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Ribble Valley
Borough Council

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Dear Councillor

The next meeting of the **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** will be held at 6.30 pm on **THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021** in the **Council Chamber, 13 Church Street, Clitheroe, BB7 2RA.**

I do hope you can be there.

Yours sincerely

M. H. Scott

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** (Pages 3 - 6)
3. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest in respect of matters contained in the agenda.

4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

ITEMS FOR DECISION

5. **CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/21** (Pages 7 - 12)
Report of Director of Resources enclosed.
6. **WELCOME BACK FUND** (Pages 13 - 16)
Report of Director of Economic Development and Planning enclosed.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7. **LEVELLING UP FUND** (Pages 17 - 36)
Report of Director of Economic Development and Planning enclosed.

8. **REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

None.

9. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

None.

Electronic agendas sent to members of Economic Development – Councillor Stuart Hirst (Chair), Councillor Richard Bennett, Councillor David Berryman, Councillor David Birtwhistle, Councillor Robert (Bob) Buller, Councillor Stuart Carefoot, Councillor Judith Clark, Councillor Louise Edge (Vice-Chair), Councillor Rosemary (Rosie) Elms, Councillor Steve Farmer, Councillor Stewart Fletcher, Councillor Mark French, Councillor Simon Hore, Councillor Ged Mirfin and Councillor Robert Thompson.

Contact: Democratic Services on 01200 414408 or committee.services@ribblevalley.gov.uk

Minutes of Economic Development

Meeting Date: Thursday, 25 March 2021, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Hirst (Chair)

Councillors:

D Berryman	S Fletcher
S Bibby	M French
D Birtwhistle	M Hindle
I Brown	S Hore
B Buller	G Mirfin
J Clark	J Rogerson
R Elms	

In attendance: Director of Economic Development and Planning, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, Head of Regeneration and Housing, Tourism Officer, Senior Accountant and Planning Policy Assistant

Also in attendance: Councillors T Austin

1075 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for the meeting were received from Councillor S Knox.

1076 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with the addition of Cllr R Elms to the apologies.

1077 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

1078 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

1079 COVID 19 ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report for information on the assessment so far on the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the economy of the Ribble Valley.

The report highlighted levels of unemployment with the working population claiming Universal Credit; the percentage of eligible employees enrolled on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (furlough); a timeline relating to events and policies relating to the pandemic; support grants paid out by the Council and vacant premises within the centres of Clitheroe, Longridge and Whalley.

Monitoring would continue and would form part of the full economic and employment land review required for the Local Plan, and officers would continue to work with the local chambers of trade / business groups.

It was suggested that additions could be included such as the number of businesses gone completely and numbers of newly registered businesses.

1080 TOURISM PROGRESS REPORT INCLUDING THE RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

The Director of Community Services submitted a report for information on general progress with tourism activity, with particular reference to measures taken to support the visitor economy during the pandemic, through the implementation of the Response and Recovery Plan.

The 'response' included ensuring clear and consistent messages about the pandemic; measures to help local businesses; keeping in touch with visitors; and keeping positive messages about tourism to the fore.

The 'recovery' included creating safe and welcoming tourism with practical measures; promoting new tourism themes and new campaigns; keeping in touch and supporting businesses; and keeping marketing channels open to customers.

Members were informed that the visitor guide this year would be in an on-line format initially with a much reduced print run later in the year.

Members appreciated the report and the work carried out so far and asked that 'care in the countryside' also be an issue to be conveyed to visitors wherever possible so that our special places remained so.

1081 CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22

The Director of Resources submitted a report for information on the schemes approved for inclusion in this committee's 2021/22 capital programme. There was just one scheme totalling £66,750 for Economic Development Initiatives.

1082 REVENUE MONITORING 2020/21

The Director of Resources submitted a report for information on the position for the period April 2020 to February 2021 of this year's revenue budget as far as this committee was concerned.

A comparison between actual expenditure and the revised estimate was shown and the main variances highlighted. There was currently an underspend of £3,322 for the period that did not present any significant concern.

1083 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

1084 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

That by virtue of the next items of business being exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

1085 PURCHASE OF LAND AT A59 BARROW

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report asking committee to consider undertaking a Development Appraisal in respect of whether to purchase land along the A59 in Clitheroe for use as employment land. The report outlined the specific area of land and the sort of appraisal that would be required.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Agree to the appointment of consultants to undertake a Development Appraisal of the land, and
2. Agree to a total budget of up to £20,000 for the Development Appraisal to be sourced from the Economic Development Initiatives budget.

1086

CLITHEROE TO HELLIFIELD RAIL PROJECT

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report updating members on the production of a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) in relation to the Clitheroe to Hellifield Rail Project.

The SOBC would be submitted to the Department for Transport in April for assessment and members would be kept updated on the outcome.

Councillor Austin was given permission to speak on this item.

The meeting closed at 7.39 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Olwen Heap 01200 414408 olwen.heap@ribblevalley.gov.uk.

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RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: 17 JUNE 2021
title: CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/21
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
principal author: ANDREW COOK

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report the 2020/21 capital programme outturn for this Committee and to seek member approval for the slippage of some capital scheme budgets from the 2020/21 financial year to the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives – none identified.
 - Corporate Priorities - to continue to be a well-managed council providing efficient services based on identified customer need.
 - Other Considerations – none identified.

2 2020/21 CAPITAL PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

- 2.1 One capital scheme for this Committee's original estimate budget, totalling £81,750, was approved by the Special Policy and Finance Committee and Full Council at their meetings in February 2020 and March 2020 respectively. The scheme budget had been moved from the 2019/20 capital programme to the 2020/21 capital programme.
- 2.2 In addition to the original estimate budget, there was one 2019/20 capital scheme that was not completed by 31 March 2020. The total unspent budget of £20,000 on that scheme, known as slippage, was moved into the 2020/21 capital programme budget after the slippage request from the budget holder was agreed by the Director of Resources.
- 2.3 As a result of the above, the total approved budget for this Committee's capital programme of two schemes was £101,750. This is shown at Annex 1.
- 2.4 The revised capital programme budget of £35,000 for two schemes was then approved by the Special Policy and Finance Committee in February 2021, following a review of progress on all schemes in the capital programme. This included moving £66,750 of budget on one scheme into the 2021/22 financial year. The revised estimate budget is shown at Annex 1.
- 2.5 During the financial year this Committee has received reports monitoring the progress of schemes within the capital programme.

3 CAPITAL OUTTURN 2020/21

- 3.1 Annex 1 shows this Committee's capital programme outturn position by scheme, including budget approvals, actual expenditure in-year and requested slippage into 2021/22. The table overleaf summarises the final outturn position.

Original Estimate 2020/21 £	Budget Moved from 2019/20 £	Slippage from 2019/20 £	Total Approved Budget 2020/21 £	Revised Estimate 2020/21 £	Budget Moved to 2021/22 £	Actual Expenditure 2020/21 £	Requested Slippage into 2021/22 £
0	81,750	20,000	101,750	35,000	66,750	0	35,000

3.2 There was no expenditure on this Committee’s capital programme in 2020/21 and both schemes in the capital programme were not complete at year-end, as follows:

- **Economic Development Initiatives (-£15,000):** One appropriate scheme for funding from this capital budget, re improving employment land site access at Salthill, was identified as possibly taking place in early 2021. However, the scheme did not take place in 2020/21 because there was no further progress by the landowner before year-end. Slippage of £15,000 into 2021/22 is requested to add to the £66,750 budget already moved to 2021/22 to fund any economic development schemes that would be appropriate to fund from this capital budget in 2021/22.
- **Gateway Signs for Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe (-£20,000):** There was no spend in 2020/21 on this scheme because officers are still to obtain permissions from Lancashire County Council to allow installation of the signs. Slippage of £20,000 into 2021/22 is requested to fund the planned installation of the two new welcome signs and replacement of a damaged sign at Simonstone.

4 SLIPPAGE

4.1 Where capital schemes are not complete at year-end and budget is requested to be moved into the next financial year, this is known as slippage. For this Committee slippage of £35,000 is requested into 2021/22 for two schemes:

- Economic Development Initiatives, £15,000.
- Gateway Signs for Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe, £20,000.

4.2 Attached at Annex 2 are the individual “Request for slippage” forms. This Committee is asked to consider and approve these requests.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – There are no additional financing requirements needed for this Committee’s 2020/21 capital programme. Capital resources are already in place to fund the £35,000 requested slippage to the 2021/22 financial year.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – Sound financial planning for known capital commitments safeguards the reputation of the Council.
- Equality and Diversity – Equality and diversity issues are examined as part of the capital bid appraisal process.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 There was no expenditure on this Committee's capital programme in 2020/21.
- 6.2 Both schemes in the capital programme were not complete at year-end. Slippage of £35,000 has been requested to fund expenditure on those schemes in 2021/22.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 7.1 Approve the slippage of the following budgets into the 2021/22 capital programme:
- Economic Development Initiatives, £15,000.
 - Gateway Signs for Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe, £20,000.

SENIOR ACCOUNTANT

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

ED7-21/AC/AC
4 June 2021

For further information please ask for Andrew Cook.

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN 2020/21

Cost Centre	Scheme	Original Estimate 2020/21 £	Budget Moved from 2019/20 £	Slippage from 2019/20 £	Additional Approvals 2020/21 £	Total Approved Budget 2020/21 £	Revised Estimate 2020/21 £	Budget Moved to 2021/22 £	Actual Expenditure 2020/21 £	Requested Slippage into 2021/22 £
ECDVI	Economic Development Initiatives	0	81,750	0	0	81,750	15,000	66,750	0	15,000
GWSGN	Gateway Signs for Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe	0	0	20,000	0	20,000	20,000	0	0	20,000
Total Economic Development Committee		0	81,750	20,000	0	101,750	35,000	66,750	0	35,000

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – CAPITAL PROGRAMME
OUTTURN 2020/21**

ANNEX 2

Request for slippage into 2021/22

Cost Centre and Scheme Title	ECDVI: Economic Development Initiatives
Scheme Description	The project is to establish a general source of pump-priming and pre-investment funding to support the delivery of the Council's economic priorities. The bid particularly seeks to support our high growth sectors in the provision of land and premises or tourism infrastructure where applicable.
Head of Service	Colin Hirst
Year Originally Approved	2020/21 (Annual recurring scheme)
Revised Estimate 2020/21 for the Scheme	£15,000
Actual Expenditure in the Year 2020/21	£0
Variance - (Underspend) or Overspend	(£15,000)
Please provide full reasons for the (under) or over spend variance shown above?	One appropriate scheme for funding from this capital budget, re improving employment land site access at Salthill, was identified as possibly taking place in early 2021. However, the scheme did not take place and there was no spend in 2020/21 because there was no further progress by the landowner before year-end. Other areas of land have been identified to assess.

Slippage Request

Please grant the amount of Budget Slippage from 2020/21 to 2021/22 requested.	£15,000
Please give detailed information on the reasons for any request for slippage. Please provide as much information as possible in order to allow the request to be fully considered.	Slippage of the £15,000 budget unspent in 2020/21 is requested to add to the £66,750 budget already moved to 2021/22 to fund any economic development schemes that would be appropriate to fund from this capital budget in 2021/22.
By what date would the work or services related to any requested slippage be completed, if it were to be approved.	Within the 2021/22 financial year, dependent on progress with an alternative site and other appropriate initiatives being identified in-year.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – CAPITAL PROGRAMME
OUTTURN 2020/21**

ANNEX 2

Request for slippage into 2021/22

Cost Centre and Scheme Title	GWSGN: Gateway Signs for Whalley, Longridge and Clitheroe
Scheme Description	Gateway signs to be erected on the major roads into the borough.
Head of Service	Mark Beveridge
Year Originally Approved	2019/20
Revised Estimate 2020/21 for the Scheme	£20,000
Actual Expenditure in the Year 2020/21	£0
Variance - (Underspend) or Overspend	(£20,000)
Please provide full reasons for the (under) or over spend variance shown above?	<p>The agreed plan for the scheme is the installation of two new welcome signs and the replacement of a damaged sign at Simonstone.</p> <p>There was no spend in 2020/21 on this scheme because officers are still to obtain permissions from Lancashire County Council to allow installation of the signs.</p>

Slippage Request

Please grant the amount of Budget Slippage from 2020/21 to 2021/22 requested.	£20,000
Please give detailed information on the reasons for any request for slippage. Please provide as much information as possible in order to allow the request to be fully considered.	To fund the installation of the two new welcome signs and replacement of a damaged sign at Simonstone.
By what date would the work or services related to any requested slippage be completed, if it were to be approved.	The work is currently expected to be completed by the end of 2021/22, subject to gaining the required permissions from Lancashire County Council and supplier delivery timescales.

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021
title: WELCOME BACK FUND
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING
principal author: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To consider suggestions for utilising the recently announced Welcome Back Fund.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Ambitions – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley and to help make people's lives safer and healthier.
- Corporate Objectives – To work with our partners to ensure that the infrastructure in the Ribble Valley is improved. To promote stronger, more confident, and more active communities throughout the borough

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In May 2020, the Government announced a new £50 million Reopening High Street Safely fund to enable councils to support their local high streets get safely back to business. This Fund was introduced to prepare for the reopening of non-essential retail. The fund was aimed at Council's introducing a range of safety measures in a move to kick-start local economies, get people back to work and customers back to the shops. The intention was to enable high streets to reopen safely and to ensure that customers felt safe when returning to the high streets.

2.2 Ribble Valley were awarded a grant of £53,771 from the fund and quickly began preparing plans to enable our high streets to reopen safely and to enable the measures to be put into place before non-essential retail re-opened on 15th June.

2.3 The following activities were undertaken as part of the fund:

- Developed Action Plans.
- Creation of a marketing campaign.
- Signs and pavement markings, to raise awareness of the need to social distance.
- Localised temporary road closures/one-way systems to allow for extra space for pedestrians and socially distanced queuing at shops.
- Increased pedestrian and cycle access in some town centres, through adjustments to traffic restrictions.
- Temporary suspension of some parking spaces and laybys, where extra space for widening footpaths to help pedestrians respect social distancing rules could be provided.
- Engagement with local businesses including the provision of business guidance advice documentation.
- Production of guidance document for Queue Management and Social Distancing Advice Note.
- Shoppers Survey.
- Production of banners and bollard covers to advise customers the high streets were now re-open and of social distancing measures.

2.4 Members may recall that the measures put in place, in particular the road adjustments, were received with mixed feelings. The changes implemented were continually reviewed, including engagement with key stakeholders, and a shoppers' survey was undertaken in July to gauge public opinion of the changes. Following consideration of the responses received to the survey and the fact that the Government introduced the mandatory requirement to wear face coverings in shops in July, a decision was made to remove the temporary road adjustments and keep the high streets under review.

2.5 Since last summer, the borough has been placed in different tier levels in respect of Covid-19 restrictions and then a further national lockdown period with non-essential shops and restaurants required to close again. As the borough once again moves out of national lockdown restrictions and businesses begin to re-open, the Government recently announced the Welcome Back Fund.

3 WELCOME BACK FUND (WBF)

3.1 In March 2021 the Communities Secretary, Robert Jenrick, announced a new £56 million Welcome Back Fund to help councils boost tourism, improve green spaces, and provide more outdoor seating areas, markets and food stall pop-ups. The intention of the fund is to support a safe and successful reopening of the high streets. The associated guidance was released in April.

3.2 Ribble Valley have been awarded £53,771 funding through the Welcome Back Fund, however this can be combined with any underspend from the Reopening High Street Safely Fund (RHSSF). Considering the spend already defrayed against the RHSSF activities, set out above, Ribble Valley have a total allocation of £82,084. Member approval is sought in respect of defraying this fund.

4 PROPOSALS

4.1 The original RHSSF included four eligible strands in respect of utilising the fund as follows:

- Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies.
- Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.
- Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.
- Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely.

4.2 Part of the fund spent to date was defrayed against each of the four strands listed above.

4.3 The WBF includes two new strands of activity which the fund can be used for as follows:

- Support to promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy.
- Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street.

4.4 It is proposed to concentrate spend of the additional WBF and the remainder of the RHSSF on these two strands. The three main retail areas, Whalley, Clitheroe and

Longridge, have few vacant units and most of the businesses have reopened following the easing of national restrictions. As such it seems appropriate to focus on responding to any medium-term impacts of Covid-19 by creation of an action plan for the three retail areas.

4.5 Member authority is sought to utilise the funding as follows:

- Appoint consultants to develop longer term strategic action plans for the three retail areas which will include engagement with stakeholders to understand any emerging issues and to explore options for pilot projects within the retail areas.
- Design and erect banners, bunting etc to make the retail areas more visually attractive and promote the areas – this would include advertisement material.
- Purchase temporary gazebos/seating – potentially linked to the pilot projects to be explored by the consultants.
- Procure services of a local artist to beautify high streets possibly linked to themes, such as Christmas decoration, within the high street.

4.6 This fund is wholly revenue funding. Any item purchased (gazebos/seating, for example) will only be eligible if it considered to be revenue and are temporary (ie moveable). Items can be purchased up to the value of £1,000. Beyond this they would be classed as an asset which is outside the remits of the fund.

5 DELIVERY PARTNERS

5.1 There is an expectation in the fund that local authorities in receipt of funding are expected to engage with local businesses, business organisations, lower tier authorities (such as town and parish councils) and other relevant stakeholders as part of the development of Welcome Back Fund plans. The best mechanism by which to do this is determined by the Local Authority. Longridge Town Council, Whalley Parish Council and Clitheroe Town Council have already been advised of the above proposals for utilising the funding. Further engagement will be undertaken when the Grant Fund Agreement is put in place in advance of engagement by the consultants.

5.2 The WBF introduces the ability for the Local Authority, in receipt of the funding, to identify other organisations (such as a town/parish council) as the most appropriate provider for any eligible activity. If this were the case such activity would be delivered through a Delivery Partner arrangement. To become a Delivery Partner the identified partner (eg town/parish council) would be required to enter into a service level agreement (SLA) with us as the principal Local Authority and be named within the Local Authority's Grant Funding Agreement.

5.3 The delivery partner would be expected to demonstrate compliance with all ERDF funding rules concerning procurement, publicity, defrayal, state aid and record keeping and would be required to retain evidence of this in the same way as the principal Local Authority. The ERDF funding rules are very detailed and include:

- the collection and submission of substantial supporting evidence when submitting a claim;
- specific branding requirements;
- detailed procurement requirements; and
- potential state aid implications.

5.4 Anything which is non-compliant will result in the funding, which will have already been defrayed (any money spent is claimed back following defrayal within the next claim period), being denied. Additionally, Ribble Valley Borough Council, as the

grant recipients would still be the accountable body for the fund and will need to ensure that the Delivery Partner has the appropriate systems in place and evidence to support financial claims for reimbursement of funding from MHCLG.

5.5 In the case of the proposals listed above, the ideas and feedback on local priorities and the delivery impact of activities will be fully explored by the consultants and discussed with not only the relevant lower tier authorities but the relevant chambers of trade, business groups etc. On this basis, concentrating use of the fund on plans to deal with the medium to long term impacts of Covid-19, it is considered that the same outcomes can be delivered with Ribble Valley Borough Council solely being responsible for defraying the funding.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – In accordance with the ERDF Procedure Rules the areas of activity will either be subject to formal tender or requests for at least three quotes.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – developing plans for the medium to long term impact of COVID19 on our local economies is considered to be a benefit to the Borough as a whole.
- Equality & Diversity – None.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Agree to the suggested areas of activity set out within paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6.

7.2 Agree that Ribble Valley Borough Council shall solely be responsible for the defrayal of the funding although there will be engagement with the relevant parish/town councils and stakeholders throughout the lifetime of the funding (the funding runs until the end of March 2022).



NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY 17th JUNE 2021
title: LEVELLING UP FUND
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
principal author: NICOLA HOPKINS – DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To update Members on the recently announced Levelling Up Fund.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Ambitions-
 - To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley
 - To help make people's lives safer and healthier

- Corporate Objectives –
 - To work with our partners to ensure that the infrastructure in the Ribble Valley is improved
 - To promote stronger, more confident, and more active communities throughout the borough

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Members will be aware that earlier this year, as part of the Spending Review, Rishi Sunak MP announced the Levelling Up Fund. This fund is intended to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. The £4.8 billion fund will support town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets.

2.2 Every area of the country has been placed into category 1, 2, or 3, with category 1 representing places with the highest levels of identified need. Ribble Valley falls within category 3. Notwithstanding this categorisation the prospectus for the fund confirms that bids from categories 2 and 3 will still be considered for funding on their merits of deliverability, value for money and strategic fit, and could still be successful if they are of exceptionally high quality.

2.3 After some consideration it was decided to submit a bid for Longridge Town Centre under the Regeneration and town centre investment theme of the fund. Officers of the Council worked with Buttress Architects who have produced a Strategic Overview Document (please see attached). This has been shared with the community of Longridge and two public engagement sessions have been arranged for Tuesday 8th June.

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

2.5 The timescale for submitting a bid is exceptionally short, 18th June, and the process of developing some ideas for Longridge including the public engagement session has happened very quickly given the timescales imposed.

3 VALUE FOR MONEY

3.1 The assessment process of the fund will focus on the following key criteria:

- 3.1.1 Characteristics of the place
- 3.1.2 Deliverability
- 3.1.3 Strategic fit with local and Fund priorities
- 3.1.4 Value for money

3.2 An economic case is required to support the bid which explains the benefits of the bid and how it represents value for money.

3.3 In this regard quotes were sought from consultants who could produce such a case. In total seven companies were approached to bid for this element of work. Three came back almost immediately stating that they were working on numerous other bids and that they did not have the capacity to undertake the work within the timescales involved.

4 CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

4.1 Given the value of the work involved, and in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules, at least two written quotations (seven in total) were sought with a deadline of 4th June. As of the deadline only one quote had been received.

4.2 As set out within the prospectus for the fund demonstrating value for money in respect of any bid submitted is critical to the bid. Section 5 of the application form specifically relates to the value for money elements of the bid with all costs and benefits compliant or in line with HMT's Green Book, DfT Transport Analysis Guidance and MHCLG Appraisal Guidance. As such it is evident that for our bid to be given due consideration an economic case is essential in support of the application.

4.3 In accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules where the relevant number of quotations has been sought, but fewer quotations have been obtained, an exemption from the requirement to obtain the number of quotations required was requested, and written agreement for an exemption in this case was received from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Director of Resources.

4.4 Given the deadline for applications is 18th June there was not sufficient time to first seek approval from this committee for an exemption in this case.

5 ECONOMIC CASE

5.1 Edge Economics provided a quote for undertaking specialist technical assistance in respect of our bid. Given the restricted timescales involved the economic case which will be produced will enable the Value for Money section of the Levelling Up Fund Application Form (Section 5) to be completed. This will increase the visibility of the Council's projects and make the case as best as possible at this time.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- **Resources-** the cost of the production of the Economic Case will come out of the Council's Capital Programme for Economic Development Initiatives (currently £66,750) which is set aside to explore options for capital initiatives.

- **Technical, Environmental and Legal-** part of the work to facilitate the production of the bid will require exemption from the Council's Contract Procedure Rules based on the timescales involved in submitting a bid and the importance of including an Economic case in support of the bid.
- **Political-** None
- **Reputation-** considering options for improving infrastructure within the Borough will improve opportunities for our residents.
- **Equality & Diversity** – None.

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1 Note the intended Levelling Up Fund bid for Longridge Town Centre

7.2 Note the exemption to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, which has already been granted, set out within Section 4 of this report.



NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

Levelling Up Longridge



Version history

Project name: Levelling up Longridge
 Project number: XXXX
 Client: Ribble Valley Council

Rev:	Date:	Status	Name	Description
3	25.05.2021	FINAL	Kimberley Corral I Senior Architect	Issued for Comment
2	20.05.2021	DRAFT	Kimberley Corral I Senior Architect	Issued for Comment
1	17.02.2021	DRAFT	Kimberley Corral I Senior Architect	Issued for Comment
	06-05-2021	DRAFT	Lee Bowen I Architectural Assistant	DRAFT

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Buttress

Buttress Architects Ltd.
 41 Bengal St.
 Manchester
 M4 6AF

T: 0161 236 3303
 W: www.buttress.net

By 2028, Longridge will be regarded by its residents as a vibrant town in which to live, work and play, having retained its historic centre and its blend of urban and rural characteristics.

Residents will have access to a range of public services, healthy leisure activities and designated green spaces, whilst community facilities in the town will be improved and enhanced. Existing employment areas will be protected and opportunities for business expansion identified.

1.0

Strategic Overview

Longridge Overview

1.1 Longridge Profile

Longridge is a market town nestled in the picturesque Ribbles Valley. The town is also on the edge of the ancient Forest of Bowland, which was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1964.

Historic Context

The advent of the railway saw other industries opening in Longridge - including four large steam-powered cotton mills and brass and iron foundries. Rows of terraced houses were built for the workers at Stonebridge and on new streets constructed off Berry Lane. This led to substantial growth over the second half of the nineteenth century - transforming Longridge from a thriving village to a fully-fledged town.

Many of the traditional industries of Longridge declined or ceased altogether during the 20th Century. Following the final closure of the railway in 1967, the former line has been largely built over and the quarries and textile mills that it served have either found alternative uses or been cleared for development.

2011 Census

Longridge has a population of approximately 38,000 and the 2011 Census shows that 46.7% of Longridge residents were aged over 45, compared to 44% for Lancashire as a whole. The high proportion in the town shows its increasing attractiveness for retirement and the need to provide suitable accommodation for residents reaching old age.

The census shows that almost 30% of Longridge residents were aged under 25 - an indication that in the future there will be a need for more affordable housing to retain these individuals in the locality.

Neighbourhood plan

Six objectives have been outlined to achieve the Longridge Neighbourhood Development Plan vision.

Objective 1 - To help manage future housing growth in Longridge

The level of housing growth in Longridge has been set through the Ribbles Valley Core Strategy. By 2026 a minimum of 1,160 new homes will be built in Longridge.

Housing development proposals to address affordability and housing needs for older and younger people.

Objective 2 - To ensure a suitable level of infrastructure is in place

Any significant growth in the area should consider extra strain on existing services and infrastructure and address the needs.

Objective 3 - To protect local character, heritage and landscape

All new development proposals will only be supported when they are of good design that responds positively to the local character and distinctiveness of the surroundings.

Objective 4 - To maintain and enhance local shops and services

The neighbourhood plan seeks to support and facilitate appropriate retail development in the main centre of Longridge town as defined in the emerging Housing and Economic Development Plan Document.

Objective 5 - To protect and enhance community facilities

The community facilities are all considered to be essential to retaining the health and vitality of the area.

Objective 6 - To protect and enhance local employment opportunities

It is important that Longridge continues to perform an economic role by providing local employment opportunities. This will ensure the community is more balanced and does not become a dormitory, commuter town.







Strategic Overview

1.2 Identifying Zones

Zones outlined within the Longridge Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2028

-  Conservation Areas
-  Housing Developments Under Construction
-  Housing Developments in for Planning Permission

Town Zones

-  Zone 01 - Town Centre
Longridge town centre maintains an active high street with approximately only 1 vacant unit.
-  Zone 02 - Key Employment Areas
Important employment areas are identified that are supported by the neighbourhood plan.
-  Zone 03 - Key Outdoor Leisure
Outdoor leisure areas deemed important for both resident well being and with significant economic value.
-  Zone 03 - Key Green Spaces
Key green spaces are identified that are protected from development coinciding with the protection of land within green belt areas.



Strategic Masterplan

1.3 Existing Overview

The following map identifies specific properties outlined in the Longridge vision document and places them in relation to the town centre and other key existing sites.

Many of the properties are located along or around the main high street on Berry Lane. The high street has many active shopfronts with high business occupancy rates.

Key

Bus Route

Proposed Surface Parking

Bus Stop

Shopfronts

High Street

Main Roads

Key Outdoor Spaces

Community Assets

1. Youth & Community Centre
2. Longridge Library
3. Longridge Civic Hall
4. Over 60's Club

Leisure Assets

1. Heritage Centre
2. St. Wilfreds Club
3. Longridge Sports & Social Club
4. Conservative Club
5. Palace Cinema
6. Skate Park

Places of Worship

1. St. Pauls Church
2. St. Wilfreds Church
3. Christ Church

Supermarkets

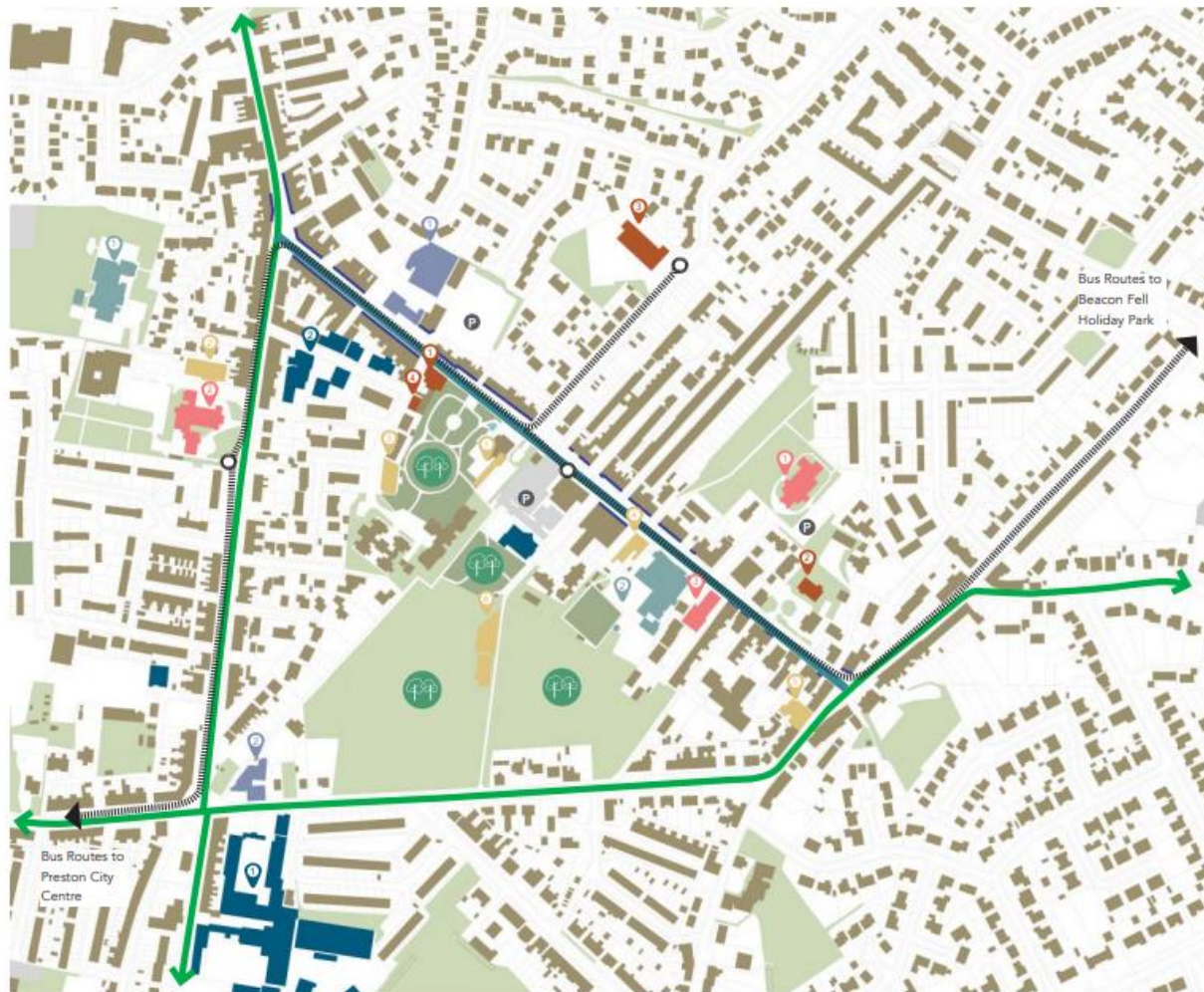
1. Booths
2. Texaco Garage

Key Employment Areas

1. Queens Mill Commercial Area
2. The Old Corn Mill Industrial Estate

Schools

1. St. Wilfrid's Primary School
2. Longridge C of E Primary School



2.0

Emerging Strategy



Activate public green

Public realm improvements

Safe pedestrian crossing

Anchor site

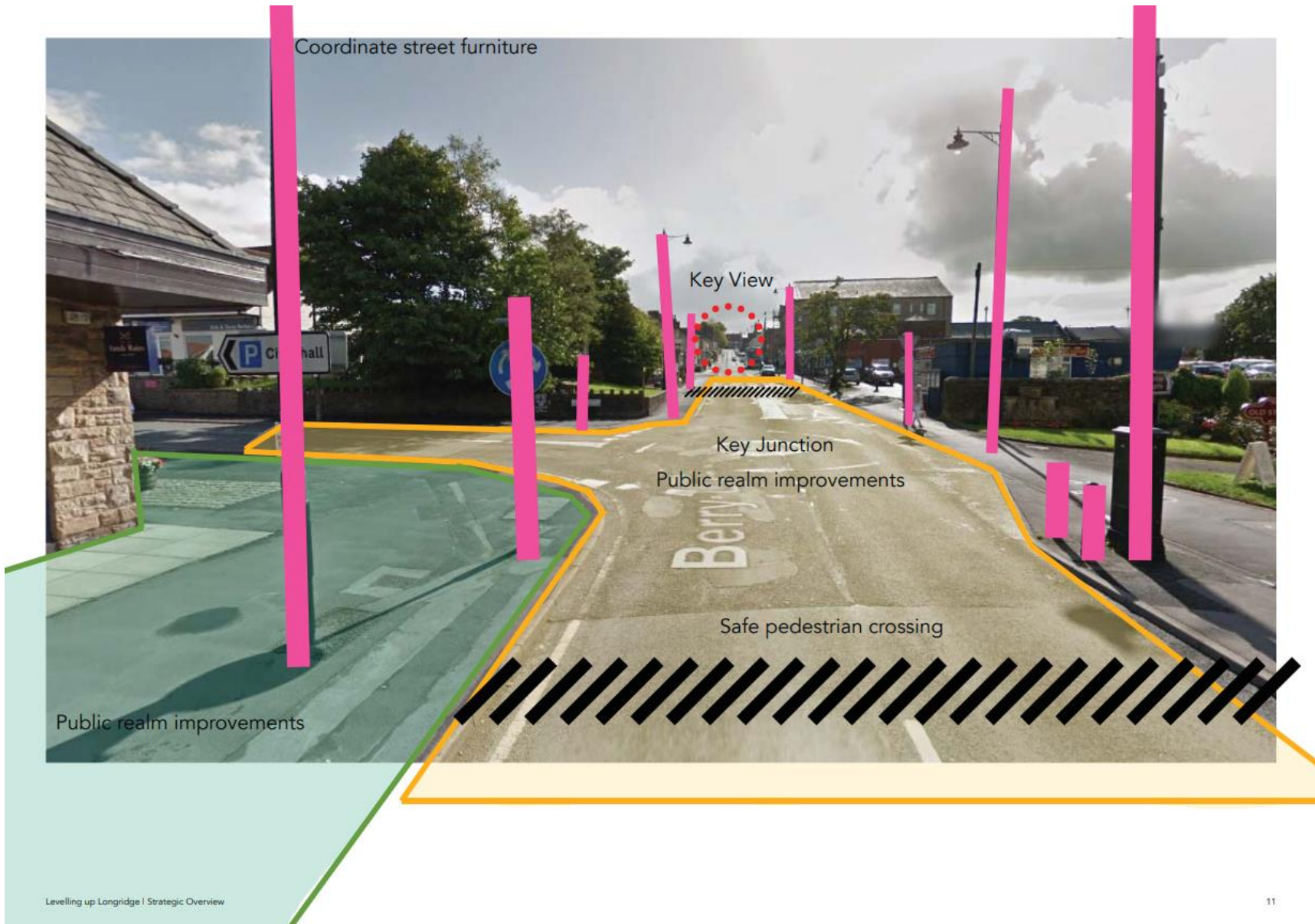
Shopfront improvements

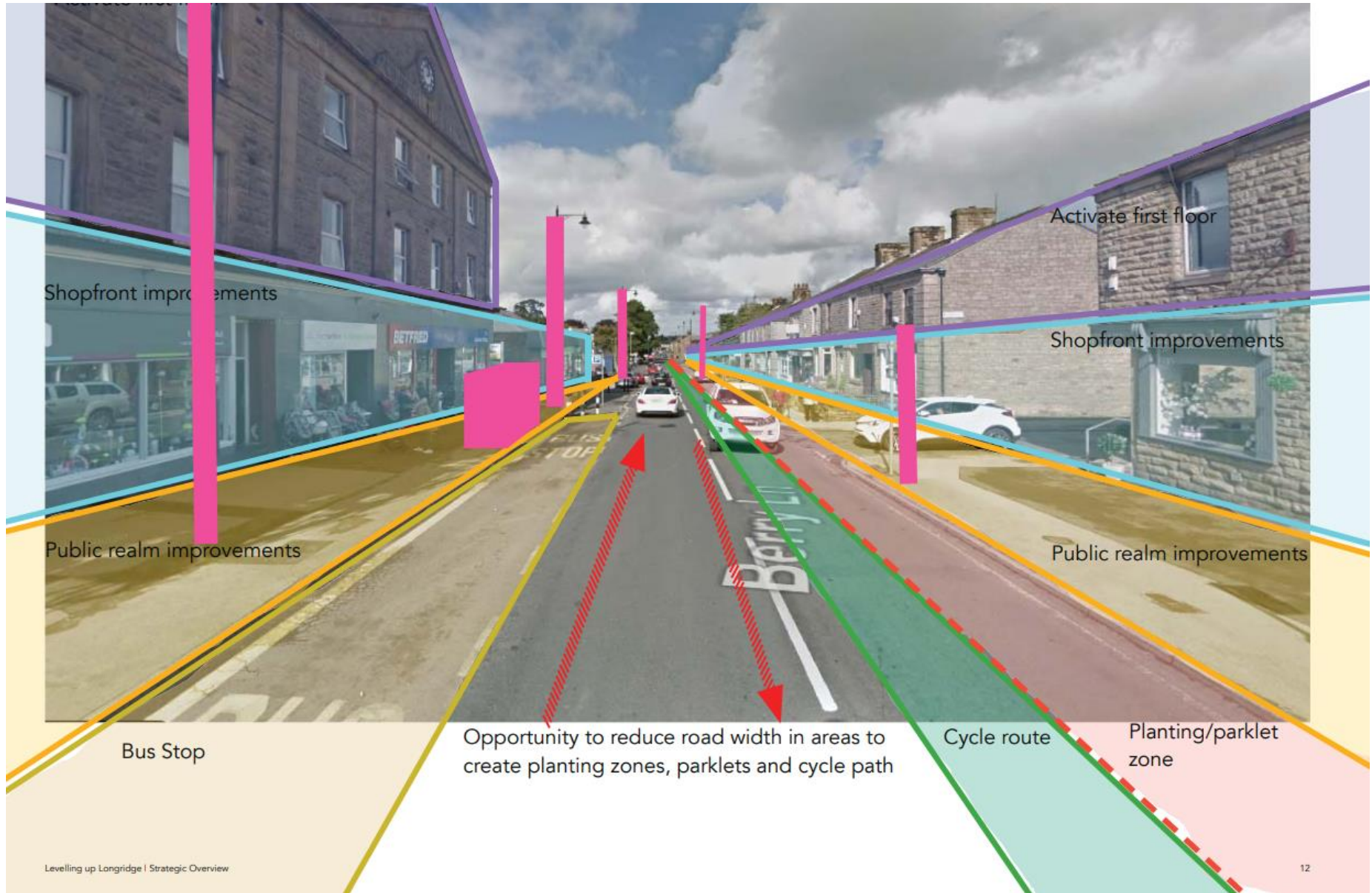
Potential for one way traffic

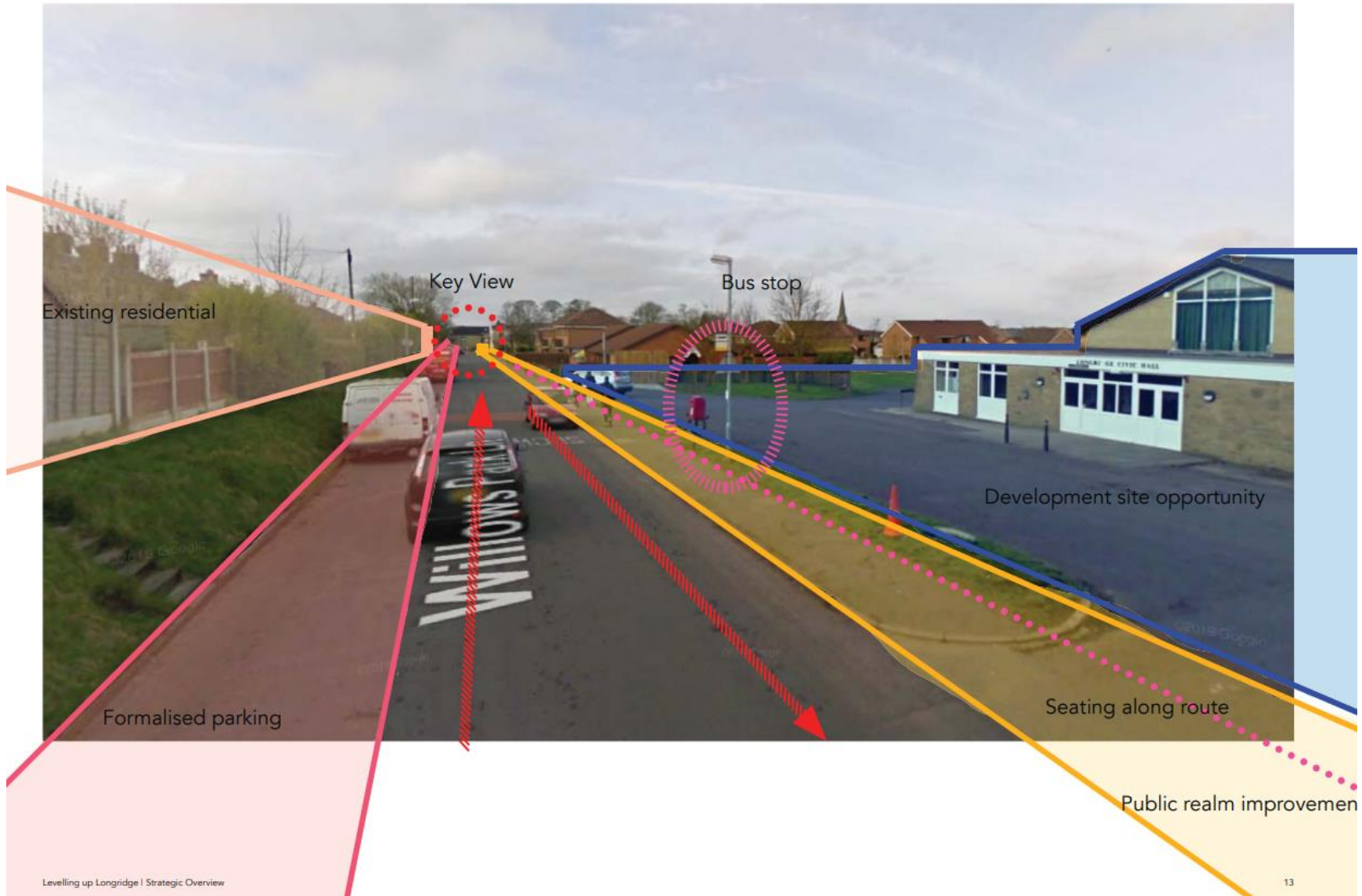
Cycle Lane

Relocate street parking

Public realm improvements







Strategic Masterplan

2.2 Emerging Strategy



2.3 Zone 1 - Specialised Accommodation and Community Hub

- Create a new mixed use community hub with specialised accommodation
- Community hub to include shared hall facility and work hub
- Public realm improvements along Calder Ave to form better connections between the development and the high street.



2.4 Zone 2 - Activating Towneley Gardens

- Activate façades facing Towneley Gardens
- Explore options to maximise the use of the existing assets



2.5 Zone 3 - Public Realm improvements

- Option 1 introduces single flow traffic down Berry Lane, using the additional area to form outside seating and wider pedestrian footpaths
- Option 2 uses parklets to informally introduce increase outside seating areas and planting along Berry Lane
- Form new crossings along Berry Lane

- ↔ Key pedestrian crossing points
- Parklet/increased footpath
- Public realm improvements including cycle path



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