance of the farmhouse or the significance of its setting.

#### B Church of St James

The church falls to the south of the site at Chapels. It is listed (Grade II) and dates from 1722. There is urban housing between this heritage asset and the site. The potential for impact on its significance from new development is likely to be low.

#### C Lower Chapel

This is a congregational chapel also at Chapels. It is Grade II listed and was first built in 1719 but it has subsequently been rebuilt and enlarged. Similar to the Church of St James, there is urban housing between this heritage asset and the site which reduces any potential for new housing development to impact on its significance.

The location of these three designated heritage assets is shown in Figure 12. This also shows the relationship between each heritage asset and the development site at Holden Fold



Figure 12 - Heritage Assets

## 04 Vision and Objectives

### 4.1 Vision

The Land at Holden Fold will be developed to provide a mix of house types and tenures. The houses will be set in a framework of landscape corridors which will run between distinct housing parcels.

These corridors will contain pedestrian links between Holden Fold and Roman Road as well as routes to the wider countryside. The corridors will also have an ecological role, providing linked habitats through the site and on to the neighbouring woodland and open land.

There will be common themes and details which are consistent across each housing parcel in order to provide visual cohesion and a degree of unity for the development as a whole. This could include external facing materials of buildings, the creation of strong boundaries or the treatment of the landscape.

There needs to be a positive relationship between new development and surrounding countryside or existing buildings and roads. This means that new houses will face outwards at the margins of the site. New housing should also front on to the landscape corridors.

### 4.2 Objectives

In order to achieve this vision, the masterplan has been based on the following objectives:

- The creation of development which is both fully integrated with its surroundings and which is comprehensive in its scope.
- The inclusion of a linked network of greenspace corridors which contain paths for pedestrians allowing safe movement around and through the development
- A particular focus on the outer edges of the northern and eastern boundaries where there needs to be a transition from new development to the countryside.
- The design of greenspace corridors to enhance biodiversity value and provide enduring ecological links through the development.
- To provide a mix of housing in terms of the character and size of homes.
- To ensure that the layout of new housing responds to the distinct topography of the site in a creative way.
- To ensure that the community playing fields at Square Meadow and new housing are considered together and that provision is made for parking adjacent to the changing pavilion.
- Where possible, to incorporate existing site features of particular value into the housing layout. This includes dry stone walls, hedges and trees.
- To manage surface water run-off through a co-ordinated network of sustainable drainage interventions. Where attenuation ponds are included these should be positive components of the network of greenspaces.
- To create a high quality setting for Manor House Farm Cottage at the north-eastern edge of the new development.
- To ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided either by way of direct construction at the site or through contributions to the Darwen East Distributor Development Corridor.
- To meet the requirements of Policy CS 13 of the Local Plan Core Strategy particularly with reference to meeting energy requirements from renewable sources, design innovation to resist the effects of climate change and the creation / enhancements of habitats.
- To investigate the potential for a small community hub which could incorporate a local shop (subject to the requirements of Policy 32 of the Local Plan). If it is viable then a local shop could represent a positive addition to the development.
- The principles of Active Design (Sport England) should be applied across the neighbourhood. This includes the creation of a walkable community with well connected walking and cycle routes and easy access to open space.

# 05 Masterplan Framework

## 5.1 Introduction to Masterplan Framework

The masterplan provides an effective framework within which environmental, community and sustainability matters have been incorporated.

It has taken the evidence base information set out in Chapter 03 as a starting point. It then accounts for community and planning objectives as summarised in relevant planning policy.

The outcome is a vision for the delivery of new housing which is comprehensive and geared towards creating a new place based on good quality design and sustainability principles (Figure 13). If it is viable then within the residential areas and at an accessible location a community hub could be incorporated possibly including a local shop (subject to the requirements of Policy 32 of the Local Plan).

The physical aspects of the masterplan are underpinned by a balanced programme of earthworks with the aim of creating platforms for housing with a cross gradient of 1:20. Greenspace corridors between the development parcels will facilitate the cut and fill approach to bulk earthworks.

In turn, the greenspace corridors running through the site will provide a structure and setting for new housing as well as harbouring pedestrian routes and drainage ponds and providing the opportunity to introduce continuous swathes of new habitats. If Square Meadow playing fields and its car park are excluded then the masterplan shows that the greenspace occupies around 23% of the total masterplan area.

In broad terms the masterplan framework leads to the following mix of land uses:

Land Use	Approximate Area (ha)
Residential	13.75
Greenspace (including water bodies)	4.58
Square Meadow (including car park)	1.64
Total	19.97





Figure 13 - Masterplan Framework



Figure 14 - Green Space Network



## 05 Masterplan Framework

### 5.2 General Design Requirements

There are some key design principles that will shape the approach to development within the housing parcels. These principles are set out below. Further detailed guidance is then provided for character areas in a later section of this masterplan document.

#### Design Layout

- It is anticipated that housing layout will be based on an interconnected network of urban or perimeter blocks linked by a network of streets.
- The block layout should ensure that buildings are orientated to face the streets and to front onto areas of open space within the site and at the outer margins of the site.
- The clear distinction between public and private spaces is important, particularly along streets where good quality boundary walls and hedges should be used to define the extent of private curtilage areas.
- A high quality edge to the development is vital particularly along the Holden Fold / Moor Lane corridor, the Roman Road corridor and at the interface with Polyphemus Wood.
- Particular attention should be given to the transition from the new development to the surrounding countryside. The character, orientation and detailing of the housing at the point of transition needs to be carefully conceived.
- The layout and the overall approach to design will need to echo the best aspects of the character of the local area and with this in mind there will need to be full consideration given to the requirements of Policy CS16 of the Local Plan Core Strategy and the provisions of Policy 11 of the Part 2 Local Plan

#### Density

- It is expected that the density of housing development will vary across the site as a whole.
- Higher density development should be concentrated on the plots towards the southern edge of the site next to the existing urban housing (up to 40 dwellings per hectare (dph) across the net developable area).
- There is an opportunity for a lower density of development where housing is next to the open countryside to provide an appropriate transition from urban to rural. The density is likely to reduce to nearer 25dph. Elsewhere a density of around 30dph is appropriate (of net developable area).

#### Mix

- Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy looks to broaden the choice of housing and to meet the need in particular for high quality family housing.
- It is expected that the majority of the new housing will be family housing in character and scale but there are opportunities to meet the needs of other households.
- There is an affordable housing requirement of 20% (Policy CS8 of the Core Strategy). The level of affordable housing will be subject to an appraisal of viability. If it is viable to contribute to meeting affordable housing needs then this will be in the form of either affordable rent homes or shared ownership homes integrated with market housing on the site.

## 05 Masterplan Framework

### 5.3 Character Areas

Two primary character areas are proposed. These take account of the way in which new housing will relate either to the existing urban area or to the surrounding Pennine countryside. The two character areas are shown on Figure 15.

The southern character area has a direct relationship with the urban edge built development along Holden Fold and Moor Lane. The majority of this urban neighbourhood is twentieth century housing in the form of inter and immediate post-war homes, but there are pockets of older stone terraced housing nearer the intersection of Moor Lane and Knowle Lane. There is evidence of post industrial use, notably the employment units along the southern boundary of the masterplan area.

The northern character area has an association with the open land at the margins of the site. Most of this character area is currently in pastoral agricultural use. It is subdivided in part by stone walls which are often in a poor state of repair. There is a long frontage along the northern boundary to Polyphemus Woods whilst the eastern boundary has a direct frontage onto Roman Road at the point where it leaves the urban area of Darwen and becomes more rural in character on its approach to Eccleshill Fold.

There is some flexibility when it comes to Plot B which is shown as falling in the northern character area. This land does not have the same associations with the margins of the site and so could be considered for housing which in form and density is more closely aligned with the southern character area,





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Figure 15 - Character Areas



## 06 Transport Framework

### 6.1 Points of Access

There is the potential to form points of access to new housing onto:

- Holden Fold
- Moor Lane
- Roman Road

In order to engender connectivity it is envisaged that there will be a road which links Holden Fold to Roman Road although this is to be principally for the benefit of those living on the site or visiting rather than a new component of the more strategic highway network. The indicative road network is shown on Figure 17. The engineering design of the three points of access is shown at Figure 16.

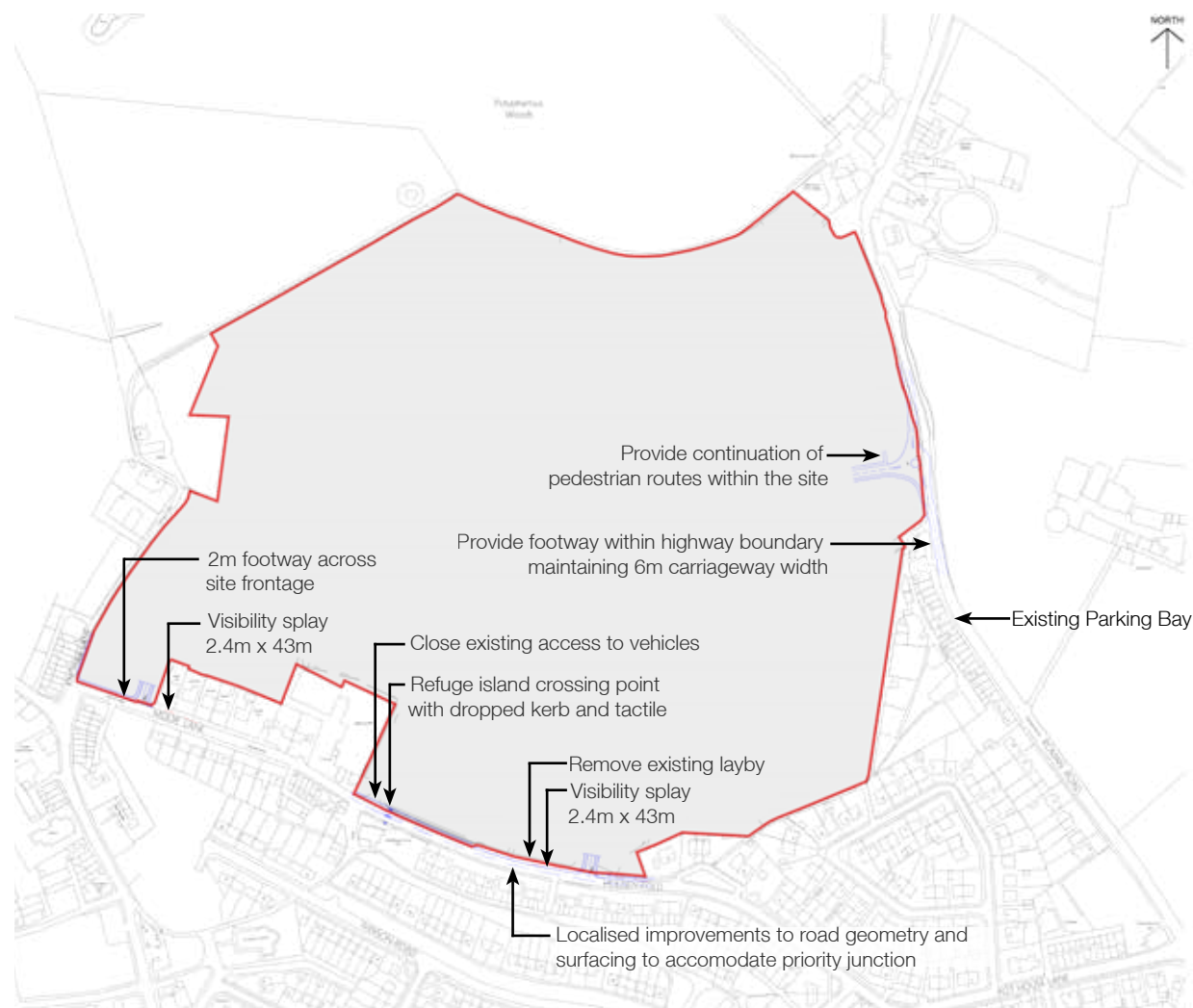
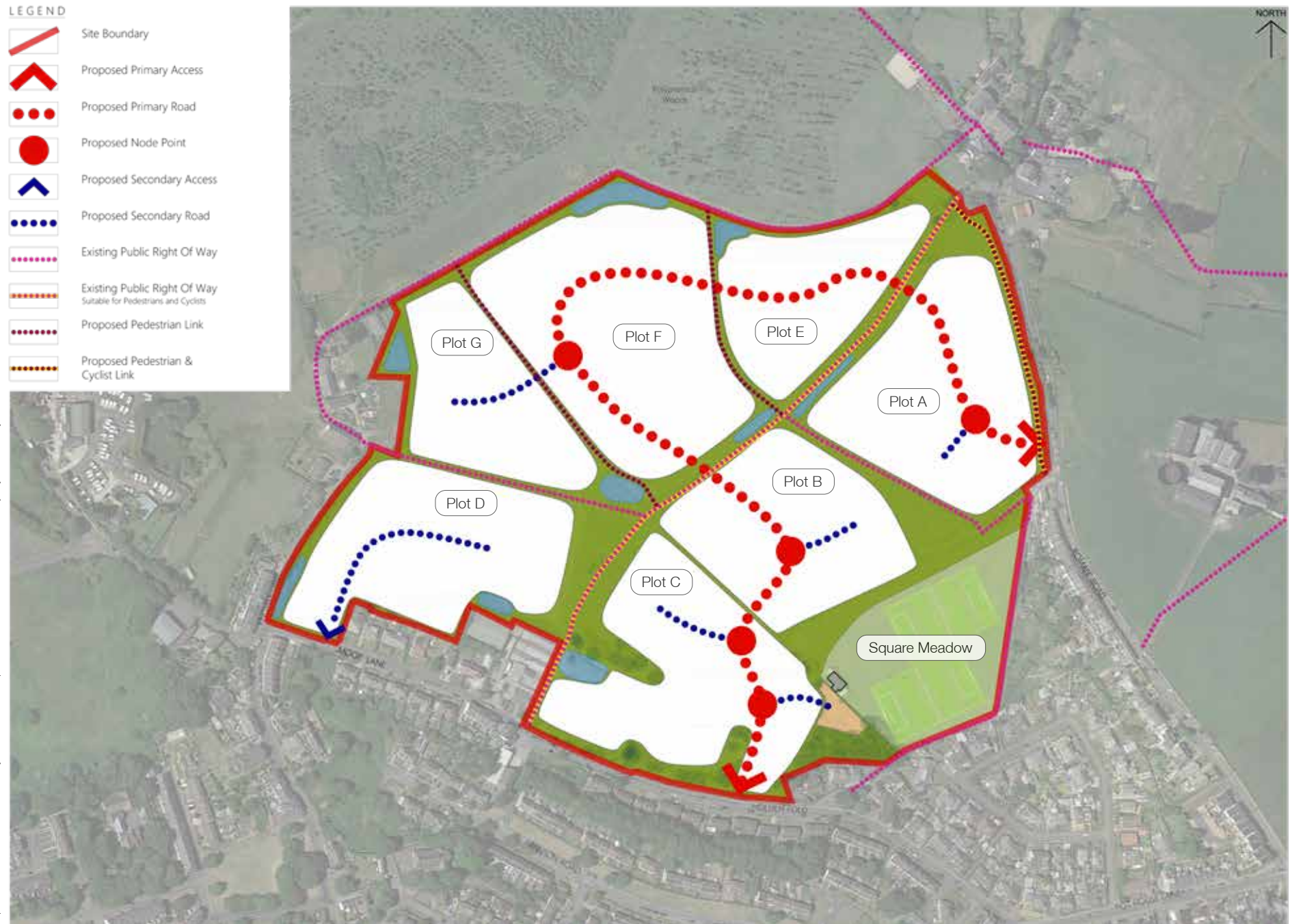


Figure 16 - Points of Access



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Figure 17 - Movement Framework



## 06 Transport Framework

### 6.2 Road Design Principles

The roads running through the development are one part of the movement route network. There are also footpaths which run through greenspace. New roads and footpaths should be considered together to provide a legible choice of routes throughout the site.

A spine road will serve as a link between Holden Fold and Roman Road, giving vehicular access to the majority of plots. This should be regarded as the primary street with a distinct character. It should be designed to act as a bus route and, as such, should not generally be less than 6.0 metres wide. The bus route and bus stops will form key elements of a walkable neighbourhood.

To provide a distinct character there is an opportunity to include a verge adjacent to the carriageway which contains street trees. The verge will not always be continuous as it is anticipated that individual houses will gain access from the spine road. To minimise the visual impact of this it is recommended that house access drives are grouped together. Figure 18 illustrates this arrangement in plan form. Figure 19 is an illustrative perspective image of the spine road and Figure 20 is an illustrative section.

The road verge will be maintained by a management company which will be set up to maintain all areas of greenspace outside of individual house plots.

Where long stretches of the spine road occur traffic calming measures should be introduced including changes to surface materials and the incorporation of stone setts.

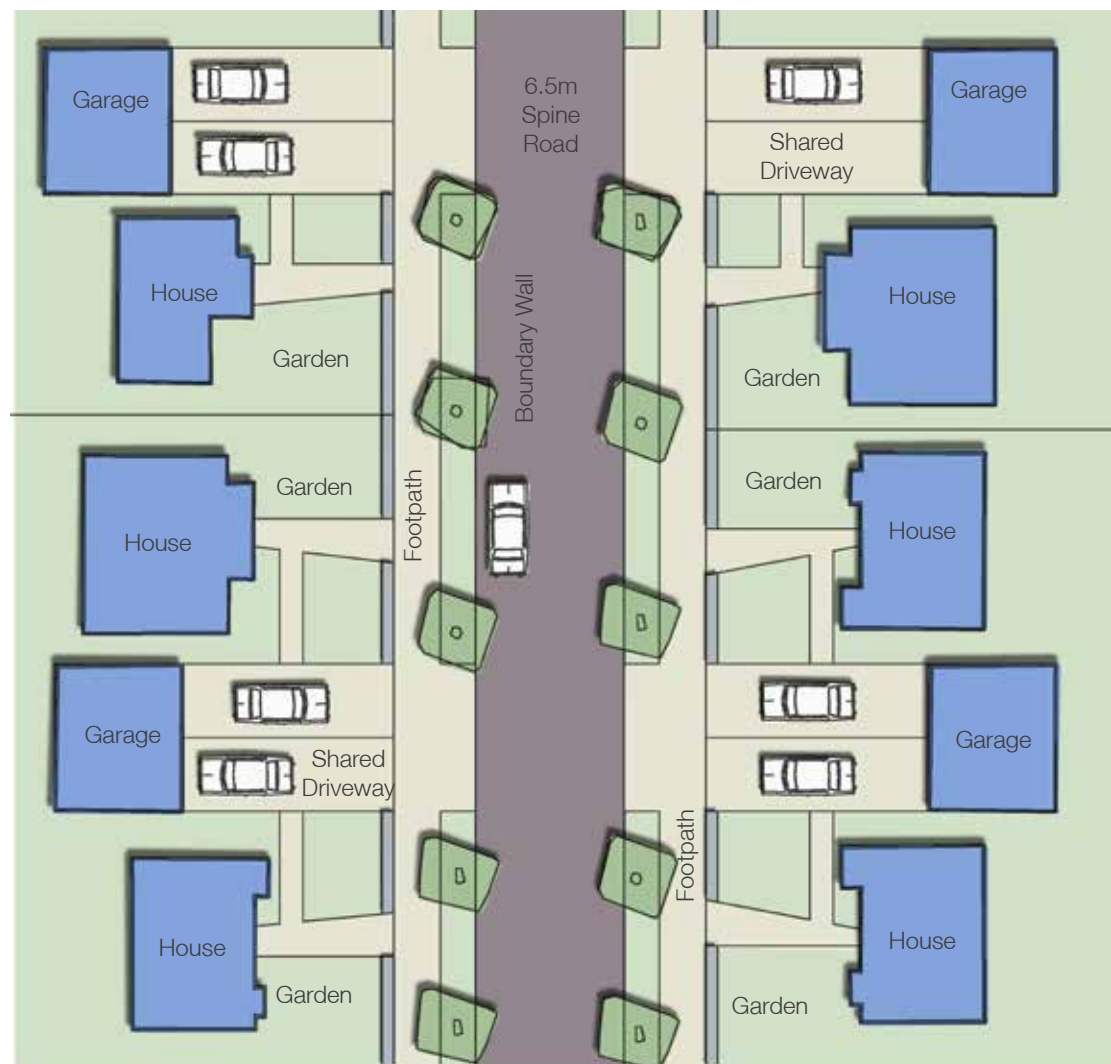


Figure 18 - Spine Road General Arrangement



Figure 19 - Spine Road Illustrative Perspective

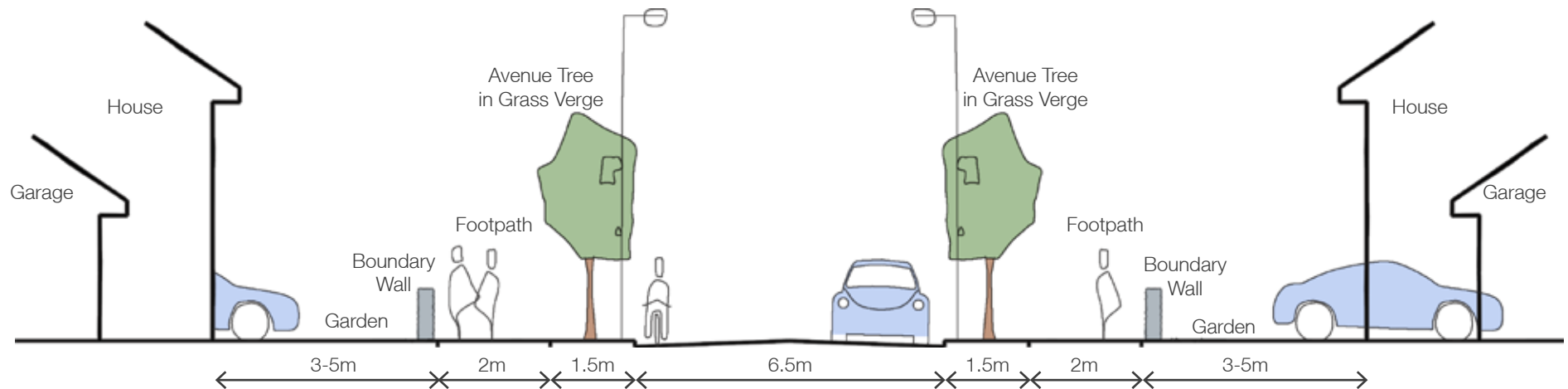
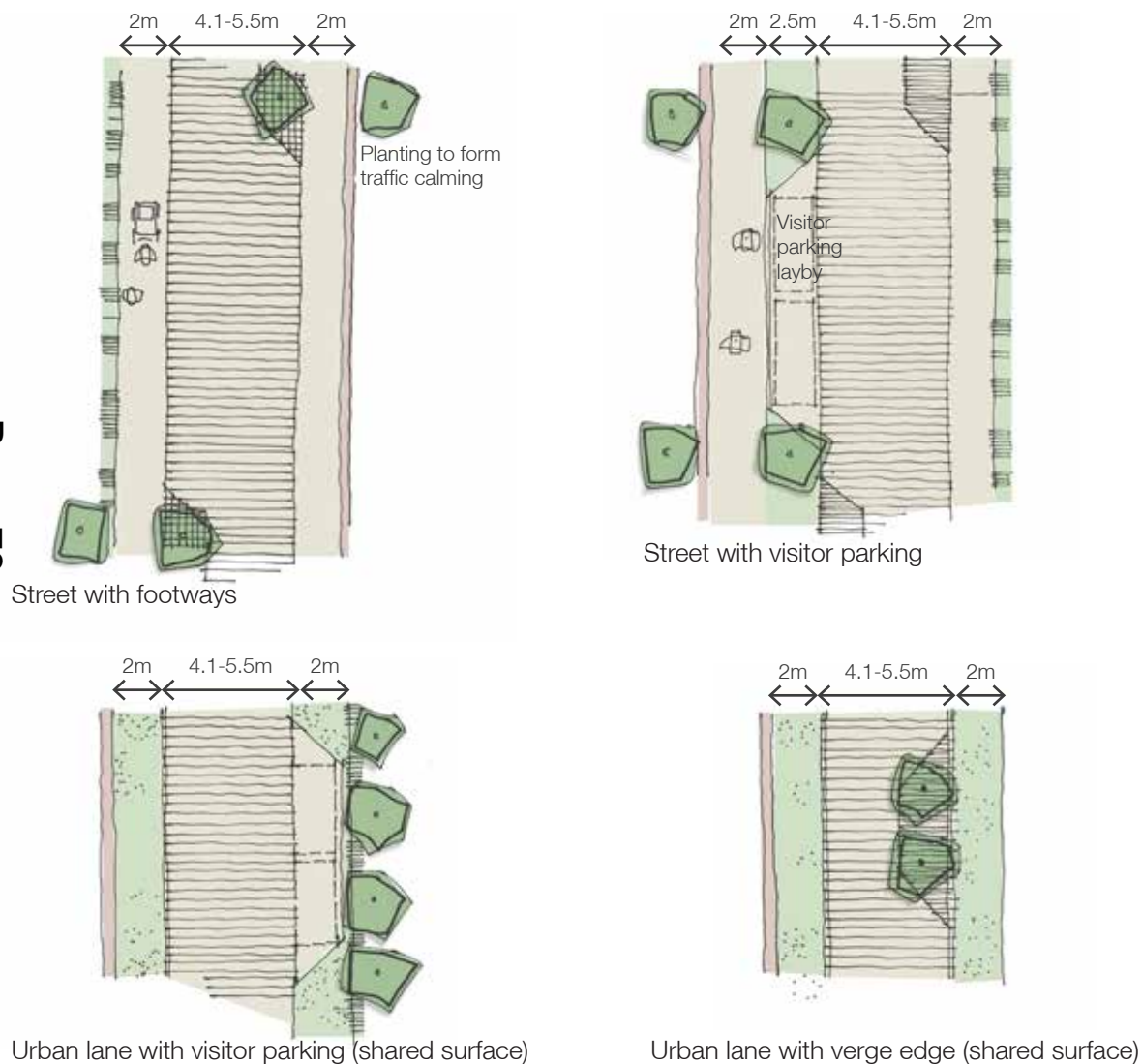


Figure 20 - Spine Road Illustrative Section



Beyond the spine road the road geometry will change to become more informal to reflect the function and status of the route. Examples of this are shown on Figure 21.

Where housing is orientated to face the outer margins of the site or green spaces and green corridors urban lanes and shared surface streets should be used, reducing as far as possible the visual impact. In this respect:

- Areas of roads and footpaths should reflect Manual for Streets standards with varying surface finishes and textures to delineate pedestrian and car parking areas.
- Carriageways widths should range from 4.1 metres for local urban lane links to 5.5 metres for local streets dependent on location and function.

Figure 21 - Intermediate and Local Roads

## 06 Transport Framework

### 6.3 Walking and Cycling

Footpaths passing through greenspace or included as part of the street corridors will provide essential, convenient and site links between individual housing parcels and between the housing neighbourhood and surrounding countryside.

The all-weather, hard surfaced routes for pedestrians, with appropriate lighting, will be along the streets running through the development. The pedestrian routes passing through greenspace corridors will be less formal with a bound gravel surface (or similar) and will not be lit.

The diagonal route across the site which will link Holden Fold to Eccleshill Fold will be a three metre wide combined footpath and cycleway. It will provide a convenient and safe link for cyclists from the urban area of Darwen to the open countryside.

### 6.4 Travel Plans

Each parcel of new housing should be supported by a Travel Plan which sets out the measures to be employed to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport, particularly walking and cycling. There is an overarching Travel Plan for the site which should act as a point of reference.

The site could to be developed in stages and by a number of developers. As such, a mechanism will need to be put in place to ensure that individual Travel Plans are integrated. There could be a need, for instance, for a single Travel Plan Co-ordinator who will take on the role of promoting and facilitating sustainable transport across the site as a whole.

### 6.5 Parking

It is imperative that car parking is considered as an integral part of the design process. It needs to be carefully conceived so that it does not dominate the visual impression of any street. The parking needs of residents will be accommodated either within the curtilage of houses or in small, well integrated and overlooked parking courts.

The level of car parking should comply with the Council's adopted standards and should be provided through a well-considered combination of on plot, off plot and on street solutions.





## 07 Green Infrastructure

### 7.1 Green Infrastructure Overview

The network of greenspaces across the site are an important component of the masterplan. They have multiple functions:

- They provide attractive corridors for pedestrian routes.
- They provide separation between housing parcels, sometimes accommodating the changes in level across the site.
- They provide a setting for new housing.
- They are corridors for the movement of wildlife and where habitats of value can be established.
- They harbour the surface water detention ponds which are an integral part of the sustainable approach to drainage.
- They incorporate trees and woodland, particularly areas to the southern boundary (the Holden Fold corridor).
- They assist in appropriate transition from this new urban neighbourhood to open countryside.
- At the south-eastern corner of the site playing fields are included along with a greenspace buffer to the neighbouring housing.
- At the north-eastern corner greenspace is used to provide an open setting to the listed Manor House Farm Cottage in Eccleshill Fold.

### 7.2 Informal Green Space and Recreation

The greenspace network will provide opportunities for formal and informal recreation. The formal recreation will be in the form of a centralised, high quality children's play area. This will be in the form of a NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) positioned where it is accessible to new residents but also where there is a degree of natural surveillance from nearby houses. This could be within the greenspace corridors or next to or part of Square Meadow.

Informal recreation is to be encouraged through the inclusion of footpaths, surfaced in a suitable, durable material such as bound gravel. These footpaths will provide attractive links through the site into the surrounding countryside including the permissive routes through Polyphemus Woods.

The general arrangement of the recreational role of green infrastructure is shown on Figure 22.



As a consequence of the earthworks to accommodate the change in level across the site and in order to incorporate a clear and safe spine for pedestrians and cyclists a significant zone of greenspace is included between Plots C and D. At this point there is an opportunity to create a focal point for the new neighbourhood as a whole. This space can have a number of functions and should be designed accordingly – as a meeting or gathering place, as a place where there are facilities for play and as a place where surface water attenuation features can be incorporated. Subject to viability, the focal point or hub could be strengthened by incorporating a local shop into the nearby residential areas (subject to Policy 32 of the Local Plan).

It is anticipated that the green infrastructure will be maintained in perpetuity by a management company which will be funded through a service charge on individual houses.







Figure 22 - Green Infrastructure

## 07 Green Infrastructure

### 7.3 Square Meadow Sports Facility

The Square Meadow Sports Facility is a community based amenity available to all age groups. It is used for a range of team sports including football, hockey, rounders and archery. The sports fields are supported by a changing pavilion.

New housing development on the adjacent land presents an opportunity to lever some investment into Square Meadow, to rationalise its boundary and to provide a new car park next to the changing pavilion.

The contribution towards improving the facility will be secured through a planning obligation attached to planning permission for new housing on the site. The general arrangement of Square Meadow with car parking and a rationalised boundary is shown in Figure 23.

The approach to Square Meadow could be influenced by the ongoing work by Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council surrounding the update of the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) and Built Sports Facilities Strategy (BSFS). These strategies will need to be taken into account in any future planning applications. This could result in changes to the anticipated planning obligation details set out in Appendix A.

The area of woodland next to the playing pitches will be considered as part of the detailed design of the car park. There is also the possibility of transferring the woodland to existing private garden tenants.



Figure 23 : Square Meadow Sports Facility



## 07 Green Infrastructure

### 7.4 Biodiversity

The Habitats of Principal Importance on the site are :

- Pond (north-west corner).
- Broad-leaved woodland.
- Hedgerows.

The development of the site presents an opportunity to improve and expand these types of habitat. The masterplan includes a sustainable approach to surface water drainage in the form of a series of linked detention ponds. These, over time, will support native aquatic vegetation and amphibian species.

The existing broad leaved woodland is of relatively poor quality. Through positive management the quality and value of this woodland can be enhanced. Furthermore, the network of greenspace corridors provide locations for new broadleaved trees. The hedgerows are species poor and only intermittent. They can be improved through management and enhanced through new lengths of hedgerow planting. The greenspace corridors can also take on an important role in providing continuity of grassland habitat and, as such, they will support the objectives of the Lancashire Grassland Ecological Network.

These key interventions - an increased number of water bodies, improved woodland and a greater number of trees and enhanced hedgerows and grassland - have the significant potential to improve the biodiversity value of the site. In addition, wildlife will benefit from other planting along the greenspace corridors and through a co-ordinated approach to the long-term management of all open land across the site.

Throughout all stages of development attention should be given to maintaining the integrity of the greenspace corridors. In this regard the Building with Nature standards are a useful point of reference.

Overall, it is important that the advice on biodiversity in the NPPF is used to inform design decisions. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements will be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.



## 07 Green Infrastructure

### 7.5 Sustainable Drainage

New development and the associated increase in impermeable areas will increase the rate of surface water runoff. It is unlikely that infiltration of surface water will be effective and the nearest water course is some distance from the site. As a consequence, it is proposed that surface water is held on the site in a series of linked detention ponds and then discharged at a controlled rate to a dedicated surface water system (using existing chambers on the site if these are found to be suitable). This system will connect to the adopted sewers in Holden Fold.

The distribution of detention ponds is aligned with a phased approach to the delivery of development. It is possible to construct the surface water drainage network in stages with provisions made to ensure that the rate of discharge to the adopted drainage network is controlled at all times. An indicative surface water drainage system is shown in Figure 24.



Figure 24- Indicative Surface Water Drainage System

## 08 Residential Character Areas

It has been suggested that there are two primary residential character areas : a Northern Zone and a Southern Zone.

### 8.1 Northern Zone

This embraces development Plots A,B,E, F and G. With the exception of Plot B (former school playing fields) the land in this Zone has not been previously developed.

The majority of this Zone is poor quality pasture. Dry stone walls, albeit in poor condition define the northern perimeter of this Zone (at the interface with Polyphemus Woods) and between Plots E and F, Plots E and A, Plots A and B and Plots F and B. At the eastern edge is a frontage to Roman Road where there is a marked difference in level between the site and the carriageway.

New housing will have to be carefully laid out to give an active frontage to the perimeter of this Zone and to the greenspace corridors. Unrelieved lengths of fences next to open areas should be avoided.

By way of illustration the indicative plan that follows shows how housing could be arranged where it falls at the perimeter of the site, next to Polyphemus Woods (Figure 25).

At Figure 26 is an illustrative section which shows the relationship between new housing and Roman Road.



Figure 25 - Indicative Plan: Housing and Polyphemus Woods





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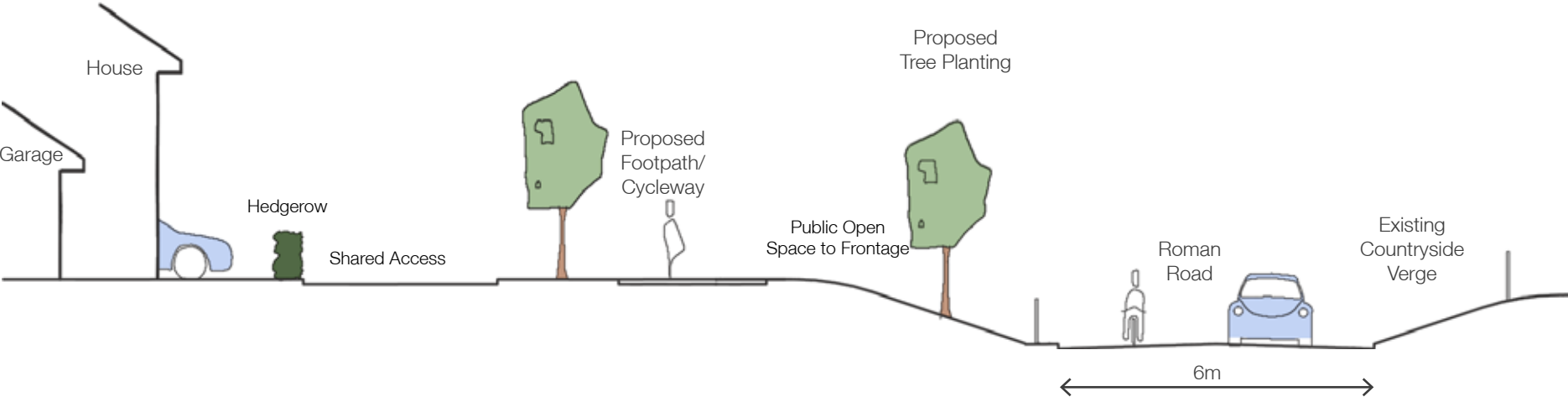


Figure 26 - Illustrative section of interface with Roman Road

## 08 Residential Character Areas

### 8.1 Northern Zone

The key characteristics of the housing at the Zone will be:

#### Layout and Density

- A reasonably low density of 20-30 dwellings per hectare (dph).
- An informal arrangement or grain of houses at the periphery of the Zone with houses served from urban lanes or shared surface routes and orientated towards the surrounding countryside.
- Houses orientated to face the greenspace corridors.
- Where possible existing dry stone walls should be incorporated to provide a point of reference to the historic use of the land.
- Footpath links from the housing parcels to the network of greenspace corridors and the open countryside.
- The primary access from Roman Road should be treated as a high quality threshold to the Zone with buildings and landscape used in combination to create a distinct gateway. A footpath connection within the site will give a strong pedestrian and cycle link from this primary access to Eccleshill Fold.
- Detention ponds and swales (where appropriate) integrated into the greenspace.

#### Scale and Form

- The majority of houses will be two storey but there is an opportunity for higher buildings at focal points or on corners in order to give variety and interest.
- A mix of detached and semi-detached houses.

#### Streets, Spaces and Landscape

- Create streets of character which are distinctive places in their own right. This can be achieved with a combination of boundary walls, landscape treatment of the street corridor and variety in the road and footpath surfacing.
- On plot parking arranged so that cars do not dominate the street scene.
- The primary open space is in the form of a greenspace corridor which runs diagonally across the site from Holden Fold to Eccleshill Fold. For a significant length this corridor is contained on one side by a dry stone wall. This should be repaired to add character to the greenspace and should be used to separate the public open space from the housing. Dry stone walls should be included on both sides of this primary open space (existing and new) Figure 27 shows this arrangement.
- At both ends of this greenspace corridor threshold features should be designed and built to permit pedestrian and cycle use only.
- Landscape treatment, particularly at the edge of the development plots, should form an integral element of the layout and design of the development. It will assist in the transition from the new urban neighbourhood to the countryside at the outer periphery of this Zone. The edge of the development is the point where the designated Green Belt starts. The edge treatment should provide an enduring and long term boundary for the Green Belt.

#### Boundary Treatments and Enclosure

- To form attractive and enduring urban streets there is a need for boundaries to the front curtilage of all houses which distinguish public from private spaces.
- Dry stone walls, either existing or new, will be a defining characteristic especially at the outer edge of the plots.

#### Detail of Built Form

- Where buildings front onto open spaces, irregular plot widths should be considered with subtle setbacks in order to provide variety and interest (Figure 28).
- Building designs to have a considered balance of solid to void with a vertical rhythm of window openings. Larger glazed features can be used to exploit views, provide interest and maximise solar gain.
- Facing materials are to be predominately red brick with accents of stone and render.



Figure 27 - Illustration of Primary Open Space Corridor





Figure 28 - Illustrative plan of Interface with Green Corridor



## 08 Residential Character Areas

### 8.2 Southern Zone

This Zone comprises plots C and D. These plots have a direct relationship with the established urban edge of Darwen - either the inter-war or immediate post war public housing along Holden Fold or the mix of post war development and older terraced housing at Moor Lane and Knowle Fold. Plot C is the location of the former secondary school. The only extant building is a sub-station but there are extensive areas of hardstanding. One part of plot D has been regraded and was once used as school playing fields.

The secondary school was orientated towards Holden Fold and along this frontage a stone retaining wall, retained trees and a bus lay-by are legacies of former development.

The stone retaining walls have value and should be retained. The stone retaining wall marks the point where there is a difference in level between the site and the road corridor. The trees appear at the higher site level. New housing on plot C will face towards Holden Fold but at a higher elevation than existing houses (Figure 30).

Plot D is reasonably discrete. It is bounded by development on Moor Lane and along Knowle Fold. There is a slight difference in level between Moor Lane and plot D where the two interface.

At Holden Fold one of the points of access to the former school is to be adapted to provide the starting point of the spine road running through the site to Roman Road. A spur from the spine road will give access to a car park next to the pavilion at Square Meadow. The car park should be viewed as an integral part of the new housing development.

Plot D can be accessed from a new junction onto Moor Lane. Within the site the change in levels prevents a practical road link between the two plots in the Southern Zone but there will be inter-connecting footpath routes (Figure 29).



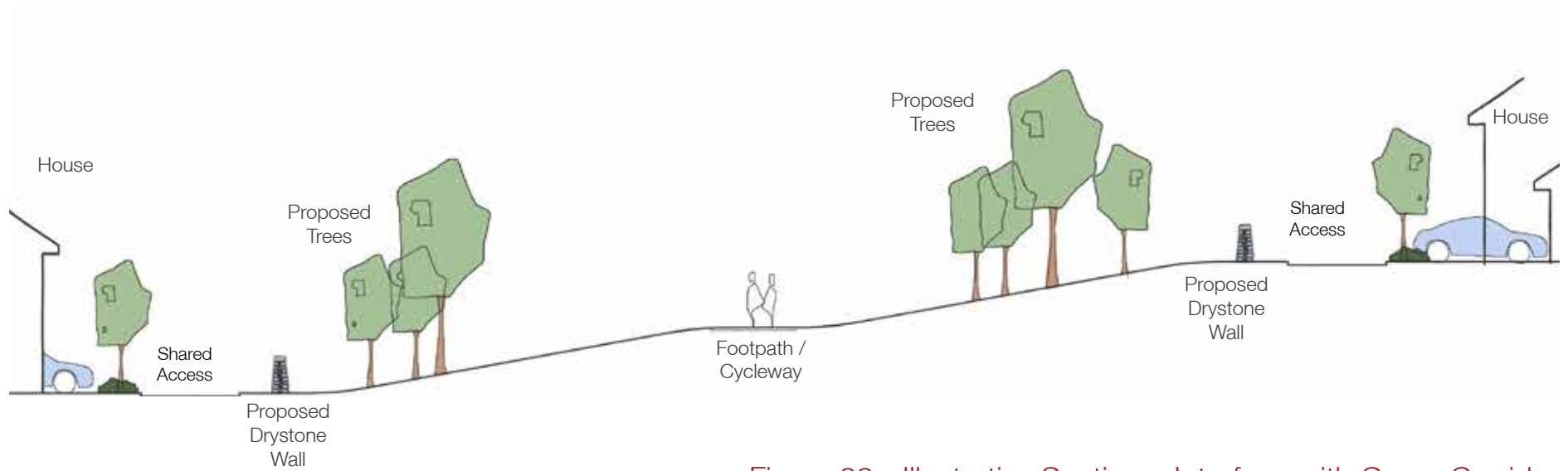


Figure 29 - Illustrative Sections: Interface with Green Corridor

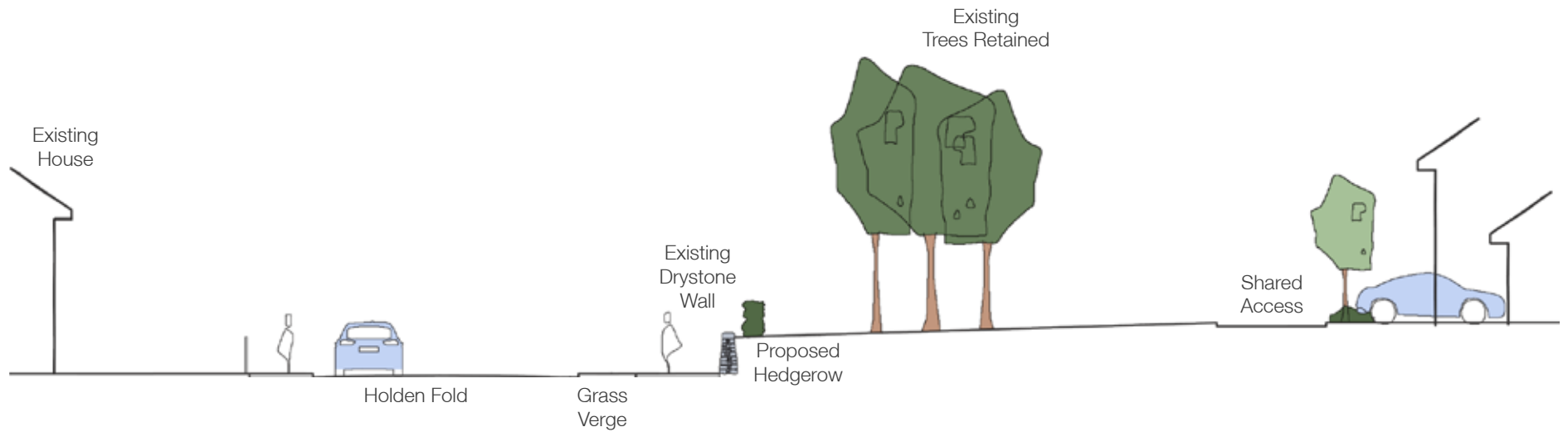


Figure 30- Illustrative Sections: Interface with Holden Fold

## 08 Residential Character Areas

### 8.2 Southern Zone

There are considerations which are similar to those outlined for the Northern Zone such as the relationship between new housing and greenspace and the treatment and orientation of houses at the outer edge. However it is anticipated that the grain of the housing will be tighter, a reflection of the neighbourhood to the south.

Key characteristics are:

#### Layout and Density

- A medium density of housing is anticipated (30-40dph) with a greater use of terraced housing.
- Direct frontage to the primary greenspace which divides Plots C and D with pedestrian routes threaded through this greenspace (Figure 29).
- Greenspace at the edge of this Zone will harbour the detention ponds which form part of the side-wide, sustainable system of managing surface water runoff.
- Orientation of new houses is important with direct frontage onto Holden Fold, Knowle Fold and Moor Lane as well as active frontage to greenspace corridors.

#### Land Use

- Residential and a new car park to meet the needs of Square Meadow.
- Areas of greenspace separating Plots C and D and accommodating sustainable drainage swales and detention ponds.

#### Scale and Form

- Two storey houses are likely to dominate but there are opportunities for higher buildings at corners to mark a particular location in the development.
- Housing mix of clusters of terraced housing, semi-detached and detached housing.

#### Street, Public Open Space and Landscape

- As described already, the spine road originating at Holden Fold will have a distinct character formed by verges, avenue trees and high quality boundaries. At the threshold onto Holden Fold existing trees, new landscape and buildings should be used in combination to create a high quality entrance.
- Elsewhere along more informal streets there remains a need for strong boundaries to distinguish public and private spaces.
- Views across the greenspace should be celebrated. Rear fences between house plots and greenspace should be avoided
- Existing trees, wherever possible, should form the starting point of a rich landscape framework for the new housing.

#### Boundary Treatments and Enclosure

- There are occasional lengths of dry stone walls which should be repaired and extended to give character to the greenspace corridors
- Housing along streets should include front boundary walls to enclose private spaces.
- At the outer edge of this Zone along Holden Fold and Knowle Fold native hedgerows should be used as a boundary enclosure.

#### Detail of Built Form

- There is the option to group clusters of terraced houses to provide a character of development which is an modern interpretation of traditional housing in Darwen.
- There needs to be a considered balance of solid to void on the principal elevations of the houses with a dominant vertical rhythm of windows openings.
- Facing materials should be predominantly red brick but with accents of stone and render.

## 09 Delivery Strategy

### 9.1 Phasing of Development, Infrastructure Delivery and Developer Contributions

The masterplan provides for the delivery of new housing in phases. The phases are aligned with land ownership interests.

If a local shop is a viable addition then it could be included in later phases of the development.

A clear understanding of the infrastructure requirements and bulk earthworks for each phase is important and it will need to be demonstrated that activities and interventions at any one plot will not prejudice the delivery of houses on any other plot.

The spine road is one key component of the site infrastructure. The first phase of development will be served by the initial stages of the spine road constructed with new junctions onto the adopted Holden Fold and Roman Road. This arrangement releases land in the Northern Zone and land in the Southern Zone in parallel and is likely to lead to a diverse range of house types and house sizes from the outset. The spine road will be completed as phases two and three are brought forward.

A similar principle applies to the drainage network and the greenspace network. They need to be conceived and designed across the whole site but they should also be capable of being delivered in stages as the associated housing is built out.

With this in mind the phasing plan (Figure 27) shows the broad extent of the strategic greenspace and the network of pedestrian routes associated with each phase.

Development, new on-site infrastructure and contributions to off-site infrastructure will be provided progressively over time. This is summarised in the schedule at Appendix A. In brief this shows:

1. In phases 1 and 2 there will be contributions (i) towards the extension of a single form entry primary school in East Darwen.
2. In phases 2,3 and 4 contributions (i) will be made towards the development of the East Darwen Development Corridor and sustainable transport initiatives.
3. New points of access onto Holden Fold, Roman Road and Moor Lane will be secured through S278 of the Highways Act 1990.
4. In all phases the starting point is the inclusion of 20% of all housing to be affordable. This is subject to viability and, potentially, a higher ratio of affordable housing in the Southern Zone than the Northern Zone.
5. Contributions (i) are to be made towards upgrading the Square Meadow Sports Facility in each phase of the development.
6. Green infrastructure (and the surface water drainage network) is to be delivered as an integral part of each phase and managed in perpetuity in accordance with a landscape management plan (and through the creation of a dedicated Management Company). The management arrangements for all green infrastructure will be overarching and will apply equally to all phases. The dedicated Management Company will ensure that all green infrastructure is maintained at all times to a consistently high standard.

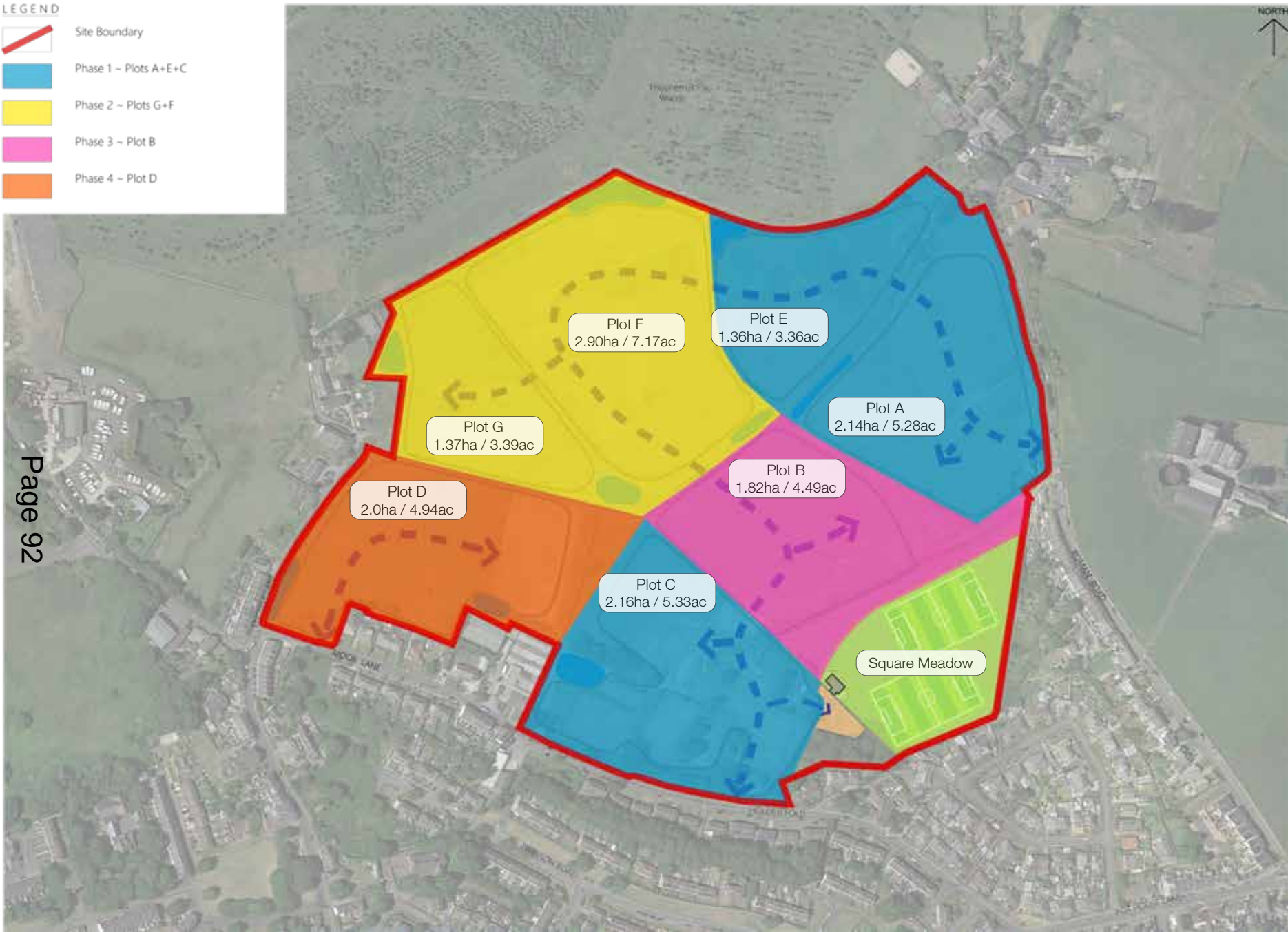


(i) **Note** Contributions and affordable housing will be secured through agreements under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Phase 1 ~ Plots A+E+C
- Phase 2 ~ Plots G+F
- Phase 3 ~ Plot B
- Phase 4 ~ Plot D



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Figure 31 - Proposed Phasing

## 09 Delivery Strategy

### 9.2 Housing Trajectory

The rate of delivery of housing will be subject to a wide range of factors and so, at this stage, the housing trajectory for the site can only be seen as indicative.

Plot	Land Area (acre)	Land Areas (ha)	Units	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
PHASE ONE	13.99	5.66	184	30	60	60	34					
PHASE TWO	10.56	4.27	114			30	30	30	24			
PHASE THREE	4.50	1.82	55						30	25		
PHASE FOUR	4.94	2.00	80							30	30	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>33.99</b>	<b>13.75</b>	<b>433</b>									
<b>Estimate of units sold per year</b>				<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>

## 09 Delivery Strategy

### 9.3 Planning Application Requirements

The development will be brought forward in phases over a time-frame which could extend over nine years. As a consequence, it is vital that the masterplan exerts a strong influence over the approach to design in individual character areas and on the delivery of infrastructure to support developments.

It is anticipated that separate planning applications for individual phases or character areas will be submitted although there is the option of a two stage approach to planning with an outline planning permission to provide an overarching statutory approval for new development followed by a series of reserved matters applications. If an outline planning application is submitted then there will be an intermediate stage which requires the submission and approval of a Design Code. This will be secured by planning condition. Whichever planning route is adopted, Blackburn with Darwen Council would encourage pre-application discussion with interested parties.

All planning applications will need to be supported by essential information. In this respect the Council's validation checklist should be consulted. The Design and Access Statement will assume a particularly important role. It should explain the rationale for all design decisions and demonstrate how the proposed development aligns with all aspects of the masterplan. Other key documents will include a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, a Transportation Assessment, a Land Quality and Remediation Statement, Ecological Surveys, and a Landscape Strategy.

If planning applications are brought forward for individual plots or phases then they will need to be accompanied by a context plan and statement to explain how the development proposed relates to the other parts of the site and the contributions the development will make to infrastructure.

Under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, the development could require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Statement. It is recommended that a Screening Opinion is submitted to the Council in advance of submitting planning applications to establish if EIA is required or not.

Blackburn with Darwen Council is preparing a new local plan. Depending on the timing of a planning application, additional policy requirements might arise through that process. Planning decisions will be made based on the adopted development plan and emerging policy in accordance with the weight that can be attributed to them. One example is the updated Playing Pitch Strategy and the Built Sports Facilities Strategy (both are currently being reviewed). These could influence the way in which planning applications are prepared and presented. They could also prompt a review of the planning obligations relating to Square Meadow as set out in Appendix A.

# APPENDIX A - Infrastructure and Delivery Plan

## INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PHASING PLAN

(Covering work under S278 of the Highways Act 1980 and contributions under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990)

	Notes	Phase	1	2	3	4	Totals
	Note 1	Indicative housing number	188	118	55	82	443
<b>Education Provision</b> 1. S106 Contributions to single form entry primary school extension in East Darwen	Note 2 Note 4		£820,000	£180,000	£0	£0	£1,000,000
<b>Key Highway Improvement Works</b> 2. S106 contributions to Darwen East Development Corridor and sustainable transport initiatives  3. 278 highway improvement/junction works where boundary of the site adjoins the public highway	Note 2 Note 4		£0  Two new junctions (Holden Fold and Roman Road)	£346,500	£242,500	£361,000  One new junction (Moor Lane)	£950,000
<b>Affordable Housing</b> 4. Inclusion of affordable housing by phase	Note 3		20%	20%	20%	20%	
<b>Green Infrastructure</b> 5. S106 contributions towards upgrading Square Meadows Sports Facility  6. Green Infrastructure provided on site within each phase and managed in perpetuity in accordance with a landscape management plan	Note 2 Note 4  Note 5		£21,000  On site/within phase	£13,500  On site/within phase	£6,000  On site/within phase	£9,500  On site/within phase	£50,000

### Notes

**Note 1** Infrastructure delivery plan is based in assumed housing yield from each phase. Any proposed changes will require proportionate changes in funding profiles

**Note 2** Payment schedule for all S106 contributions to be agreed for each phase and to be considered at the planning application stage

**Note 3** Affordable housing is subject to viability assessment at each phase of the development when planning applications are submitted.

The mix of affordable housing types and tenures is also to be determined on a phase by phase basis when planning applications are submitted

**Note 4** The costs in this schedule have been provided by Blackburn with Darwen Council

**Note 5** All green infrastructure will be maintained by a single Management Company which will have an overarching role across all phases of the neighbourhood.

It is anticipated that a single NEAP will serve the neighbourhood and that the cost of this will be apportioned to each phase.

The NEAP will be maintained by the Management Company as an integral part of the green infrastructure.



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# LAND AT HOLDEN FOLD MASTERPLAN

## CONSULTATION STATEMENT

Page 97



**BLACKBURN**  
with  
**DARWEN**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**NOVEMBER 2020**



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*Aerial image of the Land at Holden Fold Masterplan boundary*



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Consultation Statement provides details of public consultation carried out over a four week period from Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020 to Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 on a draft masterplan for land at Holden Fold, Darwen.
- 1.2 It sets out the rationale for producing the masterplan and outlines the consultation arrangements. The report also provides a summary of the main issues raised through the consultation, Council actions to address these and how these matters have been taken into account within the final version masterplan.

## 2. The Masterplan

- 2.1 The site at Holden Fold is located at the northern edge of Darwen. It is made up of pastoral agricultural fields and the site of the former Darwen Moorland High School.
- 2.2 The site is in multiple ownerships (including some Council owned land) and the Council has been working in collaboration with the site's landowners and their agent to ensure it is brought forward in a comprehensive and coordinated way.
- 2.3 The site is allocated in the Blackburn with Darwen Local Plan Part 2 (adopted December 2015) for housing and

is estimated to deliver approximately 430 new homes over a number of years.

- 2.4 Given the proposed scale of the site, multiple land ownership and the likelihood that development will take place in phases over a number of years, it was considered essential that a framework and supporting design principles were in place to ensure that development of the site forms an integrated and cohesive extension to Darwen.
- 2.5 The Land at Holden Fold Masterplan provides spatial principles for land use, transport, design and green infrastructure in addition to providing more detailed guidance on the anticipated built form in individual character areas. Fundamentally, it gives a structure to the development of the whole site and ensures that it is not developed in a piecemeal manner.
- 2.6 The masterplan will also help to ensure that any development incorporates appropriate infrastructure, achieves high standards of design, retains important features and assets, and is sensitive to its location. It will inform developers of the Council's expectations with regard to scheme content and design.
- 2.7 The masterplan was informed by a number of technical reports including:
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal;

- Phase 1 Habitats Survey;
- Flood Risk Assessment;
- Geo-Environmental Desk Study;
- Level 2 Utility Study;
- Transport Assessment.

2.8 These reports were all available to view and comment on as part of consultation on the draft masterplan.

2.9 Once adopted the masterplan will be a material consideration in the review of and decision making on every planning application for development on the site.

### 3. Consultation Process

3.1 Consultation on the draft masterplan took place over a four week period between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

3.2 The consultation involved the following actions:

- Letters and/or emails were sent to all relevant consultees/stakeholders. An example letter can be found at Appendix A;
- A letter and leaflet drop was conducted in the local area to approximately 370 properties. A copy of the leaflet and plan of the leafleting area can be found at Appendix B;

- Copies of relevant hard copy documents were made available at Darwen Library for interested parties to view (such as ecology survey, transport assessment etc);

- A number of exhibition boards were set up at Darwen Market (with leaflets also available) to summarise the masterplan content (Appendix C);

- Information posters were displayed in public buildings in the area (See Appendix D);

- Details of the consultation were added to Social Media via the Council's Facebook and Twitter pages (Appendix E);

- Notification on the Council's consultation webpage (<https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations>) and Planning webpage (Appendix F);

- The consultation was advertised within the Lancashire Telegraph (Appendix G).

2.3 Consultation responses could be sent either via email, post or through the completion of an online form using the Snap Surveys software.

## 4. Consultation Summary Responses

- 4.1 A total of 56 responses were received from statutory bodies, non-statutory bodies and members of the public.
- 4.2 Although comments received covered a number of different subject areas, a significant number raised issues relating to four key areas which were:
- Objecting to the principle of developing on greenfield land;
  - Concerns relating to the increased traffic generated as a result of the development and impact on highway safety;
  - Impacts on infrastructure as a result of the development – schools, GPs, dentists, highways;
  - Concerns over the loss of open space and impact on wildlife as a result of the development.
- 4.3 A summary of all the consultation responses received are included in the table below, alongside a comment from the Council and whether any amendments have been made to the masterplan as a result.

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The Council would like to thank all residents and other stakeholders who engaged in the consultation process for their contributions.
- 5.2 The Council has reviewed all of the consultation feedback and has made any necessary amendments to the final masterplan as a result of comments received.
- 5.3 There will be opportunities for further community consultation and input into the development of detailed scheme proposals at the planning application stage.
- 5.4 This report will be published on the Council's website alongside the adopted masterplan.



Representor	Summary of comments received	Council Response	Action(s)
Cllr Roy Davies	<p>Highways - concerned about highway impacts and safety around the proposed new Roman Rd junction</p> <p>Health - Concern also raised around impacts on GP surgeries and hospitals.</p> <p>Open Space - Questions how the Square Meadows upgrade is to be funded. Additional question raised around funding improvements to other local play areas</p>	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Health - This site is an allocated site in the Local Plan. Health infrastructure needs arising from developments were assessed at the plan making stage prior to allocation and published in the Infrastructure and Delivery Plan. Where relevant, site allocations in the Local Plan then set out contributions for specific infrastructure linked to those developments. This site sets out requirements for contributions towards school provision and highways only. The Council maintains regular contact with the CCG and NHS Trust under the Duty to Co-operate to ensure that the new Local Plan similarly plans for health infrastructure in an appropriate way.</p> <p>Open Space - Square Meadow Funding improvements to local play areas</p>	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Health - This site is an allocated site in the Local Plan. Health infrastructure needs arising from developments were assessed at the plan making stage prior to allocation and published in the Infrastructure and Delivery Plan. Where relevant, site allocations in the Local Plan then set out contributions for specific infrastructure linked to those developments. This site sets out requirements for contributions towards school provision and highways only. The Council maintains regular contact with the CCG and NHS Trust under the Duty to Co-operate to ensure that the new Local Plan similarly plans for health infrastructure in an appropriate way.</p> <p>Open Space - the upgrade of Square Meadows facilities will be part funded by S106 money, as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (Appendix A). It is not expected that this will fund all of the required improvements and other grant funding may be necessary. Development at Holden Fold will not fund improvements to play areas elsewhere in Darwen but is expected to provide facilities within the site (via a NEAP or similar as set out on p44 of the draft masterplan through planning condition as opposed to S106 monies)</p>
Mrs Elaine Whalley	No comments		None
Ethan Riley	Objection of building on green belt land. Brown belt sites should be used first. Concerns also raised around general impacts on	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). The site is not designated as 'green belt' which is a specific policy designation, although it is a greenfield site.	None.



	roads, healthcare and schools infrastructure	<p>Greenfield/brownfield - a pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p>	
Adela Watson Page 104	Objection based on negative impact on property values; insufficient infrastructure to cope in Darwen; Roman Road access to the scheme; and impact on green belt land	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Impacts of development on existing property values are not considered to be planning matters. The site is not designated as 'green belt' which is a specific policy designation, although it is a greenfield site.</p> <p>Greenfield/brownfield - a pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p>	None.

Lynne Cummins	Concerns over proposed new footpath alongside Manor House Farm Cottage. Can measures be taken to avoid this being used for motor bikes, off road vehicles etc. as a short cut from Holden Fold.	The identified route is proposed as being suitable for pedestrians and cyclists only in the draft masterplan. The concerns raised could be addressed with some increased clarity in the document.	Amend masterplan to clarify that the central PROW should only be accessible by pedestrians and cyclists. Section 8.1 of the Masterplan amended.
Lisa Hough	Objection to use of greenfield land for housing due to the impacts on wildlife. Also general impacts on roads and schools. The housing development in the town centre was poor quality and still unresolved.	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p> <p>Belgrave Mill - the Council is currently working with a new landowner of this site to assist completion of the scheme.</p>	None.
Sarah Fields	Objection in general to building in Darwen. Concern of the general impacts on schools, highways (increased traffic), shops (extra people) and wildlife.	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and</p>	None.

		<p>green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p>	
Adam	<p>This is an opportunity to create something great, not to be missed. The scheme needs to be treated as a new neighbourhood (not just a development) and therefore inclusion of a community hub. As a minimum a village square/crescent and local shop. The scheme needs a sense of community spirit, a centre is key. This will reduce travel and impact on the environment.</p>	<p>Concept - the masterplan refers to the opportunity of creating a new residential 'neighbourhood' (as opposed to just a development) from its outset. The comprehensive approach taken to preparing the draft framework in terms of preparing an evidence base, considering a vision and objectives and delivery strategy etc. demonstrates that the Council sees this site as being more than just a housing development.</p> <p>Open Space - The draft masterplan identifies around 4.7 hectares of greenspace (including water bodies) which would provide opportunities for community activities. Section 7 sets out that <i>'there is an opportunity to create a focal point for the new neighbourhood as a whole. This space can have a number of functions and should be designed accordingly - as a meeting or gathering place, as a place where there are facilities for play and as a place where surface water attenuation features can be incorporated'</i>.</p> <p>Local Shop - whilst not set out specifically in the objectives (Section 4.2), provision of a community shop on site would not be prevented by the guidance set out in the masterplan if a developer wished to come forward with a proposal at planning application stage. This would be down to a developer to consider in terms of market demand and viability. This would not constitute a 'Local Community Use' under Class F.2 of the new Use Classes Order due to the proximity of other existing facilities.</p>	<p>Amend masterplan to incorporate reference to community focal point into the overall site objectives, including support of a local shop subject to relevant Local Plan policy (Policy 32). Reference to a small community hub now made in Section 4.2 of the Masterplan (objectives) and at Section 5.1 (Masterplan Framework) and at Section 7.2</p>
Lesa Rollo	<p>General objection to new houses in Darwen due to lack of infrastructure</p>	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Public consultation took place on a number of stages of the</p>	<p>None.</p>

	(school places, doctors, dentists). Site would be better used for recreational facilities for teenagers / younger generations (skate/jump park, mountain bike park, youth centre etc.) or a larger supermarket.	Local Plan during its preparation. The purpose of presenting this draft masterplan is a further opportunity for the public to get involved. Development of the site is required to meet the housing needs of the area and to help achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.  Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A). Further infrastructure planning took place during preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 in which this site was allocated for future development.	
Page 106 Sami	Objection to new houses on green field land	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area. The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.	None.
Harry Blackwell. founder/president The Friends Of Square Meadow.	The north-western portion of the Square Meadow Sports field should be retained as part of Square Meadows and not integrated as part of the open space in the new development as indicated on the framework plan.	A lease agreement in relation to this land was signed by Friends of Square Meadow and the Council dated 20/9/17. Though the land in question will not be built upon (and is thus indicated as green infrastructure in the draft masterplan) it may be required by the developer for utilities or similar. As such it will remain part of the development site giving flexibility for any future developer of the site to use the land in the most appropriate way.	None.
Eunice Marsden	Generally supportive. Request for consultation with adjoining properties on boundary treatments (fencing) before decisions are made, and for	The masterplan will not agree details of boundary treatments as this is a detailed matter for a planning application stage. Submission of a planning application on the site in the future will trigger further consultation with adjoining properties. Matters relating to materials and maintenance will be agreed through a future planning application approval and related conditions.	None.



	maintenance of trees to take place on the site.		
David and Patricia Ann Billington	Generally supportive of redevelopment of the brownfield land (former school footprint), however object to development of 'green belt' land due to impacts on wildlife	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). The site is not designated as 'green belt' which is a specific policy designation, although it is a greenfield site.</p> <p>Greenfield/brownfield - a pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	None.
Allen Ward	<p>Side elevations of development plateaus would be more realistic for people to visualise.</p> <p>Concerns around pedestrian/cyclist safety off-site along Roman Road without traffic calming measures</p>	Elevations - the masterplan is designed to be a concept document only. As such there are no detailed layout plans for which elevations would assist in visualising. Detailed elevations will be submitted alongside any future planning applications on the site.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments on highways safety on Roman Road. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Ann Harle	No comments		None
Jennifer O'Neill	General concerns around additional traffic. Additional access road proposed at the back of the site. Spread housing density more evenly to avoid majority of traffic entering and leaving Holden Fold / Moor Lane	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	Highways - review proposal for additional access road and assess balance of traffic predicted to leave top and bottom of the site. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.

Jackie Davies	<p>Objection based on: impact on green field land; negative impact on property values; housing not affordable or appropriate for local residents; social problems in neighbouring areas; increased traffic on the roads; wildlife impacts; negative impacts on Square Meadow; insufficient infrastructure to cope in Darwen; Roman Road access to the scheme.</p>	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Impacts of development on existing property values are not considered to be planning matters. A pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough.</p> <p>Affordable housing - the draft masterplan (and adopted Local Plan) sets out the requirement for 20% of housing on the site to be affordable. A combination of different site and house types helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Square Meadow - the masterplan confirms that Square Meadow will be retained as an important community facility and financial contributions towards upgrading of facilities will be secured through development at Holden Fold.</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p>	None.
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Andrew Holmes	Concerns around highway impacts and safety at the Manor House Farm bend on Roman Road. Suggested improvements to visibility on Roman Road and junction of Moor Lane. Also reference to broadband and telecomms for the Manor Farm area.	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Telecomms - Section 3.7 of the masterplan confirms the services and utilities strategy for the site, including telecomms. Ultrafast broadband will be provided through Fibre To The Premises to new dwellings however this will not extend beyond the site. Development at Holden Fold will however improve connection capabilities for adjoining areas</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Dorothy Riley	Concerns around air pollution and congestion and what highways improvements are proposed. Safety concerns also raised around construction traffic and the junction of Pothouse Lane, Holden Fold and Oak Grove due to poor visibility.	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond (including on air quality).</p> <p>Construction Traffic - the management of future construction traffic will be detailed and agreed through any future planning applications</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Christine Riley	Concerns around air pollution and congestion and what highways improvements are proposed. Safety concerns also raised around construction traffic and the junction of Pothouse Lane, Holden Fold and Oak Grove due to poor visibility.	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond (including on air quality).</p> <p>Construction Traffic - the management of future construction traffic will be detailed and agreed through any future planning applications</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.

	Objection to the principle of development on the site	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). New housing is required alongside the renewal of existing areas (through schemes such as the empty properties programme) to meet the housing requirement figure for the Borough.	None.
Ruth Whelan	Objection to the principle of development on the site	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area. The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.	None.
Peter Crooks	Objection to the principle of development on the site. Road infrastructure cannot cope. Other sites in the town centre should be sorted out before this takes place. A new sports and leisure centre would be more suitable	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Belgrave Mill - the Council is currently working with a new landowner of this site to assist completion of the scheme.</p> <p>Sports/Leisure Centre - the Council is currently undertaking a Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Sports Facilities Strategy in support of the new Local Plan for the Borough. Should a need for a new sports/leisure centre be identified for Darwen through this process then it will be planned for through the new Local Plan (public consultation planned in early 2021).</p>	None
Hannah Lemon-Fish	No comment		None



William and Linda Chatburn	<p>Concerns around highway impacts and safety of Roman Road access and access onto Moor Lane. No buses mean that people will be forced to use car or taxi. Also concerned around whether cumulative impacts of other proposals (Ellison Fold Way) have been forecast on the highways network.</p> <p>Supportive of green corridor approach.</p>	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Steven Moss	<p>Ecology report does not take into account impacts beyond the development site which will be irreversibly damaged.</p> <p>Concerns around highways impacts and the effectiveness of the study: specifically whether traffic counts were undertaken pre/post lockdown; whether the cumulative impacts of other proposals (Ellison Fold Way) have been forecast on the highways network; and whether infrastructure proposals are built into the modelling work.</p>	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Mark Egan	Concerns around highways capacity and safety issues (speeding) on Roman Road. Also drainage of surface water down Roman	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.

	Road will be made worse potentially leading to more flooding.	<p>sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Drainage - the draft masterplan was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment report which recommended sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) to be implemented. The proposals incorporate this through a series of attenuation ponds throughout the site which will avoid significant impacts off-site</p>	
Miss Beverley Brayford	Object to the principle of development. Specific concerns about: volume of traffic on Roman Road; pedestrian safety; increase in crime; impact on habitats; impact on property values	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond. This includes a footpath/cycleway the length of Roman Road.</p> <p>Crime - any future planning applications will be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan. This includes policies ensuring that measures aimed at reducing crime and improving community safety are incorporated into new developments.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	None
Mrs S Ellison	Concerns about traffic and safety on Pot House Lane. Would prefer the site to include accessible public open space or parkland for	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). Although there will not be a new park on the site over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about Pot House Lane. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.

	elderly and people with mobility issues.	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	
Philip Hammond	Square Meadow must be protected	The masterplan proposes to retain and upgrade facilities at Square Meadow	None
Bill Stemp (Chairman - Friends of Square Meadow)	Concerned about the loss of around 10% of the present Square Meadow land	A lease agreement in relation to this land was signed by Friends of Square Meadow and the Council dated 20/9/17. Though the land in question will not be built upon (and is thus indicated as green infrastructure in the draft masterplan) it may be required by the developer for utilities or similar. As such it will remain part of the development site giving flexibility for any future developer of the site to use the land in the most appropriate way.	None
Concerned Driver  Page 114	Concerns around congestion and heavy traffic around the junction of Moor Lane / Knowle Lane. Proposal to create car parking to rear of West View to alleviate parking around the junction.	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about junction of Moor Lane / Knowle Lane. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Mrs I Lodge	Concerned about traffic, schools capacity, doctors, dentists and impact on wildlife	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.  Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A). Further infrastructure planning took place during preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 in which	None

		<p>this site was allocated for future development.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	
Richard Connell	Providing a mix of market and affordable housing on a development site does not work due to anti social behaviour	The Council's Local Plan requires that all new residential development contributes towards meeting the identified need for new affordable housing. This includes affordable housing for rent and ownership and can include provision on-site or financial contributions to providing equivalent provision off-site. The particular mix on each development is determined by a number of factors including economic viability of the development, evidence on local market conditions, and the availability of grant.	None
Mr & Mrs DG & S Craney	Concerned about increase in traffic on Roman Road	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	None
Mr & Mrs C. Aldcroft	Concerns around traffic impacts on Moor Lane and damage to wildlife. Also lack of consultation before planning takes place.	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	None



		Lack of consultation - allocation of the site as a potential housing development was first subject to public consultation back in 2014/15 when the Local Plan Part 2 was being prepared. Consultation on this draft masterplan provides another opportunity for residents to inform the development prior to any planning applications being submitted. A final opportunity to comment on planning applications will be available as and when they are submitted.	
Mrs Alison Crook	Questions access to public footpaths during building phases, and traffic calming measures on Holden Fold	<p>Public footpaths - access to public footpaths during building phases is a matter for a planning application stage. If new development impacts on public rights of way there are specific legal procedures that must be followed to either close or divert the PROW. This is a matter to be controlled through determination of, and conditions to, any future planning applications. The draft masterplan responds to the existing network of PROWs through the site. When the development is complete it will lead to an improved network of pedestrian/cycle routes through and outside of the site.</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p>	None
Mr & Mrs D Greenwood	Concerns around highways impacts and safety around some key junctions including: Knowle Lane/Moor Lane/Chapels; Cotton Hall Street/Quaker Lane/Stam Hope St. Proposed parking bans around junctions	Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about junction of Moor Lane / Knowle Lane. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Emily Hrycan, Historic England	No comments		None

Lancashire Wildlife Trust (David Dunlop)	Concerns about the impact on the integrity of nature recovery networks during construction. Strategic green corridors should be protected throughout with impacts on habitat connectivity within and across the site being minimised or mitigated. This should be done through a construction phase management plan and via a legal agreement. Encourage applicants to meet the UK Building with Nature standards.	Habitat Connectivity - these are issues to be resolved in detail at a planning application stage. Further clarity could however be added to the masterplan in terms of ensuring that the integrity of the green corridor is retained throughout and referencing the UK Building with Nature standards	Amend masterplan to clarify points around habitat connectivity. Additional guidance given at Section 7.4 (Biodiversity) of the Masterplan.
Sport England (Fiona Pudge)	<p>Square Meadow improvements - specific improvements are not made clear in the masterplan. Any development will be subject to statutory consultation. The Council should consult early with the Lancashire FA re: any improvement proposals.</p> <p>Moorlands pitches - evidence on the impact of the loss of former pitches at the Moorlands school will need to be provided in any planning application. The Council's PPS underway at the moment will assist with this.</p> <p>Active Design - Sport</p>	<p>Sports provision - the Council is continuing with the update of its Playing Pitch Strategy and Built Sports Facilities Strategy. Once complete (due before any planning applications will be received) a more informed position can be taken on the points raised by Sport England around pitch provision, improvements etc. and related costs.</p> <p>Design - points around general design and 'Active Design' principles are agreed.</p>	<p>Add reference into the masterplan to reflect the ongoing PPS/BSFS work and that findings of this will need to be taken into account in any future planning applications. Specifically reference that the S106 contribution for Square Meadows may be subject to change. Additions made at Section 7.3 (Square Meadow Sports Facility) of the Masterplan. Reference also made to the PPS and BSFS in the Section on Planning Application Requirements (9.3)</p> <p>Amend the masterplan to refer to 'Active Design' principles and guidance. Now included as one of the Objectives of the Masterplan (Section 4.2)</p> <p>Pennine Ecological - review any impacts of grassland classification of Square Meadows on the ecological appraisal.</p>

England's 'Active Design' guide prepared with Public Health England should be used to help embed active design principles into any scheme.

General design comments - consider greenspaces and their use in the context of lockdown; consider active travel wider than the red line boundary (e.g. Moor Lane/Roman Rd connection onwards?); square meadow not amenity grassland (Figure 8); clear signage to help encourage physical activity.

Additional demand for Sport - costs of the S106 contribution should be informed by the latest PPS action plan and LFFP priority projects. Indicative costs prior to more accurate cost analysis indicates for outdoor sport improvements (excluding lifecycle costs) £250k and for indoor sport improvements around £390k

Blackburn with Darwen Drainage Team	Climate change allowance for flood modelling should be increased from 30% to 40% in line with EA 'upper end' recommendation	Agreed	Update Flood Risk Assessment to 40% climate change allowance and consider any implications for the masterplan.
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The Coal Authority	Pleased to see that potential risks from past coal mining activity are mentioned and that a Coal Mining Risk Assessment is recommended to obtain more information. Further investigations should take place prior to any layout being designed. Findings should inform the development layout.	Agreed - further investigations should take place as part of any planning application in the future and should inform site layout.	Add additional text into 3.2 of the draft masterplan to say that further investigations are to be carried out in order to inform any development layout. Development to take place in accordance with government guidance on building on or within the influencing distance of mine entries. Further guidance now added to Section 3.2 (Ground Conditions) of the Masterplan.
G. Proctor (Cottage Cattery)	Concerns raised around impact on boarding cattery business; also development of greenbelt land before brownfield land; impacts on wildlife particularly in Polyphemus Woods	<p>Principle/impact on business - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). The site is not designated as 'green belt' which is a specific policy designation, although it is a greenfield site.</p> <p>Greenfield/brownfield - a pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	None
Louise Tyrie	Concerns around impacts on privacy of existing houses; increase in traffic on Roman Road and Goose House Lane and accidents in/around properties in Eccleshill; impacts on wildlife; and loss of open space.	<p>Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). A pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about safety/accidents around Eccleshill. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.



	<p>Would prefer to see the site used as a recreational/leisure facility for the town such as facilities at Witton Park.</p>	<p>highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond. Safety aspects are considered and the proposal includes a footpath/cycleway the length of Roman Road.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Open Space - although there will not be a new park on the site over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area which will be upgraded as part of the scheme.</p>	
Lisa Connolly	Square Meadow must see investment	Agreed - contributions towards helping to upgrade Square Meadows will be required as part of any planning applications	None
Allan Harle	<p>Objects to the scale of development, using the former school land only would be acceptable.</p> <p>Traffic too much around Knowle Lane junction.</p> <p>Timescales and impacts on residents are too protracted. Ecological appraisal does not take into account deer that roam the area.</p>	<p>Principle - the entire site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Phasing - phasing of delivery of the site means that impacts of new development will not be felt continually for 9 years. Construction management plans at the planning application stage will set conditions to help minimise impacts on amenity of local residents e.g. hours of operation, wheel cleaning etc.</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about Knowle Lane junction. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed

		Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.	
Stuart Ellison	Objection to loss of green space, impacts on highways and pollution, loss of wildlife.	<p>Principle - the entire site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). The Local Plan was produced through public consultation and followed an independent examination process. The plan includes sites allocated for housing but also contains a Green Infrastructure strategy and was supported by a relevant Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Over 30% of the site is proposed to be retained as green space, either informal green space or the Square Meadow formal recreation area which will be upgraded as part of the scheme.</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p>	None
Ann-Marie Haworth	Objects to the scale of development, using the former school land only would be acceptable. Traffic problems and parking on Moor Lane will only get worse. Proximity of	<p>Principle - the entire site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015).</p> <p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled</p>	Highways - review TA in light of specific comments about Moor Lane, parking and potential new access. If appropriate amend TA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed

	entrance off Moor Lane to existing dwellings will be dangerous. Negative impacts on value of residents' property.	based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.	
Josie Penman	Objects to development of plots F and G on grounds of impact to wildlife, particularly arising from Polyphemus Wood	Ecology/wildlife - The whole of the site is identified as a housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2, 2015). The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22. It concludes that the existing hedgerows are species poor and of low value however it does recommend that new development should seek to incorporate existing trees and hedgerows and augment them where possible.	None
Mick Ashton	The masterplan shows no use for the land to the rear of 31-35 Holden Fold. Resident would like to buy the land or continue to rent for garden use.	The land to the rear of 31-35 Holden Fold is within the boundary of the masterplan but not identified within any of the development plots (as demonstrated in Figure 31 - proposed phasing plan). It is identified as existing woodland in the ecological appraisal (Figure 8). Section 3.4 of the draft masterplan clarifies that new development should seek to incorporate existing trees and hedgerows and augment them where possible. In particular in relation to this land p12 states that <i>'every effort should be made to retain the limited tree cover that exists. This constraint to new housing is small and scale in range'</i> . Some greater clarity as to the current status (use of this land for private garden tenancies) should be provided in the final masterplan.	Amend the masterplan to add reference to private garden tenancies in the context of the small cluster of trees towards the southern (Holden Fold) edge of the site to the rear of 31-35. Section 7.2 of the Masterplan the potential location of a NEAP has been clarified. At Section 7.3 reference is made to the private garden tenancies and two options - consider the woodland as part of the detailed design of the car park or transfer the woodland to the tenants
Nicole Hillier (Woodland Trust)	Concerned about impacts to Woodland Trust's site at Polyphemus Wood. Recommend a 20m buffer of 50% planting of semi-natural vegetation between the proposed development and the woodland. Also that gardens of houses are not backed onto the site due to problems of waste tipping,	The north western boundary of the site (adjacent to Parcels D and E) have a natural buffer of over 20m already between the site boundary and woodland due to telegraph poles running parallel with the boundary on the Polyphemus side. The northern boundary of the site (adjacent to Parcels D and C) would benefit from some buffer built into any formal layout, this could in part be achieved through proposed attenuation ponds.	Amend masterplan to acknowledge recommendations of the Woodland Trust. Encourage any proposed layout to reflect the proposed buffer on the northern edge (Parcels C and D) and also to avoid gardens of houses backing directly onto Polyphemus Woods. Figure 25 shows the relationship between housing and Polyphemus Woods - Housing facing the woodland and a buffer created through design and sensitive layout.

	littering, spreading of invasive and non-native species, disturbance, pet intrusion etc.		
Anne Butler	Concerned about highways impacts (traffic and access points) and also impacts on the water supply to Knowle Farm	<p>Highways - Predicted impacts of the proposed scheme on the highway network are set out in the Transport Assessment (TA) accompanying the draft masterplan. Impacts were modelled based on a worst case traffic scenario. A comprehensive set of improvement measures for highway infrastructure and sustainable transport improvements have been developed to help mitigate any proposed impacts in the immediate area and beyond.</p> <p>Water supply - the draft masterplan was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment report which also considered surface water management and a preliminary drainage strategy. Comments to be forwarded to the flood risk consultants who undertook the work for further consideration.</p>	Water supply - review FRA in light of specific comments about the stream at Knowle Farm. If appropriate amend FRA and Masterplan to reflect any additional proposed measures or to help clarify how concerns are addressed.
Mr Dawson	Concerned about loss of habitat/wildlife. Objects to green belt loss; housing mix; green corridor design; lack of infrastructure	<p>Principle/impact on business - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). The site is not designated as 'green belt' which is a specific policy designation, although it is a greenfield site.</p> <p>Ecology/wildlife - The draft masterplan was accompanied by an ecological appraisal and any future planning applications will have to provide net gains for biodiversity in line with national planning policy framework (para 170). The masterplan sets out the site specific requirements arising from the ecological appraisal on p22.</p> <p>Housing mix - the masterplan proposes a 20% affordable housing requirement in accordance with adopted Local Plan policy</p> <p>Infrastructure - The draft masterplan acknowledges the infrastructure requirements arising from the proposals and sets out how these will be delivered: this includes specific financial contributions for education, key highways improvements and green infrastructure (Appendix A).</p>	None



Philip Barker	General objection to further new houses in Darwen	Principle - the site is identified as a local housing allocation in the adopted development plan (Local Plan Part 2 adopted 2015). A pipeline of sites comprising both brownfield and greenfield developments are required to meet the identified need for new housing in the Borough. A combination of sites also helps to achieve the policy aspiration of improving the quality of housing in the Borough and diversifying the housing stock.	None
Mr Brian Horton	Concerns around excessive parking on Holden Fold and suggestion of providing a car park for existing residents	The draft masterplan considers a parking strategy for within the development site. It is not however reasonable to expect the masterplan to resolve existing parking issues that lie away from the development boundary (respondee's address is over 100m south-east of the site boundary).	None

## Appendix A – Consultee Letter



Date:  
Please ask for:  
Direct Dial:  
Email:  
Website:

1<sup>st</sup> September 2020  
Forward Planning Team  
01254 585962  
[forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk)  
[www.blackburn.gov.uk](http://www.blackburn.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam,

### **PUBLIC CONSULTATION – 7<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER TO 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2020**

#### **PROPOSALS – Draft Masterplan for a proposed new housing development on land at Holden Fold, Darwen**

I am writing to inform you of a draft Masterplan that the Council has prepared in co-ordination with private landowners for land at Holden Fold, Darwen. The land is allocated in the current Local Plan for the Borough for housing development. The draft masterplan sets out a clear vision for the site and shows how new homes and associated infrastructure could be designed and delivered. The site provides a significant development opportunity for around 430 new homes. These would be delivered in phases alongside new on-site infrastructure and contributions to off-site infrastructure as well.

The Council would like to hear your view on the draft proposals and so it has prepared a range of consultation material. Any comments received will be reviewed and taken into account in finalising the Masterplan. Once completed the Masterplan will be a key consideration in any future planning applications on the site. We would encourage you to view the consultation material and respond online where possible.

Full details are available on the Council's consultation portal at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations/open-consultations>

If you are unable to access the documents online, or would prefer to see a hard copy of the consultation material then:

- **Exhibition Boards** summarising the consultation will be available to view in **Darwen Market** during opening hours between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October; and
- **The Masterplan and associated evidence base** documents (including response forms) will be available to view in **Darwen Library** during opening hours again between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss the proposals further then please direct initial queries to the Forward Planning team (contact details at the top of this letter). We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Kelly'.

Martin Kelly  
Director of Growth & Development

## Appendix B – Leaflet & Plan of leafleting area

### Questionnaire

Please take some time to review the exhibition boards before answering these questions. These are available to view at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations/open-consultations>. The Council is encouraging respondents to complete the online questionnaire however where this is not possible please complete below and post to: Growth Team (Forward Planning), Third Floor, One Cathedral Square, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1FB.

- Do you agree with the overall vision for the Holden Fold site (exhibition board 2)?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you agree with the overall structure of the development as set out in the draft Masterplan (exhibition board 4)?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you agree with the way in which green corridors have been woven through the new housing neighbourhood (exhibition board 4)?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you agree with the way in which the site is to be accessed by pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles (exhibition board 5)?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you agree with the way in which the housing and infrastructure is to be delivered in phases (exhibition board 6)?  
Yes ☐ No ☐
- Do you have any other comments or suggestions that you would like to make on any other aspect of the draft Masterplan framework?

Your Name:

Your Address:

or  
Your Email:

Contact: Email: [forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk) Tel: 01254 585962

For details on how this information will be used by Blackburn with Darwen Council please refer to: <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/data-and-information/privacy-notices>

### Land at Holden Fold - Darwen Summary & Questionnaire



The land to the north of Holden Fold and to the west of Roman Road is allocated for housing development in the Local Plan for Blackburn with Darwen. The new housing will form an urban extension to Darwen.

Ideas for how the site could be developed have now been brought together by way of an overall Masterplan. This is summarised in a series of exhibition boards as well. We want your views on the draft proposals and will take these into account as the Masterplan moves forward to the next stage of preparation. We aim to create a new housing neighbourhood on the northern edge of Darwen extending up to Polyphemus Woods. There is an opportunity to deliver a range of houses including a mix of unit sizes and different tenures of housing including housing for rent.

All consultation material, including a short questionnaire, will be available to view on the Council's website from 7th September 2020 at <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations/open-consultations>. The exhibition boards will also be available to view at Darwen Market and a copy of the Masterplan and supporting documents can be found at Darwen Library. We would encourage everyone to fill out the survey online, however the back of this leaflet provides an alternative option to return by post if you prefer. **All comments should be received by the Council no later than 5th October 2020.**



#### LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Existing Woodland and Trees
- Polyphemus Woods
- Existing Public Right of Way
- Existing Public Right of Way Made suitable for Pedestrians and Cyclists
- Proposed Footpath
- Proposed Footpath / Cycleway
- Existing Drystone Wall
- Indicative Entrance Point
- Indicative Housing Area
- Indicative Open Space
- Playing Fields
- Proposed Car Park to serve Square Meadow
- Approximate Location of Mineshaft
- Proposed Attenuation Pond



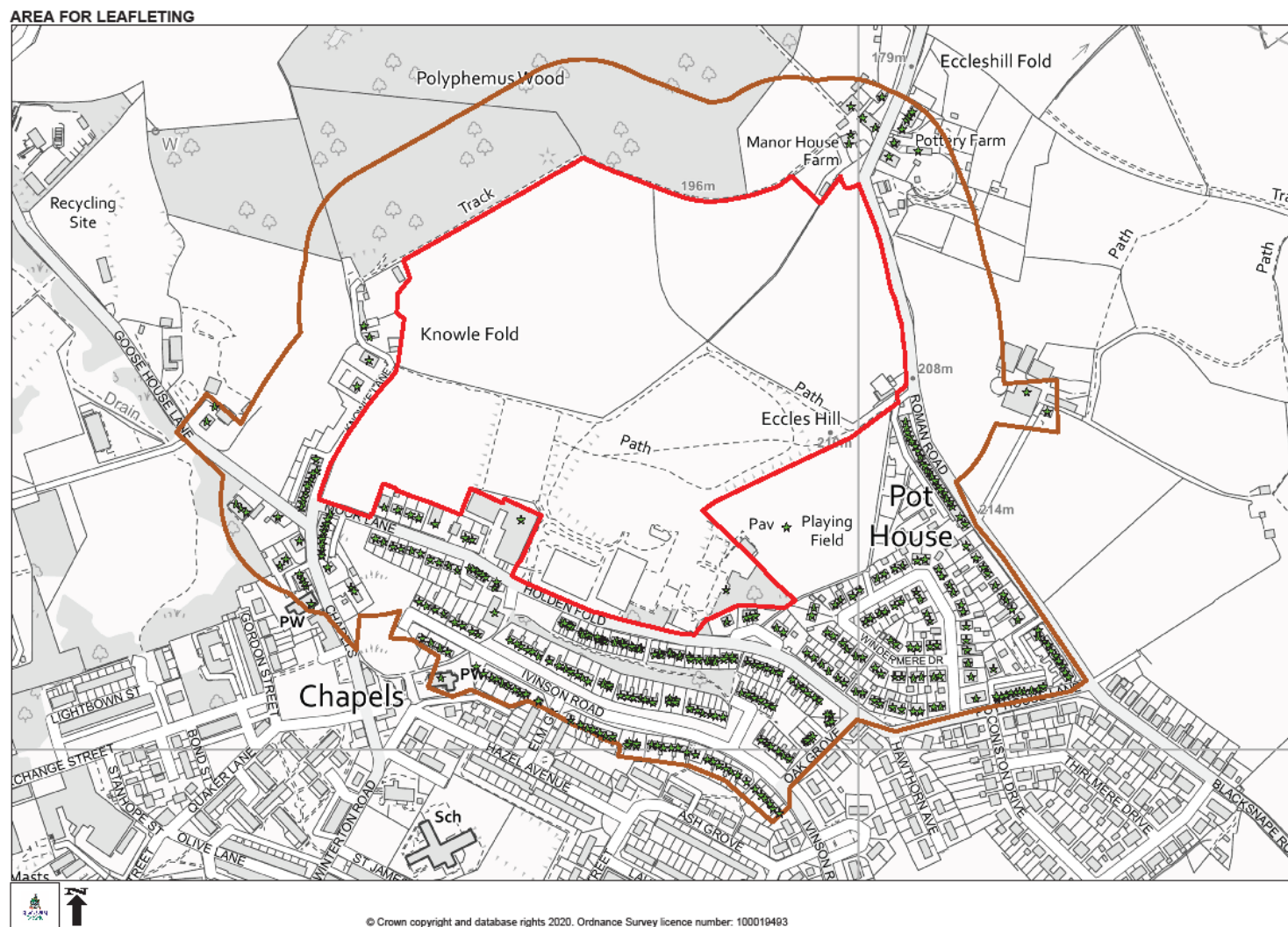
### Draft Masterplan Framework

The Masterplan allows for the delivery of new housing in phases over a number of years. Each phase of new housing will be accompanied by an appropriate amount of infrastructure – greenspace, roads, drainage and utilities. There is capacity for around 430 new homes.

The first phase will be in two locations – along the Holden Fold and Roman Road frontages. Later phases will follow with infrastructure that will link up the earliest stages of the new neighbourhood (including greenspace, roads, drainage and utilities).

Along with the new infrastructure on the site and housing of mixed tenure (including affordable housing) there will be financial contributions made towards the expansion of primary school capacity, towards the Darwen East Development Corridor and sustainable transport in Darwen and towards the upgrading of the Square Meadow Sports Facility.





### Land at Holden Fold, Darwen

### New Housing Development - Public Consultation



### Welcome to this exhibition

07 September 2020 - 05 October 2020

### Aim of this exhibition

This exhibition describes key aspects of the Draft Masterplan for the land to the north of Holden Fold and to the west of Roman Road.

We encourage you to look at the exhibition boards and give us feedback by completing the questionnaire.

**Draft Masterplan Framework**



**Cass**  
associates

architecture  
master planning  
planning  
landscape  
conservation



# 01 - Introduction

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



The land to the north of Holden Fold and to the west of Roman Road is allocated for housing development in the Local Plan for Blackburn with Darwen.

The new housing will form an urban extension to Darwen. New development will be integrated with the features of the site and its surroundings.

Ideas for how the site could be developed have been brought together by way of an overall Masterplan. We want your views

on the draft Masterplan. Your views will be taken into account as the Masterplan moves forward to the next stage of preparation.

This exhibition shows how the Masterplan has come together and explains how the new housing development could be delivered. Please take some time to look at the exhibition and then give us your views.

Comments on the Masterplan should be made in the period that runs between 07 September 2020 and 05 October 2020.



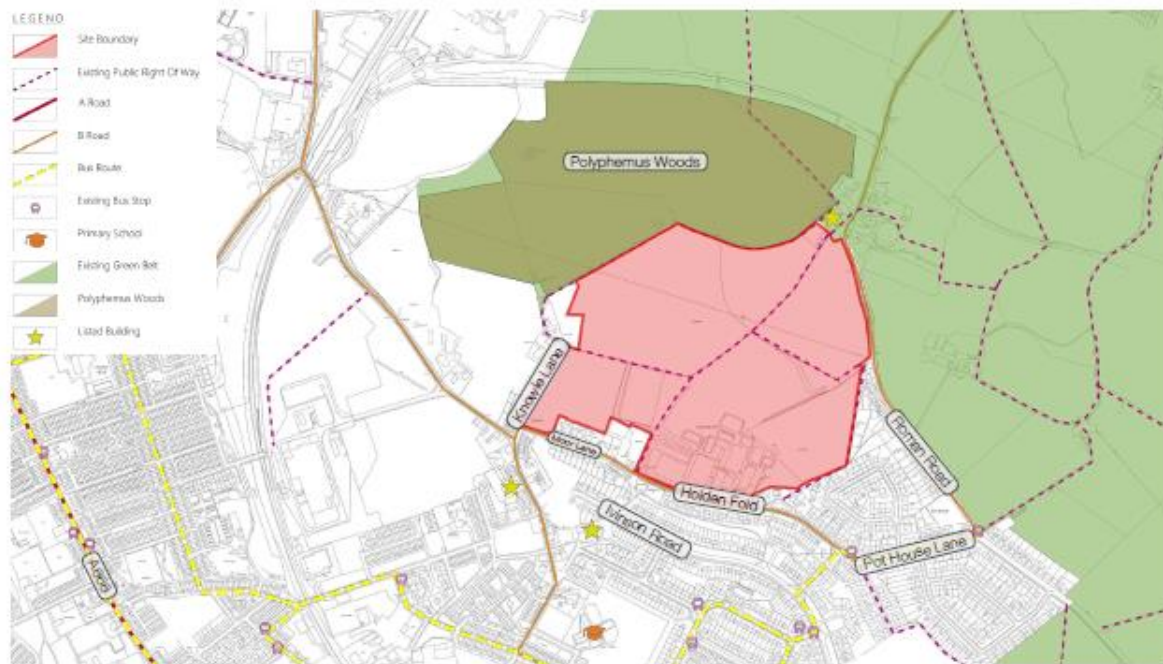
Draft Masterplan Framework



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## 02 - The Vision

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



We aim to create a new housing neighbourhood on the northern edge of Darwen. The neighbourhood will extend up to Polyphemus Woods.

There is an opportunity to deliver a range of houses. There will be a mix of unit sizes and different tenures of housing, including housing for rent. It is anticipated that the size and spacing of the houses will increase where the site has a common boundary with the woodland and Roman Road. A slightly higher density of housing is anticipated along the Holden Fold frontage. This approach will help with the transition from the developed area to the open countryside in general and to the woodland in particular.

Within the new neighbourhood there will be greenspace corridors. These will form links through the new housing to the countryside for pedestrians and cyclists and will act as continuous areas of habitat for the benefit of wildlife.

As part of the development the opportunity is also being taken to improve Square Meadow by providing car parking and other improvements.

Comments on the Masterplan should be made in the period that runs between 07 September 2020 and 05 October 2020.



Draft Masterplan Framework

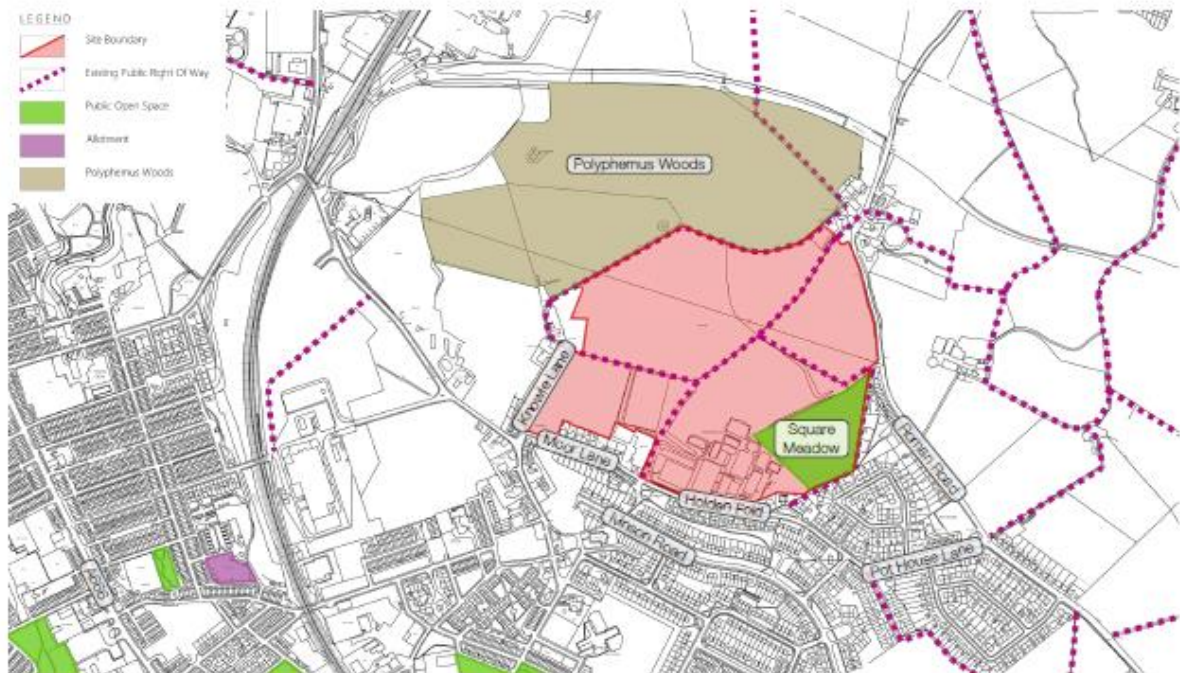


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interiors



## 03 - The Site

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



The site is made up of the former Darwen Moorland High School and the fields that surround it. There is ground that was levelled to form playing fields and other land that is sloping.

Public footpaths cross and skirt the site. These provide routes from Holden Fold and Knowle Lane to the woodland and to Eccleshill Fold. They are an important local amenity.

There is a small cluster of trees on the southern edge of the site and occasional lengths of dry stone walls. These features contribute to the particular character of the land. Along with the public routes they should be incorporated into the new housing neighbourhood.



Draft Masterplan Framework



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# 04 - Draft Masterplan Framework

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



The features of the site and constraints such as trees, stone walls, the sloping nature of the land have informed how the development is being approached.

A draft Masterplan Framework has been prepared to show how a new housing neighbourhood of distinct character can be realised.

The Framework is based on a programme of earthworks to create the platforms for new housing. The platforms are then linked by corridors of greenspaces and the road network. In order to distribute traffic safely, three points of access are proposed – one on Holden Fold, one on Moor Lane and one onto Roman Road.

The greenspace corridors are important features of the Masterplan Framework. They provide the setting for new houses but they also act as links for pedestrians and cyclists, they provide habitats for wildlife and they contain the drainage ponds which are to be used to control the runoff of surface water from the site once it is developed.



Draft Masterplan Framework

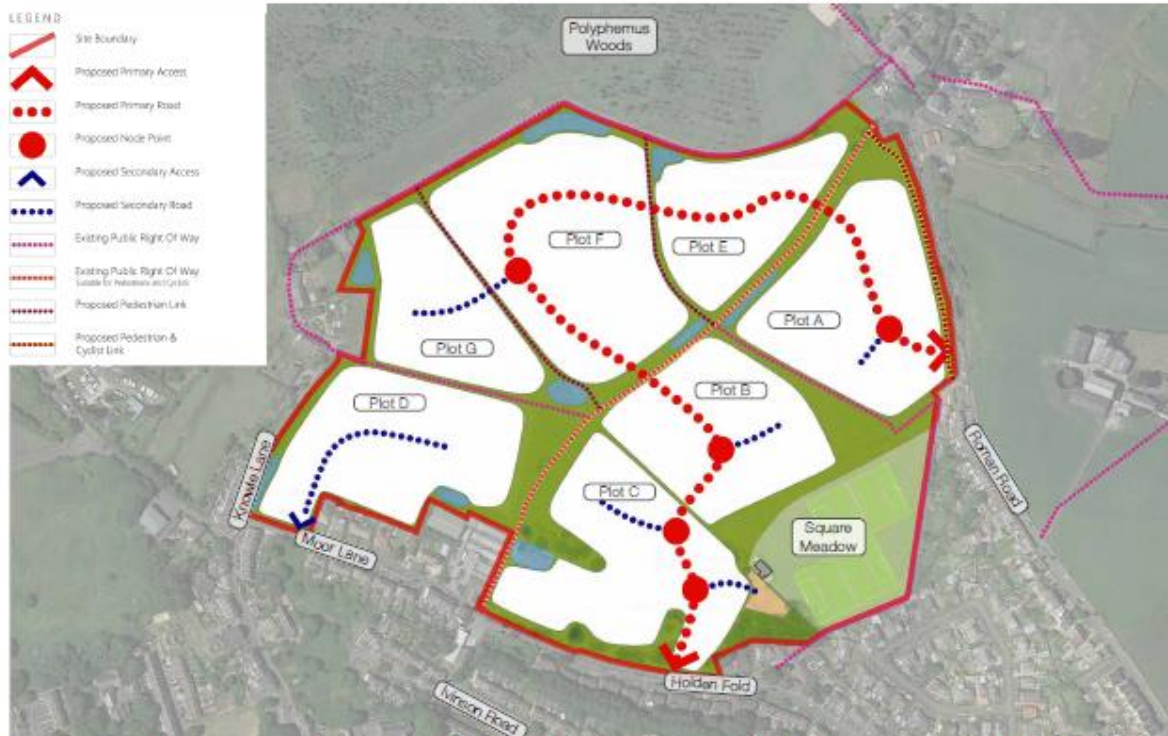


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interior design  
landscape  
consultants



## 05 - Access and Drainage

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



Equal attention has been given to how pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles access and move through the site.

There will be separated routes for pedestrians and cyclists. The main separated route will run diagonally across the site to link Holden Fold and Eccleshill Fold. This will be a key part of the new housing neighbourhood. The housing should face towards this route to make it feel safe to use.

The road link through the site from Holden Fold to Roman Road will not follow a direct route but will be threaded through the neighbourhood to serve most of the new development. This link will be designed so that it is capable of being used by buses.

There is a need to incorporate a series of drainage ponds which will hold the surface water which runs off hard surfaces. These will be part of the overall greenspace and will function in a way that holds water on the site in periods of heavy rainfall, releasing it into the sewer system at a regulated rate. This will minimise any risk of flooding.



Draft Masterplan Framework



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interior design  
landscape  
planning



## 06 - Phasing of Development & New Infrastructure

Land at Holden Fold, Darwen  
Public Consultation



The Draft Masterplan Framework allows for the delivery of new housing in phases over a number of years. Each phase of new housing will be accompanied by an appropriate amount of infrastructure – greenspace, roads, drainage and utilities. There is capacity for around 430 new homes.

The first phase will be in two locations – along the Holden Fold and Roman Road frontages. Later phases will follow with infrastructure that will link up the earliest stages of the neighbourhood.

Along with the new infrastructure on the site and housing of mixed tenure (including affordable housing) there will be financial contributions made towards the expansion of primary school capacity, towards the Darwen East Development Corridor and sustainable transport in Darwen and towards the upgrading of the Square Meadow Sports Facility.



Draft Masterplan Framework



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landscape  
planning  
landscape  
management

# Public Consultation

7 September 2020 – 5 October 2020

## Draft Masterplan for housing development on land at Holden Fold, Darwen

Land to the north of Holden Fold is allocated in the Local Plan for housing development. A draft Masterplan has now been prepared setting out a significant development opportunity to create around 430 new homes.

The Council and the private landowners are sharing their ideas on how this site can be developed through draft Masterplan proposals. The Masterplan area focuses on the area of land illustrated below.



The Council would like to hear your views on the draft proposals. We have prepared an exhibition, which shows how the draft Masterplan has come together and explains how the new housing development could be delivered.

Please take some time to look at the consultation material and then give us your views on the draft Masterplan before the consultation period ends on 5 October 2020.

**To get involved or for more information go to:**

**Web:** [www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations/open-consultations](http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations/open-consultations)

**Email:** [forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:forwardplanning@blackburn.gov.uk)

**Tel:** 01254 585962

**Holden Fold Masterplan**



**Cass**  
associates

architecture  
masterplanning  
planning  
landscape  
conservation

# Holden Fold Masterplan public consultation

The Council has prepared a draft masterplan for a proposed new housing development on land at Holden Fold, Darwen. This is land that is allocated in the current Local Plan for the Borough for housing development.

The draft masterplan sets out a clear vision of the site and shows how new homes and associated infrastructure could be designed and delivered. It provides a significant development opportunity for around 430 new homes. These would be delivered in phases alongside new on-site infrastructure and contributions to off-site infrastructure as well.

The Council would like to hear your views on the draft proposals. Any comments received will be reviewed and taken into account in finalising the masterplan. Once completed the masterplan will be a key consideration in any future planning applications on the site.

**[Once you have viewed the consultation information please tell us your views on it.](#)**

## Documents

- **[Holden Fold draft Masterplan - Consultation Leaflet](#)**
- **[Holden Fold draft Masterplan - full document](#)**
- **[Holden Fold draft Masterplan - Summary - Exhibition Boards](#)**

## Supporting technical documents

- **[Appendix 1 Map 1 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey](#)**
- **[Appendix 2 Desk Study Pennine Ecological Bolton Holden Fold](#)**
- **[Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Land at Holden Fold Darwen Lancashire](#)**
- **[Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Land at Holden Fold Darwen Lancashire](#)**
- **[Appendix 2 Desk Study Bats5km](#)**
- **[Appendix 2 Desk Study LKS](#)**
- **[Appendix 2 Desk Study SLBG Dataset](#)**
- **[02 1351 001 002 Flood Risk Assessment](#)**
- **[03 Great Crested Newt Survey Land at Holden Fold Darwen Lancashire](#)**
- **[04 PENNINE Ecological Holden Fold Substation Dusk Bat Survey Results](#)**
- **[05 Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study](#)**
- **[08 UCML Level 2 Utility Study - Holden Fold, Darwen \(Second Issue\)](#)**
- **[Transport assessment](#)**



## Plan for 400 homes on former Darwen Moorland school site



The former Darwen Moorland School site on Holden Fold

**A brand new neighbourhood boasting more than 400 homes could be built in an East Lancashire town, according to new proposals drawn up by the council.**

The Holden Fold masterplan has been revealed today, which could see derelict land on the former **Darwen** Moorland High School site sold-off and developed into a new community with 430 houses, new roads, expanded primary school capacity and an upgrade for the Square Meadow sports facility.



Residents are now being asked to have their say on the masterplan proposals.



Councillor Phil Riley, executive member for regeneration at **Blackburn** with Darwen Borough Council, said: “The land in Holden Fold has stood empty for some time now after the former school buildings had to be demolished due to arson.

“This is a chance to breathe new life in to the whole area – creating a quality development of homes for residents in the town and surrounding areas.

“The masterplan sets out the ambitions for the site, where over 400 houses could create a brand new neighbourhood.

“We’ll be putting it on show as part of a public consultation and are asking residents to come forward with their comments, ideas and suggestions.”



The land in Holden Fold and the surrounding area has been derelict for many years, since the old high school was demolished in 2016.

Teaching finished at Darwen Moorland in 2008, before it housed Darwen Vale High School for a number of years while construction work was being carried out at Vale's Blackburn Road site.

But the school was then left vacant after Vale moved back to its Earcroft home in September 2012 and after serving no purpose for three years, a planning application was submitted to knock it down.

Before it was demolished the building suffered from several arson attacks which gave rise to safety fears and frustration among residents and local councillors.

In 2016, no application for planning had been submitted to develop the site but it was earmarked for housing as part of the council's Local Plan which proposed to build 9,400 homes by 2020.

Once the new masterplan has been agreed, it would be used to help secure planning permission for the land – which has a range of owners, including the council.

The land, which borders Holden Fold, Roman Road and Polyphemus Woods would then be sold for development.

Cllr Riley added: "Houses on the other new sites in Darwen are selling well.

"This is an opportunity to create another quality development in the town and this masterplan is key to delivering that.

"The site has already been earmarked for housing as part of the Local Plan and this process will ensure it is developed in a comprehensive and co-ordinated way.

"The proposals would include a range of homes, including affordable housing as well as properties for rent.

"All of the homes would be built to incorporate the public footpaths and there will be greenspace.

"This site is one of five major housing allocations for Darwen and the masterplan helps set out a clear vision for the future."

Exhibition boards outlining the masterplan can be viewed at Darwen Market from Monday September 7 until Monday, October 5.

Residents are able to have their say throughout that period with their feedback being considered to inform the final plan.

Due to the restrictions around **coronavirus** and in a bid to keep residents safe, residents can also access the full information online from Monday [blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations](https://blackburn.gov.uk/about-council/consultations).

Printed versions of the full masterplan and supporting documents will also be available to view in Darwen Library.

# Agenda Item 8.4

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Finance and Governance

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Finance and Customer Services

**DATE:** 12th November 2020

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** All

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** All

**KEY DECISION:** YES ☒ NO ☐

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT QUARTER 2 - 2020/21**

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To report the overall revenue financial position of the Council, highlighting any significant issues and explaining variations in the second quarter of the financial year.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board is asked to approve:

- the portfolio cash limit adjustments outlined in Appendix 1.
- the Earmarked reserves position shown in Appendix 2
- the variations to revenue expenditure, as listed in Section 6, giving rise to a balance of £8.045 million in the unallocated General Fund revenue reserve.

### 3. BACKGROUND

All portfolios are required to examine their revenue budget position on a monthly basis. Regular reports are submitted to Executive Board for review along with a final report, detailing the financial outturn position.

### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

a) Actual revenue expenditure at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 in relation to controllable budgets across all portfolios was £56.844 million, which is 47.32% of the current budget. Further details relating to the financial position of each portfolio are outlined in Section 6.

b) Subject to Executive Board approval of the proposed adjustments, General Fund unallocated reserves are £8.045 million at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 compared to the minimum level of unallocated reserves agreed at Finance Council in February 2020 of £4.0 million.

c) Based on the information currently available, Earmarked Reserves available for discretionary use within the Council are £41.409 million at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 compared with a balance of £19.152



million at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, with a further £9.479 million of 'Other Reserves' held mainly in relation to schools.

## 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The information contained within the report accords with the three year budget forecast within the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-23, as approved at Finance Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 CASH LIMITS AND REVENUE EXPENDITURE

#### 6.1.1 Revenue Budget Overview

The 2020/21 Budget and MTFs 2020-2023 approved by Finance Council in February 2020 set a balanced budget for the year based on the assumptions made at that time. Since then, the Covid-19 pandemic has created a significant shock to the economy and resulted in significant, unplanned expenditure and income losses for the Council, as set out in previous reports to the Executive Board and Council Forum.

Work will continue over the coming months to monitor and forecast the costs and savings associated with both the pandemic and any other emerging budget pressures. In the meantime, arrangements are continuing to scrutinise all existing expenditure plans and Executive Members and their Directors are working to develop potential savings options for consideration.

#### 6.1.2 Performance Against Controllable Budgets

Appendix 1 details the portfolio controllable budgets approved by the Executive Board in February 2020 together with the details of the adjustments recommended to the Board for approval in this report. These include:

- transfers (budget virements) between portfolios
- transfers from Unallocated and reserves to support budget pressures
- transfers from contingencies
- transfers from Earmarked reserves in respect of grants / contributions and other budgets approved for carry forward from 2019/20
- other use of Earmarked reserves

The principle issues for each portfolio at the end of the second quarter of the year are summarised below:

#### Summary

Portfolio	Total Forecast (Under) / Over spend 2020/21	Less: Overspend due to Covid-19 related costs/loss of income	Underlying position (Under) / Over spend 2020/21
	£mill	£mill	£mill
Adults & Prevention Services	1.798	(3.359)	(1.561)
Public Health & Wellbeing	3.223	(3.703)	(0.480)
Children, Young People & Education	1.321	(1.199)	0.122
Schools & Education (DSG)	0.000	(0.000)	0.000

Environmental Services	1.861	(1.205)	0.656
Growth & Development	2.021	(1.963)	0.057
Digital & Customer Services	0.390	(0.465)	(0.075)
Finance & Governance	3.000	(3.632)	(0.632)
Cross Portfolio pressures	3.715	(3.715)	0.000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.329</b>	<b>(19.241)</b>	<b>(1.913)</b>

Note: These figures do not include income losses in respect of Business Rates and Council Tax which are covered in section 6.4 below.

### **Covid-19**

As stated above, the Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in significant unplanned expenditure and income losses. Work to collate both the actual costs incurred and income lost due to Covid-19 has continued throughout the period, and also to review and refine the assumptions on which the forecasts for these are based for the remainder of the financial year.

In addition to £15.03m general COVID-19 Grant funding the Council has received, the government announced additional financial support for councils to meet a proportion of their losses in respect of Sales, Fees and Charges based on a set of eligibility criteria issued by MHCLG. The first of these claims was completed at the end of September although we have yet to receive confirmation of approval; based on the work undertaken to forecast the eligible losses under this scheme, we estimate that £5.75 million will be due to the council if the areas we have claimed for are approved. Further returns to monitor the losses must be submitted at 31<sup>st</sup> December and 31<sup>st</sup> March respectively.

### **Portfolio positions**

The underlying budget issues for each portfolio at the end of the second quarter are as follows:

#### **Adults & Prevention Services**

The portfolio is predicting an underspend of £1.561 million for the year, excluding the additional costs and losses of income arising due to Covid-19.

The forecast reflects a net underspend across the portfolio due to changes made in the hospital discharge guidance issued during the Covid-19 pandemic.

From 19th March to 31st August 2020, care costs for residential and nursing care attributed to hospital discharge or hospital admission avoidance have been paid directly by the NHS. In addition, Continuing Health Care (CHC) frameworks for the joint funding of packages of care were suspended during this time. The hospital discharge guidance was revised on 1st September 2020 and with effect from that date, only the first six weeks following discharge are will be funded by the NHS going forward. CHC frameworks have also restarted and CHC recovery systems are now back in place. As such, the department is anticipating a future increase in referrals and in care costs, as some of the care costs will now transfer back to Social Care. The current forecast outturn seeks to take into consideration the impact of Covid-19 and hospital discharge wherever possible, however It should be recognised that together with winter pressures, this may result in further escalating costs over the next few months.

The estimated additional costs associated with Covid-19 for the year are £3.359 million.

The Neighbourhoods and Prevention department within the portfolio has identified pressures of £88,000 but expects to manage this to a breakeven position by the end of the financial year.

## **Public Health & Wellbeing**

The portfolio is forecasting an underspend, excluding the costs associated with Covid-19 of £480,000.

Due to the Covid restrictions, leisure facilities, museum and venues were not able to operate due to lockdown and are now operating at reduced capacity; the Leisure and Culture department is therefore forecasting an overspend in the region of £3.147m, which includes additional costs and income losses due to Covid of £3.627m

Public Health is currently predicted to overspend by £76k, which is totally due to the additional costs incurred due to the crisis.

## **Children, Young People & Education**

The portfolio has incurred costs associated with Covid of £1.199 million in respect of building adaptations to the accommodation at The Limes, Whalley New Road and Apple Trees, as well as additional workforce and residential care pressures.

Placement cost pressures have persisted during the first 6 months of the year and an overspend of £1.8 million is forecast based on the estimated costs of current placements and an estimate for the cost of additional placements over the course of the year, based on an average of actual numbers and the spend profile over the past few years. As such, the portfolio is requesting a cash limit increase from contingent sums for demand led pressures to support these in year pressures; the resulting forecast for the underlying underspend within the portfolio is therefore £122,000.

Placements costs will continue to be monitored over the course of the year and individual placements regularly reviewed. The department is exploring all options in order to mitigate rising demand and will ensure that we maximise the use of all sources of external grant funding.

## **Dedicated Schools Grant / Schools Block**

Services in Schools & Education (DSG) are currently forecast to spend the funding available in 2020/21 through the DSG and Pupil Premium.

Schools and Education funding from DSG is monitored by the Schools Forum and reports are considered on a regular basis.

## **Environmental Services**

The portfolio has identified non-Covid-19 related pressures in respect of recycling and waste disposal services, public protection and environmental health amounting to £656,000.

Covid-19 income losses within the portfolio include taxi licensing, trade waste, parking services and at the motor vehicle service station (i.e. for MOTs for taxis and HGV testing) which amount to approximately £1.205 million.

## **Growth & Development**

Pressures previously identified within Highways budgets of approximately £500,000 have been addressed by management action. The portfolio is currently forecasting a non-Covid19 related overspend of £57,000.

In addition to this, Covid-19 pressures of £1.963 million have also been identified arising from losses of income across the portfolio in respect of business rents and planning income in particular.

The overall forecast outturn for the portfolio outturn is estimated to be £2.021 million.

### **Digital & Customer Services**

The portfolio is forecasting an overspend of £390,200 for 2020/21, based on cumulative income and expenditure as at 30th September 2020 and the assumptions made in respect of income and expenditure for the final 6 months of the year.

Of this overspend, £464,800 relates to losses of income in respect of Registrars (£188,000) and ITM&G (£186,800) and additional costs incurred in Registrars (£50,000) and Coroners (£40,000), all of which relate to the response to Covid-19.

Excluding the impact of Covid, the key underlying position within the portfolio for the year is a forecast underspend of £74,600; this relates to vacancies across several teams which are in the process of being filled.

### **Finance & Governance**

The portfolio is forecasting an overspend of £3.0 million for 2020/21, which includes a forecast for Covid related expenditure and losses of income for the year incurred on behalf of the council of £3.632 million. This figure includes purchases of personal protective equipment for use by all departments across the Council and by adult social care providers, the costs of establishing and operating a Food Hub to supported the most vulnerable during the first lockdown and forecast income losses across the portfolio due to Covid, including those on commercial rents and the Council's income share from the Mall.

The underlying position of the portfolio, excluding Covid costs and income losses, is an underspend £632,000 which relates to staffing vacancies which have not yet been filled and costs that have not been incurred during the period as activities have ceased or been deferred e.g. elections, training courses, meetings and the progression of legal cases. This position also includes £201,600 in respect refunds from various energy companies following a utility review by the Procurement Team which resulted in backdated repayments to the council dating back to 2010.

### **6.2 General Fund Unallocated Reserves**

Summary of movement	£million
Unallocated reserves as per the 2019/20 Outturn Executive Board Report	7.689
Transfers (from) Unallocated reserves	
	0.000
Transfers to Unallocated reserves	
Net savings in respect of interest and debt repayment due to significantly reduced interest rates (Note 1)	0.356
Balance on Unallocated General Fund reserves at 30 September 2020	8.045



Note 1 – The transfer to unallocated reserves of £356k above comprises:

- A reduction in interest income - £75,000
- A reduction in interest costs - £367,000
- A reduction in MRP - £64,000

### 6.3 Earmarked reserves

Taking account of the adjustments highlighted at Appendix 2, the level of Earmarked reserves held for discretionary use by the Council at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020 will be £41.409 million compared with a balance of £19.152 million as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

Summary of movement	£million
Balance of reserves at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020 (as reported to Executive Board in June 2020)	34.586
Allocation of tranche 4 of Covid-19 funding	5.736
Use of reserves to fund early retirement, voluntary redundancy (ER/VR) and pension strain costs up to 30 September 2020 (included in Appendix 1)	(0.256)
Use of Future Maintenance of Wainwright Bridge reserve to finance capital expenditure relating to the bridge	(0.240)
Release to portfolios of grants and budgets carried forward from 2019/20 into 2020/21 (included in Appendix 1)	(0.172)
Use of Developers contributions (Section 106) Reserve to finance revenue expenditure (included in Appendix 1)	(0.030)
Use of Welfare and Council Tax Reforms reserve to support Personal Budgeting Support Service provided by Shelter	(0.035)
Use of Brexit Preparation Funding to support Emergency Support budget	(0.166)
Use of Digital Programme reserve to cover programme expenditure at month 6	(0.014)
Re-designation of contingency to create reserve for Future cost pressures	1.000
Re-designation of contingency in respect of slippage in the delivery of the savings programme to the Earmarked Reserve for the support of part year effects of future savings programmes	1.000
Balance on Earmarked reserves at 30 September 2020	41.409

Details of the requested applications of reserves are outlined in the Appendices to this report.

### 6.4 Collection Fund

#### Business Rates

As reported in the previous corporate revenue budget monitoring report, an initial grant allocation of £16.324 million was made to the Council to compensate for extended business rate reliefs introduced to help business through the coronavirus pandemic. A second data gathering exercise was been carried out during September which estimated that the Council is due a further £0.976 million to cover the costs of the additional reliefs

The Business Rates Collection Fund budget has been re-profiled to reflect the impact of the changes in the various discounts given on the amount of income due. The current rate of collection for business rates remains below that normally expected at this point in the year, as the Council has only recently recommenced recovery action following the deferment of collecting direct debt payments during the period April to June.

The current projected year end position for the Business Rates Collection Fund is a deficit carried forward into 2021/22 of £17.1 million, comprising:

	£million
Impact of extended reliefs in relation to the Covid pandemic - compensated by s31 grant	17.100
Assumed net reduction in collection	1.900
<b>Projected in year deficit 2020/21</b>	<b>19.000</b>
Less: a larger than anticipated surplus carried forward from 2019/20	(1.900)
<b>Projected deficit carried forward 31/03/2021</b>	<b>17.100</b>

Blackburn with Darwen's share of this deficit is £7.925 million.

Initial guidance issued in respect of the option to spread the Collection Fund deficit over 3 years rather than impact fully in the following financial year (i.e. in 2021/22), as is the current requirement, indicates that the above balances would impact on future years' general fund budgets in the following way:

	TOTAL £million	BwD £m	Impact
Impact of extended reliefs in relation to the Covid pandemic - compensated by s31 grant	17.100	8.389	Accounted for in 2021/22 but offset by s31 grant received in 2020/21 and carried forward via an earmarked reserve
Business rates deficit in relation to 2020/21 not compensated by Covid related s31 grants	1.900	0.949	Spread equally over the 3 years 2021/22 – 2023/24
<b>Projected in year deficit 2020/21</b>	<b>19.000</b>	<b>9,338</b>	
Difference between estimated and actual surplus/deficits in respect of 2019-20 brought forward	(1.900)	(1.413)	Accounted for in 2021/22
<b>Projected deficit carried forward 31/03/2021</b>	<b>17.100</b>	<b>7,925</b>	

## Council Tax

The Council's current rate of collection for council tax is largely in line with expectations, following the recommencement of its collection and recovery processes. However, it is anticipated that the phasing out of the original job retention scheme combined with the implementation of tighter restrictions, will result in the number of local council tax support claimants increasing further, which will in turn reduce income further and possibly impact on collection rates.

Taking all these factors into account, the current projected year end position for the Council Tax Collection Fund is a deficit carried forward into 2021/22 of £1.615 million, made up of:

	£million
A smaller than anticipated surplus carried forward from 2019/20	0.079

An assumed increase in local council tax support claimants (not funded by Hardship Fund grant)	0.966
An assumed reduction in the overall collection rate from 97.5% to 96.5%	0.570
<b>Projected deficit carried forward 31/03/2021</b>	<b>1.615</b>

Blackburn with Darwen's share of this deficit is £1.37 million.

As for business rates, initial guidance issued in respect of the option to spread the Collection Fund deficit over 3 years rather than impact fully in the following financial year (i.e. in 2021/22), as is the current requirement, indicates that the projected Council Tax deficit for 2020/21 would impact on future years' general fund budgets in the following way:

	<b>TOTAL £million</b>	<b>BwD £m</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Difference between estimated and actual surplus/deficits in respect of 2019-20 brought forward	0.079	0.067	Accounted for in 2021/22
Council Tax deficit in relation to 2020/21	1.536	1.303	Spread equally over the 3 years 2021/22 – 2023/24
<b>Projected deficit carried forward 31/03/2021</b>	<b>1.615</b>	<b>1.370</b>	

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

Not applicable.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## **12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>V3</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Julie Jewson</b> <b>Senior Finance Manager</b> <b>Tel 585893</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	3rd November 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	N/A



	Adults and Prevention Services	Public Health & Wellbeing	Children, Young People & Education	Environmental Services	Growth & Development	Digital & Customer Services	Finance & Governance	Schools & Education (DSG)	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Controllable Budget approved at Executive Board September 2020</b>	<b>53,171,796</b>	<b>2,651,753</b>	<b>30,033,613</b>	<b>8,870,093</b>	<b>8,227,921</b>	<b>5,624,852</b>	<b>9,291,666</b>	<b>(941,000)</b>	<b>116,930,694</b>
<b>Transfers between portfolios</b>									
Transfer 50% Arboricultural Manager post to Planning				(22,443)	22,443				0
									0
<b>Transfers (to)/from contingency</b>									
Funding for ER/VR and Pension Strain costs to 30 Sept	57,800	17,400	40,700	13,500	77,100	9,400	40,000		255,900
Adjustment to allocate corporate savings - terms & conditions (Essential Car User Allowance)	(131,140)		(113,710)	(22,481)	(15,976)	(2,408)	(963)		(286,678)
Living Wage increase across Early Years			67,000						67,000
Transfer from contingency to fund Placement cost pressures			1,800,000						1,800,000
									0
<b>Carry forward of grants, contributions and other budgets from 2019/20</b>									
Strengthen Communities - Volunteering in Lancashire (SCVL) ESF Project	120,315								120,315
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG) - part funding for Compliance Officer	17,500								17,500
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Grant	34,000								34,000
									0
									0
<b>Other transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves</b>									
Utilise s106 contribution - East Lancashire Football Development Association@Woolridge				3,000					3,000
Utilise s106 contribution - Green Lane Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)				1,916					1,916
Utilise s106 contribution - final instalment of support to community group at Square Meadow, Darwen				5,000					5,000
Utilise s106 contribution - sustainable transport purposes					20,000				20,000
Funding from Welfare & Council Tax Reform reserve to support Personal Budgeting Support Service provided by Shelter						35,059			35,059
Funding from Brexit Support reserve to support Emergency Support Budget							166,000		166,000
Funding from Digital Reserve to cover programme spend at Month 6						14,200			14,200
									0
<b>Transfers (to)/from unallocated reserves</b>									
									0
<b>Other budget adjustments</b>									
									0
<b>Revised Controllable Budget as at 30th September 2020</b>	<b>53,270,271</b>	<b>2,669,153</b>	<b>31,827,603</b>	<b>8,848,585</b>	<b>8,331,488</b>	<b>5,681,103</b>	<b>9,496,703</b>	<b>(941,000)</b>	<b>119,183,906</b>

## DETAILS OF GENERAL FUND EARMARKED RESERVES FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL

	Balance at 30 June 2020	Requested Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves in Qtr 2		Balance at 30 September 2020
	As reported to Exec Board September 2020	Release of grants & contributions b/wd from 2019/20	Other transfer to /(from) reserves	Q2
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Welfare, council tax and business rates reforms				
Welfare and council tax reforms	163		(35)	128
Section 31 Grant - Compensation for lost Business Rates income	16,324			16,324
Brexit Preparation				
Brexit Preparation Funding	315		(166)	149
Investment in assets and infrastructure				
Office Accommodation and property improvements	498			498
Highways winter maintenance	95			95
Support for the Local Plan	105			105
Flood Defence	77			77
Support for Other Resources and Transformation projects				
Legal Advice Reserve	105			105
Partnerships & Transformation	78			78
Insurance risk investment fund	43			43
Support for People Services				
Schools Improvement (SSIF)	236			236
YOT partnership	252			252
Music Services	117			117
Disabled Facilities Grants	289			289
Future Demand Pressures	1,799			1,799
Better Care Fund	372			372
Support for Place Services				
Investment to support business rates growth	170			170
Place Shaping Investment Reserve	250			250
Contingent sums to support future downsizing and transformation programmes				
Support for future redundancy costs	535		(256)	279
Support for part year effect of future savings plans	1,187		1,000	2,187
Support for Future Cost Pressures	0		1,000	1,000
Digital Programme	882		(14)	868
Amounts b/wd from previous year(s) in respect of unspent grants and contributions				
Transformation Challenge Award	64			64
SEN / SEND Reform Grant /SEND Prep for Empl	41			41
Transforming Lives	37			37
One Public Estate grant	474			474
Electoral Grant	57			57
DCLG Transparency Code New Burdens	13			13
Adult PSS - Local Reform and Community Voices	108			108
Adult PSS - War Pensions Disregard	30			30
Flexible Homelessness Support Grant (FHSG)	38		(18)	20
FHSG Top-up	15			15
Homelessness Reduction Act New Burdens Funding	67		(34)	33
Social Integration funding	270			270
NHS Funding for LPRES integration with Mosaic and spine mini services	29			29
COVID-19 Funding from MHCLG	9,236		5,736	14,972
Combined Authority Grant	48			48
Burdens Fund monies	2			2
Custom build Grant	15			15
Amounts committed in future year budgets/MTFS				
Budget carry over for implementation of Concerto (Property system)	20			20
Budget carry over for Intack Depot driveway	10			10
CCTV Hub carry forward	106			106
Development Investment Fund (Capital)	1			1
Strengthening Communities Volunteering in Lancashire (SCVL)	120		(120)	0
Reserves held for specified purposes				
Developers Contributions (S106 Income) *	(1,467)		(30)	(1,497)
Future Maintenance of Wainwright Bridge	268		(240)	28
Future Maintenance of Witton Park 3G Pitches	75			75
Leisure Equipment Pay-back	30			30
Future remediation costs in respect of former landfill sites	400			400
Highways claims anticipated for years up to current year but not yet received	300			300
Art Acquisitions Fund	17			17
W. Ferrier Bequest (for museum re Kathleen Ferrier)	20			20
Allowance for contingent liabilities (e.g. MMI)	250			250
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES FOR DISCRETIONARY USE</b>	<b>34,586</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,823</b>	<b>41,409</b>

DETAILS OF GENERAL FUND EARMARKED RESERVES FOR USE BY THE COUNCIL

	Balance at 30 June 2020	Requested Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves in Qtr 2		Balance at 30 September 2020
	As reported to Exec Board September 2020	Release of grants & contributions bfwd from 2019/20	Other transfer to /(from) reserves	Q2
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>'Other Earmarked' Reserves</b>				
Reserves held in respect of joint arrangements and charitable bodies				
Darwen Market Traders Association	2			2
Joint Building Control Account	162			162
Turton Tower Charity	66			66
LSCB Safeguarding Partners Fund	135			135
Reserves held in relation to schools				
Dedicated Schools Grant - Surplus	3,840			3,840
LMS Schools Balances	5,274			5,274
<b>TOTAL 'OTHER EARMARKED' RESERVES</b>	<b>9,479</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,479</b>
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>44,065</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,823</b>	<b>50,888</b>
<b>UNALLOCATED RESERVES</b>	<b>7,689</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>8,045</b>

\* Developers Contributions (S106 Income) - this reserve appears above in a negative position. This is due to the fact that income received during 2020/21 will only be reflected in the reserve once the year end outturn entries have been completed, as is the normal practice.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Finance and Governance
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Director of Finance
<b>DATE:</b>	12 November 2020

<b>PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:</b>	All
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	All
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

**SUBJECT: CORPORATE CAPITAL BUDGET AND BALANCE SHEET MONITORING REPORT 2020/21 – Quarter 2 (6 months to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020)**

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To report the overall financial position of the Council in respect of the capital programme as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, highlighting key issues and explaining variations in the first 6 months of the financial year.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board is asked;

- to approve the revised capital programme as per Appendix 1,
- to approve the variations to the programme shown in Appendix 2

### 3. BACKGROUND

All portfolios are required to examine their capital budget position on a monthly basis.

### 4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS

a) The total cost of the Council's capital investment programme for 2020/21 has now decreased from £36.967 million, as approved by Executive Board on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020, to £32.815 million. The net variation of £4.152 million (detailed in Appendix 2) reflects;

- Variations made to reflect the approval of schemes during the first quarter of the year, including an increase of £1.722 million (of which £1.348 million is funded from reallocation of budgets within the existing 2020/21 programme)
- further variations during the second quarter of the year, for which approval is requested (£0.927 million)
- slippage and re-profiling of budgets during the second quarter of the year (£5.453 million).

b) As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, the capital expenditure across the portfolios was £6.219 million (representing 19.0% of the current, revised projected capital spend).

c) The estimated of capital receipts expected in 2020/21 is £4.3 million; £422,499 has been received in the first six months of the year.



## 5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The information contained within the report accords with the capital strategy and the three year budget forecast within the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-23, as approved at Finance Council on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

### 6.1 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The variations in actual spend and resource availability for 2020/21 are summarised by portfolio in Appendix 1. Variations in spending are set out in Appendix 2.

The Capital Programme for 2020/21 has decreased by £4.152 million, the major capital variations to note are as follows:

#### 6.1.1 New Approved Capital Schemes

Several capital schemes (new schemes and amendments to existing schemes) were approved in the second quarter of 2020/21 and have now been added to the capital programme as follows:

Scheme	Amount	Approved By	Date Approved
<b>Children's, Young People and Education</b>			
Lower Darwen Primary School – Disability access adaptations	£50,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Avondale Primary School – Variation on kitchen extension and refurbishment scheme	£150,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Brunel Nursery – External fencing	£30,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Feniscowles Primary School – Disability access adaptations	£150,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Audley Infant and Junior Schools – Variation on heating system scheme	£244,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Feniscowles Primary School – Variation on heating system scheme	£95,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Brookhouse Primary School – Variation on fire alarm scheme	£10,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
St Cuthberts Primary School – Variation on extension and remodel (SEND) scheme	£105,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
BCHS/Crosshill – Variation on refurbishment of Sunnyhurst Centre scheme	£58,700	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Shadsworth Infant School – Extension and remodel (SEND)	£260,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Turncroft Nursery – Variation on heating system scheme	£5,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Contingency	£100,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20
Project Management Fee	£50,000	Executive Board	10-Sept-20

<b>Environmental Services</b>			
Fielden Street Car Park ANPR	£159,000	Executive Member Decision	7-Aug-20
<b>Growth and Development</b>			
Old Gates Drive FAS Blackburn	£215,000	Director of Environment & Operations - Grant Application	16-Sept-20
<b>Digital and Customer Services</b>			
Corporate ICT – RFID in Libraries	£40,000	Delegated Officer Decision	4-Sept-20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,721,700</b>		

### 6.1.2 Children's Young People & Education

#### Capital Allocations for Schools

The final Schools Capital allocation of £2.653 million has been partially allocated, leaving a remaining balance of £1.345 million. The scheme allocations, as approved by Executive Board on 10/09/2020, are detailed in 6.1.1.

### 6.1.3 Growth and Development

#### Growth Team Housing Schemes

Approval is sought for the following variations to housing schemes managed by the Growth Team:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Slippage into the 2021/22 Capital Programme</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Other Variations</b>
Bank Top and Griffin Clearance	£150,000	£3,000	-
Group Repair	-	(£3,000)	-
Neighbourhood Intervention Fund	£700,000	£130,000	£43,400
Equity Loans	£100,000	(£50,000)	-
Empty Homes Cluster	£360,000	-	-
Other Acquisition Costs	£10,000	-	-
Development Investment Fund	-	-	£209,000
Land Release Fund	£400,000	-	-
Refurbishment Loans	-	(£80,000)	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,720,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>£252,400</b>

Capital receipts of £43,400 have been recycled back into the Neighbourhood Intervention Fund and a request is made to increase the scheme by this value.

A request is made to increase the Development Investment Fund scheme by £209,000. The Development Investment Fund is to be used to fund the initial works for sites planned for disposal. The current priorities for the scheme are:

- Clarendon Road site
- Queens Park site

- Fishmoor sites
- Blackamoor housing site

This increase will be funded by main programme borrowing.

#### Blakey Moor

Approval is sought to reduce this scheme by £170,000, being contributions from private property owners. The Blakey Moor scheme has faced various delays, with work virtually ceasing since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Approval is also therefore requested to slip £2,161,000 to 2021/22, for works not expected to complete this year.

#### Local Transport Plan

Variations to the Local Transport Plan budget are listed in the table below.

Approval is sought to add these schemes to the approved Local Transport Plan capital programme for 2020/2021.

<b><u>Variations to the programme - increases</u></b>	<b><u>£'000s</u></b>
DFT Emergency Active Travel Fund – phase 2 grant	308
Wainwright Bridge Maintenance	240
<b>Total increases</b>	<b>548</b>
<b><u>Variations to the programme - decreases</u></b>	
Bus Station Bond	(160)
Contribution to Jubilee Square – Reel Cinema Scheme	(200)
<b>Total decreases</b>	<b>(360)</b>
<b>Total net variations</b>	<b>188</b>

The programme increases will be funded £308,000 by an additional grant from the Department for Transport and £240,000 from an earmarked reserve held for maintenance work on Wainwright Bridge.

#### Reel Cinema

Approval is sought to increase this scheme by £200,000, to be funded from existing Local Transport Plan budgets. This is to be used for the Jubilee Square highways and public realm work, included as part of the Reel Cinema scheme.

#### Darwen Town Fund – Darwen Tower

A request is made to approve an addition of £225,000 to the capital programme for the Darwen Tower restoration scheme. This is to be funded by a grant received from the Governments Towns Fund. The total grant received to date for the Darwen Town Fund is £750,000, with the remaining being allocated to projects at J4 Skate Park, AFC Darwen and Aldridge North Cricket Academy. These have not been added to the capital programme as they are not Council assets.

### **6.1.4 Digital and Customer Services**

#### Corporate ICT Schemes - Slippage

A request is made to approve the re-profiling of the Corporate ICT schemes as listed below. These are continuing schemes which are not expected to fully complete in 2020/21:

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Slippage</b>
Corporate Website	£70,000
Digital Customer Portal	£502,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£572,000</b>

### **6.1.5 Finance and Governance**

#### Corporate Accommodation Strategy

It is expected that phase 2 and phase 3 of the Corporate Accommodation Strategy scheme will now run into 2021/22 and therefore approval is requested to re-profile £1,000,000 from this scheme into 2021/22.

#### Witton 3G Changing Room Roof

The roof on the changing rooms at the Witton Park 3G pitches is now beyond repair and needs to be replaced. Approval is sought to add a scheme for £65,000 to the capital programme for this roof replacement. This is to be funded from the Corporate Property Investment earmarked scheme.

### **6.2 CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

Actual capital receipts at the end of September 2020 were £422,499. All of these receipts will be utilised in support of the Minimum Revenue Provision.

### **6.3 BALANCE SHEET POSITION**

#### **6.3.1 Overview**

Good balance sheet management assists in the effective use and control over the Council's assets and liabilities. Key assets comprise of the Council's tangible fixed assets, debtors, investments and bank balances. Key liabilities include long and short-term borrowing, creditors and reserves.

#### **6.3.2 Non-current Assets**

Tangible non-current assets include property, plant and equipment held by the Council for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others or for administrative purposes. Property assets are the responsibility of the Finance and Governance portfolio. One fifth of all assets are re-valued every year, and annual reviews are undertaken to establish whether any impairment or other adjustments need to be applied. New assets and enhancements to existing assets are managed by way of the capital programme, as reported in Appendix 1.

#### **6.3.3 Borrowing and Investments**

Long-term borrowing requirements flow from the capital programme. Regular dialogue and meetings take place between the Director of Finance, her staff and the Council's independent treasury consultants Arlingclose, and options for optimising borrowing requirements are actively reviewed.

Both short and long term borrowing interest rates were at low levels at the end of the period, having remained fairly stable over the course of the second quarter of the year. Interest rates on investments have continued to fall throughout the second quarter of the year, reaching negligible rates by the end of the period. To date, it is now projected that:

- (a) Income on treasury investments will be £75,000 lower than the original budget, as a result of the significant fall in interest rates,
- (b) Debt interest payable will be £431,000 lower than the original budget, as a result of interest rates on borrowing being much lower than originally forecast.



## Interest and Debt Repayments Revenue Budget

	Original Budget	Forecast at Quarter 1	Movement Quarter 2	Forecast at Quarter 2
Interest and investment income	(215,000)	(115,000)	75,000	(40,000)
Debt interest payable	12,990,200	12,990,200	(431,000)	12,559,200
MRP	6,835,000	6,911,000	0	6,911,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,610,200</b>	<b>19,786,200</b>	<b>(356,000)</b>	<b>19,430,200</b>

The current borrowing and investment position is as follows:

	Amounts at 30/09/2020 £000	Amounts at 30/06/2020 £000	Amounts at 31/03/2020 £000
Short term borrowing	76,000	84,000	84,000
Long term borrowing	147,798	149,915	149,915
Transferred debt re Local Government Reorganisation	14,007	14,148	14,148
Recognition of debt re PFI arrangements	62,508	62,961	63,414
<b>TOTAL BORROWING</b>	<b>300,313</b>	<b>311,024</b>	<b>311,477</b>
Investments made by the Council	33,968	46,623	57,453

The totals include the debt recognised on the balance sheet as a result of accounting adjustments in respect of bringing the BSF school buildings in to use, which are financed through PFI arrangements. These adjustments are made to ensure that the Council's effective control over, and use of, these assets is recognised with corresponding adjustments to the debt. These changes do not add to the costs faced by the Council Tax payer as the actual capital costs for these schools form part of the ongoing stream of payments made to the PFI contractor (which are in turn largely offset by PFI grant funding from the Government).

### 6.3.4 Debtors

The Council has a corporate debt policy, as well as other specific policies for the management of debt in the key areas of council tax, business rates and housing benefit overpayments. The table below summarises the collection performance of the various debts and the total outstanding debt in the respective areas at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The table also shows the corresponding level of debt at the same point in the last financial year.

	Position at 30/09/2020	Position at 30/09/2019
<b>Council tax</b>		
Current year balance (£000)	31,021	30,523
Previous year arrears (£000)	13,753	12,444

<b>Total Council tax balances</b>	<b>44,774</b>	<b>42,967</b>
Collection rates	52.4%	52.8%
<b>Business rates</b>		
Current year balance (£000)	13,878	20,261
Previous year arrears (£000)	3,556	2,705
<b>Total Business rates balances</b>	<b>17,434</b>	<b>22,966</b>
Collection rates	50.7%	55.9%
<b>Housing Benefit</b>		
Overpayments balances (£000)	2,756	2,938

The Business Rates collection rate has been affected by the measures taken by both central government and the council, to support businesses in the borough through the COVID pandemic. To allow businesses sufficient breathing space from April to June, the council took the decision that it would not request direct debit payments, and instead it would recalculate all Business Rate bills with the instalments reprofiled over the period from July to March.

In addition, the council has also offered the option to any struggling businesses, to make contact with the Finance Team and in many instances, as a result, instalment plans have been introduced for the payment of their invoices relating to the April to June period.

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has a duty to ensure it can deliver a balanced budget. The Local Government Act 2003 imposes a duty on an authority to monitor its budgets during the year and consider what action to take if a potential deterioration is identified.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

**Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.**

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

None

**11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

**12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>V1.0</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jody Spencer-Anforth (Ext 507748) Julie Jewson (Ext 5893)</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	October 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	N/A

Overall Capital Monitoring 2020/21

	2020/21				2021/22 and Future Years			
	Approved Programme 2020/21	Programme Approved At Executive Board August 2020	Requested Variations (See Appendix 2)	Revised 2020/21 Capital Programme As at 30th September 2020	Approved Programme 2021/22 and future Years	Programme Approved At Executive Board August 2020	Requested Variations (See Appendix 2)	Revised 2020/21 Capital Programme As at 30th September 2020
	(Finance Council)				(Finance Council)			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Costs</u>								
Adults and Prevention Services	2,796	1,891	0	1,891	5,000	3,228	0	3,228
Children, Young People & Education	7,237	6,125	167	6,292	12,750	5,576	0	5,576
Environmental Services	1,929	1,961	159	2,120	0	0	0	0
Public Health & Wellbeing	0	23	0	23	0	0	0	0
Growth & Development	17,781	21,248	(2,971)	18,277	300	300	3,881	4,181
Digital & Customer Services	697	1,722	(572)	1,150	0	0	572	572
Finance & Governance	3,490	3,997	(935)	3,062	0	0	1,000	1,000
<b>Total Predicted Expenditure</b>	<b>33,930</b>	<b>36,967</b>	<b>(4,152)</b>	<b>32,815</b>	<b>18,050</b>	<b>9,104</b>	<b>5,453</b>	<b>14,557</b>
<u>Resources</u>								
- Department for Education	5,461	4,225	167	4,392	10,000	0	0	0
- Department for Transport	3,299	5,713	(580)	5,134	0	0	888	888
- Disabled Facilities Grants	3,322	2,411	0	2,411	6,000	3,754	0	3,754
- Other Grants	2,093	1,193	(302)	891	0	0	742	742
<b>Government Grants</b>	<b>14,175</b>	<b>13,542</b>	<b>(715)</b>	<b>12,827</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>3,754</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>5,384</b>
Unsupported Borrowing	9,804	12,950	(3,236)	9,714	300	300	3,383	3,683
External Contributions	6,601	7,439	(441)	6,998	0	0	441	441
Revenue Contributions	3,350	3,036	240	3,276	1,750	5,050	0	5,050
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>33,930</b>	<b>36,967</b>	<b>(4,152)</b>	<b>32,815</b>	<b>18,050</b>	<b>9,104</b>	<b>5,453</b>	<b>14,557</b>
<b>Difference</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<u>Earmarked Schemes</u>								
Corporate ICT	3,116	2,249	0	2,249	0	0	0	0
Corporate Property Investment	2,864	2,636	(65)	2,571	3,000	0	0	3,000
Vehicles (funded from capital or leased)	0	352	0	352	0	0	0	0
	<b>5,980</b>	<b>5,237</b>	<b>(65)</b>	<b>5,172</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<u>Contingent Schemes</u>								
Asset Management Strategy	0	0	0	0	3,000	0	0	3,000
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>



Scheme variations to 2020/21 Capital Programme											
	Capital Programme Approved By Executive Board on August 2020 £ 000	Portfolio Changes £'000	Slippage (to)/from future years/Reprofiling of Budget £'000	Requested Variations Qtr 2 2020/21 £ 000	Total Capital Programme at 30 September 2020 £ 000		Approved Programme 20/21 and Future Years Finance Council February 2020 & August 20 Exec Board £'000	Portfolio Changes £'000	Slippage (to)/from future years/Reprofiling of Budget £'000	Requested Variations £'000	Total Programme 20/210 and Future Years £'000
<b>Adults and Prevention Services</b>											
Disabled Facilities Grant	1,601	0	0	0	1,601		2,908	0	0	0	2,908
Telecare Project	290	0	0	0	290		320	0	0	0	320
Blackburn Town Centre Security	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
	<b>1,891</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,891</b>		<b>3,228</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,228</b>
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>											
Disable Facilities Grant	623	0	0	0	623		526	0	0	0	526
Apple Trees Building Works	37	0	0	0	37		0	0	0	0	0
Two Year Old Grant	214	0	0	0	214		0	0	0	0	0
<b><i>Schools capital programme</i></b>											
Capital allocations	2,486	0	0	(1,141)	1,345		0	0	0	0	0
St Barnabas and St St Pauls	232	0	0	0	232		0	0	0	0	0
Newfield ASD Demolition	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Audley Infant and Junior - New Heating System	245	0	0	244	489		0	0	0	0	0
Audley Junior - Roofing Works	34	0	0	0	34		0	0	0	0	0
Roe Lee Park - Classroom Works	3	0	0	0	3		0	0	0	0	0
Audley Childrens Centre	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Avondale Kitchen	113	0	0	150	263		0	0	0	0	0
Feniscowles Heating	96	0	0	95	191		0	0	0	0	0
Shadsworth Infants - Heating	100	0	0	0	100		0	0	0	0	0
Brookhouse Primary - Upgrade Fire Alarm	20	0	0	10	30		0	0	0	0	0
Belmont Ramp	8	0	0	0	8		0	0	0	0	0
St Cuthberts SEND	133	0	0	105	238		0	0	0	0	0
Belmont Drainage and External Painting	9	0	0	0	9		0	0	0	0	0
Audley Infants Remodel Reception Class	203	0	0	0	203		0	0	0	0	0
Meashowhead Infants external works and lighting	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Turton/Edgworth Windows	1	0	0	0	1		0	0	0	0	0
BCHS Crosshill SEN	300	0	0	59	359		0	0	0	0	0
Turner Loft Nursery Boiler	28	0	0	5	33		0	0	0	0	0
Lammack Extension	740	0	0	0	740		800	0	0	0	800
Darwen - Additional School Places	500	0	0	0	500		2,750	0	0	0	2,750
Longshaw Nursery Relocation	0	0	0	0	0		1,500	0	0	0	1,500
Lower Darwen Disability Access Adaptations	0	0	0	50	50		0	0	0	0	0
Brunel Nursery External Fencing	0	0	0	30	30		0	0	0	0	0
Feniscowles Disability Access Adaptations	0	0	0	150	150		0	0	0	0	0
Shadsworth Infants Extension and Remodel	0	0	0	260	260		0	0	0	0	0
Contingency	0	0	0	100	100		0	0	0	0	0
Project Management Fee	0	0	0	50	50		0	0	0	0	0
	<b>6,125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>6,292</b>		<b>5,576</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,576</b>
<b>Environmental Services</b>											
Old Bank Lane Car Park	100	0	0	0	100		0	0	0	0	0
Land Remediation Scheme	111	0	0	0	111		0	0	0	0	0
Purchase of Blue Bins	1,520	0	0	0	1,520		0	0	0	0	0
Blakewater Car Park	230	0	0	0	230		0	0	0	0	0
Feilden St Car Park ANPR	0	0	0	159	159		0	0	0	0	0
	<b>1,961</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>2,120</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Public Health &amp; Wellbeing</b>											
Witton 3G Pitches	23	0	0	0	23		0	0	0	0	0
	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Growth &amp; Development</b>											
Bank Top and Griffin Clearance	186	0	(150)	3	39		0	0	150	0	150
Group Repair (Inner NW/InnerSE/Darwen)	3	0	0	(3)	0		0	0	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Intervention Fund	615	0	(700)	173	88		0	0	700	0	700
Equity Loans	150	0	(100)	(50)	0		0	0	100	0	100
Empty Homes Cluster	360	0	(360)	0	0		0	0	360	0	360
Other Acquisition costs	10	0	(10)	0	0		0	0	10	0	10
Development Investment Fund	41	0	0	209	250		0	0	0	0	0
Assistance to Industry	254	0	0	0	254		300	0	0	0	300
Blakey Moor	2,927	0	(2,161)	(170)	596		0	0	2,161	0	2,161
Cathedral Quarter Office Block Fit Out	38	0	0	0	38		0	0	0	0	0
Local Transport Plan	13,232	0	0	188	13,420		0	0	0	0	0

Scheme variations to 2020/21 Capital Programme											
	Capital Programme Approved By Executive Board on August 2020 £ 000	Portfolio Changes £'000	Slippage (to)/from future years/Reprofiling of Budget £'000	Requested Variations Qtr 2 2020/21 £ 000	Total Capital Programme at 30 September 2020 £ 000		Approved Programme 20/21 and Future Years Finance Council February 2020 & August 20 Exec Board £'000	Portfolio Changes £'000	Slippage (to)/from future years/Reprofiling of Budget £'000	Requested Variations £'000	Total Programme 20/210 and Future Years £'000
Bury Fold Brook	14	0	0	0	14		0	0	0	0	0
Birch Hall Ave diversion appraisal	52	0	0	0	52		0	0	0	0	0
Reel Cinema	2,493	0	0	200	2,693		0	0	0	0	0
Land Release Fund	683	0	(400)	0	283		0	0	400	0	400
Refurbishment Loans	80	0	0	(80)	0		0	0	0	0	0
Affordable Warmth Grants	11	0	0	0	11		0	0	0	0	0
Pottery Farm Alleviation	10	0	0	0	10		0	0	0	0	0
Pallet Farm Environment Grant	9	0	0	0	9		0	0	0	0	0
Waterfall Study	26	0	0	0	26		0	0	0	0	0
Surface Water Modelling	45	0	0	0	45		0	0	0	0	0
Green Arms Rd FAS Turton	5	0	0	0	5		0	0	0	0	0
Grimshaw Park FAS Blackburn	4	0	0	0	4		0	0	0	0	0
Old Gates Drive FAS Blackburn	0	0	0	215	215		0	0	0	0	0
Darwen Tower	0	0	0	225	225		0	0	0	0	0
	21,248	0	(3,881)	910	18,277		300	0	3,881	0	4,181
<b>Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>											
Corporate ICT - Montr & Mgmt, service systems & op	3	0	0	0	3		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Digitisation of Planning Service	1	0	0	0	1		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Finance System	5	0	0	0	5		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Desktop Refresh	104	0	0	0	104		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Core Infrastructure Programme	230	0	0	0	230		0	0	0	0	0
Coprorate ICT - Ticketing System KGH/DLT	80	0	0	0	80		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Legal Services Case Management System	101	0	0	(40)	61		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Corporate Website	106	0	(70)	0	36		0	0	70	0	70
Corporate ICT - Replacement Unix Servers	7	0	0	0	7		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate ICT - Protocol Mobile App Project	6	0	0	0	6		0	0	0	0	0
Coprorate ICT - Microsoft Office 365	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0
Coprorate ICT - Town Hall IT Infrastructure Upgrade	220	0	0	0	220		0	0	0	0	0
Coprorate ICT - Digital Customer Portal	809	0	(502)	0	307		0	0	502	0	502
Coprorate ICT - Reablement System	50	0	0	0	50		0	0	0	0	0
Coprorate ICT - RFID in Libraries	0	0	0	40	40		0	0	0	0	0
	1,722	0	(572)	0	1,150		0	0	572	0	572
<b>Finance &amp; Governance</b>											
Carbon Management Plan	67	0	0	0	67		0	0	0	0	0
Griffin Lodge	300	0	0	0	300		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate Accommodation Strategy Phase 2	2,930	0	(1,000)	0	1,930		0	0	1,000	0	1,000
15a Town Hall Street roofing	178	0	0	0	178		0	0	0	0	0
Darwen Town Hall Reroofing	292	0	0	0	292		0	0	0	0	0
Purchase of 3-7 Blakey Moor	230	0	0	0	230		0	0	0	0	0
Witton 3G Changing Room Roof				65	65						
	3,997	0	(1,000)	65	3,062		0	0	1,000	0	1,000
<b>Portfolios Total</b>	<b>36,967</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5,453)</b>	<b>1,301</b>	<b>32,815</b>		<b>9,104</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,453</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14,557</b>
<b>Earmarked schemes:</b>											
Corporate ICT	2,249	0	0	0	2,249		0	0	0	0	0
Corporate Property Investment	2,636	0	0	(65)	2,571		3,000	0	0	0	3,000
Vehicles (funded from capital or leased)	352	0	0	0	352		0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,237</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(65)</b>	<b>5,172</b>		<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>
<b>Contingent schemes:</b>											
Asset Management Strategy	0	0	0	0	0		3,000	0	0	0	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>3,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,000</b>

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Finance and Governance
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Director of Finance
<b>DATE:</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2020

**PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:** Finance and Governance

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** All

**KEY DECISION:** YES ☒ NO ☐

### SUBJECT: TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR STRATEGY REVIEW FOR 2020/21

#### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To update Members with regard to the Treasury Management position to date, and the proposed Strategy for the remainder of 2020/21.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Executive Board:

1. notes the Treasury Management position for the year to date, and approves the proposed Strategy for the remainder of the year, detailed in Appendix 1, and
2. approves the proposed changes to the Investment Counterparty limits and that there are no changes to all other existing Treasury and Prudential Indicators for 2020/21, as set at Executive Board (12<sup>th</sup> March 2020).

#### 3. BACKGROUND

Treasury Management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council borrows and invests substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks, including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk is therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.

In March 2020 the Executive Board agreed a Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21. It is necessary to review and consider updating the Strategy, if required.

This mid-year review is to be considered and noted by the Audit and Governance Committee at their meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

##### **Treasury Priorities**

The Council has operated within CIPFA and statutory guidance and requirements in respect of Treasury Management practice. The approved Treasury Management Policy Statement, together with the more detailed Treasury Management Practices and each year's Annual Strategy have all emphasised the importance of security and liquidity over yield.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The information contained within the report accords with the Treasury Management Strategy, as approved at Executive Board on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications arising from the 2019/20 Treasury Outturn and latest position for 2020/21 have been incorporated into Corporate Budget Monitoring Reports.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under the Local Government Act 2003, local authorities determine locally their levels of capital investment and associated borrowing. The Prudential Code has been developed to support local authorities in taking these decisions, and the Council is required by Regulation to have regard to the Code when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.

The Department for Communities and Local Government issued Guidance on Local Government Investments, under the Local Government Act 2003, effective from 1st April 2010. Authorities must manage their investments within an approved strategy, setting out what categories of investment they will use and how they will assess and manage the risk of loss of investments.

#### **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

**Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.**

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

#### **10. CONSULTATIONS**

The issues raised in this report have been discussed previously with Audit and Governance Committee and Treasury Management Group.

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**11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

**12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>VERSION:</b>	<b>v1</b>
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>Jody Spencer-Anforth (Ext 507748)</b>
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<b>DATE:</b>	October 2020
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 approved at Executive Board 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2020.
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## **MID-YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REVIEW 2020/21**

### **1 Original Strategy for 2020/21**

1.1 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21 was approved by Executive Board on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

The broad strategy continued the approach of looking to minimise borrowing costs, in the context of the Council's long-term debt being considerably lower than its accumulated Capital Financing Requirement, with the difference covered by the use of short-term borrowing and any available balances. This approach had generated savings on interest costs over the last few years.

At the time, it was expected that interest rates could increase slowly, so it was noted that it might be possible, and appropriate, to take out more long-term borrowing.

1.2 The Original 2020/21 Investment Limits were set by reference to amount, duration and credit rating – and distinguished between Unsecured Deposits, which would be subject to greater risk of credit loss, and Secured Deposits, in which there was less risk. The limits set were largely comparable to those applying in previous years.

### **2 Economic Review 2020/21**

2.1 The spread of the coronavirus pandemic dominated during the period as countries around the world tried to manage the delicate balancing act of containing transmission of the virus while easing lockdown measures and getting their populations and economies working again. After a relatively quiet few months of Brexit news, it was back in the headlines towards the end of the period as agreement between the UK and EU on a trade deal was looking difficult and the government came under fire, both at home and abroad, as it tried to pass the Internal Market Bill which could override the agreed Brexit deal, potentially breaking international law.

2.2 During the period, The Bank of England (BoE) maintained Bank Rate at 0.1% and its Quantitative Easing programme at £745 billion.

2.3 GDP growth contracted by a massive 19.8% in Q2 2020 (Apr-Jun) according to the Office for National Statistics, pushing the annual growth rate down to -21.5%. Recent monthly estimates of GDP have shown growth recovering, with the latest rise of almost 7% in July, but even with the two previous monthly gains, this still only makes up half of the lost output.

2.4 In the three months to July, labour market data showed the unemployment rate increased from 3.9% to 4.1% while wages fell 1% for total pay in nominal terms (0.2% regular pay) and were down 1.8% in real terms (-0.7% regular pay). Despite only a modest rise in unemployment over the period, the rate is expected to pick up sharply in the coming months as the furlough scheme ends in October. On the back of this, the BoE has forecast unemployment could hit a peak of between 8% and 9%.

2.5 Arlingclose, our Treasury Management Advisors, expect Bank Rate to remain at the current 0.10% level and additional monetary loosening in the future, most likely through further financial asset purchases. While Arlingclose's central case for Bank Rate is no change from the current

level of 0.1%, further cuts to Bank Rate to zero or even into negative territory cannot be completely ruled out.

### **3 Treasury Performance to date**

3.1 Thus far, cash balances have ranged between £40M and £110M, being significantly higher than in previous years as a result of grants received in advance from central government. These investment levels have also been supported by short-term borrowing (at rates averaging around 0.8%). No further long-term borrowing has been taken, while short-term borrowing levels have fluctuated, currently standing at slightly lower levels than the start of the year.

3.2 Investments have continued to be made with a limited range of banks, building societies and Money Market Funds, along with other local authorities and the Government's Debt Management Office (DMO), earning interest at exceptionally low levels. Interest rates have fallen significantly to date this year, following the Bank of England Bank Rate cuts in March 2020, bringing the average interest earned on investment balances to around 0.17% in the first half of the year. It is likely that investment returns will remain exceptionally low in the second half of the year.

### **4 Investment and Borrowing Strategy for the rest of the year**

4.1 Both the CIPFA Code and government guidance require that funds be invested prudently, and with regard to security and liquidity, before seeking the optimum rate of return or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

4.2 The Council's Investment Criteria allow investment in a range of other organisations and structures, but as there are limited opportunities for straightforward trading in Secured Deposits, and as priority is given to maintaining liquidity, short-dated and simpler options are mainly used. Investments are made in: fixed term deposits and instant access accounts with banks and building societies; instant access Money Market Funds; and fixed term deposits with local authorities and the UK Government's Debt Management Office. It is expected that these will continue to be the main investment options taken up across the remainder of the year.

4.3 In the light of the pandemic crisis and the likelihood of unexpected calls on cash flow, the Authority kept more cash available at very short notice than is normal. Liquid cash was diversified over several counterparties and Money Market Funds to manage both credit and liquidity risks.

4.4 On 25th September the 'less than 2 week' deposit rates on the UK Government's Debt Management Account Deposit Facility (DMADF) deposits dropped below zero percent to -0.03%, the rate was 0% for 3 week deposits and 0.01% for longer maturities.

4.5 The Council continues to hold higher than usual cash levels. With interest rates being extremely low, including short term deposit rates with the DMADF being below 0%, it is proposed to make an amendment to the Investment Counterparty Limits approved by Executive Board on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020, to allow the Council to further diversify its investments and attempt to maintain principal amounts invested, in a low interest rate environment. It is proposed to amend Investment Counterparty Limits as follows:

Other Investment Limits	Cash Limit
Money market funds	£30M in total (was £20M in total)

It is proposed that all other Investment Counterparty Limits remain as approved in March 2020 by Executive Board.

4.6 The Council's key objective when borrowing has been to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving cost certainty over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans, should long-term plans change is a further, secondary objective.

4.7 It is proposed that the Borrowing Strategy remain unchanged, with the Council looking to take new borrowing as determined by cash flow requirements and by reference to movements in actual and projected long-term interest rates.

**5 Risk Management**

5.1 The Council's main objective for the management of its investments is to give priority to the security and liquidity of its funds before seeking the best rate of return. Therefore, most surplus cash is held in short-term investments with government bodies, and with highly rated banks and pooled funds. In addition, the Council can hold investments that entail a slightly higher level of risk, but such risks are mitigated by limiting the amount and duration of exposure.

5.2 The Council's main objective for the management of its debt is to ensure its long-term affordability. The largest part of its loans is from the PWLB at long-term fixed rates of interest.

5.3 Another significant element of the Council's long-term debt is £18M of loans from banks and other institutions. £13M worth are "lender's option, borrower's option" (LOBO) loans, under which the Lender can, at pre-determined times, exercise an Option to increase the rate payable on the debt, and the Borrower has the Option to either accept the proposed increase or repay the whole loan.

These loans have interest rates fixed at levels that were relatively low when they began, but if the Lender Option is exercised, the Borrower has to deal with whatever interest rates turn out to be at that later date. This exposes the Council to some risk of rising long-term interest rates, but that is mitigated by the fact that £5M of this debt (forming a large part of the lowest interest rate elements) can only be "called" once in every five years. Current projected future interest rates suggest LOBOs are unlikely to be called in the next 5 years.

5.4 A combination of short duration investments and long duration debt exposes the Council to the risk of falling investment income during periods of low interest rates. However, the risk of low investment returns is viewed as lower priority compared to the benefits of optimising the security and liquidity of investments, and the savings made on borrowing costs. Also, though the Council has no long term investments, at this stage, it is hedged against the investment return risk by its short term debt holdings.

**6 Indicators**

6.1 The originally approved Indicators were set at cautious levels and can remain unchanged.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Executive Member for Finance and Governance Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education
<b>LEAD OFFICERS:</b>	Director of Finance Director of Children, Young People and Education
<b>DATE:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> October 2020

<b>PORTFOLIO/S AFFECTED:</b>	Finance and Governance Children, Young People and Education
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED:</b>	All
<b>KEY DECISION:</b>	YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**SUBJECT: Sale of minority shareholding in BSF Project Companies**

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Further to the Executive Board report in March 2020, where it was approved that the Council sell its shares of the minority shareholdings in the BSF Project Companies to the majority shareholder Amber Infrastructure, this report provides an update on the completion of the sale of the Council's shares, which were originally acquired as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme in 2010.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board;

Notes the outcome of the recent share sale exercise of the Council's minority shareholding in the BSF Project.

### 3. BACKGROUND

As part of the BSF Programme, three new schools were procured through two PFI (Private Finance Initiative) Contracts. The schools were delivered in two phases and both achieved Financial Close in 2010: Phase 1 – Pleckgate High School, Phase 2 - Witton Park High School and Blackburn Central High School with Crosshill.

On the 21st September 2009, Balfour Beatty Education was appointed as the Council's selected partner to form the Blackburn with Darwen and Bolton Local Education Partnership to deliver the BSF investment programme across the Borough. The Council was a minority shareholder in the LEP (5%).



On the 12th July 2016 the Local Education Partnership (LEP) formally notified the Council of Balfour Beatty's Investment's decision to sell its shares in the PFI Project Companies and the LEP; the shareholding was then subsequently sold to Amber Fund Management.

Under the BSF programme the commercial structure of the arrangements involved the setup of a Project Company for each phase of the programme. For the Council's BSF programme two project companies were set up. The arrangements provided for the Council to take a minority (9.5%) shareholding in each company. Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council also owned a minority (0.5%) shareholding as a result of their investment in the LEP.

Amber Infrastructure made an offer to buy both Council's shares in the two PFI Project Companies and the LEP.

The Council appointed Asteros Advisors Limited, who are financial advisors that specialise in equity financing, and DAC Beachcroft who provided legal advice on the original BSF programme, to advise the Council on whether the financial valuation was appropriate and on the legal implications of the share sale.

Asteros concluded that the basis of the calculations, and the discount rate proposed, were appropriate in the context of achieving a fair valuation of the equity held by Blackburn with Darwen BC and considered the offer by Amber to be fair and value for money.

DAC Beachcroft reviewed the legal documentation, which was deemed satisfactory for the sale to proceed.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

Following preparation and thorough review of the supporting legal and financial documentation, the share sale took place on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific policy implications associated with this report.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The sale of the minority shareholding has resulted in a capital receipt for the Council. The capital receipt is to be used in line with the Council's policy to repay debt, which will give rise to a reduction in the future Minimum Revenue Provision made by the Council.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council's Financial Procedure Rules have been complied with in the progression of the share sale and the Council procured expert, external legal and financial advice to support this project.

#### **1. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Although there was some impact on finance, procurement and contracting staffing resources for the finalisation of the share sale, the ongoing input and management of the LEP contracts will not

materially impact on the current staffing resources.

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below. Where appropriate please include the hyperlink to the EIA.

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA link here)*

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision. *(insert EIA attachment)*

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

None.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

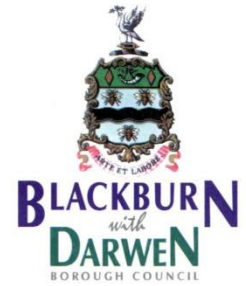
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<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Rizwana Karim (Senior Solicitor, Contracts and Procurement)
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<b>DATE:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
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<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	None
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## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Growth and Development

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Growth & Development

**DATE:** Thursday, 12 November 2020

**PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED:** Growth and Development

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** Billinge and Beardwood;

**KEY DECISION:** N

### SUBJECT:

Petition requesting the resurfacing of Yew Tree Drive, Service Road numbers 105 to 119, Blackburn

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A petition signed by residents of seven of the eight properties on the side road servicing numbers 105 to 119, inclusive, off Yew Tree Drive, has been submitted to the Council requesting that their road be resurfaced.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board:

- Notes the petition.
- Supports the officers' recommendation that the request for resurfacing be refused.
- Request that officers inform the lead petitioner of the decision.

### 3. BACKGROUND

This service road, off Yew Tree Drive is an adopted 96m long cul-de-sac immediately off Whinney Lane at its junction with Yew Tree Drive, giving access to eight homes. The residents believe that both the carriageway and footway should be resurfaced. The petition states that some of the residents have lived there 20 years and the road has not been resurfaced in that time.

The residents note that both the main dual carriageway and the service road on the opposite side of Whinney Lane has been resurfaced and cannot understand why their cul-de-sac has not. They are concerned for the safety of the numerous lorries, van, wagons, joggers and dog walkers that use the cul-de-sac. They state that one resident has almost fallen over a number of times and cite negligence by the Council.

The carriageway appears to be surfaced with bituminous macadam which has been surfaced dressed in the past. This dressing is approximately 10mm thick and is in some places wearing away to reveal the original surfacing underneath.

In 2019 the council commissioned a condition survey of its entire highway network, the results of which categorised carriageways and footways as follows:

Grade 5	Structurally impaired
Grade 4	Functionally impaired
Grade 3	Mid life
Grade 2	Signs of surface wear
Grade 1	Free from defects

The footways were shown as approximately 47% grade 3; and 53% grade 4, whereas the carriageway was classed as 17% grade 5; 77% grade 4; 6% grade 3, overall functionally impaired.

In accordance with the Council's Safety Inspection Procedure for Highways this road is inspected annually and any defects which exceed the intervention levels are repaired. The table below identifies this repair history since 2017.

Year	Number of defects	
	Carriageway	Footway
2017	1	5
2018	0	3
2019	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>

This defect history supports the results of the condition survey that the major issues lie with the carriageway with the footways generally being acceptable.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

The previous long term plan for highway work, approved by the Executive Member for Regeneration and published on 3<sup>th</sup> February 2017 described the authority's approach and commitment to highway maintenance.

Present funding levels, both revenue and capital, effectively restrict consideration of only the Borough's major classified roads for the foreseeable future. It would be unrealistic to expect or anticipate routine, planned resurfacing of side streets or cul-de-sacs in the foreseeable future. Unfortunately the structural condition and visual appearance of these roads will continue to deteriorate, however the authority will continue to inspect them to ensure that safety defects are identified and repaired.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The capital maintenance budget is committed to the long term plan for highway work which effectively precludes resurfacing roads such as this service road off Yew Tree Drive.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council has a duty to maintain the adopted highway under the Highways Act 1980.

This is an ordinary petition as defined in the Council's constitution as being one signed by at least 6 people and submitted by people who live, **Page 175** in the Borough. Part 7 of the

Constitution outlines the possible mechanisms for petitions and this report and response is one such type of valid response.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Dwayne Lowe, dwayne.lowe@blackburn.gov.uk
<b>DATE:</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	Petition



To whom it may concern,

I write to you on behalf of all the residents regarding our street and road, Yew Tree Drive Layby 105-119, Blackburn, BB2 7DH.

Our street and road is in need of dire repair and resurfacing. Parts of tarmac have been ripped up along the road causing damage to our car suspensions and wheels. This is extremely concerning at the bottom of our driveways on a council owned road, where a sloping driveway and broken road can cause severe damage to cars or severe injury to a person. There are several potholes in one area and this is the case along the whole road. Our pavements are just as bad, broken in areas that we can see loose stones underneath, sharp stones lying about the road and pavement causing a hazard for walkers. The pavements have weeds growing out of them which constantly have to be cleared by the residents on surfaces that are the responsibility of the council/Highways England. The weeds are also growing at the sides of the road and no resident has ever seen any local authority clearing these or spraying any chemicals to kill them.

I have noticed recently that the dual carriageways outside our house have been resurfaced multiple times and repairs have been undertaken on the carriageway numerous times over the past couple of years in addition to the other layby on Yew Tree Drive just opposite our road, however, I or any of the residents (who have lived here over 20 years) cannot recall the last time our road has ever been resurfaced. In fact, our residents who have lived here the longest have informed me the road has never been resurfaced. Our road is not a private road, therefore it defeats logic why the rest of Yew Tree Drive would have works undertaken yet, our layby excluded. Some potholes have occasionally been filled in so this demonstrates the road is not private and is council/Highways England's responsibility.

I personally have requested the council to fill in potholes at the bottom of my driveway but this request has only been granted once. On other occasions, when meeting with a member of the team from Highways England, I was informed only potholes that have a minimum of 25mm depth would be fixed. I would like to express that potholes or road cracks that are less than 25mm depth can still cause damage and injury given that the size of the cracks/potholes are quite large and over a large area.

We have many trucks, vans and wagons which come along our road including the bin lorry. When these vehicles turn around using one of the resident's driveways, it causes further damage due to the existence of cracked tarmac and the heavy load on a poor surface. This in turn causes further damage which has not yet been rectified.

We have many joggers who pass along our road and street alongside dog walkers, the elderly and us, the residents. It is only a matter of time before someone is injured by the dreadful conditions of the road/path or their car damaged which could lead to a claim against the responsible party.

I have a friend who has recently been injured in a car accident and is still suffering with terrible pains in his back from the incident. This friend comes to visit regularly and on more than one occasion he has hit a poor road surface crack which has caused him severe pain. This may be the case for many other residents or other walkers who have not yet told their stories.

All residents have expressed concern about the pathway and road especially our elderly residents who find it unsafe to walk along the pathway. One of our residents has almost fallen over multiple times. This is unacceptable and is negligence on behalf of the council/Highways England endangering public health.

I have attached in the appendices below pictures of the road surface, potholes, tarmac cracks and cracked pavements. As you can see from the images the road and path is in a poor condition and requires full resurfacing. Therefore I request that this matter can be resolved in an **urgent and timely** manner to avoid any injury or further damages to vehicles which can lead to a claim made against either the council or Highways England.

Yours Faithfully,

[Redacted Signature]

On behalf of all the residents of Yew Tree Drive,

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive

Yew Tree Drive



**APPENDIX 1 – CLOSE UP**





## APPENDIX 2 - FOOTPATHS





**APPENDIX 3 - ROAD**





**APPENDIX 4 – FURTHER DAMAGE**





## EXECUTIVE BOARD DECISION



**REPORT OF:** Executive Member for Growth and Development

**LEAD OFFICERS:** Director of Growth and Development

**DATE:** Thursday 12 November 2020

**PORTFOLIO(S) AFFECTED:** Growth and Development

**WARD/S AFFECTED:** Ewood;

**KEY DECISION:** N

### SUBJECT:

Arkwright Fold Petition

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackburn with Darwen BC has a duty to maintain all Public Rights of Way (PROW). We notified residents of our intention to undertake maintenance on Public Footpath 106, which is at the rear of Arkwright Fold, Blackburn. Since this notification the residents have submitted an objection petition to halt the works.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive Board recognises the legal duty of the Council to maintain these routes and approves of the planned maintenance on this public footpath.

### 3. BACKGROUND

Blackburn with Darwen BC are the surveying authority responsible for maintaining all rights of way within the borough that hold the status of “maintainable at the public expense”.

The right to pass and repass belong to the public at large not the authority. This path has been on the list for enforcement for some considerable time and as other cases have been resolved, it has moved up the enforcement list.

A national walking group has raised the obstructions on this path, the path has long-standing obstructions and should be returned to use. If the council takes no action, any member of public or walking group can serve notice on the authority at which point the authority will have one month to serve official notice on persons causing obstruction. Any application received by landowners to divert, change or extinguish the right would likely be met with objection from the statutory bodies and thus fail.

We have written to residents and are removing vegetation to reveal obstructions. Dealing with these obstructions, it allows the authority to progress the work in a measured and planned way. If the authority refuses to deal with the issue, the authority will be open to a legal notice and will have a much shorter time scale in which to serve notice and remove obstructions.

With regards to the path not being able to be used for a period of time. The legal position on obstructed paths is:

- A public right of way is held by a legal order and once created the rights can only be withdrawn with a further legal order to remove or change the right. The common saying to describe this is “once a right of way always a right of way”. There is no legal way of removing the right of way by lack of use or taking possession of the land.

**Relevant court case where member of public served notice on the authority for failing to undertake its statutory duty.**

In a court case in 2010, *Herrick v Kidner and Somerset County Council*, the judge made some important comments on the interpretation of the words ‘significantly interferes’. He said that ‘any structure erected within the legal extent of the footpath, and which prevents public passage or the enjoyment of amenity rights over the area of its footprint, significantly interferes with the exercise of public rights of way.’

He also said that in his view ‘interfere [with the right of passage] means to get in the way of, in other words, the structure must impede the right of passage or prejudice other amenity rights, either generally or in particular. There is no reason to confine interference to physical interference. An object can get in the way of right of passage or other amenity rights because of its psychological impact’.

What this means is that the whole width of the right of way in question should be available for public use and that a structure erected on the highway, for example, gates which suggest you are entering a private drive and which act as a psychological deterrent, could be the subject of an order under this legislation.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES & RISKS**

If we do not undertake the planned maintenance the national walking group can serve notice on the authority at Magistrates court under section 130A Highways Act 1980. At which point the authority will have one month to serve official notice on persons causing obstruction. Any application received by landowners to divert, change or extinguish the right would likely be met with objection from the statutory bodies and thus fail.

If we fail to deliver upon this legal notice the issue will progress to Magistrates court which will result in financial and reputation cost to the authority.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Dependent upon legal action

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Council as highways authority has a duty to protect public rights including the removal of obstructions under section 130 Highways Act 1980.

Risk of legal action from the national walking group that raised the obstruction issue under Section 130A of Highways Act 1980.

## 8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

N/A

## 9. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Please select one of the options below.

Option 1 ☒ Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required – the EIA checklist has been completed.

Option 2 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Member needs to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

Option 3 ☐ In determining this matter the Executive Board Members need to consider the EIA associated with this item in advance of making the decision.

## 10. CONSULTATIONS

All residents were informed of our intention to undertake this essential maintenance.

## 11. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

The recommendations are made further to advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been considered. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

## 12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of any Executive Member consulted and note of any dispensation granted by the Chief Executive will be recorded in the Summary of Decisions published on the day following the meeting.

<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Dwayne Lowe, Ailsa Smith, , dwayne.lowe@blackburn.gov.uk, ailsa.smith@blackburn.gov.uk
<b>DATE:</b>	November 2020
<b>BACKGROUND PAPER:</b>	

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Blackburn  
BB1 7DY

Arkwright Fold

Blackburn  
BB2 4LZ

9 February 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Objection from the residents of Arkwright Fold, Blackburn regarding proposed clearing of Footpath 106.**

We, the residents of Arkwright Fold, object to the proposed clearing of Footpath 106 (letter reference PROW 106 Blackburn dated 27.01.2020).

Footpath 106 has been neglected for some 30 years, the Council have not had resources to maintain it and the public have not used it throughout that time. It does not traverse open fields, farmland or an area of beauty, it is in an urban environment in an area adequately served by roads and pavements.

Our objections to clearing Footpath 106 are:

- i) Security risk - the footpath has become severely overgrown over the past 30 years with undergrowth and trees which has provided an element of security to the adjoining properties, reducing the likelihood of intruders in an area with well documented problems including break-ins and burglaries. Clearing the undergrowth will present more opportunities for burglary and trespassing. The Council closed an adjoining footpath 12 years ago due to security concerns.
- ii) Clearing the footpath would give rise to social nuisance - it would be unlit giving rise to a 'back-alley' situation that can be abused by those wishing to do so. The drugs problems and anti-social behaviour associated with the footpath between Arkwright Fold and Brotherston Drive are already well documented by the Police. We do not wish to give the opportunity for more.
- iii) Destruction of wildlife - the clearance of the path would necessitate the cutting down of established trees and the clearance of undergrowth which would destroy the habitat of wildlife - hedgehogs and foxes inhabit this area.
- iv) Maintenance costs - the Council have admitted that they do not have the resources to maintain the footpath. It would become a dumping ground for fly tippers if not regularly maintained.
- v) Redundant - the footpath has not been used for 30 years. With the building of Brotherston Drive and adjoining roads the footpath is not needed. Alternative routes are easy to find.
- vi) Waste of Council resources - to spend several thousands of pounds on a project that nobody wants and nobody would use is a flagrant dereliction of the Council's duty. The money would be better spent on the many projects desperately in need of finance that would benefit the community as a whole.

Yours faithfully



## **Footpath 106 objection**

We, the undersigned residents of Arkwright Fold, Blackburn, object to the clearing of footpath 106 on grounds of security, social nuisance, maintenance & drainage issues and flagrant waste of Council resources.

We, the undersigned residents of Arkwright Fold, Blackburn, object to the clearing of footpath 106 on grounds of security, social nuisance, maintenance & drainage issues and flagrant waste of Council resources.

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