

Public Document Pack



Town Hall
Royal Tunbridge Wells

Tuesday, 19 September 2017

To the Members of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council

I request your attendance at a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to be held at the Council Chamber, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS, on Wednesday, 27 September 2017, at 6.30 pm, when the following business is proposed to be transacted.

- 1 **Apologies for absence**
- 2 **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest by Members in items on the agenda. For any advice on declarations of interest, please contact the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.
- 3 **Announcements**
To receive announcements from the Mayor, the Leader of the Council, members of the Cabinet and the Chief Executive.
- 4 **The minutes of the meeting dated 26 April 2017** (Pages 1 - 4)
The minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2017 to be approved as a correct record.
- 5 **The minutes of the previous meeting dated 26 July 2017** (Pages 5 - 22)
The minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 July 2017 to be approved as a correct record.
- 6 **Questions from members of the public**
To receive questions from members of the public, of which due notice has been given, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 8, to be submitted and answered.
- 7 **Questions from members of the Council**
To receive questions from members of the Council, of which due notice has been given, pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10, to be submitted and answered.
- 8 **Civic Development Planning Framework** (Pages 23 - 126)
- 9 **Revised Five Year Plan 2017-2022** (Pages 127 - 192)

- 10 **Crescent Road Car Park Extension** (Pages 193 - 210)
(This item is associated with exempt appendices)
- 11 **Appointment of Monitoring Officer** (Pages 211 - 214)
- 12 **Approval of Timetable of meetings 2018/2019** (Pages 215 - 220)
- 13 **Urgent Business**
To deal with any business the Mayor regards as urgent due to special circumstances.
- 14 **Common Seal of the Council**
To authorise the Common Seal of the Council to be affixed to any contract, minute, notice or other document arising out of the minutes, or pursuant to any delegation, authority or power conferred by the Council.
- 15 **Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6 December 2017 at 6.30pm**

EXEMPT APPENDICES

It is proposed that, pursuant to section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following appendices on the grounds that they may involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Act, by virtue of the particular paragraphs shown on the agenda and on the attached appendices.

- 16 **Exempt Appendices for Crescent Road Car Park Extension (Item 10)**
(Pages 221 - 226)
Exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the above Act:
Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

William Benson
Chief Executive

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Notes on Procedure

- (1) A list of background papers appears at the end of each report, where appropriate, pursuant to the Local Government Act 1972, section 100D(i).
- (2) Members seeking factual information about agenda items are requested to contact the appropriate Service Manager prior to the meeting.

- (3) Members of the public and other stakeholders are required to register with the Democratic Services Officer if they wish to speak on an agenda item at a meeting. Places are limited to a maximum of four speakers per item. The deadline for registering to speak is 4.00 pm the last working day before the meeting. Each speaker will be given a maximum of 3 minutes to address the Council.
- (4) Meetings held in the Council Chamber have a public capacity of 100. Meetings held in Committee Room A have a public capacity of 20.
- (5) Please note that this meeting may be recorded or filmed by the Council for administrative purposes. Any other third party may also record or film meetings, unless exempt or confidential information is being considered, but are requested as a courtesy to others to give notice of this to the Democratic Services Officer before the meeting. The Council is not liable for any third party recordings.

Further details are available on the website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk) or from Democratic Services.

If you require this information in another format please contact us, call 01892 526121 or email committee@tunbridgewells.gov.uk

Accessibility into and within the Town Hall – There is a wheelchair accessible lift by the main staircase, giving access to the first floor where the committee rooms are situated. There are a few steps leading to the Council Chamber itself but there is a platform chairlift in the foyer.

Hearing Loop System – The Council Chamber and Committee Rooms A and B have been equipped with hearing induction loop systems. The Council Chamber also has a fully equipped audio-visual system.

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TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, duly convened and held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS, at 6.30 pm on Wednesday, 26 April 2017

PRESENT:

The Mayor Councillor David Neve (Chairman)

Councillors Backhouse, Dr Basu, Bland, Bulman, Chapelard, Mrs Cobbold, Dawlings, Elliott, Gray, Dr Hall, Hamilton, Hannam, Heasman, Hill, Hills, Horwood, Huggett, Jamil, Jukes, Lewis-Grey, Lidstone, Mackonochie, March, McDermott, Moore, Munn, Noakes, Nuttall, Oakford, Ms Palmer, Podbury, Rankin, Reilly, Simmons, Sloan, Mrs Soyke (Vice-Chairman), Stanyer, Stewart, Mrs Thomas, Uddin, Weatherly, Williams and Woodward

IN ATTENDANCE: William Benson (Chief Executive), Keith Trowell (Senior Lawyer and Deputy Monitoring Officer) and Mike McGeary (Democratic Services Officer)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

FC75/16 Apologies for absence were reported from Councillors Barrington-King, Hastie, Holden and Scholes.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

FC76/16 There were no declarations of interest made, within the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FC77/16 The Mayor advised that a list of events which he had attended since the last meeting of the Full Council had been tabled, for members' information. He added that the list included a number of forthcoming events, up until the date of the Annual General Meeting, i.e. 24 May.

There were no announcements made by the Leader of the Council, or by Cabinet members or by the Chief Executive.

THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

FC78/16 The minutes of the Full Council meeting dated 22 February 2017 were submitted.

The following corrections were made:

The Civic Complex Project (minute FC70/16) – page 14

Councillor Moore asked that the word “completely” be inserted in between “to” and “de-risk”, in the seventh paragraph, to reflect her actual wording more accurately.

Councillor Reilly said that he had voted against the amendment and thus his name needed to be added to the list of dissenters at the top of page 14.

Councillor Stewart referred to the sixth paragraph on this page. She said that she had been referring to a phrase used by the Director of Finance and

Corporate Services when she said “no appetite for cuts” and asked that the minutes be accordingly amended.

The Chief Executive asked that, if members had similar issues to raise in the future, it would be helpful if these could be discussed with the committee administrator in advance, in order that the precise details could be checked.

RESOLVED – That, with the above three amendments, the minutes of the meeting dated 22 February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

FC79/16 The Mayor advised that one question had been submitted by a member of the public under Council Procedure Rule 8, as follows:

Question from Mr Brian Ransley

“Can the Portfolio Holder for Finance provide a Business Plan, with cash-flow projections for the full period of the £72m loan, showing that the Civic Centre Development Project is financially viable?”

Reply from Councillor Jukes (in the absence of Councillor Barrington-King)

“Thank you for the question Mr Ransley.

As all current members are aware we are still in RIBA Stage 3 (developed design) and following the completion of this stage we will bring forward a report to Full Council in the Autumn, as planned.

This will include a funding strategy for elected members to weigh up the benefits and risks of this project before progressing any further.”

Mr Ransley was asked if he had a supplementary question, arising from the reply he had received. He asked if the Leader of the Council felt that, before the Council committed to a sum of this magnitude, it made more sense to establish the financial viability of the project first, especially as he understood that the Conservative Group had voted against approval of the scheme.

Councillor Jukes said that, while some members of the Conservative Group wished to defer a decision on the project, that had not been the majority opinion. He added that, to be able to make a fully-informed decision on this scheme, it was necessary to expend further sums on consultants’ reports – for which a budget existed. Councillor Jukes stressed that, for the authority to decide whether to proceed with this important scheme and to make a firm financial commitment, the provision of consultants’ evidence-based advice was an absolutely essential requirement.

Councillor Jukes extended an offer to Mr Ransley to view all of the RIBA Stage 1 and 2 documents that had been commissioned by the Council, if he would find that helpful.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

FC80/16 The Mayor advised that there had been no questions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP PLAN

FC81/16 The Mayor advised that, if members had any questions relating to the CCTV element of community safety, it should be remembered that the proposed new contract was not due to begin until 2018.

Councillor Weatherly, Portfolio-holder for Communities and Wellbeing, moved that the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017/18 be approved. She explained how the Plan set out how the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Partnership would address local priorities to reduce crime and disorder across the Borough. Councillor Weatherly added that the Partnership Plan had been developed after full consultation with a range of partners; she said it had also been designed to continue to complement and support the delivery of the Kent Police and Crime Plan, published by the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner.

The motion to approve the Plan was seconded by Councillor Jukes, who reserved his right to speak on the matter.

There were no speakers on this proposal and members unanimously voted to approve the Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Community Safety Partnership Plan 2017/18 be approved.

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MAYOR 2017/2018

FC82/16 Councillor Jukes proposed, and Councillor McDermott seconded, that Councillor Len Horwood be appointed as Deputy Mayor for 2017/18.

Councillor Jukes described Councillor Horwood's experience, achievements and suitability for the role; Councillor McDermott added that Councillor Horwood fully deserved this opportunity.

Councillor Hills voiced his full support for Councillor Horwood and underlined how deserving he was of the appointment.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – That Councillor Len Horwood be appointed as Deputy Mayor for 2017/18.

TO RECORD THE COUNCIL'S APPRECIATION FOR THE MAYOR

FC83/16 The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Mrs Soyke, assumed the chair for this item. She invited the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jukes, to speak.

Councillor Jukes wished to place on record his grateful thanks to Councillor David Neve, for what he had achieved as Mayor for 2016/17 for the benefit of residents and businesses in the Borough. He described the Mayoral year as having been colourful and eventful and the Mayor as having been a great ambassador for the Council. Councillor Jukes also said how grateful the Council was for the support provided by the Mayoress, Mrs Jill Neve. Together, he added, they had also achieved great success for Beat, their selected 'beating eating disorders' charity.

On behalf of the Council, Councillor Jukes thanked the Mayor for his excellent

year of office.

Councillors Hill and Chapelard, on behalf of their respective political groups, also thanked the Mayor for his hard work and commitment and expressed their grateful thanks to the Mayoress. Councillor Hill said she had enjoyed the sense of adventure which the Mayor had brought to his year; Councillor Chapelard said he had appreciated how Councillor Neve had paid great attention to understanding the people behind the many organisations he had come into contact with and how he had also made the office of Mayor more approachable.

Councillor Hills acknowledged the significant work the Mayor and the Mayoress had undertaken in support of their charity. He presented an autographed boxing glove signed by the former light welterweight and welterweight world champion, Ricky Hatton, to be auctioned at the Mayor's end-of-year dinner dance that week.

In response, Councillor Neve thanked councillors for their kind words, adding that he had been very grateful for the support he had received from the Mayoral officer team. Councillor Neve reminded councillors that he would greatly appreciate their presence at the end-of-year dinner dance, taking place that week.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY – That the Borough Council formally records its appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the Mayor and the assistance given to him by the Mayoress during his period of office.

COMMON SEAL OF THE COUNCIL

FC84/16 **RESOLVED** – That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any contract, minute, notice or other document arising out of the minutes or pursuant to any delegation, authority or power conferred by the Council.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

FC85/16 It was noted that the next meeting of the Full Council would be the Annual Meeting, taking place on Wednesday 24 May at 10am.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 7.02 pm.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, duly convened and held at the Council Chamber, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS, at 6.30 pm on Wednesday, 26 July 2017

PRESENT:

The Mayor Councillor Mrs Julia Soyke (Chairman)
Councillors Backhouse, Barrington-King, Dr Basu, Bulman, Chapelard, Mrs Cobbold, Dawlings, Dr Hall, Hamilton, Heasman, Hill, Hills, Horwood (Vice-Chairman), Huggett, Jamil, Jukes, Lewis-Grey, Lidstone, Mackonochie, March, McDermott, Moore, Munn, Neve, Noakes, Nuttall, Podbury, Reilly, Scholes, Simmons, Sloan, Stanyer, Stewart, Uddin, Weatherly, Williams and Woodward

IN ATTENDANCE: William Benson (Chief Executive), Mathew Jefferys (Democratic Services and Elections Manager) and Mark O'Callaghan (Democratic Services Officer)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

FC9/17 Apologies were received from Councillors Bland, Elliott, Gray, Hannam, Hastie, Holden, Oakford, Palmer, Rankin and Thomas

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

FC10/17 There were no declarations of interest made, within the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Members.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FC11/17 The Mayor advised that a written summary of her past and future engagements would be made available to members.

Councillor Jukes advised that the Council had received a very good planning application from developers Altitude for the old cinema site. He was fairly confident, should they be granted planning permission, that they would start building sometime in late 2018. Councillor Jukes commented that one of the reasons that the developers had come to Tunbridge Wells to build the project was because they were very impressed with the Borough Council's forward plans for the area.

There were no announcements from either Cabinet members or by the Chief Executive.

THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

FC12/17 The minutes of the Annual meeting, dated 24 May 2017, were submitted.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting dated 24 May 2017 be approved as a correct record.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

FC13/17 The Mayor advised that no questions from members of the public had been received under Council Procedure Rule 8.

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

FC14/17 The Mayor advised that there were two questions pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 10 which would be taken in the order in which they were received.

1. Question from Councillor Chapelard

“The county cricket match between Kent and Sussex during the Tunbridge Wells 2017 Cricket Festival was nearly cancelled due to poor grounds maintenance by its contractor Sodexo. What action has Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) taken and what action will TWBC take to ensure this never happens again?”

Answer from Cllr March

“The condition of the outfield was not up to the usual standard. The preparation of the county wicket, which had been progressing, did falter in the two weeks prior to the start of the Festival leading to KCCC staff being required to oversee the final preparations.

The Council has issued a default notice against the contractor and they have responded with an action plan, which includes the recruitment of a new Head Groundsman for the Nevill Ground.

In the meantime, additional contract supervision will also be carried out to ensure that the required standards at the ground continue to be achieved.”

Supplementary question from Councillor Chapelard

“As the Portfolio holder responsible for the Sodexo contract, how satisfied are you with their work given that we have had issues with the Cemetery, parks, allotments and now the county cricket ground?”

Response from Councillor March

Councillor March responded to say that with the assistance of KCCC, the Nevill Ground did look very picturesque, the end of the season work on the football pitches had been completed to plan and the pitches were in good condition ready for the start of the new season. The parks had once again achieved ‘green flag’ status with an improvement on marks at all sites. With the help of the Council’s contractor and volunteers, Dunorlan Park had also achieved ‘green flag’ status. She felt that when default notices were needed then they were issued and then the contractors put in an action plan and that from the positive things that have come out of it she was very happy that the council was achieving progress with the contractors.

2. Question from Councillor Lidstone

“Can the Leader confirm that there is still to be a review of the CCTV operation, and when does he anticipate it will be completed?”

Answer from Councillor Weatherly (as the relevant Portfolio-holder)

“I am sure that Cllr Lidstone already knows the answer to this question. As the Leader of the Council stated at Cabinet on 22 June, CCTV will

continue to be actively monitored and we are carrying out a review of our cameras and all possible options with regards to future operation and funding.

I have already written to local councils and a number of organisations that are interested in CCTV. The response so far has been positive and I asked for initial replies to be returned by 4 August 2017.

I will then review the responses and bring forward an approach later in the year.”

Supplementary question from Councillor Lidstone

“Does the Leader stand by his pledge that active CCTV monitoring will not be removed under his watch, even if the Council is unable to obtain full funding from end users?”

Response from Councillor Jukes

Councillor Jukes confirmed that he would stand by this pledge.

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - AGREEMENT OF PLANNING CALL-IN WORDING

FC15/17 Councillor March opened the item to explain the process that had been undertaken and proposed the motion.

Councillor March advised members that the Constitution Review Working Party had met in 2016 and discussed the procedure for calling in planning applications. She said that members used to be able to call in planning applications for consideration where there was a planning issue that warranted consideration by a planning committee or where there was significant level of local concern. This significant level of local concern had been omitted from paragraphs in the constitution and so what was discussed was that it be re-introduced and officers had been asked to revise and include this element.

Councillor March advised that there had been a further meeting on 10 March 2017 that clarified the proposal after receiving feedback from various groups. On 27 June 2017 the Audit and Governance Committee unanimously supported the recommendations.

Councillor March believed the recommendations would benefit members, members of the public and particularly parish councils who would now be able to bring forward applications where there was a significant level of local concern.

Councillor Heasman seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Stanyer supported the proposal but said he would like to see further discussions on changing the criteria so that parish and town councils had a right of calling in applications.

RESOLVED –

1. That paragraph 8 of Table 3 of Annex C to Part 3 of the Constitution be replaced with the text as follows:
 8. Determine all forms of planning and other applications and all notifications submitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990, Localism Act 2011 or under any related principal or secondary legislation, except the following:
 - 8.1 those applications where any Member has requested in writing that the application be “called in” to be determined by the Planning Committee, and the “call in” and reasons for the “call in” have been agreed as valid by the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation following discussion with the Head of Planning (or delegated deputy).
 - 8.1.1 The reasons for which an application can be called in must include:
 - A) the material planning issue(s) that warrant(s) the application being determined by Committee; and/or
 - B) evidence and the reason(s) of significant local concern that warrant(s) the application being determined by Committee.
 - 8.1.2 The request for the “call-in” must be received in writing addressed to the Head of Planning Services within five weeks (35 days) of the date that the application is originally made valid.
2. That paragraph 5.1 of the Planning Committee Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution be replaced with the text as follows:
 - 5.1 The Constitution provides at Paragraph 8 in Table 3, of Annex C of Part 3 that any member may “call in” any planning application – i.e. require that an application be determined by the Planning Committee rather than by an officer under delegated authority. Members should exercise discretion in using this power and should only call in applications where there is a material planning issue which warrants consideration by the Planning Committee, or where there is evidence of local concern that warrants consideration by the Planning Committee. Any request to call in an application should be made in writing to the Head of Planning Services.

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION - AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

- FC16/17 Councillor March introduced the report and said that this was a matter of good housekeeping, adding that the Audit and Governance Committee had unanimously supported the recommendations on 27 June 2017.

Councillor March commented that the current proposals were written six years ago and that there had been major legislative changes since that time. She added that these new proposals would enable smaller contracts of low risk to be procured more efficiently.

Councillor March moved the motion.

Councillor Reilly seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members of the Council supported the recommendations without comment.

RESOLVED – That the updated Standing Orders on Procurement and Contracts, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be approved.

REQUEST TO WAIVE THE SIX MONTH ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT - CLLR HASTIE

FC17/17 Councillor Jukes introduced the report and said that Councillor Hastie had been offered the opportunity to enhance his career quite considerably and that he had asked if the Council would allow him to continue to be absent from Council duties until February 2018.

Councillor Jukes moved the motion.

Councillor Dr Hall seconded the motion.

Councillor Neve understood that Councillor Hastie's career was valuable but expressed concern that he could not come back and fulfil his commitments to the Council and the people he represents. He concluded that he would abstain but was minded to vote against and have a by-election.

Councillor Backhouse supported the comments of Councillor Jukes.

Clr Neve's and Chapelard's abstentions were noted.

RESOLVED – That, pursuant to Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the employment reason set out in the report in respect of Councillor Hastie's failure to attend meetings of the authority during the period 23 February 2017 to 21 February 2018, be approved.

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

FC18/17 The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, Councillor Moore, introduced the report and commented that the Committee was an essential part of the corporate checks and balances, independent from the Cabinet and with the power to refer any matters it feels are relevant to any part of the Council. She noted that not all councils had independent members but she endorsed the value of independent members in questioning and helping to hold the Council to account.

Councillor Moore said that the business of the Committee had been conducted with openness, transparency and professionalism. This was the sixth year in a row where a clean audit letter had been received from the external auditors and that corporate governance training for all members of the Committee had just started.

Councillor Moore also took the opportunity to thank Councillor Horwood for his excellent work as Chairman of Audit and Governance Committee in the previous civic year and moved the motion.

Councillor Simmons seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Members of the Council supported the recommendations without comment.

RESOLVED – That the Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee 2016/17 be noted.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

FC19/17 The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Dawlings, introduced the report and commented that it covered the last year of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under Councillor Rankin's chairmanship. He took the opportunity to thank Councillor Rankin for her leadership of the Committee over the last few years.

Councillor Dawlings advised that it was a very comprehensive report and at the next meeting in August the work programme for the coming year would be determined. He added that if there were any matters that any member would like the Committee to include then they should liaise with him.

Councillor Dawlings proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report be approved.

Councillor Hills seconded and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Chapelard reminded members that the Task and Finish group had made a recommendation that glass recycling should be introduced for residents as part of the new waste contract when it comes up for renewal in 2019. That recommendation had been approved by Cabinet on 13 April 2017 and he hoped that members would all be pressing to make this happen for residents when it comes up for discussion.

RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report 2016/17 be approved.

PETITION - CIVIC DEVELOPMENT

FC20/17 The Mayor, Councillor Soyke, advised that a petition had been submitted to the Council, containing 2,016 signatures (received both on-line and in paper format).

The wording of the petition was as follows:

"We the undersigned petition Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to stop the proposed development of a new theatre and offices in Calverley Grounds and to consider again the redevelopment of the existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall."

The petition organiser, Dr Chris Gedge, along with Mr Nick Pope and Dr Robert Chris, were invited to address the Council for a maximum of ten minutes, in order to highlight the key points of their argument.

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Dr Gedge said that the main thrust of the petition was that the plan was deeply flawed and that the community deserved much better. He said that people felt very strongly about these plans. He continued that the campaign was not against progress but it must be properly considered. He felt that the costs had been ignored along with considerations relating to noise and air pollution and congestion.

Mr Pope questioned the transparency of the project. He said the site selection, the most important decision in this project was not a consultation but a presentation of slides showing 13 site options, leading to the final selection of the Calverley Grounds site. He felt that this was a selection based on weak criteria and that detail on the decision process had not been forthcoming.

Mr Pope added that there had been concerns all along from The Friends of Calverley Grounds, however when the land take increased to 993 square metres these concerns increased. He said that building on 993 square metres of a Grade II Listed park was not acceptable.

Dr Robert Chris said that there was an increasing clamour across the town from many people objecting for many reasons. He added that people who cared about this town had been treated with disdain and had never been consulted about what kind of theatre would best serve the town.

Dr Chris advised that Hooper's had issued a press release that afternoon, that they saw any arrangement to share their service road and car park with the theatre as an existential threat to their store. This he considered meant that the proposed theatre development was now dead.

Dr Chris summarised that this now presented a welcome second chance to explore options that had been too quickly dismissed and others that had not been considered at all. He welcomed building a performing arts centre of excellence that would take root in the town, that would bring employment and creative talent and energy to the community. He added that everyone who wanted to participate in the process must be given an opportunity to do so.

Four members of the public had registered to speak to give their views on the petition: James Tansley, James Pickering, Jim Kedge and Ben Van Grutten.

(a) Mr James Tansley - Economist at Bank of England, was keen to point out that there is no such thing as Government money only money that comes from the tax payer. Government at all levels should always carefully consider the need for any expenditure, it should always deliver value for money and above all be honest, open and accountable for the way that money is spent. He was disappointed that this Council had abandoned these principles in pushing forward proposals for a new civic complex and stated that the numbers simply did not add up.

Mr Tansley said that he was very disappointed at the lack of transparency and also by the way those promoting this project had misrepresented the position of others including himself and the petitioners. He ended his comments by warning that councillors should not underestimate the level of anger in the Borough at the handling of the civic complex issue.

(b) Mr John Pickering observed that no decision could be made about moving the Council offices or theatre and providing office space to let until the plan

for the present Town Hall was also available. The reason for that, he continued, was that debt financing was being used and that debt financing on the scale proposed was inherently a risk for Borough Council finances. Mr Pickering said that there was no cash plan to consider and asked when that would be available.

Mr Pickering ended by stating that the immediate needs were to refurbish the Town Hall building and create or rebuild a more practical theatre, which could be done at a cost much less than the current proposals. He suggested that building offices to let on park land surely crossed a red line, especially when it appears to destroy the landscape of the western end of the park.

(c) Mr Jim Kedge explained that, as a trustee of the charity Friends of Calverley Grounds it was his duty "to preserve, support and improve Calverley Grounds for the benefit of the inhabitants of Tunbridge Wells and the surrounding areas."

He argued that the proposal to build a theatre and office block in, under and alongside Calverley Grounds would do nothing for Calverley Grounds except to damage it for the community and that the Council would be ignoring its own policies with the destruction of 66 trees. Mr Kedge reminded the Council that Calverley Grounds was a conservation area and urged them to please think again.

(d) Mr Van Grutten felt that the Council's plans had not been well thought-out, specifically that they were not sufficiently ambitious. He said that the proposed theatre would not even be able to host all the current touring shows or be able to maximise food and beverage profits because the site was too small.

Councillor Jukes, as Leader of the Council, was invited by the Mayor to respond to the petition and to the public speakers.

Councillor Jukes began by saying that he welcomed the petition because it had opened up the debate for public views to be expressed. He added that, to some extent, this was premature, because the public would have the opportunity for a better informed debate when the full details of the project under RIBA stage 3 were known.

Councillor Jukes said that there had been some interesting points raised particularly from Mr Van Grutten and his support for a new first class state of the art theatre in Tunbridge Wells.

Councillor Jukes said that the Council had listened and would welcome working with the petitioners and speakers to achieve a solution to the problems raised.

Addressing Dr Chris' point about access, Councillor Jukes said that negotiations with Hooper's were continuing. He added that if a resolution could not be found alternative options were still available to the Council.

Councillor Jukes reminded the meeting that this proposed development consisted of two parts and only objections to the theatre had been discussed. The other part was the Town Hall, which he said was no longer fit for purpose adding that he was looking to build new offices for the next century.

Councillor Jukes remarked that, although this petition had shown a level of opposition to the proposals, it had also raised a lot of support, with people urging the Council to proceed quickly.

Councillor Jukes added that as soon as all of the necessary consultants' reports were available, the Full Council would be asked to decide whether to proceed with these proposals. He provided reassurance that the Council would not close the Assembly Hall Theatre until an acceptable alternative venue had been provided.

As a result of the above matters, Councillor Jukes proposed the following motion for the Full Council to consider:

“This Council welcomes the petition entitled ‘Save our Park’, notes the concerns that have been expressed and undertakes to take them into account as the scheme is developed through future phases and the planning process.

The Council furthermore notes that proposals for a new theatre have been worked up over the past three years, were a part of the Council’s Five Year Plan and have been subject to numerous debates and votes by Full Council.

It is also the case that the proposal only affects no more than 2% of the Grounds, would enhance access to the park and the facilities within it and would bring significant social, economic and cultural benefits to the town and wider Borough.”

Councillor McDermott seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

Councillor Neve began the debate by voicing his support for the motion. He felt RIBA stage 3 would address many of the concerns raised. He said he firmly believed it was time to invest in the future and that years of under-maintenance by previous administrations had left the current Town Hall in an unfit state, adding that this failed to provide a legacy for future generations.

Councillor Stewart said she had voted against this scheme in July 2016 and February 2017 so her feelings on this were well known to the Council. She added that she was yet to see any information to make her change her mind. Councillor Stewart said that she valued this Town Hall building and it was listed for a reason. She believed it would cost many millions to bring it up to modern standards but the investment bill would only be a fraction of the proposed civic complex and theatre. Councillor Stewart said that refurbishing the Town Hall would be a worth-while exercise, that would be supported by the public and ensure the future of an iconic town centre landmark. She did not believe that this option had been considered seriously.

Councillor March believed that the Borough needed to re-assert its position as a major cultural and leisure destination, making the most of its past but also looking forward and investing in the Borough's future. She advised that the Assembly Hall Theatre had a limited stage, fly tower and wing space all of which left the authority with a building, a programme and cultural contribution that was in decline. Councillor March asked members to consider the benefits of a new theatre: wider programming choices; more opportunities for participation and community work alongside an extended programme; improved public facilities – access, comfort; better backstage facilities; a larger stage; bigger fly-tower etc. Councillor March said that this was a long

term investment in culture adding that theatre audiences bring huge economic benefit to the town and Borough.

Councillor Backhouse supported the motion and said the Council needed to move on to the next stage.

Councillor Hill explained that the Labour group was in principle not opposed to a renovated and revitalised new civic complex but were opposed to projects that were hugely expensive and ignored the daily needs of many of the town's residents. She felt that the Council should be concentrating more on efforts like tackling poverty, building homes, reducing congestion and pollution and improving public transport. She summarised by saying that she liked the idea of a new theatre but not at any cost adding that if it were to go ahead then it needed to be affordable and that services would not be cut to fund it.

Councillor Sloan thanked the petitioners and speakers and recognised the depth of feelings on this subject. He said that he would work to make sure their concerns are addressed and listened to. Councillor Sloan said that Calverley Grounds was a beautiful park in the centre of the town and that it was clearly an asset and that these proposals would improve the park and attract more people.

Councillor Weatherly looked at how a proposed new theatre would promote accessibility and inclusivity. She wanted a new theatre to be something for all the community to share in. Councillor Weatherly quoted JJ Almond, Assembly Hall Theatre Director "a new building with better facilities, and greater programming options is the only way to move us forward and the location really is the best and most accessible for all."

Councillor Hamilton said she valued the town's heritage and its preservation and believed that the proposals would open up Calverley Grounds to more people so that they could appreciate the beautiful space.

Councillor Uddin supported the motion and felt that the long term opportunities outweighed the concerns. He thought that members needed to concentrate on how these proposals would benefit the wider community.

Councillor Bulman opposed the motion and focused his argument on the costs and the subsidy of the proposed new theatre. He wondered what would the new theatre would be worth after 50 years and had concluded that it would probably have had two or three refurbishments in that time, the cost of which had not been included in any analysis. He asked how the Council had reached the cost of spending £4 million without a business plan. Councillor Bulman urged that the Council sets out what viable plan it has for the future of the Town Hall and the theatre, as an important next step.

Councillor Williams considered the revenue and the capital implications. He felt members should tackle the problems that really concerned residents and not ones that had been artificially created.

Councillor Heasman supported the motion but felt that the chances of finding a perfect site were zero. He felt that what the Council was trying to do was to come up with a plan and compromises that achieved the best result within the space and sites available. He did not think that the Council should make any decisions until it had completed the whole of RIBA Stage 3 at which point a

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fully informed decision could be taken. He urged all members and residents to read all the information that will be available at that stage.

Councillor Reilly said that he was looking at this from a slightly different angle and focused on town centres across the country. He advised that the Borough Council had committed to revitalise the town centre as the commercial, social and cultural hub of the Borough, whilst at the same time preserving the heritage, sense of place and civic amenity for the community.

Councillor Reilly stressed that the 'full build' business case would be reviewed using international accounting standards. He added that it would also be reviewed by an external auditor who would look at all aspects of the business case, the financial elements and the government process. That, he said, would provide a high degree of reassurance to residents.

Councillor Moore thanked the organisers and supporters of the petition for their work. She said that she recognised that there were genuine concerns but felt that residents should reserve judgement until all of the consultants' reports were available in the Autumn.

Councillor Moore reminded members as to why they had embarked upon this project: it was for the economic benefit of the town and the wider Borough and it was because these were challenging financial times and that this project offered a real opportunity. She added that there were record low interest rates and she believed that long term borrowing for long term infrastructure improvement was appropriate, not reckless, and was actually responsible. Councillor Moore said that other local authorities in Kent and around the South East were borrowing to invest and that if the Council did not invest and improve its offer then she felt that the Borough would decline compared to other towns.

Councillor Moore summarised by saying that it was the Council's responsibility to try and ensure that there was an enhanced cultural offer, a vibrant town centre and a growing economy for the whole Borough's benefit. She reminded members that the Council had adopted a vision in the Cultural Strategy of 2014 to grow its role as the cultural centre of the Kent and Sussex High Weald so that by 2024 the Borough of Tunbridge Wells was nationally recognised for its vibrant cultural provision.

Councillor Stanyer gave his assurance to the petitioners that no one was going to destroy Calverley Grounds. He said that it had been provided as a people's park and that would not change. He suggested that the Council has not followed due diligence and that needed to be addressed.

Councillor Lidstone did not support the motion as it did not provide any real resolution to the concerns of the 2,000 signatories that had expressed their dissatisfaction.

Councillor Woodward supported the motion and said that this was the first time he had seen anything that excited him about what the Council was trying to do, for the Borough as a whole. He said that he was conscious that there was a greater audience than the one present in the Chamber and reminded members that they acted for them as well. He was keen for this to proceed but await a fully-costed RIBA stage 3 report.

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Councillor Scholes said that this was not a simple issue. He said he was concerned about the size of the loan required and whether servicing debt of that scale would impact on the future provision of services. He believed that members would have to determine whether the project was viable once they had the consultants' reports in front of them.

Councillor Simmons said he had kept an open mind on this and would make a considered view whether to proceed or not when all the facts were presented.

Councillor Jamil supported the motion. He said that for this kind of project in the heart of Tunbridge Wells businesses would be thriving and the result of this would be more business rates. He believed Tunbridge Wells needed this modernisation.

Councillor Chapelard felt that this was the right idea but on the wrong site. He agreed that the Town Hall was not viable and that the Assembly Hall did not attract large West End shows but that did not mean Calverley Grounds was the right option. He stated that during this process no other options had been considered and that the choice now was false. He would not support the motion as it did not deal with the issue of the choice of sites which he felt was the fundamental problem.

Councillor McDermott thought that the evening had produced a very fine debate and thanked the petitioners. He did not think that Tunbridge Wells was evolving and was concerned that the town could become a dormitory town to London. He said that the promise of a new development on the old cinema site would join both the Pantiles and Royal Victoria Place and that it was the ideal time to put a theatre and a new Town Hall in the proposed location.

Finally, Councillor Jukes, as the mover of the motion, summed up. He thought that it had been a very interesting debate but that some people seemed entrenched in their views.

He stated that he could make a very good economic case for offices and a car park. He added that this was not so with the new theatre but that a very good cultural argument could be made. Councillor Jukes said that it would make Tunbridge Wells the cultural centre of West Kent and that he knew that there was a tremendous amount of support for it.

Councillor Jukes advised that it would be easy to do nothing; some councils he said, had done nothing and they were now suffering for it. He would take into account the considerations which had been raised in the meeting and would try to accommodate them.

Councillor Chapelard requested a recorded vote.

Members voting in favour of the motion: Councillors Backhouse, Barrington-King, Basu, Mrs Cobbold, Dawlings, Hamilton, Heasman, Hills, Huggett, Jamil, Jukes, Lewis-Grey, Mackonochie, March, McDermott, Moore, Neve, Noakes, Nuttall, Podbury, Reilly, Scholes, Simmons, Sloan, Stanyer, Weatherly, Woodward and Uddin.

Members voting against the motion: Councillors Bulman, Chapelard, Lidstone, Stewart and Williams.

Members abstaining from voting: The Mayor (Councillor Soyke), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Horwood) Councillors Dr Hall, Hill and Munn.

RESOLVED – That this Council welcomes the petition entitled ‘Save our Park’, notes the concerns that have been expressed and undertakes to take them into account as the scheme is developed through future phases and the planning process. The Council furthermore notes that proposals for a new theatre have been worked up over the past three years, were a part of the Council’s Five Year Plan and have been subject to numerous debates and votes by Full Council. It is also the case that the proposal only affects no more than 2% of the Grounds, would enhance access to the park and the facilities within it and would bring significant social, economic and cultural benefits to the town and wider Borough.

PETITION - PLANNING DECISIONS AND POLICY

FC21/17 The Mayor advised that a second petition had been submitted to the Council, containing 1,017 signatures (received both on-line and in paper format).

The wording of the petition was as follows:

“We the undersigned demand that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council apply some joined-up thinking and develop a strategy for quality development. Stop saying yes to large, obtrusive developments that are not sympathetic to the town.”

The petition organiser, Ms Ellen Kent, was invited to address the Council for a maximum of ten minutes, in order to highlight the key points of her argument.

Ms Kent felt that the town’s infrastructure was not coping; that the traffic, parking and pollution were untenable. The petition was not anti-progress or change: it was not anti-development, it simply asked for the Council to do two things: 1. Use the power that it had to stop over-development and 2. Implement some joined-up thinking and fast.

Ms Kent said that these could be achieved by: acting on expert advice; risking a planning appeal; use the Community Infrastructure Levy, a tool for local authorities in England and Wales to help deliver infrastructure to support the development of the area; and use Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights brought into the realms of planning consent.

Four members of the public had requested to speak in support of the petition: Cliff Kilner, Paul Jenner, Janet Sturgis and Colin Godsave.

(a) Cliff Kilner addressed the issues of both parking pressure and increased traffic pollution in the town as a result of new developments. Mr Kilner said he had put a deposit on an electric car however he felt local authorities, by not providing sufficient charging points, were hindering residents from going electric. He said that he supported the petition and urged the Council to stop over-development and to fix the infrastructure by preparing an emergency strategic plan that demonstrated joined-up thinking.

(b) Paul Jenner said that the Council needed to have some cohesive thinking and that it needed to follow its own plans. He said that it was a good idea to have designated areas of change with the idea being that any development in

the area must be integrated in to the proposals for the area as a whole however, the idea was not being followed by the Council.

(c) Janet Sturgis, Chairman of the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society, felt that in 2017 this town faced the most severe threat to its arcadian character. Ms Sturgis said that dubious plans were being accepted as the Council felt that there were no alternatives and that they were powerless to refuse. She said the Council should accept that enough was enough and that the Borough could not accommodate 640 additional units a year.

(d) Colin Godsave, a resident of Paddock Wood and a member of Warrington Road action group, felt the Council were being held at gunpoint by central government to provide their quota of new houses in the Borough. He felt that the Council should have the courage to raise the genuine public concerns with government policy on residents' behalf.

Councillor Antony Harris, speaking on behalf of Goudhurst Parish Council, said the rural parishes faced many of the issues raised by the petition, especially unsympathetic architecture and excessive development. He stated that countryside and villages in and around the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty were the jewels in the Borough's crown and the Council's decisions put those jewels at risk. He added that there was huge concern over the number and style of developments being permitted. He believed that, should the Council decide to allow thousands of homes to be built, not in the town from which the projected numbers arose, but in the villages where they did not, there would be real anger.

Councillor McDermott, as Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, was invited by the Mayor to respond to the petition and to the public speakers.

Councillor McDermott began by saying that permitted development was a significant issue in Tunbridge Wells. He added that the Council was in the process of assessing potential sites for development as part of the review of the Local Plan. He said on the issue of offices being converted to residential properties that under the Government's current planning legislation, this could be done without seeking planning consent from the Borough Council.

Councillor McDermott remarked that Sajid Javid, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, had indicated that all the wealthy authorities were likely to have to build more houses. He said that the Council had been advised that it needed to build 13,000 houses and that the figure may end up being closer to 18,000. Councillor McDermott suggested that it would be far easier to build a new garden village and that the Council was considering that option.

As a result of the above matters, Councillor McDermott proposed the following motion for the Full Council to consider:

"This Council welcomes the petition entitled 'stop ill-considered planning and development in Royal Tunbridge Wells', notes that most of the concerns being expressed arise from national policies and legislation and encourages petitioners and other residents to engage in consultation on the Council's emerging Local Plan, which will shape future developments in the Borough."

Councillor Jukes seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

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Councillor Dr Hall shared the petitioner's concerns but pointed out that the Council's hands were tied and that the Government, by changing the rules for permitted development rights, had removed a lot of local control mechanisms.

Councillor Barrington-King explained that Tunbridge Wells was extremely congested and that people liked their cars and tended to use them for short journeys. He said that Tunbridge Wells was an extremely desirable place to live and therefore had seen a population growth that was never expected, requiring significantly more housing development.

Councillor Sloan supported the motion and thanked the petitioners and speakers. He said that, in developing the Council's Local Plan, careful consideration needed to be given to infrastructure. Councillor Sloan said that in order to keep the town alive and prevent decay new development was required but that some sites were being over-developed. Councillor Sloan said he thought that planning proposals were considered carefully by planning officers and debated in Committee but that the problem was that proposals were often accepted out of fear that refusal would bring about an appeal with huge costs to the taxpayers.

Councillor Bulman did not support the motion as he felt that it did not actually say very much. He was in no doubt that the Borough's infrastructure was sadly stretched to breaking point. Councillor Bulman felt that the roads were far too congested; he added that demands for additional homes should be resisted, even if that resulted in an uneasy relationship with central government.

Councillor Hamilton explained the constraints on the Planning Committee and that if the Borough lost a certain number of appeals then they could be put into special measures that would result in a loss of all control.

Councillor Backhouse concurred with Councillor McDermott regarding the need for a garden village. Councillor Backhouse remarked that on the issue of transport, whenever the Council had tried to solve the transport problems they had always been frustrated by outside agencies.

Councillor Heasman supported the motion and said that he had quite a lot of sympathy with the petitioners but believed that the Council would not be able to resolve all the problems in a way that people would want, due to constraints from central government. This was, he agreed, as frustrating to the Council as it was to residents.

Councillor Munn explained that councillors did not make the law but they had to apply it. He said that there was a housing crisis and a chronic need to build but that the Government had introduced legislation that had constrained councils' powers over house-building rather than expanding those powers.

Councillor Jamil supported the motion and liked the idea of a garden village as that would remove the burden from the town centre and Southborough.

Councillor Chapelard felt that there was a danger of the Council portraying itself as purely a victim of government legislation. He said that the petitioners had given the Council practical solutions to the problems that they had raised.

He felt that what was now required was some joined-up thinking on the Council's behalf to implement them.

Councillor Chapelard argued that the Council needed to lead by example and that there were practical things that Tunbridge Wells could do that would make the situation better such as: using Article 4 to force developers to go to Planning Committee; moving to a community infrastructure model with all section 106 money going into one pot that funds a wish list of infrastructure projects; and park and ride.

Councillor Jukes broadly agreed with the petitioner but felt that there had been a lack of infrastructure planning from the Government for the last 30 years. Councillor Jukes said that, centrally, infrastructure needed to be looked at first as you could not keep building houses that would not provide adequate lighting, water or drainage.

Councillor Chapelard requested a recorded vote.

Members voting in favour of the motion: Councillors Backhouse, Barrington-King, Basu, Mrs Cobbold, Dawlings, Hamilton, Heasman, Hill, Hills, Huggett, Jamil, Jukes, Lewis-Grey, Mackonochie, March, McDermott, Moore, Munn, Neve, Noakes, Nuttall, Podbury, Reilly, Scholes, Simmons, Sloan, Stanyer, Weatherly, Woodward and Uddin.

Members voting against the motion: Councillors Chapelard, Lidstone and Williams.

Members abstaining from voting: The Mayor (Councillor Soyke), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Horwood) Councillors Dr Hall and Stewart.

RESOLVED – That this Council welcomes the petition entitled ‘stop ill-considered planning and development in Royal Tunbridge Wells’, notes that most of the concerns being expressed arise from national policies and legislation and encourages petitioners and other residents to engage in consultation on the Council’s emerging Local Plan, which will shape future developments in the Borough.

MOTIONS

FC22/17 Councillor Chapelard presented the following motion to Council:

“Before Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Full Council takes the final decision on the Civic Complex Development (to build a new town hall, offices and theatre), Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will hold a borough-wide local referendum on this matter.”

Councillor Chapelard explained that the reason for submitting this motion was that there was going to be an unprecedented cost to local taxpayers with figures in excess of £100 million. The cost to hold a referendum would be about £66,000 if it were to be held on the same day as a Borough election. Councillor Chapelard also explained that there were concerns about saving £2.4million to pay back the loan every year and also there would have to be a council tax rise, to support this. He said that the idea that there would be no council tax rise was misleading and that there would be the maximum council tax rise allowed to pay for other Council services. He believed that everyone should have a say if this was the right direction for the Borough.

Councillor Lidstone seconded the motion and reserved his right to speak.

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Councillor Hill said that the Labour group believed, given the monies involved, that there should be some sort of mandate from the people the councillors represented; the people would be paying for it should the proposals go ahead and at present there was no mandate. She agreed that the final proposals should be tested at the ballot box in a referendum.

Councillor Dr Hall supported this motion for a referendum as there was no mandate from the ratepayers to borrow such huge sums. She said that there would be cuts to services and that it would be irresponsible to decide to incur such significant costs on the basis of anecdotes or intuition that people supported the proposals without solid evidence of a vote that showed that the public did support it.

Councillor Neve advised caution as with a referendum there had been a system before that if you did not vote it was read that you were happy with the proposals; he felt that this aspect needed to be looked at.

Councillor Backhouse said that members were confusing fiscal and monetary decisions.

Councillor Jukes advised that members were here to manage policy, that they were elected to manage policy by the people that put them here and that there was a mandate to get on and do what was best.

Councillor Moore argued that the idea of a referendum was a seductive one but actually it undermined democracy. She said councillors had been elected to make informed decisions. She reminded members that there was a Five Year Plan and a Cultural Strategy that had been adopted three years ago, and for those arguing that there was no mandate these adopted documents set out the vision of the Council. She said the idea of a referendum was just an attempt to avoid making a decision.

Councillor Uddin said he would be voting against the motion; he said that a referendum would be over-simplifying a very complex decision-making process.

Councillor Lidstone argued that council tax payers should have the final say and that there was no mandate from the people specifically on this scheme. He added that there would be costs and benefits to the scheme and that people were capable of deciding whether or not the benefits outweighed the costs.

A recorded vote was requested by Councillor Chapelard in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.4.

Those in favour of the motion put forward by Councillor Chapelard:
Councillors Bulman, Chapelard, Lidstone, Dr Hall, Hill, Munn, Stewart and Williams.

Those against the motion put forward by Councillor Chapelard:
Councillors Backhouse, Barrington-King, Basu, Mrs Cobbold, Dawlings, Hamilton, Heasman, Hills, Huggett, Jamil, Jukes, Lewis-Grey, Mackonochie, March, McDermott, Moore, Nuttall, Podbury, Reilly, Scholes, Sloan, Stanyer, Weatherly, Woodward and Uddin.

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Those abstaining from voting on the motion put forward by Councillor Chapelard:
The Mayor (Councillor Soyke), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Horwood) and Councillors Neve and Simmons.

MOTION NOT CARRIED

URGENT BUSINESS

FC23/17 The Mayor confirmed there was no urgent business to consider within the provisions of Council Meetings Procedure 2.1.12.

COMMON SEAL OF THE COUNCIL

FC24/17 **RESOLVED** – That the Common Seal of the Council be affixed to any contract, minute, notice or other document arising out of the minutes or pursuant to any delegation, authority or power conferred by the Council.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

FC25/17 It was noted that the next meeting of the Full Council would take place on Wednesday 27 September 2017 at 6.30pm.

NOTE: The meeting concluded at 10.50 pm.

Full Council

27 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Civic Development Planning Framework

Final Decision-Maker	Full Council
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Alan McDermott – Planning and Transportation Portfolio Holder
Lead Director	Lee Colyer – Director of Finance, Policy and Development
Head of Service	Karen Fossett, Head of Planning
Lead Officer/Author	Kelvin Hinton, Planning Policy Manager
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	Park

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the consultation responses received in respect of the draft Planning Framework be noted;
2. That the revised draft Planning Framework be adopted to inform decision making, as a material planning consideration, in regard to planning applications; and
3. That the draft Planning Framework be further updated by the inclusion of content in regard to delivery and be subject to further public consultation as a draft Supplementary Planning Document.

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Prosperous Borough
- A Green Borough
- A Confident Borough

The Planning Framework seeks to supplement the policy and guidance provided by current Development Plan documents in regard to specific areas and sites within the Tunbridge Wells town centre with the objective of achieving sustainable development which accords with the Borough Council's key corporate objectives.

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Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Management Board	21 June 2017
Discussion with Portfolio Holder	4 July 2017
Planning Policy Working Group	4 July 2017
Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board	10 July 2017
Cabinet	3 August 2017
Full Council	27 September 2017

Civic Development Planning Framework

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The draft Planning Framework has been prepared on the basis that there is a need to supplement the policy and guidance provided by current Development Plan documents in regard to specific areas and sites within the Tunbridge Wells town centre, namely Crescent Road / Church Road, Mount Pleasant Car Park and Great Hall Car Park.
 - 1.2 The Framework document would initially have the status of non-statutory planning guidance and once adopted would be a material consideration in the determination of any future planning applications.
 - 1.3 Following the completion of public consultation on the draft and subsequent revision to respond to the representations received, this report recommends approval of the Planning Framework and its adoption.
 - 1.4 This report also recommends that further revisions are made to the draft document and that it be subject to further public consultation as a draft Supplementary Planning Document with the intention of giving it a statutory status in due course.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As stated above the draft Planning Framework has been prepared on the basis that there is a need to supplement existing policy and guidance provided by current Development Plan documents in regard to specific sites at Crescent Road / Church Road, Mount Pleasant Car Park and Great Hall Car Park.
- 2.2 It is intended that the Framework has the following functions:
 - Provide up to date site-specific planning guidance for each site
 - Provide the local community with the opportunity to influence development through the associated consultation process
 - Ensure a comprehensive approach is taken
 - Assist in the determination of planning applications
- 2.3 The scope of the Framework includes the following:
 - Introduction to the study area and the planning policy context
 - Vision, Objectives, Key Design Principles, Land Use, and Site-Specific Principles for the following key sites:
 - Existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall
 - Cultural and Learning Hub
 - 9-10 Calverley Terrace

- Police Station and Magistrates' Court
- Crescent Road
- Proposed New Town Hall and Car Park
- Proposed New Theatre

- 2.4 The preparation of the draft Framework has been informed by stakeholder engagement and the draft document has been the subject of a six-week public consultation, including exhibition. A consultation summary – Appendix C – can be viewed via the following link:

<http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/meetings/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD974&ID=974&RPID=381123>

NB – It has not been attached as part of this agenda due to its large size. However, a copy is available to view for members of the public in the Gateway office and for councillors in the Members' Room.

- 2.5 Those representations relating to the Framework document itself have been considered and have led to revisions being made to the draft document. The consultation outcome and revised draft document are now reported with relevant recommendations to progress the Planning Framework.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Note the consultation responses but not progress the Planning Framework document.

It is considered that the need and merits of preparing a framework document to supplement existing policy and guidance and to guide future development proposals remain valid. Whilst a significant number of the responses received have commented on the principle of development, the specific projects being considered by the Borough Council and the issues that arise from these few, if any, comments have dismissed the document as unnecessary. Revisions to the draft document have been made in response to those comments that relate to the document itself in terms of structure, form and detailed text.

- 3.2 Note the consultation responses and make further revisions to the draft document before progressing it to adoption.

It is considered that the revisions made to the draft document as a result of the consultation are appropriate and no further changes are necessary. A majority of the representations received related not to the draft document itself but rather to the specific development proposals consulted upon by the Borough Council at the same time. It is considered that the draft document as revised achieves the right balance of providing suitable additional guidance and advice, to guide future development, in a concise, uncomplicated form.

3.3 Progress the draft Planning Framework attached at Appendix B to adoption.

There is no legal requirement to provide the additional guidance and advice set out in the Framework but as already commented it is considered advantageous to produce such a document to guide future development proposals given the sensitivity of the town centre and the sites concerned. Revisions to the draft document have been made in response to those comments that relate to the document itself in terms of structure, form and detailed text. Consequently it is recommended that the draft Planning Framework be approved for adoption as a material planning consideration for development management purposes.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended for the reasons given at 3.3 above that the Planning Framework as revised is progressed to adoption.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The draft Planning Framework was subject to six weeks of public consultation between 20 April and 1 June.
- 5.2 Over 100 people responded to the consultation on the draft Framework. A consultation response summary is set out at Appendix C (please see note above, under 2.4).
- 5.3 Some further revisions to the draft Framework were considered to be merited and these are identified in the changed version at Appendix A.
- 5.4 The Planning Policy Working Group will have considered the revised draft Framework at their meeting on 4 July and any comments will be reported.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET ADVISORY BOARD

- 5.5 The Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 10 July 2017 and agreed the following recommendation:

That the recommendations in the report be supported.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET

- 5.6 The Cabinet considered the matter on 03 August 2017 and resolved as follows:
1. That the consultation responses received in respect of the draft Planning Framework be recommended to Full Council for noting;
 2. That the revised draft Planning Framework be recommended to Full Council for adoption to inform decision making, as a material planning consideration, in regard to planning applications; and

3. That the draft Planning Framework being further updated by the inclusion of content in regard to delivery and being subject to further public consultation as a draft Supplementary Planning Document be recommended to Full Council for agreement.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Framework will be published on the Council's website and its formal adoption will be confirmed to everyone who made representations.
- 6.2 If Full Council agree recommendation 3 above the draft Framework document will be further revised as a draft Supplementary Planning Document and be subject to a further 6 week public consultation, the results of which will be further reported to Cabinet.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides for the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs), including those which do not form part of the statutory development plan and are consequently described as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). As a consequence of amendments to the PCPA 2004 made by Section 180 of the Planning Act 2008, SPDs do not need to be produced in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) or to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.	Russell Fitzpatrick Team Leader (Planning) MKLS 27.06.17
Finance and other resources	No additional costs arise from adopting the presented Framework document. Existing budget provision and resources in place to support further work to produce a Supplementary Planning Document.	Jane Fineman Head of Finance and Procurement 27.06.17
Staffing establishment	No additional staffing implications. Existing staff and financial resources in place.	Report Author
Risk management	Adoption of the presented Framework document will help guide future development proposals and reduce risk of unsustainable development being promoted contrary to the Council's adopted planning policies.	Report Author

Environment and sustainability	The presented Framework document will help guide future development proposals and reduce risk of unsustainable development being promoted contrary to the Council's adopted planning policies.	Report Author
Community safety	There are no community safety issues or effects in respect of crime and disorder.	Report Author
Health and Safety	There are no health and safety issues.	Report Author
Health and wellbeing	There are no health and well-being issues.	Report Author
Equalities	There are no equality issues.	Report Author

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Final draft Planning Framework (Identified change version)
- Appendix B: Final draft Planning Framework (As revised)
- Appendix C: Public Consultation Response Summary (This document is 174 pages long and may be viewed online at: <http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/meetings/ecSDDisplay.aspx?NAME=SD974&ID=974&RPID=381123>. Printed copies are available for members of the public in the Gateway office and for councillors in the Members' Room.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Tunbridge Wells Core Strategy 2010
http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/138636/Core-Strategy-adopted-June-2010.compressed.pdf
- Site Allocations Local Plan 2016
http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/130066/01_Site-Allocations-Local-Plan_July-2016.pdf

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TUNBRIDGE WELLS
CIVIC DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING FRAMEWORK

July 2017





Appendix A

This version of the Civic Development Planning Framework has been annotated to identify the parts of the document which have been changed following the public consultation

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- 4.7 New Theatre

5 DELIVERY

- 5.1 Delivery

Key amended to the reflect the addition of a new document section

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Text added

This document has been prepared to supplement existing planning policies and guidance in relation to specific key sites within the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The intention is that the additional guidance helps shape the form and quality of future development proposals including the Councils own development projects.

The document sets out a planning framework for the following key sites in Tunbridge Wells town centre (please refer to the plan at figure 1):

- Crescent Road/Church Road
- Mount Pleasant Car Park
- Great Hall Car Park

It provides up to date site-specific planning guidance on the implementation of relevant policies set out in the suite of documents that comprise the Tunbridge Wells Development Plan. The guidance has been informed by a comprehensive evidence base specific to the sites which encompasses heritage, urban design, transport/access, and environmental/technical matters.

The preparation of the framework aims to optimise the planning and other potential benefits associated with the redevelopment of the sites, with the following specific planning objectives:

- Provide up-to-date site specific planning guidance for each of the three sites;
- Provide the local community with the opportunity to influence development;
- Ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken to the preparation of redevelopment proposals for the sites (which are inter-related); and
- Assist in the determination of planning applications.

Text updated for context in the process

This document has the status of non-statutory planning guidance and will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.

It has been prepared on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council with significant stakeholder consultation undertaken to inform its content. This has included meetings and workshops with local interest groups including the Town Forum, The Friends of Calverley Grounds and The Civic Society with two major stakeholder meetings held on 26 April 2016 and 16 June 2016. The Council has also sought the advice and support of Historic England in the preparation of this document.

This document was subject to a detailed six-week programme of public consultation from 20 April to 1 June 2017, to ensure that it has weight to inform decision-making on subsequent planning applications. It was subsequently updated to reflect the inputs of the consultation process.

The Council may wish to adopt the framework as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in due course, and would undertake further statutory consultation as part of this process.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The area of study for this framework includes the whole urban block bounded by Mount Pleasant Road, Monson Road, Calverley Road and Crescent Road, along with the block stretching down the hill between Mount Pleasant Road and Calverley Grounds as far as Grove Hill Road. The study area is shown in Figure 1.

This boundary reflects existing policy allocations in the Tunbridge Wells Development Plan, and responds to scheme developments being proposed to inform a suitable planning context.

A brief guide to the key buildings and spaces is presented on the following pages.

Text added



Green space shading removed from Calverley Park


Figure name and key updated
Key
 Study area

Fig 1 Study area



The existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall

contains offices, meeting rooms and Council Chamber. The adjoining Assembly Hall is a 1,000 seat theatre with a flat floor and retractable seating. The external range of the buildings and particularly the strong corner tower are important features in the townscape.



The Library is part of the listed group of civic buildings. It is adjacent to the **Adult Education Centre** which faces onto Monson Road and is also listed, but with a distinctive Edwardian character. Proposals are being developed to bring the two buildings together as the Cultural and Learning Hub



The Police and Magistrates Court also forms part of the civic cluster designed by Thomas and Prestwich in the 1930s. The building is no longer used as a magistrates court and may be surplus to police requirements in the future.



9-10 Calverley Terrace

are the remaining pair of original Decimus Burton buildings on the site. The setting of the building is dominated by parking, with the decked car park to the rear and the large parking forecourt.





The Crescent Road car park is a major multi-storey car park serving the town centre. Access is from Crescent Road, with a further pedestrian connection out to Monson Road to the north



Calverley Grounds is an historic park in the centre of Tunbridge Wells. The landscape forms an attractive natural bowl and there are a number of mature trees and features. Facilities within Calverley Grounds include the bowling green and tennis courts. Calverley Grounds forms part of the wider historic landscape with Calverley Park to the east

Text added



The Mount Pleasant Avenue car park is located alongside Calverley Grounds. It provides public parking at the weekends and is largely screened from the road and from the park by shrubs and trees



The Great Hall car park is a low-rise decked car park adjacent to Calverley Grounds. It provides public parking throughout the week. It is accessed from Mount Pleasant Road with an exit onto Grove Hill Road



1.3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Policy Framework

The planning policy basis that underpins the framework comprises the following:

- National planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) (and associated National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (2014)); and
- The Tunbridge Wells Development Plan which comprises:
 - Local Plan (2006) (saved policies)
 - Core Strategy (2010)
 - Site Allocations Local Plan (2016)

The 2006 Local Plan and 2010 Core Strategy were prepared prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the operational period of the 2006 Plan has now expired. Accordingly, parts of the adopted Development Plan are no longer considered up to date.

Furthermore, the Council is at the early stages of preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the existing adopted Development Plan documents. The sites are not located within a defined Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Text amended

Site/area specific policies

The Civic Centre site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations DPD (Policy AL/RTW2A) (see Figure 2). The allocation site covers the whole block defined by Crescent Road to the south, Calverley Road to the east, Monson Road to the north, and Mount Pleasant Road to the west.

The Mount Pleasant Car Park site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations DPD (Policy AL/RTW21)

The Great Hall car park site is not subject to any site specific policies in the Local Plan.

Policy designations

Local Plan (2006) policy designations that are relevant to the framework area are as follows:
Conservation Area – Local Plan Policies EN4 and EN5

Historic Parks and Gardens – Local Plan Policy EN11

Arcadian Area – Local Plan Policy EN24

Areas of Important Open Space – Local Plan Policy EN21

Central Parking Zone – Local Plan Policy TP7

Economic Development Area – Local Plan Policies ED1 and ED3

Primary Shopping Area – Local Plan Policy CR5

Other Relevant Planning Policies

The following strategic Core Strategy (2010) policies are of particular relevance:

Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development

Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure

Core Policy 4: Environment

Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction

Core Policy 6: Housing Provision

Core Policy 7: Employment Provision

Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure, and Community Facilities Provision

Core Policy 9: Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells

Fig 2 shows the policy designations relevant to the study area. It should be noted that due to the extensive nature of the town centre conservation area the boundary is wider than the extents of this plan.

Text added



Key








-  Study area boundary
-  Listed buildings
-  Primary shopping area
-  Retail/mixed use development sites allocated in the Local Plan
-  **1** AL/RTW2A: Civic complex/Crescent Road area of change
-  **2** AL/RTW2I: Mount Pleasant car park
-  Calverley Park and Grounds grade II listed landscape

Fig 2 Study area planning context

Key and figure name updated

Green space shading removed from Calverley Park

Policy AL/RTW 2A: Crescent Road/Church Road Area of Change (extract from site allocations DPD 2016)

The area shown on the Royal Tunbridge Wells & Southborough Proposals Map is designated as an Area of Change.

A masterplan shall be prepared by the developer(s) with the involvement of the Borough Council, stakeholders and the local community. The masterplan shall indicate the distribution, scale and quantum of proposed uses together with areas of open space/public realm, vehicular access, parking provision and pedestrian routes into and within the site. Proposals will be expected to deliver:

- civic, educational, cultural and leisure uses: these shall include library, museum, adult education and theatre facilities, including the facilities to be provided by the Cultural and Learning Hub. There shall be no loss of existing educational, cultural and leisure facilities, or public or ceremonial civic functions from the Area of Change unless suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere in the town centre
- retail development: incorporating approximately 15,000sqm (net) additional comparison retail floorspace (A1) which may include a new department store and other units of varying sizes. Retail uses should be provided on the ground floor to ensure active retail frontages

Other uses may also be delivered as part of the redevelopment and refurbishment of sites within the area. Appropriate uses could include:

- restaurants and cafés: development could provide restaurant and café facilities
- market facilities: development could provide

enhanced market facilities, which may include the provision of permanent facilities

- hotel and conference facilities
- office (B1): high quality (B1) office space
- residential use: supplementary to the other uses
- parking: any development should reinstate at least the same amount of public car parking spaces within the Area of Change, with the provision to include additional or fewer spaces as considered necessary, subject to the latest available evidence

Development shall contribute to transport improvements, to include the Royal Oak junction Bayhall Road, Church Road/Mount Pleasant junction, Church Road/A26 (London Road) junction and Garden Road/Victoria Road/Camden Road junction.

Proposals for redevelopment and refurbishment within the Civic Complex/Crescent Road Area of Change shall accord with the following principles:

- a Conservation Statement must be produced to inform the masterplan and guide the redevelopment and refurbishment of sites, buildings and spaces within the Area of Change. This will focus on the heritage assets within the area (including listed buildings such as the Assembly Hall Theatre, Police Station, Magistrates' Court, Town Hall, War Memorial and Nos 9-10 Calverley Crescent) and also address any potential Local Heritage Assets
- proposals must be of a high quality design and shall demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the Conservation Area
- proposals must be accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures
- any proposals affecting the Town Hall will be expected to retain significant features, such

as the main entrance, staircase and Council Chamber in situ and allow their continued use for civic functions and other compatible uses

- key views into, and within, the Area shall be protected. These are likely to include views of the main Town Hall entrance and views down Mount Pleasant Road
- opportunities should be explored to create a series of new public spaces and interlinking routes to promote better access for cycling and walking
- development will be expected to provide or enhance green infrastructure links within the area and to provide public art, which may include water features
- proposals shall promote the use of high quality, locally distinctive materials and features
- proposals should explore the potential to enhance the lighting of the area to promote public safety and improve the night-time setting of historic buildings and the associated public realm

Proposals for developing part of the Area of Change shall not compromise the wider aims and comprehensive redevelopment of Policy AL/RTW2A and wider Core Strategy objectives.

Policy AL/RTW 21 Mount Pleasant Avenue Car Park

This site, as shown on the Royal Tunbridge Wells & Southborough Proposals Map, is allocated for office employment uses providing approximately 3,200sqm (gross) floorspace. The preferred use is office (B1(a)) or financial and professional services (A2). Opportunities to re-provide a similar amount of public car parking provision on site shall be explored.



SECTION 2

VISION AND OBJECTIVES



2.1 VISION

Text added

Tunbridge Wells is a vibrant historic town with an excellent retail and leisure offer and a strong cultural and civic presence. The planning framework in seeking to guide and influence the form and quality of future development proposals, including proposals for a new Theatre and new Council offices and civic suite, has the objective of safeguarding and enhancing the townscape, cultural vitality and civic life of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Redevelopment of the existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall will work sensitively with the wider group of historic buildings, respecting their listed status and their group value. A viable long term future for the listed buildings will be sought to ensure their continued contribution to the historic character of the town centre.

The ambitious Civic development project presents an exciting opportunity to create a new focal point for civic functions and public life in Tunbridge Wells and will play a major role in strengthening Tunbridge Wells' identity as a cultural destination for the south-east.

The development will deliver a more efficient and modern office building and civic suite with open and flexible spaces and a new 1,200 seat theatre capable of hosting first-class touring shows. The buildings will be complemented by an attractive public space for congregation and celebration, creating an improved entrance to Calverley Grounds. The new buildings will create an attractive civic and cultural presence at the edge of Calverley Grounds, promoting their use and enjoyment.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The planning framework objectives draw on the findings of baseline research and through discussions that took place at the stakeholder workshops.

Development of the area should:

Establish a strong new civic focus for the town – a fulcrum which links together the upper and lower parts of Tunbridge Wells.

The new civic buildings will play an essential role in the every-day civil and community activities of the town. This echoes the strong concept of the existing 1930s suite of civic buildings. Their location between Calverley Grounds and the railway station strengthens the link between the upper and lower parts of the town, creating a new civic heart for the town.

Create a forum for public life – a destination for the wider area and a place of congregation and celebration.

The theatre will strengthen Tunbridge Wells popularity as a cultural beacon for the region, encouraging people to visit and spend time in the town. There will be new spaces for the community, which will offer an opportunity for people to gather together and to celebrate life's special moments.

Protect and enhance the historic townscape – a sustainable future for the existing historic buildings, parks and spaces.

The historic buildings and spaces in the town centre are a vital part of the continuing appeal of Tunbridge Wells. Proposals should protect and enhance this character, particularly establishing a viable and sustainable use of the existing historic buildings to give them a long term future which protects their continued contribution.

Deliver architecture and public realm of the highest quality – flexible and sustainable development which responds to its context.

The objective for the study area is to preserve and enhance the best aspects of the townscape of the area and to seek enhancements where possible to elevate all areas of public realm and all buildings to a good standard. The new buildings, and particularly the new office building and civic suite will deliver flexible space which can accommodate a range of activities and which can be adaptable over time.

Text edits and additions and layout revised

2.3 KEY PRINCIPLES

A series of urban design principles have been identified for the study area:

Retention and enhancement of locally listed buildings and conservation area

The existing buildings are part of an important listed group within the heart of the town centre conservation area and should be conserved and enriched. Calverley Grounds and Park is located within a conservation area requiring new buildings to be sensitive to their surrounding context.

A strong unified civic identity

The existing buildings should maintain a united civic appearance, and any new buildings should share a cohesive identity with clear purpose and activity which establishes a new civic heart for the town.

A well-connected environment

Any development scheme should improve connections and ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, contributing positively to the legibility of the town. This will include the potential for a new connection into Calverley Grounds.

Integration of development within its local context

The buildings should be integrated well within the surrounding area. Any new buildings should embrace and enhance Calverley Grounds, by creating views over the park and encouraging indoor uses to spill out into the outside spaces. Re-modelling and re-use of the existing buildings should reflect their listed status and contribution to the wider townscape.

Text edits and additions

A high quality public realm

The setting of the existing and new buildings should be enhanced by improvements to the public realm, to create an attractive network of streets and spaces for people to enjoy. Creating a new gateway into Calverley Grounds and improving the street-scape around the existing Civic buildings are two major components of this.

Flexible and adaptable space for multi-use and long term resilience

The preferred approach will prioritise the flexibility and adaptability of spaces. New buildings will be adaptable over time to accommodate a range of uses. Proposals for a new office building and civic suite will have public rooms designed to accommodate a range of functions and lettings as well as their core civic activities.

A sustainable future

Any proposed development should contribute towards a shift to sustainability and reduced carbon footprint. In the case of any buildings developed for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council this should enhance the Council's self-sufficiency, increasing its capacity to respond to the needs of the local population without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.





SECTION 3

FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT



3.1 OVERALL FRAMEWORK

Text added

This framework has been drafted to help guide and coordinate a number of potential development projects and to set these within the context of wider townscape considerations and public realm improvements.

The overall framework for the area has emerged in response to the Council's decision to relocate the theatre and council offices, currently situated at the junction of Mount Pleasant Avenue and Crescent Road. The existing Town Hall is not fit for purpose as modern office space but has significant potential for re-use through remodelling. The Assembly Hall lacks the space and back-of-house facilities to attract the variety of theatre shows needed to achieve the Council's broader vision to strengthen the identity of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a cultural beacon for the region.

An initial options study was undertaken in October 2015, on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, to explore the possibilities for the relocation of the Civic complex and the redevelopment of the existing buildings. These options were tested and developed, and a preferred option emerged which sees the development of a new theatre on the edge of Calverley Grounds, together with a new office building and civic suite which allows for flexible and efficient multi-use spaces. It also proposes the partial remodelling of the existing buildings to make them suitable for a wide range of alternative uses and thereby give them a sustainable future.

The preferred option is outlined in this masterplan framework, accompanied by a set of guiding principles to inform development of the highest quality. The main components of the preferred approach are outlined in the following section.

Delivery of the **Culture and Learning Hub** project in the Library and Adult Education buildings

Town Hall and Assembly Hall refurbished and remodelled

Police and Magistrates Court refurbished and remodelled





Setting of **9-10 Calverley Terrace** enhanced with improved landscaping

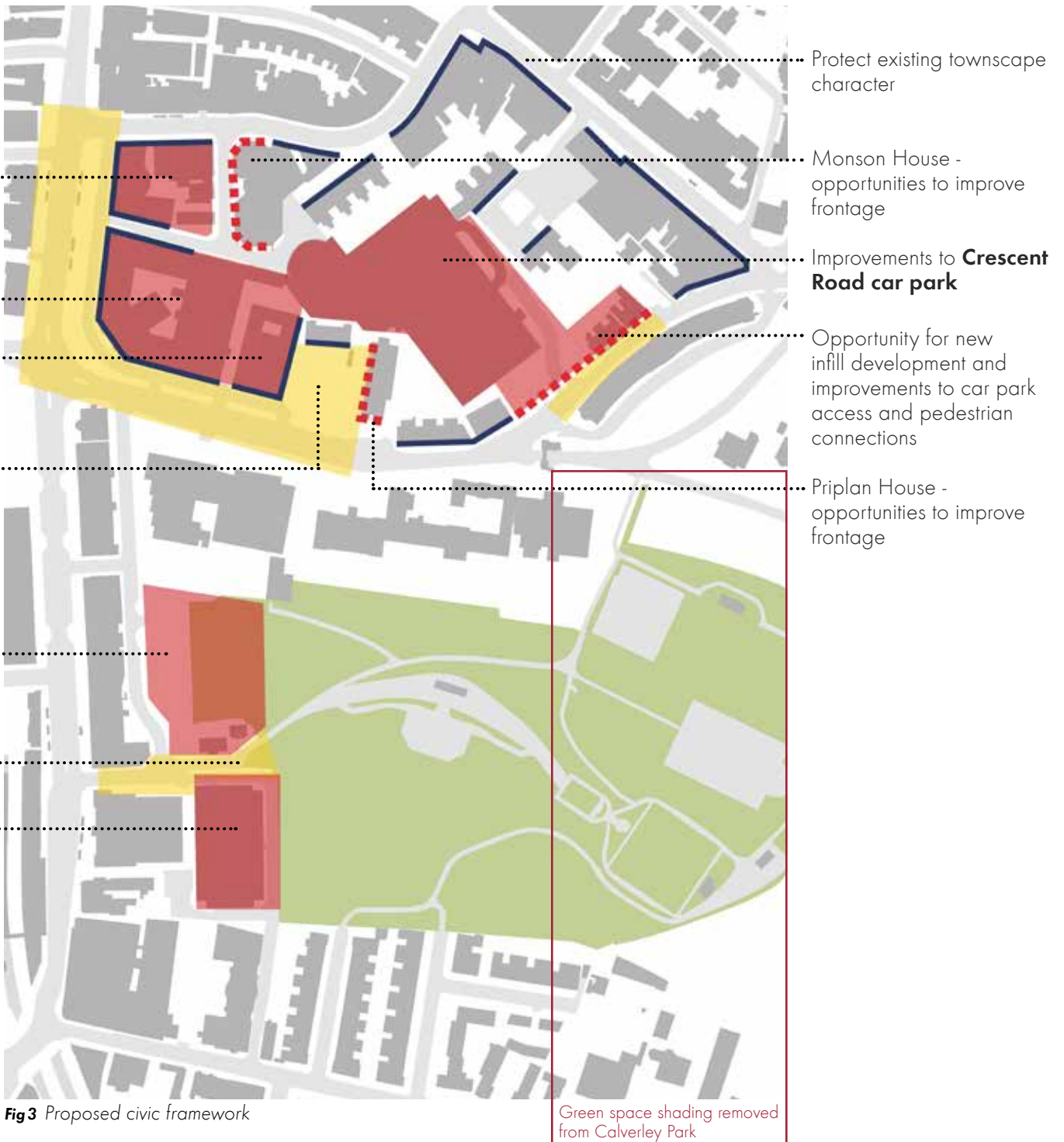
New **office building and civic suite** with underground car parking

Improved **park entrance**

New theatre

Key

-  Key opportunity sites
-  Frontage to protect
-  Frontage to enhance
-  Public realm enhancements



3.2 PUBLIC REALM

Context

The Council's wider planning policy provides the following context for the Framework:

- To improve linkages between different areas of the town centre and to improve the street scene and public realm, including with the provision of street furniture and green infrastructure, to promote wellbeing and a sense of place;
- To promote the town centre as an attractive and thriving place for retail and leisure (including the night-time economy);
- To promote and improve access to the town's cultural, tourism and amenity attractions; and
- To reduce traffic congestion in the town centre and beyond and to encourage alternative modes of transport.

Streetscape improvements for Mount Pleasant Road, set out in the Public Realm Framework include:

- Create a more attractive link between top and bottom of town;
- Upgrade and reinforce existing character;
- Replace all trees with consistent species in properly constructed tree pits;
- Replace all lamp columns to same design as elsewhere in town centre and properly spaced;
- Upgrade pedestrian courtesy crossing improve sense of priority and calm traffic; and
- Surface parking bays in paving to reduce visual impact of highway.

A detailed set of public realm enhancements are being developed by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. These include:

- Maintaining a good east-west traffic flow across town;
- Potential for landmark space;
- A clearer definition of road hierarchy through paving and signal phasing;
- Wider footways provide greater pedestrian potential;
- Shorter pedestrian crossings;
- Restricted access and speeds in north-south directions; and
- Adjusted signals phasing would retain east-west traffic priority.

Civic Way

There is potential for cars to be removed from Civic Way and the space to be re-landscaped to provide a high quality pedestrian environment.

The area in front of the Library may be more extensively re-modelled to create a more cohesive space in front of the building. This would reflect its enhanced significance as a public building in the area.

In the event that a non-public use is considered for the existing Town Hall site an element of landscape buffer between the building and the publicly accessible space may be appropriate to manage access and privacy. A more public re-use of the building could be reflected in the inclusion of new seating and landscaping which encourages access.

9 and 10 Calverley terrace

The forecourt to these buildings has been dominated by parking in recent years, particularly associated with the Police Station. If this use were to cease there may be the opportunity to reconsider the design of the space to enhance the setting of the buildings. Ideally this would feature a predominantly green space, reflecting the original setting of the buildings.

Monson Way

Monson Way will remain important to provide service and parking access within the block. However, there is also potential for improvements in the space and the addition of a new pedestrian link through the opening up of the Police Station site.

Crescent Road

An element of potential infill development has been identified along Crescent Road. This

would help to screen the existing multi-storey car park, improving the wider townscape. This element of development coincides with a pinch-point along the road itself, and development in this location could usefully deliver a carriageway widening to improve safety and access.

The existing pedestrian connection past the Crescent Road car park is noted as being relatively unattractive. This could be enhanced as part of the wider improvements to the area, creating better access to the car park and a more useable link from Monson Road to Crescent Road. The design of the infill development on Crescent Road should particularly consider how passive surveillance might be achieved to provide greater

overlooking of this route. The Carrs Corner junction at the eastern end of Crescent Road is complex and would benefit from changes to improve cycle and pedestrian facilities.

Text added

Calverley Grounds

Calverley Grounds has a key role in the centre of Tunbridge Wells as an historic open space. The natural bowl of the landscape, overlooked by historic buildings, makes it an attractive location for occasional events and festivals, but at all times of the year it provides a welcome open space close to a number of town centre amenities.

Development of the office building and civic suite and Theatre presents an opportunity to reassess the way in which Calverley Grounds is used and managed, with potential for a wider range of events linking into the new civic buildings, reflecting its historic role. The new development would also be a helpful trigger to initiate a wider study of the park and review whether any existing amenities can be consolidated or improved to the betterment of the historic character.

Mount Pleasant Road

The improvements to the public realm approaching Calverley Grounds has the potential to connect in with wider public realm enhancements along Mount Pleasant Road, particularly in the area around the station.

The station building, Hoopers Department Store and the Great Hall building all provide strong frontage onto the street, and there are opportunities to rationalise bus stops, taxi rank and pedestrian realm to enhance the quality of arrival in the town centre.

Pedestrians

The Core Strategy notes that it is important to increase the current low levels of walking to facilitate a shift away from private car use. There is currently poor pedestrian access into Calverley Grounds, limited by the relatively small number of entrances. The lack of connecting routes on desire lines means it is not a natural short-cut for daily use.

A new gateway to Calverley Grounds via Mount Pleasant Avenue, framed by the proposed new office building and civic suite and theatre buildings, would improve the setting and approach to the park for pedestrians by creating a high quality and attractive shared surface with active frontage leading up to the park. This route should be designed as a pedestrian priority public space, taking into account the necessity for service and delivery access for the theatre and office building and civic suite, and vehicular access along the stretch of Mount Pleasant Avenue which runs parallel to Mount Pleasant Road. The space in front of the proposed theatre and office building and civic suite should be designed for pedestrians only.

Public realm improvements along existing stretches of Mount Pleasant Avenue to the west of the proposed office building and civic suite, including better quality paving and planting, would make the area safer and more pleasant for pedestrians.

Access to Calverley Grounds from the south is currently from Mountfield Road and Mountfield Gardens, and from the north from the northern end of Calverley Park. A new pedestrian entrance to Calverley Grounds should also be considered from the north of Calverley Grounds, linking Crescent Road to the park, to create another route through Calverley Grounds that follows a natural desire line. This could be from 9-10 Calverley Terrace with a new pedestrian crossing over Crescent Road.

Development should take advantage of Mount Pleasant Road as a key link between the top and bottom of town and a transport node; there are a number of bus stops and it is in close proximity to the train station.

Cycling

Cycling to and from the site will be encouraged. Safe and secure cycle parking should be provided for employees and for public use. The number of cycle parking spaces should be in keeping with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council policy requirements, and should be in an obvious and accessible location. A possible location for bike storage could be along the southern edge of Mount Pleasant Avenue.

Vehicular movement

Mount Pleasant Avenue will need to remain in use as a service route to maintain access to a number of existing buildings. Similarly, the servicing for the new theatre will require access from the bottom of Mount Pleasant Avenue around the back of the Great Hall and connecting with the service area of Hoopers Department Store.

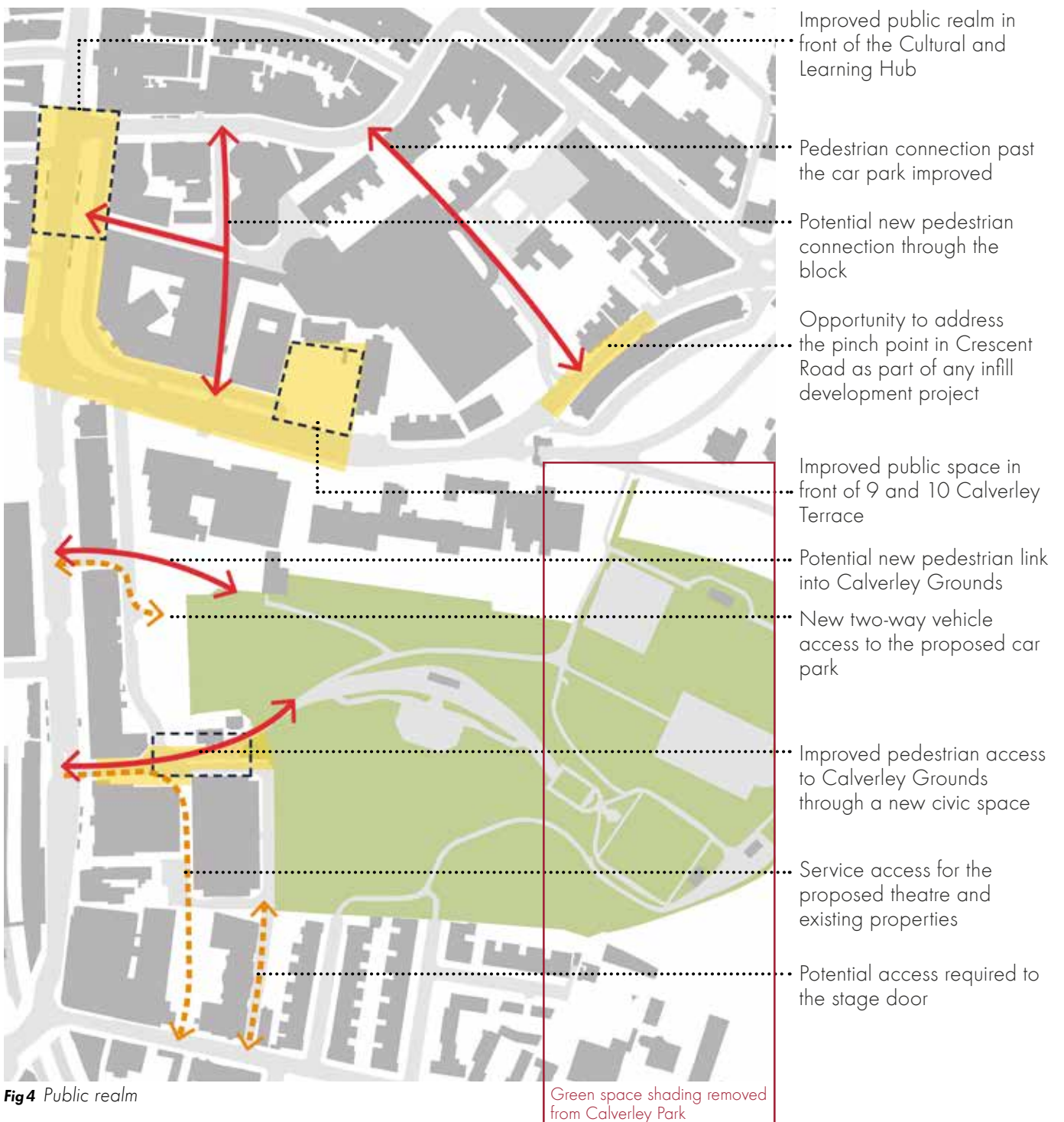


Fig4 Public realm

Both of these access movements will necessitate an element of shared space, but will leave the connecting link between the new office building and civic suite and theatre free of traffic. Large vehicles will require access to the theatre service yard at the beginning and end of any show run, and for delivery and refuse collection. However, this is not expected to result in a high number of vehicle movements during the middle of the day or during the run of a show.

Computer analysis of these routes has been undertaken to ensure that vehicles will be able to safely undertake the movements required, and the planning of the routes eliminates the need for large vehicles to reverse in public spaces.

The shared surface space is also important as an access for emergency vehicles, including into Calverley Grounds.

Car parking

To support the development of the theatre and office building and civic suite, new car parking should be delivered to replace the two existing car parks.

Options studies have been undertaken to test different locations and access arrangements. This work has considered how the impact in terms of construction process and access for vehicles can be minimised. It has been identified that basement parking would best be provided below the site identified for office development. It may be possible for the basement parking to extend below part of Calverley Grounds provided that the landscape is properly reinstated.

Access to a car park in this location would be established by allowing two way movement on a short stretch of Mount Pleasant Avenue, as shown in figure 4, to ensure that cars are not required to pass through the new public space between the office and theatre buildings.

Taxis

The proposed changes to the park entrance will require an alternative solution to the current taxi waiting area on the eastern side of Mount Pleasant Road. This will be developed as part of the public realm improvements being undertaken by the Borough Council, in discussion with taxi operators.

Set-down and pick-up

The development of a new theatre on the Great Hall car park site will attract a significant number of vehicles, including coach parties, as happens with the existing Assembly Hall Theatre. The short stay parking on the eastern side of Mount Pleasant Road will be reviewed with the aim of providing set-down and pick-up areas for the theatre.

Text added

3.3 LAND USE

Site Allocations Local Plan Policy AL/RTW2A (Civic Complex/Crescent Road Area of Change) establishes policy principles in terms of the protection and retention of existing uses and sets out acceptable alternative uses in the Crescent Road/Church Road Area of Change.

The policy requires the educational, cultural, and leisure facilities and civic/ceremonial functions that currently exist within the site to be retained or re-provided on the site or elsewhere within the town centre. The policy therefore allows some of these uses to be 'decanted' to the sites identified in the lower area of the Development Framework.

The use of part of the town hall buildings should be reserved for publicly accessible civic-type functions but the policy also recognises an opportunity to incorporate other uses on site as part of its comprehensive redevelopment and refurbishment. These uses could include restaurants and cafés, market facilities, hotel and conference facilities, offices, and residential use.

Policy AL/RTW21 in the Site Allocations Local Plan (2016) allocates the Mount Pleasant car park site for office use. As the site is also within the town centre boundary, strategic planning policy supports a range of town centre uses (with the exception of retail, which would need to satisfy sequential and impact assessment tests). This includes potential to accommodate 'decanted' uses from the sites identified in the upper area of the Development Framework.

Although the Great Hall car park site does not benefit from a site specific policy in the Site Allocations Local Plan (2016), it is located within the town centre boundary. As explained above, strategic planning policy therefore supports a range of town centre uses within the site (including 'decanted' uses from the sites

identified in the upper area of the Development Framework.

Paragraphs 3.28-3.29 of the Site Allocations Local Plan require that each development in the town centre re-provides at least the same amount of public parking spaces (this is 205 spaces for the Great Hall car park and 60 spaces for the Mount Pleasant car park) unless justified by evidence of a lack of need. Furthermore, policy would allow additional car parking to meet operational needs.

The existing use of the land to the east of the Great Hall car park is a public park. The site is subject to designations in the adopted Local Plan as an Area of Important Open Space, a Historic Park or Garden, and an Arcadian Area. Whilst none of the existing trees on site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, the site is within a Conservation Area.

3.4 FORM, SCALE AND MASSING

Building heights in the centre of Tunbridge Wells are predominantly two to four stories. However, perceptions of scale are also impacted by the dynamic topography which creates a varied and interesting roofscape.

There are a number of set-piece elements within the town centre, including the Calverley Park Crescent, designed by Decimus Burton, which create a strong consistent form rather than stepping with the terrain.

The existing group of civic buildings takes a similar form, establishing a strong consistent parapet wall height which unifies the group despite the changes in ground level around the area. The entrance to the Town Hall on the prominent corner of Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road is then distinguished by the presence of a squat, muscular tower. To the rear of the block the Assembly Hall has

an existing fly-tower structure which rises to a similar height but is far less visible from the surrounding streets.

Other taller features of the area include the strong roofline of the Adult Education building, and the domes of the former opera house to the north of Monson Road.

Future development within the area, including re-modelling of the existing buildings should respect rather than challenge this overall character, particularly the strong tower of the Town Hall as part of a broadly symmetrical composition.

The opportunity for infill development along Crescent Road to screen the existing car park should also take its reference point as the surrounding buildings to repair the existing townscape.



Fig 5 Existing stepping terrace on Mount Pleasant Road

In the particular vicinity of the proposed theatre and office building and civic suite development the existing buildings tend to follow the sloping terrain, creating stepping terraces, which some buildings in the wider town centre create a stronger presence in the townscape.

This dynamic townscape creates a strong backdrop to new development. It strongly suggests that development of the office building and civic suite on the existing Mount Pleasant Avenue car park should step gradually down the hillside, reflecting the overall massing and the stepped terrace of Mount Pleasant Road.

The proposed location for a new theatre is at the lowest point in the landscape. This is helpful in terms of accommodating what will inevitably be a relatively large building. Any fly tower and the wider roofscape will be particularly significant in the townscape given the location of the building in the bottom of the valley, making them even more prominent.

Text amended





SECTION 4
KEY SITES



4.1 EXISTING TOWN HALL AND ASSEMBLY HALL

Context

The existing Town Hall is the centrepiece of the civic cluster, occupying the dominant corner site at the junction of Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road. It is currently the main site for the council offices, council chamber and members robing rooms. The building has two generous storeys, along with a basement level and a limited element of rooftop development, with a courtyard in the centre.

The Assembly Hall forms the eastern section of the block. Its current use as a theatre is limited by poor back-of-house facilities and its lack of space, which, together with the capacity and layout of seating, makes it less attractive to touring shows. The building is comprised of an elegant art-deco style lobby with stairs leading to the main theatre space; a simple rectangular box with single large rake of seating above a flat floor.

The 1930s neo-Georgian style buildings are Grade II Listed, thus requiring the preservation and enhancement of the buildings. It is also located with the town centre conservation area and within the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To protect the Grade II Listed buildings and the historic fabric of the surrounding townscape;
- To provide suitable alternative uses for the building which work well in the town centre context; and
- To improve the setting of the civic buildings by ensuring a high quality public realm.

Development parameters

The existing Town Hall building is characterised by a strong corner tower presence and side wings which are superficially symmetrical. This tower and the rest of the outer range of buildings form an important part of the historic townscape and are important features to retain and enhance.

To the rear of the site, the large box of the Assembly Hall theatre has less of an impact on the townscape as despite its bulk it is screened on all sides by other buildings. Similarly, the fly tower is relatively obscured from view.



The Council Chamber is located in a projecting element in the centre of the courtyard, on the same orientation as the corner tower. It has no visible impact on the street, but it does significantly constrain the potential for successful re-use of the rest of the building around the courtyard.

It is important for the long term future of the listed buildings that a viable and sustainable future use is established. This should balance the desire to retain and protect the character of the existing buildings with the need to adapt them to ensure their ongoing usability.

There is a significant level change between the floor level in the building and the external ground level which varies substantially around the edge of the building. Coupled with the existing listed status of the buildings this limits the opportunities to create new entrances into the building.

Potential uses such as office space, academic use, hotel or residential use could all be considered as potentially suitable for the building, subject to commercial viability.

In order to render the structure more usable it may be possible to undertake significant modifications whilst retaining and protecting the essential character and contribution to the townscape. Any additions to the silhouette of the Assembly Hall and new development to the roof of the existing building should respect the form and symmetry of the building and the prominence of the corner tower.

The public realm around the site should be improved. In particular, enhancements will be sought to improve the setting of the War Memorial.

Public use of the buildings would imply retained public access to the space with opportunities for revised treatment such as seating and market stalls. A more private use such as residential-led development would benefit from reduced access to the edge of the building and private landscaped garden space replacing Civic Way.

Consideration should be given to the potential development of the Police Station and Magistrates Court to the east of the site. Flexibility should be built into the design of the redevelopment to ensure that a range of options can be explored for the adjacent site. Delivery of this development and re-use of the existing building is contingent on the completion of the proposed new theatre and office building and civic suite which will allow for the buildings to be vacated.

4.2 CULTURAL AND LEARNING HUB

Context

The Cultural and Learning Hub will integrate the existing Library and Museum & Art Gallery with the adjacent Adult Education Centre, to create a modernised space that is a vibrant hub for culture and heritage. It is being coordinated by Kent County Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To establish a new Cultural and Learning Hub in the existing Library, Museum and Adult Education Centre
- To support an integrated approach to development of the Town Centre;
- To create a suitable public realm context for the Cultural and Learning Hub as a significant public building.

Design parameters

The current Library entrance should remain as the main entrance to the Hub, with potential for a secondary service entrance on Monson Way.

The two existing listed buildings should be retained, with new connecting development established to the rear on Monson Way. Given the location of this (away from the main street frontage) there is scope for this to be an attractive modern addition which mediates between the varied style of the two buildings.

The existing Adult Education building is one of the taller structures in the area and has a distinctive and dynamic roofline. New development should be clearly subordinate to this. However, there may be opportunities for sensitive additions to the roof of the existing Library within the wider context of the whole listed group.

In the event that public uses such as education are established for the existing Town Hall building there may be opportunities to deliver further integration between the two functions.



4.3 POLICE STATION AND MAGISTRATES COURT

Context

The existing police and magistrates building was designed specifically for that function in the 1930s. It forms part of the listed group and includes a number of very particular elements such as cells and courtrooms which render the building difficult to re-use. Accessibility is also very limited. It is therefore considered that significant remodelling could be possible in order to ensure that the key elements of the building are retained in order to maintain the listed group. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To support an integrated approach to development of the Town Centre;
- To ensure the heritage value of the building is protected; and
- To potentially integrate the development with the adjacent Assembly Hall development.

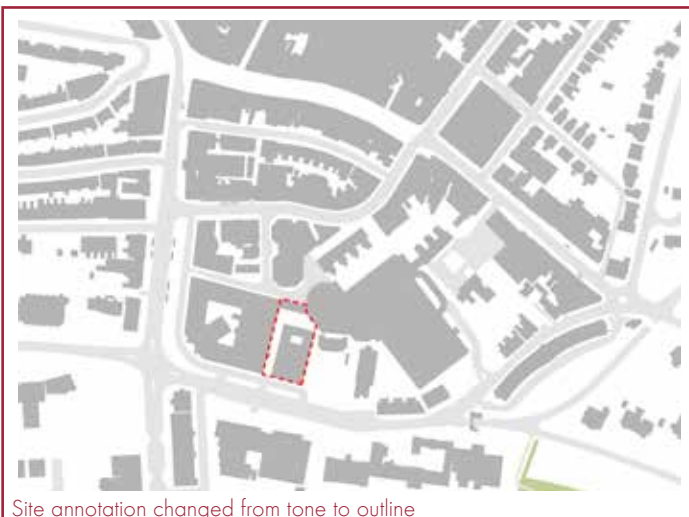
Design parameters

As with the Town Hall and Assembly Hall the front range of the building to the street has particular importance. It is one of the key entrances, and continues the group elevation. This range of the building should be retained and incorporated as part of the remodelling and reuse of the building.

The area of building to the rear could be sensitively remodelled, including partial demolition to create more useable space which establishes a viable future for the building. The east elevation of the building faces onto the open space in front of 9-10 Calverley Terrace and active frontage and new entrances could be established which face this way.

There may be some scope to accommodate additional building volume towards the rear of the plot, replacing the existing garaging.

Any design options for the building will be required to facilitate a north-south pedestrian link through the block. This is to be in the form of a lane or a mews, with active frontages and overlooking.



4.4 NO. 9-10 CALVERLEY TERRACE

Context

The pair of buildings are Grade II Listed and the last to remain out of the group of Decimus Burton villas that were demolished to make way for the existing civic buildings. They are located to the east of the Police Station and Magistrates Court and set back considerably from the road.

Their context has been significantly affected by subsequent development, including the 1930s civic development which changed the building line to the street, limiting views to and from the buildings.

The large forecourt in front of 9-10 Calverley Terrace is currently for car parking, principally associated with the Police Station. They are currently in use as office accommodation and are located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A)

Objectives

- To establish a viable long-term future for the building; and
- To improve the setting of the building to enhance its Grade II Listed character.

Design parameters

This is a significant building by Decimus Burton, and therefore limited external alterations are expected beyond the restoration of period features and measures to improve accessibility.

The potential to re-model the landscaping in front of the building once car parking is not required for the police station could significantly enhance the setting of the building, potentially complemented by more active frontages on the police station site and the adjoining Priplan House site.

The Town Yard decked car park to the rear of the building is a separate element of parking, and is an independent structure from the main Crescent Road car park. Removal of this car park would improve the setting of the building, and would create the possibility for appropriate buildings to be developed to the rear which could complement the listed building.



Site annotation changed from tone to outline



1897 - 99 map extract showing the original buildings

4.5 CRESCENT ROAD

Context

The existing Crescent Road car park is acknowledged as an unattractive but important structure in the town centre. Its impact is in part due to the large area of open space on Crescent Road which means that it has a direct impact on the listed Calverley Park Terrace.

A further constraint on the area is the pinch point in Crescent Road. This impacts on both vehicles in the area, but also limits the opportunities to provide a suitable footway on both sides of the road. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A)

Objectives

- To screen the car park from the street through sensitive infill development;
- To provide additional parking capacity within the site;
- To improve the north-south pedestrian connection through the block; and
- To facilitate the widening of Crescent Road to remove the existing pinch point through setting the buildings back from the existing building line.



Design parameters

The space to the south and east of the car park offers the potential for additional parking capacity to be delivered. This should be accompanied by new frontage development to Crescent Road which screens the car park structure. These buildings should establish a consistent building line, re-establishing active frontage.

These properties are expected to be residential development most likely to be in the form of apartments. This is not considered to be a strong commercial location and therefore active ground floor uses would be encouraged but not required.

The entrance and exit arrangement to the car park should be rationalised to reduce its land take and impact on the street scene. At the same time, the project also provides the opportunity to remove the pinch point in the road to improve safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

The quality of the north-south pedestrian route past the car park should be improved, including consideration given to the directness and clarity of the route and the potential to include any active overlooking to enhance passive surveillance.

Consideration should be given to improving the appearance of existing elevations of the structure to reduce its impact on the wider townscape.

4.6 NEW OFFICE BUILDING AND CIVIC SUITE AND CAR PARK

Context

The proposed location for a new office building and civic suite is at the site of the existing Mount Pleasant car park and, together with the new theatre, will frame the improved entrance into Calverley Grounds.

The existing Town Hall building is currently insufficient for its use and function, and a new building will provide opportunity for the council to make efficiency savings and to reduce operational and running costs.

The Mount Pleasant Car Park site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW21)

Objectives

- To provide a modern and sustainable building for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, presenting an open and welcoming character and significantly reducing the life costs of the building compared to the existing town hall.
- To deliver spaces that are flexible and adaptable and which ensure long term resilience;
- To provide opportunities for lettable space that offers a commercial return;
- To establish active frontage onto the public space;
- To deliver new parking provision to maintain town centre capacity; and
- To have multi-use public facing spaces which encourage people to gather together and to celebrate important events.

Design parameters

The creation of a new civic building is a significant opportunity for the Council to create an environment which will suit modern working practices and democratic processes as well as engaging with the public in an accessible

manner. The southern part of the building should provide flexible civic and public spaces whilst the rear of the site should provide flexible and sub-dividable office accommodation.

Whilst the Council could choose to occupy the whole building, any space it doesn't wish to use for Council functions could be subdivided and let as independent office space. Separate access can be created into the different parts of the building, allowing it to be let either as a stand-alone office suitable for a significant employer, or as a series of smaller units suitable for start-up companies.

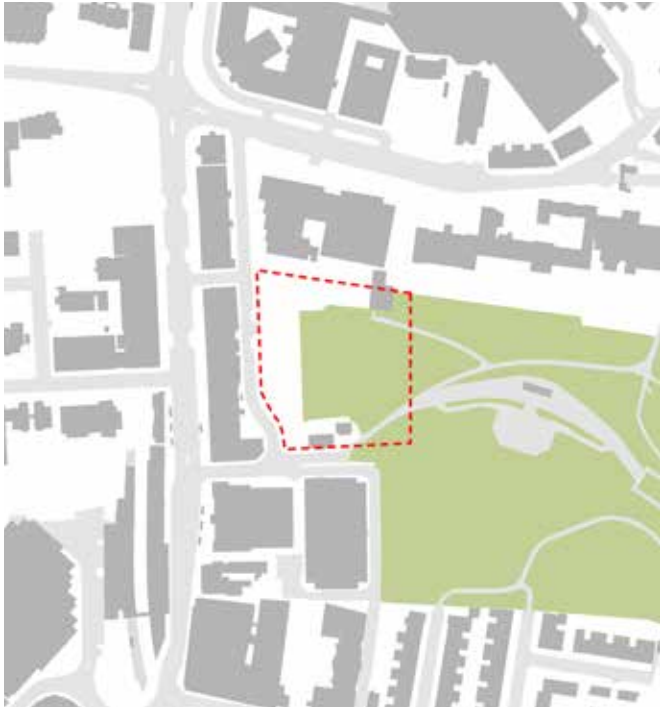
The southern edge of the block should be the main entrance to the building and help to improve the setting of the route into Calverley Grounds. The concept proposed for the building is to establish a new civic presence onto Mount Pleasant Avenue, facing south towards a new theatre, with two buildings together framing the entrance into the park.

The design of the building should be shaped by the challenging terrain of the site, which slopes steeply upwards from the south to the north.

The building should address the parkland setting in a positive manner, capitalising on the setting to create high quality civic buildings.

New parking provision is expected to be provided as underground parking below the office. Parking may extend below the open space provided this is reinstated. The entrance and exit to the car park is expected to be via Mount Pleasant Road at the northern end of the site and that traffic arrangements on Mount Pleasant Avenue may be altered to allow two way flows on the upper part to avoid traffic having to use the new public space at the bottom of the hill.

Site annotation changed from tone to outline and boundary amended to coordinate with the wider study area boundary as shown in fig 1



4.7 NEW THEATRE

Context

A new 1,200 seat theatre is proposed on the site of the existing Great Hall car park. This will replace the existing Assembly Hall Theatre and will be large enough to attract an excellent artistic programme and expand the cultural and leisure offer of Tunbridge Wells.

The Great Hall car park site and the land to the east are not subject to any site specific policies in the Local Plan. The car parking spaces will be reprovided within the scheme. The theatre, along with the office building and civic suite, will frame a new attractive gateway into Calverley Grounds.

Objectives

- To deliver a 1,200 seat venue that attracts a variety of high quality touring shows and encourages people from across the region to visit;
- To form a strong unified civic identity with the new Office building and civic suite;
- To embrace its setting close to Calverley Grounds by creating terraces and new views, and coordinating cultural events which make use of the park;
- To enhance the restaurant and bar offer that supports the functioning of the Theatre; and
- To ensure ease of movement around the site for service and emergency vehicles.

Design parameters

A new building on the site should frame a new entrance for Calverley Grounds. The principle facade and entrance will be on the north side, facing onto the new pedestrian space.

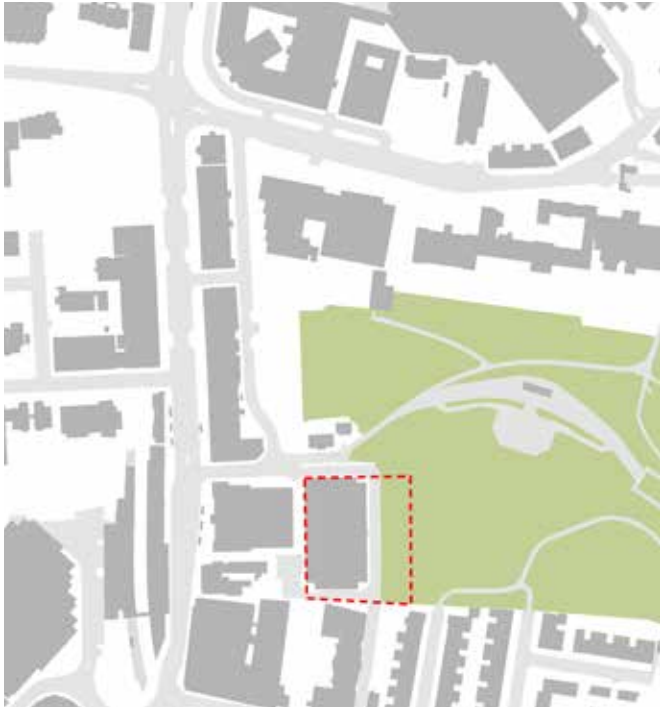
The second significant elevation will be the frontage to the park, where there is the opportunity to create open views and establish

a terrace which extends opportunities for outside seating and activities.

It is acknowledged that the theatre will be a building of significant size. Care should be taken in the design to modulate and manage this, particularly in views from around Calverley Grounds. The elevated vantage points which the terrain provides means that an attractive approach is required for the fly tower and for the roofscape more generally given their prominence in many views.

Servicing should be established on the yard to the south of the building, with access from the north via the shared space and exiting to the south onto Grove Hill Road.

Site annotation changed from tone to outline and boundary amended to coordinate with the wider study area boundary as shown in fig 1





SECTION 5

DELIVERY



New section added

5.1 DELIVERY

Delivering the vision and objectives

The Council is seeking to deliver its vision and objectives for Tunbridge Wells town centre. This section provides guidance on the delivery approach for comprehensive development and applies to all development within the study area regardless of ownership.

Continuing to work with stakeholders

Significant stakeholder consultation has already been undertaken to inform the preparation of this planning framework and proposals for the sites. The Council will continue to work and engage with stakeholders including the local community, businesses, landowners, residents and statutory consultees to progress the delivery of each site including through the planning application process.

Delivery approach

In line with the Core Strategy, Local Plan and Site Allocations DPD, the Council promotes town centre uses within Tunbridge Wells town. Tunbridge Wells town is the borough's main town and largest shopping area. The town incorporates a number of distinct character areas, with much of the town designated as a Conservation Area, reflecting its rich architectural heritage. There are many listed buildings and the open spaces and parks are highly valued. New development must ensure that it considers and is appropriate for the surrounding built and natural environment whilst also enhancing Tunbridge Well's role as the borough's main town centre. The guidance in this document seeks to ensure this.

The Council is committed to redeveloping parts of Tunbridge Wells town centre including the Civic development project, which will provide new council offices and civic suite, and a new theatre. Project feasibility and viability are key considerations for the Council and at every stage

of decision making the Council seeks to ensure a deliverable solution to development.

The Council requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to development of the Civic development project. This is in order to deliver the aspirations of this planning framework and the wider policy framework including the Site Allocations DPD designations, and policies within the Core Strategy and Local Plan.

Where possible the Council is bringing forward its own land for development. Where required, the Council will use its statutory powers including compulsory purchase powers to facilitate comprehensive development and delivery of the sites in order to deliver the policy framework for Tunbridge Wells.

Managing the developments

A coordinated management of development is required in order to minimise impact on businesses, residents and visitors during and post construction. The following will be considered to manage the construction process and the impact of the development:

- Construction Management Plans.
- Encouraging contractors to achieve excellence in construction management, as certified by the national Considerate Contractors Scheme.
- Minimising impact on public realm and open space during construction.
- Requiring travel plans.
- Requiring delivery and servicing plans to address the delivery and servicing arrangement for new developments.

This may include the use of planning conditions and/or section 106 planning obligations to minimise and mitigate the impact of development.



TUNBRIDGE WELLS
CIVIC DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING FRAMEWORK

July 2017





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1.1 INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared to supplement existing planning policies and guidance in relation to specific key sites within the centre of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The intention is that the additional guidance helps shape the form and quality of future development proposals including the Councils own development projects.

The document sets out a planning framework for the following key sites in Tunbridge Wells town centre (please refer to the plan at figure 1):

- Crescent Road/Church Road
- Mount Pleasant Car Park
- Great Hall Car Park

It provides up to date site-specific planning guidance on the implementation of relevant policies set out in the suite of documents that comprise the Tunbridge Wells Development Plan. The guidance has been informed by a comprehensive evidence base specific to the sites which encompasses heritage, urban design, transport/access, and environmental/technical matters.

The preparation of the framework aims to optimise the planning and other potential benefits associated with the redevelopment of the sites, with the following specific planning objectives:

- Provide up-to-date site specific planning guidance for each of the three sites;
- Provide the local community with the opportunity to influence development;
- Ensure that a comprehensive approach is taken to the preparation of redevelopment proposals for the sites (which are inter-related); and
- Assist in the determination of planning applications.

This document has the status of non-statutory planning guidance and will be a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.

It has been prepared on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council with significant stakeholder consultation undertaken to inform its content. This has included meetings and workshops with local interest groups including the Town Forum, The Friends of Calverley Grounds and The Civic Society with two major stakeholder meetings held on 26 April 2016 and 16 June 2016. The Council has also sought the advice and support of Historic England in the preparation of this document.

This document was subject to a detailed six-week programme of public consultation from 20 April to 1 June 2017, to ensure that it has weight to inform decision-making on subsequent planning applications. It was subsequently updated to reflect the inputs of the consultation process.

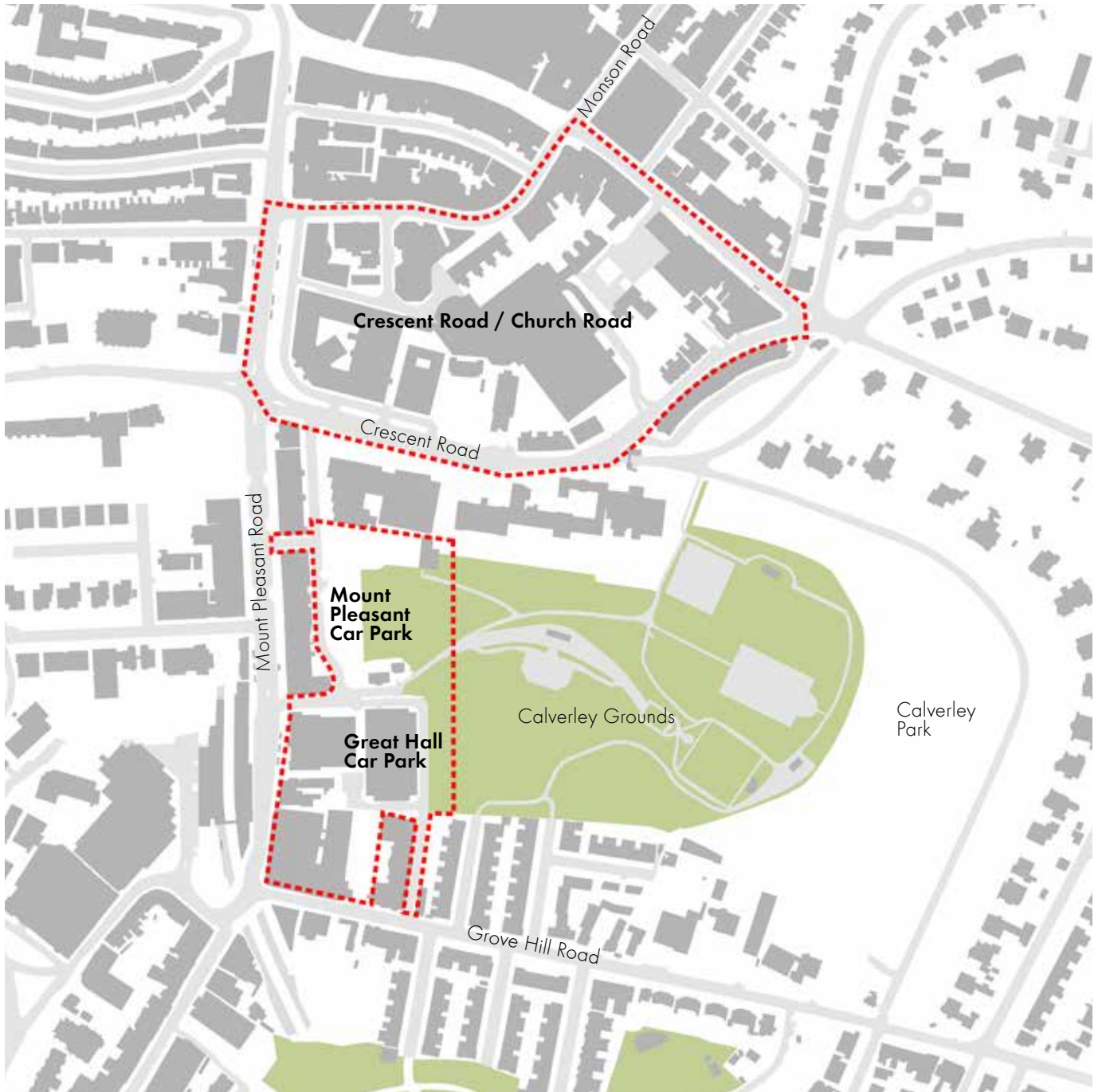
The Council may wish to adopt the framework as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in due course, and would undertake further statutory consultation as part of this process.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The area of study for this framework includes the whole urban block bounded by Mount Pleasant Road, Monson Road, Calverley Road and Crescent Road, along with the block stretching down the hill between Mount Pleasant Road and Calverley Grounds as far as Grove Hill Road. The study area is shown in Figure 1.

This boundary reflects existing policy allocations in the Tunbridge Wells Development Plan, and responds to scheme developments being proposed to inform a suitable planning context.

A brief guide to the key buildings and spaces is presented on the following pages.



Key



Study area

Fig 1 Study area



The existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall

contains offices, meeting rooms and Council Chamber. The adjoining Assembly Hall is a 1,000 seat theatre with a flat floor and retractable seating. The external range of the buildings and particularly the strong corner tower are important features in the townscape.



The Library is part of the listed group of civic buildings. It is adjacent to the **Adult Education Centre** which faces onto Monson Road and is also listed, but with a distinctive Edwardian character. Proposals are being developed to bring the two buildings together as the Cultural and Learning Hub



The Police and Magistrates Court also forms part of the civic cluster designed by Thomas and Prestwich in the 1930s. The building is no longer used as a magistrates court and may be surplus to police requirements in the future.



9-10 Calverley Terrace

are the remaining pair of original Decimus Burton buildings on the site. The setting of the building is dominated by parking, with the decked car park to the rear and the large parking forecourt.





..... **The Crescent Road car park** is a major multi-storey car park serving the town centre. Access is from Crescent Road, with a further pedestrian connection out to Monson Road to the north



..... **Calverley Grounds** is an historic park in the centre of Tunbridge Wells. The landscape forms an attractive natural bowl and there are a number of mature trees and features. Facilities within Calverley Grounds include the bowling green and tennis courts. Calverley Grounds forms part of the wider historic landscape with Calverley Park to the east



..... **The Mount Pleasant Avenue car park** is located alongside Calverley Grounds. It provides public parking at the weekends and is largely screened from the road and from the park by shrubs and trees



..... **The Great Hall car park** is a low-rise decked car park adjacent to Calverley Grounds. It provides public parking throughout the week. It is accessed from Mount Pleasant Road with an exit onto Grove Hill Road



1.3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Policy Framework

The planning policy basis that underpins the framework comprises the following:

- National planning policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012) (and associated National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) (2014)); and
- The Tunbridge Wells Development Plan which comprises:
 - Local Plan (2006) (saved policies)
 - Core Strategy (2010)
 - Site Allocations Local Plan (2016)

The 2006 Local Plan and 2010 Core Strategy were prepared prior to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the operational period of the 2006 Plan has now expired. Accordingly, parts of the adopted Development Plan are no longer considered up to date.

Furthermore, the Council is at the early stages of preparing a new Local Plan which will replace the existing adopted Development Plan documents. The sites are not located within a defined Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Site/area specific policies

The Civic Centre site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations DPD (Policy AL/RTW2A) (see Figure 2). The allocation site covers the whole block defined by Crescent Road to the south, Calverley Road to the east, Monson Road to the north, and Mount Pleasant Road to the west.

The Mount Pleasant Car Park site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations DPD (Policy AL/RTW21)

The Great Hall car park site is not subject to any site specific policies in the Local Plan.

Policy designations

Local Plan (2006) policy designations that are relevant to the framework area are as follows:
Conservation Area – Local Plan Policies EN4 and EN5

Historic Parks and Gardens – Local Plan Policy EN11

Arcadian Area – Local Plan Policy EN24

Areas of Important Open Space – Local Plan Policy EN21

Central Parking Zone – Local Plan Policy TP7

Economic Development Area – Local Plan Policies ED1 and ED3

Primary Shopping Area – Local Plan Policy CR5

Other Relevant Planning Policies

The following strategic Core Strategy (2010) policies are of particular relevance:

Core Policy 1: Delivery of Development

Core Policy 3: Transport Infrastructure

Core Policy 4: Environment

Core Policy 5: Sustainable Design and Construction

Core Policy 6: Housing Provision

Core Policy 7: Employment Provision

Core Policy 8: Retail, Leisure, and Community Facilities Provision

Core Policy 9: Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells

Fig 2 shows the policy designations relevant to the study area. It should be noted that due to the extensive nature of the town centre conservation area the boundary is wider than the extents of this plan.



Key








-  Study area boundary
-  Listed buildings
-  Primary shopping area
-  Retail/mixed use development sites allocated in the Local Plan
-  **1** AL/RTW2A: Civic complex/Crescent Road area of change
-  **2** AL/RTW2I: Mount Pleasant car park
-  Calverley Park and Grounds grade II listed landscape

Fig 2 Study area planning context

Policy AL/RTW 2A: Crescent Road/Church Road Area of Change (extract from site allocations DPD 2016)

The area shown on the Royal Tunbridge Wells & Southborough Proposals Map is designated as an Area of Change.

A masterplan shall be prepared by the developer(s) with the involvement of the Borough Council, stakeholders and the local community. The masterplan shall indicate the distribution, scale and quantum of proposed uses together with areas of open space/public realm, vehicular access, parking provision and pedestrian routes into and within the site. Proposals will be expected to deliver:

- civic, educational, cultural and leisure uses: these shall include library, museum, adult education and theatre facilities, including the facilities to be provided by the Cultural and Learning Hub. There shall be no loss of existing educational, cultural and leisure facilities, or public or ceremonial civic functions from the Area of Change unless suitable alternative provision has been secured elsewhere in the town centre
- retail development: incorporating approximately 15,000sqm (net) additional comparison retail floorspace (A1) which may include a new department store and other units of varying sizes. Retail uses should be provided on the ground floor to ensure active retail frontages

Other uses may also be delivered as part of the redevelopment and refurbishment of sites within the area. Appropriate uses could include:

- restaurants and cafés: development could provide restaurant and café facilities
- market facilities: development could provide

enhanced market facilities, which may include the provision of permanent facilities

- hotel and conference facilities
- office (B1): high quality (B1) office space
- residential use: supplementary to the other uses
- parking: any development should reinstate at least the same amount of public car parking spaces within the Area of Change, with the provision to include additional or fewer spaces as considered necessary, subject to the latest available evidence

Development shall contribute to transport improvements, to include the Royal Oak junction Bayhall Road, Church Road/Mount Pleasant junction, Church Road/A26 (London Road) junction and Garden Road/Victoria Road/Camden Road junction.

Proposals for redevelopment and refurbishment within the Civic Complex/Crescent Road Area of Change shall accord with the following principles:

- a Conservation Statement must be produced to inform the masterplan and guide the redevelopment and refurbishment of sites, buildings and spaces within the Area of Change. This will focus on the heritage assets within the area (including listed buildings such as the Assembly Hall Theatre, Police Station, Magistrates' Court, Town Hall, War Memorial and Nos 9-10 Calverley Crescent) and also address any potential Local Heritage Assets
- proposals must be of a high quality design and shall demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the Conservation Area
- proposals must be accompanied by an Air Quality Assessment and appropriate mitigation measures
- any proposals affecting the Town Hall will be expected to retain significant features, such

as the main entrance, staircase and Council Chamber in situ and allow their continued use for civic functions and other compatible uses

- key views into, and within, the Area shall be protected. These are likely to include views of the main Town Hall entrance and views down Mount Pleasant Road
- opportunities should be explored to create a series of new public spaces and interlinking routes to promote better access for cycling and walking
- development will be expected to provide or enhance green infrastructure links within the area and to provide public art, which may include water features
- proposals shall promote the use of high quality, locally distinctive materials and features
- proposals should explore the potential to enhance the lighting of the area to promote public safety and improve the night-time setting of historic buildings and the associated public realm

Proposals for developing part of the Area of Change shall not compromise the wider aims and comprehensive redevelopment of Policy AL/RTW2A and wider Core Strategy objectives.

Policy AL/RTW 21 Mount Pleasant Avenue Car Park

This site, as shown on the Royal Tunbridge Wells & Southborough Proposals Map, is allocated for office employment uses providing approximately 3,200sqm (gross) floorspace. The preferred use is office (B1(a)) or financial and professional services (A2). Opportunities to re-provide a similar amount of public car parking provision on site shall be explored.



Station

Great Hall

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SECTION 2

VISION AND OBJECTIVES



2.1 VISION

Tunbridge Wells is a vibrant historic town with an excellent retail and leisure offer and a strong cultural and civic presence. The planning framework in seeking to guide and influence the form and quality of future development proposals, including proposals for a new Theatre and new Council offices and civic suite, has the objective of safeguarding and enhancing the townscape, cultural vitality and civic life of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Redevelopment of the existing Town Hall and Assembly Hall will work sensitively with the wider group of historic buildings, respecting their listed status and their group value. A viable long term future for the listed buildings will be sought to ensure their continued contribution to the historic character of the town centre.

The ambitious Civic development project presents an exciting opportunity to create a new focal point for civic functions and public life in Tunbridge Wells and will play a major role in strengthening Tunbridge Wells' identity as a cultural destination for the south-east.

The development will deliver a more efficient and modern office building and civic suite with open and flexible spaces and a new 1,200 seat theatre capable of hosting first-class touring shows. The buildings will be complemented by an attractive public space for congregation and celebration, creating an improved entrance to Calverley Grounds. The new buildings will create an attractive civic and cultural presence at the edge of Calverley Grounds, promoting their use and enjoyment.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The planning framework objectives draw on the findings of baseline research and through discussions that took place at the stakeholder workshops.

Development of the area should:

Establish a strong new civic focus for the town – a fulcrum which links together the upper and lower parts of Tunbridge Wells.

The new civic buildings will play an essential role in the every-day civil and community activities of the town. This echoes the strong concept of the existing 1930s suite of civic buildings. Their location between Calverley Grounds and the railway station strengthens the link between the upper and lower parts of the town, creating a new civic heart for the town.

Create a forum for public life – a destination for the wider area and a place of congregation and celebration.

The theatre will strengthen Tunbridge Wells popularity as a cultural beacon for the region, encouraging people to visit and spend time in the town. There will be new spaces for the community, which will offer an opportunity for people to gather together and to celebrate life's special moments.

Protect and enhance the historic townscape – a sustainable future for the existing historic buildings, parks and spaces.

The historic buildings and spaces in the town centre are a vital part of the continuing appeal of Tunbridge Wells. Proposals should protect and enhance this character, particularly establishing a viable and sustainable use of the existing historic buildings to give them a long term future which protects their continued contribution.

Deliver architecture and public realm of the highest quality – flexible and sustainable development which responds to its context.

The objective for the study area is to preserve and enhance the best aspects of the townscape of the area and to seek enhancements where possible to elevate all areas of public realm and all buildings to a good standard. The new buildings, and particularly the new office building and civic suite will deliver flexible space which can accommodate a range of activities and which can be adaptable over time.

2.3 KEY PRINCIPLES

A series of urban design principles have been identified for the study area:

Retention and enhancement of locally listed buildings and conservation area

The existing buildings are part of an important listed group within the heart of the town centre conservation area and should be conserved and enriched. Calverley Grounds and Park is located within a conservation area requiring new buildings to be sensitive to their surrounding context.

A strong unified civic identity

The existing buildings should maintain a united civic appearance, and any new buildings should share a cohesive identity with clear purpose and activity which establishes a new civic heart for the town.

A well-connected environment

Any development scheme should improve connections and ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, contributing positively to the legibility of the town. This will include the potential for a new connection into Calverley Grounds.

Integration of development within its local context

The buildings should be integrated well within the surrounding area. Any new buildings should embrace and enhance Calverley Grounds, by creating views over the park and encouraging indoor uses to spill out into the outside spaces. Re-modelling and re-use of the existing buildings should reflect their listed status and contribution to the wider townscape.

A high quality public realm

The setting of the existing and new buildings should be enhanced by improvements to the public realm, to create an attractive network of streets and spaces for people to enjoy. Creating a new gateway into Calverley Grounds and improving the street-scape around the existing Civic buildings are two major components of this.

Flexible and adaptable space for multi-use and long term resilience

The preferred approach will prioritise the flexibility and adaptability of spaces. New buildings will be adaptable over time to accommodate a range of uses. Proposals for a new office building and civic suite will have public rooms designed to accommodate a range of functions and lettings as well as their core civic activities.

A sustainable future

Any proposed development should contribute towards a shift to sustainability and reduced carbon footprint. In the case of any buildings developed for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council this should enhance the Council's self-sufficiency, increasing its capacity to respond to the needs of the local population without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.





SECTION 3

FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT



3.1 OVERALL FRAMEWORK

This framework has been drafted to help guide and coordinate a number of potential development projects and to set these within the context of wider townscape considerations and public realm improvements.

The overall framework for the area has emerged in response to the Council's decision to relocate the theatre and council offices, currently situated at the junction of Mount Pleasant Avenue and Crescent Road. The existing Town Hall is not fit for purpose as modern office space but has significant potential for re-use through remodelling. The Assembly Hall lacks the space and back-of-house facilities to attract the variety of theatre shows needed to achieve the Council's broader vision to strengthen the identity of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a cultural beacon for the region.

An initial options study was undertaken in October 2015, on behalf of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, to explore the possibilities for the relocation of the Civic complex and the redevelopment of the existing buildings. These options were tested and developed, and a preferred option emerged which sees the development of a new theatre on the edge of Calverley Grounds, together with a new office building and civic suite which allows for flexible and efficient multi-use spaces. It also proposes the partial remodelling of the existing buildings to make them suitable for a wide range of alternative uses and thereby give them a sustainable future.

The preferred option is outlined in this masterplan framework, accompanied by a set of guiding principles to inform development of the highest quality. The main components of the preferred approach are outlined in the following section.

Delivery of the **Culture and Learning Hub** project in the Library and Adult Education buildings

Town Hall and Assembly Hall refurbished and remodelled

Police and Magistrates Court refurbished and remodelled





Setting of **9-10 Calverley Terrace** enhanced with improved landscaping

New **office building and civic suite** with underground car parking

Improved **park entrance**

New theatre

Key

-  Key opportunity sites
-  Frontage to protect
-  Frontage to enhance
-  Public realm enhancements

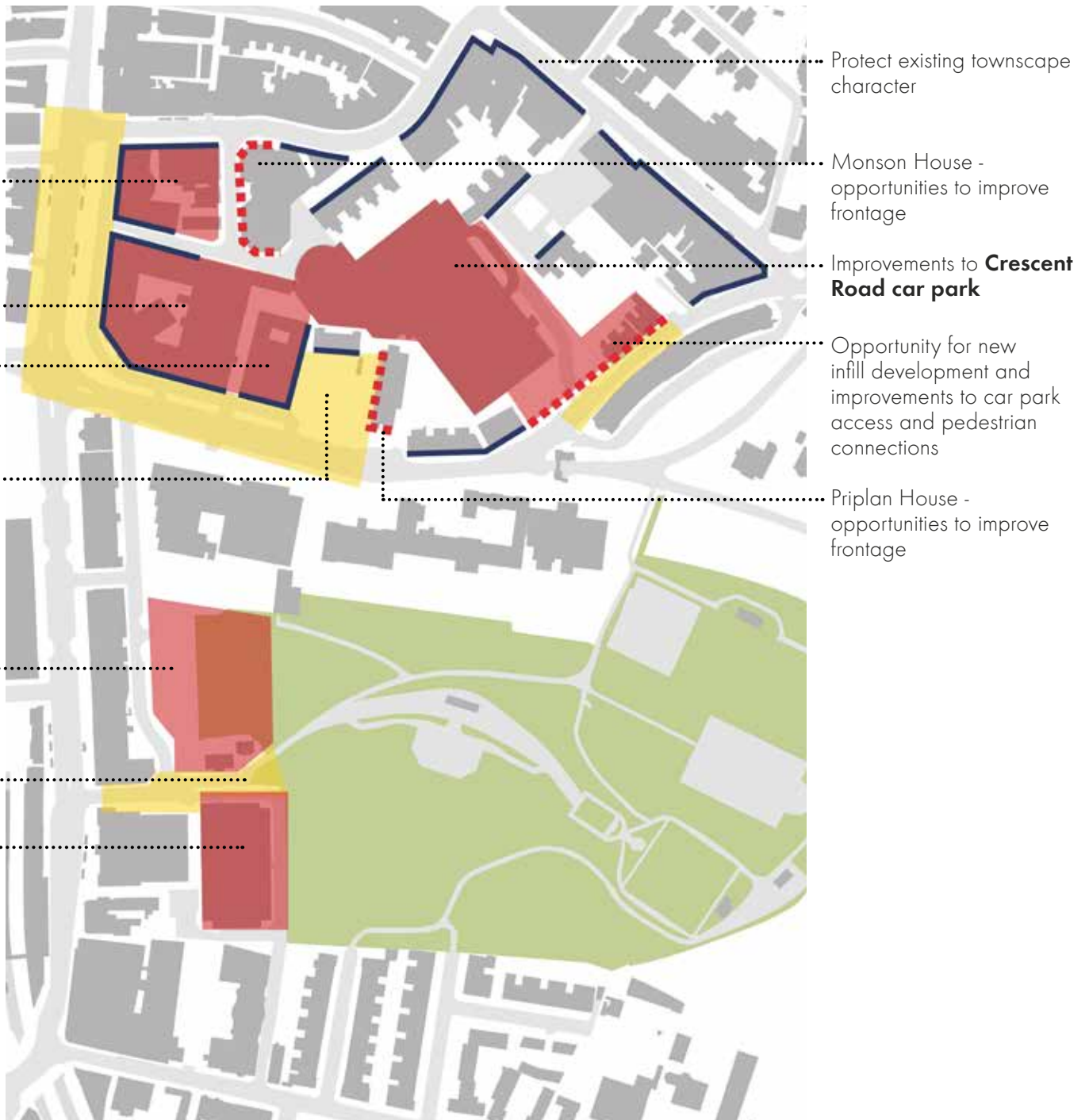


Fig 3 Proposed civic framework

3.2 PUBLIC REALM

Context

The Council's wider planning policy provides the following context for the Framework:

- To improve linkages between different areas of the town centre and to improve the street scene and public realm, including with the provision of street furniture and green infrastructure, to promote wellbeing and a sense of place;
- To promote the town centre as an attractive and thriving place for retail and leisure (including the night-time economy);
- To promote and improve access to the town's cultural, tourism and amenity attractions; and
- To reduce traffic congestion in the town centre and beyond and to encourage alternative modes of transport.

Streetscape improvements for Mount Pleasant Road, set out in the Public Realm Framework include:

- Create a more attractive link between top and bottom of town;
- Upgrade and reinforce existing character;
- Replace all trees with consistent species in properly constructed tree pits;
- Replace all lamp columns to same design as elsewhere in town centre and properly spaced;
- Upgrade pedestrian courtesy crossing improve sense of priority and calm traffic; and
- Surface parking bays in paving to reduce visual impact of highway.

A detailed set of public realm enhancements are being developed by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. These include:

- Maintaining a good east-west traffic flow across town;
- Potential for landmark space;
- A clearer definition of road hierarchy through paving and signal phasing;
- Wider footways provide greater pedestrian potential;
- Shorter pedestrian crossings;
- Restricted access and speeds in north-south directions; and
- Adjusted signals phasing would retain east-west traffic priority.

Civic Way

There is potential for cars to be removed from Civic Way and the space to be re-landscaped to provide a high quality pedestrian environment.

The area in front of the Library may be more extensively re-modelled to create a more cohesive space in front of the building. This would reflect its enhanced significance as a public building in the area.

In the event that a non-public use is considered for the existing Town Hall site an element of landscape buffer between the building and the publicly accessible space may be appropriate to manage access and privacy. A more public re-use of the building could be reflected in the inclusion of new seating and landscaping which encourages access.

9 and 10 Calverley terrace

The forecourt to these buildings has been dominated by parking in recent years, particularly associated with the Police Station. If this use were to cease there may be the opportunity to reconsider the design of the space to enhance the setting of the buildings. Ideally this would feature a predominantly green space, reflecting the original setting of the buildings.

Monson Way

Monson Way will remain important to provide service and parking access within the block. However, there is also potential for improvements in the space and the addition of a new pedestrian link through the opening up of the Police Station site.

Crescent Road

An element of potential infill development has been identified along Crescent Road. This

would help to screen the existing multi-storey car park, improving the wider townscape. This element of development coincides with a pinch-point along the road itself, and development in this location could usefully deliver a carriageway widening to improve safety and access.

The existing pedestrian connection past the Crescent Road car park is noted as being relatively unattractive. This could be enhanced as part of the wider improvements to the area, creating better access to the car park and a more useable link from Monson Road to Crescent Road. The design of the infill development on Crescent Road should particularly consider how passive surveillance might be achieved to provide greater overlooking of this route. The Carrs Corner junction at the eastern end of Crescent Road is complex and would benefit from changes to improve cycle and pedestrian facilities.

Calverley Grounds

Calverley Grounds has a key role in the centre of Tunbridge Wells as an historic open space. The natural bowl of the landscape, overlooked by historic buildings, makes it an attractive location for occasional events and festivals, but at all times of the year it provides a welcome open space close to a number of town centre amenities.

Development of the office building and civic suite and Theatre presents an opportunity to reassess the way in which Calverley Grounds is used and managed, with potential for a wider range of events linking into the new civic buildings, reflecting its historic role. The new development would also be a helpful trigger to initiate a wider study of the park and review whether any existing amenities can be consolidated or improved to the betterment of the historic character.

Mount Pleasant Road

The improvements to the public realm approaching Calverley Grounds has the potential to connect in with wider public realm enhancements along Mount Pleasant Road, particularly in the area around the station.

The station building, Hoopers Department Store and the Great Hall building all provide strong frontage onto the street, and there are opportunities to rationalise bus stops, taxi rank and pedestrian realm to enhance the quality of arrival in the town centre.

Pedestrians

The Core Strategy notes that it is important to increase the current low levels of walking to facilitate a shift away from private car use. There is currently poor pedestrian access into Calverley Grounds, limited by the relatively small number of entrances. The lack of connecting routes on desire lines means it is not a natural short-cut for daily use.

A new gateway to Calverley Grounds via Mount Pleasant Avenue, framed by the proposed new office building and civic suite and theatre buildings, would improve the setting and approach to the park for pedestrians by creating a high quality and attractive shared surface with active frontage leading up to the park. This route should be designed as a pedestrian priority public space, taking into account the necessity for service and delivery access for the theatre and office building and civic suite, and vehicular access along the stretch of Mount Pleasant Avenue which runs parallel to Mount Pleasant Road. The space in front of the proposed theatre and office building and civic suite should be designed for pedestrians only.

Public realm improvements along existing stretches of Mount Pleasant Avenue to the west of the proposed office building and civic suite, including better quality paving and planting, would make the area safer and more pleasant for pedestrians.

Access to Calverley Grounds from the south is currently from Mountfield Road and Mountfield Gardens, and from the north from the northern end of Calverley Park. A new pedestrian entrance to Calverley Grounds should also be considered from the north of Calverley Grounds, linking Crescent Road to the park, to create another route through Calverley Grounds that follows a natural desire line. This could be from 9-10 Calverley Terrace with a new pedestrian crossing over Crescent Road.

Development should take advantage of Mount Pleasant Road as a key link between the top and bottom of town and a transport node; there are a number of bus stops and it is in close proximity to the train station.

Cycling

Cycling to and from the site will be encouraged. Safe and secure cycle parking should be provided for employees and for public use. The number of cycle parking spaces should be in keeping with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council policy requirements, and should be in an obvious and accessible location. A possible location for bike storage could be along the southern edge of Mount Pleasant Avenue.

Vehicular movement

Mount Pleasant Avenue will need to remain in use as a service route to maintain access to a number of existing buildings. Similarly, the servicing for the new theatre will require access from the bottom of Mount Pleasant Avenue around the back of the Great Hall and connecting with the service area of Hoopers Department Store.

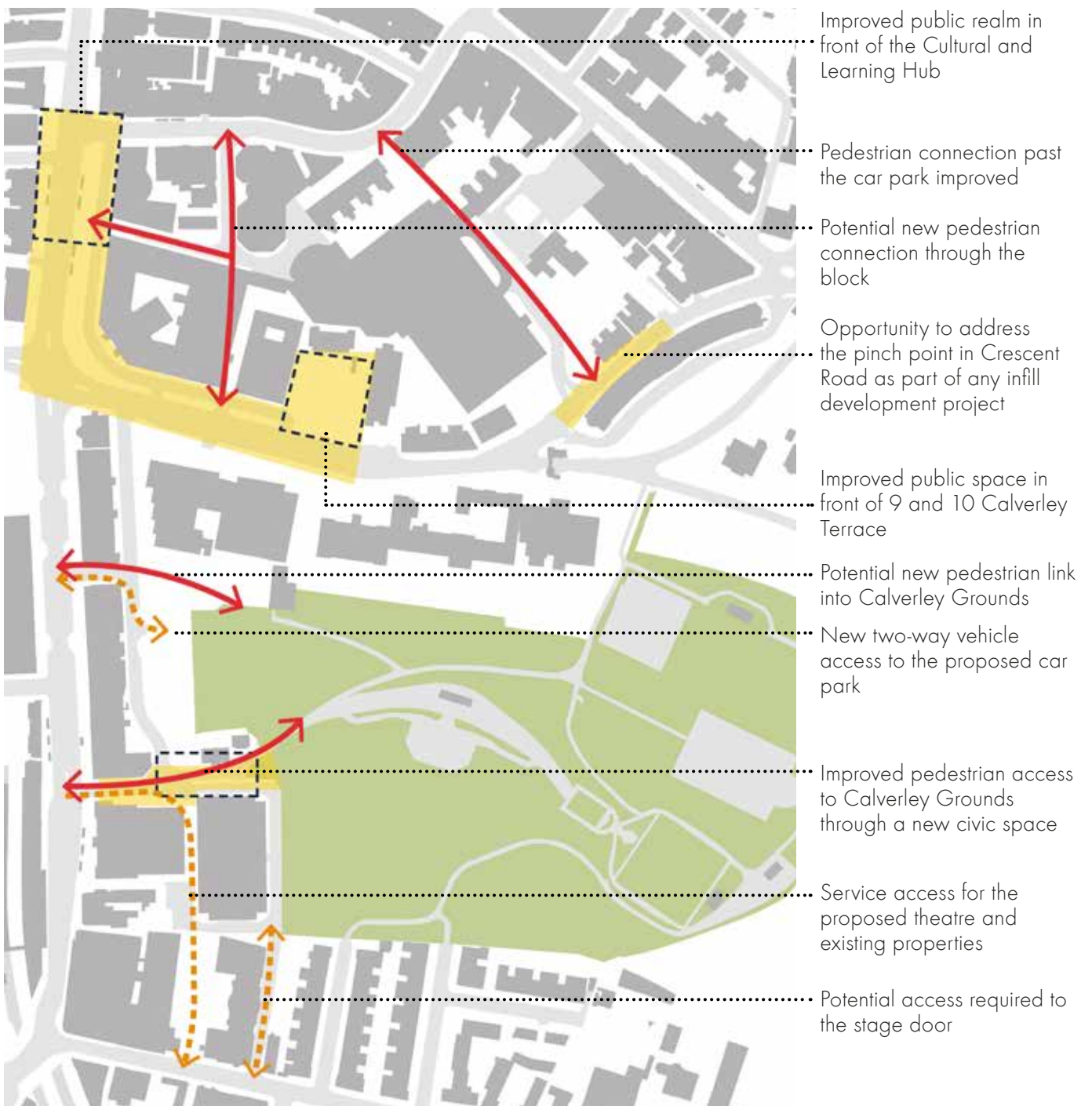


Fig4 Public realm

Both of these access movements will necessitate an element of shared space, but will leave the connecting link between the new office building and civic suite and theatre free of traffic. Large vehicles will require access to the theatre service yard at the beginning and end of any show run, and for delivery and refuse collection. However, this is not expected to result in a high number of vehicle movements during the middle of the day or during the run of a show.

Computer analysis of these routes has been undertaken to ensure that vehicles will be able to safely undertake the movements required, and the planning of the routes eliminates the need for large vehicles to reverse in public spaces.

The shared surface space is also important as an access for emergency vehicles, including into Calverley Grounds.

Car parking

To support the development of the theatre and office building and civic suite, new car parking should be delivered to replace the two existing car parks.

Options studies have been undertaken to test different locations and access arrangements. This work has considered how the impact in terms of construction process and access for vehicles can be minimised. It has been identified that basement parking would best be provided below the site identified for office development. It may be possible for the basement parking to extend below part of Calverley Grounds provided that the landscape is properly reinstated.

Access to a car park in this location would be established by allowing two way movement on a short stretch of Mount Pleasant Avenue, as shown in figure 4, to ensure that cars are not required to pass through the new public space between the office and theatre buildings.

Taxis

The proposed changes to the park entrance will require an alternative solution to the current taxi waiting area on the eastern side of Mount Pleasant Road. This will be developed as part of the public realm improvements being undertaken by the Borough Council, in discussion with taxi operators.

Set-down and pick-up

The development of a new theatre on the Great Hall car park site will attract a significant number of vehicles, including coach parties, as happens with the existing Assembly Hall Theatre. The short stay parking on the eastern side of Mount Pleasant Road will be reviewed with the aim of providing set-down and pick-up areas for the theatre.

3.3 LAND USE

Site Allocations Local Plan Policy AL/RTW2A (Civic Complex/Crescent Road Area of Change) establishes policy principles in terms of the protection and retention of existing uses and sets out acceptable alternative uses in the Crescent Road/Church Road Area of Change.

The policy requires the educational, cultural, and leisure facilities and civic/ceremonial functions that currently exist within the site to be retained or re-provided on the site or elsewhere within the town centre. The policy therefore allows some of these uses to be 'decanted' to the sites identified in the lower area of the Development Framework.

The use of part of the town hall buildings should be reserved for publicly accessible civic-type functions but the policy also recognises an opportunity to incorporate other uses on site as part of its comprehensive redevelopment and refurbishment. These uses could include restaurants and cafés, market facilities, hotel and conference facilities, offices, and residential use.

Policy AL/RTW21 in the Site Allocations Local Plan (2016) allocates the Mount Pleasant car park site for office use. As the site is also within the town centre boundary, strategic planning policy supports a range of town centre uses (with the exception of retail, which would need to satisfy sequential and impact assessment tests). This includes potential to accommodate 'decanted' uses from the sites identified in the upper area of the Development Framework.

Although the Great Hall car park site does not benefit from a site specific policy in the Site Allocations Local Plan (2016), it is located within the town centre boundary. As explained above, strategic planning policy therefore supports a range of town centre uses within the site (including 'decanted' uses from the sites

identified in the upper area of the Development Framework.

Paragraphs 3.28-3.29 of the Site Allocations Local Plan require that each development in the town centre re-provides at least the same amount of public parking spaces (this is 205 spaces for the Great Hall car park and 60 spaces for the Mount Pleasant car park) unless justified by evidence of a lack of need. Furthermore, policy would allow additional car parking to meet operational needs.

The existing use of the land to the east of the Great Hall car park is a public park. The site is subject to designations in the adopted Local Plan as an Area of Important Open Space, a Historic Park or Garden, and an Arcadian Area. Whilst none of the existing trees on site are subject to Tree Preservation Orders, the site is within a Conservation Area.

3.4 FORM, SCALE AND MASSING

Building heights in the centre of Tunbridge Wells are predominantly two to four stories. However, perceptions of scale are also impacted by the dynamic topography which creates a varied and interesting roofscape.

There are a number of set-piece elements within the town centre, including the Calverley Park Crescent, designed by Decimus Burton, which create a strong consistent form rather than stepping with the terrain.

The existing group of civic buildings takes a similar form, establishing a strong consistent parapet wall height which unifies the group despite the changes in ground level around the area. The entrance to the Town Hall on the prominent corner of Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road is then distinguished by the presence of a squat, muscular tower. To the rear of the block the Assembly Hall has

an existing fly-tower structure which rises to a similar height but is far less visible from the surrounding streets.

Other taller features of the area include the strong roofline of the Adult Education building, and the domes of the former opera house to the north of Monson Road.

Future development within the area, including re-modelling of the existing buildings should respect rather than challenge this overall character, particularly the strong tower of the Town Hall as part of a broadly symmetrical composition.

The opportunity for infill development along Crescent Road to screen the existing car park should also take its reference point as the surrounding buildings to repair the existing townscape.



Fig 5 Existing stepping terrace on Mount Pleasant Road

In the particular vicinity of the proposed theatre and office building and civic suite development the existing buildings tend to follow the sloping terrain, creating stepping terraces, which some buildings in the wider town centre create a stronger presence in the townscape.

This dynamic townscape creates a strong backdrop to new development. It strongly suggests that development of the office building and civic suite on the existing Mount Pleasant Avenue car park should step gradually down the hillside, reflecting the overall massing and the stepped terrace of Mount Pleasant Road.

The proposed location for a new theatre is at the lowest point in the landscape. This is helpful in terms of accommodating what will inevitably be a relatively large building. Any fly tower and the wider roovescape will be particularly significant in the townscape given the location of the building in the bottom of the valley, making them even more prominent.





SECTION 4
KEY SITES



4.1 EXISTING TOWN HALL AND ASSEMBLY HALL

Context

The existing Town Hall is the centrepiece of the civic cluster, occupying the dominant corner site at the junction of Mount Pleasant Road and Crescent Road. It is currently the main site for the council offices, council chamber and members robing rooms. The building has two generous storeys, along with a basement level and a limited element of rooftop development, with a courtyard in the centre.

The Assembly Hall forms the eastern section of the block. Its current use as a theatre is limited by poor back-of-house facilities and its lack of space, which, together with the capacity and layout of seating, makes it less attractive to touring shows. The building is comprised of an elegant art-deco style lobby with stairs leading to the main theatre space; a simple rectangular box with single large rake of seating above a flat floor.

The 1930s neo-Georgian style buildings are Grade II Listed, thus requiring the preservation and enhancement of the buildings. It is also located with the town centre conservation area and within the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To protect the Grade II Listed buildings and the historic fabric of the surrounding townscape;
- To provide suitable alternative uses for the building which work well in the town centre context; and
- To improve the setting of the civic buildings by ensuring a high quality public realm.

Development parameters

The existing Town Hall building is characterised by a strong corner tower presence and side wings which are superficially symmetrical. This tower and the rest of the outer range of buildings form an important part of the historic townscape and are important features to retain and enhance.

To the rear of the site, the large box of the Assembly Hall theatre has less of an impact on the townscape as despite its bulk it is screened on all sides by other buildings. Similarly, the fly tower is relatively obscured from view.



The Council Chamber is located in a projecting element in the centre of the courtyard, on the same orientation as the corner tower. It has no visible impact on the street, but it does significantly constrain the potential for successful re-use of the rest of the building around the courtyard.

It is important for the long term future of the listed buildings that a viable and sustainable future use is established. This should balance the desire to retain and protect the character of the existing buildings with the need to adapt them to ensure their ongoing usability.

There is a significant level change between the floor level in the building and the external ground level which varies substantially around the edge of the building. Coupled with the existing listed status of the buildings this limits the opportunities to create new entrances into the building.

Potential uses such as office space, academic use, hotel or residential use could all be considered as potentially suitable for the building, subject to commercial viability.

In order to render the structure more usable it may be possible to undertake significant modifications whilst retaining and protecting the essential character and contribution to the townscape. Any additions to the silhouette of the Assembly Hall and new development to the roof of the existing building should respect the form and symmetry of the building and the prominence of the corner tower.

The public realm around the site should be improved. In particular, enhancements will be sought to improve the setting of the War Memorial.

Public use of the buildings would imply retained public access to the space with opportunities for revised treatment such as seating and market stalls. A more private use such as residential-led development would benefit from reduced access to the edge of the building and private landscaped garden space replacing Civic Way.

Consideration should be given to the potential development of the Police Station and Magistrates Court to the east of the site. Flexibility should be built into the design of the redevelopment to ensure that a range of options can be explored for the adjacent site. Delivery of this development and re-use of the existing building is contingent on the completion of the proposed new theatre and office building and civic suite which will allow for the buildings to be vacated.

4.2 CULTURAL AND LEARNING HUB

Context

The Cultural and Learning Hub will integrate the existing Library and Museum & Art Gallery with the adjacent Adult Education Centre, to create a modernised space that is a vibrant hub for culture and heritage. It is being coordinated by Kent County Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To establish a new Cultural and Learning Hub in the existing Library, Museum and Adult Education Centre
- To support an integrated approach to development of the Town Centre;
- To create a suitable public realm context for the Cultural and Learning Hub as a significant public building.

Design parameters

The current Library entrance should remain as the main entrance to the Hub, with potential for a secondary service entrance on Monson Way.

The two existing listed buildings should be retained, with new connecting development established to the rear on Monson Way. Given the location of this (away from the main street frontage) there is scope for this to be an attractive modern addition which mediates between the varied style of the two buildings.

The existing Adult Education building is one of the taller structures in the area and has a distinctive and dynamic roofline. New development should be clearly subordinate to this. However, there may be opportunities for sensitive additions to the roof of the existing Library within the wider context of the whole listed group.

In the event that public uses such as education are established for the existing Town Hall building there may be opportunities to deliver further integration between the two functions.



4.3 POLICE STATION AND MAGISTRATES COURT

Context

The existing police and magistrates building was designed specifically for that function in the 1930s. It forms part of the listed group and includes a number of very particular elements such as cells and courtrooms which render the building difficult to re-use. Accessibility is also very limited. It is therefore considered that significant remodelling could be possible in order to ensure that the key elements of the building are retained in order to maintain the listed group. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A).

Objectives

- To support an integrated approach to development of the Town Centre;
- To ensure the heritage value of the building is protected; and
- To potentially integrate the development with the adjacent Assembly Hall development.

Design parameters

As with the Town Hall and Assembly Hall the front range of the building to the street has particular importance. It is one of the key entrances, and continues the group elevation. This range of the building should be retained and incorporated as part of the remodelling and reuse of the building.

The area of building to the rear could be sensitively remodelled, including partial demolition to create more useable space which establishes a viable future for the building. The east elevation of the building faces onto the open space in front of 9-10 Calverley Terrace and active frontage and new entrances could be established which face this way.

There may be some scope to accommodate additional building volume towards the rear of the plot, replacing the existing garaging.

Any design options for the building will be required to facilitate a north-south pedestrian link through the block. This is to be in the form of a lane or a mews, with active frontages and overlooking.



4.4 NO. 9-10 CALVERLEY TERRACE

Context

The pair of buildings are Grade II Listed and the last to remain out of the group of Decimus Burton villas that were demolished to make way for the existing civic buildings. They are located to the east of the Police Station and Magistrates Court and set back considerably from the road.

Their context has been significantly affected by subsequent development, including the 1930s civic development which changed the building line to the street, limiting views to and from the buildings.

The large forecourt in front of 9-10 Calverley Terrace is currently for car parking, principally associated with the Police Station. They are currently in use as office accommodation and are located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A)

Objectives

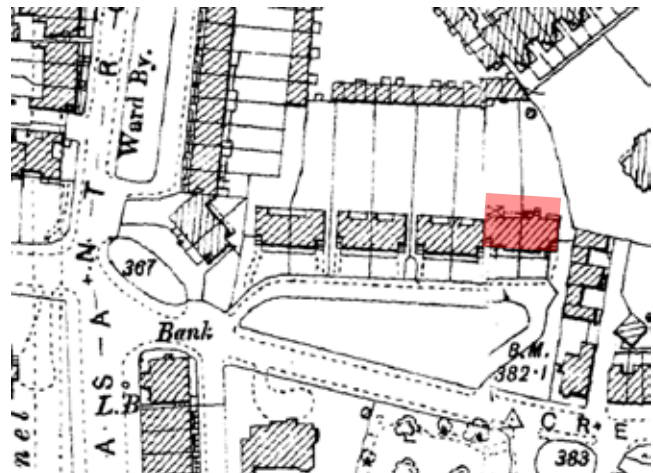
- To establish a viable long-term future for the building; and
- To improve the setting of the building to enhance its Grade II Listed character.

Design parameters

This is a significant building by Decimus Burton, and therefore limited external alterations are expected beyond the restoration of period features and measures to improve accessibility.

The potential to re-model the landscaping in front of the building once car parking is not required for the police station could significantly enhance the setting of the building, potentially complemented by more active frontages on the police station site and the adjoining Priplan House site.

The Town Yard decked car park to the rear of the building is a separate element of parking, and is an independent structure from the main Crescent Road car park. Removal of this car park would improve the setting of the building, and would create the possibility for appropriate buildings to be developed to the rear which could complement the listed building.



1897 - 99 map extract showing the original buildings

4.5 CRESCENT ROAD

Context

The existing Crescent Road car park is acknowledged as an unattractive but important structure in the town centre. Its impact is in part due to the large area of open space on Crescent Road which means that it has a direct impact on the listed Calverley Park Terrace.

A further constraint on the area is the pinch point in Crescent Road. This impacts on both vehicles in the area, but also limits the opportunities to provide a suitable footway on both sides of the road. The building is located within the area covered by the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW2A)

Objectives

- To screen the car park from the street through sensitive infill development;
- To provide additional parking capacity within the site;
- To improve the north-south pedestrian connection through the block; and
- To facilitate the widening of Crescent Road to remove the existing pinch point through setting the buildings back from the existing building line.



Design parameters

The space to the south and east of the car park offers the potential for additional parking capacity to be delivered. This should be accompanied by new frontage development to Crescent Road which screens the car park structure. These buildings should establish a consistent building line, re-establishing active frontage.

These properties are expected to be residential development most likely to be in the form of apartments. This is not considered to be a strong commercial location and therefore active ground floor uses would be encouraged but not required.

The entrance and exit arrangement to the car park should be rationalised to reduce its land take and impact on the street scene. At the same time, the project also provides the opportunity to remove the pinch point in the road to improve safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

The quality of the north-south pedestrian route past the car park should be improved, including consideration given to the directness and clarity of the route and the potential to include any active overlooking to enhance passive surveillance.

Consideration should be given to improving the appearance of existing elevations of the structure to reduce its impact on the wider townscape.

4.6 NEW OFFICE BUILDING AND CIVIC SUITE AND CAR PARK

Context

The proposed location for a new office building and civic suite is at the site of the existing Mount Pleasant car park and, together with the new theatre, will frame the improved entrance into Calverley Grounds.

The existing Town Hall building is currently insufficient for its use and function, and a new building will provide opportunity for the council to make efficiency savings and to reduce operational and running costs.

The Mount Pleasant Car Park site is allocated for development in the Site Allocations Local Plan (Policy AL/RTW21)

Objectives

- To provide a modern and sustainable building for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, presenting an open and welcoming character and significantly reducing the life costs of the building compared to the existing town hall.
- To deliver spaces that are flexible and adaptable and which ensure long term resilience;
- To provide opportunities for lettable space that offers a commercial return;
- To establish active frontage onto the public space;
- To deliver new parking provision to maintain town centre capacity; and
- To have multi-use public facing spaces which encourage people to gather together and to celebrate important events.

Design parameters

The creation of a new civic building is a significant opportunity for the Council to create an environment which will suit modern working practices and democratic processes as well as engaging with the public in an accessible

manner. The southern part of the building should provide flexible civic and public spaces whilst the rear of the site should provide flexible and sub-dividable office accommodation.

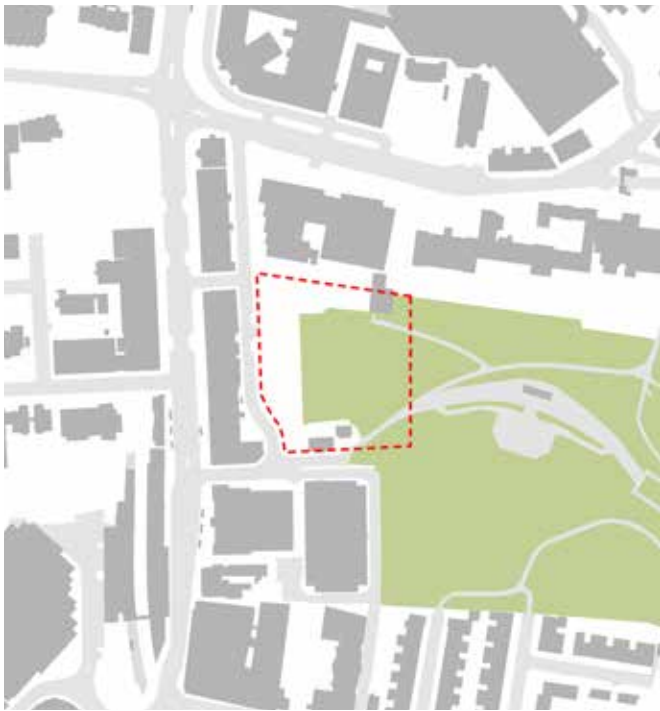
Whilst the Council could choose to occupy the whole building, any space it doesn't wish to use for Council functions could be subdivided and let as independent office space. Separate access can be created into the different parts of the building, allowing it to be let either as a stand-alone office suitable for a significant employer, or as a series of smaller units suitable for start-up companies.

The southern edge of the block should be the main entrance to the building and help to improve the setting of the route into Calverley Grounds. The concept proposed for the building is to establish a new civic presence onto Mount Pleasant Avenue, facing south towards a new theatre, with two buildings together framing the entrance into the park.

The design of the building should be shaped by the challenging terrain of the site, which slopes steeply upwards from the south to the north.

The building should address the parkland setting in a positive manner, capitalising on the setting to create high quality civic buildings.

New parking provision is expected to be provided as underground parking below the office. Parking may extend below the open space provided this is reinstated. The entrance and exit to the car park is expected to be via Mount Pleasant Road at the northern end of the site and that traffic arrangements on Mount Pleasant Avenue may be altered to allow two way flows on the upper part to avoid traffic having to use the new public space at the bottom of the hill.



4.7 NEW THEATRE

Context

A new 1,200 seat theatre is proposed on the site of the existing Great Hall car park. This will replace the existing Assembly Hall Theatre and will be large enough to attract an excellent artistic programme and expand the cultural and leisure offer of Tunbridge Wells.

The Great Hall car park site and the land to the east are not subject to any site specific policies in the Local Plan. The car parking spaces will be reprovided within the scheme. The theatre, along with the office building and civic suite, will frame a new attractive gateway into Calverley Grounds.

Objectives

- To deliver a 1,200 seat venue that attracts a variety of high quality touring shows and encourages people from across the region to visit;
- To form a strong unified civic identity with the new Office building and civic suite;
- To embrace its setting close to Calverley Grounds by creating terraces and new views, and coordinating cultural events which make use of the park;
- To enhance the restaurant and bar offer that supports the functioning of the Theatre; and
- To ensure ease of movement around the site for service and emergency vehicles.

Design parameters

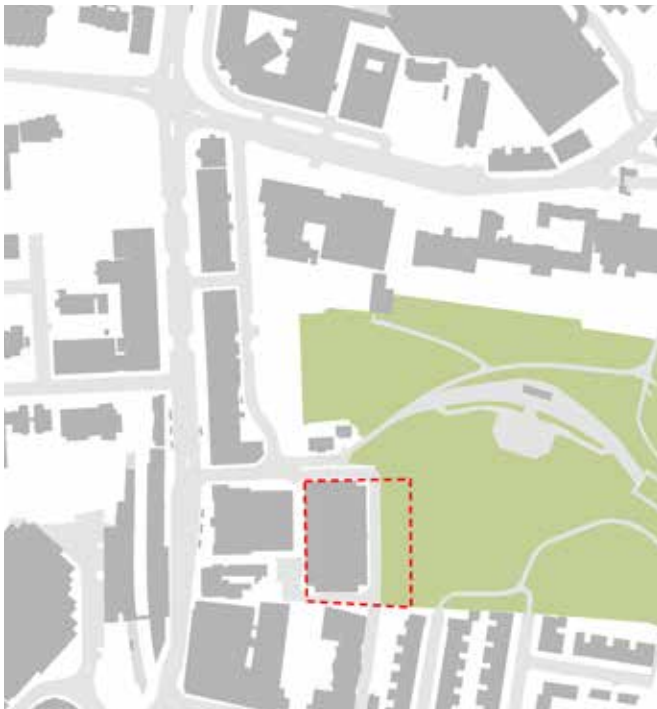
A new building on the site should frame a new entrance for Calverley Grounds. The principle facade and entrance will be on the north side, facing onto the new pedestrian space.

The second significant elevation will be the frontage to the park, where there is the opportunity to create open views and establish

a terrace which extends opportunities for outside seating and activities.

It is acknowledged that the theatre will be a building of significant size. Care should be taken in the design to modulate and manage this, particularly in views from around Calverley Grounds. The elevated vantage points which the terrain provides means that an attractive approach is required for the fly tower and for the roofscape more generally given their prominence in many views.

Servicing should be established on the yard to the south of the building, with access from the north via the shared space and exiting to the south onto Grove Hill Road.





Congl. Ch.

B.M. 382.0

G. Yd.

Trinity Ch.

Ward By.

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Bank

B.M. 382.1

Tunnel

383

340

SDALE GARDENS

Pump Ho.

Bank

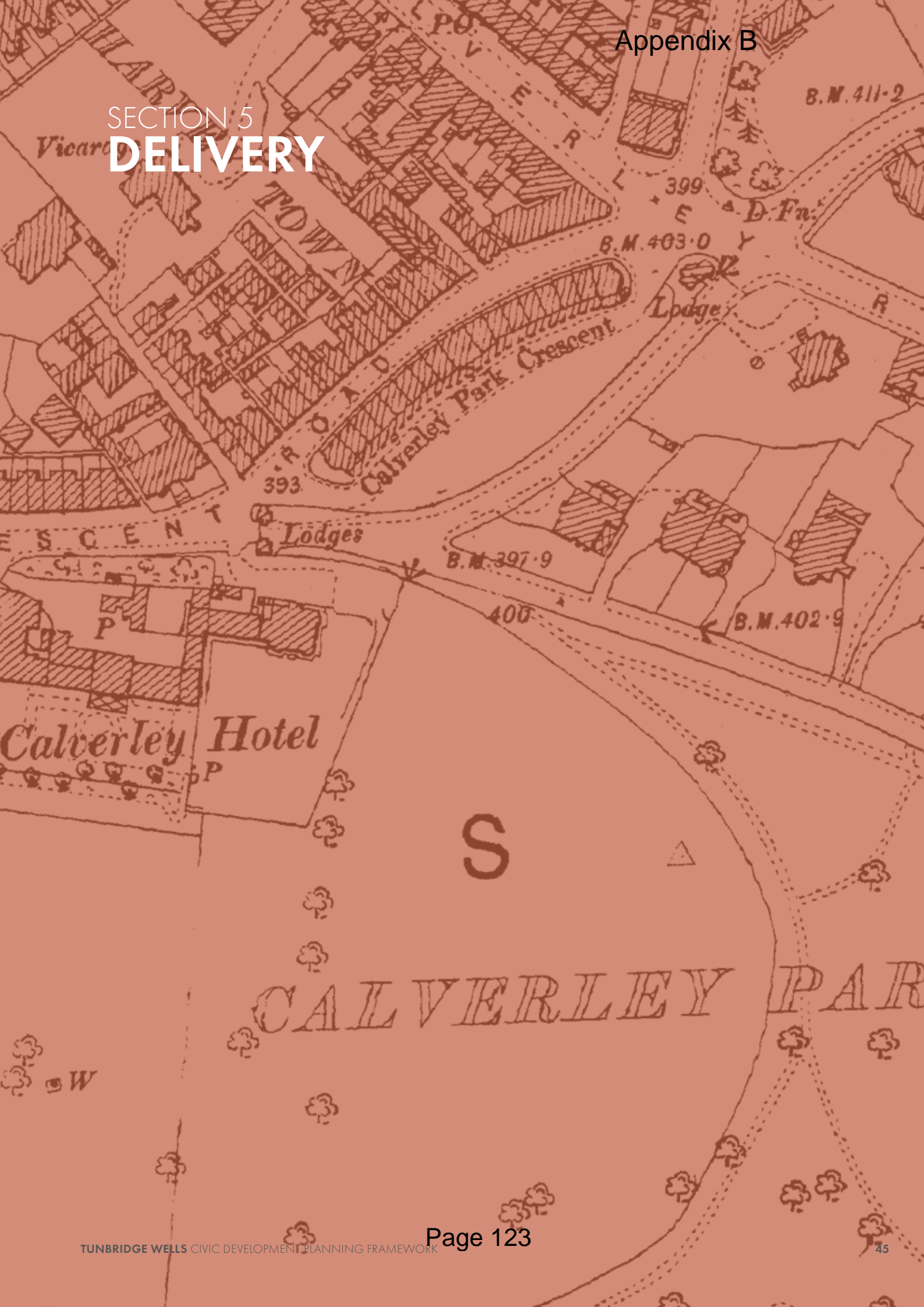
Great Hall

Station

294

SECTION 5

DELIVERY



5.1 DELIVERY

Delivering the vision and objectives

The Council is seeking to deliver its vision and objectives for Tunbridge Wells town centre. This section provides guidance on the delivery approach for comprehensive development and applies to all development within the study area regardless of ownership.

Continuing to work with stakeholders

Significant stakeholder consultation has already been undertaken to inform the preparation of this planning framework and proposals for the sites. The Council will continue to work and engage with stakeholders including the local community, businesses, landowners, residents and statutory consultees to progress the delivery of each site including through the planning application process.

Delivery approach

In line with the Core Strategy, Local Plan and Site Allocations DPD, the Council promotes town centre uses within Tunbridge Wells town. Tunbridge Wells town is the borough's main town and largest shopping area. The town incorporates a number of distinct character areas, with much of the town designated as a Conservation Area, reflecting its rich architectural heritage. There are many listed buildings and the open spaces and parks are highly valued. New development must ensure that it considers and is appropriate for the surrounding built and natural environment whilst also enhancing Tunbridge Well's role as the borough's main town centre. The guidance in this document seeks to ensure this.

The Council is committed to redeveloping parts of Tunbridge Wells town centre including the Civic development project, which will provide new council offices and civic suite, and a new theatre. Project feasibility and viability are key considerations for the Council and at every stage

of decision making the Council seeks to ensure a deliverable solution to development.

The Council requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to development of the Civic development project. This is in order to deliver the aspirations of this planning framework and the wider policy framework including the Site Allocations DPD designations, and policies within the Core Strategy and Local Plan.

Where possible the Council is bringing forward its own land for development. Where required, the Council will use its statutory powers including compulsory purchase powers to facilitate comprehensive development and delivery of the sites in order to deliver the policy framework for Tunbridge Wells.

Managing the developments

A coordinated management of development is required in order to minimise impact on businesses, residents and visitors during and post construction. The following will be considered to manage the construction process and the impact of the development:

- Construction Management Plans.
- Encouraging contractors to achieve excellence in construction management, as certified by the national Considerate Contractors Scheme.
- Minimising impact on public realm and open space during construction.
- Requiring travel plans.
- Requiring delivery and servicing plans to address the delivery and servicing arrangement for new developments.

This may include the use of planning conditions and/or section 106 planning obligations to minimise and mitigate the impact of development.



Full Council	27 September 2017
Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	Yes

Revised Five Year Plan 2017-22

Final Decision-Maker	Full Council
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor David Jukes – Leader of the Council
Lead Director	William Benson – Chief Executive
Head of Service	Jane Clarke – Head of Policy and Governance
Lead Officer/Report Author	Jane Clarke – Head of Policy and Governance
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the revised Five Year Plan 2017-22, as set out at appendix A to the report, be adopted; and
2. That the contents of the equalities impact assessment and associated actions be noted.

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Prosperous Borough
- A Green Borough
- A Confident Borough

The Five Year Plan is the strategic plan for the Council, and sets out the key objectives of Prosperous, Green and Confident as the themes for the Council's projects and plans. This report refreshes the Five Year Plan to ensure it is aligned with current thinking and circumstances, and proposes a revision to the Five Year Plan key objectives.

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Leadership Board	10 July 2017
Management Board	19 July 2017
Discussions with Portfolio Holders	Ongoing
Cabinet Advisory Boards	21 – 23 August 2017
Cabinet	14 September 2017
Full Council	27 September 2017

Revised Five Year Plan 2017-22

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Five Year Plan has been revised to take account of the substantial changes to both the national government and the local government landscape in the last three years, the effects that continued austerity measures have had on this organisation, and the results of the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Challenge report.
 - 1.2 This report presents the final version of the Five Year Plan, following consultation with councillors, stakeholders, and members of the public.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Strategic planning is important for any organisation, not least governments and local government organisations, which are responsible for delivering a range of different products and services to a wide and varied demographic.
- 2.2 Strategic planning is widely recognised as a way of helping an organisation to develop a sense of direction, and clarifies the steps it wants to take to get there. It ensures that those who work for the organisation and who are responsible for delivering the day-to-day functions of the organisation, do not lose sight of its overall aims and purpose.

Policy Framework

- 2.3 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is one of several bodies of influence within the borough area. Our plans and strategies outline the aims and ambitions we have for the borough, but also take account of, feed into, and reflect back the plans and strategies of other organisations that we work alongside, such as central Government and Kent County Council.
- 2.4 The Five Year Plan is Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's overarching strategy, which all of our other plans, strategies and policies flow from. It is supported by the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and the Local Plan. These are all medium to long term strategies, but in the short term, they are refreshed regularly by the annual Corporate Priorities and Budget, and ad hoc refreshes of the policies and Development Planning Documents of the Local Plan.

The Previous Five Year Plan

- 2.5 The last strategic plan, the Five Year Plan 2014 - 2019, was agreed in April 2014, and set out the main activities that the Council would work on to achieve its mission.
- 2.6 The Council has undertaken a variety of projects and much has been done in the last three years to achieve the key aim and mission in the Five Year Plan.

2.7 Some key successes from the last Five Year Plan include:

	We Said...	We Did...
Prosperous	By 2019, we will have worked with Kent County Council and the Highways Agency to complete dualling of the A21 and eased congestion in North Farm Industrial Estate .	By April 2015, work had begun on dualling the A21, with an expected completion date of Summer 2017. By September 2015, work had been completed to road improvement works on North Farm Industrial Estate.
	By 2019, we will have developed business space to attract small creative industries to the Borough.	By September 2016, refurbishment work had been completed to 29-31 Monson Road to provide a co-working space for creative businesses, called The House.
Green	By 2019, we will have improved facilities in Grosvenor and Hilbert park .	By April 2014, we had been awarded HLF funding of £2.36m, and to date we have completed works to the Hub, the play area, Marnock Lake and the Dripping Wells, upgraded the entrances to the park, and restored the wetlands.
	By 2019, we will have encouraged a reduction in household waste and an increase in the borough recycling and compost rate.	During 2016, we have altered our collections at the kerbside to include more materials for recycling, included material collected by our street sweeping vehicles for recycling, altered our Civic Amenity Vehicle collections and rounds, which has resulted in a significant drop in the amount of waste going to landfill, and begun the process of renewing our waste and recycling contracts, to ensure we meet the target of 50% of our waste being sent to recycling and composting.

Confident	<p>By 2019, we will have worked with local parish/town councils and community groups to devolve those services that are better placed to be delivered in the local community.</p>	<p>By August 2016, we had worked with all town and parish councils to jointly fund an improved weekend supplementary waste and recycling service (Civic Amenity Vehicle), which has seen a significant drop in the amount of waste going to landfill.</p>
	<p>By 2019, we will have worked with local parish/town councils and community groups to develop suitable community facilities.</p>	<p>By October 2016, we had worked with Southborough Town Council and KCC, so that a planning application could be submitted for the Southborough Hub, which will see a new Theatre, library, café and medical centre, plus residential housing provided for the town.</p> <p>Throughout 2016, we continued to work with a support Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council and Paddock Wood Town Council to develop community facility schemes of their own.</p>

3. FEEDBACK AND CONSULTATION

- 3.1 This version of Five Year Plan, which will cover the period from 2017-2022, has been revised to take account of the substantial changes to both the national government context and the local government landscape in the last three years, with some of those changes taking place recently. The effects that continued austerity measures have had on the organisation also need to be taken into account in the new corporate strategy.
- 3.2 As well as taking account of the significant changes taking place at a national level, the council has also taken account of comments received from the wider council membership, advice received from the Local Government Association (LGA) in their recent corporate peer challenge for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, feedback from stakeholders such as town and parish councils, and the results of a public consultation held between Tuesday 25 May and Monday 5 June.

Councillor Feedback (Appendix B)

- 3.3 Members have been consulted over the last year on the emerging draft of the revised Five Year Plan, and on the draft for public consultation.
- 3.4 Full details of the comments received by members during the stages of developing the revised Plan are included at appendix B. As a result of this feedback, changes and amendments have been made to the Plan, and these are noted in the response to the comments at appendix B.

Public Consultation (Appendix C)

- 3.5 Residents were consulted over a six week period from Tuesday 25 April to Monday 5 June, and two consultation 'events' were held at Matfield on 10 May, and Cranbrook on 12 May.
- 3.6 Full details of the comments received by members of the public during this period are included at appendix C, together with the Cabinet's response to those comments, and a note of where any amendments or changes have been made to the Plan as a result of the comments.

Stakeholder Feedback (Appendix D)

- 3.7 Key stakeholders were consulted during the public consultation period, and the revised Plan was presented to the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum on 11 May, and the Parish Chairmen's Forum on 12 June.
- 3.8 Full details of the comments received from the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum, and from those Town and Parish Councils that took part in the consultation are available at appendix D, together with the Cabinet's response to those comments and a note of where any changes or amendments have been made to the Plan as a result of the comments.

LGA Feedback

- 3.9 The Local Government Association (LGA) was invited to conduct a corporate peer challenge for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council in October 2016. The final report of the LGA on this challenge was overwhelmingly positive, but did include some recommendations for the Council to consider, of which recommendations two and three related to the communication of strategy and strategic narrative. The response of the Council to these recommendations was to include changes in the new revision of the Five Year Plan to take account of the recommendations.
- 3.10 The changes that have been made include:

Recommendation two:

A greater balance of emphasis between the projects of the Council (Our Borough), and the day-to-day work or services of the Council has been included. The work we undertake on a day to day basis, and the strategic narrative that supports this has been added in new sections titled 'Our Services', 'Our People' and 'Providing Value'.

Recommendation three:

Including a strategic message in the Five Year Plan under which the projects in 'Our Borough' are nested, has been added by updating the Vision, and including an introduction page to the 'Our Borough' section, which links the projects to the Vision. This is to provide a clear message about the future direction of the borough.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET ADVISORY BOARD

- 3.11 The Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 21 August 2017 and agreed the following recommendation:

That the recommendations set out in the report be supported.

- 3.12 The Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 22 August 2017 and agreed the following recommendation:

That the recommendations set out in the report be supported.

- 3.13 The Communities Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 23 August 2017 and agreed the following recommendation:

That the recommendations set out in the report be supported.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET

- 3.14 The Cabinet considered the matter on 14 September 2017 and resolved as follows:

That Full Council be recommended:

1. That the revised Five Year Plan 2017-22, as set out at appendix A to the report, be adopted; and
2. That the contents of the equalities impact assessment and associated actions be noted.

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

1) Do nothing

- 4.1 The Cabinet could choose to do nothing, and to not refresh the current Five Year Plan.

- 4.2 Medium term planning is an important tool for all organisations and businesses, and creating a medium term strategic plan will enable the Council to set out its aims and ambitions, which can then be tested with stakeholders and the public to ensure it is viable and fit for purpose, and that it reflects local choice and circumstances. Whilst it is not a requirement for the Council to have a strategic plan in place, for the reasons given, this is option is not recommended.

2) Agree the revised Five Year Plan

- 4.3 The Council has already committed itself, through previous Five Year Plans, to a number of projects that make up the main part of this revised version of the Five Year Plan. The revised plan presents Cabinet with an updated version of the existing plan, which takes into account changes to national government and legislation, feedback from stakeholders, and from the consultation period on the draft plan. Cabinet could chose to agree the final version of the Five Year Plan to be presented to Full Council for final decision.

5. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Given the importance of creating a strategic plan for the organisation, and given the Council's current commitments and direction, which has seen many large scale projects progressed to a point where delivery will be possible within the next five years, it is recommended that Cabinet choose option 2 and agree the final version of the revised Five Year Plan, which has been the subject of extensive consultation with the public, with partners, and with councillors, and will be presented to Full Council for final adoption on 27 September.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 If Full Council agrees to adopt the final version, this will then be published on the website as the final document and a small article added to Local magazine.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<p>Legal including Human Rights Act</p>	<p>Each local authority has a statutory duty to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The Council's Five Year Plan demonstrates compliance with that duty.</p> <p>There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect or interfere with individuals' rights and freedoms as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>	<p>Keith Trowell Senior Lawyer</p>

Agenda Item 9

<p>Finance and other resources</p>	<p>The Five Year Plan is accommodated within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and annually during the budget setting process. The current Corporate Priorities are therefore supported financially.</p> <p>Any new Corporate Priority projects that may be proposed as part of the public consultation would need to be considered as part of a robust business case for the financial viability and affordability to the Council.</p>	<p>Lee Colyer, Director of Finance and Corporate Services</p>
<p>Staffing establishment</p>	<p>This report outlines the strategic work to be undertaken over the medium term, and as such provides information on some of our future staffing requirements.</p> <p>The HR Strategy, and other HR processes and procedures will take into account the requirements within the revised strategic plan to assess the level of need for skills, and take account of any other HR and staffing issues that need to be addressed.</p>	<p>Nicky Carter, Head of HR and Customer Services</p>
<p>Risk management</p>	<p>Risks associated with the Corporate Priority projects and Council services are contained in separate risk registers, and managed through the Council's strategic risk management procedures, and in accordance with its risk management strategy.</p>	<p>Jane Clarke, Head of Policy and Governance</p>
<p>Environment and sustainability</p>	<p>The project and action plans associated with the Corporate Priority projects will have considered environment and sustainability aspects to ensure that the service areas and projects deliver the desired outcomes for Environment and Sustainability.</p>	<p>Gary Stevenson, Head of Environment and Street Scene</p>
<p>Community safety</p>	<p>There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect community safety.</p>	<p>Terry Hughes, Community Safety Manager</p>
<p>Health and Safety</p>	<p>There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect workplace health and safety.</p>	<p>Jane Clarke, Head of Policy and Governance</p>
<p>Health and wellbeing</p>	<p>There are no direct consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect health and wellbeing.</p> <p>It is widely accepted to be beneficial to health to live in a democracy with the opportunity to comment on these things.</p>	<p>Sarah Richards, Healthy Lifestyles Manager</p>

Equalities	The Council has an agreed Equality Policy Statement and objectives, and has already completed a number of equality impact assessments on its projects, but the one contained at appendix B provides an overview of the issues that have been identified so far in relation to aspects of our corporate plans and policies. This will be revisited following the results of the public consultation.	Sarah Lavallie, Corporate Governance Officer
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Revised Five Year Plan
- Appendix B: Member's Consultation Responses
- Appendix C: Public Consultation Responses
- Appendix D: Stakeholder Consultation Responses
- Appendix E: Equalities Impact Assessment

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

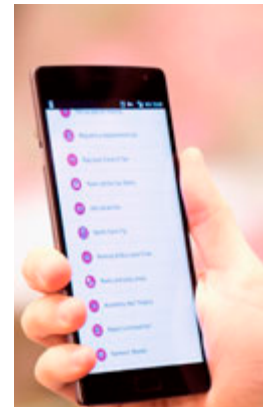
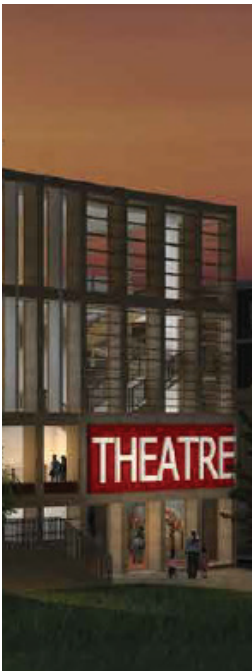
- The Five Year Plan, 2014, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/53291/Our-Five-Year-Plan-2014.pdf

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Appendix A

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

2017 – 2022





VISION

History has a tendency to repeat itself and there are few places where this is more evident than in Tunbridge Wells. Health, leisure, culture and tourism first made our borough a destination over 400 years ago. Some would argue that these key ingredients never went away. I would argue that unless we continue to build on our spa town heritage, invest in our cultural venues, sports facilities and beautiful parks, we will not continue to be an attractive destination.

Yes, I want Royal Tunbridge Wells to continue to be the cultural capital of the Kent and Sussex Weald, with theatres, galleries and alternative venues and music festivals to suit all tastes. This enhances everyone's quality of life, but our borough does not stop there. Looking beyond the town centre, in the heart of the Garden of England, lie a range of ancient market towns and villages, with outstanding countryside, world-famous gardens and many National Trust properties that tell the stories of England's past. And these play an equally important role.

Our borough is an incredibly attractive place to live, work and visit. We have the highest levels of skills and entrepreneurship in the county, amazing and creative businesses, outstanding schools, and the lowest levels of crime and unemployment, but we need to be ambitious. Standing still is not an option. We need growth.

For me, growth has to be sustainable to preserve the wellbeing of our residents. It will not be accepted at a detrimental cost. It will start with preserving what we have and dealing with some of the current challenges such as tackling congestion. It will be achieved by encouraging business, retail and trade to grow and prosper. And it will require the building of new homes so that everyone has the chance to be included in

our prosperity. This will present its own set of challenges as it will test our natural environment and require the right infrastructure, but we must meet the demand for new homes.

When I became Leader of the Council, I was determined to run the Council like a business. This approach has had much success. We've raised income through the sale of assets and managing our costs. By 2019 we will no longer receive any funding from the Government. We have achieved the cost-savings associated with this a year ahead of schedule. However, we can't and won't stop there. We will continue to cut costs, manage our finances and will have to take some difficult decisions if we are to deliver our ambitious programme of work.

People will have heard me say it many times but my door is always open. The Council will make certain it works together with local councils, groups and forums across the borough. We are an enabling council and will always help others to deliver their aims and aspirations.

This Five Year Plan sets out my vision for the borough. At its heart is a mission to see an enhanced quality of life for all. This will be delivered through sustainable growth, investing in our local economy by building new arts venues, and enhancing our community and sport facilities.



Councillor David Jukes
Leader of the Council

"To encourage investment and sustainable growth, and to enhance quality of life for all."



What sometimes gets overlooked when people think about the Council is the significant role that our services play in the day-to-day life of residents. Our team of staff work tirelessly – often in difficult circumstances – to provide a vast range of services that cost less than 50 pence per day.

The Leader often describes running the Council as a business. My job is to deliver this alongside our responsibilities for providing a wide range of services that don't generate income: cultural and leisure facilities, regulatory services that keep people safe, our Gateway and customer service staff, and our housing and community safety teams. This mix of emphasis is what makes local government both vital and exciting.

Like any business we have had to change over recent years, and I have been blown away by how our staff have responded to the most demanding challenges that have faced local Government in recent times. In the face of huge cuts to our funding, constant changes to our operating environment, and rising customer expectations, they have worked passionately and innovatively, not just to keep services going, but to make them better, cheaper and more accessible. We know that residents value this – we have some of the highest satisfaction ratings of any local council, and the regular compliments we receive from residents, businesses and partners are a testament to the dedication of our staff and councillors.

In the current climate it could be tempting to dwell too heavily on the negatives of the next few years, and the evitable changes to legislation and further reductions to our funding. But I'm an optimist and I think Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has shown it is well placed to tackle these head on.

Yes, it will mean continuing to do things differently, sometimes enabling where we once delivered directly, or working in partnership to achieve goals; but we have a great track record of doing this. What is more, our ambitions could see us moving into new civic premises. This will present opportunities to not only improve the way we work by doing more digitally, but also see us continuing to play an active role as part of the community, and to make sure we enhance quality of life for all.

I think this edition of the Five Year Plan neatly encapsulates both side of the Council: our place shaping project work and our innovative day-to-day services. I also think it will be an exhilarating five years.



William Benson
Chief Executive Officer



The borough of Tunbridge Wells

Demographic and economic growth

The population of Tunbridge Wells borough has grown by more than the national average, and this trend is set to continue with predicted population growth from 116,100 in 2014 to 122,700 by 2022.

We're also seeing interest in the borough as a place for businesses, retailers and restaurants to set up. Our predicted employment growth is 8.3 per cent by 2024, which is greater than the South East average.

Our economy is also dependent on the availability of a highly educated workforce. We have a higher proportion of jobs in the knowledge economy at 32.9 per cent compared with the average across Kent at 16.8 per cent.

Access and commuting

A growing population and successful businesses create significant pressures on our road and rail networks. We have some of the slowest journey to work times in Kent, and commuters regularly contend with delays and congestion, which impacts on our economy.

However, funding for the highways infrastructure is prioritised by central Government according to the delivery of new homes and jobs. This presents us with a problem because we are already congested, and are restricted on where we can develop.

Housing demand

Our economic success and population growth have put pressure on housing demand, and the cost of housing is increasing.

The cost of an average semi-detached house has risen by 19 per cent in the four years from 2012 to 2016. To help alleviate this we need to find land for an additional 650 new homes each year.

This is a difficult challenge, given our congestion problems, and because many areas are classed as green belt or areas of outstanding natural beauty. Opportunities to develop are limited, but if we fail to meet it, the housing gap widens.

Educational needs

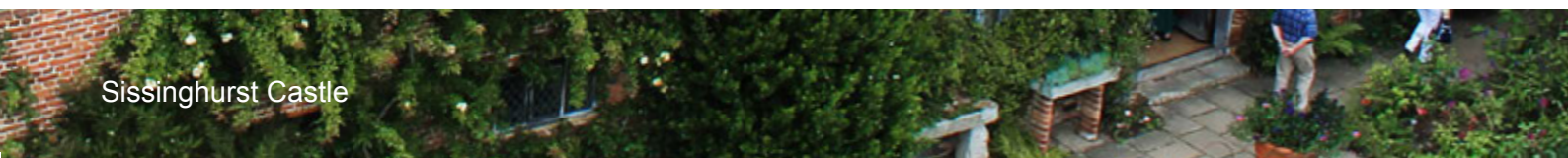
There is growing pressure on places and a need for a number of new primary schools and secondary schools.

Tunbridge Wells borough also has a mix of further education and higher education provision which we are keen to build on. We need a range of opportunities for learners and young people, including skilled manual and technical professions.

Social and health inequalities

Much of Tunbridge Wells borough is prosperous and healthy, and we will continue to support residents in maintaining healthy lifestyles, and access to good homes, jobs and education. However, our success also masks the social and health inequalities that exist. Some areas are in the 10 per cent most deprived in the country.

CONTEXT



Sissinghurst Castle

The rural areas

We are home to a number of attractive towns and villages with a rich natural history, a pleasant built environment and thriving rural businesses. Approximately 70 per cent of the land is designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Part of the success of Royal Tunbridge Wells is its pleasant setting and easy access to high quality countryside. Our historic towns and villages act as important service centres and are a vital part of the tourism economy.

Larger towns such as Cranbrook, Paddock Wood, and Southborough are essential focal points for the local economy and access to services.

Over many years we have worked with parish and town councils in our area to enhance these features and deliver improved services.

A destination town

Royal Tunbridge Wells is rooted in culture, leisure and the arts. It's what first made it a spa-town destination over 400 years ago.

Today, the town continues to be a prominent destination, with cultural, leisure and arts opportunities complemented by our beautiful parks and open spaces, our spa town heritage and a wide range of sports and activity clubs on offer.

This is a significant benefit to the local economy and for residents across the area.

More people enjoy cultural and arts activities in our area than the average across England. We can capitalise on this, but to do so we need to invest in our facilities.

Our residents value activities for promoting health and wellbeing, but we need to invest in our sports and recreation provision to encourage greater participation.

The tourism that comes with being a destination town is an important part of our economy, estimated at £261m in 2016. We will continue to support the industry, encouraging the growth in visitor accommodation, and promoting an all year round offer of attractions that visitors can enjoy.

The Borough Council

A new policy landscape

In the summer of 2016, a historic referendum on the future of Britain's membership of the European Union was held, with the outcome in favour of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. On the current timetable, the Government has indicated that the UK will have left the European Union by March 2019, which is within the lifespan of this Five Year Plan.

The Council will implement any necessary changes in policy that may occur as a result of this new central Government policy direction.

Devolution

A national policy agenda for local Government is to devolve local services to public bodies.

Devolution means that services which are currently provided and funded by central Government may be devolved to other public bodies. It also means that services we currently provide as a borough council may be devolved to parish and town councils, or community groups.

This is to ensure that services can be provided at the most local level, where knowledge and choice can be used to provide the best services for residents.

The models for local Government are changing to recognise this, which is creating both opportunities and challenges.

Resources and finances

Public services are facing unprecedented funding pressures. We are providing for an increasing population, who are growing older, and have higher expectations. While all councils are facing these challenges, we face particular difficulties.

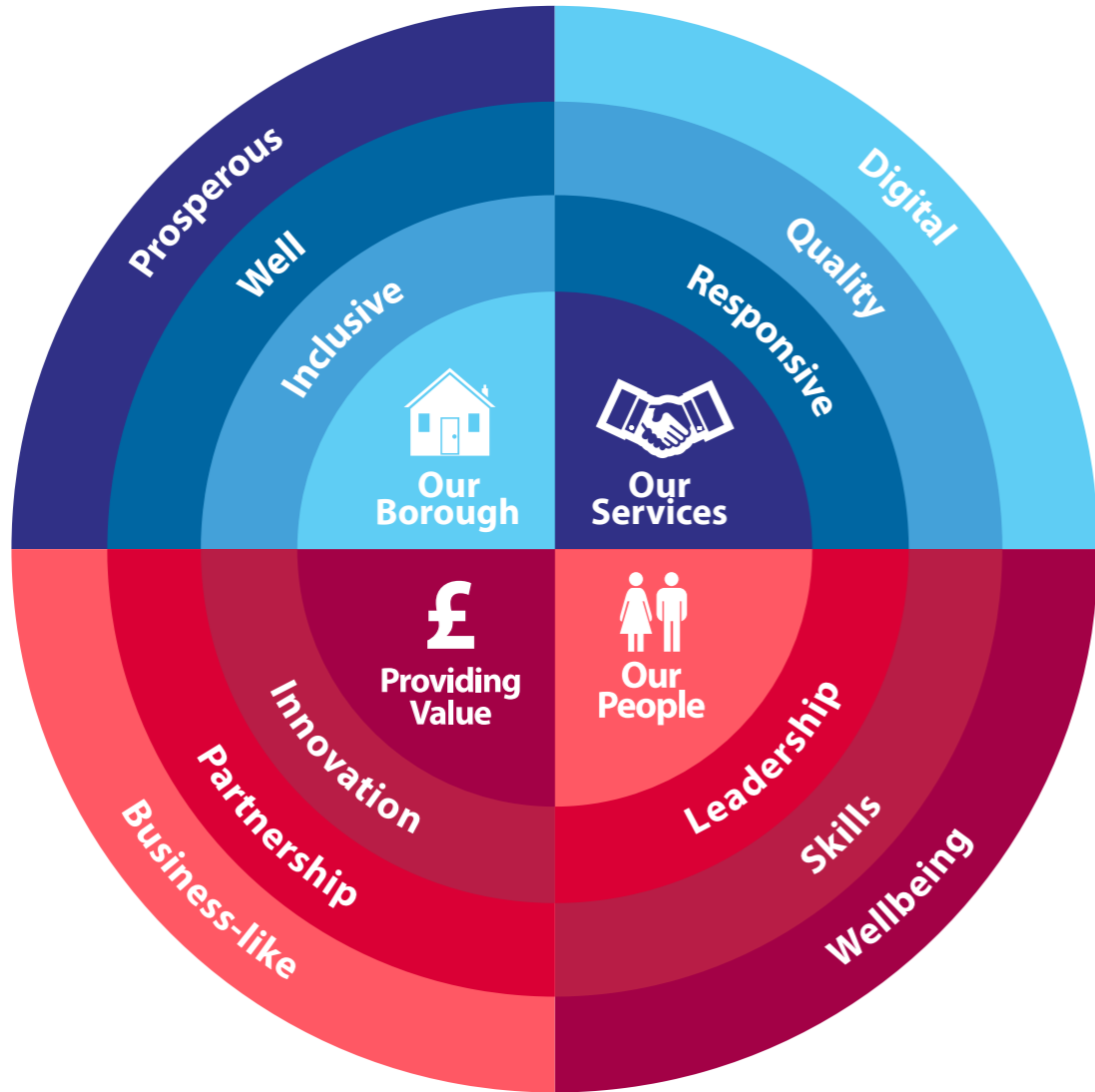
The grant that we receive from central Government will disappear by 2018/19. We need to become self-sufficient – a challenge when operating in a high-cost area.

In the future, we will need to compete for central Government funding linked to economic and housing growth, but because of our challenges we can't compete on an equal footing with other areas.

So we need to find ways to be self-sufficient, and look at a range of options for how we do things.



Cranbrook Windmill



CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Our Corporate Priorities are the things the Council believes are the most important to deliver over the next five years, to ensure we achieve the vision.

“To encourage investment and sustainable growth, and to enhance quality of life for all”

Our Borough

Supporting activities in the borough that encourage prosperity, wellness and inclusivity will make it a more attractive place for businesses to invest and for sustainable growth to take place.

- To support a **prosperous** borough
- To support a **well** borough
- To support an **inclusive** borough

Our Services

The Borough Council also needs to operate in a sustainable way, delivering services that enhance the quality of life for our residents and customers. Focusing on providing digital choice and support, good quality services, and services that respond to need will help to achieve this.

- To provide **digital** choice
- To provide **quality** services
- To provide **responsive** services

Our People

Alongside operating as a sustainable business, councillors and staff need to be equipped to lead and manage the services of the future. This will need effective leadership, relevant skills and high levels of wellbeing.

- To have **effective** leadership
- To have **relevant** skills
- To have high levels of **wellbeing**

Providing Value

To get the best value out of the public purse, the Borough Council needs to innovate to find different ways to deliver the same or better services for less money. This includes working in partnership to deliver more for less, and acting in a business-like way to secure efficiencies.

- To ensure **innovation** in our services
- To ensure effective **partnership** working
- To ensure we operate in a **business-like** way



OUR BOROUGH

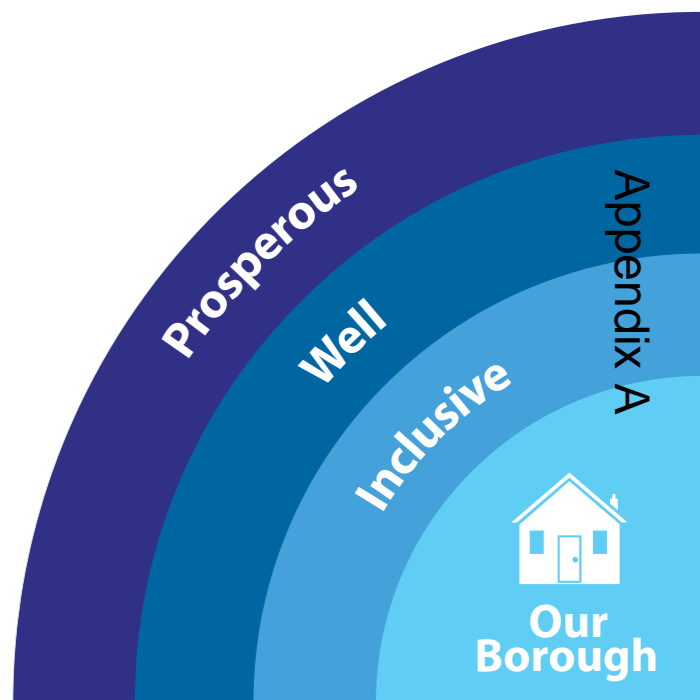
Grosvenor & Hilbert Park

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Our vision is to encourage investment and sustainable growth and enhance quality of life for all.

Focusing on activities that support prosperity, wellness and inclusivity, the borough will be a more attractive place to live, work and visit.

Our commitments on the following pages will help us to achieve this.



EIGHT BIG PROJECTS

Over the next five years, the borough council will work to deliver eight big projects that will meet the vision.

- **Provide a new Cultural and Learning Hub in Royal Tunbridge Wells**

To enhance the vibrant cultural and arts scene, and to further encourage tourism and investment in the economy, work has started on providing a new Cultural and Learning Hub in Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Funding has been secured from Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, and construction is expected to start in 2018.

- **Explore the delivery of a new theatre in Royal Tunbridge Wells**

A new theatre in Royal Tunbridge Wells to replace the Assembly Hall will encourage economic investment and tourism, and add an estimated £15 million to the local economy. A significant amount of work has already been done and, if Full Council agreement is secured, the new theatre is expected to be open in 2021.



- **Explore the delivery of new civic centre and office space in Royal Tunbridge Wells**

The borough is a thriving place to do business. To support economic investment and maintain the Council's presence in Royal Tunbridge Wells, a project to deliver a new civic centre and office space has begun. If Full Council agreement is secured, proposals will move forward into the development stage of the project. It is anticipated that the civic centre and offices will be open and ready for occupation in 2021.

- **Provide additional off-street car parking in Royal Tunbridge Wells**

Additional off-street parking will support the thriving economy in Royal Tunbridge Wells. It will also ensure visitors, who provide investment into the wider borough economy through tourism, are able to stay in town as long as they like, and want to come back. Options will be explored to provide additional off-street car parking within the town to accommodate tourism growth.

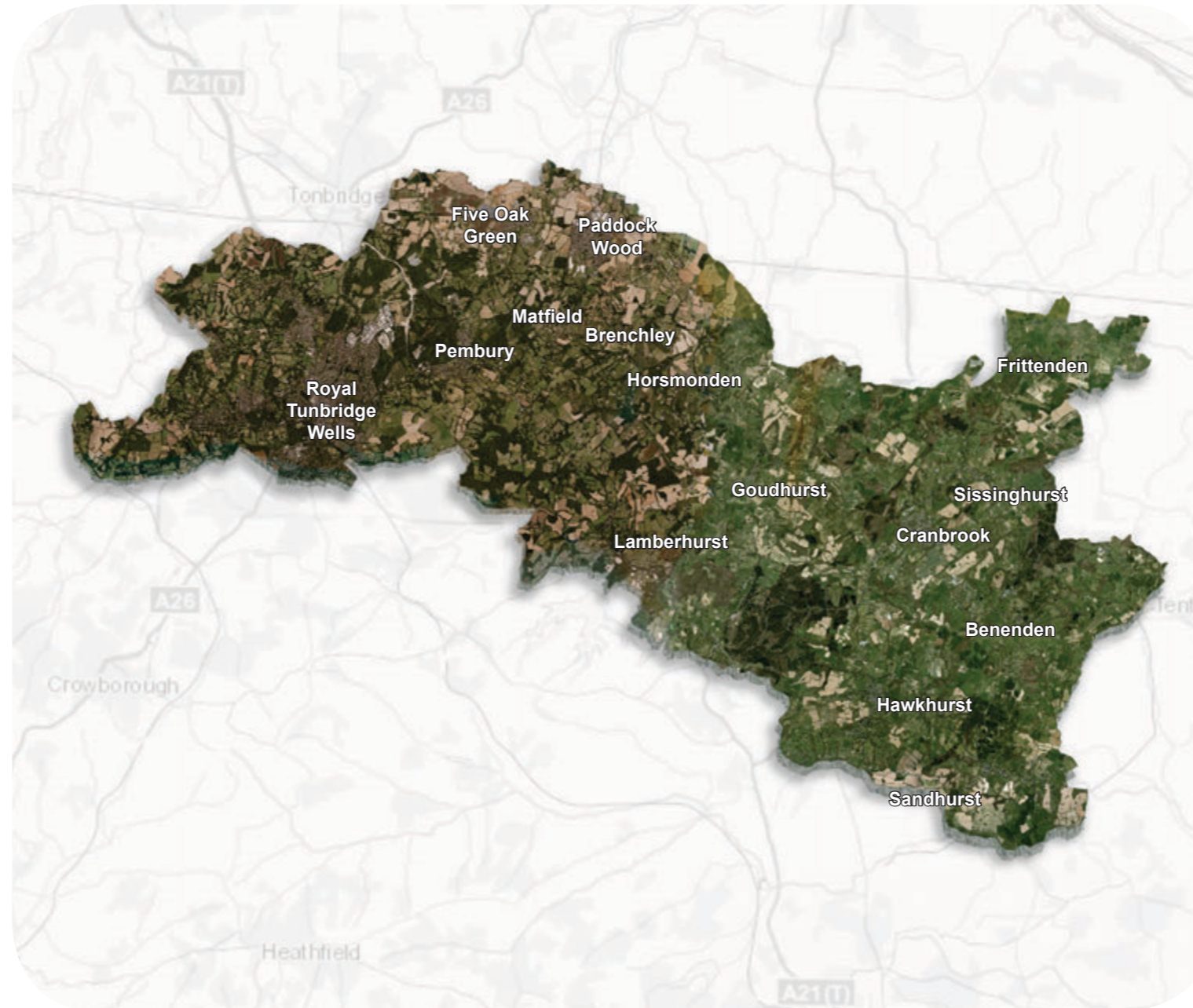
■ **Creating a new local plan for the borough**

The new local plan will cover the period from 22013 – 2033. It will outline how we shape, enhance and preserve our local built and natural environment, and encourage the growth and investment we need in a sustainable way. This may include opening up areas for high-tech businesses, such as a science park, and an aspiration for a garden village in the borough.

■ **Creating new sports facilities across the borough**

Residents value the provision of facilities and activities that promote health and wellbeing, and access to these activities adds to the quality of life experienced in the borough. There is a high take-up of sports club activities across the borough, and the local football and rugby clubs have both had considerable success in recent years. Options will be investigated to provide new sports facilities so that access is improved and increased, including the possibility of a new site that can act as a focus for a variety of sporting activities and as a catalyst for greater achievement.

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■ **Support the development of the Community Centres in the borough**

The Council has worked closely with Southborough Town Council to help them secure a planning application for the delivery of new community facilities. We will continue to work with them to deliver this exciting project, and with Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council, and Paddock Wood Town Council, who have similar aspirations to increase the availability of local services in the heart of their communities and so enhance quality of life of residents.

■ **Enhancing the public realm in the borough**

An enhanced and more pleasant public realm will help to attract further tourism, and investment in local economies, and help our businesses to grow because they are located in a place people want to come to, where there is a high quality of life. Funding has been secured the public realm in Royal Tunbridge Wells, which will see improvements to create a more pedestrian-focused space and improve the setting of the civic complex.

As an organisation we know we can't deliver everything by ourselves. There are a number of other activities which we know are important to residents, but we need to work in partnership to achieve.

The next pages outline the work we will undertake with others to achieve a prosperous, well and inclusive borough.

A PROSPEROUS BOROUGH



■ Advocating for further improvements to alleviate congestion

Whilst we are not responsible for transportation or highways improvements, we know this is one of the most important issues for our residents.

We will continue to encourage and work with Kent County Council and Highways England to secure further enhancements to our road network, and try to secure vital funding from the Local Growth Fund to enable infrastructure improvements to happen. We are also keen to work with responsible partners to secure improvements to access between Royal Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and East Sussex.

Proposed improvements to roads leading to Royal Tunbridge Wells and those trunk routes going through the town will reduce congestion and tackle air pollution. This may mean reducing road parking and widening the roads in some places.

■ Supporting the development of Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans give local communities the power to create positive economic, social and environmental development in their area.

Where parish and town councils or local community groups such as the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum have the desire to create a Neighbourhood Plan, we will support them with advice and assistance to ensure they align with and complement national planning policy and the Council's own Local Plan.

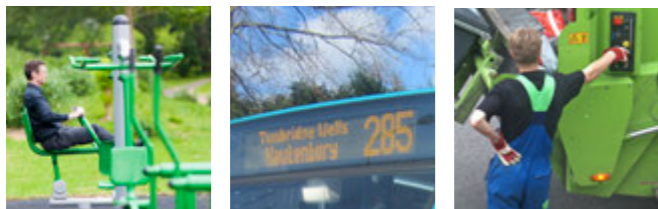
■ Advocating for new education facilities

There is a lack of primary school places and will work with our partners to secure a new school at Hawkenbury.

One of our strengths is the quality of our local schools and education establishments, including Hadlow Group, West Kent College and Canterbury Christ Church University.

We will explore the provision of a higher education facility and/or training facility in the borough to encourage young people to stay and learn here, so that they might remain to work here. We will try to get an established university to open a campus or faculty to kick-start the provision of higher education opportunities.

A WELL BOROUGH



■ Household recycling

We have extended our service to include a wider range of plastic materials and cartons that can now be put out for collection. We know from feedback that residents are keen to have kerbside glass collection. The introduction of glass collection is one of the options that will be considered as part of the process to put a new recycling and waste collection service in place, and to achieve a recycling rate of at least 50%. We anticipate that this will be in place in 2019.

■ Active travel

We need to ensure every resident is supported to live a healthy lifestyle. Switching more car journeys to active travel (walking, cycling and public transport) can improve health outcomes, is good for the environment (including air quality) and will also help to support local businesses. We know that congestion is a significant issue for residents, and whilst highways issues are matters for Kent County Council, we are able to help mitigate this by supporting active travel initiatives. The Council will work with partners to improve the cycle network in the borough, and introduce 20mph schemes to improve the safety of more vulnerable road users. We will continue to work with the bus and rail operators to improve services in the borough and provide residents and visitors with a range of travel options.

■ Improving social and health inequalities

We know that there are significant pockets of deprivation in some wards, and that the life-chances of some of our residents are limited by this deprivation.

Over the next plan period, we will continue to work with our partners to deliver the Health Inequalities Action Plan, and we will work with the West Kent Partnership to improve public health services on a regional basis.

We will expand the successful model of community partnership that was set up during the last plan period to tackle social deprivation. This will be extended to other areas of the borough to secure the same positive outcomes for local families, and focus on the benefits of work and employment. We will also work with our partners to deliver better housing options, and to provide better temporary housing for families in crisis.

AN INCLUSIVE BOROUGH



■ Engaging with Parish and Town Councils

We will continue to engage and work with parish and town councils and will revise and update the existing Parish Charter to take account of the significant changes to the local government landscape over the last five years.

We will also continue to support the Parish Chairmen's Forum and will involve town and parish councils in all discussions that affect rural areas, particularly in areas of work such as planning, where we know that government planning policy decisions can have a significant impact on rural communities.

Tourism is an important part of our borough's economy and the unique setting of our towns and villages play a key role in attracting visitors. Our new economic development strategy will outline how we intend to support the rural economy including tourism.

■ Devolution of Services

We will explore opportunities to work with our partners across the West Kent Partnership, with Kent County Council and with parish and town councils to devolve services and funding where appropriate. We will work with Sevenoaks District Council and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council to deliver a range of services across our boundaries, and where the town or parish councils are the best placed partner to provide these services we will work with them to deliver very local services such as grass cutting, footway maintenance and highways, ensuring that budgets follow services.





OUR SERVICES



Calverley Grounds

Delivering services in a sustainable way means we need to work more digitally, more responsively, and put the customer at the heart of everything we do to ensure quality services.

Our commitments on the following pages will help us to achieve this.



OUR RANGE OF SERVICES

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council provides a vast range of day to day services that our residents, businesses and visitors rely on. For less than 50p a day, we provide a range of different services such as:

- a household recycling and waste collection service
- a service to provide business support and visitor information
- help to assist and support planning applications, from small residential extensions and loft conversions, to schemes for several hundred houses, offices and shops
- an emergency call-out service for dangerous trees and structures
- care for a variety of public parks and gardens, including Dunorlan Park, Grosvenor and Hilbert Park, and Calverley Grounds
- a housing service for individuals and families at risk of eviction
- a private rental housing monitoring service to ensure a minimum standard
- licences for pubs, restaurants and entertainment venues
- a service to check and approve food outlets so that they meet minimum health and safety standards
- a service to deal with noise, litter and other environmental concerns
- a theatre
- leisure centres in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Paddock Wood and Cranbrook
- a museum and art gallery in Royal Tunbridge Wells
- community centres in Sherwood and Broadwater
- management of on-street parking and off-street car parks
- a crematorium and cemetery
- a farmers' market
- street sweeping and litter enforcement

We also have a small set of in-house services that support and give advice to our publicly-provided services, such as accountants, lawyers, property and facilities specialists, and administrators.

To provide all of this for our community, we bring in funding from four separate areas:

- council tax
- fees and charges on certain products and services (such as theatre tickets and off-street car parking)
- special Government grants for certain services
- awards, bids and grants from Government departments, agencies or non-governmental organisations

OUR SERVICE COMMITMENTS

■ All our business that can be online, will be online

As an organisation we need to move with the times. Now, more than 87 per cent of people use the internet or are online within the borough, and this is increasingly becoming the method of choice for contacting the Council. We need to adapt to this change, and make sure that all of our services that can be provided online, are available online.

■ Digital inclusion

Moving more services on to digital channels doesn't mean closing down our other contact channels.

We recognise that for some, using the internet can be difficult, and so we will continue to support people by providing 'face-by-face' services, and by designing our online services to be as easy and simple to use as possible.

■ Getting it right first time

We'll strive to get it right every time we deliver a service to the public.

We'll promote a culture of flexibility and adaptability within the Council, even if that means working in different ways, because our focus will be to deliver excellent services.

■ Putting it right first time

We know that sometimes we won't get things right first time, which is why we are also committed to putting it right first time when things go wrong, so that residents can be confident in the service they are receiving

■ Learning from complaints

When someone takes the time to complain to us, we will use this information to ensure that we learn from the mistakes we have made.

We will embed a culture of continuous improvement by using lessons learned and applying them across the Council. We will promote a positive culture around complaints, recognising that they are one of the vital ways in which we can learn from things when they go wrong.

■ Designing services you need

As a country, we are going through significant demographic change, and technological advances are driving social progress. In the future, our residents are more likely to be older, more likely to use digital technology, and more likely to engage with the Council directly through technology. We need to design our services to meet these future needs.



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OUR PEOPLE



Our People

Leadership

Skills

Wellbeing

We work in an increasingly complex world where our staff and councillors will need to show leadership and have the right skills to ensure we meet ever rising demands.

Our commitments on the following pages will help us to achieve this.

WHAT WE DO

The following are a 'day in the life' of a Housing Officer and a Tree Preservation Officer, which shows some of the variety of work we do as an organisation.

Housing Needs

No two days are ever the same in Housing Needs. We may be dealing with residents who are homeless that day, or people who have several months before they will become homeless. We try to get to people at as early a stage as possible to try and help them keep their home, or help them find somewhere else to move to before they have to leave where they are.

When a resident has lost their home, the team will speak to their family or friends, where appropriate, aiming to get them somewhere to stay in the short term. We then explore the resident's circumstances with them and give advice on how they can find alternative accommodation.

Cases could involve giving advice to a single homeless person and making referrals to supported housing, helping someone to make bids for a housing association property through our housing register, attending child protection conferences and assisting with a loan to help someone with the costs of securing a private rented property. Sometimes homelessness is unavoidable and for those who have a 'priority need' under the homelessness legislation, emergency accommodation has to be secured.

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Tree Preservation

We received two telephone calls in quick succession from neighbours of a house that had just come up for sale. The neighbours were concerned that an area of ancient woodland behind the house, and partially within its grounds, might be at risk when the sale went through, as it was likely that the house would be redeveloped. We promised to have a look and assess the trees.

A couple of days later we received a call to say that tree felling had begun. We immediately visited the site, and noted that one large tree very close to the rear of the house had been felled, presumably to make the sale a more viable proposition. This did not necessarily mean that the woodland itself was under threat at that point, but a future risk was definitely foreseeable, and so a Tree Preservation Order was immediately made to protect the woodland for the benefit of all residents into the future.



OUR PEOPLE COMMITMENTS

- **Being a councillor-led council**

Councillors are at the heart of our decision-making, and are best-placed to make the right decisions for their communities.

As an organisation, we expect all of our councillors to bring forward ideas for improvement and progress in their areas, both urban and rural. We will continue to support and train councillors in their work as community leaders and ensure they have excellent access to information.

- **Staff who are well led and managed**

Effective working relationships are key to ensuring the delivery of good services, so we will invest in our managers to ensure they have the right mix of skills to lead the organisation effectively, to deal with change, and to manage staff in the best way possible.

- **Staff and councillors have the skills they need**

The Council is going through significant change. To provide high quality services, we need to have well trained, competent and committed people. We will invest in digital technologies and upskill staff and councillors to use these, develop a more business-like focus in our staff, and put systems in place to retain knowledge and expertise.

- **Supporting healthy working environments**

The Council has a diverse and engaged workforce, and to ensure this is maintained we will continue to support activities that promote healthy lifestyles and working environments, by supporting staff and promoting flexible working arrangements and a positive working environment.

- **Anticipating change**

We need a workforce that can adapt quickly to changing business needs, and to be able to anticipate those needs in advance. Flexibility in both the workplace and in mindset will be key to this.

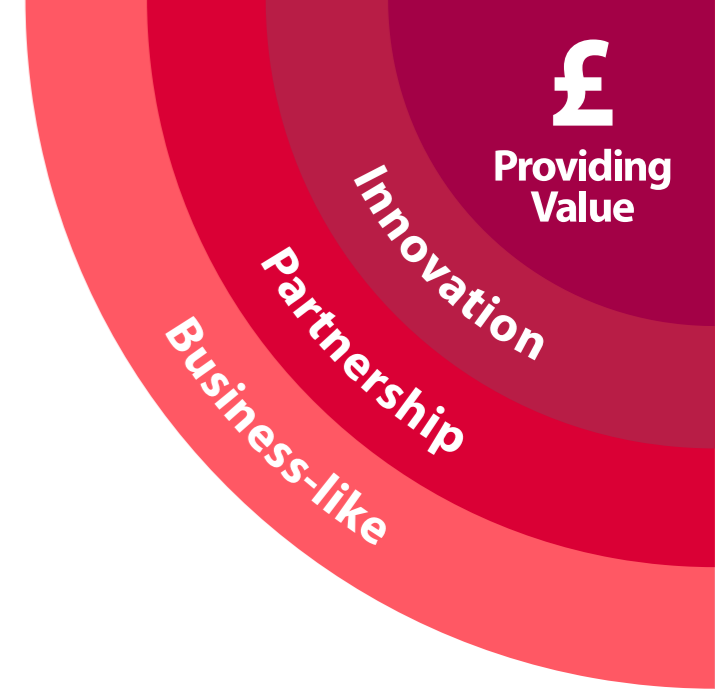
We will ensure that we are working in the most flexible way possible, and that our organisational structure continues to meet the aims and plans of the organisation.

- **Good quality councillor and officer relationships**

Good working relationships are the foundation of everything we do and strong councillor and officer relationships are a core element. We will ensure that staff are well informed and connected to promote cross-departmental and organisational working and that councillors are informed of key developments in individual service areas.



PROVIDING VALUE

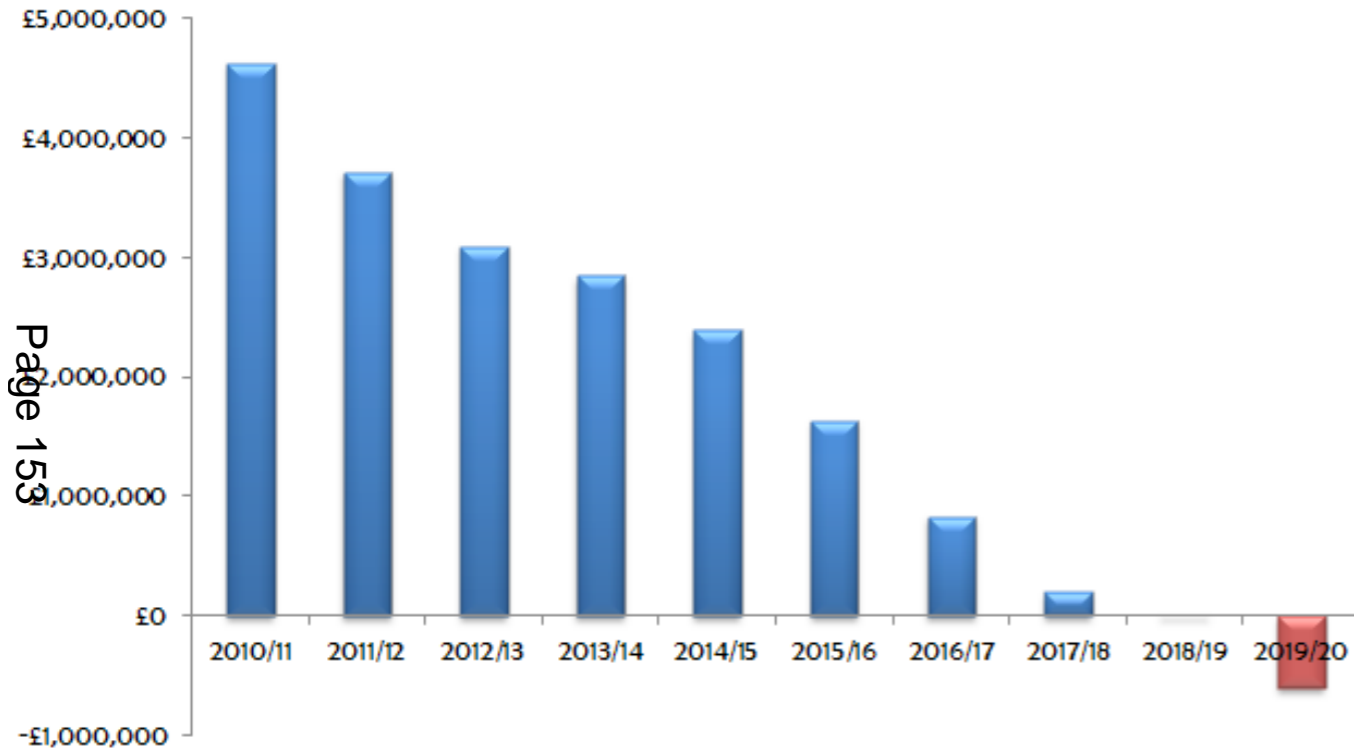


Along with many others in local Government, we are facing difficult financial circumstances, but will continue to deliver a broad range of excellent services. To ensure this for the future, we will need to transform the way in which we deliver services, by being more innovative, more business-like and working in partnership with others.

Our commitments on the following pages will help us to achieve this.

OUR FALLING GOVERNMENT GRANT

This chart shows how our Government grant has fallen from £4.6 million in 2010/11 to £0 in 2018/19. The future is uncertain and we need to ensure the council can be self-sustaining.



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OUR VALUE COMMITMENTS

- Using technology to innovate and improve**

Led by the intelligent analysis of data and feedback from customers, we will design our services from the residents' point of view so that they get what they need from us, in the way they want it.

- Transforming what we do**

We will remove duplication and fragmentation, and design end-to-end digital transactions to improve demand management and deliver savings. Finding the best way of doing things will make sure we all work in a consistent way, so that standards remain high.

- Working with the best-placed partners**

We will be proactive in seeking out partners who are able to help us deliver services, whether this is through contractors, community groups, other public authorities or the third sector. We will take a mixed economy approach, will remain committed to our existing partnerships, such as Mid Kent Services, but will explore partnerships with others, such as the West Kent Partnership.

- An enabling council**

We will continue to be an enabling council. This means that where we cannot provide a service, we will actively encourage and work with others to do so. We will also assist the parish and town councils in our area to help them deliver their ambitions at a very local level.

- Investing to create opportunities**

We understand that at times we will need to invest to create the best opportunities for efficiency and additional income. We will continue to explore opportunities to invest to save. In developing our Medium-Term Financial Strategy, we have been clear that we will take advantage of low interest rates to invest in income-generating projects.

- Make money, save money and improve processes**

We are conscious that we need to continue to deliver an excellent level of service, despite the significant changes we are going through. To ensure that we can continue to do this we will generate new income streams for the Council, spending wisely by getting best value in everything we do, and continually challenging ourselves to improve our processes to deliver more effective services.

**Draft Five Year Plan 2017 - 2022
Members' Consultation Responses**

The below comments are a summary of relevant comments made by council members at meetings of the council where the revised Five Year Plan has been considered. For a more comprehensive account of the discussions, please see the relevant minutes of the meeting as indicated, available on the council's website.

Meeting	Councillor	Summary Comments	Cabinet Response
Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board 12.07.2016	Cllr Holden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firmly against any proposals for a directly elected Mayor under devolution. Better outcomes for rural parts of the borough should be included. New recycling centre provision in the Eastern part of the borough to be established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. There are no plans for directly elected Mayors in the county. Noted, changes have been made to the Five Year Plan to reflect the importance of our rural areas. Provisions of recycling facilities are the responsibility of the County Council.
	Cllr Munn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Against directly elected Mayors under devolution. Largest infrastructure funding gap in the county needs to be addressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. There are no plans for directly elected Mayors in the county. Agreed. We have raised this consistently with KCC, and are working to address infrastructure issues through the LEP.
	Cllr Dawlings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing Neighbourhood Plans for parishes is essential as a way for them to set out their aspirations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted, amendments have been made to the Five Year Plan. We will support towns and parishes to prepare Neighbourhood Plans and have reflected this in page 19 of the new Five Year Plan.
	Cllr Elliott	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New recycling centre provision in the Eastern part of the borough to be established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of household waste recycling sites is the responsibility of the County Council. KCC Members will be reviewing the findings of a waste infrastructure review, which is part of the waste disposal strategy. KCC Members will determine the future the county-wide infrastructure requirements in the autumn.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee 31.10.2016	Cllr Woodward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough focus on unparished areas of the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells, such as Broadwater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Five Year Plan is an overarching strategy and aspiration document for the borough. Where specific issues for areas need addressing, these can either be added as corporate priorities at the annual refresh, or

**Draft Five Year Plan 2017 - 2022
Members' Consultation Responses**

			through more detailed strategies and plans that relate to specific issues (such as the Local Plan or Housing Strategy).
	Cllr Uddin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detail on the work planned to reduce social and health inequalities needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Five Year Plan is an overarching strategy and aspiration document for the borough. More detailed plans for reducing social and health inequalities are included in the Health Inequalities Action Plan, and in the ongoing project work regarding the Sherwood Partnership.
	Cllr Hannam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More focus on the rural areas needed. • Focus on securing a recycling site for the Eastern part of the borough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, amendments have been made to the plan to reference the rural economy and the importance of rural tourism to the borough. • Noted. See comment above.
Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board 20.03.2017	Cllr Moore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision should emphasise the history of Royal Tunbridge Wells as a spa town. • The document too focussed on the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells, and not enough on the borough. • The civic development should be termed civic space to demonstrate the benefit for the public. • Not in favour of road-widening schemes, but pinch points within the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells should be removed. • More specific on actions around reducing health inequalities. • Make reference to devolution of Highways functions under 'devolution'. • Minor wording changes to assist clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, changes have been made to the Five Year Plan to reflect this. • Noted, amendments have been made to the plan to reference the rural economy and the importance of rural tourism to the borough. • Noted, changes have been made to reflect this. • Amendments have been made to the plan to reflect the interaction between traffic and active travel schemes. • The Five Year Plan is an overarching strategy and aspiration document for the borough. More detailed plans for reducing social and health inequalities are included in the Health Inequalities Action Plan, and in the ongoing project work regarding the Sherwood Partnership. • Noted, changes have been made to reflect this. • Noted, changes made.
	Cllr Hamilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhancements to the road network should be treated with caution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Noted, amendments have been made to the

**Draft Five Year Plan 2017 - 2022
Members' Consultation Responses**

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More emphasis on the borough as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan to reference the rural economy and the importance of rural tourism to the borough.
	Cllr Bulman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road widening schemes are unlikely to reduce congestion. • Traffic pinch points should be tackled to improve traffic flow. • More pedestrian shared space areas should be created, in particular in Royal Tunbridge Wells. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Amendments have been made to the plan to reflect the interaction between traffic and active travel schemes. • One of the 'Eight Big Projects' is enhancing the public realm, which includes phase two of public realm enhancements for Mount Pleasant Road in Royal Tunbridge Wells.
	Cllr Lidstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a clearer strategic direction expressed in the document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, changes to wording and layout have been made to make this clearer.
	Cllr Stanyer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a clearer strategic direction expressed in the document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, changes to wording and layout have been made to make this clearer.
Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board 21.03.2017	Cllr Chapelard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document not strategic enough. • Road widening schemes were unlikely to lead to de-congestion. A park and ride scheme should be considered. • Master plan for the town centre needed, which focussed on reducing congestion. • Recycling plans should be treated with caution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, changes to wording and layout have been made to make this clearer. • Amendments have been made to the plan to reflect the interaction between traffic and active travel schemes. • A new Transport Strategy is being prepared which will deal with more specific issues around transport and congestion. • Noted.
	Cllr Holden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high priority should be the provision of a new settlement within, or partly within, the borough to accommodate some of the housing need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, this has been included as an aspiration in the Five Year Plan.
	Cllr Munn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor wording changes requested. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Communities Cabinet Advisory Board 22.03.2017	Cllr Lidstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No overarching vision for development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We disagree that there is no overarching vision for development. This is included in the Leader's foreword, and in the 'Eight Big Projects' for the borough.
	Cllr Stewart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan needs to emphasise importance of economic growth in balancing the Council's future budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. Our new Economic Development Strategy and Local Plan will address the issues of economic development in more detail,

**Draft Five Year Plan 2017 - 2022
Members' Consultation Responses**

			although we recognise that this may now have a direct link into sustainable funding for the council in the future.
	Cllr Hannam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civic complex statements are written as if the development has already been agreed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We disagree. The projects relating to the civic complex clearly state 'If Full Council agreement is secured...'
Overview and Scrutiny Committee 12.06.2017		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No specific comments made by committee members on the contents of the draft plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted.
Email comments	Cllr Woodward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution of other transport methods, aside from road widening schemes and additional parking, should be considered to reduce congestion. • Investigate the potential of a POD system for Royal Tunbridge Wells. • Concerned that extra car parking will add to congestion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments have been made to the plan to reflect the interaction between traffic and active travel schemes. • Noted. • Noted, see above comment.
Email comments	Cllr Stewart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like a park and ride scheme to be considered for Royal Tunbridge Wells. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, however park and ride schemes in other areas (such as Maidstone) have not proved to be economically sustainable.

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Comments on any part of the consultation document	Name/Organisation:	Cabinet Response
<i>TWBC: respondent mistakenly entered information in this consultation instead of Local Plan Issues & Options consultation.</i>	Mark French	Noted.
<p>Section 5/Q 10 A26 is already very congested, and I have not seen any proposals as to how more development in the area of Southborough Common will be managed, and increased congestion alleviated. Proposed development is close to ancient woodland - the common has been much improved recently, for local people and wildlife - all this will be jeopardised by such far reaching development proposals. We have long enjoyed splendid high weald views, - an area of outstanding beauty will be ruined.</p>	Mr D. Simmons	<p>Kent County Council is responsible for highways and traffic management. Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is the planning authority, and when new applications for development are submitted, the Highways Team at Kent County Council are consulted on the proposals to ensure that local roads can cope with any additional traffic anticipated from the new development. Mitigation measures can be proposed to help alleviate any extra traffic and these would be paid for by the developer when the new development is built out.</p> <p>The Borough Council and the County Council work together to produce a Transport Strategy for the area, and this is being renewed alongside the new Local Plan to take account of the new levels of growth expected in the borough.</p>
<p>An inspirational document with many sensible proposals, yet the key challenge - traffic movement to / through the town is not addressed and the proposed provision of more off street parking will surely just add to the existing congestion? Perhaps Park and Ride from e.g. The Hop Farm might help.</p>	Bob Anthony	<p>Kent County Council is responsible for highways and traffic management. As this issue is important to many residents, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council will continue to advocate for road improvements, and where possible work with Kent County Council to mitigate any issues.</p> <p>The Transport Strategy, a joint document between the Borough Council and the County Council, is currently being renewed alongside the Local Plan to take account of the new levels of growth expected in the borough.</p>
I find the document vague and using aspiration as a substitute for the kind of detail that would make comment meaningful.	Maurice Price	Noted. This is an overarching strategy and is therefore unable to go into greater levels of detail, given the extent of projects and services contained within it. Our projects are available in more detail through the relevant business cases, action plans

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Comments on any part of the consultation document	Name/Organisation:	Cabinet Response
<p>'The new theatre project in my view is not a priority and will impact on a particularly valuable community space in Tunbridge Wells. I do not believe the the public realm has, or will be improved in Tunbridge Wells or Southborough from the projects stated and I believe that both towns are losing their attractive qualities.</p> <p>The area where the old cinema stood has been an eyesore for many years and if the council really want to attract more business and tourism to the town this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>I understand the need for housing development and that there is a shortage however the infrastructure does not allow for the extra population and the traffic congestion will only become worse. I personally know people who avoid visiting Tunbridge Wells because of the traffic delays on the A26 – this is not a new problem.</p> <p>I am sure the plan will be implemented despite protestations but I hope to continue to live in a town once renowned for its character and beauty.</p>	<p>July Cave</p>	<p>and strategies that sit under the Five Year Plan.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The old cinema site is not in the possession of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, and as such we are reliant on the private owners of the site to come forward with a suitable planning application. We have been working with the current owners of the site, and are very pleased that a planning application has now been submitted.</p> <p>We understand that traffic congestion is a particularly important issue for residents, and we will continue to advocate for road improvements. Kent County Council is responsible for highways and traffic management, and where possible we work with them to find measures to mitigate the issues. The Transport Strategy, a joint document between the Borough Council and the County Council, is currently being renewed alongside the Local Plan to take account of the new levels of growth expected in the borough.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
<p>Page 12 - Theatre and Offices / Civic Space.</p> <p>The existing Assembly Halls are perfectly suited and located for their purpose. If there is a proven need for expansion it should be facilitated by moving the Police Station into new premises. The police building and the last of the Decimus Burton crescent buildings are very poorly utilised and could be brought into a greater scheme to expand the theatre Operation and introduce commercial/retail space into the theatre offer.</p> <p>The existing Town Hall / Civic complex are as above purpose built</p>	<p>Mr Bruce M Neilson MCIOB MAPM</p>	<p>We have aspirations to develop a theatre for the borough capable of hosting high-end West End shows.</p> <p>We believe this will add around £14m to the local economy each year (through cultural and tourism activity, which is an important part of the borough's economy), improve the cultural offer and act as a hub for the community so that quality of life for our residents is enhanced, and increase the sustainability of the theatre operation by attracting larger audiences.</p> <p>The current Assembly Hall Theatre is not able to offer this kind</p>

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Comments on any part of the consultation document	Name/Organisation:	Cabinet Response
<p>and strategically located as well as being ill suited to other purposes! seriously risking them becoming the victim of Land Banking and protracted planning in the same way as the cinema site. These buildings can be substantially updated and modernised to suit current and future council spacial requirements at a fraction of the cost of new buildings and would gain substantial merit under BREEAM in reusing the existing buildings and not destroying the finite public open space, parks and mature trees vital to our town centre.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 161</p>		<p>of potential benefit to the economy or our residents.</p> <p>Expert consultants have reviewed all options for the redevelopment of the Assembly Hall and concluded that, given the constraints of the building and its Listed status, it would cost £31m (up from £25m in 2013) to redevelop.</p> <p>However, even with this investment the Assembly Hall would still not be large enough to attract the bigger productions. The theatre's fly tower would remain too low and the backstage would still be too small. The foyer would also be too small for an enlarged audience.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that if the existing Assembly Hall was redeveloped the building would have to close for 2-3 years, removing an important leisure amenity from local residents, and the economy.</p> <p>The current town hall and civic complex would remain in the possession of the Borough Council, which means we will have a much greater say on how and when the site is redeveloped, thereby significantly reducing the risk of it remaining vacant.</p>
<p>Dear Mr Jukes,</p> <p>I would like to compliment you on the draft five year plan. There are many areas needing improvement & development that appear to be in the process of being addressed. This may not be the first you/TWBC has produced but having lived in the borough for more than 20 years it is the first I have seen. This raises the point as to how it can be that the plan hasn't been effectively promoted so TWBC's inhabitants for comment. What level of feedback have you</p>	<p>Guy MacNaughton</p>	<p>Noted, thank you.</p> <p>The consultation was advertised through social media websites, at the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum meeting, through the Parish and Town Councils, at two separate consultation events held on 10 May in Matfield and 12 May in Cranbrook, with hard copies placed in the Royal Tunbridge Wells Library and at the Weald Information Centre in Cranbrook. A digital copy was displayed and advertised on our website. Alongside this we notified through email the list of residents who have signed up to our consultation portal.</p>

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Comments on any part of the consultation document	Name/Organisation:	Cabinet Response
<p>received? I only heard about the plan at a meeting in Goudhurst held about a different matter. I could very easily have missed it. Email may be regarded by some as slightly outdated but isn't it a way of effectively and efficiently and inexpensively broadcasting issues we need to be aware of?</p> <p>Your opening section highlights the fact TW sits at the heart of a very beautiful part of the country - it's why people want to visit the town and surrounding countryside and hence why it should not in any way be developed to its detriment. The selection of sites, the quality of housing (both from an aesthetic point of view but also build quality/energy efficiency) are of utmost importance in maintaining the area's character and quality and should be of equal importance to any other factors. Many would argue that before any further houses are built an investment in infrastructure and transport should be made. The trains to London are slow and overcrowded, but nothing is done about this. The roads in the area are often narrow, windy and of poor quality and already congested and cannot take more cars. That said for many of us who live in the countryside we like narrow roads, it adds to the charm!</p> <p>Taking into account the views of local people is essential and I urge you to ensure this becomes central to any future plan.</p>		<p>We agree that high quality housing and protection areas of character and quality are of importance. The planning policies and development allocations of the adopted Core Strategy seek to deliver sustainable development, balancing the need for growth with protection and enhancement of the borough's highly-valued built and natural environment. In preparing a new up-to-date Local Plan the Council will seek to retain the same objectives: promoting high quality development; and ensuring that the right type of development happens in the right places.</p> <p>Unfortunately, funding for improvements to infrastructure, including road and rail improvements, are now directly linked by central Government to housing growth, which as the Plan highlights, is a particular problem for us due to the restricted areas in which we can develop.</p>

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Comment	Council	Cabinet Response
The Parish Council were largely agreeable with the draft five year plan and those strategies put forward.	Horsmonden Parish Council	Noted, thank you.
<p>1. We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Five-Year Plan, and fully support its ambitious vision to enhance the quality of life for all residents. The focus on sustainability is to be applauded. We recognise that it will be extremely challenging to achieve real growth, given the constraints (environmental, financial, national political priorities) which will influence the attainment of the council's ambitions. However, from the range and scale of the projects set out in the document, it seems that there is a well founded appetite for transformational change in the urban areas. There is also genuine recognition of the role of rural areas in contributing to social, economic and environmental well-being of the whole borough.</p> <p>2. In terms of the relationship between the borough council, and parish and town councils, we are delighted to see a strong commitment to a closer working-relationship. This recognises the shared responsibility for providing the services that are important to residents, and the need to ensure that the arrangements for commissioning or delivering those services are as robust as possible. We believe that the challenges of devolution – resources, accountability, subsidiarity – can be best addressed collaboratively, and the borough council will in Brenchley P. C. find a ready partner in seeking solutions to those challenges.</p>	Brenchley Parish Council	Noted, thank you.
The document focusses mainly on the urban area of Tunbridge Wells and pays little attention to the rural areas of the Borough. The town is, of course, an important hub for	Benenden Parish Council	We have amended the revised Five Year Plan to take account of your comments and make reference to the important roles our rural areas play, and the tourism they

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the economic and social life of local residents. However past resident and visitor surveys have indicated that the attractiveness of the town as a place to live, work, or visit is largely due to the fact that the town is not too big and that it is in a very rural setting in the High Weald AONB and surrounded by small villages and other settlements.

In the eastern part of the Borough, the town of Cranbrook is mentioned only in passing despite its strategic importance to many surrounding villages. There is however a nice picture of the Union Mill - presentation appears to be more important than strategic content in the document.

There appears to be no mention of Benenden.

So if the consultation draft is to be improved, we would suggest more detail on the issues facing villages such as Benenden, and what the Borough Council can do to tackle them.

For example, we would suggest that it should be Borough policy to encourage small scale sensitive development in the villages so as not to detract from their historic character and charm.

The provision of community facilities should be high on the agenda, especially for the local hub, Cranbrook.

Villages, such as Benenden, need to maintain the viability of their local shops, pubs and other small businesses and the Borough Council should consider how it can assist in this. In villages these are not just businesses, these are also important community facilities and their loss would turn our villages into zombie ghettos. In particular these are hard hit with the current high levels set for the NNDR, or

attract, to the larger town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and the wider borough.

Whilst we cannot list every town and village in the borough within the Five Year Plan, we have made amendments to reference to the larger towns of Southborough, Cranbrook and Paddock Wood, and the strategic importance they play.

The type and nature of development are policy issues reserved for the Local Plan and associated documents, and we not include this in our Five Year Plan corporate strategy.

We recognise the importance of community facilities, and the community centre proposals at Cranbrook, Southborough and Paddock Wood have been added as part of our 'eight big projects' to demonstrate their importance.

Business rates are set nationally, and the Council has no ability to change the rates that have been set by the Government. The government recently confirmed additional funding to support businesses that have seen significant increases in business rates following the recent revaluation. The council is developing the local criteria for relief within the borough. Any business rate relief needs to be fair and carefully balanced against the needs of other tax payers in the area.

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<p>Business Rate. These are, of course, imposed on us from above and not set by the Borough Council (another example of the lack of true localism). The Borough can however offer Business Rate Relief. We acknowledge that this is expensive for the Borough, as it cannot reclaim the sum from central government. However, given the strategic and community importance of these facilities in our villages the Borough should be able to help more than it does. An example of this in Hawkhurst is the Kino cinema which serves all of the eastern part of the Borough.</p> <p>In conclusion, we feel that the strategic content of the document should be enhanced, especially for the rural areas. We also feel that the document should be more ambitious and visionary. In our case, the people of Benenden should be given cause to consider themselves fortunate to live in the Borough of Tunbridge Wells and not in Ashford or Maidstone. Currently one hears this said only on a Saturday morning when the CAV Saturday dustcart is visiting. In this regard, the Council should be very wary about the sharing of operations with other local authorities. It needs to differentiate itself from them, not be taken over by them. Consideration should be given as to how localism can be improved with more powers, not just costs, for the Parish Councils.</p>		
<p>Vision/Corporate Priorities</p> <p>Although there is reference to delivering a prosperous, well and inclusive borough, the plan appears to major on what this means for Royal Tunbridge Wells and not the remainder of the borough. As an example of a rural outlying Parish, it does not feel as if the Plan has much application in Frittenden. This should be addressed.</p>	<p>Frittenden Parish Council</p>	<p>We have amended the revised Five Year Plan to take account of your comments and make reference to the important roles our rural areas play, and the tourism they attract, to the larger town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and the wider borough.</p> <p>Whilst we cannot list every town and village in the borough within the Five Year Plan, we have made amendments to reference to the larger towns of Southborough, Cranbrook</p>

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<p>Context</p> <p>With reference to 'the rural areas', the Plan refers to the fact that 'we have worked with parish and town councils ...to enhance these features [attractive villages, rich natural history, pleasant built environment, thriving rural businesses, AONB] and deliver improved services'. We are not clear in what areas the borough council has worked with rural parishes in recent years and how the relationship with parish councils will be strengthened going forward. The impact on the parish appears to result from budget cuts eg reduced civic amenity vehicle service and no bus service.</p> <p>In respect of 'devolution', we would like to understand more about the timing and type of services that may be devolved and the financial implications.</p> <p>A Well Borough</p> <p>We would question whether the proposal to charge for garden waste is compatible with the goal to achieve a recycling rate of at least 50%.</p> <p>In addition, with cuts to the service provided by the Civic Amenity Vehicle, we would suggest that the borough council should prioritise the opening of a new recycling centre in the east of the borough.</p> <p>Projects</p> <p>We are concerned that the Plan refers to 'an aspiration for a garden village within the borough'. This feels like a predetermination of the current Issues and Options Consultation which would be wholly wrong.</p>	<p>and Paddock Wood, and the strategic importance they play.</p> <p>The borough council has worked with town and parish council's through the Parish Chairmen's Forum for many years. Unfortunately, due to the extensive cuts from Government the borough council has received since 2010 (a reduction in Government grant from £4.6m to £0 next year), in recent years this work has been focussed on finding new ways to provide services together, such as changes to the Civic Amenity Vehicle scheme.</p> <p>We note the Parish Council's interest in this work stream and will include further up-dates on devolution and cross-working arrangements at the Parish Chairmen's Forum meetings.</p> <p>Our waste and recycling and waste collection contract will go out to tender in 2018, and a range of service options will be considered as part of this process. The introduction of glass recycling will help to increase our recycling rate.</p> <p>Whilst the borough council is responsible for recycling and waste collection, it is Kent County Council that is responsible for recycling and waste processing, and for recycling and waste centres. We have raised the possibility of Kent County Council opening a recycling and waste centre nearer to the Eastern part of the borough, and will continue to advocate for this. KCC Members will be reviewing the findings of a waste infrastructure review, which is part of the waste disposal strategy, and determining the future the county-wide infrastructure requirements in the autumn.</p> <p>The Five Year Plan is an aspirational document for the next five years, and as such sets out a number of themes, ideas and projects which are yet to be formally agreed through the</p>
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<p>In respect of Neighbourhood Plans, Frittenden parish would request advice and guidance in respect of the potential working up of a Plan and how this sits with the current Local Plan process.</p> <p>An Inclusive Borough</p> <p>The Plan states that 'we will continue to engage and work with parish councils...'. We would like to understand the current 'engagement and work' with us as this is not apparent. The Parish Chairmen's Forum though useful is largely a means of top-down communication. A more balanced dialogue between the borough council and Parish/Town councils could help realise the aspiration to be an inclusive borough.</p> <p>What we do</p> <p>Many of the stated services have little impact on outlying communities. Two things that would be beneficial:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Press for better broadband in rural areas – desirable for domestic users and essential if rural businesses are to flourish. 2. Provide more support for the enforcement of safe on-street parking in villages. 		<p>decision-making structures of the council. It is right that residents are informed of the vision of the council for the next five years, but this does not override subsequent consultation processes, or decision making processes related to any of the projects or aspirations within the plan.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted, we would welcome suggestions from the Parish Council for items to discuss at the next Parish Chairmen's Forum.</p> <p>TWBC has worked with KCC and the Kent Broadband Delivery UK to secure improvements to broadband in Brenchley and Matfield, Horsmonden, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst, and Speldhurst. We are continuing to work with and support KCC to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of residences across the county by the end of 2017. We know this is an important issue for rural communities, and will be addressing this through our revised Economic Development Strategy.</p> <p>On-street parking enforcement is the responsibility of the Highways Authority, KCC, and we are working together to try to address known problems. Unfortunately, highways funding is not always available to make the required improvements.</p>
<p>Members discussed the Plan and it was RESOLVED that the following observations were to be passed to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.</p>	<p>Southborough Town Council</p>	<p>Noted, thank you.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members support the process for the new cultural hub and civic centre. • Although Members would support devolution in principle, the appropriate funds would need to be available. • Members support the works done to date on the cycling strategy and additional 20 mph zones the next challenge is a cheap reliable bus service. • Members support the work being put into tackling social deprivation. • More community safety cameras to be installed. • Members would support kerbside glass recycling 		
<p>The population of the Borough is approximately half in the urban area of Tunbridge Wells and half in the rural parishes. This Five Year Plan does not reflect that balance. The terminology used implies a greater commitment to the urban areas. An example is ‘we will have completed...’ for the urban area as opposed to ‘we will have supported...’ for the rural areas.</p> <p>Tourism is an important part of the economy, but there is nothing in the Plan to actively encourage and support tourism in the rural parishes. There should be some active coordination and provision of all tourism information throughout the Borough.</p> <p>There is little in this Plan that encourages access to and from the rural areas. There needs to be some innovation on the provision of bus services, perhaps mini-buses, or car sharing. The lack of frequency and convenience of such services means that cars are the only viable option. If bus timetables could reliably match the train times, buses would be used more. Pembury Hospital visits are a particular problem for non-drivers due to the absence of the 297 bus on Sundays and weekday evenings.</p>	<p>Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council</p>	<p>This refers to wording in the document relating to supporting the development of community centres. As this work is being done in conjunction with the relevant town and parish councils (with the town or parish council as lead), we see our role as supporting these aspirations.</p> <p>We have amended the plan to include references to the importance of tourism in the rural economy. More detailed issues, projects and plans relating to promoting tourism are contained in the Destination Management Plan, and are being developed in the revised Economic Development Strategy, which includes a significant section on the rural economy.</p> <p>Kent County Council are the responsible authority for the provision of bus services, in conjunction with the bus companies.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted, the recent Economic Needs study recognises the need for a range of premises and sites for businesses including in rural areas. This will be picked up through the</p>

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<p>Encouraging cycling and walking is good, but not on our rural roads and lanes, where it is positively unsafe to do this. Safety requires major investment in pavements and cycle paths. Locally cars both park and drive on pavements with impunity.</p> <p>Thriving rural businesses need somewhere to be based. There should be active encouragement of conversion of redundant farm buildings for commercial use. Rural businesses also need a top quality broadband provision.</p> <p>We accept that we will have to experience an increase in housing, but this must be done with due consideration of the historical character of Cranbrook, Sissinghurst and the surrounding hamlets.</p> <p>Although many services can be devolved to local level, this cannot be done without the budget and supporting expertise. Providing budget for the only first few years is not sufficient. It is of regret that we see no commitment to continuation of the provision of the Community Amenity Vehicle.</p> <p>A new sports site in Tunbridge Wells will be of little benefit to those in rural parishes, especially for those reliant on bus transport. Investment in our local provision instead would be welcome and more useful.</p> <p>Similarly the new theatre in Tunbridge Wells is likely to be viewed as a vanity project. It is easier for non-car users to access London theatres, and London provides a much wider selection. The theatre in Canterbury is also accessible.</p>		<p>new Local Plan and revised Economic Development Strategy.</p> <p>TWBC has worked with KCC and the Kent Broadband Delivery UK to secure improvements to broadband in Brenchley and Matfield, Horsmonden, Cranbrook and Sissinghurst, and Speldhurst. We are continuing to work with and support KCC to deliver superfast broadband to 95% of residences across the county by the end of 2017. We know this is an important issue for rural communities, and will be addressing this through our revised Economic Development Strategy.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted, we have amended wording in the Five Year Plan to reflect that budgets must follow responsibilities.</p> <p>Sports facilities strategy is looking at the condition of sports facilities across the borough, and the aspirations of local clubs and national sports federations for the area. Where areas have specific ambitions for sports in their area, this can be included in discussions for contributions should any funding for the area, in the form of S106 money for example, become available.</p> <p>Details from the Assembly Hall database show that visitors are split 60/40 between those from the TN1, TN2 and TN4 postcodes that take in the town centre, Pembury, Southborough and Rusthall and those from rural areas of the borough. This demonstrates our theatre draws in audiences from across the borough, and not just the town itself. The work we have completed also shows that there is unmet demand for theatre in Tunbridge Wells postcodes and a much more significant potential audience in the</p>
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<p>To complement Cranbrook's growth and importance consideration should be given to it being the location for new tertiary education provision mentioned under 'Projects a Prosperous Borough'. This could be an offshoot from Hadlow or West Kent Colleges offering agricultural, horticultural and technical education. Adult education facilities are sadly lacking in the rural areas.</p> <p>In general, greater investment is needed in Cranbrook to re-establish its position as an important market town attracting visitors and providing services to residents and those of the surrounding areas. Improved sports and community facilities are a vital factor in improving social cohesion. Facilities in Tunbridge Wells are mostly unavailable to our residents due to the distance and poor public transport.</p> <p>Investment should match the need.</p>		<p>surrounding South East. Increased visitor numbers attracted by the new theatre will boost the tourism economy, and those businesses that service it, from across our area.</p> <p>Noted. Further work would be required to ascertain if Cranbrook would be a suitable location for new tertiary education provision. Both the Five Year Plan and the ED Strategy reference the desire to explore options for the provision of further HE in the Borough.</p>
<p>Generally, the document is focussed on the urban rather than rural areas of the Borough. This needs to be addressed to achieve a better strategic balance.</p> <p>CONTEXT For example, in the CONTEXT section on page 6 'Demographic and Economic Growth', there is no mention of the rural economy.</p> <p>FARMING Much of the Borough is taken up with farmland and yet there is no mention of farming on page 7: 'The Rural Areas', where one might expect to see it, or anywhere else in the document?</p> <p>TOURISM Tunbridge Wells is mentioned as 'A Destination Town' but</p>	<p>Hawkhurst Parish Council</p>	<p>We have amended the revised Five Year Plan to take account of your comments and make reference to the important roles our rural areas play, and the tourism they attract, to the larger town of Royal Tunbridge Wells and the wider borough.</p> <p>Whilst we cannot list every town and village in the borough within the Five Year Plan, we have made amendments to reference to the larger towns of Southborough, Cranbrook and Paddock Wood, and the strategic importance they play.</p> <p>We will be addressing issues related to the rural economy specifically through the revised Economic Development Strategy, and note this is an important issue for towns and parishes.</p> <p>Highways issues (including traffic congestion/air quality, and</p>

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the rural villages, although acknowledged in Cllr Jukes opening letter, seem not to be considered as tourist destinations needing support to grow and prosper as such.

RURAL INCLUSION

The rural economy also needs to prosper to be a “prosperous borough”. Any off-street car parking project (page 12) should include rural settlements. The same applies to traffic congestion / air quality.

Under the “well borough” heading, the projects to 'enhance the public realm' on page 13 could include work to improve pedestrian safety in rural settlements. People don't leave the car and walk if it isn't safe to do so.

As stated in the document, new sports facilities are needed across the borough, not just in the major town. In addition to “the possibility of a new site” a commitment to assisting and supporting local initiatives would be welcome.

RURAL ISSUES

One of the biggest issues for many rural villages is HGV routing and there should be a project within the five year timeframe to tackle this problem jointly with adjacent boroughs. It is not a subject that can be left with the County Council, the Borough Council should be proactively representing the views of the Borough residents and putting forward consensual suggestions.

VULNERABILITY

There is no mention of vulnerable people, even under the “inclusive borough” heading on pages 15-16? On page 18, ensuring all borough council services are accessible for our more vulnerable and disabled people such as via GATEWAY is important and should be included in the Chief Exec's list of services and what we get for our 50p per day on page 20. It also warrants a specific objective to continue

HGV routing) are the responsibility of the Highways Authority, KCC, and we are working together to try to address known problems. Unfortunately, highways funding is not always available to make the required improvements.

Sports facilities strategy is looking at the condition of sports facilities across the borough, and the aspirations of local clubs and national sports federations for the area. Where areas have specific ambitions for sports in their area, this can be included in discussions for contributions should any funding for the area, in the form of S106 money for example, become available.

The council has an Equality Policy Statement and Objectives, which is updated every four years and agreed at Full Council meetings. This deals specifically with the Council's equality duties, and outlines and action plan for improvements. We are also supporting Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council, Paddock Wood Town Council and Southborough Town Council in their plans to deliver community centres, which will make local services more directly available to residents.

Noted, the Council has a Digital Inclusion Strategy which recognises that not everyone can, or wants to, engage with the Council digitally. We recognised the need to maintain a face to face present for those that need this level of provision.

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<p>and improve.</p> <p>TECHNOLOGY WITH EMPATHY While supportive of increasing effective use of technology (page 28) to interface with people quickly and conveniently, we also feel it is important to acknowledge the need to maintain human, face to face availability of council services.</p>		
<p>We support the views expressed by Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council and by Hawkhurst Parish Council.</p>	<p>Goudhurst Parish Council</p>	<p>Noted, thank you.</p>
<p>Town Forum response to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council 5 year plan 2017 – 2022</p> <p>While the Town Forum welcomes many aspects of the Borough Council's 5 year plan, it has a number of observations and suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>The Vision statement is a good encapsulation of Royal Tunbridge Wells, both its heritage and its future as a centre of culture. References to quality of life, the financial challenges that the Borough faces and the need for new homes are clearly described.</p> <p>The Corporate Priorities on pages 3/4 add little to the document. Better would be to explain HOW the projects listed later will deliver the Vision.</p> <p>The Context on pages 5/6 is useful, but some items are solutions rather than context. The linkage between congestion, highways infrastructure and growth through housing is misleading. Building the right sort of housing in the right place near to local services is more effective in</p>	<p>Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum</p>	<p>Noted, thank you.</p> <p>Noted. We have revised the final version of the Five Year Plan to take solutions out of the context section.</p> <p>Building new housing near to services is a good way to prevent future congestion, however the current congestion we suffer in the borough is partly as a result of historic housing and road networks not able to cope with today's development needs. New roads are one way to mitigate existing congestion problems.</p> <p>We disagree that the reference to Royal Tunbridge Wells as a destination town does not belong in the context. This section sets out the current issues and opportunities for the borough, and Royal Tunbridge Wells has a long history of being a destination town, which we are seeking to enhance and preserve through some of the projects in the Five Year Plan.</p> <p>Planning considerations, policy and strategy are contained within the Local Plan and associated planning documentation. It would be inappropriate to talk in detail on</p>

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solving congestion than building new roads, as the Campaign to Protect Rural England pointed out in its recent report <http://www.cpre.org.uk/magazine/opinion/item/4576-road-building-time-for-a-new-direction>.

The reference to Royal Tunbridge Wells as a destination town does not belong in Context. It is a key generator of economic activity which helps the whole borough to prosper and its development needs to be stated as a strategic aim.

The Town Forum has commented elsewhere on the new Local Plan, but the key is for housing to be built where it's needed and for the people that need it, often in the villages, where children and grandchildren can't afford to live in the place where their grandparents grew up. The National Planning Policy Framework requirement to meet the current Objectively Assessed Need for housing with 50% affordable needs to be included in the Context section. In recent years housing in Tunbridge Wells has been low density and expensive and concentrated in Royal Tunbridge Wells. The five year plan needs to explicitly redress this imbalance.

The description of how the Borough Council provides its services is thorough but the limits of its powers and responsibilities could be clearer:

- In areas such as health, transport & education, the Borough Council's strategy can and should be laid out, but it should be stressed that it cannot deliver the desired outcomes and can only be an enabler in these matters.
- More needs to be made of the fact that little of the money raised locally is spent on local services –

planning matters in the Five Year Plan, which is an aspirational 'vision' document.

Noted, amendments have been made to the Five Year Plan to indicate where we are not able to deliver things ourselves because they are not our direct responsibility.

Noted, changes have been made to the layout of the Five Year Plan and Strategic Compass to show the relationship between services and projects, and to make these easier to interpret. The key strategic aim of the Council is to "encourage investment and sustainable growth, and to enhance quality of life for all", and the projects within the plan reflect this external emphasis.

Noted, we recognise that active travel is an important issue for Royal Tunbridge Wells, and this is being addressed more thoroughly in the new Transport Strategy. We have amended the wording in the Five Year Plan to recognise this.

The Borough Council needs to balance the needs of all residents and visitors, and this includes those who choose to drive and those who want to engage with more active travel. There is a need for parking facilities that support the vitality of the town centre, and the council will be seeking to address the balance between car parking and active travel through its new Transport Strategy.

Other highways issues (including traffic congestion/air quality, and HGV routing) are the responsibility of the Highways Authority, KCC, and we are working together to try to address known problems. Unfortunately, highways funding is not always available to make the required

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<p>most residents do not understand this point.</p> <p>There is an absence of projects relating to the Council’s objectives other than Leisure, Culture and Tourism, with the overall effect of an imbalance in the document towards services and their delivery.</p> <p>The strategic compass on page 25 seems to be an attempt to address a key concern of the Local Government Association’s Peer Challenge from October 2016.</p> <p><i>“The council needs to develop a ‘strategic narrative’ for Tunbridge Wells that conveys what the borough and the council are all about to help people understand the strategic direction of the borough.”</i></p> <p>However, it is rather complex and fails to explain how the projects underpin the Vision.</p> <p>Recent government guidance to Local Authorities on cycling and walking and on clean air should be referenced to support the Borough’s objective of more people travelling actively. Unfortunately the references to active travel lack prominence under Social and Health Inequalities. Active travel is not an afterthought. Of all the issues that face the town, the one that many people highlight as bringing most benefit is the need for facilities that get people walking and cycling the shorter distances into town, rather than being forced into a car, as at present.</p> <p>This desire for active travel is undermined on page 12 by the projects to “improve” highways and to have more car parking, both of which lead to more cars, and thereby more congestion, more pollution and worse health. As we have</p>		<p>improvements.</p> <p>Educational needs are referenced in both the context of the Five Year Plan, as an aspiration under a Prosperous Borough, and as a specific project to see a new primary school delivered at Hawkenbury. Kent County Council are however the statutory authority responsible for education, and our role is limited to advocating what we see as the needs of the borough.</p> <p>Noted, we have amended the wording in the Five Year Plan to reflect the role community groups, such as the Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum, might play in designing new neighbourhood plans.</p> <p>Noted, we have taken account of the LGA Peer Challenge recommendations and included new sections within the Five Year Plan. This includes an updated Vision, a strategic approach for Our Borough, under which our projects are nested, and new sections under Our Services, Our People and Providing Value, which cover the strategic approach for the services that we deliver. The updated Five Year Plan sets out the key strategic aims for the authority, and a Programme Board sits under this to ensure the work is directed across the organisation.</p>
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stated elsewhere, we would not endorse the need for more parking in the absence of a comprehensive parking strategy which integrates all aspects of parking, including non-residents parking on residential streets.

Educational needs are understated. We have blackspots of need at primary, secondary and tertiary level, although we accept that the Borough Council is limited in what it can deliver.

Royal Tunbridge Wells is implicitly excluded by the reference to supporting neighbourhood plans of parish and town councils. We would welcome a reference to the need, in the absence of a local council for RTW, to consult with the RTW Town Forum in implementing the Plan.

In summary, the Town Forum asks the Borough Council to consider whether it has fully implemented the recommendations of the Local Government Association's Peer Challenge in this five year plan.

The council should take all the transformation activity that is already underway, build on it and develop it into a strategic approach and programme with application across the organisation focused on helping to fulfil the council's ambitions.

Adrian Berendt

Chair, Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

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Equality Impact Assessment Template

Summary of decision to be made:	Approval of the Council's Five Year Plan 2017-2022		
Lead Officer (job title):	Head of Policy and Governance, West Kent Equalities Officer		
Date the final decision is due to be made:	22/06/2017	Date this assessment commenced:	01/03/2017
Is the decision relevant to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty to:			
Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes		
Advance equality of opportunity	Yes		
Foster good relations	Yes		
Background			
<p>In setting the strategic direction for the Council over the next five years, there is potential to consider whether our corporate priorities reflect the needs of people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Council has approved an Equality Policy Statement and Objectives for 2016-2020 which sets out our commitments as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a community leader • a service provider, and • an employer <p>It also sets out our equality objectives which were developed by considering where we capture data in relation to each of the protected characteristics and where the equality duty is relevant within our services.</p> <p>We completed a Residents' Survey in 2015. Reducing crime and maintaining feelings of safety, protecting the environment and planning services were ranked as the most important services by respondents. Working with Kent County Council to improve congestion and cycle routes, exploring ways for improving and expanding sports facilities and having plans in place to ensure unmet housing needs in the borough are met whilst protecting the countryside and heritage of the town were ranked as the most important work programmes by respondents. Encouraging personal responsibility and making more use of buildings and money were ranked as most important for delivering savings by respondents.</p> <p>We have already completed a number of equality impact assessments on key projects. This equality impact assessment provides an overview of the issues that have been identified in relation to key aspects of the Five Year Plan so far.</p>			
Relevance to the Public Sector Equality Duty			
The Five Year Plan has the potential to include outcomes which could support all aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty.			

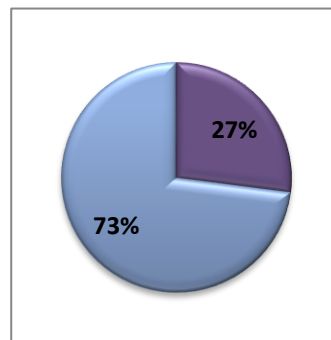
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Equality Impact Assessment Template

Disability

Evidence Base

Census (2011)



27 per cent of households in the borough include people with a long-term health problem or disability.

14 per cent of people in the borough have their day to day activities limited a little of a lot by a long-term health problem or disability.

Residents' Survey (2015)

There were no differences between respondents with disabilities and respondents without disabilities in ranking the importance of services, work programmes and delivering savings.

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

One respondent raised issues relating to the lack of rural bus services, which made accessing council services difficult for elderly and disabled residents. Whilst TWBC is not the responsible authority for bus services, this concern has been noted. TWBC is working with town and parish councils in Cranbrook, Paddock Wood and Southborough to develop new community facilities, which will help to retain and make local services more accessible to rural populations.

Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan

A prosperous borough

- We have considered the impacts of our Transport Strategy and Cycling Strategy on people with disabilities. Cycle routes require features to address the needs of people with mobility, visual or sensory impairments. The operation of transport systems and implementation of transport interventions require adaptations of infrastructure and facilities to ensure specific needs are met, including the needs of

Equality Impact Assessment Template

those with disabilities.

- We have considered the needs of people with disabilities in relation to our cultural, leisure and sporting offer and have identified that the needs of people with disabilities cannot be fully met within the current Museum building. We have also identified an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity for those that may currently be seen as under-represented in sports and active recreation, such as people with disabilities.
- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity by increasing participation in our heritage, arts and culture programme for people with disabilities. In 2016/17 staff at the Museum and Art Gallery completed training on improving access for visitors with visual impairments. In 2017/18 we will focus on improving the experience for visitors with Special Education Needs. The Assembly Hall Theatre will develop a Creative Learning Participation Plan to identify measures to diversify the theatre's audience.

A well borough

- We have considered the impacts of our Housing Allocations Policy and Housing and Homelessness Strategy on people with disabilities. The proportion of those housed who consider themselves to have a disability is slightly lower than the proportion on the register but this is due to less availability of specialist accommodation. Our Housing Strategy includes an action to provide assistance to vulnerable residents to help them remain in their homes.

An inclusive borough

- We have not identified any issues in relation to the projects in the Five Year Plan.

Our services

- We will continue to use equality impact assessments when making changes to our services. We will continue to publish equality information about the protected characteristics of people that use our services and our employees, where relevant, and use this information to monitor and evaluate our services, on an annual basis.
- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by investigating whether we can increase the number of people who are able to easily access the information they need, and satisfactorily complete the transactions they require, on the Council's website. In 2016/17, we have completed a number of accessibility audits on our website and tested our compliance with the Level AA Website Accessibility Guidelines and found no major issues. In 2017/18 we will focus on making sure our website continues to comply with accessibility standards.
- Advance equality of opportunity by encouraging a broader range of people to apply for Council

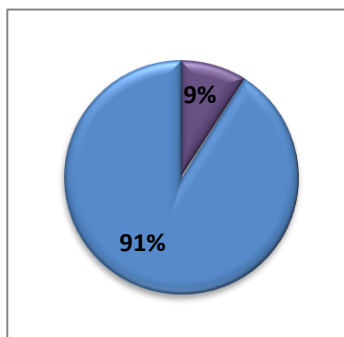
Equality Impact Assessment Template

vacancies. In 2016/17, 4.07% of applicants for Council vacancies had a disability. Of those that were recruited, 3.23% had a disability. We will continue to monitor this in 2017/18.

Carers

Evidence Base

Census (2011)



9 per cent of the population provide unpaid care.

Residents' Survey (2015)

Information about carers was not captured in the Residents' Survey.

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

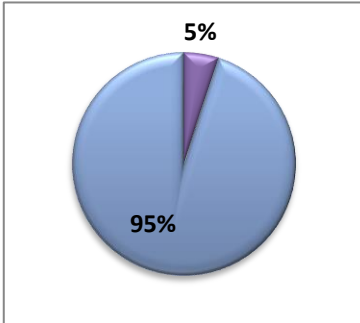
Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

No issues were raised in relation to carers.

Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan

We have not identified any issues in relation to the Five Year Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Template

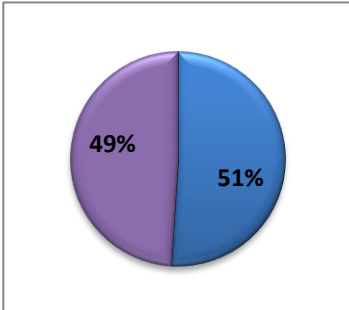
<p>Race</p>	<p>Evidence Base</p> <p><i>Census (2011)</i></p>  <p>5 per cent of people in the borough are from a Black or Minority Ethnic Background.</p> <p><i>Residents' Survey (2015)</i> There were no differences by ethnicity, in ranking the importance of services, work programmes and delivering savings.</p> <p><i>Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)</i> Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.</p> <p>No issues were raised in relation to ethnicity.</p> <p>Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan</p> <p><i>A prosperous borough</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We have considered the needs of ethnic groups in relation to our cultural, leisure and sporting offer and have identified that people from Minority Ethnic Backgrounds are less likely to use the Museum and Art Gallery.- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity by increasing participation in our heritage, arts and culture programme for ethnic groups. In 2016/17, the Museum and Art Gallery worked with the Polish Community to offer an exhibition which saw an increase in local Polish visitors to the Museum. In 2017/18 the Assembly Hall Theatre will develop a Creative Learning Participation Plan to identify measures to diversify the theatre's audience.
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Equality Impact Assessment Template

	<p><i>A well borough</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have considered the impacts of our Housing Allocations Policy and Housing and Homelessness Strategy on ethnic groups. Our Housing Strategy includes an action to participate in the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme. <p><i>An inclusive borough</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have not identified any issues in relation to the projects in the Five Year Plan. <p><i>Our services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will continue to use equality impact assessments when making changes to our services. We will continue to publish equality information about the protected characteristics of people that use our services and our employees, where relevant, and use this information to monitor and evaluate our services, on an annual basis. - To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by investigating whether we can increase the number of people who are able to easily access the information they need, and satisfactorily complete the transactions they require, on the Council's website.
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Sex

	<p>Evidence Base</p> <p><i>Census (2011)</i></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>51 per cent of the population is female and 49 per cent is male.</p> </div> </div> <p><i>Residents' Survey (2015)</i></p> <p>There were no differences between males and females in ranking the importance of services, work programmes and delivering savings.</p>
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Appendix E

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

No issues were raised in relation to males and females.

A prosperous borough

- We have considered the needs of males and females in relation to our cultural, leisure and sporting offer and have identified an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity for those that may currently be seen as under-represented in sports and active recreation, such as women and girls.

A well borough

- We have already considered the impacts of our Housing Allocations Policy and Housing and Homelessness Strategy on males and females. Our Housing Strategy includes an action to extend the use of, and promote, the Sanctuary Scheme to allow people experiencing domestic abuse to remain in their home.

An inclusive borough

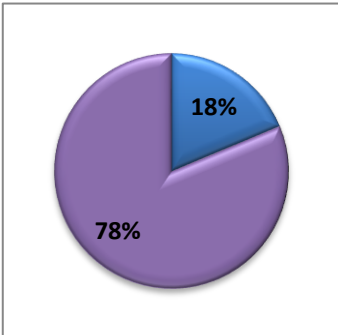
- We have not identified any issues in relation to the projects in the Five Year Plan.

Our services

- We will continue to use equality impact assessments when making changes to our services. We will continue to publish equality information about the protected characteristics of people that use our services and our employees, where relevant, and use this information to monitor and evaluate our services, on an annual basis.

- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by encouraging a broader range of people to apply for Council vacancies. In 2017/18 we will analyse and report on the Council's gender pay gap, in line with the Government's reporting requirements.

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Age	<p>Evidence Base</p> <p><i>Census (2011)</i></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>18 per cent are aged over 65. Population forecasts indicate that 26 per cent of the borough's population will be aged over 65 by 2033. The average age of the borough's population is 40.4.</p> </div> </div> <p><i>Residents' Survey (2015)</i></p> <p>Importance of services: Respondents aged 16-34 were more likely to rank providing support to local businesses and the creation of jobs, activities for promoting health and wellbeing and housing services as important. Respondents aged 35-54 were more likely to rank protecting the quality of the local environment, providing support to local businesses and the creation of jobs, and activities for promoting health and wellbeing as important. Respondents aged 55+ were more likely to rank events, theatres and arts as important.</p> <p>Importance of work programmes respondents: Aged 16-34 were more likely to rank improving the RTW town centre, exploring the potential to deliver a university within or around the town and exploring ways in which we can improve and expand sports facilities as important. Respondents aged 35-54 were more likely to rank improving congestion and cycle routes, and exploring ways which we can improve and expand sports facilities as important. Respondents aged 55+ were more likely to rank having plans in place to ensure unmet housing needs are met whilst protecting the heritage of the town, significantly improving the museum, adult education centre and art gallery, and a new improved theatre and Lottery funding bid for Calverley grounds as important.</p> <p>Delivering savings Respondents aged 16-54 ranked using technology to redesign how services are provided as important. Respondents aged 55+ ranked asking users to pay more towards the cost of discretionary services as important.</p>
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Equality Impact Assessment Template

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

One respondent raised issues relating to the lack of rural bus services, which made accessing council services difficult for elderly and disabled residents. Whilst TWBC is not the responsible authority for bus services, this concern has been noted. TWBC is working with town and parish councils in Cranbrook, Paddock Wood and Southborough to develop new community facilities, which will help to retain and make local services more accessible to rural populations.

Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan

A prosperous borough

- We have considered the impacts of our Transport Strategy and Cycling Strategy on age groups. Cycle routes require features to address the needs of younger and older people. The operation of transport systems and implementation of transport interventions require adaptations of infrastructure and facilities to ensure specific needs are met, including the needs of those with young children.
- We have considered the needs of age groups in relation to our cultural, leisure and sporting offer and have identified that some age groups are less likely to use the Museum and Art Gallery. We have also identified an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity for those that may currently be seen as under-represented in sports and active recreation, such as older people.
- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity by increasing participation in our heritage, arts and culture programme for younger and older age groups. In 2016/17 4,473 young people visited Tunbridge Wells Museum and Cranbrook Museum or took part in outreach visits in school groups or settings. The Museum are also working on a Dementia Friendly Project which will deliver weekly sessions. In 2017/18 the Assembly Hall Theatre will develop a Creative Learning Participation Plan to identify measures to diversify the theatre's audience.

A well borough

- We have considered the impacts of our Housing Allocations Policy and Housing and Homelessness Strategy on age groups. Our Housing Strategy includes actions to ensure appropriate access and support for those with dementia and to work with partners to provide access to a facility to manage crisis homelessness and a "cooling off" space for young people.
- To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by mitigating the potential impacts of welfare reform on 16-24 year olds who require our housing services. In 2016/17 we have started to monitor the number of 16-24 year olds who require our housing services. In 2017/18 we will monitor the impacts of welfare reform on all age

Equality Impact Assessment Template

groups who may be affected and identify any steps we can take to mitigate impacts where appropriate.

An inclusive borough

- We have not identified any issues in relation to the projects in the Five Year Plan.

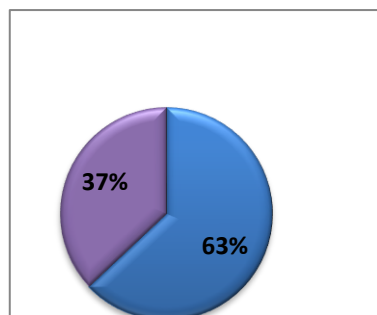
Our services

- We will continue to use equality impact assessments when making changes to our services. We will continue to publish equality information about the protected characteristics of people that use our services and our employees, where relevant, and use this information to monitor and evaluate our services, on an annual basis.
- We have identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by investigating whether we can increase the number of people who are able to easily access the information they need, and satisfactorily complete the transactions they require, on the Council's website. In 2016/17 we collected information about the age profile of people who visit the Council's website. We will continue to monitor this in 2017/18.
- We have identified a corporate equality objective to advance equality of opportunity by encouraging a broader range of people to apply for Council vacancies.

Religion / Belief

Evidence Base

Census (2011)



63 per cent of the borough's population is Christian.
 27 per cent have no religion.
 Small proportions of the remainder of the population are Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh and Jewish.

Residents' Survey (2015)

Information about religion/belief was not captured in the survey.

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so

Equality Impact Assessment Template

	<p>we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.</p> <p>No issues were raised in relation to religion or belief.</p> <p>Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan</p> <p><i>A prosperous borough</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity by increasing participation in our heritage, arts and culture programme for religious groups. <p>We have not identified any issues in relation to other aspects of the Five Year Plan.</p>
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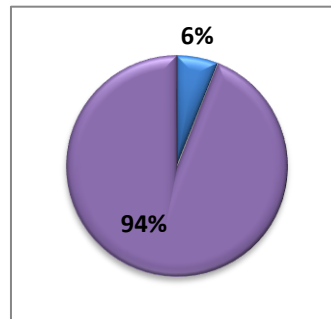
<p>Sexual Orientation</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 187</p>	<p>Evidence Base</p> <p>Sexual orientation data is not captured by the Census (2011). Sexual orientation data was not captured in the Residents' Survey (2015). Sexual orientation data was not captured in the Five Year Plan consultation (2017)</p> <p>Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics. No issues were raised in relation to sexual orientation, in the consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017).</p> <p>Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan</p> <p><i>A prosperous borough</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To support the Five Year Plan, we have already identified a corporate equality objective to foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity by increasing participation in our heritage, arts and culture programme for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people. In 2016/17 the Museum and Art Gallery have started a project to develop a lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans (LGBT) exhibition and contemporary collection plan and this will continue in 2017/18. In 2017/18 the Assembly Hall Theatre will develop a Creative Learning Participation Plan to identify measures to diversify the theatre's audience. <p>We have not identified any issues in relation to other aspects of the Five Year Plan.</p>
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Equality Impact Assessment Template

Pregnancy / Maternity

Evidence Base

Census (2011)



In 2014, there were 58 births per 1,000 of the borough's population.

Residents' Survey (2015)

Pregnancy and maternity data was not captured in the Residents' Survey (2015).

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

No issues were raised in relation to pregnancy or maternity.

Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan

A prosperous borough

- We have considered the impacts of our Transport Strategy and identified that the operation of transport systems and implementation of transport interventions require adaptations of infrastructure and facilities to ensure specific needs are met, including the needs of pregnant mothers.

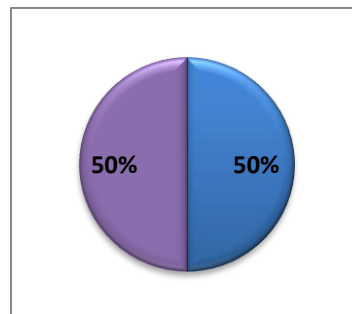
We have not identified any issues in relation to other aspects of the Five Year Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Template

Marital or Civil Partnership Status

Evidence Base

Census (2011)



50 per cent of the borough's population are married.

Residents' Survey (2015)

Information about marital or civil partnership status was not captured in the Residents' Survey (2015).

Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)

Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.

No issues were raised in relation to marital or civil partnership status.

Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan

We have not identified any issues in relation to the Five Year Plan.

Equality Impact Assessment Template

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Gender reassignment	<p>Evidence Base</p> <p><i>Census (2011)</i> Gender reassignment data is not captured by the Census.</p> <p><i>Residents' Survey (2015)</i> Information about gender reassignment was not captured in the Residents' Survey (2015).</p> <p><i>Consultation on the Five Year Plan (2017)</i> Equality monitoring questions were not asked of people responding to the Five Year Plan consultation, so we are unable to determine whether there were any differences in responses based on the eleven protected characteristics.</p> <p>No issues were raised in relation to gender reassignment.</p> <p>Issues already captured that relate to the draft Five Year Plan We have not identified any issues in relation to the Five Year Plan.</p>
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Armed Forces Community	To be considered as part of the commitments within the Community Covenant to encourage support for the Armed Forces community working and residing in the borough.
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Please tick the outcome of this assessment:	No impact	Adjust the policy	Continue the policy ✓	Stop and remove the policy
How will you summarise the impacts in the committee report:	<p>The Five Year Plan has potential to impact on all protected characteristics as it relates to all people who live in, work in or visit the borough. It also has the potential to include outcomes that support all aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. We have considered equality impact assessments that have already been completed, against key aspects of the Five Year Plan, as well as the information used to inform the development of our Equality Policy Statement and Objectives. Our Equality Policy Statement and Objectives continue to be relevant to, and will support delivery of, key aspects within the new Five Year Plan.</p>			

Appendix E

Equality Impact Assessment Template

	<p>We have limited data about some protected characteristics but will consider the impact of individual projects and plans in more detail to establish where more data may be beneficial and where particular needs may need to be addressed.</p> <p>Whilst most of the comments made during the Five Year Plan consultation did not relate to any of the protected characteristics, one respondent noted that the lack of rural bus services made accessing council services difficult for rural residents, in particular those who are elderly or have a disability. Whilst the council is not directly responsible for bus services within the area this comment has been noted. The council is currently refreshing its joint Transport Strategy with Kent County Council, and there will be an opportunity for residents to comment in more detail on how transport options affect residents in different ways – in particular we will consider where there might be negative impacts on any of the protected characteristics through the Equalities Impact Assessment for the Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Alongside this, the community centre projects within the Five Year Plan are seen as a way of bringing and keeping local services closer to communities, which should help to mitigate transport difficulties that residents might face when trying to access local services.</p>
When will you review this assessment:	When we next refresh the Five Year Plan.

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Full Council	27 September 2017
Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	Yes

Crescent Road Car Park Extension

Final Decision-Maker	Full Council
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor David Jukes – Leader of the Council
Lead Director	Lee Colyer – Director of Finance, Policy and Development
Head of Service	David Candlin – Head of Economic Development and Property
Lead Officer/Author	Diane Brady – Civic Development Manager
Classification	<p>Part Exempt</p> <p>Exempt Appendices A and B exempt by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended): Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information.</p>
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the Crescent Road Car Park extension project, designed to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) in accordance with Cabinet Decision CAB157/16 on 9 February 2017, be approved;
2. That funds be made available to procure and deliver the project up to a capital cost detailed in Exempt Appendix A plus VAT; and
3. That authority to procure, deliver and complete the project be delegated to the Head of Economic Development and Property in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, the Director of Finance, Policy and Development (S.151 Officer) and the Monitoring Officer.

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Prosperous Borough
- A Green Borough
- A Confident Borough

Agenda Item 10

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Management Board (Verbal update)	Wednesday 2 August 2017
Discussion with Portfolio Holder	Monday 14 August 2017
Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board	Monday 21 August 2017
Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	Tuesday 22 August 2017
Cabinet	Thursday 14 September 2017
Council	Wednesday 27 September 2017

Crescent Road Car Park Extension

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In February 2017 Cabinet approved the design of an extension to the Crescent Road car park, Tunbridge Wells to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design). This work has been completed
 - 1.2 This report now seeks to summarise the proposed works, project timetable and indicative budget costs, to identify the benefits of the proposed extension and to seek authority to fund the extension project.
 - 1.3 The report also requests that authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Development & Property in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, the S 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to procure, undertake and complete the project.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Crescent Road Car Park is a multi storey car park constructed in the 1970s and currently provides 1069 car parking spaces in the Town Centre. The freehold title of the site on which the car park is located is owned by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and the extent of the freehold ownership exceeds the footprint of the current structure. The location of the car park and extent of the site in Council's ownership is shown at Appendix A.
- 2.2 It is recognised that there is a need to provide further parking in the town to ease parking congestion on the streets and accommodate those vehicles that are displaced through parking management, to continue to support the revenue receipt to the Council, to facilitate proposed future development and to accommodate potential future changes to town centre parking and the provision of shared space and public realm.
- 2.3 Through the regular review of the Council's asset portfolio it has been identified that the freehold site at Crescent Road Car Park could accommodate a car park extension and it was decided by Cabinet, at their meeting on 9 February 2017 that consultants should be instructed to design an extension to the existing Crescent Road Car park to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design). In addition Cabinet approved a refurbishment of the existing structure. The refurbishment work has now been specified and is being tendered and this work will be coordinated to accommodate the car park extension if it is decided to proceed with the extension project.
- 2.4 The RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) for the potential car park extension has identified a scheme that will deliver a 4 storey extension to the East Elevation of Crescent Road car park.

- 2.5 The project will achieve the construction of an extension which delivers 96 new parking bays, 26 new cycling stands and space allocated for electric bikes for future installation. It will serve to assist the Council's corporate priorities by providing town centre parking to support the economic development of Tunbridge Wells and will support the Council's healthy borough priority by providing cycling stands and space allocated for electric bikes for future installation. All new parking bays will be wider than the existing parking bays. New landscaping will be sited to the entrance and exit of the car park.
 - 2.6 Details of the design are attached at Appendix B.
 - 2.7 Indicative budget costs and demonstration of payback periods are attached at Exempt Appendix A.
 - 2.8 The proposed project programme is attached at Exempt Appendix B and provides for submitting a planning application, specification and tender process, tender award and construction. It is anticipated that the extension project would take approximately 8 months to complete from starting on site.
 - 2.9 It is proposed that the contractor will be procured through a framework although this may be reviewed depending on the construction market at the time.
 - 2.10 The Finance department have confirmed that the project may be funded from reserves and from capital receipts from the sale of surplus assets.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 – Do nothing – This would mean that no new spaces would be delivered in this location in the town centre which could impact on its long term viability. This is not a recommended option for the future of the town. The need for parking will become more intense as the new developments proposed over the next few years commence and the do nothing options would prevent the creation of new spaces to alleviate the pressure.
- 3.2 Option 2 – Extend other car parks within the Town Centre – Although this option may be theoretically possible, the other car parks within TWBC's ownership in the town centre are not adjacent to land within the Council's freehold that is currently underused and capable of facilitating a car park of a size significant enough to justify project expenditure.
- 3.3 Option 3 – Identify other potential sites for car parking provision – This is currently being undertaken in accordance with the Cabinet's decision made in February 2017. There are limited spaces which could be suitable for the provision of car parking within the town centre, either in private or public ownership and all potential options will be subject to full feasibility review to ascertain whether parking could be facilitated on the site both in practical terms and in viability terms.

- 3.4 Option 4 – Extend Crescent Road Car Park to create 96 new spaces, 26 new cycling racks and space allocated for electric bikes for future allocation.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Preferred option - Extend Crescent Road Car Park

- 4.2 This option would allow for immediate action to be taken to facilitate temporary displaced parking from private sector development proposed in the town centre.

It would also quickly provide replacement parking to assist in the delivery of the Council's Five Year plan.

The Crescent Road car park site provides the opportunity to extend onto land currently in the Council's ownership, thus avoiding incurring the costs of acquisition.

By developing on this site, it ensure that an area of public asset that is currently underutilised is brought into revenue producing use by the provision of the new parking bays, supporting the financial objectives of the Council.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Planning and Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board and the Finance and Governance Advisory Board have been consulted. As part of the presentation given to the Cabinet Advisory Boards the Parking Manager outlined the broader parking strategy affecting the town centre and management of off-street spaces. The detail of this position is attached as Appendix C Town Centre Car Parking Demand and Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET ADVISORY BOARD

- 5.2 The Planning and Transport Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 21 August agreed the following recommendations:

That the recommendations set out in the report be supported.

- 5.3 The Finance and Governance Cabinet Advisory Board were consulted on this decision on 22 August and agreed the following recommendations:

That the recommendations set out in the report be supported.

RECOMMENDATION FROM CABINET

- 5.4 The Cabinet considered the matter on 14 September 2017 and resolved as follows:

That Full Council be recommended:

1. That the Crescent Road Car Park extension project, designed to RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) in accordance with Cabinet Decision CAB157/16 on 9 February 2017, be approved;
2. That funds be made available to procure and deliver the project up to a capital cost detailed in Exempt Appendix A plus VAT; and
3. That authority to procure, deliver and complete the project be delegated to the Head of Economic Development and Property in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance, the Director of Finance, Policy and Development (S.151 Officer) and the Monitoring Officer.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Details will be available through the Council's website.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	The legal team will continue to assist and advise on the procurement process, contracts etc.	Estelle Culligan, Interim Head of Legal Partnership 11 August 2017
Finance and other resources	The investment can be funded from reserves and capital receipts and will provide a positive payback.	Lee Colyer, Director of Finance, Policy and Development 14 August 2017
Staffing establishment	There are no additional staffing implications	Nicky Carter, Head of HR 14 August 2017
Risk management	The proposal should be recorded in the risk register, highlighting the associated construction and project management risks. These will be managed through proper contract administration including risk identification, impact assessment, mitigation and regular monitoring of existing risks and of the opportunity for the creation of new risks as the project progresses.	Diane Brady, Interim Civic Development Manager 14 August 2017
Environment and sustainability	The proposal provides additional cycle storage infrastructure and makes provision for the future installation of charging points for electric bikes	Gary Stevenson, Head of Environment and Street Scene 11 August 2017

Community safety	There are no significant community safety implications as a result of the proposals.	Terry Hughes, Community Safety Manager 14 August 2017
Health and wellbeing	This plan supports the council's priority to create opportunities that will attract the development of new and existing businesses. The economy of the town is linked to the health of the town, since employment is protective against ill-health. Cycling stands and parking for electric bikes will assist people to use healthy and sustainable forms of transport.	Sarah Richards, Healthy Lifestyles Co-ordinator 11 August 2017
Health and Safety	The scheduled works would be of a benefit to public health and safety within Crescent road car park especially when any new landscaping to the entrance and exits of the car park is taken into consideration. Any increase in safety within this car park would have additional benefits due to the large number of people that use this car park on a regular basis.	Mike Catling, Corporate Health and Safety Advisor 11 August 2017
Equalities	The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users. The decisions recommended in this report will not alter the current provision of parking spaces for people with disabilities which is sufficient to meet to demand. The extension will not include any additional parking for people with disabilities.	Sarah Lavallie, Corporate Governance Officer 11 August 2017

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Site Plan
- Appendix B: Design Drawings
- Appendix C: Town Centre Car Parking Demand and Strategy
- Exempt Appendix A: Project Cost Plan
- Exempt Appendix B: Alternative Programme Options

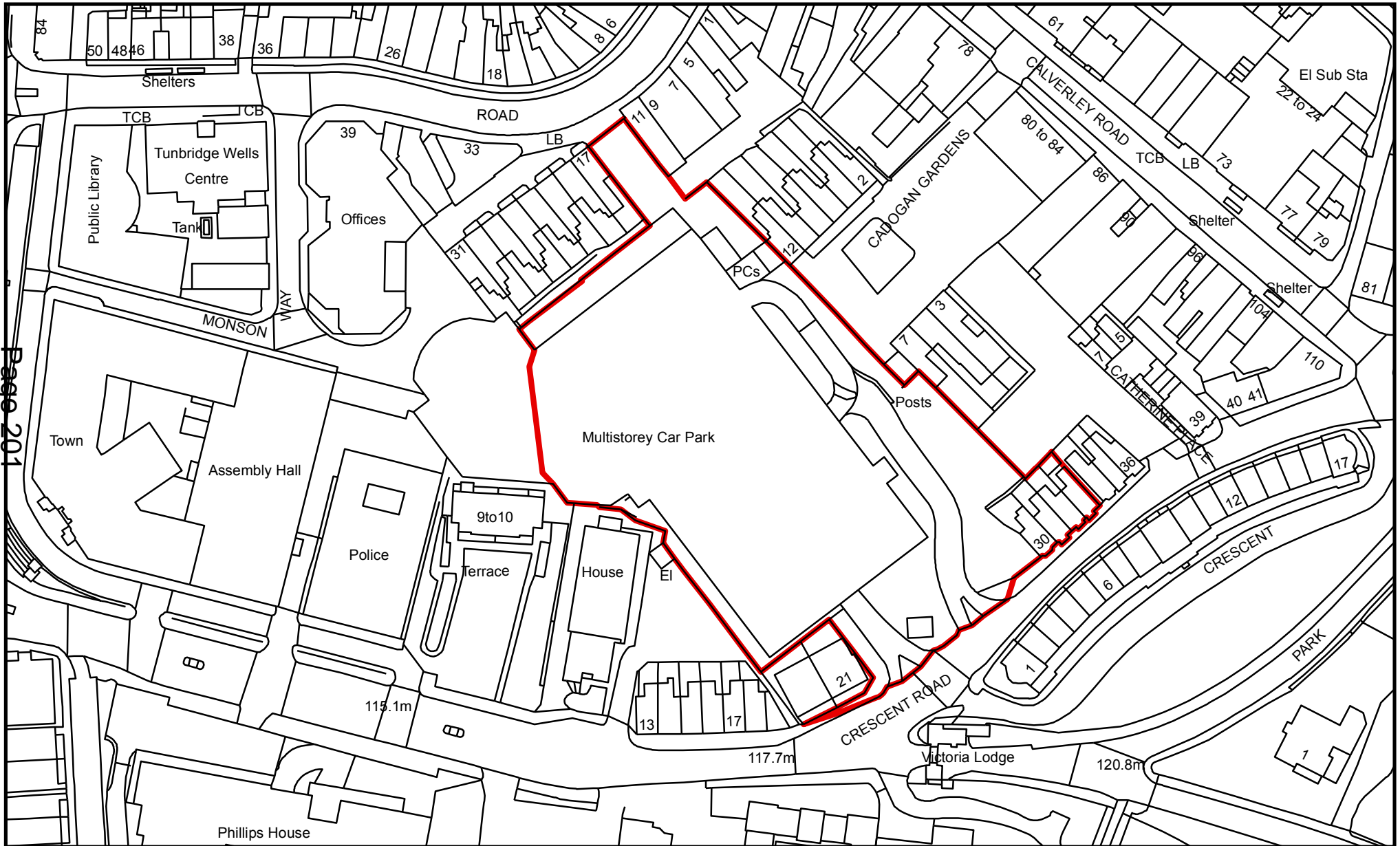
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet Report 9 February 2017:

<http://democracy.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/meetings/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=50014696&Opt=0>

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CRESCENT ROAD MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK



Page 201

Appendix A

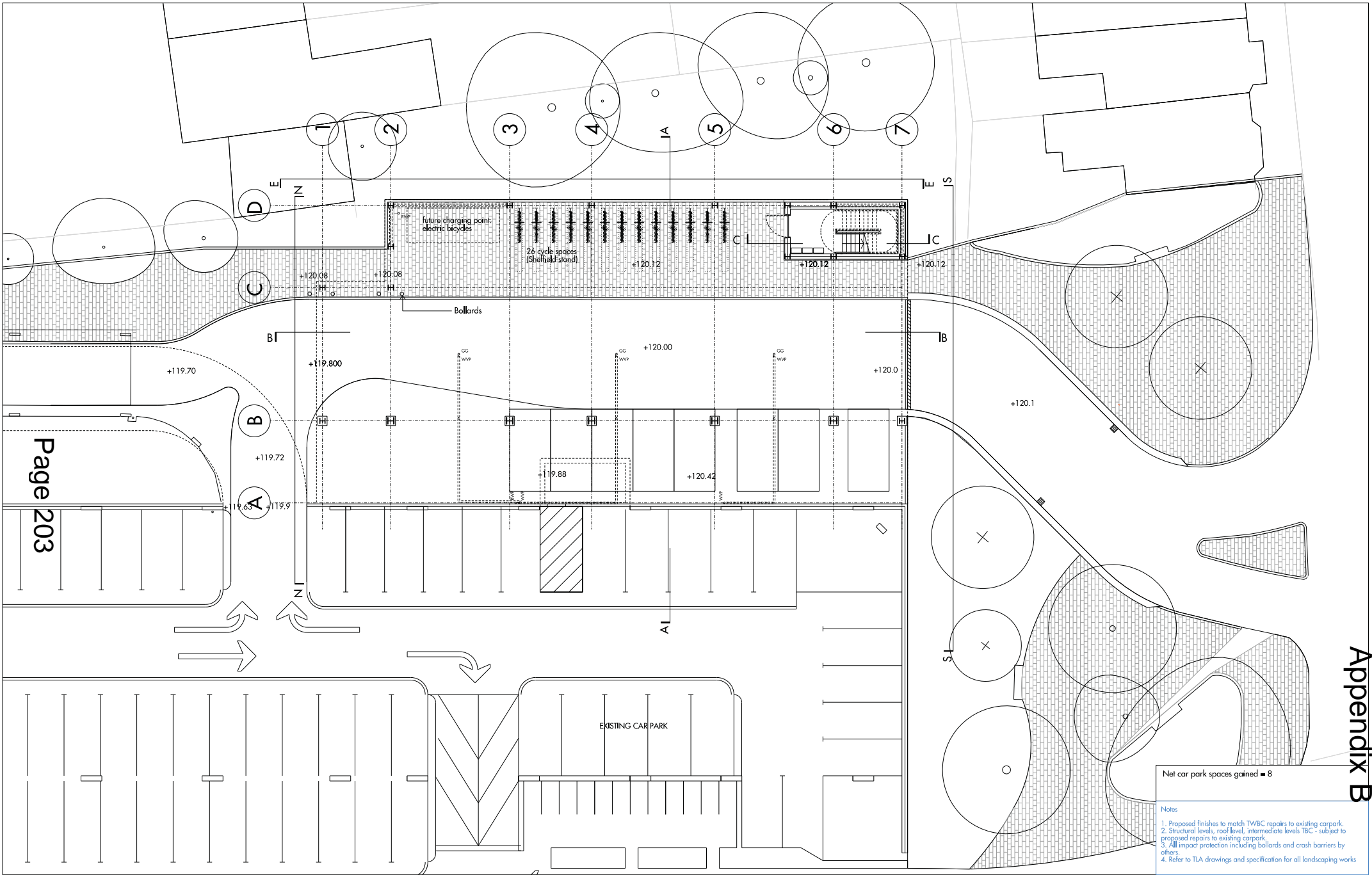


Scale 1:1,250

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Map Dated: 10/08/2017

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Page 203

Appendix B

Net car park spaces gained = 8

Notes

- Proposed finishes to match TWBC repairs to existing carpark.
- Structural levels, roof level, intermediate levels TBC - subject to proposed repairs to existing carpark.
- All impact protection including bollards and crash barriers by others.
- Refer to TLA drawings and specification for all landscaping works

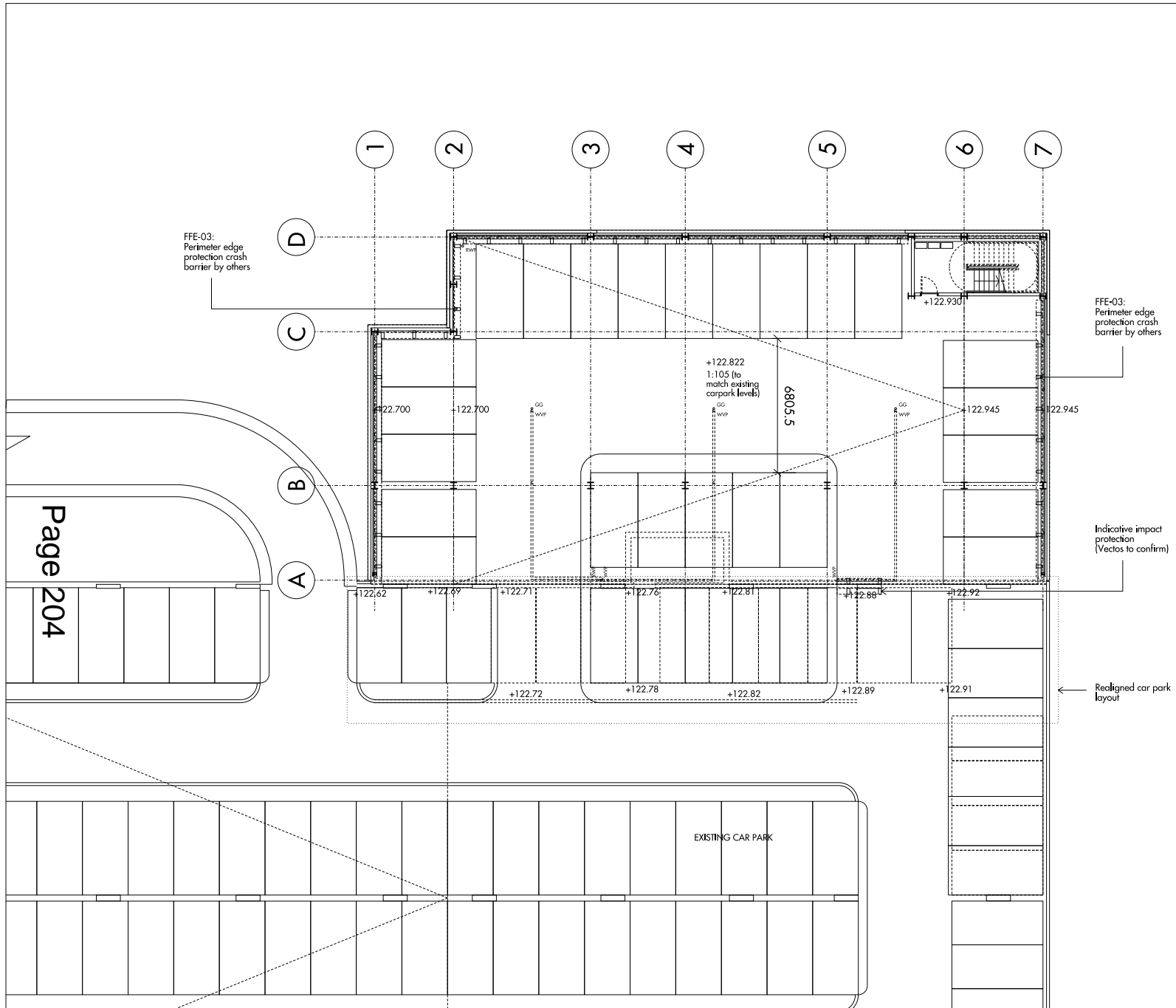
Do not scale from this drawing. Use figured dimensions only. Figured dimensions are to millimetres. All levels are to mean sea level. All dimensions and levels shall be verified on site before proceeding with works. Detailed site survey to be carried out to verify positions and level relationships with the features and ordnance survey. The architect must be notified of any discrepancy. Where building components are described in the specification as contractor designed, "contractor" information relating to those components on this drawing represents design intent only.

REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CD	REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CD	REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	CD
P1	13.04.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD	PS	16.06.17	STAGE 3 DESIGN FREEZE ISSUE	MD				
P2	25.03.17	DESIGN FREEZE	MD	PS	27.06.17	STAGE 3 DESIGN UPDATE	MD				
P3	06.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD	PS	07.08.17	ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD				
P4	13.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD								
P5	13.06.17	DRAFT PRE APP	MD								
P6	14.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD								
PF	15.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD								

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TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIVIC CAMPUS: 04 - CRESCENT ROAD CAR PARK
 GENERAL FLOOR PLAN
 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
 999_04_06_100
 SCALE 1:100@A1 1:200@A3

P10
 Revision



Page 204

Do not scale from this drawing. Use figured dimensions only. Figured dimensions are to millimetres. All levels are to mean sea level. All dimensions and levels shall be verified on site before proceeding with works. Detailed site survey to be carried out to verify positions and level relationships with the features and ordnance survey. The architect must be notified of any discrepancy. Where building components are described in the specification as contractor designed, "contractor" information relating to those components on this drawing represents design intent only.

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P5	13.06.17	DRAFT PRE APP	MD								
P6	14.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD								
PP	15.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD								

Spaces gained = 35
 Spaces removed = 13
 Net car park spaces gained = 22

Notes

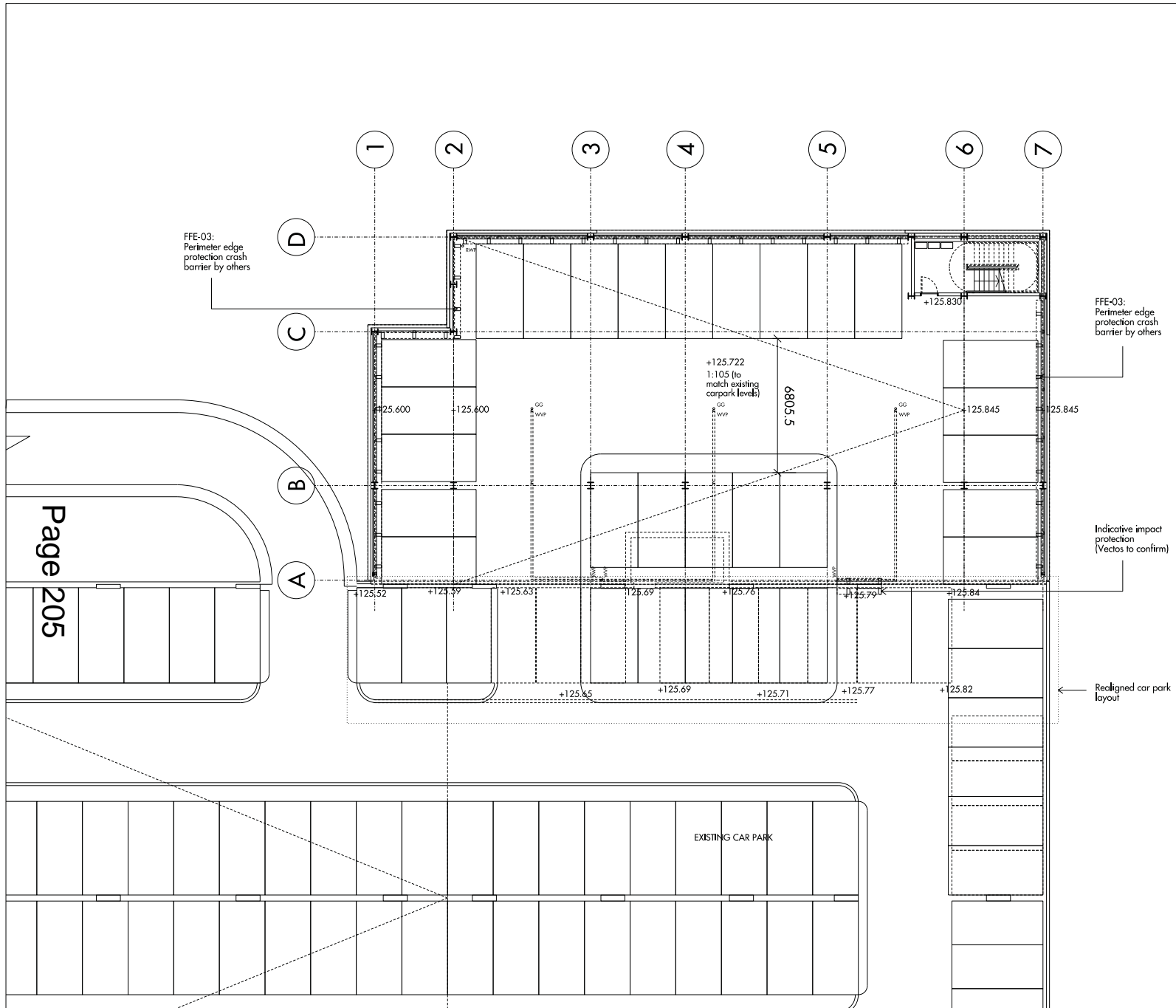
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TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIVIC CAMPUS: 04 - CRESCENT ROAD CAR PARK
 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
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 SCALE 1:100@A1 1:200@A3

Appendix B

P9
 Revision



Page 205

Spaces gained = 35
 Spaces removed = 13
 Net car park spaces gained = 22

- Notes
1. Proposed finishes to match TWBC repairs to existing carpark.
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P5	15.06.17	DRAFT ISSUE FOR INFORMATION	MD
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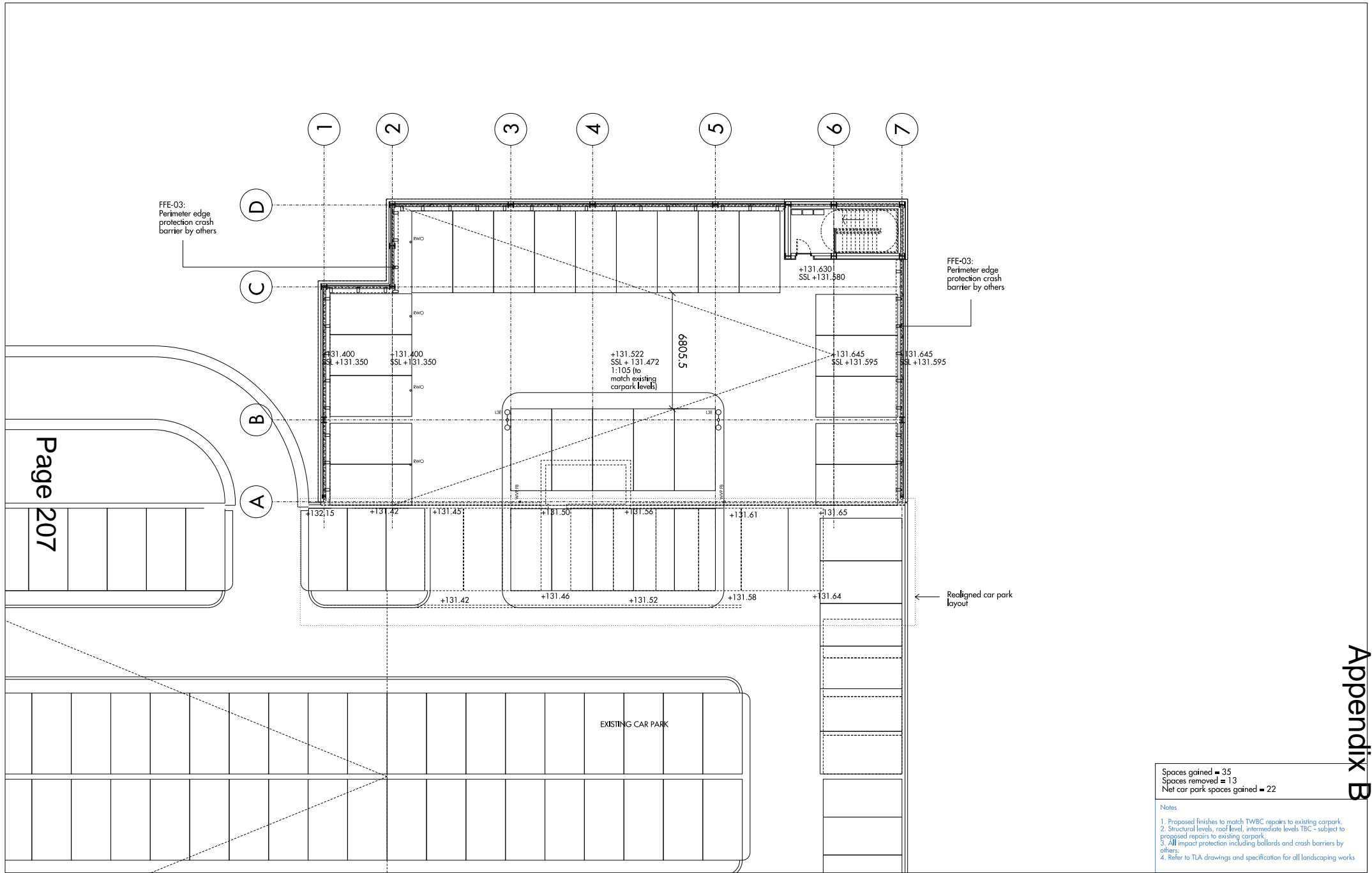
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TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIVIC CAMPUS: 04 - CRESCENT ROAD CAR PARK
 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
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Appendix B

P7
 Revision



Spaces gained = 35
 Spaces removed = 13
 Net car park spaces gained = 22

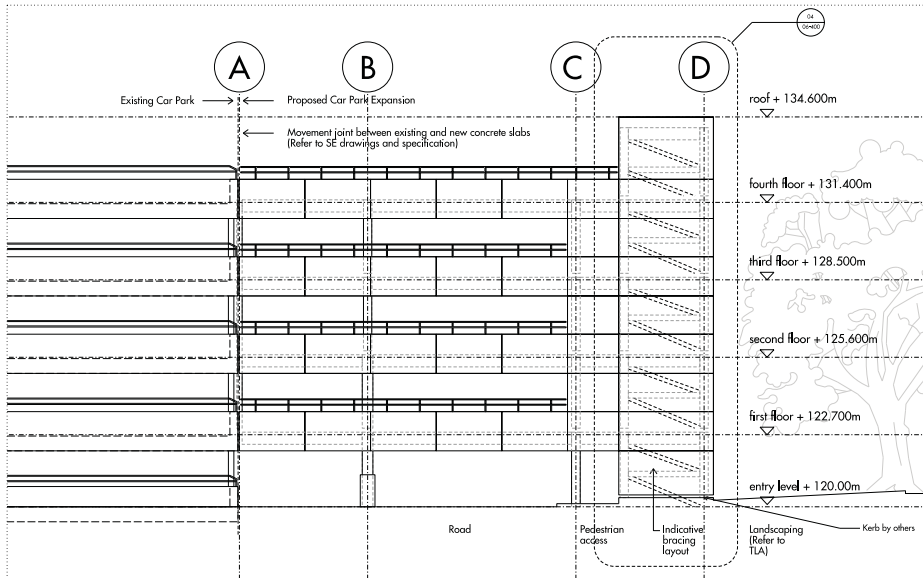
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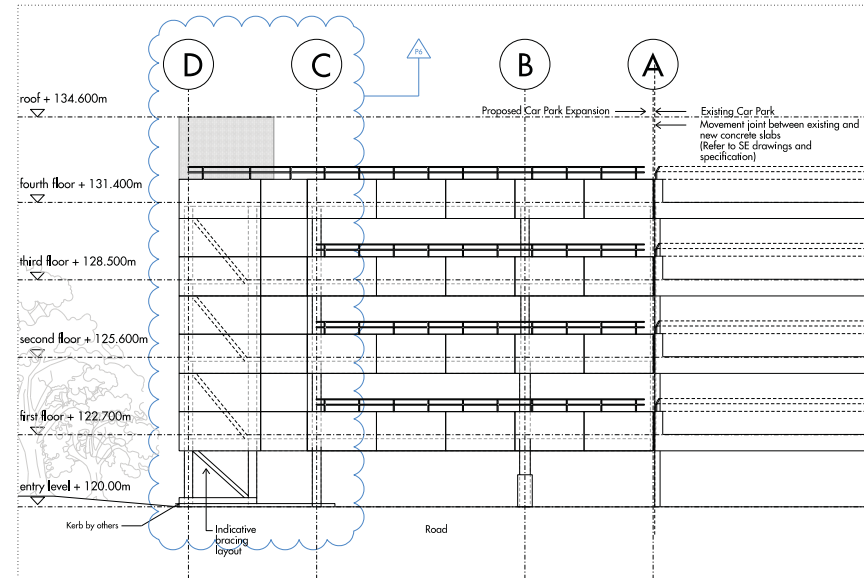
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P6	19.06.17	STAGE 3 DESIGN FREEZE ISSUE	MD				
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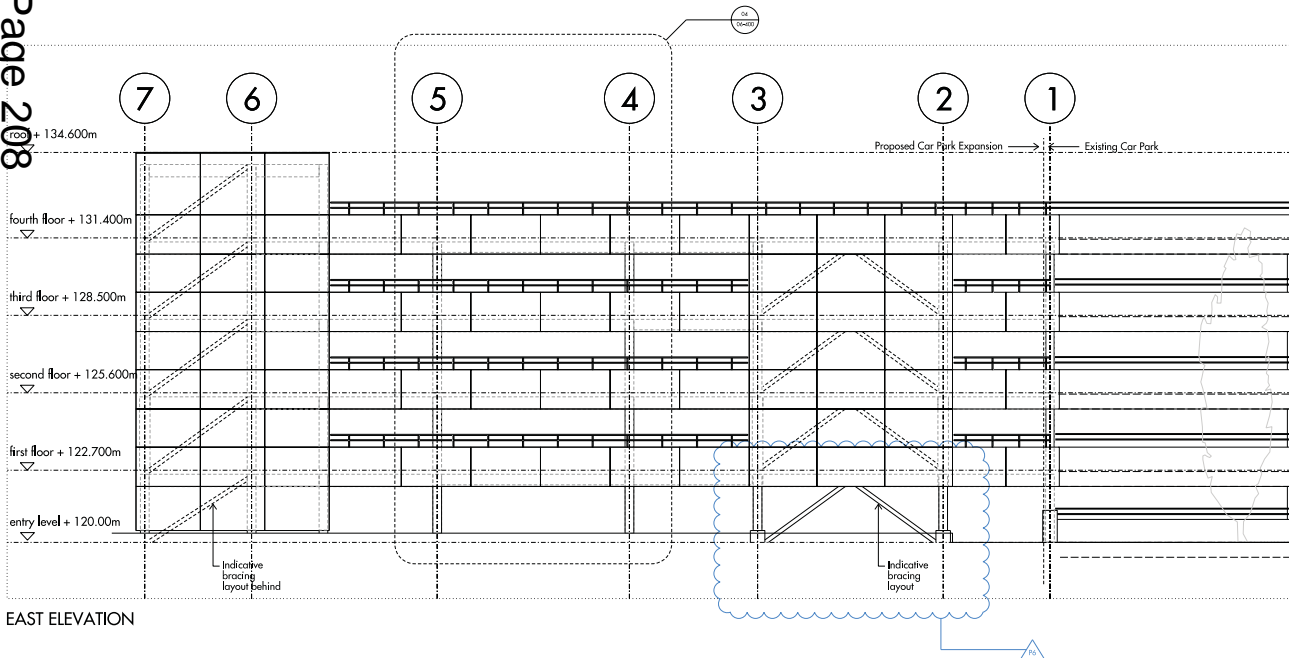
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 ROOF PLAN
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SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

- Notes
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P5	16.04.17	STAGE 3 DESIGN FREEZE ISSUE	WD								
P6	27.04.17	STAGE 3 DESIGN UPDATE	WD								

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TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIVIC CAMPUS: 00
 CRESCENT ROAD CAR PARK
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Town Centre Car Parking Demand and Strategy

All towns need an element of parking to support the economy which will be for a mixture of shoppers and local workers. Being a commuter town, there is also a large demand for both car park season tickets as well as kerbside parking in non-restricted residential areas.

Car ownership is on the increase according to Department for Transport's latest statistics, as bus use reduces. The south East of England has 561 cars for every 1,000 people. RAC have said that over the last 20 years the rise in the number of cars on the road in Britain has been relentless, going from 21 million in 1995 to 31million in 2015.

In January 2016 it was reported that cars on England's roads increased by almost 600,000 in the year. The reasons are believed to be mainly the growing population and prosperity.

Whilst it is likely in the years ahead alternative methods of transport may be also be available, if these methods are not affordable or an attractive alternative to the motorcar, it is likely to take many years before car park space can reduce. In the meantime it's important that we meet car parking needs in the short to medium term or trade will suffer.

If car park provision standstill or reduced in the town centre then alternative methods of transport needs to be in place beforehand - methods that are both affordable and an attractive alternative to the motor car.

Park and Ride has been explored in the past and will be looked at again to try and reduce the amount of vehicles travelling into town, and no doubt as technology progresses, other modes of transport will be made available and some people might choose these alternative methods.

More cycling lanes would be welcomed by many and we already have parking racks for cycles both on-street and in our car parks, including in the extension to Crescent Road. However, it will take time to deliver a robust infrastructure for cyclists to make any significant difference in reducing congestion and the amount of car parking spaces needed, with cars and vans accounting for 98% of all transport modes according to DfT statistics.

Tunbridge Wells town centre car parks provide ¹2,866 public spaces. 1,188 are dedicated to season ticket holders and an average of 832 accommodates long stay occasional parkers. This leaves just 846 spaces for short stay visitor parking and with the recent closure of Union House this figure reduces more. Not so many for a town like Tunbridge Wells particularly when we look at the planned expansion of the town in the short to medium term. We have also had an enquiry from a local employer wanting to lease 100 dedicated spaces for their staff and customers. The availability of parking space for new potential employers in the town could determine whether or not the town is right for them.

¹ Excluding disabled spaces

Appendix C

Unemployment is very low in this town and many employers have to recruit from out of town which means many employees may have no alternative but to travel in by car.

The parking strategy outlined many changes to existing restrictions and new ones to deal with congestion, traffic flow, and air quality through alternative restriction and policy changes. These changes will displace some of those vehicles from outside people's homes to car parks, particularly the all day parkers, many of which will be outbound commuters. Overtime this is also likely to influence decisions on the necessity of a vehicle when living in a town centre and ultimately contribute to reduced car ownership.

To give you an example, with the introduction of an extension to residential zone C recently announced, this will displace approximately 300 vehicles parked outside people's homes. Many of these will be outbound commuters; some local workers, shoppers and residents. Some may choose alternative methods of transport, but we must also be able to provide adequate car park space for those who have no choice. And there are several other town centre residential zones that are being changed and extended over the next two years.

Additionally, the Parking Strategy, in its aims to reduce congestion, is also looking to restrict many of those unrestricted roads on the edge of town where cars park all day long and those roads that are prone to footway parking causing major damage to infrastructure, trip hazards and other safety issues for pedestrians. It will also be reviewing our residents permit policy with initiatives to reduce and discourage car ownership and on-street parking that contributes to congestion and poor traffic flow.

So with the current average occupancy levels of car parks at 74%, the inevitable displacement from forthcoming restriction changes and the new 96 additional spaces on Crescent Road, it is likely our car parks space will meet the short to medium term parking demand, but this will need to be kept under review.

Whilst the future will no doubt bring other transport options, I believe it will be a long time before we see a huge change from the car to alternative modes of transport that will make a quick or significant difference to congestion and car ownership,

Crescent Road is in need of urgent structural repair and refurbishment. It also needs larger bays for some wider vehicles. So the proposed extension not only provides an extra 96 spaces but will be also be able to cater for those wider vehicles without the need to change existing infrastructure.

As we begin to encourage traffic to move from our streets to our car parks, car park space will be needed to be available to meet the demands of all day parking and short term parking. If alternative modes of transport come along in the future then they will no doubt ease this pressure and could, in the longer term, reduce the demand for parking both on-street and in car parks. The potential for transport mode changes will be kept under review.

Full Council

27 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Appointment of Monitoring Officer

Final Decision-Maker	Full Council
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Reilly – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance
Lead Director	Stephen McGinnes – Director of Mid Kent Services
Head of Service	Patricia Narebor – Head of Legal Partnership
Lead Officer/Author	Donna Price – Interim Deputy Head of Legal Partnership
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That Patricia Narebor be appointed as the Monitoring Officer for the Council with effect from 28 September 2017;
2. That Patricia Narebor was appointed as the Head of Mid Kent Legal Partnership on 1 September 2017 be noted; and
3. That the Head of Legal Partnership be authorised to exercise the delegated functions and responsibilities relating to the Head of Legal Partnership as set out in the Council's Constitution.

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Prosperous Borough
- A Green Borough
- A Confident Borough

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs. The appointment of an experienced Monitoring Officer is a key component of these arrangements and will support the Council to achieve its corporate objectives.

Timetable

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Council	27 September 2017

Appointment of Monitoring Officer

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Estelle Culligan, the Council's interim Head of Legal Partnership and Monitoring Officer, left the Council on 6 September 2017.
- 1.2 Since the Council is required by law to appoint a Monitoring Officer, this report notes the appointment of Patricia Narebor as Head of Legal Partnership from 1 September 2017 and recommends her appointment as the Council's Monitoring Officer.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One of the services which the Council shares with Maidstone and Swale Borough Councils is legal services (Mid Kent Legal Services) which is headed up by Patricia Narebor, Head of Legal Partnership. Ms Narebor will also be appointed as the Monitoring Officer for Maidstone Borough Council. Her predecessor Estelle Culligan, interim Head of Legal Partnership has left the Council.
- 2.2 The Council is required by law to appoint a Monitoring Officer and under the Council's Constitution, the decision must be taken by Full Council. The Council's Head of Paid Service and the Chief Finance Officer cannot also hold the position of Monitoring Officer.
- 2.3 The Monitoring Officer has a number of statutory duties and responsibilities relating to the Council's Constitution and the arrangements for effective governance. These duties include maintaining the constitution, ensuring that no decision or omission of the Council is likely to give rise to illegality or maladministration and promoting high standards of conduct. A full list of the Monitoring Officer's responsibilities and delegated powers is included within the Council's Constitution (Part 2 - Article 6.3).
- 2.4 Patricia Narebor has been appointed as the Head of Legal Partnership for the three local authorities from 1 September 2017.
- 2.5 It is proposed that Ms Narebor be appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer with effect from 28 September 2017 and that she is seconded to the Council from Swale Borough Council (her employing authority) whilst carrying out the Monitoring Officer duties. Ms Narebor has been a qualified solicitor for over 14 years and has over 14 years experience working in local government legal services. She is also experienced in carrying out the Monitoring Officer role.
- 2.6 If the recommendation is accepted, Ms Narebor will appoint a Deputy Monitoring Officer to assist with her Tunbridge Wells Borough Council responsibilities.

2.7 As the Head of Legal Partnership, it is also recommended that Ms Narebor exercise the Head of Legal Partnership’s delegated functions and responsibilities in the Council’s Constitution.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 The Council could decide to appoint another Council officer as its Monitoring Officer but without the same degree of legal and governance expertise.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The recommendation is to appoint Patricia Narebor, Head of Legal Partnership, as the Council’s Monitoring Officer for the reasons set out above.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 Given that this report concerns the appointment of one of the Council’s statutory officers, the recommendation is being made directly to Full Council. The Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee have both been consulted about the report.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 If the recommendation is approved, the decision will be communicated to staff and relevant stakeholders.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	The Council is required to appoint a Monitoring Officer by section 5 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows one local authority to agree with another that it will place an officer at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions.	Donna Price, Interim Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership 13 September 2017
Finance and other resources	If the recommendation is accepted, it will enable the Council to make use of existing Mid Kent Services resources, namely the legal and governance experience of the Head of Legal Partnership.	Donna Price, Interim Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership 13 September 2017

Staffing establishment	If the recommendation is accepted, the Head of Legal Partnership will be seconded to the Council from Swale Borough Council whilst carrying out her Monitoring Officer duties.	Donna Price, Interim Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership 13 September 2017
Risk Management	If the recommendation is accepted, the risks are considered to be low given the Head of Legal Partnership's extensive legal and governance experience. The risks of appointing a Monitoring Officer without these skills and experience would be much higher.	Donna Price, Interim Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership 13 September 2017
Environment and sustainability	No implications	Donna Price, Interim Deputy Head of the Legal Partnership 13 September 2017
Community Safety	No implications	
Health and Safety	No implications	
Health and Wellbeing	No implications	
Equalities	No implications	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and forms part of the report:

- None
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

Full Council

27 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Timetable of Meetings 2018/19

Final Decision-Maker	Full Council
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor David Jukes – Leader of the Council
Lead Director	Lee Colyer – Director of Finance, Policy and Development
Head of Service	Jane Clarke – Head of Policy and Governance
Lead Officer/Author	Mark O’Callaghan – Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

That the Timetable of Meetings for 2018/19, as at appendix A to the report, be agreed

This report relates to the following Five Year Plan Key Objectives:

- A Confident Borough
Scheduling meeting dates in advance is essential for ensuring decision making is open, transparent and accountable.

Timetable	
<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Management Board	13 September 2017
Full Council	27 September 2017

Tunbridge Wells Committee Report, version: September 2016

Timetable of Meetings 2018/19

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The timetable of meetings sets out the meeting dates for the municipal year 2018/19 and includes all public meetings that deal with decision-making, advice-giving or scrutiny of decisions at Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The timetable largely follows the pattern of previous years with some minor amendments to account for clashes and efficiencies. No significant changes are proposed.
- 2.2 It is good practice that the timetable be agreed in advance in order to provide members, the public, press and the Council's officers as much notice as a possible about when decision-making meetings of the Council will take place.
- 2.3 The timetable may be amended at a future date to take account of specific circumstances that may arise.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 To approve the Timetable of Meetings 2018/19.
- 3.2 To approve an alternative schedule.
- 3.3 To move to ad-hoc scheduling.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To approve the timetable (3.1). The timetable has been carefully prepared and takes account of precedent, practical implications and ensures the process is open and transparent.
- 4.2 Ad-hoc scheduling would be grossly inefficient and not open nor transparent.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 No suggestions for changes to the scheduling of meetings were received prior to or since the commencement of preparing the timetable.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Meeting dates are published on the Council’s website and notice board.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal including Human Rights Act	<p>In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 the Council must give proper notice and summons of its decision making meetings, and if a proper notice and summons are not issued, then the meeting may not be properly convened and the business transacted of no effect. The Timetable of Meetings 2017 -18 assists in the efficient organisation of publication of the notices and summons of meetings, and gives officers, members and the public advanced notice (although not legal notice) of meeting dates.</p> <p>Under schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council must hold its Annual Meeting within 21 days of the retirement of the Councillors in an ordinary election.</p> <p>There are no consequences arising from the recommendation that adversely affect or interfere with individuals’ rights and freedoms as set out in the Human Rights Act 1998.</p>	<p>Keith Trowell Senior Lawyer (Corporate Governance) 13 September 2017</p>
Finance and other resources	There are no additional finance implications as a result of this decision.	<p>Mark O’Callaghan Democratic Services Officer 12 September 2017</p>
Staffing establishment	There are no significant staffing implications as a result of this decision.	
Risk management	There are no significant risk management implications as a result of this decision.	
Environment and sustainability	There are no significant environment implications as a result of this decision.	
Community safety	There are no significant community safety implications as a result of this decision.	
Health and Safety	There are no significant health and safety implications as a result of this decision.	
Health and wellbeing	There are no significant health and wellbeing implications as a result of this decision.	
Equalities	There are no significant equalities implications as a result of this decision.	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Draft Timetable of Meetings 2018/19 v3
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL
DRAFT TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2018-19



PUBLIC MEETINGS

	Day ¹	Time ¹	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Full Council	Wed	6.30pm	25	23 (Annual) (10am)		25		26			12		20		24
Cabinet	Thu	10.30am	12	23 (following Annual Council)	21		2	13	25	15 (fees and charges) 29			7	7	11
Planning & Transportation Cabinet Advisory Board	Mon	6.30pm		31 (Thu)		9	20		1	5		14	11	18	
Finance & Governance Cabinet Advisory Board	Tue	6.30pm		29		10	21		2	6		15	12	19	
Communities Cabinet Advisory Board	Wed	6.30pm		30		11	22		3	7		17 (Thu)	13	21 (Thu)	
Audit and Governance Committee	Tue	6.30pm	3	23 (following Annual Council)		17		11		27			5 (if needed)		
Licensing Committee	Tue	6pm			5			4			4			5	
General Purposes Committee	Wed	6.30pm	4			4			17			9			3
Joint Transportation Board	Mon	6pm	16			16			15			21			15
Planning Committee	Wed	5pm	18	9	6 27	18	8 29	19	10 31	21	13 (Thu)	16	6 27	20	10
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Mon	6.30pm	9		11		13		8	19		28			4

NOTES: 1 Usual day/time unless specified otherwise

TUNBRIDGE WELLS BOROUGH COUNCIL
DRAFT TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS 2018-19



OTHER MEETINGS

	Day ¹	Time ¹	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum	Thu	6.30pm		10		5		6		15		24		28	
Public Transport Forum	Thu	6.30pm	5			12				1					11
Parish Chairman's Forum	Tue	7pm			12			18			11			12	
Cabinet DART (Draft Agenda Review Team)	Thu	10.30am			7	19	30		11	15		24	21	28	
Leadership Board (formerly Management Board & Cabinet)	Mon	9.30am	16	14	11	16	13	17	15	12	10	14	11	11	15
Management Team	Tue	10am	10	8	5	3	7	4	9	6	4	8	5	5	9
Management Board (Committee Reports)	Wed	9am	11 25	9* 23	6 20*	4 18	1* 15 29	12* 26	10 24*	7 21	5 19*	2 16 30*	13 27*	13 27	10 24
Conservative Group	Thu	6.30pm	19	17	14	19	16	20	18	8	6	10	14	14	18
Member Briefings	Wed/Thu	5.30pm	19 (CG) 25 (FC)	17 (CG)	14 (CG)	19 (CG) 25 (FC)	16 (CG)	20 (CG) 26 (FC)	18 (CG)	8 (CG)	6 (CG) 12 (FC)	10 (CG)	14 (CG) 20 (FC)	14 (CG)	18 (CG) 24 (FC)
Development Advisory Panel	Various	6pm													
Planning Policy Working Group	Tue	10am	17	15	12	10	7	4	2 30	27	18	22	19	19	16
Constitution Review Working Party	Various	Various													
Tunbridge Wells Property Holdings Ltd- Board Meetings	Various	5.30pm													

NOTES: 1 Usual day/time unless specified otherwise

Exempt Appendices to Crescent Road Car Park Extension
(Item 10)

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