



Please ask for: Wendy Rowe
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10 September 2026

Dear Councillor,

Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
6:00pm, Tuesday 22 September 2026
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

You are invited to attend this meeting for consideration of the matters itemised in the following Agenda.

Yours sincerely,

T. Clegg
Chief Executive

To: Councillors:

Lyons, O. (Chair)
Thompson S. (Vice-Chair)
Cecil, D. Johnson, T.
Cecil, M. Millington, G.
Deakin, S. Muckley, A.
Freeman, M. Prestwood, J.
Haden, P.

1. Invitees for Agenda Item 5 - Call-in: Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Councillors:

Jones, P.	Leader of the Council
Johnson, T.	Proposer of call-in request and member of the Scrutiny Committee
Dunnett, A.	Supporter of call-in request
Freeman, M.	Supporter of call-in request and member of the Scrutiny Committee
Hill, J.	Supporter of call-in request
Prestwood, J.	Supporter of call-in request and member of the Scrutiny Committee

Officers:

Clegg, T.	Chief Executive
Stott, G.	Deputy Chief Executive-Place
Forrester, C.	Deputy Chief Executive-Resources
Piper, D.	Head of Economic Development and Planning

Agenda

Part 1

2. Apologies

3. Declarations of Interests of Members

- (i) To declare any interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct and any possible contraventions under Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.
- (ii) To receive any Party Whip declarations.

4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2026 (enclosed).

5. Call-in: Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 4.1 – 4.138).

Item 4.132 – 4.133 of the report is confidential due to the inclusion of information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Council).

6. Quarter 1 2026/27 Performance Update

To receive the quarter 1 2026/27 performance update for the Economic Prosperity Priority Delivery Plan (Item 5.1 – 5.5).

The documents included are as considered by Cabinet on 20 August 2026.

7. Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Update

Update from the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

8. Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2026-27

Update from the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Held on Tuesday 7 July 2026 at 6:00pm
in the Esperance Room, Civic Centre, Cannock**

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

Lyons, O. (Chair)
Thompson, S. (Vice-Chair)
Cecil, M. Millington, G.
Freeman, M. Muckley, A.
Haden, P. Prestwood, J.
Johnson, T.

The meeting was being recorded in accordance with Section 40 of the Council's Constitution, specifically the Protocol for Recording, Filming and Social Media at Meetings.

1. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. Cecil.

2. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restrictions on Voting by Members and Party Whip Declarations

No declarations of interests in addition to those already confirmed by Members in the Register of Members Interests were made and no party whip declarations were received.

3. Minutes

Resolved:

Arising from consideration of the minutes the Chair referred to the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Scrutiny Review and the presentation provided by the representatives from the Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy Partnership at the meeting on 26 February 2026. If any Member wished to have a copy of the presentation, she advised Members to contact officers directly.

She then referred to the Town Centre Regeneration Scheme update and the reference to the Development Framework document. She commented that following the May elections there had been a change in administration and the document would now be reviewed by the new administration and presented to Cabinet in due course.

She also made reference to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund update where it had been explained that a more detailed report would be submitted to a future Scrutiny Committee and representatives from local businesses who had benefitted from the funding would be invited to attend. She advised that this would be submitted to either the September or December meeting.

A member referred to the Town Centre Regeneration Scheme Update and queried the wording in respect the Development Framework document and there being a period of the engagement with the public.

The Head of Economic Development and Planning explained that the position in March was that the Development Framework document had been developed and a period of engagement with the public had been due to take place to explain the proposals. However, as there was a change in administration in May it was possible that this document would now be reviewed.

Once the Development Framework had been agreed by Cabinet the new administration would then need to determine how they wished to undertake any consultation and engagement with the public. He confirmed that the minutes were factually correct as of March 2026.

Members then congratulated officers on the success of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and looked forward to the Committee receiving the more detailed report.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2026 be approved.

4. Introduction to the Role of the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Economic Development and Planning and the Head of Regulatory Services that provided members with an introduction to the Committee. The presentation covered:

- Support for the Committee
- Background
- Purpose of scrutiny and effective scrutiny
- Committee's role and remit
- Work programme and examples of work scrutiny, and
- Undertaking a review.

Following the presentation Members were given the opportunity to ask questions. A Member asked if the Committee had the power to suggest targets that were set and define the criteria for success in respect of policies and strategies. Officers advised that it would be possible for the Committee to have an input in the key indicators and targets.

The Chair added that Members would be able to feed into the process via the quarterly performance reports for the Economic Prosperity PDP and KPIs that were submitted to the Committee at each meeting.

5. Annual Scrutiny Business Report 2025-26

Consideration was given to the Briefing Note of the Head of Law and Governance (Item 5.1- 5.4) presented by the Head of Economic Development and Planning.

The Chair led members through the report which outlined the business conducted by the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee during 2025-26. A full copy of the report would be presented to the 8 July full Council meeting.

A Member asked whether the presentation given on car parking at the meeting on 16 September 2025 could be provided to all Members on the Committee. Officers confirmed this could be arranged.

Resolved:

- (A) That the annual report be agreed and submitted to the 8 July 2026 full Council meeting for noting.
- (B) That the presentation given on car parking at the meeting on 16 September 2025 be provided to all Members on the Committee.

6. Quarter 4 / End of Year Performance 2025/26

Consideration was given to the Q4 performance update for the Economic Prosperity PDP (Item 6.1 – 6.6).

The Head of Economic Development and Planning led members through the report referring to the progress of the various projects and summarising the successes and slippages. Overall, good progress had been made on the key priorities, but some were behind schedule.

With regard to Cannock Town Centre Regeneration a significant milestone had been achieved with the completion of the main demolition works to the multi-storey car park and Forum Shopping Centre with pre-demolition works commencing for the Cabot units along Church Street. However, it was a complex project, and there had been some slippages relating to the Development Framework document and delivery options. These had been delayed due to the Council decision in January not to release capital funding to deliver the regeneration programme.

He confirmed that the S106 review had also slipped due to capacity issues.

Members noted that another success in Quarter 4 was the formal adoption of the Local Plan for 2018-2040 on 23 March 2026.

A member asked for an update in respect of the position with the Halifax unit along Church Street and how this would affect the progress of demolition. The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised that Halifax had confirmed that they would close the Cannock branch on 9 September. It was a commercial decision as part of retiring the Halifax brand. Once the branch closed a timetable for demolition of the Cabot units would become clearer.

Another member congratulated staff involved in the adoption of the Local Plan which was a significant achievement. She also referred to the Team being shortlisted for an award. The Head of Economic Development and Planning confirmed that the Local Plan Team and an Officer had been shortlisted, with the Award Ceremony scheduled for 23 July 2026. He added that although the Local Plan had just been adopted, it was necessary to start work on a new Local Plan and to scope the consultation. New regulations meant that the process had to be undertaken over 30 months rather than 7 years and the Government had indicated a preference for digital consultation. The Council would therefore need to adapt accordingly. He suggested the Committee may wish to look at this as part of the Work Programme.

The Chair referred to the refresh of the Economic Growth Strategy and the new Local Plan which formed part of the remit of the Committee. She asked whether it would be possible to put forward any new Cultural policies during the consultation stages. The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager advised that when Stafford Borough Council reviewed their strategies part of the preparatory work was to undertake a workshop to review policies with the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

Members noted that the S106 Planning Obligations Working Group had not been progressed due to capacity issues, and it was proposed to deprioritise this action and remove it from the PDP for 2026/27. However, S106 monies would still be collected and used to mitigate the impacts of development proposals. A Member referred to CIL contributions and the need to ensure money was spent in the relevant Wards/Parishes before Local Government Reorganisation. She suggested that the Committee could undertake a review of this as part of the Work Programme.

Another Member asked whether staffing and capacity issues had improved. The Head of Economic Development and Planning advised that the Planning Policy Team still carried several vacancies. Although there was interest in graduate roles it was difficult to get experienced staff.

The Officer then outlined the KPI's for Planning and confirmed that targets were consistently being exceeded. With regard to Building Control, it was noted that two targets were slightly behind, but it was confirmed that the targets that had been set were higher than the statutory requirement. The Building Control Team struggled to recruit staff and had carried vacancies for over 2 years due to the Council not being able to compete with salaries in the private sector or locally. However, the Team continued to work incredibly hard.

The Chair wished to place on record her congratulations to the Planning Team for being shortlisted for an Award and to the Building Control Team for achieving 100% customer satisfaction rates.

Resolved:

That the end of year 2025/26 performance update be noted.

7. Outcome of Staffordshire Local Visitor Economy and Partnership Scrutiny Review

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 7.1 – 7.6).

The Chair updated members on the outcome of the Task and Finish Review outlining the findings of the Group. She explained that Members were being asked to consider some recommendations to Cabinet to support future activity in this workstream.

A Member asked if the work of the Review Group had concluded or would it continue to meet. The Chair explained that the review had concluded and the Group had made several recommendations for consideration at Cabinet. If the recommendations were agreed by Cabinet, there would be an opportunity for the Committee to review these again in the future.

A Member suggested that contact be made with Hednesford Raceway and Hednesford Football Club as both attracted many visitors and boosted the local economy. The Chair advised that the recommendations made by the Group covered the whole of Cannock Chase District.

Concern was raised over the provision of Christmas lights/decorations as there was no Parish Council covering Cannock and the Town Centre Partnership had disbanded. The Economic Development and Regeneration Manager confirmed that activity was underway in this respect, and a different group were taking forward the provision of Christmas lights/decorations in Cannock.

Resolved:

That Members note the report and the following recommendations proposed by the Task and Finish Group be noted and presented to Cabinet for consideration:

- (i) **LVEP Engagement** – That the Council reviews its level of engagement with the Staffordshire LVEP, including the benefits of formal membership, to ensure the district maximises opportunities arising from the partnership.
- (ii) **Tourism / Visitor Economy Strategy** – That consideration is given to the development of a Tourism or Visitor Economy Strategy for Cannock Chase to provide a clear framework for future activity, aligned with available resources.
- (iii) **Private Sector Collaboration** – That stronger engagement is established with key private sector partners, including McArthurGlen, Foresty England and others, to support joint promotion, sponsorship opportunities and improved visitor offer.
- (iv) **Town Centre Connectivity** – That opportunities are explored to better link key visitor destinations with town centres, including improved signage, digital promotion, and visitor information.
- (v) **Events** – That the Council works with Town and Parish Councils, businesses and community groups to explore opportunities to support and expand events and activities within town centres.
- (vi) **Evidence and Local Plan** – That the Council continues to gather evidence on the visitor economy to inform future Local Plan policies, including opportunities for visitor accommodation and supporting infrastructure.
- (vii) **Data and Performance Monitoring** – That ongoing engagement with the LVEP and partners is used to monitor visitor economy performance and inform future decision making.

8. Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2026/27

Consideration was given to report of Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 8.1 – 8.14).

The Chair led the Committee through the report which set out the draft work programme for the Committee for 2026-27. She explained that there were three further meetings scheduled during the municipal year, and should the Committee decide to set up a Task and Finish Group this would meet regularly throughout the year. She confirmed that quarterly performance reports would also be presented to each meeting.

She referred Members to Appendix 4 of the report that outlined the meeting dates and four possible items for review that she had proposed. She added that another member had suggested earlier in the meeting that a review of CIL contributions could also be considered. She also referred to an online meeting that she had attended with Councillor Muckley in respect of Theatres being at risk. She suggested that the Committee may wish to consider reviewing the economic impact of the cultural offer within the district and to review any cultural policies.

She then asked Members whether they had any further suggestions, explaining that it would be unrealistic for the Committee to undertake more than two reviews as it would be challenging for officers to provide the necessary support. It would be important to determine the scope of the review and for members to be clear on what they wanted to achieve.

The Committee then discussed further potential ideas for the work programme and members put forward several suggestions. During the discussion a member suggested that if the Committee decided to include Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Rugeley Town Centre Masterplan on the work programme, the cultural aspects within each town could also be considered. Another member suggested that the Local Plan should be included on the work programme given that work on a new one would need to commence soon. The Head of Economic Development and Planning explained that there was no date set for the initial consultation on the new Local Plan. However, he suggested that a presentation/update be provided at a meeting later in the year.

Members expressed their preference to undertake a review of the economic impact of the cultural offer within the district and to review any cultural policies. It was agreed that a Task and Finish Group be set up to undertake the review. Members also agreed to include Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Rugeley Town Centre Masterplan on the work programme with updates being provided at each meeting. Another member suggested that the Committee could potentially look at how car parking affects the visitor economy.

The Chair then sought nominations from Members who wished to be part of the Task and Finish Group. It was agreed that Councillors A. Muckley, M. Freeman, M. Cecil and O. Lyons would be on the Review Group.

The Chair confirmed that the Task and Finish Group would be set up on a date to be determined. She added that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 22 September 2026.

Resolved:

- (A) That Cannock Town Centre Regeneration and Rugeley Town Centre Masterplan be included on the Work Programme for 2026-27 with updates being provided at each meeting.
- (B) That the new Local Plan be included on the Work Programme for 2026-27 and an update be provided at a future meeting.
- (C) That a Task and Finish Group be established, on a date to be determined, to review the economic impact of the cultural offer within the district and to review any cultural policies.
- (D) That Councillors A. Muckley, M. Freeman, M. Cecil and O. Lyons form the membership of the Task and Finish Group.
- (E) That a detailed report on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund be submitted to the September or December meeting and representatives from local business who had benefited from the funding be invited to attend.

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Chair

Call-in: Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Committee:	Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee
Date of Meeting:	22 September 2026
Report of:	Head of Economic Development and Planning
Portfolio:	Regeneration and Corporate Strategy

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information to the Committee regarding a call-in request received in relation to the Cabinet decision of 20 August 2026 in respect of the Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options report

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members consider the proposal put forward by Councillor T. Johnson as set out in report paragraph 3.7, below.

3 Call-in Details

- 3.1 Cabinet, at its meeting held on 20 August 2026, considered a report entitled 'Cabinet Town Centre Regeneration Options'. The original Cabinet report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Cabinet resolved that:
- (A) The contents of the report be noted, including the options for the regeneration of Cannock town centre and the associated deliverability, financial implications and risks.
 - (B) The preferred strategic approach for the regeneration of Cannock town centre, in principle, be to retain and refurbish the Prince of Wales Theatre, noting that the wider opportunities identified in the Development Framework would not be progressed at this stage.
 - (C) It be noted that further detailed due diligence, design work and full business cases would need to be undertaken by officers before any final commitment was made to delivery by the Council of either option as set out in report paragraph 2.2.
- 3.3 The relevant extract from the 20 August 2026 Cabinet minutes is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.4 Decision (B) is the subject of this call-in.
- 3.5 The request for this call-in was submitted by Councillor T. Johnson, and supported by Councillors A. Dunnett, M. Freeman, J. Hill and J. Prestwood.

3.6 The reasons given for the call-in are:

“The above decision at 30(B) poses an unacceptable financial and reputational risk to Cannock Chase Council”

3.7 Councillor T. Johnson is proposing that:

“In Section 2 subsection 2.2 that option a) of the report is adopted:

To progress the Development Framework approach, including the redevelopment of the Prince of Wales Theatre site as part of a wider mixed-use regeneration scheme and the further exploration of opportunities relating to the Civic Centre site, major retail provision, housing, commercial development, cultural uses and educational facilities.”

3.8 The full call-in request, detailing the specific reasons for the call-in and the proposed motion for consideration is set out in Appendix 3.

3.9 The procedure for debating a call-in request is set out in report appendix 4.

4 Implications

4.1 Financial

The report to Cabinet on 20 August 2026 referred to the financial implications arising from Cabinet’s resolutions. Any changes to those resolutions resulting from the outcome of this call-in process will form part of further reports to Cabinet, if applicable.

4.2 Legal

The powers of the Scrutiny Committees are limited by the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) and the Council’s Constitution. The Committee cannot substitute its own decision for that of the Cabinet as it has no power to make decisions on Executive functions.

If the Committee disagrees with the decision of the Cabinet, then it can refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration, making recommendations as it wishes. The Cabinet must, if the Committee refers the matter back, reconsider the decision, having regard to the Committee’s recommendation, but it is not bound by the recommendation proposed.

4.3 Human Resources

None.

4.4 Risk Management

None.

4.5 Equalities and Diversity

None.

4.6 Health

None.

4.7 Climate Change

None.

5 Appendices

Appendix 1: Cabinet report 20 August 2026: Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Appendix 2: Extract of 20 August 2026 Cabinet Minutes.

Appendix 3: Call-in Request Form

Appendix 4: Procedure for consideration a call-in request.

Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Committee:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	20 August 2026
Report of:	Head of Economic Development and Planning
Portfolio:	Regeneration and Corporate Strategy

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present Cabinet with the comprehensive information that Members will need to make key decisions to enable the Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Programme to be delivered.
- 1.2 To set out the chronology of the Cannock Town Centre Regeneration programme, the decisions taken to date and the rationale for those decisions to provide context to the decisions required to move forward.
- 1.3 To present a range of development options and seek Cabinet's agreement on the preferred option to enable progression of the regeneration programme.

2 Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report, including the options for the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre and the associated deliverability, financial implications and risks.
- 2.2 Consider the preferred strategic approach for the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre in principle, either:
 - a) To progress the Development Framework approach, including the redevelopment of the Prince of Wales Theatre site as part of a wider mixed-use regeneration scheme and the further exploration of opportunities relating to the Civic Centre site, major retail provision, housing, commercial development, cultural uses and education facilities
 - or
 - b) To retain and refurbish the Prince of Wales Theatre, noting that the wider opportunities identified within the Development Framework would not be progressed at this stage.
- 2.3 Note that further detailed due diligence, design work and full business cases will need to be undertaken by officers before any final commitment is made to delivery of either option by the Council.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.4 A draft Development Framework has been produced by the Council's advisers (Continuum) for Members to consider, but there are other options to consider.
- 2.5 Members are asked to consider the options available and the associated opportunities and risks.
- 2.6 Once the preferred options have been confirmed it is necessary to then complete the associated detailed due diligence to enable future funding requirements to be established, the viability of the proposals, their phasing, and the outline programme for delivery.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 Since Government funding for the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre was awarded in 2021 the proposed redevelopment scheme has been refined and amended to reflect the requirements of the funding award, the volatility of the construction market and wider economic influences. Since the bid was submitted the impact of inflationary pressures on the construction industry alongside increasing energy costs has created pressure from two directions. Firstly, the real value of the capital grant funding has decreased and the revenue costs of running buildings has increased meaning that the feasibility assessment of the original proposals can no longer be relied upon.
- 3.2 As the programme involves a number of interlinked projects a change in one area can and will affect a project in another development parcel. Reflecting on the position that the programme is currently at and how that point has been reached is important context that will enable Members to reach an informed decision on the vision for the town centre so that the delivery phase of the scheme can begin.
- 3.3 Members are reminded that whilst the regeneration projects are being delivered primarily through funding awarded by Government specifically for that purpose those projects have to be understood in the context of the Council as a whole. As the chronology of the programme sets out, both the financial position of the Council and the associated resource and capacity constraints have influenced the detail of the regeneration programme.

4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Programme supports delivery of the following priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan 2026-28:
 - i. Economic Prosperity
 - ii. Health and Wellbeing

By leading on site assembly and clearance works the regeneration programme is addressing longstanding issues around deliverability that could continue to deter investment in Cannock town centre. A redevelopment opportunity that offers the potential for a variety of uses can support both the local economy and the delivery of housing.

The Programme is also consistent with the development strategy as set out in the adopted Cannock Chase District Local Plan 2018-2040.

5 Report Detail

Background

- 5.1 In March 2021 the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) was launched by Government with up to £20m available to councils on the basis of outline business cases for regeneration schemes. Following a 15 week bidding period, in which the Council sourced, appointed and worked with development consultants to create a comprehensive proposal, in October 2021 the Council secured £20m capital funding to support an ambitious town centre regeneration scheme that would seek to deliver:
- i. Re-development of the former Multi-Storey Car Park and Indoor Market Hall site; creating a new cultural hub which includes the refurbishment of the Prince of Wales Theatre.
 - ii. Business workspace linked with the leisure hub as part of the same mixed-use building.
 - iii. Creation of the Northern Gateway, removing the existing subway and connecting the town centre to the bus station and Beecroft Road car park via new high quality public realm and commercial space.
 - iv. Bike hub, storage, hire and repair within a dedicated new facility to encourage active sustainable travel.
 - v. Enabling work to pay for demolition and clearance works to unlock land for the scheme.
 - vi. New service access arrangements at street-level for existing tenants with servicing rights with removal of existing roof-top servicing to facilitate re-development of the existing shopping centre.
 - vii. Retirement living complex.
- 5.2 The original funding application documents are available on the Council website ([Cannock Town Centre is Changing | Cannock Chase District Council](#)) and the original site plan is enclosed at **Appendix 1**. The original deadline by which all LUF grant monies had to be spent was 31 March 2025. Cabinet should however note that the Levelling Up Fund is now referred to as the Local Regeneration Fund and the Council is not bound to the original scheme as above but now has flexibility to change elements of the scheme if no longer viable. Cabinet should also note that the deadline for spend of the remaining funding has also been extended to 31 March 2028.
- 5.3 The relationship between the conditions of the grant award and the finer detail of the redevelopment scheme is set out in the chronology enclosed at **Appendix 2**. Members are asked to note that the 15 week bidding period was only long enough to identify potential development schemes, carry out initial feasibility work and produce a high level cost plan to inform the funding application. The timescale did not allow for a complete and robust due diligence process to assess the deliverability of the

scheme within the parameters of the funding award. The Council were in the same position as all other bidding authorities. As a result, revisions have had to be made to ensure that no element of the funding was lost and funding timescales adhered to.

- 5.4 It is also important to note the rationale for the funding itself was driven by three investment themes – transport (for Unitary and County Councils), regeneration and town centre investment and cultural investment as set out in the Levelling Up Fund Prospectus¹. Applicants were advised that investment proposals should focus on supporting high priority projects that would make a visible impact in local areas. Within the Cannock Chase application documents, it is noted that the proposed scheme set out in 5.1 above would deliver urban regeneration to an area of 1.36 hectares of Cannock Town Centre, addressing the long term decline of the high street.
- 5.5 The funding application (referred to in 5.2) provides further information on the leisure hub with the principle being that a reconfiguration and refurbishment of the Prince of Wales theatre would benefit not only the cultural offer in the town centre but would diversify the use of the building to support entrepreneurship and business incubation.
- 5.6 At the point that the LUF bid was submitted the total cost of the scheme was estimated at £44 million. In addition to the £20 million of LUF funding, the Council committed a further £17.2 million to fund a new Civic Hub and improvements to public realm and infrastructure. The bid stated that there could be an additional £6.8 million of unsecured funding met by a private sector investor in respect of the retirement living complex. The level of Council funding was necessary to deliver a strong Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) which was a prerequisite to securing the LUF funding.

Scheme design and review

- 5.7 To progress the design of the approved scheme, Cabinet approved permission to spend of up to £1.9 million in June 2022, to enable the appointment of multi-disciplinary consultants (Tetra Tech). The design team worked with the Council to progress the design and development of the scheme components including the creation of the new cultural hub (including refurbishment of the Prince of Wales Theatre), creation of the Northern Gateway, outline design work for the proposed Civic Hub and enabling work such as the demolition of the multi-storey car park.
- 5.8 The bid winning scheme was complex with dependencies across the different elements. These dependencies range between land assembly, costs, timescales, access arrangements, vacation of commercial units and legal negotiations. It was noted early in the project, that the Theatre would need to close for a period of time to accommodate the regeneration works and the operator at the time was made aware of this with the view to considering contingency options.

¹ [Levelling Up prospectus.pdf](#)

- 5.9 The first instance of dependencies conflicting was encountered within the land assembly process. The Council attempted to acquire key land parcels such as the former Forum Shopping Centre and negotiate with a leaseholder occupying a unit within the regeneration area, to achieve a relocation. These negotiations were not successful necessitating a Compulsory Order Process (CPO) which was agreed by Cabinet in September 2022. The CPO process was lengthy and complex and took the project beyond the deadline for spending the LUF funding, which prompted the move to a phased delivery approach (as set out in the Project Chronology at Appendix 2).
- 5.10 Ultimately, it was not necessary to progress the CPO to its conclusion, as the Council reached negotiated agreements with key landowners which later led to decisions made by Cabinet in June 2024 to proceed with the acquisition of the Forum Shopping Centre. Negotiations resumed with a leaseholder occupying a key site within the regeneration area in 2025 and this is covered later in the report.
- 5.11 Other dependencies that created conflict was the challenge with engaging and retaining a contractor for the Northern Gateway scheme which were addressed by implementing a two stage construction contract which enabled a pause between the design phase and the delivery phase whilst the highway works could be progressed.
- 5.12 During 2022 and 2023, the Council's appointed design team progressed the detailed technical work necessary to understand the final design and cost of each scheme component before a decision could be made by the Council to approve the works and move to contractor procurement.
- 5.13 The design work progressed through the various RIBA stages² with a RIBA Stage 2 report for the Cultural Hub and Northern Gateway produced and received in summer 2022 and RIBA Stage 3 report produced and received in summer 2023. At the same time, a RIBA Stage 1 report for the proposed Civic Hub was produced.
- 5.14 An outline planning application for the original LUF scheme was submitted in March 2023 and approved in July 2024.
- 5.15 The original bid scheme was worked up into a more detailed design underpinned by technical work and surveys, and the cost plan was refreshed by the consultant team. The cost of the Cultural Hub and Northern Gateway elements of the scheme increased significantly from the bid level estimates to detailed design and the cost exceeded the funding envelope identified in the bid. During 2022 and 2023, the prevailing economic conditions and global events created significant volatility around construction costs and high inflation which affected the viability of the project.
- 5.16 Through the detailed design process, it became clear that it would not be possible to expand the seating capacity of the theatre as part of the proposed refurbishment of

²The RIBA Plan of Work consists of eight stages that guide construction projects from inception to completion, with Stage 3 finalising the design [2020ribaplanofworkoverviewpdf.pdf](#)

the Prince of Wales Theatre, due to the constraints of the building structure. This limited the ability to increase income from shows in the auditorium and therefore its viability.

- 5.17 Council officers worked with the design team to review the designs and the cost plans for the entire scheme with a view to identifying a deliverable scheme that could be contained within the previous approved budget and still deliver the anticipated outputs but concluded that the scheme needed to be reviewed before it could move forward. The complexities around the CPO process also created uncertainty around land assembly and had a significant impact on the delivery programme and timetable.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Involvement

- 5.18 Due to the challenges in progressing the delivery of the original scheme, the Council accepted support from a new MHCLG Discovery Team which had been set up to support councils in receipt of Levelling Up Fund grant awards. The Discovery Team's remit was to provide focussed support and advice to identify elements of the scheme that could be delivered within the funding timescales.³
- 5.19 The Discovery Team met with senior officers between January and March 2024 and undertook site visits. The extent to which MHCLG were required to approve any changes to the original scheme depended on the nature and scale of the proposed amendments, the potential impact on budget and the outputs and outcomes that would be delivered (the benefits of the scheme as a whole).
- 5.20 Where a change was considered significant by MHCLG a Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process was triggered. Regular communication with MHCLG, both with the Discovery Team and via the quarterly monitoring returns submitted by the Council, helped to determine whether the PAR process applied. For Cannock Chase this first occurred in June 2024, following the engagement with the MHCLG Discovery Team.
- 5.21 To address the concerns around land availability, cost control and deliverability and with support from the MHCLG team, the Council agreed a phased approach to delivery of the scheme.
- 5.22 Phase One was agreed by Cabinet in March 2024, with Members agreeing to the following project scope:
- Demolition of the former Multi-Storey Car Park and Indoor Market Hall site
 - Creation of the Northern Gateway; removing the existing subway and connecting the town centre to the bus station and Beecroft Road car park via high quality public realm and creation of a new café unit
 - Refurbishment of Beecroft Road car park

³ In July 2025 MHCLG published this report discussing the challenges Councils were experiencing [Levelling Up Fund Process Evaluation – Phase 1](#)

- 5.23 The second phase of delivery related to a wider area within the town centre. Phase 2 was focussed on creating a future re-development opportunity that could attract investment into the town centre. The scope of works was as follows:
- Acquisition and demolition of the former Forum Shopping Centre
 - Acquisition and partial demolition of retail units along Church Street, Market Street and Market Hall Street
 - Public realm works
- 5.24 The Council continued at this stage to explore options for the Theatre and engaged with the previous operator IHL to identify potential improvements that could enhance the theatre offer and experience for users and increase income generation. This led to Page\Park being commissioned to develop a concept plan for a more modest refurbishment and this report was completed in August 2024. This was accompanied by a high level cost plan produced by Tetra Tech. Due to ongoing discussions at that time around the leisure contract review, this workstream was paused at this stage.

Current Position

- 5.25 Based on the original scheme and the phased approach agreed by Cabinet in March 2024 (Phase 1) and June 2024 (Phase 2) and decisions taken by Cabinet in December 2025, progress across the programme is as follows:

Project	Workstream	Current Status
Original scheme		
Cultural Hub	Refurbishment of Theatre, business workspace	Not progressed due to prohibitively high construction costs and outcome of the leisure contract review and subsequent Council decision to close the Theatre.
Retirement living complex	Release of site within regeneration area	Not progressed due to inability to reach an agreement to relocate existing leaseholder.
Civic Hub	Council funded new Civic Hub	Not progressed due to prohibitively high construction costs and lack of certainty of wider scheme. In December 2025, the Cabinet did agree in principle to look at the potential to relocate to smaller office space within the town centre, subject to a detailed business case.
Phase 1 (Cabinet March 2024)		
Demolition	Multistorey Car Park	Demolition concluded, final groundworks being completed
Northern Gateway	Units 1-3, Cannock Shopping Centre	Leasehold acquired, vacant possession secured, demolition complete, remedial works underway.

Project	Workstream	Current Status
Northern Gateway	Beecroft Road Car Park Resurfacing	The Council has worked up a design for the refurbishment of the car park including landscaping and installation of EV Charging points. This work has been paused pending the outcome of the decisions made on the Development Framework and Theatre. There are options to be considered in relation to the future of the car park which are outlined later in the report.
Northern Gateway	Steps and ramps - entrance to the town centre	Following the completion of detailed technical design work the cost of the highway works element of the Northern Gateway and proposed café increased significantly from original estimates. Cabinet agreed in December 2025 to remove these elements from the scope of the project and to progress an appropriately scaled public realm improvement scheme that is within previously agreed budget and delegations for phase 1 works agreed in March 2024. Subject to consideration and confirmation of the development options set out in this report the revised scheme (without highway works) could be designed and progressed.
Phase 2 (Cabinet June 2024)		
Land Assembly	Forum Shopping Centre	Acquired February 2025, vacant possession from March 2025.
Land Assembly	Retail units along Market Hall Street, Market Place and Church Street	Acquired February 2025. Cabinet were advised that the retail units along Market Hall Street were mostly occupied and would be subject to a future review with a report to come back to Cabinet for further consideration. This would consider retaining or disposing of the units.
Demolition	Forum Shopping Centre	Planning consent issued October 2025 for demolition of the shopping centre; demolition complete, final groundworks underway.
Demolition	Church Street and Market Place Retail Units	Planning consent issued February 2026, one tenant in situ but vacation date now confirmed as September 2026. Pre-demolition works to vacant units completed Spring 2026.

- 5.26 In September 2025, MHCLG removed the need for PARs and simplified the monitoring regime associated with the funding and determined that local authorities should have more flexibility as to how they wish to use the regeneration funding. LUF is now referred to as the Local Regeneration Fund⁴ (LRF). The deadline for the spend of the funding was extended to 31 March 2028.

Previously Approved Workstreams Recommencing

- 5.27 In March 2024 Cabinet resolved to refurbish the existing Beecroft Road car park as part of the Northern Gateway project within the Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Programme. Permission to spend on both elements was confirmed and in January 2025 the Council engaged Speller Metcalf in a Pre-Construction Services Agreement (PCSA) to design and implement the Northern Gateway scheme. In December 2025 Cabinet acknowledged that the remainder of the Northern Gateway works which sought to alter the highway arrangement, infill the pedestrian subway, install new steps and ramps and create a new café at road level were no longer value for money and this element of the project was closed. A commitment was made to deliver improvements to the steps, ramp and underpass as part of the Beecroft Road car park refurbishment, without carrying out works to the highway. Members are advised that the design element of this project has now been commissioned.
- 5.28 In June 2024 the Cabinet resolved to demolish the recently acquired vacant retail units along Church Street, subject to planning permission being granted which occurred in February 2026. Whilst pre-demolition works have been carried out the demolition itself has been paused whilst the Council awaited clarification from the Halifax bank as to their intentions regarding their lease. Separately to this Halifax announced in June that the branch would close in September 2026 as part of a corporate strategy and therefore the demolition works can now be confirmed and are scheduled to start.
- 5.29 Both of these workstreams are already contained within the permissions to spend of March and June 2024.

Options for consideration

- 5.30 The Council now needs to determine a way forward for the Town Centre Regeneration programme by considering options for the delivery of regeneration opportunities utilising the remaining LRF / Council funding.
- 5.31 The first option is to progress the draft Development Framework that has been produced (Appendix 3) and to consider the sub-options relating to each land parcel within the Framework. This creates the potential opportunity for a broad mix of development uses to come forward to support the regeneration of the town centre and creates a scalable development site which could be of interest to developers and operators.

⁴ [Local Regeneration Fund - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/local-regeneration-fund)

- 5.32 Alternatively, there is an option to retain and refurbish the Prince of Wales Theatre bringing it back into use. Whilst this could deliver benefits for the town centre and community, Cabinet will need to consider this alongside the opportunity to support a wider mix of uses within the Development Framework. Furthermore, this option presents risks and delivery challenges to the Council.
- 5.33 Consideration of the options and accompanying detail is set out in Appendix 4. This paper has been produced by the Council's appointed Development Consultants, Continuum, to help inform the Cabinet's deliberations and selection of a preferred option.

Draft Development Framework Option

- 5.34 In December 2025, Cabinet considered a report relating to the creation of a Development Framework document for the town centre. This would produce a concept masterplan for the Council owned sites setting out the types and amount of development the various plots would be capable of delivering. It is important to note that the Development Framework is a spatial document that sets out possible location and massing (size) of buildings, but it is not a planning application document. The proposals are indicative only but help to guide proposals from potential developers and operators. The Framework includes illustrative designs, plans and parameters, proposed uses within the red line of the regeneration area and planning context. If this option is selected, the Development Framework would become part of the formal developer selection and evaluation process.
- 5.35 Three in principle decisions were considered at Cabinet in December 2025 relating to:

(i) proposal for the Council to vacate the Civic Centre to facilitate redevelopment of that site

Cabinet were advised that the existing Civic Centre is larger than required to deliver Council services and due to the age of the building is expensive to run and has a backlog of maintenance.

The government have announced the decision on Local Government Reorganisation which will see a new South and Mid Staffordshire unitary council replace Cannock Chase Council in April 2028. It is unlikely that the new authority will require a large civic building in Cannock, but it is nonetheless important for residents to have a local point of contact with the new Council. There is the potential for an appropriately sized base within the town centre, which could be co-located with partners or other service providers.

If the Council moved out of the Civic Centre it creates a development site for a number of possible uses, including retail and social and other housing.

(ii) proposal to relocate an existing leaseholder onto the front of the Civic Centre site to facilitate redevelopment of the existing store on Market Hall Street

The report sets out a proposal to relocate an existing leasehold occupying a key unit within the regeneration area to the front part of the Civic Centre site, this was dependent on the above in principle decision for the Council to vacate.

Members were asked to agree to progress the negotiations with the leaseholder regarding their relocation and subsequent demolition of their existing premises. The proposed relocation of the store creates a larger and more viable development site in the town centre. It would also safeguard the presence of the leaseholder in the town centre, the footfall that it drives and the jobs it provides. The remainder of the Civic Centre site could be earmarked for residential purposes including provision of affordable housing or a retirement/older living scheme.

(iii) proposal to demolish the redundant theatre building, subject to securing planning permission

Following the Council's decision to close the Prince of Wales Theatre as part of a budget saving in February 2025 and noting the constraints of repurposing the existing building, Cabinet agreed to include the Theatre within the red line of the regeneration area with the intention to demolish, subject to securing planning consent.

5.36 The above in principle decisions were subject to the development of detailed business cases but work on these was paused in light of the announcement of the local elections in May. Despite the Council decision in January 2026 not to allocate further funding in the capital programme to support the proposals, Cabinet should note that those three proposals (and the associated assumption of redevelopment) still underpin the regeneration site boundary as confirmed by the Cabinet in December 2025. As a result, the document at **Appendix 3** was drafted at the request of the previous Cabinet. The draft Development Framework proposes the following phased development scheme:

- Up to 206 residential units across the existing Civic Centre site and along Church Street (including the former Prince of Wales theatre site).
- Up to 3614m² of commercial development at the front of the existing Civic Centre site and the former multi-storey car park site.
- An education and cultural space on the site, this could potentially accommodate any future expansion by Cannock College and/or a new Civic Hub, although members should note that this is currently an aspiration rather than a fully developed proposal.
- A decked car park at Beecroft Road and improved access into the town centre.
- New public realm in the main town centre.

5.37 The draft Development Framework was scheduled to be reported to Cabinet in the spring however the re-confirmation of local elections in February 2026 meant that any decision-making process would need to pause until after May. The time in between has been used to collate all of the information on the scheme to date, as set out in the report, to assist Members in making an informed decision on the proposals for the regeneration of the town centre.

5.38 The draft Framework could deliver a number of outcomes including:

- Delivers new housing (up to 206 homes), helping meet local need and increasing town centre living.
- Increases economic activity through new commercial space, supporting businesses and job creation.
- Enhances education and cultural provision, with potential for a college expansion new studio theatre.
- Improves accessibility and infrastructure with a new decked car park and better town centre access.
- Strengthens town centre vitality by bringing more residents, workers, and visitors into the area.

Prince of Wales Theatre Retention Option

5.39 To enable Members to take an informed decision on the future of the Theatre officers have commissioned further detailed cost estimates on the option of retaining the building.

5.40 The costs associated with retaining the existing building and addressing the capital works needed before the building could be brought back into theatre use have been updated and costs relating to asbestos, building condition and mechanical and electrical (M&E) requirements added in April 2026.

5.41 The detail of the reports commissioned is as follows:

Report	Prepared By	Date of Report
Refurbishment and Demolition Asbestos Survey	C&D Consulting and RDM Surveys Ltd	10/03/26
M&E Condition Report	Crooks Walker Consulting	15/04/26
Technical Due Diligence Condition Survey Report	Integra	29/04/26
Initial Budget Costs and Executive Summary	Tetra Tech	05/06/26

5.42 The capital costs as produced by Tetra Tech are informed by each of the other reports and are based on the Page\Park Concept Design Report of 14 August 2024. Using costs as at Quarter 1, 2026 and excluding inflation a minimum capital budget of £9,609,623 would be required. The Executive Summary produced by Tetra Tech (enclosed in **Appendix 5**) sets out the rationale for the estimates.

5.43 The designs upon which the estimates are based are at a concept stage only and would need to be developed to RIBA Stage 3 before revisiting the cost requirement. The cost plan is subject to change depending on the final design of the scheme.

- 5.44 Due to the significant work that would need to be progressed to design a detailed scheme for the Theatre and the cost uncertainties, it is not possible at this stage to determine with any certainty the balance of funding available to progress any further elements of the Development Framework. In the first instance, the balance of funding would need to be used to make good/or complete the demolition of the multi-storey car park, make safe the cleared sites and demolish the remaining Cabot buildings, along Church Street and Market Place.
- 5.45 The Council would not be able to commit to other capital elements of the regeneration scheme until the available budget is confirmed, beyond what has already been contractually committed. Progressing the Theatre retention option would create a hiatus with the wider regeneration of the town centre which would be detrimental to public and developer confidence.
- 5.46 At the request of the four political Group Leaders, the Theatres Trust (national) was commissioned to provide advice on a number of questions in relation to the Theatre to aid decision making. The Theatres Trust is the national public body for theatres, with a statutory remit to protect theatres for the benefit of the nation and to advise decision makers on the value, viability and long-term sustainability of theatres. Their advice is provided at **Appendix 6**. This advice recommends that the Council defer any final decision on the Prince of Wales Theatre until independent economic and social impact evidence has been commissioned, completed and determined by elected members. They are not able to support either retention or demolition at this stage, with the evidence available.

Theatre Operator Considerations

- 5.47 When considering whether to refurbish and reopen the Prince of Wales Theatre it's important to recognise that there is currently no operator to run it and the theatre has been closed for over 12 months.
- 5.48 In November 2024 when Cabinet agreed to the proposed closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre, there was no consideration of reopening it. It was only after significant interest from local groups did the Council consider there may be an opportunity for it to reopen. In March 2025, Members asked for a process to be established to assess whether any locally interested groups would be in a position to sustain the operation of the Prince of Wales Theatre, on the basis of a community asset transfer with zero financial subsidy from the Council. This was based on the decision made by full Council in February 2024 to remove the budget that subsidised the operation of the theatre in response to budgetary pressures.
- 5.49 In considering a future operator for the theatre, it is necessary to consider on what model this would be based. The Theatres Trust is the national advice and advisory body for the UK's theatres. In relation to subsidy requirements, they state that "While a few of the mid-scale and large-scale theatres have developed zero subsidy models it remains a rarity and most local authority venues previously transferred to an

independent operator still require a subsidy⁵.” They go on to say, “It is unusual for theatres under 800 seats to be viable under this model amongst the current commercial operating models, but this may change”.

The Midscale Theatre Venues Impact Study 2024 (enclosed at **Appendix 7**) discusses the challenges faced by similar venues across the country. It notes that “in order to sustain their missions and impacts, regional mid-scale theatres are drawing on their cash reserves at an unsustainable rate...if their financial capacity isn’t secured, mid-scale theatres may not be able to continue to deliver”. It is also the case that other theatres in Staffordshire operate with subsidy. One of the two groups interested in taking on the Prince of Wales Theatre as a Community Asset Transfer withdrew from the process because they accepted they could not run it without subsidy. On this basis, it should be assumed subsidy would be required from the Council to an operator to run the Prince of Wales Theatre.

- 5.50 The Council would need to procure and contract with an operator in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023. The likely timescale for completion of the procurement process is around 12 months. Consideration will need to be given whether as part of this process, the potential operators views are sought on the redesign elements of the theatre as this could have implications for their tenders and the level of subsidy required. To minimise the financial and reputational risk, it is essential that an operator is secured in advance of commencing the refurbishment works. It is anticipated that while the procurement process is underway, detailed designs would be worked up for the refurbishment of the theatre. If the Council were to pause the design works on the theatre until an operator was contractually committed this would build in a delay of around 12 months across the programme as a whole.
- 5.51 It must be noted that procurement of an operator for the Prince of Wales Theatre carries a significant level of risk. There is likely to be interest from operators to take on a mid-sized theatre, however there is a risk that the procurement opportunity in Cannock does not attract any operators, or it attracts operators but at a cost the Council cannot afford. Factors that will influence this include:
- The Prince of Wales Theatre has been closed for over a year and audiences and productions have gone elsewhere. A new operator would have to build this up over a period of time;
 - There isn’t a final design for the Theatre;
 - There will be a time lag between the operator being awarded the contract and the theatre opening;
 - There isn’t a date for the Theatre to open;
 - The Theatre was closed because the council couldn’t afford the subsidy;

⁵ Theatres Trust advice on outsourcing theatre operations [Outsourcing theatre operations original.pdf](#)

- The size of the Theatre will mean some of the larger, commercial operators are unlikely to be interested;
- There is no certainty of local government budgets and,
- Local government re-organisation means that Cannock Chase District Council won't exist by the time the Theatre reopens, and we cannot assume that a successor council will allocate a budget to subsidising the running costs of the theatre.

5.52 The Theatres Trust (**Appendix 6**) have provided elements to consider that would increase the likelihood of a successful procurement, which would be considered as part of any procurement alongside ongoing costs to the Council. They have also included examples of theatres that have been closed but successfully secured a new operator.

5.53 Whilst the Theatre retention option requires significant investment and creates significant risk, it could potentially deliver a range of positive outcomes and benefits including:

- Support the town centre economy by increasing footfall and spend in nearby businesses
- Creates employment opportunities in both the Theatre and wider supply chain
- Strengthens community pride and cohesion by providing a shared cultural space for residents
- Improves wellbeing and access to culture, offering inclusive entertainment and creative opportunities
- Brings an empty building back into productive use

As with both options, this is subject to further detailed due diligence, design work and full business cases being undertaken by officers before any final commitment is made to delivery.

Financial assessment

5.54 The draft Development Framework can be delivered in phases within the existing funding allocated to the regeneration programme.

5.55 The significant capital funding required to reopen the theatre will leave limited funding to progress the other elements in the draft Development Framework, and subject to detailed design and fit out considerations these are likely to increase further. If Members are minded to progress the retention and refurbishment of the Prince of Wales Theatre, it should be noted that whilst the initial costs relating to that building are set out in detail in **Appendix 5** the budget for site preparation works for the residential and commercial schemes, Beecroft Road and the public realm improvements cannot be committed until the final theatre costs are confirmed.

5.56 Detailed financial and viability data is contained within the **Confidential Appendix** due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information and the potential to prejudice the Council's position in current and future negotiations. The financial assessment provided has been produced by the Council's consultants Continuum

and any values relating to the disposal of land interests should not be treated as red book valuations, but estimates based on comparable transactions either in Cannock or adjacent areas.

Phasing and timing considerations

- 5.57 A key consideration in determining a preferred option is the phasing of each option and what can be delivered before the funding deadline of 31 March 2028. Furthermore, Cabinet will be aware that the government have confirmed its intention to reorganise local government in Staffordshire with the dissolution of existing councils and the creation of two new unitary authorities. Shadow Unitary Authorities are expected to come into effect from May 2027, with all functions, assets and liabilities being vested into the new Authority from 1st April 2028.
- 5.58 It should be noted that it will be challenging to deliver either of the options due to these factors. A decision to reorganise is brought into effect by a Structural Change Order. Once that order is made, it is anticipated that the government will make a section 24 direction. The section 24 direction will restrict the ability of all current Staffordshire Authorities to enter into significant contracts without the written consent of the new Shadow Authority. This will almost certainly mean that the Council will need to obtain written consent from the Shadow Authority before completing either a theatre operator contract or a works contract for refurbishment of the building.
- 5.59 Delivery of the opportunities set out in the draft Development Framework goes beyond the lifespan of Cannock Chase District Council. Whilst the Council should be able to progress certain workstreams such as the demolition of the Theatre and complete the clearance of sites and it may be possible to secure developers/operators to build out some of the residential plots, decisions around the future of the Civic Centre may be deferred to the Council's successor authority, meaning proposals around the Education/ Cultural space and relocation of the leaseholder could extend beyond the LGR timescale.
- 5.60 If the Theatre retention option is selected, then further work will need to be undertaken by officers to progress the procurement of an operator, to undertake precontract design work and to procure a suitable contractor. It is anticipated that procurement would take at least 12 months. Timescales for detailed design and cost uncertainties associated with the Theatre refurbishment will preclude any progression of the Development Framework that supports the wider regeneration of the town centre.

Decisions Required to Confirm the Preferred Development Framework mix

- 5.61 The Council needs to determine the preferred way forward for the regeneration of Cannock Town Centre. This requires Cabinet to make a strategic choice between two distinct approaches:
- i) Progressing the Development Framework, which enables a comprehensive, mixed-use redevelopment of the town centre and assumes the redevelopment of the Prince of Wales Theatre site; or
 - ii) Retaining and refurbishing the Prince of Wales Theatre as a standalone project, with other regeneration works identified once the balance of funding is known.

5.62 Should Cabinet prefer to progress the Development Framework approach, further decisions would be required to confirm the preferred redevelopment option for each plot within the regeneration area. A number of options have been identified for each plot, reflecting different approaches to land use, delivery, and phasing. These options are set out in detail in Appendix 4 together with pros and cons and relate to the following plots:

- Future of Civic Centre site
- Leaseholder site
- Beecroft Road car park
- Proposed residential and mixed-use plots
- Public realm

Conclusion

5.63 For the regeneration programme to now move forward Cabinet is therefore asked to determine which of the two approaches set out in this report best meets the Council's objectives for deliverability, affordability and regeneration impact.

5.64 Once the preferred option is confirmed detailed design, feasibility and deliverability studies will be prepared and presented to Cabinet for final approval.

6 Implications

6.1 Financial

The budget allocated to all phases of the project is £26.265 million.

Scheme delivery is expected to operate within this financial envelope.

To date £8.994 million of capital funding has been spent and deducting projected financial commitments of £2.308 million leaves a balance of £14.083m to be allocated and spent on the project. Future spend is dependent on decisions made by Cabinet/Council and an assessment of the estimated cost of each option is set out in the Confidential Appendix.

6.2 Legal

As the Local Regeneration Fund award is a grant Officers need to ensure that all associated grant conditions are monitored and met. Procurement of any works, or services, enabling development will need to be conducted in accordance with rules set out in the Council's Procurement Regulations and the Procurement Act 2023.

Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the Council the general power to do anything that individuals generally may do (general power of competence). Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 allows the Council to do anything which is calculated to be facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of its functions. Section 145 of the Local Government Act 1972 gives the Council the power to provide theatres, or other premises suitable for the giving of entertainments.

The government has indicated its intention to make an order for dissolution of the Council by 1st April 2028 and transfer of its functions to a new South and Mid Staffordshire Unitary Authority. As part of the process, it is intended that elections to

the Unitary Authority will take place in May 2027 (with the new Authority acting as a Shadow Authority in its first year). Section 24 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 gives the Secretary of State the power to issue directions to any Council that is to be dissolved as part of local government reorganisation. The direction can prevent the Council from (a) disposing of land over £100,000 in value, (b) entering into any capital contract with consideration exceeding £1million or (c) entering into any non-capital contract with consideration over £100,000 where the period of the contract extends beyond 1st April 2028 (or which allows for such an extension), unless they first obtain written consent from a person specified by the SoS (this is likely to be the new Shadow Authority). A direction is expected to be issued following the May 2027 elections.

The Council is at risk of challenge by way of judicial review where any party with standing can demonstrate that the Council has acted unlawfully in public law terms. Accordingly, decision makers are advised to reach a decision by reference to all relevant considerations, disregarding irrelevant ones, and be satisfied that the recommended course of action is a rational course of action for the Council to take. Decision makers should consider whether the financial consequences of their decisions are prudent, having regard to the Councils general fiduciary duties.

6.3 Human Resources

The delivery of the town centre regeneration project will require sufficient resource and capacity to ensure that the selected scheme can be delivered to the agreed specification and within budget. The Council will need to assess the resource implications of either option and determine what level of additional resources are required across various service areas including Regeneration, Legal, Finance, Communications and Corporate Assets.

6.4 Risk Management

Delivery of the Town Centre Regeneration scheme is already identified as a risk on the Council's strategic risk register. The elements of this risk pertinent to this report are:

- There is a risk that the high profile large regeneration projects may not deliver as anticipated, to time or to budget, leading to reputational risks to the Council and creating financial risks that impact on the Council's financial position and could impact on service delivery and hinder the Council's wider ambition to secure economic prosperity for the District.
- There is a risk that the Council may not be able to secure a development partner to re-develop the cleared sites.

The consequences of this risk are:

- Major reputational risk for the Council in terms of not delivering the schemes that local residents expect; potential that Council may be unsuccessful with future funding bids
- Reduced growth and economic prosperity for local residents
- Decline of town centres / impact on major redevelopment proposals

- Council exposed to unplanned financial risks and pressure on revenue resources which impacts on delivery of core services
- Clawback of funding for non-delivery
- Increased pressure on already stretched services/functions of the council which have capacity issues.
- Cleared sites could sit empty for indeterminate period if developer interest doesn't materialise

The risk is currently scored as 12 which means that it is a high/red risk. A high risk sits outside of the Council's risk appetite. However, in view of the opportunities offered by the successful regeneration of the town centre, the Council has chosen to accept this risk and ensure that there are sufficient controls in place to manage it.

Current Position

The Cabinet is now being asked to determine the way forward at a crucial stage in the delivery of the project. The strategic risk as set out above will continue to be a risk going forward. The project is of a significant scale and complexity; rigorous project management and professional support will be needed to manage this risk.

For both options, there are risks that:

- The scheme doesn't deliver the intended outcomes or best outcomes for the district. This risk could be mitigated in part by seeking the views of residents through a consultation process; and
- The cost estimates and other data underpinning the options may not be robust. Further checks and due diligence are required to mitigate this risk.

In addition, there are specific risks associated with each of the options.

1. For delivery of the Development Framework and the key risks are:

- Failure to secure development partner(s) for the different elements of the scheme.
- The College decides not to proceed or fails to secure the additional funding it will need to deliver its additional accommodation/the cultural hub.
- The existing leaseholder does not wish to relocate, or the council is unable to demonstrate the value for money in the relocation.
- Planning consent is not granted.

The current assessment of risk for securing a development partner is considered to be high due to current market conditions and macro uncertainties.

In terms of the college and the leaseholder, if one or both decided not to proceed, alternative options for these sites could be pursued. Albeit this would delay the scheme. This could lead to risk of failure to spend the grant funding by March 2028.

2. For delivery of refurbishment of the Prince of Wales Theatre and the procurement of a successful operator, the key risks relate to the complexity of the timing and delivery of this project.

If works on the refurbishment of the theatre proceed ahead of securing an operator, there is a risk that we may not secure an operator and will have spent considerable sums on a building which will not be able to open.

Alternatively, if a theatre operator is secured before works commence, there is a risk that the Government could stop the work from proceeding due to the issuing of a Section 24 Notice which would prevent the Council from making major financial or contractual commitments without the consent of the incoming shadow authority during local government reorganisation.

There is also a risk that a delay would increase the costs of refurbishing the theatre, due to inflation etc and reduce the funding available for other elements of the scheme.

If the Council were to be successful in securing an operator for the theatre, there is a financial risk to the Council with regard to the level of subsidy that the operator would require. Whilst an estimate would need to be made for budget planning purposes, it should be noted that when LGR proceeds the Council will be binding a future authority to this level of subsidy. This will require legal advice.

There is the additional risk that an operator may not be able to deliver the service to the terms of the contract, and the subsidy in particular, particularly given the length of time that the theatre will have been closed and the loss of clients. The Council would look to mitigate this risk through a formal procurement process in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, seeking interest from organisations that are experienced in operating theatres and have a suitable infrastructure to support service delivery.

There is considerable uncertainty in the project to restore and re-open the Prince of Wales Theatre and overall the risk is assessed as being High.

Either option presents significant risks although these need to be balanced against the potential outcomes and benefits set out at paragraphs 5.38 and 5.53.

6.5 Equalities and Diversity

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was previously carried out when the Council considered closure of the theatre in 2025 (See Appendix 8). It is recommended that the Council undertakes public consultation to gather views on the proposed options in this report. The feedback obtained will then inform the preparation of further EIA's for each option, ensuring that potential impacts on different groups are fully considered before a final decision is made.

6.6 Health

It is recognised that a redevelopment of this scale will have significant impacts on many of the wider determinants of health and the Council will work with partners to ensure opportunities to reduce health inequalities are maximised.

6.7 Climate Change

Either option has the potential to deliver positive impacts in relation to climate change. There will be a strong emphasis on maximising opportunities to design buildings and developments to achieve the highest possible standards of energy efficiency and sustainability. It should also be recognised that new build development typically provides greater scope to incorporate modern, low-carbon technologies and sustainable construction methods when compared to the adaptation of older buildings, such as an existing theatre.

7 Appendices

Appendix 1: LUF Application Site Boundary

Appendix 2: Project Chronology

Appendix 3: Draft Development Framework Summary

Appendix 4: Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options Paper

Appendix 5: Cost information relating to the Prince of Wales Theatre

Appendix 6: Theatres Trust Report

Appendix 7: Midscale Theatre Venues Impact Study 2024

Appendix 8: Equalities Impact Assessment

CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX Financial & Viability assessment (Continuum)

8 Previous Consideration

Cabinet: 2 February 2022, 16 June 2022, 15 June 2023, 28 March 2024, 12 June 2024; 4 December 2025

Council: 21 January 2026

9 Background Papers

Theatre Surveys.

Contact Officer:	Michelle Smith
Telephone Number:	01785 619 335
Ward Interest:	Cannock Longford and Bridgtown
Report Track:	Cabinet: 20/08/26
Key Decision:	Yes

LUF Bid Site Plan



Northern Gateway



Cafe/Bar from Church Street



Leisure Hub and Theatre from Church Street



Business Incubator
Managed Workspace



Culture and Leisure Hub
Atrium

Project Chronology

Date	Activity	Links
Levelling Up Fund Bidding Process		
03/03/21	LUF Prospectus published and 15 week bidding window opens.	Levelling Up prospectus.pdf
04/05/21	LUF Technical Note published. This document was an integral part of the bidding process but released 9 weeks into the bidding window.	Levelling Up Fund - Technical note - UK wide
18/06/21	Deadline for bids.	
21/10/21	Successful bids announced as part of the UK Spending Review. Deadline for funding to be spent confirmed as 31 March 2025.	Levelling Up Fund: first round successful bidders - GOV.UK
FUNDING DEADLINE 31 MARCH 2025		
LUF: Design Development – Original Scheme		
16/06/22	Cabinet permission to spend to appoint multi-disciplinary consultants to develop the redevelopment scheme. TetraTech appointed following a competitive procurement process.	
08/09/22	RIBA Stage 2 draft issued to CCDC. Cost plan for scheme identified that scheme cost was unaffordable. Council officers worked with the design team to review the scheme to reduce costs. Feedback provided from CCDC officers to inform final draft.	
LUF: Requirement for Compulsory Purchase Order		
15/09/22	Cabinet approve the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) in respect of multiple parcels of land within the town centre to facilitate delivery of the grant funded scheme. Action taken following the inability to negotiate a settlement with principally Homes Bargains, the Forum or Cabot.	
18/10/22	Updated RIBA Stage 2 report issued to CCDC.	

Date	Activity	Links
04/05/23	RIBA Stage 3 draft issued to CCDC. Feedback from CCDC/IHL to inform final draft. Cost for amended scheme still higher than available financial envelope.	
15/06/23	Cabinet approve permission to spend in respect of the acquisition of Units 1-3 Cannock Shopping Centre (outside of CPO). Report notes best case scenario for CPO completion to be 16/02/26 (11 months after the LUF deadline).	Full Papers - Cabinet 150623 (Public Copy) Minutes: Full Papers - Cabinet 180724
05/07/23	Updated RIBA 3 detail issued to CCDC. Despite designs being amended, the costs remain above the available financial envelope.	
LUF: Introduction of Phased Approach		
31/01/24	MHCLG Discovery Team inception meeting with CCDC to discuss the deliverability of the existing scheme and potential alternative options given the increased costs and CPO timescale.	
27/02/24	Discovery Team content that works to Beecroft Road car park, the Northern Gateway and multistorey car park demolition can proceed as Phase 1; more detail required on Phases 2 and 3. No objection to descoping the existing theatre proposals.	
28/03/24	Cabinet approval for new phased approach to delivery. Permission to spend in respect of Phase 1 activities. CPO formally withdrawn.	Full Papers - Cabinet 280324 (public copy) Minutes: Full Papers - Cabinet 250424 (public copy).pdf
10/04/24	Meeting between CCDC officers and IHL to review theatre design and identify options to reduce build costs and maximise commercial opportunities.	
20/05/24	Discovery Team confirm MHCLG acceptance of Phase 2 subject to submission of a Project Adjustment Request (PAR). Discovery Team also reviewed Phase 2 Cabinet report	
12/06/24	Cabinet approval for Phase 2 land acquisitions and permission to spend for Phase 2 activities	Full Papers - Cabinet 120624 (public copy) (updated 060624) Minutes: Full Papers - Cabinet 180724

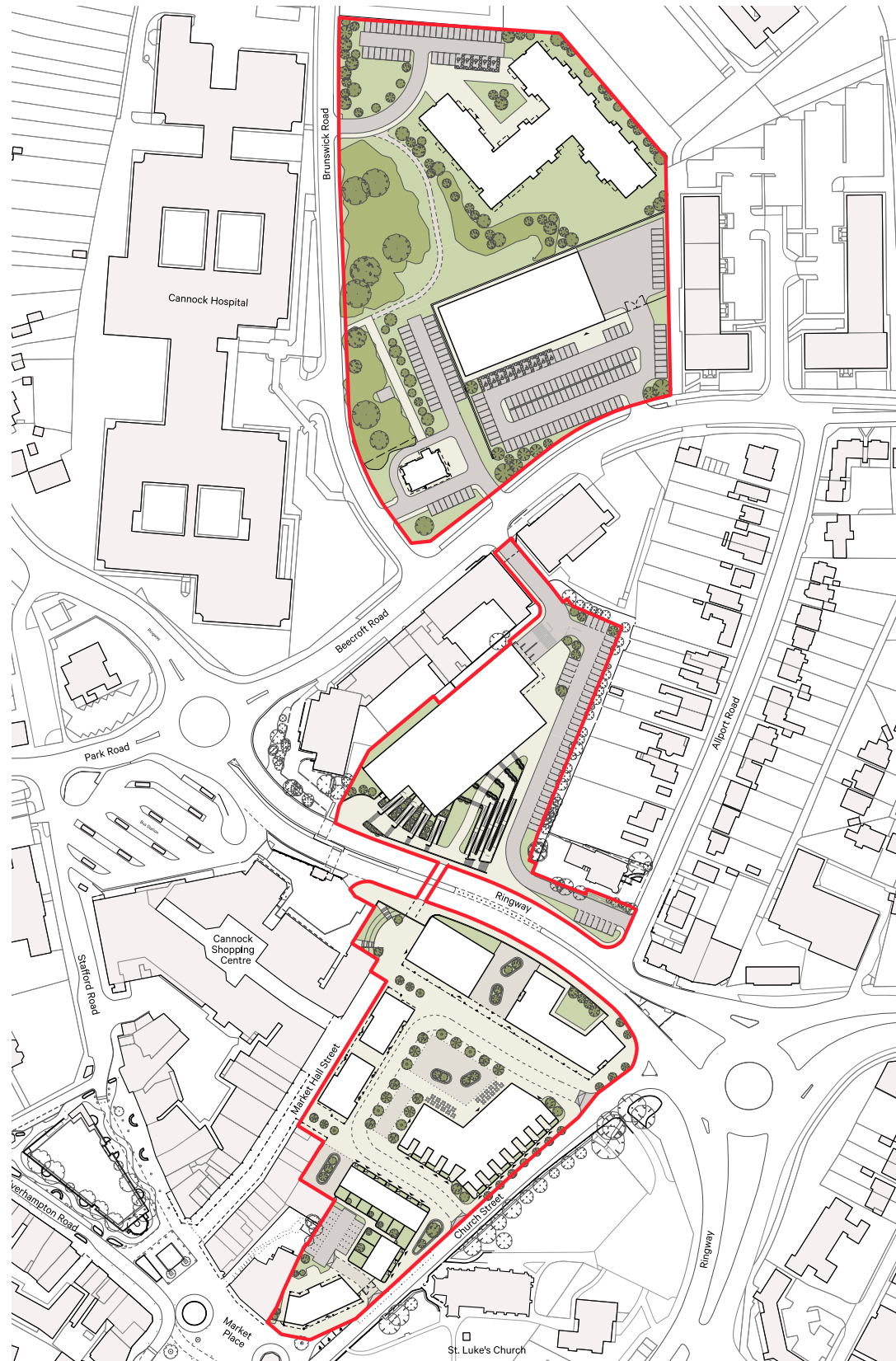
Date	Activity	Links
GENERAL ELECTION 4 JULY 2024		
19/07/24	PAR submitted in respect of Phase 2 Cabot land acquisition. Approval of the PAR necessary to then implement Cabinet approvals of 12/06/24	
28/11/24	Cabinet support recommendations proposing to close the Prince of Wales Theatre based on budget position.	Full Papers - Cabinet 281124 (public copy) (updated 251124)
29/11/24	MHCLG confirm July 2024 PAR not being reviewed, confirmation provided that Cabot purchase can proceed. Change of Government led to a change of PAR processes	
January 2025	Spend deadline extended to 31 March 2026. Extension only granted 2 months before the original deadline meaning unspent monies would otherwise have been at risk of repayment	
30/01/25	Cabinet approve the budget for 2025/26 noting the closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre from the end of April 2025	Full Papers - Cabinet 300125 (updated 230125) Minutes: Full Papers - Cabinet 091025
12/02/25	Full Council approve the budget for 2025/26 noting the closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre from the end of April 2025. Equalities Impact Assessment re Prince of Wales closure included in the papers and consultation results on an alternative culture and heritage offer.	Full Papers - Budget Council 120225 Minutes: Full Papers - Council 260225
April 2025	LUF Spend deadline extended to 31 March 2027	
30/04/25	Prince of Wales Theatre closes	
FUNDING DEADLINE 31 MARCH 2028		
02/09/25	MHCLG confirm the spend deadline is extended to 31 March 2028	
September 2025	Cabinet agree not to proceed with a Community Asset Transfer of the Prince of Wales Theatre on the basis that it could not be demonstrated that CCTT could run it without subsidy.	Full Papers – Cabinet 040925 Minutes: Full Papers – Cabinet 091025

Date	Activity	Links
04/12/25	Cabinet resolved to agree the updated programme scope, gave permission to spend the remaining capital budget of £6.615m, agreed in principle, subject to a detailed business case to relocate CCDC from the Civic Centre and to include an existing large retail unit and Prince of Wales theatre building within the red line for the regeneration programme with the intention to demolish both, subject to planning permission. Cabinet also agreed to the creation of a revenue budget and to support future funding applications. Capital programme amendments referred to full Council in accordance with the Constitution	Full Papers - Cabinet 041225 (Public Copy) 0.pdf Minutes: Full Papers - Cabinet 290126 (updated 230126)
09/12/25	Verbal update given to the Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee on the regeneration programme.	Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee 091225 full papers.pdf Minutes: Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Cttee agenda 12 March - full papers 0.pdf
15/01/26	Economic Prosperity Committee consider the two call ins of the Cabinet decision of 04/12/25. Committee resolved to reject the two call ins and that Cabinet's decision of 04/12/25 be implemented. Meeting postponed from 07/01/26 due to bad weather.	Full Papers - Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee (call-in) 070126 (Public Copy) 01-Amended Agenda Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee (call-in) 150126.docx Minutes: Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Cttee agenda 12 March - full papers 0.pdf
21/01/26	Full Council do not approve the changes to the capital programme	Full Papers - Council 210126 Minutes: Full Papers - Budget Council 160226
LOCAL ELECTIONS CONFIRMED FOR 7 MAY 2026		
16/02/26	The Cabinet report scheduled for April, presenting the draft Development Framework for town centre regeneration is postponed due to the pre-election period.	



1.0 Development Framework.

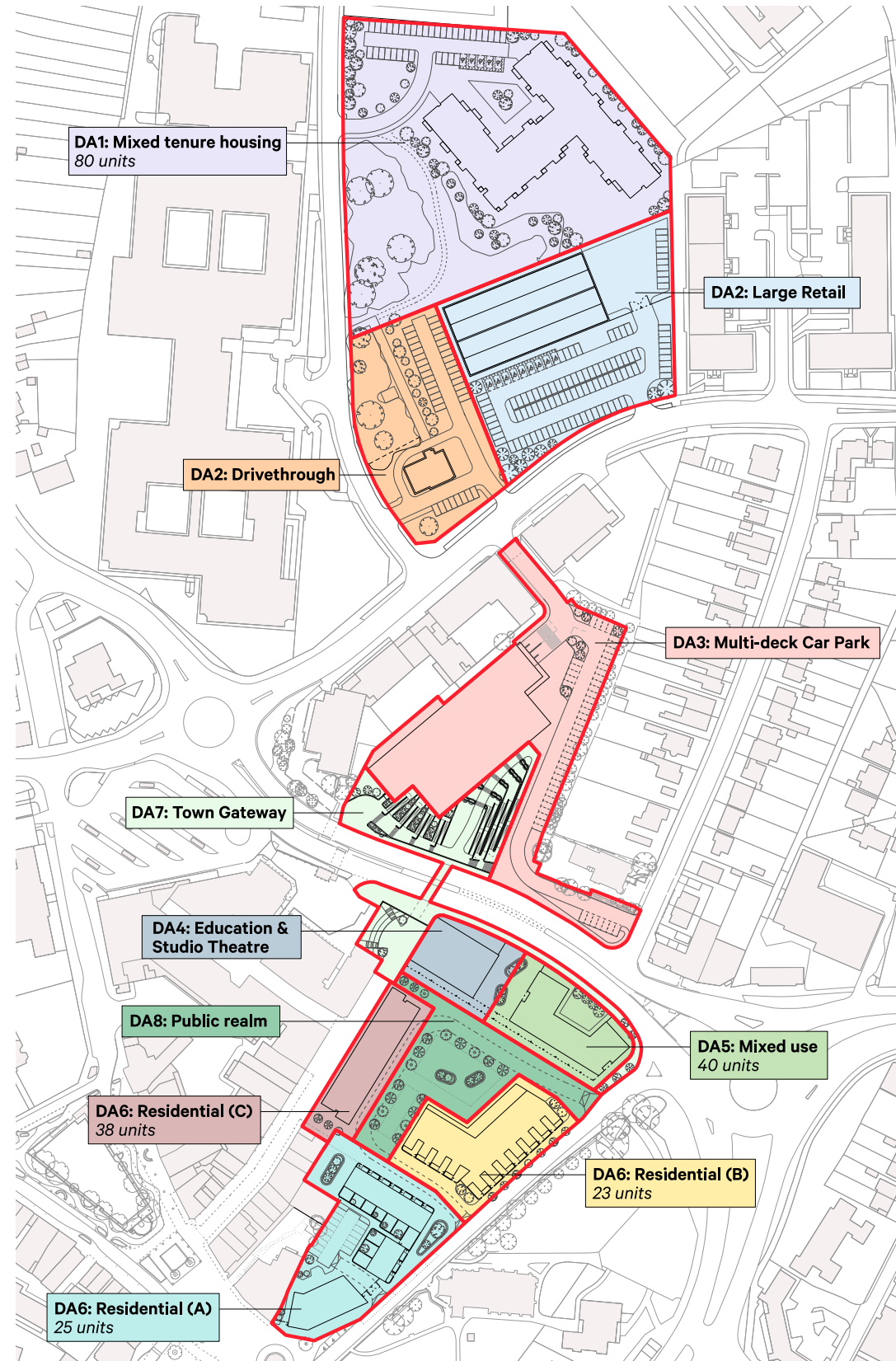
1.1 Development Framework - Masterplan



Development Framework Masterplan drawing. Not to scale.



1.2 Development Framework - Sites overview



Development Framework Sites overview drawing. Not to scale.



1.0 Development Framework.

1.3 Development Framework - Area schedule

The Development Framework masterplan consists of three distinct parts; the site of the current Civic Centre, Beecroft Road car park, and a site to the northwest of Church Street which includes Home Bargains, part of Cannock Shopping Centre, the Forum shopping centre, the Prince of Wales Theatre, and commercial buildings facing onto Market Place.

In the proposed masterplan these are split into smaller sites as illustrated in the Sites Overview drawing t the left and the schedule below.

25019 - Cannock Prospectus

Sites and buildings area schedule

Revision D

ArkleBoyce.

Site name	Site area (m ²)	Site area (ft ²)
Mixed tenure housing	12,905	138,908
Large retail	6,772	72,893
Drivethrough	4,155	44,724
Multi-deck Car Park	6,252	67,296
Town Gateway	3,417	36,780
Cultural Building	1,290	13,885
Mixed use	1,859	20,010
Residential (A)	3,505	37,728
Residential (B)	2,403	25,866
Residential (C)	1,445	15,554
Public Realm	2,679	28,837
Totals	46,682	502,481

Building name	Ground floor GIA (m ²)	First floor GIA (m ²)	Second floor GIA (m ²)	Third floor GIA (m ²)	Fourth floor GIA (m ²)	Fifth floor GIA (m ²)	Building GIA (m ²)	Building GIA (ft ²)	No. Dwellings	Commercial NIA (m ²)	Notes
Mied tenure housing	2,422.37	2,441.28	2,441.28	-	-	-	7,304.93	78,629.61	80	-	(1)
Large retail	1,878.44	-	-	-	-	-	1,878.44	20,219.36	-	1,878.44	
Drivethrough	171.82	-	-	-	-	-	171.82	1,849.46	-	171.82	(2)
Multi-deck Car Park	2,390.60	2,390.60	2,390.60	-	-	-	7,171.80	77,196.61	-	-	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3)
Cultural building	600.00	-	-	-	-	-	600.00	6,458.35	-	-	
Mixed use building	744.05	744.05	612.88	612.88	612.88	612.88	3,939.62	42,405.72	40	730	(4)
Resi block 1	305.31	361.31	361.31	361.31	-	-	1,389.24	14,953.65	15	127.41	
Resi block 2	135.72	135.72	135.72	-	-	-	407.16	4,382.63	3	-	
Resi block 3	320.16	320.16	320.16	-	-	-	960.48	10,338.52	7	-	
Residential building	1,169.64	981.44	501.96	-	-	-	2,653.04	28,557.08	23	464.75	
Residential building	541.78	706.07	706.07	706.07	396.29	-	3,056.28	32,897.52	38	241.92	
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Totals							29,532.81	317,888.52	206	3614.34	

NOTES

(1) Area of ground floor only. Additional area may be possible through provision of mezzanine.

(2) Car park deck area is used in place of GIA since decks are open sided.

(3) Area of Cultural Building is indicative only.

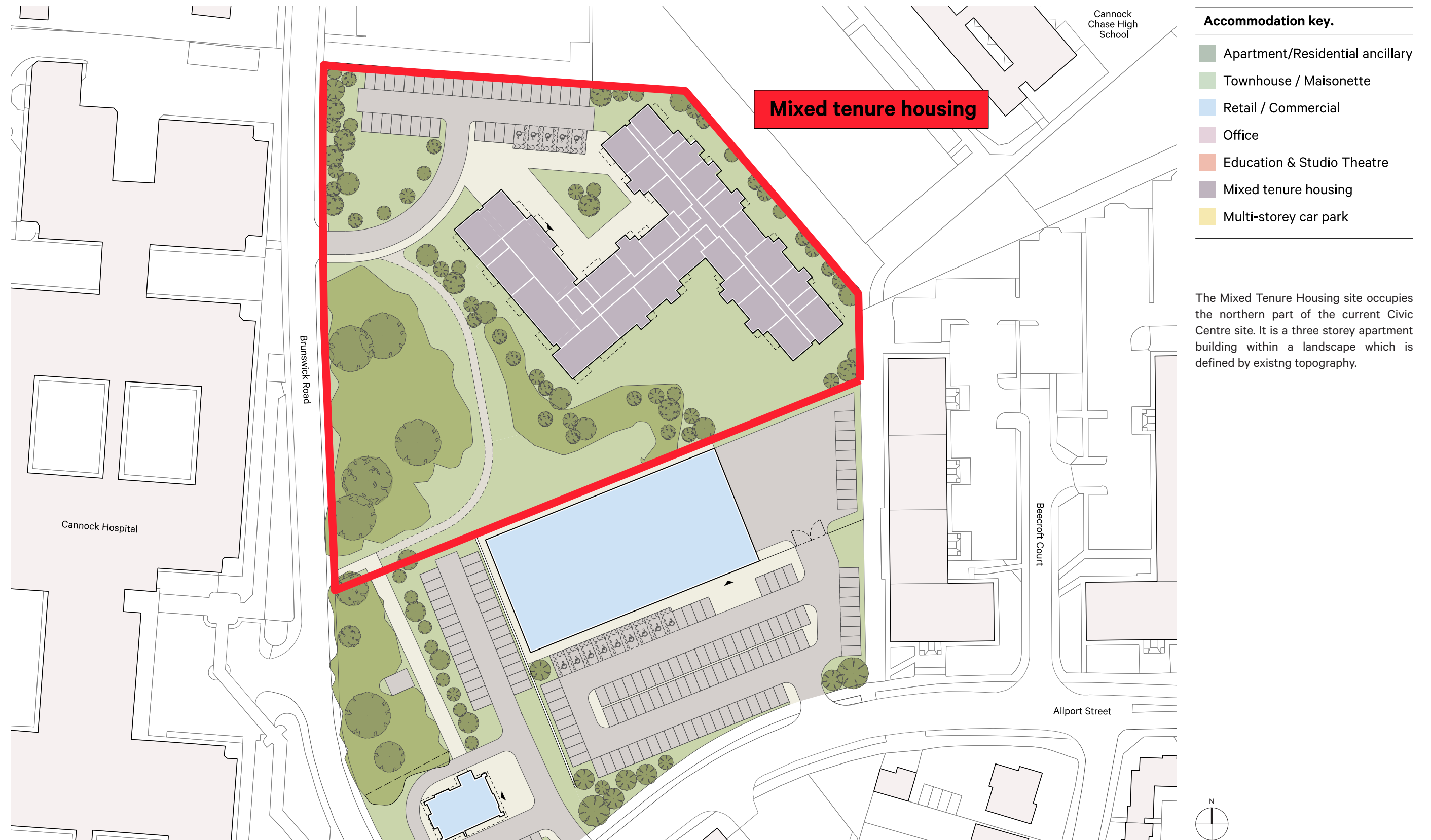
(4) Commercial area is office space over two storeys

The schedules above describe the site areas at the current stage of design.The design is subject to Statutory approvals and specialist design input.

Any decision to be made on the basis of these numbers, such as project viability, pre-letting, lease agreements or the like, should include due allowance for the changes inherent in the design development and building processes.

1.0 Development Framework.

1.4 Site overview - Mixed Tenure Housing



Site overview drawing: Mixed Tenure Housing. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

1.5 Site overview - Large Retail and Drivethrough



Accommodation key.

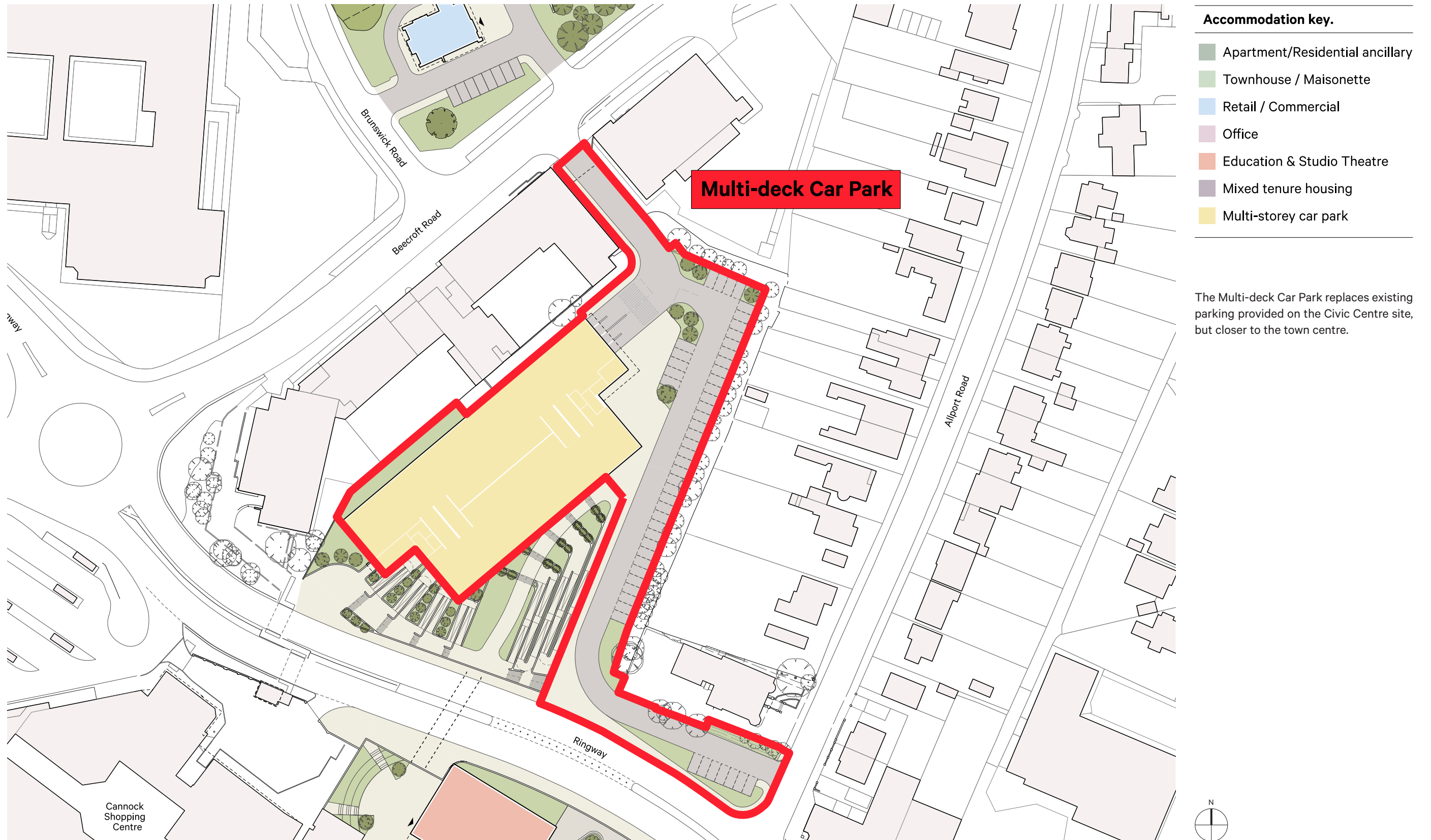
- Apartment/Residential ancillary
- Townhouse / Maisonette
- Retail / Commercial
- Office
- Education & Studio Theatre
- Mixed tenure housing
- Multi-storey car park

The Large Retail site houses a substantial retail shed, customer parking, and service yard.

Site overview drawing: Large Retail and Drivethrough. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

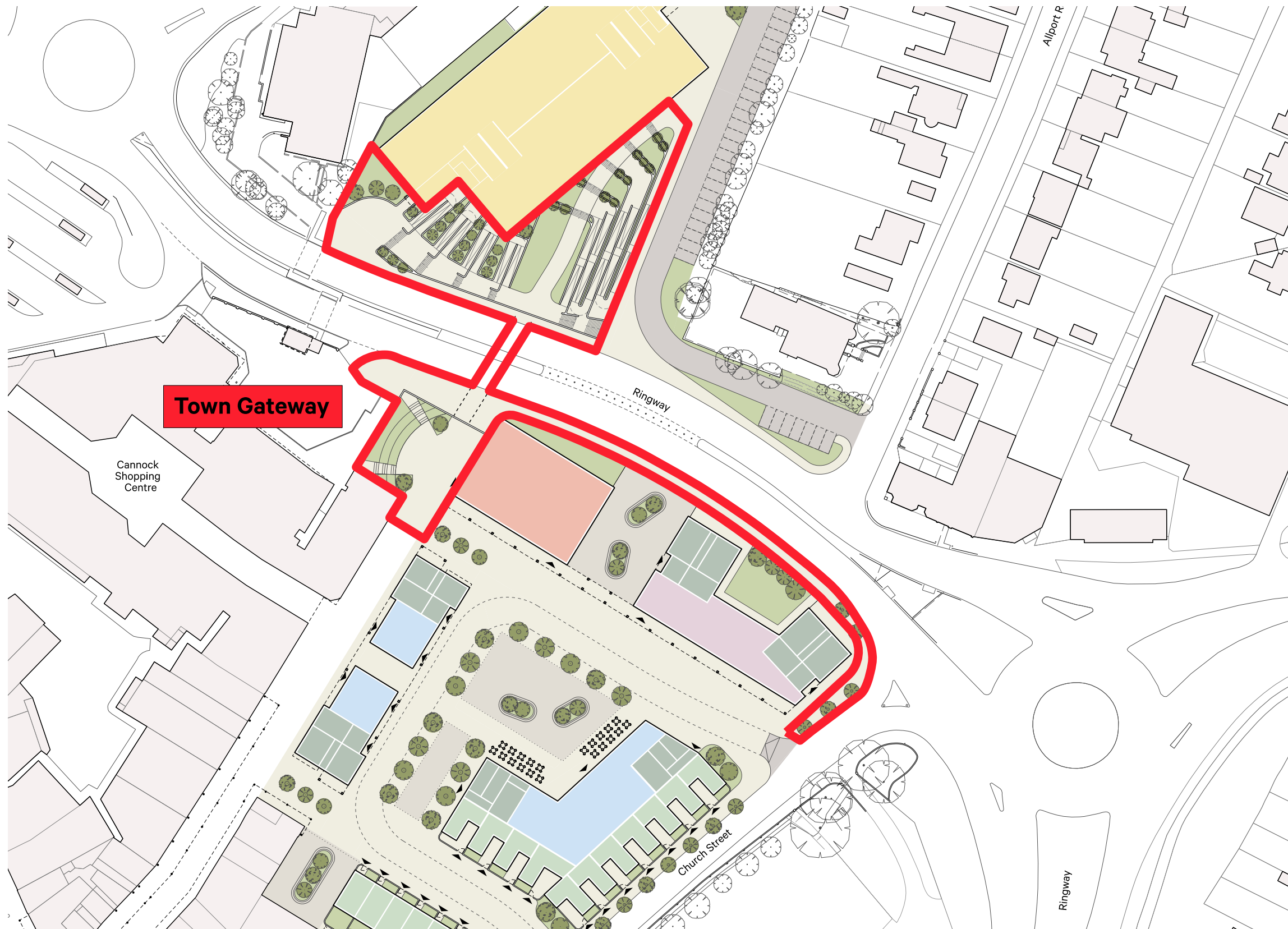
1.6 Site overview - Multi-deck Car Park



Site overview drawing: Multi-deck Car Park. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

1.7 Site overview - Town Gateway



Site overview drawing: Town Gateway. Not to scale.

Accommodation key.

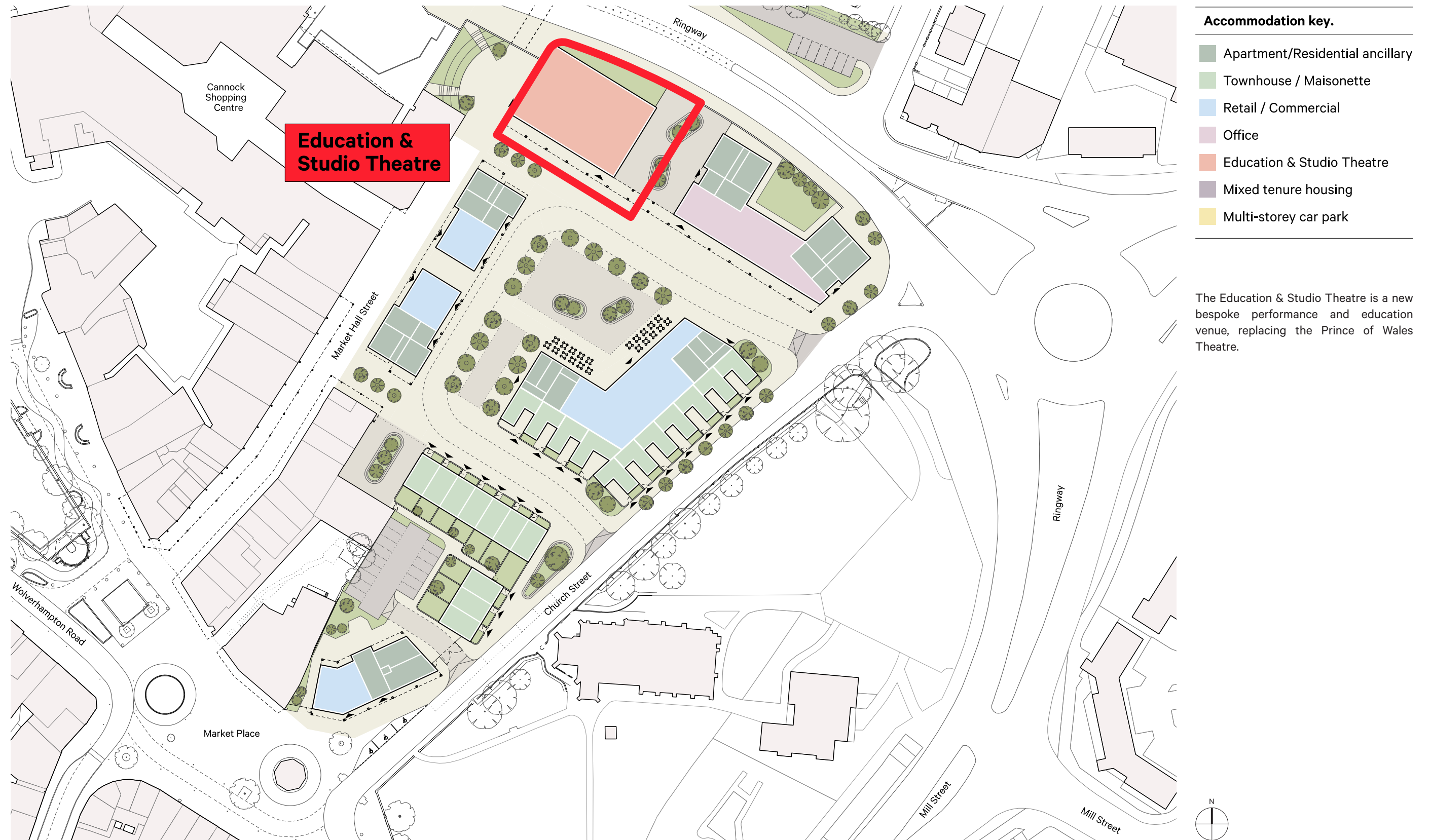
- Apartment/Residential ancillary
- Townhouse / Maisonette
- Retail / Commercial
- Office
- Education & Studio Theatre
- Mixed tenure housing
- Multi-storey car park

The Town Gateway site includes enhancements to public realm either side of the existing underpass beneath the Ringway. It includes stepped and ramped level changes to negotiate the change in level down to the underpass as well as an amphitheatre for informal seating and performance.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3

1.8 Site overview - Education & Studio Theatre

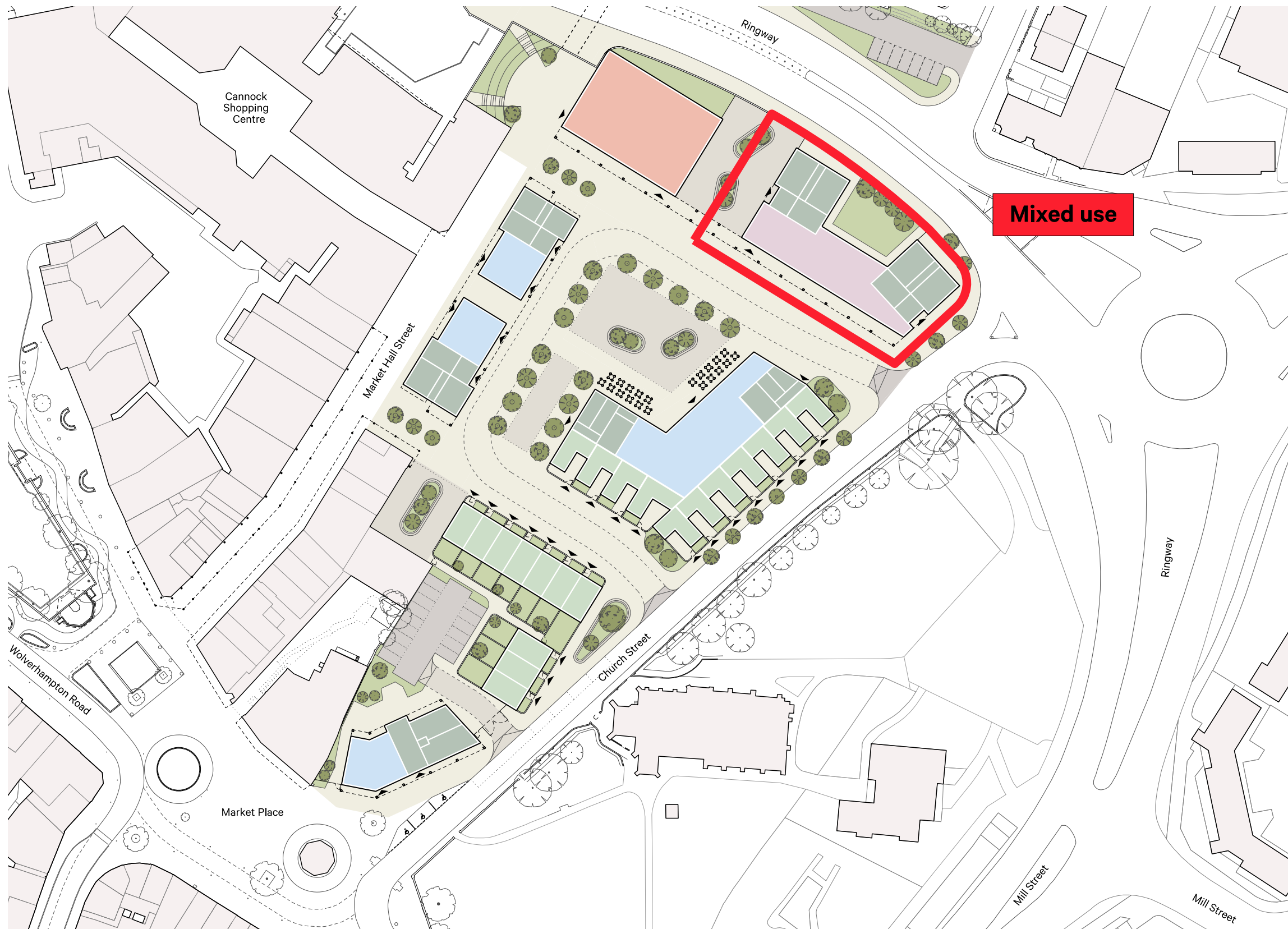


Site overview drawing: Education & Studio Theatre. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3

1.9 Site overview - Mixed Use



Accommodation key.	
■	Apartment/Residential ancillary
■	Townhouse / Maisonette
■	Retail / Commercial
■	Office
■	Education & Studio Theatre
■	Mixed tenure housing
■	Multi-storey car park

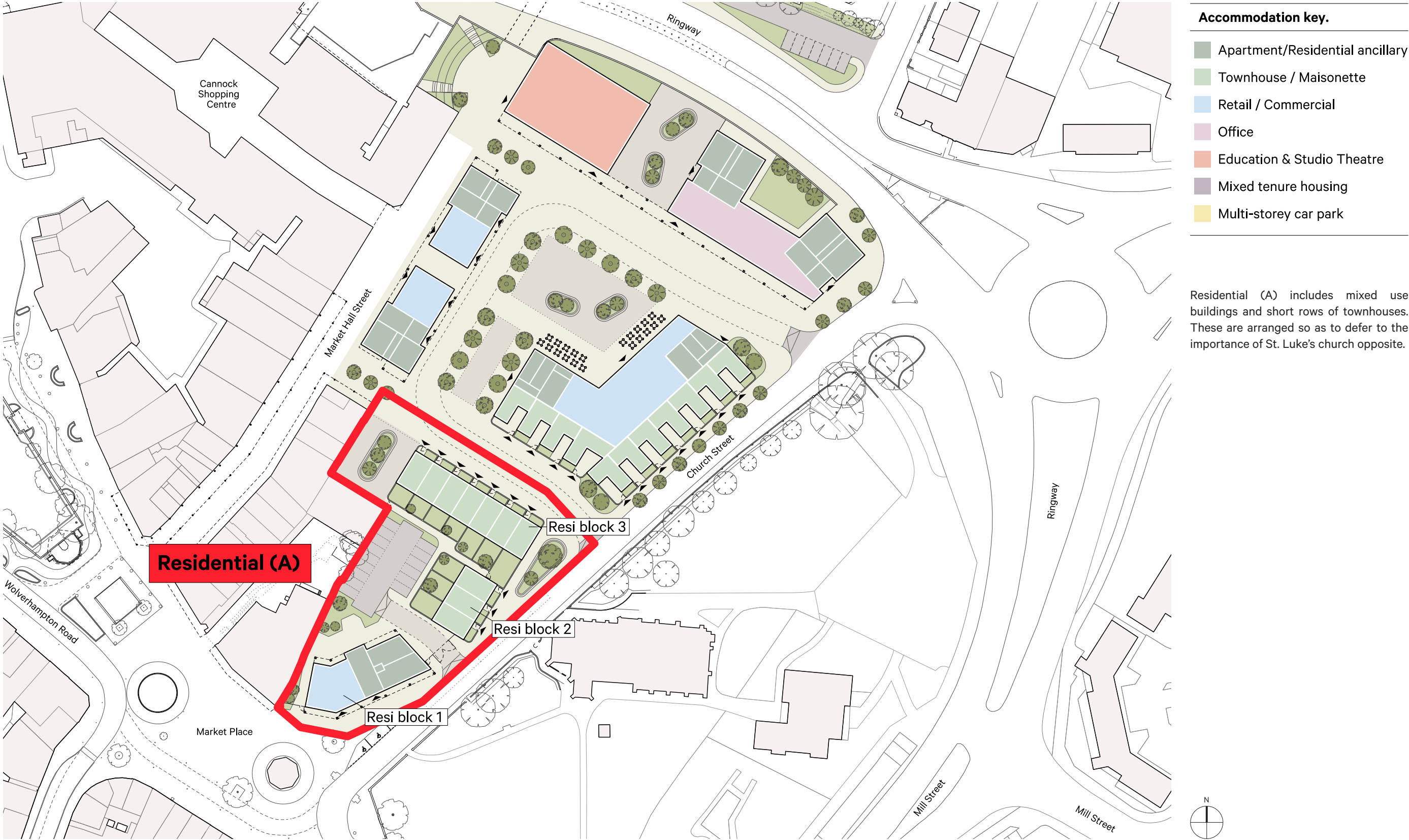
The Mixed Use site has a plinth with active ground and first floor commercial or office uses, with residential in smaller blocks rising above.

Site overview drawing: Mixed Use. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3

1.10 Site overview - Residential (A)

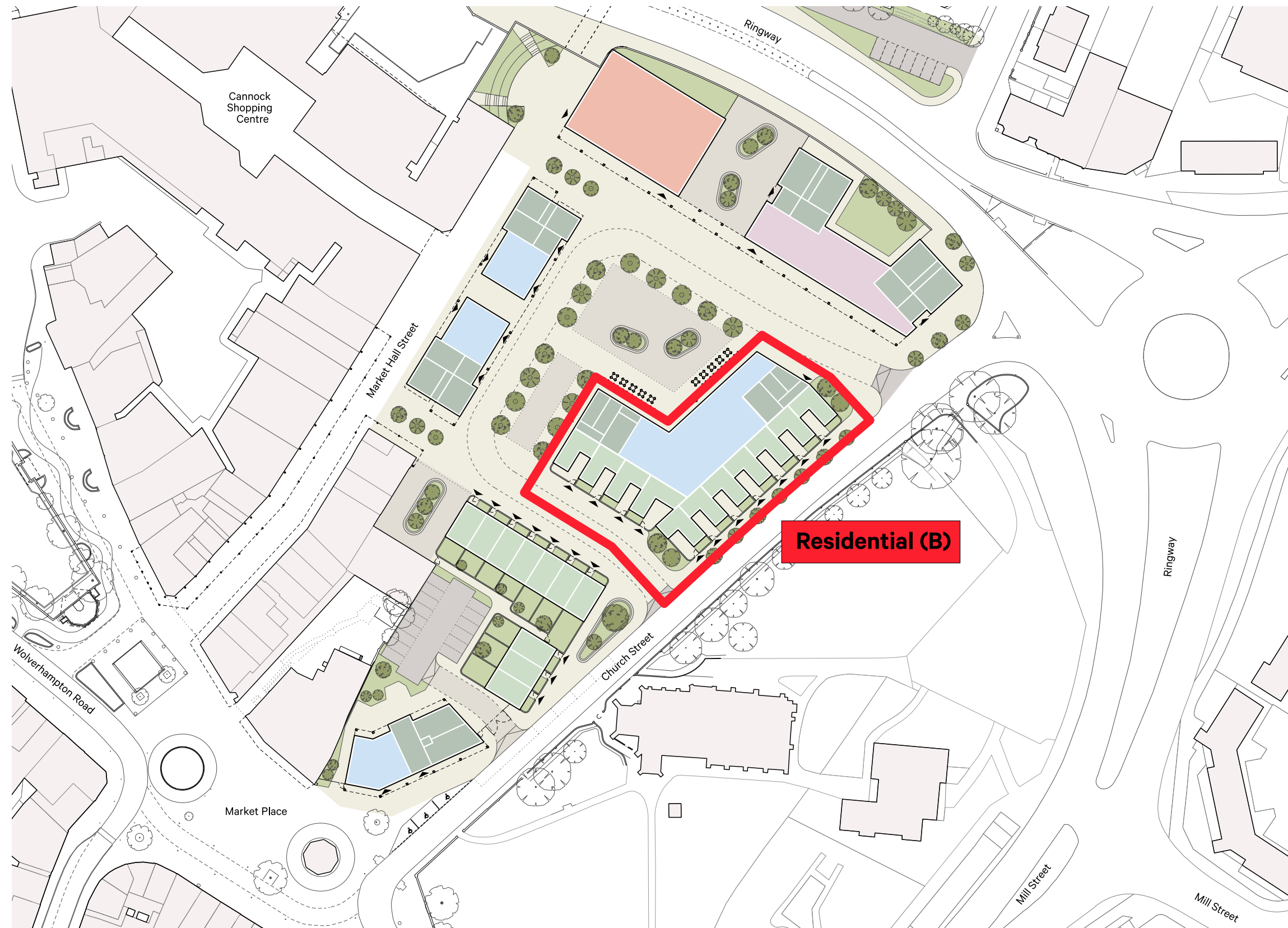


Site overview drawing: Residential (A). Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3

1.11 Site overview - Residential (B)



Site overview drawing: Residential (B). Not to scale.

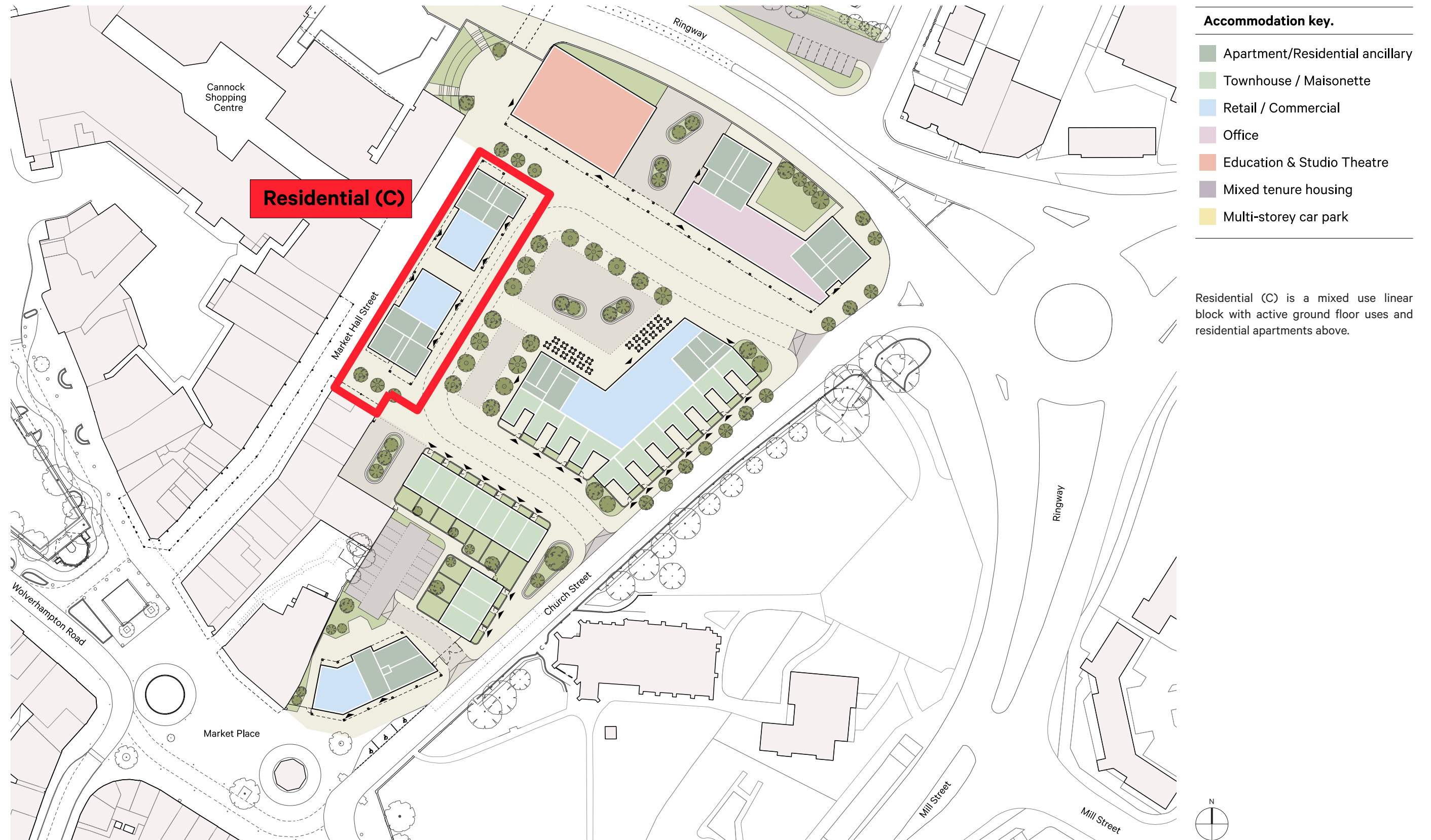
Accommodation key.

- Apartment/Residential ancillary
- Townhouse / Maisonette
- Retail / Commercial
- Office
- Education & Studio Theatre
- Mixed tenure housing
- Multi-storey car park

Residential (C) negotiates the different characters of Church Street and the new Public Realm. Terraced houses front onto Church Street. On the public realm side, active ground floor uses spill out into the square, with apartments above.

1.0 Development Framework.

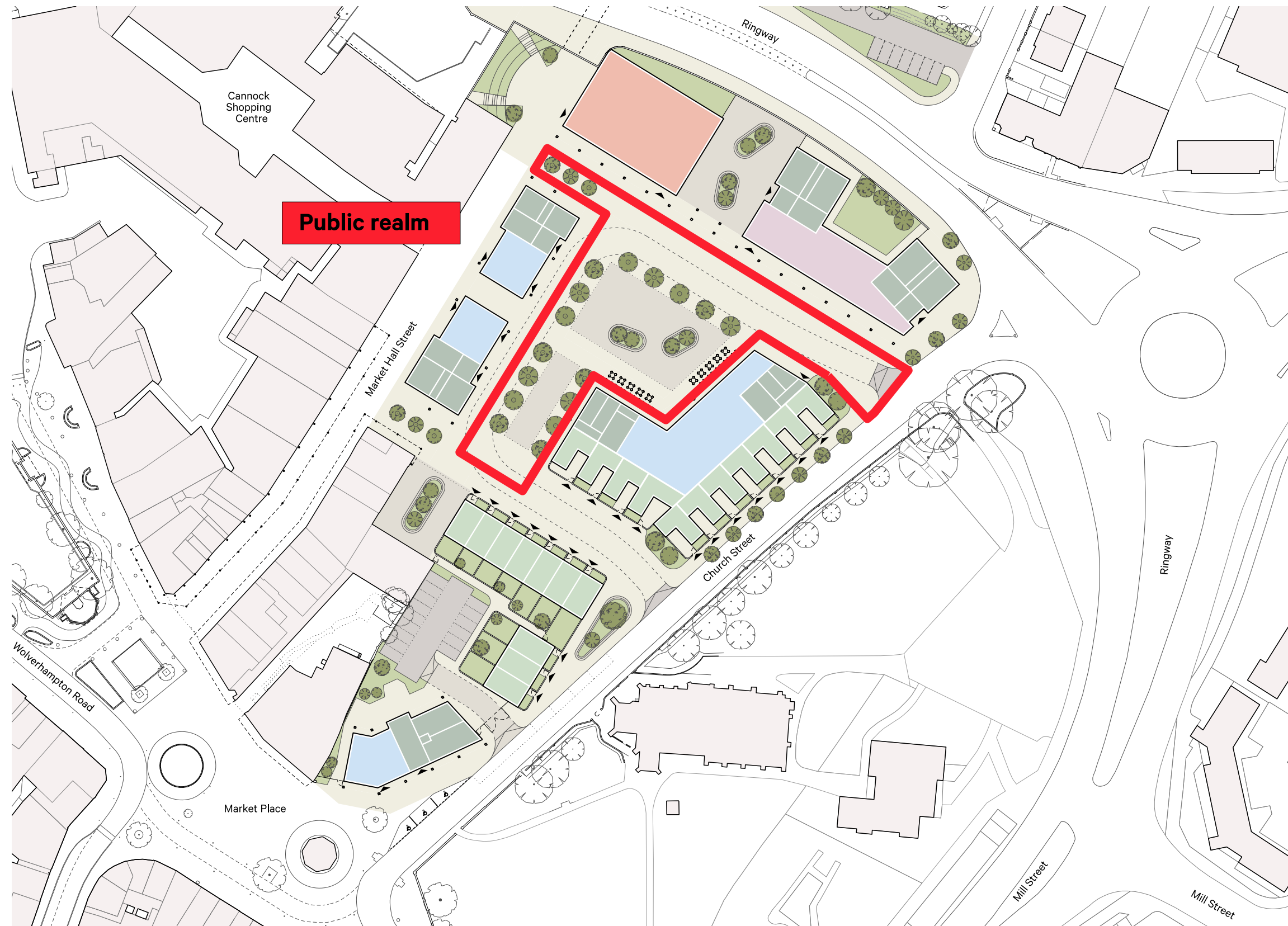
1.12 Site overview - Residential (C)



Site overview drawing: Residential (C). Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

1.13 Site overview - Public Realm



Site overview drawing: Public Realm. Not to scale.

Accommodation key.	
■	Apartment/Residential ancillary
■	Townhouse / Maisonette
■	Retail / Commercial
■	Office
■	Education & Studio Theatre
■	Mixed tenure housing
■	Multi-storey car park

New Public Realm knits the others development sites together and creates a new civic destination activated by food, beverage, retail, and performance uses.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3

1.14 Indicative visualisations



Indicative aerial view of masterplan. Not to scale.

1.0 Development Framework.

Appendix 3



Indicative view from underpass looking South. Not to scale.

JUNE 19, 2026



05(E)-APPX 4 - CANNOCK TOWN CENTRE REGEN OPTIONS PAPERS

1.0 Development Framework

Objectives

This paper has been prepared to summarise, the contents of the current proposed Development Framework including proposed plots, land use and development density. It considers the potential phasing, timings, pro and cons and financial implications in delivering comprehensive regeneration proposed for Cannock Town Centre.

The paper also sets out the potential routes that could be taken on a plot-by-plot basis, together with the implications of each approach. Its purpose is to help develop a clear and concise view of a preferred plots to be include in a refined Development Framework moving forward.

Additionally, this paper contains information relative to the refurbishment of the PoW Theatre in terms of recent surveys, associated refurbishment costs and the implications on the Development Framework, should the building be restored and brought back into operational use.

2.0 Market Assessment

In February 2025, a market demand assessment was carried out by Savills UK to provide a guide to commercial opportunities to support the development of a town centre regeneration prospectus. The stage 1 assessment provided a market overview of the demand in relation to possible town centre uses including retail, leisure, food & beverage, office and residential.

The market assessment also made reference to previous reports such as the Cannock Chase Retail Town Centres Uses (January 2021) study, which considered the potential for growth in retail and other town centre uses. This report was prepared to inform the development of the local plan over a period of 20 years. In relation to Cannock and the performance of its town centre, the study stated:

- Although the town centre provides convenience retail offer, there is a limited leisure and food and drink offer
- The town centre has a high vacancy rate
- There is a poor level of quality environment close to and within the shopping areas
- There is no quantitative need for additional convenience floorspace
- There is no quantitative need for additional comparison retail floorspace (taking account of the Designer Outlet Village).

Since the 2021 report, the above conditions have deteriorated further with higher vacancy rates, less food and drink offer with a poor environmental townscape which fails to attract sustainable users.

The market assessment has more detail within it; however, the table below summarises the market demand outputs derived from the Savills 2025 study:

Town Centre Uses	Demand
Retail, Leisure, F&B,	• Limited capacity for new convenience or comparison retail. Any retail should focus on provision for independent stores • Potential for complementary F&B which is underrepresented • Potential for non-retail town centre uses e.g. cinema, bowling alley* • Underprovided Art & Cultural provision • Unlikely demand for a hotel unless supported by the Council
Offices	• Little demand for purpose-built office development in secondary locations. Re-purpose existing office space to alternative uses • There is potential for co-working space to be delivered, but this would need to be alongside wider community uses with improved connectivity to train station
Residential	• There is limited demand for non-traditional family housing based on the current market. However, the apartment market could be a component of any town centre regeneration • Potential for Affordable Housing within the town centre on the basis of Registered Providers being able to access grant funding • Senior Living and Care Home provision has potential, subject to further market testing. Needs to be located near to public transport & amenities

*note – although there appears to be potential local demand for a cinema and bowling alley, this development is predominantly private sector led and not funded by the Public Sector. Based on our understanding there is no private sector developer demand to bring forward these facilities in the town centre due to the viability issues of these types of uses.

What the demand assessment has indicated, it that there is very little current demand in Cannock town centre for a number of key uses essential to sustain a stable town centre economy. As such, the council is seeking to act as enabler, using its powers, land and funding from government to create new markets for uses that will stimulate regeneration of the town centre, thus halting its current decline, and acting as a catalyst for future private sector investment.

Following the Government's lead in best practice in the revitalisation of town centres, the proposals for the town centre have been informed via an engagement process with a number of operators and developers who have shown an interest in the development opportunities offered in the Cannock town centre.

This process started with the launch of the Cannock town centre Prospectus at UKREiiF in May 2025. The information gained from the Savills market assessment study was used as a guide to inform the development of the Prospectus. Through informal discussions, the council has engaged with market leaders in the investment and delivery of town centre regeneration programmes.

This has informed all aspects of the master planning process including development mix/uses, quantum, scale and massing. All of which are key elements of modelling and subsequently delivering commercially viable proposals.

In addition to the above, South Staffordshire College have been positively working in partnership with the council to address regional skills gaps in the market. At their presentation to the Council's Economic Prosperity Scrutiny Committee in December 2025, they set out their proposed Strategic Overview moving forward which included:

Strategic Partnership

- Cannock College reopened through a partnership with the local council to address regional skills gaps.

Inclusive Education Mission

- The college offers education for full-time students, adults, and apprentices, promoting inclusivity.

Workforce and Economic Growth

- Focus on workforce development supports local economic resilience and social mobility.

Community Regeneration

- The college plays a key role in long-term community development and employer engagement.

In terms of curriculum expansion, the college would like to introduce new courses in Hair and Beauty, Arts, Business, Law, and Sport to broaden learning opportunities for students.

Unfortunately, due to the college's success, they now face capacity challenges. This demand provides a great opportunity in working together to secure space for delivery as well as expanded provision in leisure courses such as creative arts to promote inclusivity and ongoing education. It is here where there is an exciting opportunity to deliver a new dedicated education and cultural space within the town centre. If supported, the facility could support the future requirements of South Staffordshire College, providing purpose-built accommodation for teaching, rehearsal, performance and wider creative learning activities linked to the needs of their expanding curriculum. Further dialogue and work will be required with the college to consider the feasibility of a new educational offer in the town centre.

Continuum was instructed by Cannock Chase Council in 2024 to undertake a development feasibility study pursuant to the land located off Beecroft Road in Cannock which is the current location of the Council's Civic Centre offices. The study was carried out to inform a Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) bid for the demolition of the Civic Offices to unlock local authority-owned land for new homes. A number of residential layouts were produced with supporting appraisals which concluded, that subject to funding the demolition works, the site could support residential

development. Interest has been shown in this site via a number of parties including retail operators, residential operators and senior living / care home operators.



Fig. 1 – Civic Site

3.0 Planning Policy

Separate planning reviews in relation to the town centre opportunities have been carried out by Savills as part of their demand assessment and by Arkle Boyce in the development of the town centre masterplans. Both reviews covered National and Strategic Guidance including, The National Planning Policy Framework, Draft National Decision-Making Policies, Planning Practice Guidance, Redefining Staffordshire, Cannock Council Corporate Plan (2022-2026) and at the time, the Draft Local Plan.

The Cannock Chase Local Plan 2018 to 2040 was adopted at the 23rd March 2026 Council.

The new plan contains local planning policies and site allocations which will meet the development needs of the district over the plan period to 2040. The Local Plan addresses needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the local economy, community facilities and infrastructure. Policies will safeguard the environment, enable adaptation to climate change and help secure high quality accessible design.

The Local Plan outlines strategic objectives for the town centre's development.

Policy SO6 Designates Cannock Town Centre as a strategic hub for services and a night-time economy. Policies encourage **mixed use developments**, protecting existing services while allowing for **residential opportunities**. Specific sites in Cannock Town Centre have been identified for redevelopment with various potential uses

Policy SO6.1 Designates Cannock Town Centre, as the Strategic Town Centre, with the role to provide the focus for District Town Centre Services and be the District focus for a **nighttime economy**;

Policy SO6.4 Provides the detailed policy framework for Cannock Town Centre's regeneration, requiring **mixed-use development, strong design standards, better connectivity, and heritage-sensitive renewal**. It ensures Cannock evolves into a **resilient, attractive, and community-focused town centre**.

Policy SO6.5 - Transforming Cannock Town Centre Redevelopment Areas provides a spatial focus for regeneration by designating key redevelopment sites in Cannock Town Centre and builds on the strategic objective (SO6) to revitalise Cannock, ensuring investment is directed to priority locations.

Redevelopment Areas include Site Allocation M1 - A multi-storey car park, Market Hall and retail units, Church Street (0.78ha) – retail, leisure use, food and beverage uses, upper floors could also provide residential apartments, hotel or office space.

- Development proposals should promote the function of Cannock Town Centre as the **main retail, leisure and cultural hub of the district. A wide mix of town centre uses will be considered on regeneration sites to promote higher footfall and reduce vacancy rates.**
- Opportunities for residential above shops, where this does not detract from the operation of town centre uses on ground floor will be encouraged.

- Redevelopment proposals involving the redevelopment of existing buildings and other land uses in the town centre will be supported where they improve the appeal and attractiveness of units to modern occupiers, are of high-quality design and materials and improve the quality and accessibility of the public realm.
- **Proposals which respond positively to historic heritage assets in the town centre**, including the Cannock Town Conservation Area, St Lukes Church, Cannock War Memorial, Conduit Building and Water Pump and other listed buildings promoting distinctive architectural design and character features will be supported.
- The central Market Place remains an important defining centre of the public realm in Cannock Town Centre. **Proposals should encourage activity and footfall in the Market Place and support open air markets and events in this location.**
- Redevelopment opportunities should be compatible with the **Councils Cannock Chase Town Centre Development Prospectus or successor documents, and support priorities and the Councils vision for the town centre.**
- Development within the Town Centre will be of **high quality** and will conform to the guidance set out in Policy SO6.4: 'Town Centre Design', and relevant Local Design Guidance. Development proposals will incorporate high quality digital connectivity where appropriate.

The masterplan proposals contained in this paper are supported by town centre planning policies adopted as part of the Cannock Chase Local Plan 2018 to 2040.

4.0 Development Framework

Cannock Chase Council commissioned Continuum and ArkleBoyce to produce a Development Framework for Cannock Town Centre to provide clarity for prospective investors and inform the local community about the long-term vision for Cannock's transformation.

The Framework is a guide for developers, operators and investors describing the opportunity that has been created within Cannock Town centre. The vision described in the development framework will help deliver Cannock's growth, productivity and quality of life. The development sites identified in the Development Framework are strategically positioned adjacent to key town centre assets. The planned regeneration will form strong physical and functional connections with the existing built environment which will support continued development and success.

Cannock is ideally positioned with excellent connectivity to several major cities, including Birmingham and Manchester. With strong transport links and a growing local economy, the Development Framework describes the opportunity to deliver high-quality, commercially attractive development that will enhance the town centre offer for current and future generations.

The Development Framework is based on feedback from informal discussions with potential developers and operators, conducted over the last 12 months and considers the town centre regeneration that would follow the demolition of the Prince of Wales Theatre, subject to planning permission, and the cleared development site around it. The plan includes a new dedicated education and cultural space (Education & Studio Theatre), using land unlocked by relocating Homes Bargains to a new premises on a cleared civic site, ensuring that cultural provision remains an integral part of the town centre regeneration proposals. The facility would support the future requirements of South Staffordshire College, providing purpose-built accommodation for teaching, rehearsal, performance and wider creative learning activities linked to the needs of their expanding curriculum.

The Development Framework promotes a mix of residential and mixed-use accommodation across the town centre and civic site, totalling up to 206 units. In addition, a new decked car park at Beecroft Road is proposed to help offset the loss of parking provision resulting from the demolition of the former multi-storey car park and the car park to the rear of the Civic Centre site.



Fig 2. Development Framework Plan

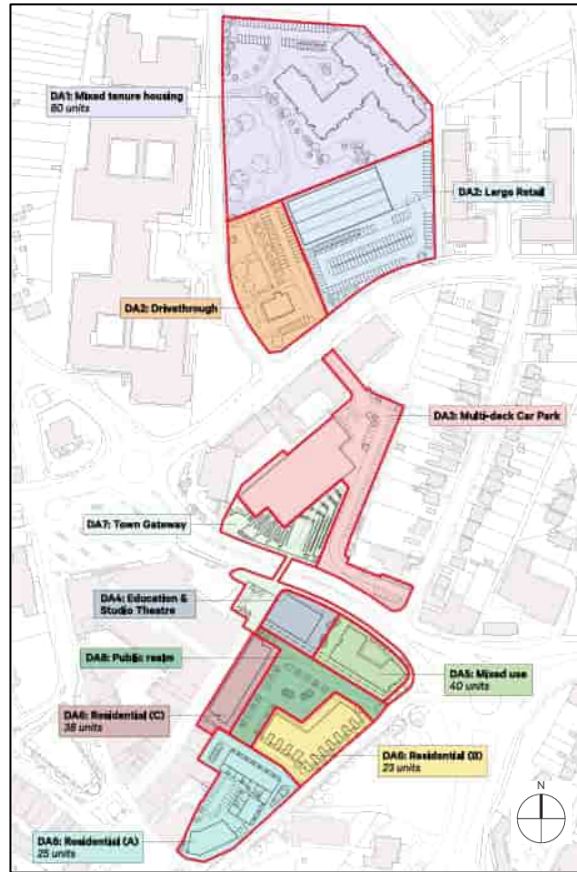


Fig 3. Proposed Land Uses

The Development Framework consists of three distinct parts; the site of the current Civic Centre, Beecroft Road car park, and a site to the northwest of Church Street which includes large retail unit, part of Cannock Shopping Centre, the Forum shopping centre, the Prince of Wales Theatre, and commercial buildings facing onto Market Place. The summary Development Framework is contained in Appendix A.

The plans below provide further detail in relation to the proposed uses for the distinct parts of the Development Framework.

Civic Site

- *Mixed-use tenure housing - (up to 80 units)*
- *Large retail development - (20,200 sq ft)*
- *Drive through retail – (1,850 sq ft)*

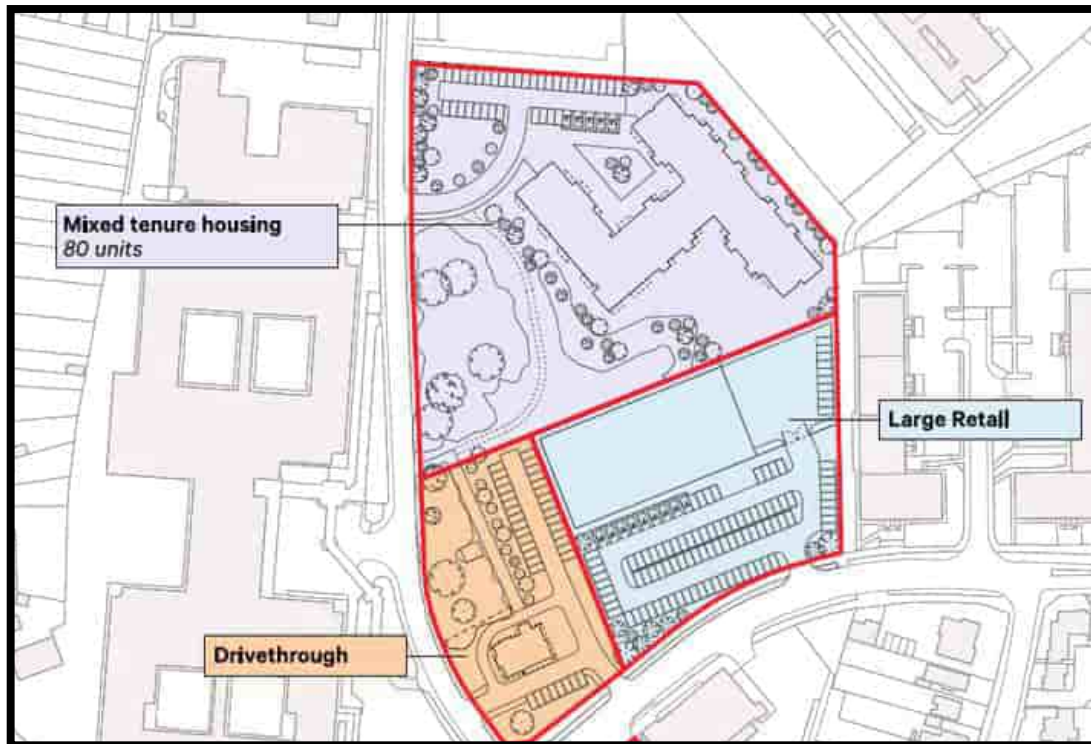


Fig 4. Civic Centre Site

Beecroft Road Car Park

- *Decked car park*
- *Town centre gateway including public open space*

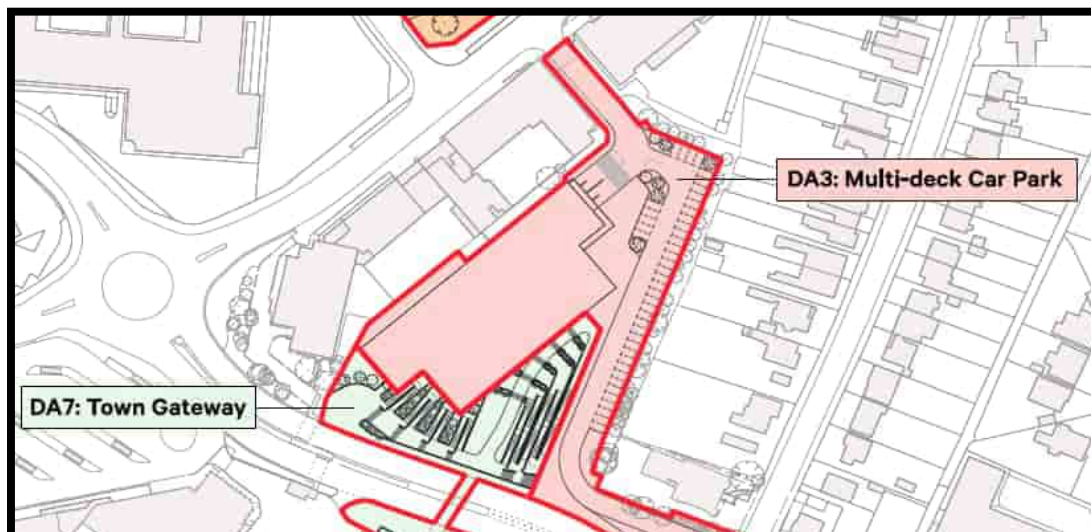


Fig 5. Beecroft Road Site

Town Centre

- *Education and Studio Theatre - (160-180 seats)*
- *Residential development – (up to 86 units)*
- *Mixed-use development – (up to 40 residential units + 7800 sq ft commercial)*
- *New public realm including new public square*

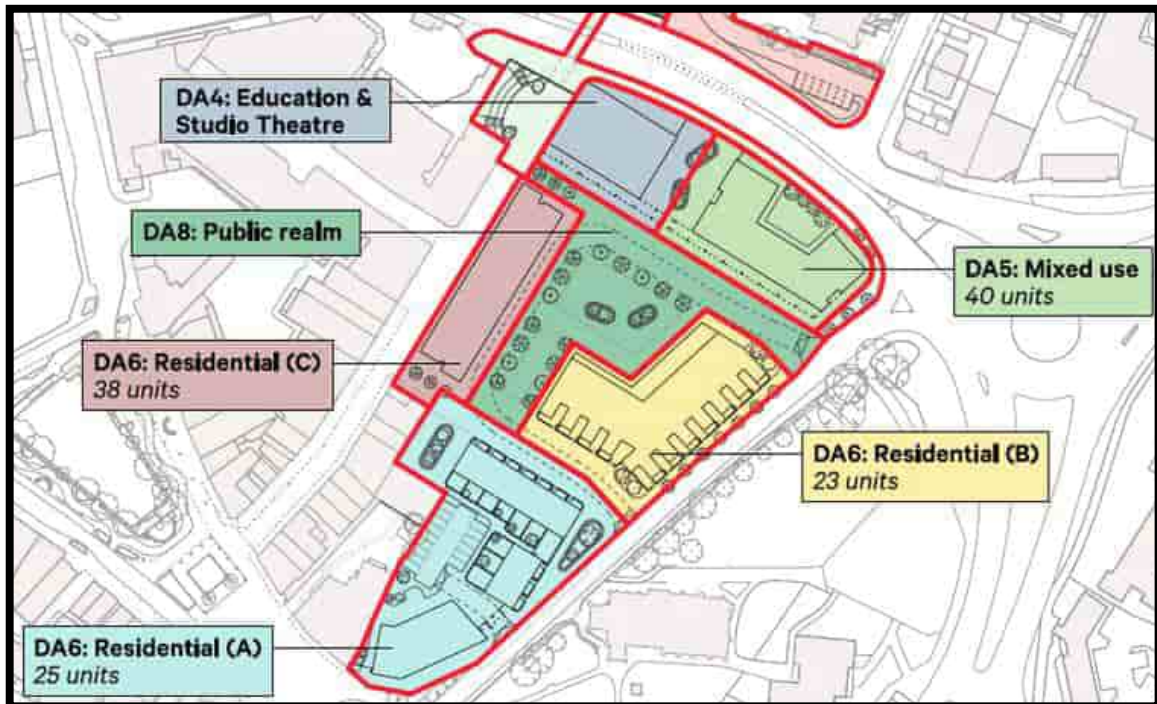


Fig 6. Town Centre Site

The Education and Studio Theatre has been carefully located within the Development Framework and sits against the high retaining wall adjacent to the ring road, where the building's limited need for external frontage or multiple aspects makes efficient use of a constrained site.

5.0 Education and Cultural Space

New Education & Studio Theatre Building

In masterplan 1, a new Educational and Studio Theatre Building is proposed to ensure that there is a cultural / theatre offer that remains in the Town Centre following the demolition of the Prince of Wales Theatre. The new building will have a Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 600 m² and is proposed to act as a landmark building which will be a focal point for the Town Centre. The building will be up to 2 storeys in height with active ground floor. The internal layout of the building will be flexible and be able to support a mix of community, educational and cultural functions.



Fig. 7. Visual of the Windmill Performance and Education Centre

The proposed building is based on the Windmill Performance and Education Centre which is a new Educational and Studio Theatre Building that was recently completed in April 2025 and located at the Lowther Pavillion, Lytham. The building cost £3m to build (including fit out) and had a GIA of 400 m² and includes a 162 seated performance venue (350 standing), outdoor classroom, foyer / community space (with kitchenette / bar), toilets and plant. The Windmill did not include any changing rooms for performance which was provided in another building and had an area of 115 m². Based on the Windmill, a new Educational and Studio Theatre Building would need a minimum GIA of circa. 515 m² to develop a facility that would include a 162-seat performance venue with changing rooms, foyers, toilets and plant.

The Windmill hosts a number of cultural and community events including:

- Professional shows
- Amateur dramatic shows
- Youth theatre groups
- Holiday courses for children on free school mills
- Community choirs
- Art groups

- Dance groups
- Education classes
- Health groups
- Live music
- Sandwich and soup lunchtime film club

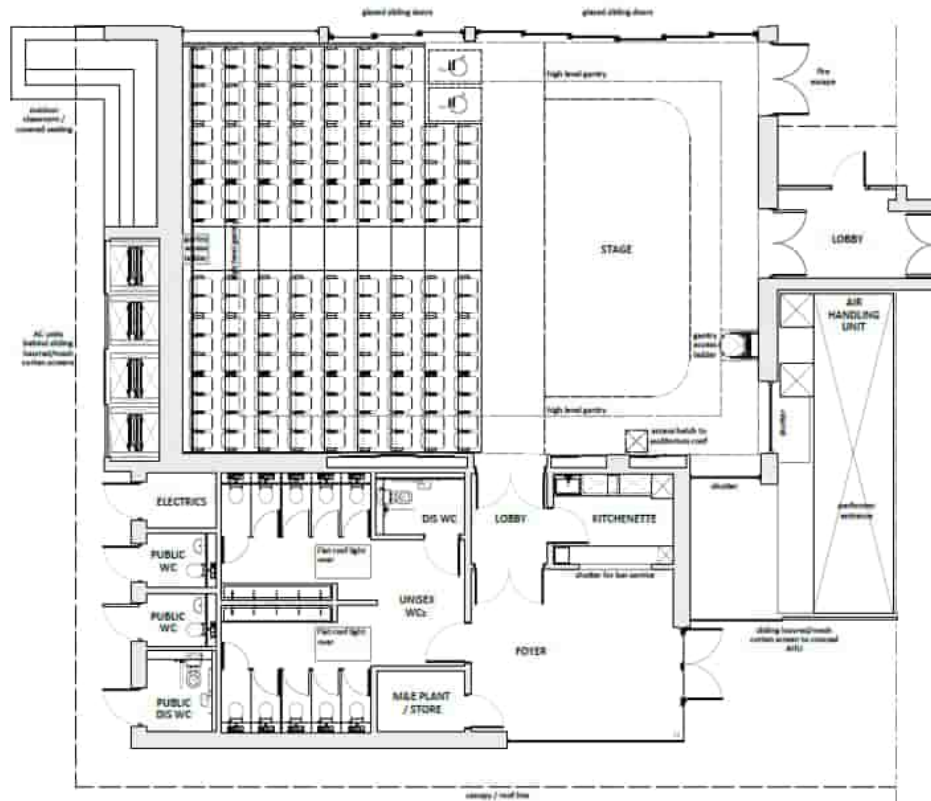


Fig. 8. Floor plans of the Windmill Performance and Education Centre



Fig. 9. Theatre Seating in the Windmill Performance and Education Centre

The proposal for the Development Framework is to offer a similar multi-purpose facility which will include a 160-180 seated performance venue, community space, changing facilities, toilets, foyer and plant over 600 m² of floor space. Based on the Windmill costs it is estimated that the all in costs associated with delivering the facility would be approximately £4.5m, although significant dialogue will be required with South Staffordshire College and other relevant stakeholders to determine the exact requirements for such a new facility.

As mentioned previously in section 2 of this report, demolition of the Prince of Wales Theatre, subject to planning permission, and land unlocked by relocating would provide an exciting opportunity to create a new dedicated education and cultural space in the heart of the town centre. The facility would also support the future requirements of South Staffordshire College, providing purpose-built accommodation for teaching, rehearsal, performance and wider creative learning activities linked to the needs of their expanding curriculum.

6.0 Phasing

In relation to the Development Framework, the Council can seek to deliver the ambitions of the regeneration programme over a prolonged period, mitigating the risk of major events such as local government reorganisation or economic uncertainty. The Development Framework makes a number of phasing assumptions in regard to timings, specifically as to when the Halifax will vacate their premises on Church Street and when the Council could leave the Civic Centre Offices. However, the announcement of the Halifax closing their town centre branch in September 2026 de-risks demolition of the Cabot units around the Halifax and provides confidence in opportunity to sell plot DA6 for re-development.

Development Framework Phasing and Indicative Timings

Phase	Activity	Indicative Start Date
1	Planning and Demolition of the Theatre	Quarter 3/4 2026
	Operator Selection: Beecroft Road Car Park	
	Public Realm (Commence Design)	
2	Sale of Residential A,B,C	Quarter 1 2027 (assuming Halifax vacate Sept 2026)
3	Civic Demolition (low rise elements)	September 2027
4	Sale of Civic Site for relocation of retail occupier , residential/senior living and Drive Through	March 2028
	Lease Extinguishment of Existing Retail Operator	
5	Existing Large Retail Unit Demolition	2029
6	Studio and Educational Theatre Build	2029
	Land Sale for Mixed Use Development	

Based on a decision to demolish the Prince of Wales Theatre, the Council would be able to deliver all phases of the Development Framework within an indicative timescale as set out above.

*The Studio and Education Theatre could be brought forward sooner if the council was able to vacate the Civic Offices and demolish the low-rise elements sooner. The demolition of the low-rise Civic Offices provides the opportunity for the existing retail operator to be relocated, thus allowing the demolition of the current retail store and deck carparking above. This in turn creates a cleared site for the delivery of the Studio Theatre (DA4) and adjacent mixed-use development (DA5) to be delivered.

**Alternatively, the Education and Studio Theatre could be delivered quicker if located on a vacant site contained within the Development Framework boundary, however as mentioned previously in this report, The Education and Studio Theatre has been carefully located to make efficient use of a constrained site.

7.0 Development Framework – Pros and Cons

The table below sets out the pros and cons of delivering the Development Framework:

Development Framework	
Pros	Cons / Risks
• Largest overall development opportunity • Wide-reaching regeneration opportunity creating significant social and economic outputs for the town centre • Greater scale so will be more desirable to the private sector • Can be phased over time to deal with Local Government Re-organisation • Large variety of uses within the town centre including residential, mixed tenure housing, mixed use, F&B, large retail, cultural, leisure and a multi-storey carpark • Delivery of high-quality public realm • Demolition of existing retail store and derelict car park above • Delivery of a new dedicated education and cultural space, providing purpose-built accommodation for teaching, rehearsal, performance and wider creative learning activities • Supports college plans to enhance their teaching curriculum • Addresses end-of-life civic accommodation • Eliminates on-going backlog maintenance/running costs - civic building • Maximises land receipts • Can deliver development as whole with funding identified incl. land receipts • Aligns with adopted Local Plan policies • Potential leverage of other future funding opportunities i.e. Brownfield Land Release Fund, Homes England, City Densification fund	• Development risk • Market downturn • Reliance on existing retail operator cooperation • Reliance on lease extinguishments of Civic tenants • Reduced public access to council services (though could be managed elsewhere in the town centre) • Staff and Council relocation management • Loss of Council chamber in Cannock

8.0 Prince of Wales (PoW) Theatre

Due to the significant public interest in the POW, between March and June 2026, CCDC took the opportunity to commission further work on elements of the programme that would assist Members in reaching a conclusion about the preferred way forward for the PoW Theatre.

An initial budget estimate had been produced in August 2024 that reviewed all of the costs associated with retaining the existing building and addressing the capital works needed before the building could be brought back into theatre use. This estimate was subject to a number of exclusions as reports relating to asbestos, building condition and mechanical and electrical (M&E) requirements were still to be produced.

Surveys

To understand the scope and cost of the remedial works required to reopen the POW Theatre, CCDC commissioned in 2025 the following building surveys and reports through Tetrattech and C&D Demolition Consultants.

- Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (Asbestos)
- Building Condition Survey Report
- M&E Condition Report

Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (Asbestos) Findings

The refurbishment and demolition survey has identified asbestos within the building that will need removing prior to any works being carried out in the building. There remains an inherent risk associated with refurbishment works to buildings of this age, where concealed asbestos-containing materials may be uncovered once intrusive works commence. This approach is also informed by recent experience of works to an adjacent building of similar age and construction, where unexpected asbestos was encountered during the works.

Building Condition Survey and M&E Condition Report

The Building Condition Survey notes the following items need to be considered as part of any refurbishment of the building.

1. The building structure (foundations / concrete / steelwork) is in sound condition however any alteration of this to suit a new layout/extension / use should be investigated further.
2. The fabric of the entrance tower is in poor condition (GRP cladding) and requires replacement. This is compounded by the use of flammable insulation (expanded polystyrene), which should be replaced.
3. The now exposed gable wall (adjacent to the former Forum) requires treatment in the longer term to provide weatherproofing/thermal, and acoustic performance. Existing brickwork in satisfactory condition, subject to minor remedials however, thermal performance to be reviewed.
4. The roof finish and structure are in poor condition and structure could be deemed fragile under HSE Guidance (reinforced woodwool slabs) and requires replacement. Edge protection measures on the roof also need to be upgraded/provided.

5. Windows/glazing are in poor condition throughout and should be replaced. Leak/staining visible to surrounding finishes and areas.
6. Ground Floor roller shutter doors are operable; however, some are in poor condition/require upgrade.
7. Doors/floor/wall/ceiling finishes are generally dated/worn, and consideration should be given to replacement throughout. The main staircase appears in good condition.
8. WC's are generally dated/worn (but functional) and consideration should be given to replacement throughout.
9. Fire stopping is considered inadequate in several areas.

The M&E Condition Report notes the following items need to be considered as part of any refurbishment of the building.

1. Mechanical installations are in poor condition or past their economic life expectancy and therefore require replacement. The AC unit to the first-floor bar and water heater are in good condition (both approx. 5 years old) but it is suggested that these are replaced as part of a wider refurbishment of the building.
2. Electrical systems are in poor condition or past their economic life expectancy and therefore require replacement, with some elements considered not in line with best practice or potentially non-compliant with Part L (Building Regs) or others (BS / IET Wiring Regs).
3. IT and Data Installations and Emergency lighting are in fair/good condition and subject to maintenance, should continue to operate for several years. Lighting to WC's and a few DB boards have been replaced and are in good condition (both approx. 5 years old). Notwithstanding this, we would suggest replacement of these as part of a wider refurbishment of the building.
4. The lift is considered to be in good condition.

Based on the surveys and reports, Tetra Tech have assessed the refurbishment and extension budget costs on the basis that all existing internal finishes, fixtures and fittings are removed in full, inclusive of all M&E installations.

In terms of the building fabric, given the concerns identified regarding the condition of existing roof and its classification as a fragile roof, Tetra Tech have allowed for this to be removed and replaced in full. Costs allow for the replacement of cladding/glazing to the existing entrance tower due to the condition of the cladding (GRP) and presence of flammable insulation. Refurbishing the entrance tower could be considered cost-prohibitive as it could be demolished with a new means of access incorporated into the service spine extension, however the design of this would need to be developed at the next stage.

The refurbishment works would necessitate a new means of escape to be provided as the former escape routes used the adjacent multi-storey car park, which has now been demolished. Tetra Tech have provisionally allowed for 2nr semi enclosed fire escape staircases to the east elevation, the design of which is to be further developed at the next stage.

Internally, Tetra Tech have allowed for new finishes throughout and included provisional allowances for new fixtures and fittings such as tiered theatre seating, fit out of the kitchen, as well as dressing rooms etc. Whilst the Page\Park concept design provided an informed steer, it should be noted that this has not been developed to a sufficient level of detail to allow costs to be market tested via a tender process.

Tetra Tech have allowed for new M&E installations throughout to achieve compliance with Building Regulations Part L and industry guidance. An allowance for specialist M&E installations (AV/Stage Lighting/Stage Engineering) is based on budget costs provided by Charcoal Blue in June 2023 which have been uplifted to present day.

Tetra Tech have allowed for the demolition of the former multi-storey car park ramp, which also houses the existing substation, as part of an enabling works package. They have also included a provisional allowance for the treatment of (new housing / switch room) or movement of the existing substation (location TBC), which is to be confirmed following further investigation.

Costs are informed using Tetra Tech's in-house cost data and BCIS analyses as a benchmark. Costs include an allowance for on costs in line with expected levels and include preliminaries, contingencies, OH&P and fees for the delivery of the works.

wider masterplan.

Theatre Retention Cost Plan

In June 2026, Tetrattech issued an updated cost plan reflecting adjustments arising from the R&D and Building Condition Surveys. The initial estimate is based on a 501 m² extension, aligned with the architect's Page Park scheme. Including all on-costs, Tetra Tech have assessed the scheme at approximately £9.609 million.

Theatre Refurbishment Design

Should a decision be made to refurbish the PoW Theatre and bring it back into operational use, a design to RIBA stage 3/4 will be required to inform planning, cost and operational requirements. This will have to take into consideration the current condition of the building and how it interacts with its surrounding environment as the majority of buildings around it have been demolished. Internal and external design via dialogue with stakeholders will therefore be required to define the likely scope of works and provide a more robust basis for estimating the cost of reopening the building.

Any emerging designs will have to respond to a number of key operational and placemaking requirements. These include the removal of the existing entrance tower, due to the condition of the cladding (GRP) and the presence of flammable insulation, the rotation of the building through 180 degrees, and improvements to the way in which the theatre addresses and interacts with any new public realm.

It will also be essential to balance the benefits of retaining existing infrastructure with the need to modernise the building and address current operational requirements such as retaining the broad location of the stage and audience seating area.

A new extension to the theatre would be required to support the practical operation of the building. This would provide the necessary servicing arrangements, including a dedicated stage door and delivery access, enabling the Theatre to receive sets, equipment, supplies and other operational deliveries via Church Street.

In addition, the ground floor proposals would need to be reviewed in terms of a new café/restaurant/bar offer. This could provide an improved visitor experience and create a more active frontage at ground level, particularly in relation to any new public realm / square.

It must be noted that in order to refurbish and reopen the PoW Theatre, engagement with an experienced theatre operator will be required to test the proposals in detail and inform specific design recommendations, particularly in relation to operational requirements, audience experience, backstage servicing, income generation, long-term management and overall commercial viability.

To ensure the Council's interests are protected as far as possible, the following approach should be followed:

- Procure an operator to input on design, operational costs and funding requirements and level of subsidy that the Council may need to provide and be willing to accept in bringing back into operation a theatre of current scale.
- Appoint a design team to develop the theatre proposals to RIBA Stage 3 / 4.
- Ensure the design creates a theatre space that is commercially attractive, operationally sound and capable of meeting long-term management requirements.
- Procure a contractor to confirm the true price for delivery of a refurbished theatre

Progressing the design without first identifying an experienced operator and seeking specialist input, is likely to leave the Council exposed to significant uncertainty. In particular, the restored building may fail to meet operational requirements, may not be attractive to future operators, or may require further redesign and additional cost before it can be brought back into use.

9.0 PoW Theatre Retention – Pros and Cons

The table below sets out the pros and cons of retaining the PoW Theatre:

PoW Theatre Retention	
Pros	Cons / Risks
• Original cultural offering retained in the town centre • No requirement on existing retail operator to relocate to unlock the site for the new Studio and Education Theatre • New design offers potential for additional revenue opportunity with Café/Restaurant/Bar	• Planning risk • High cost to refurbish • Additional capital required over and above Grant/Match funding in order to deliver all of the development framework outputs • Need for ongoing revenue subsidy • Reduced opportunity to create significant social and economic outputs for the town centre • Reduced development scale so will be less attractive to the private sector • Theatre operator required to inform design of refurbished theatre and cost – this could take 12 months to procure • No guarantee that an operator can be identified • Contractor price for capital works may be higher than budgeted – potential for abortive work / cost • Timescales for detailed design and cost uncertainties will preclude any progression of the Development Framework that supports wider regeneration of the town centre • Loss of interest from the private sector • Detrimental impact on the College plans to secure new space for delivery and expanded curriculum • Lost opportunity to deliver a new dedicated education and cultural space, providing purpose-built accommodation for teaching, rehearsal, performance and wider creative learning activities • Lost opportunity to demolish the dilapidated carpark above existing retail store • Ongoing H&S / security obligation re-derelict buildings / undeveloped plots • Continued decline of town centre • Lost opportunity to deal with end-of-life Civic accommodation

10.0 Financial

Development Framework

A financial model has been prepared for the Development Framework to assess overall scheme deliverability, taking into account the remaining grant funding and available match funding. The model also estimates the potential value that could be generated through the onward sale of the cleared sites to a developer or operator.

The financial model prepared for is based on the full delivery of all elements and plots within the Development Framework. As such, the outputs should be considered on the basis that the Development Framework is delivered as a complete package, rather than as a selection of individual plots.

Depending on the outcome of the plot selection process, (see section 11.0 below) a revised financial model will need to be prepared to understand the associated financial implications, including any changes to cost, funding requirement, land receipt assumptions and overall scheme viability.

The financial model for the Development Framework and accompanying data which contain commercially sensitive information is contained in a Confidential Appendix.

PoW Theatre Retention

If the decision is made to retain and refurbish the PoW Theatre, the cost of these works would take up the majority of the uncommitted funding of circa. £14m and would mean that there is not enough funding to deliver all of the development framework outputs.

Summary

In summary, the Development Framework can be delivered in its entirety with the available budget, assuming the proposed land sale values are achieved.

If the Prince of Wales Theatre is retained, there is not enough funding to deliver the full development framework outputs.

11.0 Plot options

The section below considers the various plots within the regeneration proposals, the decisions required for each, and the implications for delivery of the wider town centre regeneration programme, including associated risks.

Plot-by-plot decisions are required to inform a final development framework. This can then be financially tested and assessed with the market to understand its attractiveness to developers and operators.

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
Civic Centre	Option A: Stay in civic and no redevelopment of site	- No requirement to relocate staff out of Civic Office - Development risk passed to the successor authority - No reliance on existing retail operator's cooperation	- Existing retail operator cannot be relocated, restricting wider regeneration and plot creation opportunities. (existing retail operator's site will not be released) - The site will not generate land receipts, impacting the delivery of other town centre plots - The Civic Office backlog maintenance liability continues to grow. Council to cover the continuing operational running costs. - The office (or parts) may need to be mothballed due to not meeting building regulations - Reduced variety of uses within the town centre - Reputational damage with MHCLG/Homes England/ existing retail operator
	Option B: Stay in civic and redevelop the land to North	- Development site created but reduced size compared to redeveloping the entire civic site - Development risk associated with Civic relocation passed to the successor authority - No reliance on existing retail operator's cooperation - No need to relocate staff out of Civic Office - Some Land Receipts generated - Some new houses delivered - Potential key worker housing site	- Not enough land to relocate existing retail operator - Land receipts will be significantly reduced compared to redeveloping the entire Civic Site - The Civic Office backlog maintenance liability continues to grow. Council to cover the continuing operational running costs. - The office (or parts) may need to be mothballed due to not meeting building regulations - Reduced variety of uses within the town centre - Further reduction in car parking which could affect planning applications for future residential development - Planning risk of proximity to civic site – risk of overlooking - Risk of less appetite in the site due to potential future demolition works, plus less compatible use next to the site - Reputational damage with existing retail operator

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
	Option C: Vacate the Civic and develop the entire plot	• The only option that is suitable to attract existing retail operator's relocation • Unlocks existing retail store site, which has wider regeneration benefits • Larger overall development site • A greater scale will be more desirable to the private sector • Reduced planning risk in relation to the Northern Part of the Civic site • Addresses end-of-life civic accommodation • Eliminates ongoing backlog maintenance/running costs associated with the civic building • Option to deliver a range of different housing types and tenures • Maximises land receipts	• Development risk • Market downturn • Reliance on existing retail operator 's cooperation • Reliance on lease extinguishments of Civic tenants • Reduced public access to council services (though could be managed elsewhere in the town centre) • Staff and Council relocation management • Loss of Council chamber in Cannock
Existing Retail Store	Option A: Existing retail store and car park hand-demolished	• No reliance on Civic relocation • No lease extinguishment cost for existing retail operator • Development risk associated with the existing retail operator site passed to the successor authority	• Further surveys and investigations needed to determine if possible to hand demolish car park • Extremely expensive approach to demolition • If the car park remains, it will blight the prospects for a public square, residential development, and theatre refurbishment. • Gateway site not unlocked • The site will not generate land receipts, impacting the delivery of other town centre plots • Reliance on existing retail operator to support demolition work while the store is operational • Possible claim from existing retail operator for loss of income during demolition

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
			- Possible remedial works required at existing retail operator resulting from demolition - The site for education and cultural space is not unlocked if the theatre is demolished - Reputational damage with MHCLG/Homes England/ existing retail operator
	Option B: Existing retail operator relocate	- Larger overall development site - Wider-reaching regeneration opportunity creating greater outputs for the town centre - Greater scale will be more desirable to the private sector - Larger variety of uses within the town centre - More cost-effective and safer approach to demolition - Gateway site unlocked - Ability to dispose of land to generate additional value - Site unlocked for Education and Studio Theatre if the theatre is demolished - Existing retail operator's relationship maintained and retained in town centre	- Development risk - Market downturn - Reliance on the Council to vacate Civic offices as the only option in Cannock for existing retail operator is this site - Reliance on existing retail operator's cooperation - Cost incurred for extinguishing existing retail operator 's lease early
Theatre	Option A: Do nothing	Development risk passed to the successor authority	- Mothballed site is blight on the town centre - Building could deter investment from developer/operators - Council retains responsibility for mothballed site - On-going security and health & safety compliance obligations - Reputational risk - Reputational damage with MHCLG/Homes England/Public

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
	Option B: Retain theatre	• Original cultural offering retained in the town centre • No requirement on existing retail operator to relocate to unlock the site for the new Studio and Education Theatre • New design offers potential for additional revenue opportunity with Café/Restaurant/Bar	• Development risk • Planning risk • Market downturn • No guarantee that an operator can be identified • Possible need for ongoing subsidy • High cost to refurbish • Potential additional capital required over and above Grant/Match funding • The site will not generate land receipts, impacting the delivery of other town centre plots • Contractor price for capital works may be higher than budgeted • Overall delay to wider programme
	Option C: Demolish theatre	• Funding is available to deliver a flexible custom studio theatre for local theatre groups, the college, council and wider community use (subject to Civic relocation and unlocking existing retail store site) • Land disposal could generate income to support the scheme. • A more cost-effective approach, enabling a broader package of town centre regeneration benefits to be delivered. • Lower delivery risk than refurbishing an existing building, with fewer constraints and unknown costs. • Potential that the college will take on operational liability • More efficient and cost effective to manage due to reduced size	• Development risk • Market downturn • Reliance on relocation of Council and existing retail operator to unlock the site for new education and cultural space • Site for new education and cultural space unlocked at the end of the programme • Funding for the new education and studio theatre facility relies on achieving best value from the disposal of other sites, with any additional costs managed within the wider regeneration programme.

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
Beecroft Road / Unit 1 - 3 / Steps and Ramps	Option A: Resurface car park, install EV chargers, upgrade steps and ramps and underpass, public realm in units 1-3	• Council retains car parking revenue • Car parking resurfacing can be commenced quickly • Option to dispose of the car park to an operator in the future retained • Possibility to optimise layout to increase car parking capacity and revenue • Improved gateway to the town centre • EV charging deliverable	• Potential shortfall in car parking provision if land currently supporting parking is disposed of for alternative uses. • Potential upgrade / additional substation required to support EV charging, • Council retain liability of the car park • Council carry development risk with any upgrade to the car park • Risk that works to Units 1–3 are progressed before the wider decision on existing retail operator and Theatre is confirmed, which could affect the most appropriate future use of the space and the cost becomes a sunk cost. • Parking shortfalls could create planning challenges for potential residential developers and affect scheme deliverability.
	Option B: Dispose of car park site to operator for creation of a decked car park, upgrade steps and ramps and an underpass, public realm in units 1-3	• Development risk passed onto a third party • Potential to retain ownership of land in the long term • Possibility to enter profit share agreement after initial period • Significantly greater spaces compared to the existing car park • Shortfall of car parking addressed • EV charging deliverable • Improved gateway to town centre • Could improve the likelihood of a residential developer obtaining a planning consent due to increased parking	• Potential upgrade / additional substation required to support EV charging • Procurement support required to identify the operator • Council loses control of site, potentially permanently • Loss of car park revenue • Risk that works to Units 1–3 are progressed before the wider decision on existing retail operator and Theatre is confirmed, which could affect the most appropriate future use of the space and the cost becomes a sunk cost.

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
	Option C: Do nothing	- Development risk passed to the successor authority - Car park revenue retained	- Insufficient car parking if other land supporting car parking is disposed of for an alternative use case - Parking shortfalls could create planning challenges for potential residential developers and affect scheme deliverability. - Council retain liability of the existing car park - Council retains responsibility for cleared 1-3 sites - On-going security and health & safety compliance obligations - No EV charging installed - No investment at Units 1–3 would undermine the quality of a key town centre gateway, leaving a highly visible detractor in place. - Reputational damage with MHCLG
Proposed residential development plots	Option A: Do nothing	- Development risk passed to the successor authority - No reliance on Halifax vacating - No requirement to dispose of Civic Northern site - No requirement to relocate existing retail operator	- No land value created to support wider town centre requirements. - Council left with vacant, dilapidated units with no uses. - Cleared site that has to be retained with Council covering liability and insurances - Further decline in the town centre - Reputational risk with Public - Could lead to reduced footfall in town centre due to negative environment - Reputational damage with MHCLG/Homes England/Public

Decision	Options	Pros	Cons/Risks
	Option B: Deliver residential and mixed use sites	- Land value created to support wider town centre regeneration - Risk of sites passed on to the private sector - Larger variety of uses within the town centre - Option to deliver a range of different housing types and tenures	- Development risk - Market downturn - Parking shortfalls could create planning and viability challenges. - Once disposed of, the council has less control over future use, design and delivery timescales - Value generated dependent on site constraints, abnormal costs and market demand
Public realm works	Option A: Do nothing	- Development risk passed to the successor authority - Funding could be reinvested in other parts of regeneration - Avoids disruption to businesses, residents and traffic during construction	- May detract from developer/operators investing in the town centre - Limits opportunities to improve accessibility, safety and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists etc - Could weaken support for local businesses - Security, reputational and H&S risk - Reputational damage with MHCLG/Public - Could lead to reduced footfall in town centre due to a negative environment
	Option B: Deliver public realm	- Improves the overall look, feel and quality of the town centre. - More attractive environment for residents, visitors, businesses and investors. - Supports wider regeneration by improving connections between key sites and facilities. - improved accessibility, safety and movement for pedestrians, cyclists etc - Support local businesses by improving the setting around shops, cafés and services	- Requires ongoing maintenance funding to keep spaces clean, safe and attractive. - Disruption during works - Development risk



Initial Budget Costs – Executive Summary (5.6.26)

Tetra Tech (TT) have undertaken an assessment of initial budget costs for the refurbishment and extension of the Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock on behalf of Cannock Chase District Council (CCDC). These are dated 5 June 2026.

To inform these costs, CCDC commissioned the following surveys / reports on the building via Tetra Tech and C&D Demolition Consultants.

- C&D (RDM) – Prince of Wales Theatre Refurbishment & Demolition Survey; ref 260417
- Intega - Technical Due Diligence Condition Survey Report (April 2026) – 01265
- CWC - M&E Condition Report - 15.04.26 Ref 3731-CWC-XX-RP-N-0001

TT have also utilised concept design report produced by Page\Park architects, dated 18 August 2024, which provides a conceptual design for the refurbishment and service spine extension to the theatre. The service spine is a circa 500m² extension across three stories which allows the stage door at 1st floor level to be serviced, as the current access route via the multi storey car park ramp has been demolished as part of the wider town centre redevelopment works.

The Page\Park design maintains the current entrance tower and also includes a potential layout for the ground floor which shows a new foyer and seating area, kitchen, rehearsal space and toilets. This area currently acts a storage area for the former market and does not form part of the PoW Theatre floorplate.

Further to receipt of the Refurbishment & Demolition Survey, it is noted that the extent of asbestos within the building is limited, however given experience with the adjacent buildings and structures in Cannock, we have included an allowance for any unexpected asbestos uncovered during the works.

The Intega TDD Condition Survey notes the following items need to be considered as part of any refurbishment of the building.

1. The building structure (foundations / concrete / steelwork) is in sound condition however any alteration of this to suit new layout / extension / use should be investigated further.
2. The fabric of the entrance tower is in poor condition (GRP cladding) and requires replacement. This is compounded by the use of flammable insulation (expanded polystyrene) which should be replaced.
3. The now exposed gable wall (adjacent the former Forum) requires treatment in the longer term to provide weatherproofing / thermal and acoustic performance. Existing brickwork in satisfactory condition subject to minor remedials however thermal performance to be reviewed.
4. The roof finish and structure are in poor condition and structure could be deemed fragile under HSE Guidance (reinforced woodwool slabs) and requires replacement. Edge protection measures to the roof also need to be upgraded / provided.
5. Windows / glazing are in poor condition throughout and should be replaced. Leak / staining visible to surrounding finishes and areas.
6. GF roller shutter doors are operable however some in poor condition / require upgrade.
7. Doors / floor / wall / ceiling finishes are generally dated / worn, and consideration should be given to replacement throughout. Main staircase appears in good condition.
8. WC's are generally dated / worn (but functional) and consideration should be given to replacement throughout.
9. Fire stopping considered inadequate in several areas.



Initial Budget Costs – Executive Summary (5.6.26)

The CWC M&E Condition Report notes the following the following items need to be considered as part of any refurbishment of the building.

1. Mechanical installations are in poor condition or past their economic life expectancy and therefore require replacement. The ac unit to the first-floor bar and water heater are in good condition (both approx. 5 years old) but would suggest replacement of these as part of a wider refurbishment of the building.
2. Electrical systems are in poor condition or past their economic life expectancy and therefore require replacement, with some elements considered not in line with best practice or potentially non-compliant with Part L (Building Regs) or others (BS / IET Wiring Regs).
3. IT and Data Installations and Emergency lighting are in fair / good condition and subject to maintenance should continue to operate for several years. Lighting to WC's and a few DB boards have been replaced and are in good condition (both approx. 5 years old). Notwithstanding this, we would suggest replacement of these as part of a wider refurbishment of the building.
4. The lift is considered to be in good condition however we understand that a survey of the lift is being undertaken direct by CCDC.

Further to the above surveys and reports, we have assessed the refurbishment and extension budget costs on the basis that all existing internal finishes, fixtures and fittings are removed in full, inclusive of all M&E installations.

In terms of the building fabric, given the concerns identified regarding the condition of existing roof and its classification as a fragile roof, we have allowed for this to be removed and replaced in full. Costs allow for the replacement of cladding/glazing to the existing entrance tower due to the condition of the cladding (GRP) and presence of flammable insulation. Refurbishing the entrance tower could be considered cost prohibitive as it could be demolished with a new means of access incorporated into the service spine extension, however the design of this would need to be developed at the next stage.

The refurbishment works would necessitate a new means of escape to be provided as the former escape routes used the adjacent multi storey car park which has now been demolished. We have provisionally allowed for 2nr semi enclosed fire escape staircases to the east elevation, the design of which is to be further developed at the next stage.

Internally, we have allowed for new finishes throughout and included provisional allowances for new fixtures and fittings such as tiered theatre seating, fit out of the kitchen, as well as dressing rooms etc. Whilst the PagePark concept design provides us with an informed steer, it should be noted that this has not been developed to a sufficient level of detail to allow costs to be market tested via a tender process.

We have allowed for new M&E installations throughout to achieve compliance with Building Regulations Part L and industry guidance. An allowance for specialist M&E installations (AV/Stage Lighting/Stage Engineering) is based on budget costs provided by Charcoal Blue in June 2023 which have been uplifted to present day.

We have allowed for the demolition of the former multi storey car park ramp which also houses the existing substation as part of an enabling works package. We have also included a provisional allowance for the treatment of (new housing / switchroom) or movement of the existing substation (location TBC) which is to be confirmed following further investigation.

Costs are informed using in house cost data and BCIS analyses as a benchmark. Costs include an allowance for on costs in line with expected levels and include preliminaries, contingencies, OH&P and fees for the delivery of the works.

**PoW Theatre - Refurbishment
Works**

for

Cannock Chase District Council

Initial Budget Costs

Tetra Tech

Horton House - 6th Floor

Exchange Flags

Liverpool

L2 3PF

B033419

05 June 2026

PoW Theatre - Refurbishment Works Cannock Chase District Council



Basis of Estimated Costs

Page\Park Architects

- 1 Prince of Wales Theatre Concept Design Report 14.8.2024 (inc Sketch Plans)
- 2 C&D (RDM) Prince of Wales Theatre Refurbishment & Demolition Survey; ref 260417
- 3 Intega - Technical Due Diligence Condition Survey Report (April 2026) - 01265 & Photographic Schedule (April 2026)
- 4 CWC - M&E Condition Report - 15.04.26 Ref 3731-CWC-XX-RP-N-0001

Schedule of Accommodation

- 1 **Existing Theatre**
GF - 700m2
1st - 705m2
2nd - 286m2
- 2 **Service Spine (Extension to accomodate stage access)**
GF - 167m2
1st - 167m2
2nd - 167m2
- 3 **Total**
GF - 2192m2

Qualifications & Exclusions

- 1 Costs are based on 2Q2026 and exclude inflation

The following items are excluded from this Cost Plan:-

- 2 VAT payments
- 3 Land acquisition costs / CPO costs
- 4 Client Legal fees / Client Insurances / Client charges or fees outside of TT Appointment i.e. CIL Payments
- 5 Client finance / direct funding costs

CCDC LUF WORKS
PoW THEATRE - REFURBISHMENT WORKS



Date:
05/06/2026

ENABLING WORKS (RAMP DEMOLITION)

Ref	Description	Costs
1	ENABLING WORKS (RAMP DEMOLITION)	157,590
2	NET CONSTRUCTION COST	157,590
3	Enabling Works Contingency (20%)	31,518
4	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKS (EXCL FEES)	189,108
5	Provisional Allowance for Fees (20%)	37,822
6	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKS (INCL FEES)	226,930

Comments		
Net Construction Cost	-	cost/m2
Total Construction Cost (Excl Fees)	-	cost/m2
Total Construction Cost (Incl Fees)	-	cost/m2

PoW THEATRE REFURBISHMENT WORKS

Ref	Description	Costs
1	PoW THEATRE	6,347,373
2	NET CONSTRUCTION COST	6,347,373
3	Main Contractor Preliminaries (15%)	952,106
4	Project Design Contingency (7.5%)	547,461
5	Project Risk Allowance (2.5%)	196,173
6	Main Contractor D&B Risk (1%)	80,431
7	Main Contractor OH&P (5%)	406,177
8	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKS (EXCL FEES)	8,529,722
9	Provisional Allowance for Design & Planning Fees (10%)	852,972
10	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKS (INCL FEES)	9,382,694

Comments		
Net Construction Cost	£2,896	cost/m2
Total Construction Cost (Excl Fees)	£3,891	cost/m2
Total Construction Cost (Incl Fees)	£4,280	cost/m2

OVERALL COST

1	TOTAL CONSTRUCTION WORKS (INCL FEES)	9,609,623
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CCDC LUF WORKS
PoW THEATRE - REFURBISHMENT WORKS

Date:
05/06/2026



Ref	Description	Quantity	Unit	Rate (£)	Estimated Costs	Comments
1A	PoW THEATRE (SERVICE SPINE TO ACCOMMODATE STAGE ACCESS)					GIFA = 501m2
1A1	Substructure	501.00	m2	150	75,150.00	
1A2	Superstructure	501.00	m2	750	375,750.00	<i>Incl connection into existing building</i>
1A3	Finishes	501.00	m2	160	80,160.00	
1A4	Fittings (Changing Rooms / Staff Offices)	501.00	m2	100	50,100.00	
1A5	M&E	501.00	m2	775	388,275.00	
1A6	Lift		Item		125,000.00	<i>Goods lift to scene dock (dual entrance)</i>
1A7	Drainage	501.00	m2	15	7,515.00	
2	PoW THEATRE EXISTING BUILDING					GIFA = 1691m2
2B	Demolitions & Alterations					
2B1	Remove cladding to existing entrance tower / Glazing to link bridges	406.00	m2	100	40,600.00	
2B2	Remove lift to existing entrance tower		Item		10,000.00	
2B3	(GF/1st/2nd)		Item		25,000.00	<i>Stairs protected / maintained</i>
2B4	maintained)	606.00	m2	150	90,900.00	<i>Incl crash deck etc</i>
2B5	Remove existing roller shutter doors	19.00	nr	250	4,750.00	
2B6	Remove existing windows	33.00	m2	50	1,650.00	
2B7	Allowance for opening up existing windows to 1st floor (Church St)	17.00	m2	250	4,250.00	
2B8	Remove existing fixtures & fittings (Bars / Dressing Rooms / WC's etc)		Item		25,000.00	
2B9	Remove existing floor and ceiling finishes	991.00	m2	20	19,820.00	
2B10	Remove existing theatre seating		Item		5,000.00	
2B11	Remove existing M&E installations	1,691.00	m2	25	42,275.00	<i>Assumed existing theatre equipment to be retained removed direct by PoW Theatre</i>
2B12	Remove existing M&E plant to roof		item		25,000.00	<i>incl craneage</i>
2B13	Allowance for asbestos removal		item		50,000.00	
2C	Roof					
1C1	Lightweight Roof (single ply / insulation / VCL / metal deck)	606.00	m2	300	181,800.00	<i>No structural mods</i>
2D	External Walls					
2D1	Curtain Walling to Entrance Tower / Link Bridges	195.00	m2	700	136,500.00	<i>GF & Link Bridges</i>
2D2	Insulated Cladding to Entrance Tower	225.00	m2	400	90,000.00	<i>Tower</i>
2D3	Allowance for remedial works to existing brickwork / elevations		Item		25,000.00	
2D4	Insulated Cladding Panel to exposed gable following demolition of Forum	273.00	m2	400	109,200.00	
2D5	Insulated Cladding Panel to Fly Tower structure	180.00	m2	400	72,000.00	
2D6	Allowance for external metal fire escapes (semi enclosed) to East Elevation; including forming openings / fire doors etc	2	Nr	75,000	150,000.00	<i>Fire Escape Strategy to be developed as PIP Concept Design does not consider this.</i>
2E	Windows & External Doors					
2E1	PPC Aluminium window to Arches (GF)	96.00	m2	600	57,600.00	
2E2	PPC Aluminium windows to replace to existing	33.00	m2	500	16,500.00	
2E3	Entrance Pod, incl automated doors		item		50,000.00	
2F	Internal Walls & Partitioning					
2F1	Internal Walls to GF	700.00	m2	150	105,000.00	
2G	Internal Doors					
2G1	Doors to GF	700.00	m2	50	35,000.00	
2G2	New Doors to 1st / 2nd	991.00	m2	50	49,550.00	
2H	Wall Finishes					
2H1	Wall finishes to GF	700.00	m2	40	28,000.00	
2H2	New Wall finishes to 1st / 2nd	991.00	m2	40	39,640.00	
2J	Floor Finishes					
2J1	Allowance for levelling existing GF slab	700.00	m2	25	17,500.00	
2J2	Floor finishes to GF	700.00	m2	80	56,000.00	
2J3	New Floor finishes to 1st / 2nd	991.00	m2	40	39,640.00	
2K	Ceiling Finishes					
2K1	Ceiling finishes to GF	700.00	m2	40	28,000.00	
2K2	New Ceiling finishes to 1st / 2nd	991.00	m2	40	39,640.00	
2L	Fixtures & Fittings (incl adaptations to existing areas)					
2L1	Allowance for Reception / Servery Counter (GF)		Item		25,000.00	
2L2	Allowance for Kitchen (GF)		Item		50,000.00	<i>Re-Heat Style</i>
2L3	Allowance for Multi Purpose Room (GF)		Item		10,000.00	
2L4	Allowance for vanity units to 2 x WC's (GF)		Item		10,000.00	
2L5	Allowance for Changing Places facility (GF)		Item		20,000.00	
2L6	Allowance for Booth Seating to Foyer (GF)		Item		25,000.00	
2L7	Allowance for lockers / storage etc (GF)		Item		5,000.00	
2L8	Allowance for fixed tiered seating, incl structure (Theatre)		Item		250,000.00	
2L9	Allowance for re-dec / improvements to theatre box / control area (Theatre)		Item		50,000.00	
2L10	Allowance for new stage (Theatre)		Item		25,000.00	
2L11	Allowance for raising existing floor to suit new stage level (Theatre)		Item		10,000.00	
2L12	Allowance for Green Room (Theatre 2nd)		Item		5,000.00	<i>Incl layout mods</i>
2L13	Allowance for 2 x Changing Rooms (Theatre 1st)		Item		10,000.00	<i>Incl layout mods</i>
2L14	Allowance for 2 x WC's (Theatre 1st/2nd)		Item		10,000.00	<i>Incl layout mods</i>
2L15	Allowance for Bar / Lobby Area (Theatre 1st/2nd)		Item		10,000.00	<i>Incl layout mods</i>
2L16	Allowance for loose furniture		Item		10,000.00	<i>Tables & Chairs / Stools</i>
2L17	Allowance for external signage		Item		25,000.00	
2M	M&E					
2M1	M&E Installations	1,691.00	m2	775	1,310,525.00	<i>Incl BWIC Excl Sprinklers</i>
2M2	M&E Installations (Extra over allowance for BREEAM Accreditation)	2,192.00	m2	-	Excl	
2M3	Lift Installation		Item		75,000.00	<i>New passenger lift to entrance tower</i>
2M4	Specialist M&E Installations (AV / Stage Lighting / Stage Engineering)		Item		1,153,583.00	<i>Bronze Option - CB Report June 2023 plus inflation (Excl refit of existing equipment)</i>
2N	Site Works					
2N1	Allowance for forming new access point / vehicular service route to building		Item		75,000.00	
2N2	Allowance for landscaping to building frontage		Item		100,000.00	
2O	Drainage					
2O1	Drainage adaptations to suit new GF layout	700.00	m2	15	10,500	
2P	Incoming Services					
2P1	Allowance for treatment / move of existing substation and diversion of existing utilities		Item		300,000.00	
Estimated Costs					6,347,373	

Cannock Chase Council,
Civic Centre,
Beecroft Road,
Cannock,
Staffordshire WS11 1BG

30 July 2026

Dear Cllr P Jones, Cllr T Jones, Cllr Lyons and Cllr Muckley,

cc Tim Clegg and Anna Nevin

Re: Prince of Wales Theatre, Cannock

Theatres Trust welcomes the Council's engagement with us on the future of the Prince of Wales Theatre and the constructive dialogue to date. The theatre is at a critical point, and the decision now facing the Council is significant both for the future of the town and for the community it serves.

Theatres Trust is the national public body for theatres, with a statutory remit to protect theatres for the benefit to nation and to advise decision makers on the value, viability, and long-term sustainability of theatres for which they are. In that advisory capacity, we have responded to the Council's questions in Appendix 1 and provided further context and relevant case studies in Appendix 2.

As we recommended in our letter to the Cabinet of the previous administration dated 3 December 2025, a decision of this significance should not be taken without objective expert evidence about:

- the theatre's previous and potential economic, social and cultural value
- the consequences of losing the town's only 436-seat mid-scale live performance venue
- the comparative impacts of the credible options for retention, redevelopment or demolition.

To date, the necessary assessments have not been commissioned. The Council, and subsequently Theatres Trust, therefore lacks the evidence needed to reach an informed view on the consequences of retaining, redeveloping, or demolishing the theatre.

Any final decision must consider more than the immediate capital costs. It should be informed by credible analysis of the longer-term effects on cultural participation,

town-centre vitality and footfall, community identity, the visitor economy and opportunities for future regeneration. Without this work, the options cannot be compared transparently or responsibly.

Theatres Trust therefore recommends that the Council defer any final or irreversible decision on the future of the Prince of Wales Theatre until the necessary independent economic and social impact evidence has been commissioned, completed, and considered by your elected members. On the evidence currently available, we cannot support a final determination on either retention or demolition. In particular, we would not support a decision to demolish the theatre, an irreversible step, before the economic and social consequences have been properly assessed.

Deferring the decision until the proper evidence has been procured would demonstrate responsible stewardship of a public asset, good governance and a commitment to evidence-based decision-making in the interests of the Council and its residents.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Theatres Trust if we can provide further information, or direct the Council to potential providers for the evidence required.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua McTaggart
CEO, Theatres Trust

Theatres Trust

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The Theatres Trust is the national advisory public body for theatres. The Theatres Trust Charitable Fund supports the work of The Theatres Trust, has the same Trustees and is registered as a charity under number 274697

Appendix 1: Theatres Trust Response to Council Questions

The Council would like the Theatres Trust to provide information on the following:

1. Confirm that a procurement exercise to secure an operator for the theatre is likely to take around 12 months.

Finding an operator could range from two months to 18 months depending on the complexity of the project and negotiations and the council's capacity to deliver a robust procurement process. The full scope of works to get the theatre ready to reopen, and the Council's position on these works, would need to be taken into account when planning the tender process (examples are provided in Appendix 2).

2. Comment on the likelihood of success of attracting an operator given the circumstances e.g. the PoW has been closed since April 2025 and requires substantial investment to enable it to open.

The theatre's on-going closure and requirement for investment will not diminish the likelihood of finding an operator (see supporting evidence in Appendix 2).

3. Confirm that an operator is likely to require an annual subsidy and what that is likely to be.

Any potential future operator is likely to require subsidy to reignite the operation and rebuild its audiences. Given the size of the venue, it is likely that this would require £500,000 per annum but without the financial information relating to the theatre's previous operating history it is not possible to give an accurate figure and would be something the Council would need to commission from a consultancy that can undertake an Economic Impact Assessment and financial modelling for a 10-year period to establish if the investment could be gradually decreased over a 5-10 year period (see examples in Appendix 2)

4. Suggest how we might improve the chances of successful procurement.

The most important element of a successful procurement is for the Council to have a clear Vision and ambition that champions the provision of a live mid-scale performance venue for its residents. It provides a mark of confidence to a potential bidder that they can work with the local authority as a partner who is keen to buy in to cultural provision and has a strategy to support this. Other practical aspects are noted within Appendix 2.

5. Indicate your view on the risks of undertaking a substantial refurbishment without having secured an operator first.

Some risks are already detailed within the Park\Page reports that supported the Levelling Up Funding bid. This level of work would need to be commissioned by a specialist consultancy. The Trust can also introduce the Council to Thanet District Council leads who are working on the reopening of Theatre Royal Margate who will have undertaken a risk review of this nature.

6. The estimated refurbishment costs that we have shared with you are for a basic level of finish (and we are concerned they will rise as we develop them to Riba 3). Will theatre goers (and potential operators) be satisfied with this level of quality?

The Trust remains unclear around the Council's vision and ambition for the project, what it wants to achieve and where the evidence is to support it (Economic and Social Impact Assessments (EIA), Market Demand, Audience Consultation). The design and cost plan can be developed once the design brief is understood and clear project priorities and redlines around what is a necessity for the project to succeed has been established. The Trust would then be able to provide an impartial view on whether the brief is realistic and a consultation with the residents of Cannock will establish the satisfaction levels.

7. Suggest practical ways in which we could increase the income of the PoW e.g. increasing the number of seats by taking space from the changing rooms was proposed but we need to consider the payback period of this option (cost vs. extra income) and how would we re-configure the changing space?

Again, it is important to understand the project priorities. The Charcoalblue study suggests adding side balconies both for ambience and to increase the number of seats. However, the same report suggests increasing the stage depth (loss of seats, albeit for particular performances such as the dance school) and improvements to the control room and follow spots (at a loss of seats). Your EIA and market demand reports will indicate the project priority and allow your design to focus on this.

8. Suggest ways of increasing the community's use of the PoW.

Undertaking a community engagement consultation to understand their needs and demands on the space will highlight opportunities to increase the venue's use, some of which may already be within your Local Plan consultation work. As noted in Q12, venues such as Maesteg Town Hall and Storyhouse in Chester were able to identify innovative ways to combine local authority service provision and successfully develop a different operating model. The reports that have provided, including the original LUF bid have identified avenues such as a cafe, restaurant, bar or the partnership with the college that addresses their needs for a small studio space or incubator workspace.

9. Suggest opportunities to bid for further funding.

Theatres Trust's Advice Note on [Fundraising for Capital Projects](#) has a series of links that the Council should explore as well as researching the [Creative Foundations](#) funding avenues from Arts Council England. Other avenues include ongoing stakeholder engagement with government to make the case for the project and ascertain if funds can be found to support it, which the Trust has seen being done successfully with other recent capital projects.

10. Provide examples of the economic benefits to the town that would follow from refurbishing and retaining the PoW.

It has been repeatedly demonstrated by many venues across the UK that theatres deliver a mix of direct local spending from residents, visitor spend in town, and wider regeneration benefits. This is achieved through the initial one-off local work for contractors for the construction phase, staff wages, supplier spending, audience spend on food, drink transport, childcare and other local purchases. The standard economic impact calculation demonstrates that for every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, it will generate at least a further £1.40 spend within the local economy. Based on the theatre's financial information from 2024/25 this would equate to c£750,000. The theatre will also provide higher footfall and stronger street trade, increase evening and weekend activity and help hospitality and retail to grow. It is also well reported that theatres provide safer evenings, stronger social cohesion and lower crime risk. Further supporting information and links can be found in Appendix 2.

11. Your website suggests that the optimal size for a theatre when considering refurbishment is over 800 seats. What is different about the PoW (circa 450 seats) that suggests that it can be viable?

The reference to "over 800 seats" reflects a general observation that larger theatres can sometimes benefit from greater income-generating capacity and economies of scale when undertaking refurbishment. However, the Prince of Wales is different because the business case is not based on capacity alone. At circa 400 seats, it is still within the typical operating range for a regional theatre, and its viability is strengthened by the fact that there is already an established theatre asset in place, the building has an existing audience base and civic identity, and there is a wider site opportunity to reconfigure the theatre, flower market and surrounding land into a more coherent and commercially resilient town-centre destination. In other words, the question is not whether the Prince of Wales is large enough in the abstract, but whether retaining and upgrading an existing c400-seat venue delivers better value, lower demolition risk, and a stronger long-term operating model than starting again with a new-build solution or losing it completely.

12. Are there alternative operating models which have enabled theatres to successfully reopen elsewhere?

A good example of alternative operating models can be demonstrated with both [Maesteg Town Hall](#) and [Storyhouse, Chester](#) where they have combined culture and library Council services, creating a multi-purpose venue serving its communities.

13. Please can you outline your views on the proposal for a new, smaller theatre.

The South Staffordshire College new studio concept is based on Lowther Pavilion's new [Windmill Building](#), which has 162 capacity that complements the main auditorium of 450 seated and 900 standing. A robust Economic Impact Assessment and Market Demand analysis would provide the Council with evidence that demonstrates the size of venue its community needs. Without this information the Trust is unable to comment conclusively on whether a 162-capacity venue is suitable but given the Prince of Wales was regularly performing to 80% capacity audiences and welcoming c80,000 people per annum it is unlikely that this level of provision would be sufficient and would also be further reduced as a facility for the residents of Cannock due to the demands and needs of the college activity.

14. Any other information that you think can help members in making this decision.

Councillors must take into account in their decision making the importance of placemaking. What Theatres Trust means when we talk about placemaking, it is the process of shaping a place, so it feels useful, welcoming, distinctive, and meaningful to the people who live, work, and spend time there. It is about how people use a theatre, connect through it, and develop a sense of belonging to it.

Theatres are such an important element to the fabric of placemaking because they do more than present performances: they draw people into shared experiences, create regular reasons to gather, and help define a town or neighbourhood's identity, making them both social and cultural infrastructure. Through all of this, they create the conditions for a stronger, more connected place, providing social connection, local identity, cultural activity, and public life.

Councillors should also understand that a refurbished theatre is usually the lower-carbon and lower cost option because it retains the existing substructure and superstructure, avoiding the embodied carbon already "locked into" the building and the high emissions associated with demolition, new structure, and materials. In cost terms, redevelopment is also likely to be materially cheaper than new build: a refurbishment rate is around £2,060/m² before taking in to account several key items, but benchmarking points to a more realistic refurbishment range of roughly £4,000–£7,500/m² once stage engineering, specialist lighting/audio-visual, fees, inflation, and contingency are properly allowed for, whereas new-build theatres are commonly benchmarked at about £8,000/m², before adding demolition, soft strip, asbestos removal, and site-enabling works; for a theatre of this type, demolition alone could easily add over £1 million, with asbestos and unknown-condition risk pushing the figure higher.

Appendix 2: Further Supporting Information numbered by relevant question

1. Examples: Landmark Theatres took over The Key Theatre in Peterborough and reopened it within a month. This was off the back of soft market testing – there was no formal tender process. The theatre had been closed for a year, was very well moth-balled, had all the equipment ready to use and an existing customer database.

The Harlequin Theatre in Redhill has been closed since September 2023 due to RAAC. Their tender process has been conducted across 18 months, and they announced recently they've selected an operator.

The Theatre Royal in Margate specified a quick turnaround on their recent tender process, opening in June this year with an operator to be selected by September, and plan to progress the design works in parallel with the operator selection process with planning permission for the proposals just having been granted.

2. By the time the Harlequin re-opens (2028) it will have been 5 years since closure. By the time Theatre Royal Margate re-opens (2027) it will have been 5 years since closure.

Note: Operators value clarity and would want to work with the Council on costings with the understanding that major works to get the building re-opened would be covered by the Council. With a clear picture of what assets currently exist (lighting, equipment, bar etc.) the operator can understand everything they're taking on and what the council would be willing to pay for.

3. Parkwood Theatres have a venue of c.400 seats - receives £200k p/a from the LA
Newbury Corn Exchange 400 seats - receives c£397k core funds from Arts Council England (ACE)
The Courtyard 400 seats - receives c£217k core funds from ACE
Corby Cube 445 seats - receives £298k from North Northamptonshire Council and c£173k core funds from ACE
4. The following is a list of some examples:
 - Provide a building that is fit for purpose
 - Provide a clear list of assets including lighting, theatre equipment etc.
 - Undertake structural, MEP and conditions surveys
 - Provide a sufficient investment level to reignite business momentum
 - Operate a split maintenance matrix to ensure the operator is not burdened with large life cycle costs and that the Council maintains an active role in the building's wellbeing
 - Offer a 30-year lease agreement

- Minimise costs that are within the Council's gift to offer, such as 100% business rate relief, peppercorn rent agreement
- Include ground floor space (flower market) to maximise other revenue stream opportunities – a secondary performance/live music space, food and beverage offering

9. Case Studies:

Y Muni secured £5.3m from Levelling Up Funding, £250,000 from Welsh Government's Transforming Towns Placemaking Grant, £250,000 match funding from Rhondda Canon Taf Council, Arts Council of Wales funding and the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund to complete the project.

Corby Cube secured £6.5m from East Midlands Development Agency, £1m from Northamptonshire Enterprise Limited, and the balance came from Corby Borough Council and the European Regional Development Fund.

Corn Exchange Newbury's Old Library redevelopment has secured £1 million from Greenham Trust for the acquisition of the building, repairs, and conservation. It has also had support from Backstage Trust, Foyle Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, and Syder Foundation. More than half of the overall costs were raised through trusts, foundations, and public donations, with the remaining amount covered by a mix of funding applications, pledged funds, cost savings, and public fundraising.

10. Case Studies:

Whilst the following may not directly relate to the situation in Cannock the principles demonstrate a theatre's impact upon its local economy and social health.

Newbury Corn Exchange's [Impact Report](#)

[ACE Storyhouse Case Study Article](#)

Key stats from its first year of opening reported that 100 jobs were directly supported, including around 40 full-time, 30 part-time and 30 casual/seasonal staff members. A 15% increase in footfall brought new spend to surrounding city centre businesses. 1 million visitors visited the venue representing an additional strength to Chester's significant tourism offer. 160 volunteers were engaged with running the operation, with benefits from volunteering including developing skills and confidence levels, as well as deriving personal satisfaction and making new friends. 150 community groups were supported contributing to community cohesion and an estimated 54% of users report that they are not there to see a play or to use library books or the café/bar facilities, but are just spending time in the building, in line with the aspiration for a primarily community-focused facility

HOME, Manchester

HOME has contributed nearly £26m to Greater Manchester's economy in 2019/20. A newly published assessment also estimated that Home's services saved the NHS £1m in health and well-being costs.

A financial assessment of Home's impact by research and consultancy firm Ekosgen found it created £11.2m of gross value added for the local economy in visitor spending and £12.3m as an employer. An additional £1.5m was added to the economy through the purchasing of goods and services.

The social value of HOME's operations was also analysed using research by Simetrica and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, which recognised arts engagement as reducing the need for GP visits and mental-health services. The report calculates that HOME's operation saved the NHS £1m per year, while the organisation also reached nearly 22,000 participants through its outreach and engagement work.

Bradford Live

Early economic impact forecasts estimated that the venue would deliver 270,000 visitors a year to the city and support not only those jobs involved with the project but up to 500 FTE indirectly across the region.

Soho Theatre Walthamstow

The building is now owned by Waltham Forest Council and operated by Soho Theatre; however, it had been in other ownership and was in a bad state of disrepair having been largely unoccupied for 20 years.

Its revival is thanks to the hard work of Soho Theatre, Waltham Forest Cinema Club and the Council. Theatres Trust was also involved, supporting the council in the early stage when they were considering purchasing and restoring the building, including in persuading the council to invest in an Economic Impact Assessment.

The original Economic Impact Statement estimated that a reopened and renovated site could add between £34m and £52 million to the local economy over a ten-year period. An update a few years later indicated an uplift on the original estimate of £46m to £62m to the local economy over a ten-year period; 222 long term jobs created and £17m of indirect benefits such as increased land and property values.

Social Impact:

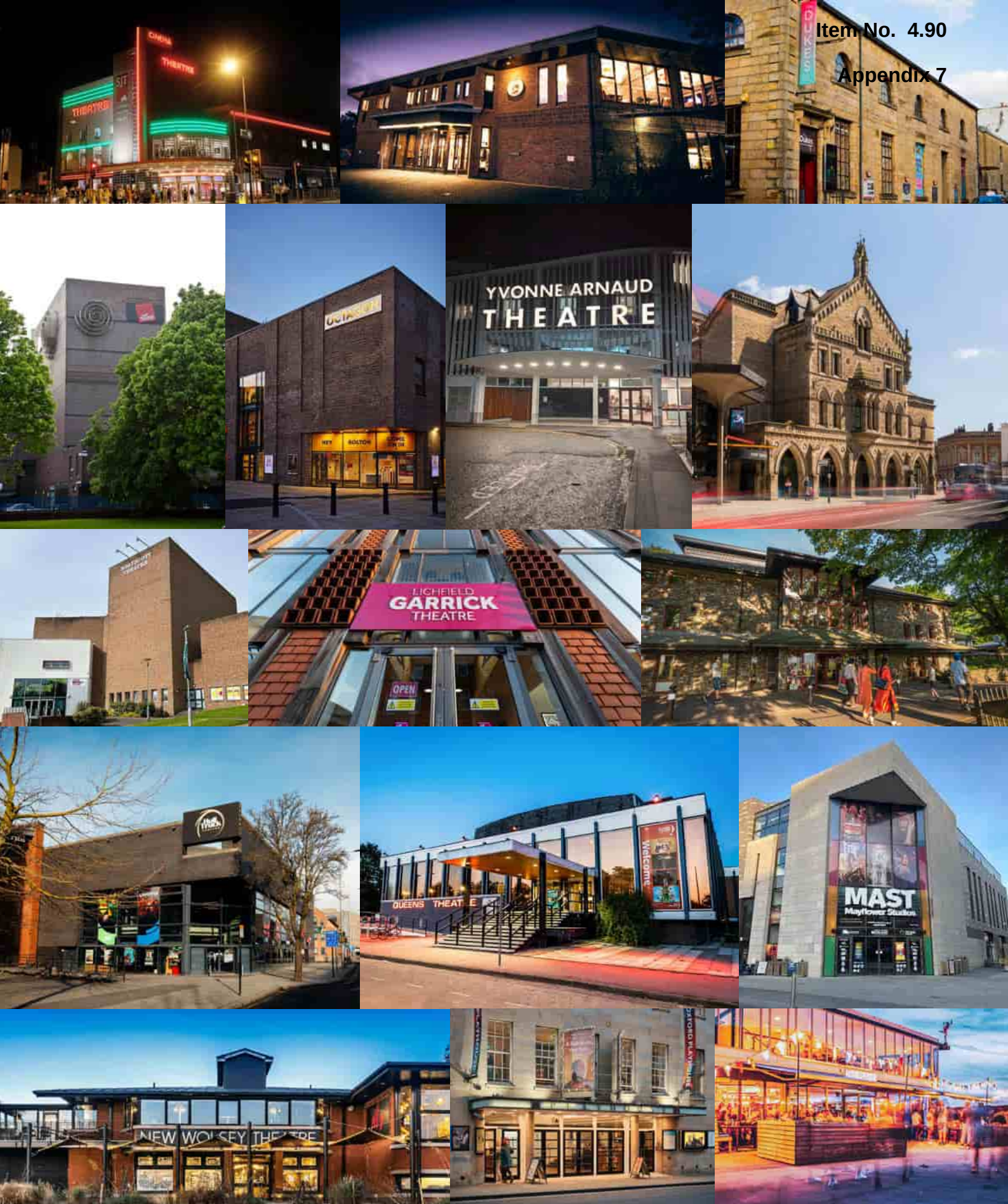
A recent publication comprehensively proves the impact of arts engagement and highlights a government commission from economists in the UK, using the studies within the book, where it is estimated that the societal financial impact of improvements in well-being amongst working adults as a result of engaging with the arts is valued at £15bn of cost savings a year to society. Amongst older adults specifically, the estimated annual cost savings from the reductions in depression rates estimated from people going to live music events, galleries, exhibitions, theatre and the cinema were also valued at £255m just for the NHS, with broader societal benefits to productivity of £3bn.

14. Case Study - [Chester Storyhouse](#)

Storyhouse was built as a replacement for the Gateway Theatre in Chester. The project was a part new build, and part transformation of Chester's landmark 1930's Odeon cinema, and has brought together theatre, cinema, and a library under one roof.

Key stats from its first year of opening indicated that the building was a source of community cohesion – an estimated 54% of users reporting that they are not there to see a play or to use library books or the café/bar facilities, but are just spending time in the building, in line with the aspiration for a primarily community-focused facility.

Storyhouse is an exemplar of vision and mission, creating a sense of local identity and local pride to Chester.



Midscale Theatre Venues

Impact Study 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Appendix 7

This report summarises the value of mid-scale theatres in England – a cohort who play a distinctive role in the country’s cultural landscape. It highlights the many ways in which mid-scale theatres support and enhance their local communities and economies. It also illustrates their ambition for this work and the entrepreneurial ways they generate inward investment to deliver culture, social change and capital projects.

Despite this demonstrable impact and value for money, the mid-scale theatre sector is fragile. The last five years have been volatile for theatres, and for charities and small businesses at large. Brexit, the Covid-19 Pandemic, and high inflation and interest rates have each caused disruption and economic pressure. Theatres have had to respond to a series of external events that has seen business costs escalate and consumer spending fall. Local government funding for culture has decreased by 48% per person in real terms between 2009 – 2023, whilst Arts Council England core funding per person fell by 18% in real terms. The UK now has one of the lowest levels of public investment in culture in the European area.

There are however characteristics of mid-scale theatres that significantly exacerbate these economic challenges:

- Mid-scale theatres are defined by their auditorium size (300 – 700 seats), so self-evidently have less earning capacity than large-scale theatres (size upwards). Earning capacity includes ticket income from seat sales, donations and ancillary trading such as food and beverages.
- The Arts Council’s 2016 Theatre Analysis describes the polarisation of the theatre sector into “winners and losers”, with medium and smaller theatres having disproportionately less earned income in a sector that is ‘marketised’ (i.e. driven by supply, demand and price).
- Many mid-scale theatres operate in areas of relative deprivation, with a lower wage economy and less disposable income. This creates a ‘double whammy’ effect of having fewer seats than larger theatres and greater price sensitivity. There is also less access to major philanthropists and large corporations, reducing the potential for fundraised income.
- In recent years, Universities have been major supporters of several mid-scale theatres but the recently well-reported crisis in Higher Education finance has led to pressure on this income stream

In order to sustain their missions and impacts, regional mid-scale theatres are drawing on their cash reserves at an unsustainable rate, resulting in a decline in the sector’s financial capacity. If their financial capacity isn’t secured, mid-scale theatres may not be able to continue to deliver the multitude of cultural, economic and social impacts outlined in this report.

This report presents evidence from sixteen theatres across England to demonstrate these impacts. We recognise that there is a wider cohort of mid-scale theatres who contribute to the cultural ecology and assume that the report’s findings broadly represent their impacts. This wider cohort includes other producing theatres that make new productions, presenting theatres that present touring and other productions, and regional arts centres, who all contribute to ensuring local audiences have the highest quality arts experiences.

This cohort of theatres are typically the only Arts Council funded performing arts venue in a town or smaller city, and often the only theatre that regularly produces new work in a district or county. In that regard, they are critical in reflecting local culture and employing creative talent in the regions.

These theatres act as hubs for theatre production and talent development, whilst presenting a wide range of artforms (music, dance, film and more) to audiences, and extensively engaging with their communities, generating creative and social outcomes. They are place-makers, with their institutions contributing to civic pride and renewal, as well as stimulating economic growth. As creative engines, in terms of creative output and talent development, their work contributes to the UK theatre's global success.

Theatre is an important part of the UK's creativity industries, one of the fastest growing parts of the country's economy and a priority within the Government's Industrial Strategy. A 2023 study on behalf of SOLT and UK Theatre suggests that the total theatre sector generates £2.39bn in GVA, supports over 200,000 workers and has a total turnover of £4.44bn. For every £1 spent on a theatre ticket an additional £1.40 is spent in the local economy, adding up to £1.94bn per year of extra value added by theatre audiences.

Our thanks to Researcher Gregory Nash and Associate Consultants Caroline Meaby & Mark Mallabone.

THE RESEARCH

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The research was conducted across June and July 2024 with the following sixteen mid-scale theatre organisations, representing national coverage:

Octagon Theatre Bolton	New Vic Theatre Newcastle-under-Lyme
Derby Theatre	New Wolsey Ipswich
Dukes Theatre Lancaster	Oxford Playhouse
Exeter Northcott Theatre	Queens Theatre Hornchurch
Hull Truck	Stephen Joseph Theatre Scarborough
Lichfield Garrick	Theatre by the Lake Keswick
Mayflower Studios Southampton	York Theatre Royal
Mercury Theatre Colchester	Yvonne Arnaud Theatre Guildford



Methodology

Data was collected using a mixed methodology approach, including three quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, case study collection and desk research.

Some of the participating theatres don't currently capture all of the data used within this report. Given that, there are instances where it has not been possible to base cited data on the total sample of sixteen theatres. For clarity, this is highlighted within the report, where relevant, and averages are given as indications.

Project Team

The research was led by Gregory Nash, alongside associate consultants, Caroline Meaby and Mark Mallabone.

Definitions

When timeframes are cited within the report, they indicate the relevant financial year, unless otherwise stated.

To establish a consistent understanding of 'local', the participating theatres used their average audience drive-time, which was 38 minutes.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Appendix 7

Mid-scale theatres have established a reputation for providing invaluable culture and entertainment. This research has demonstrated that they perform a much more dynamic and multi-faceted function within their geographies.

The study demonstrates the significant amounts of direct and indirect revenue they generate for their local economies. It is important to consider that the indirect revenue generated may not be spent within local economies if these theatres weren't attracting people into towns and city centres through their productions and other cultural offerings. In addition, this research indicates that around one in every five pounds of that indirect revenue generation comes from outside their immediate localities, further evidencing how local economies are likely to benefit by having mid-scale cultural venues within them.

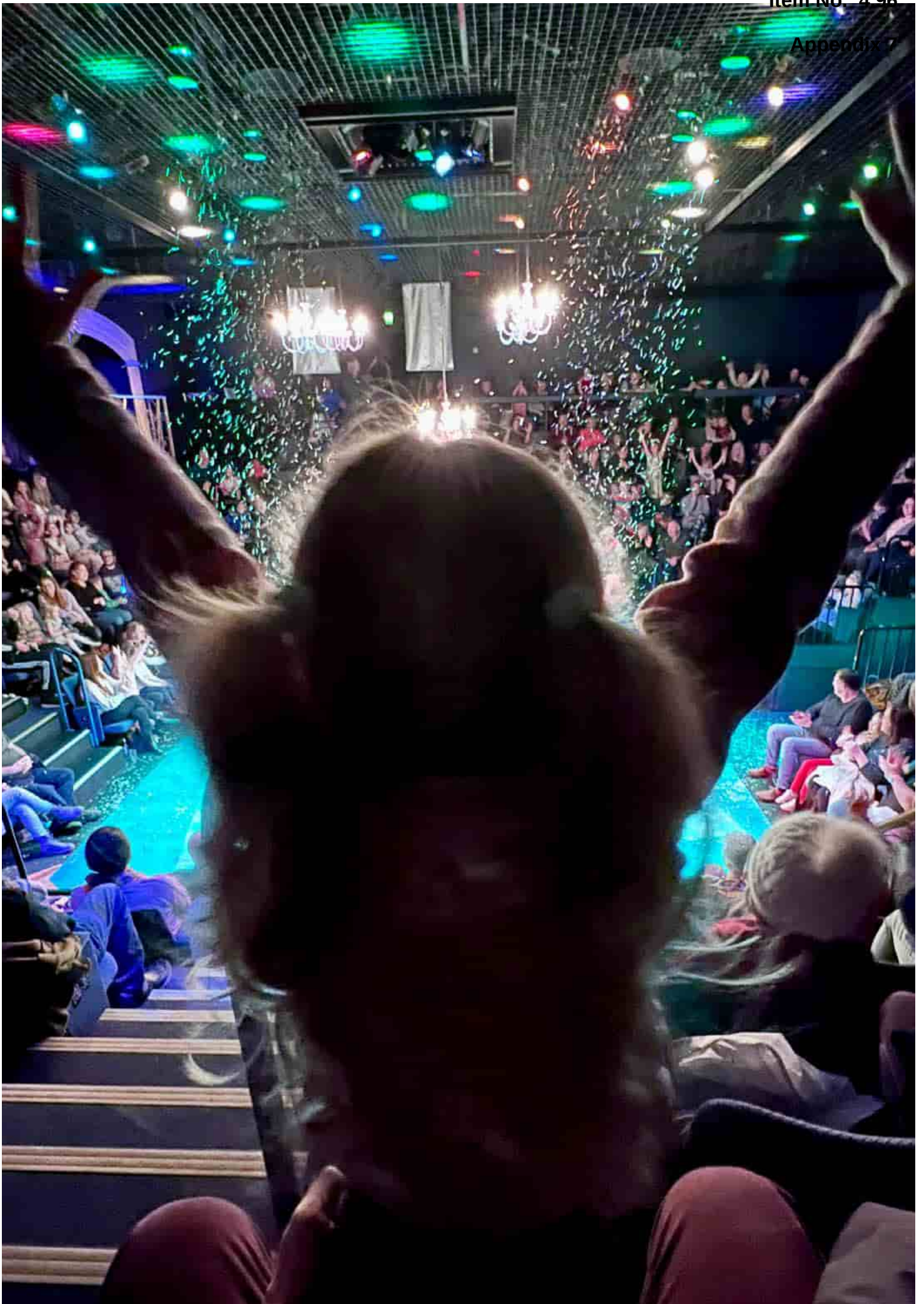
The mid-scale theatres in the study cohort are dynamic organisations that leverage notable inward investment into their localities for capital development and social regeneration projects, benefiting placemaking, community well-being and the local construction sector. Their staff proactively take on strategic leadership roles in relation to local business development, environmental sustainability and social change. Indeed, some of the participating theatres are actively involved in the development and evaluation of social prescription models, that could impact on the shape of future health provision.

There is an array of evidence that demonstrates their creative participation programmes positively impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents, most notably by increasing social confidence and social skills, reducing isolation and aiding language development. The work they do in this area is targeted at, and benefits, some of the most marginalised and disadvantaged people within their local communities, and is often done in conjunction with statutory and third sector partner organisations, by whom they are highly valued.

As well as being economic and social contributors, the theatres enhance the local and national creative economy, through talent pipeline and development opportunities aimed at creative freelancers and local SMEs. In that regard, this study found that they fulfil a number of the functions of a key 'creative hub' in their localities, and notes that policy agencies around the world are currently promoting creative hubs as the way to support the creative economy (Pratt, 2021)².

The following four sections outline the evidence and give further detail about the positive impacts these organisations have, both locally and nationally.

Additional case studies that strengthen this evidence and demonstrate the breadth of these impacts, are included within the report's appendix.





ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPACT

3. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL IMPACT

Appendix 7

The research further evidences that midscale theatres are a significant source of revenue generation for their local economies, through direct and indirect revenue generation, and cross-sector spending. They make a notable contribution to their regional labour market, and also generate significant capital spending investment for their localities.

◆ Direct revenue generation:

- In 2023/24, the combined turnover of fifteen of the theatres was £58,615,846 for all productions, an average of £3,907,723
- Thirteen theatres reported a further combined gross income of £494,390 for fees for participatory events (classes, workshops, talks etc.), an average of £38,030

◆ Indirect revenue generation

- UK Theatre report that for every £1 spent in a theatre, an additional £1.40 is spent elsewhere within a local economy, due to spend on hospitality and transportation as part of an evening out
- Using this figure as a guide, we estimate that those fifteen theatres helped to generate around £82,062,184 in additional indirect revenue generation for their local economies
- Given 22% of audiences came from outside the theatres' drive-times, we estimate that around £1 in every £5 of that revenue was generated from outside their immediate locality

◆ Contribution to the labour market

- Total workforce spend in the last financial year was £20,968,845, an average spend of £1,747,403 per theatre (12 theatres)
- This spend increased by 9% compared to the previous year
- The average number of people employed per locality was 238
- Just under 2/3 (62%) of core staff live within the town/city the theatre is located within, and 9 out of 10 (92%) live within its drive-time
- 85% of casual staff live within the theatres' drive-time

◆ Capital spending generation

Appendix 7

- Between 2020 and 2024, ten theatres spent a combined £9,305,552 on capital improvements, helping to improve the town/city centres and localities they reside within

◆ Contribution to the local economy

- Mid-scale theatres spend significant amounts of money across different sectors within their local economies (see illustration 1.1)
- That spend is increasing, although these cost increases are putting extra financial pressure on them

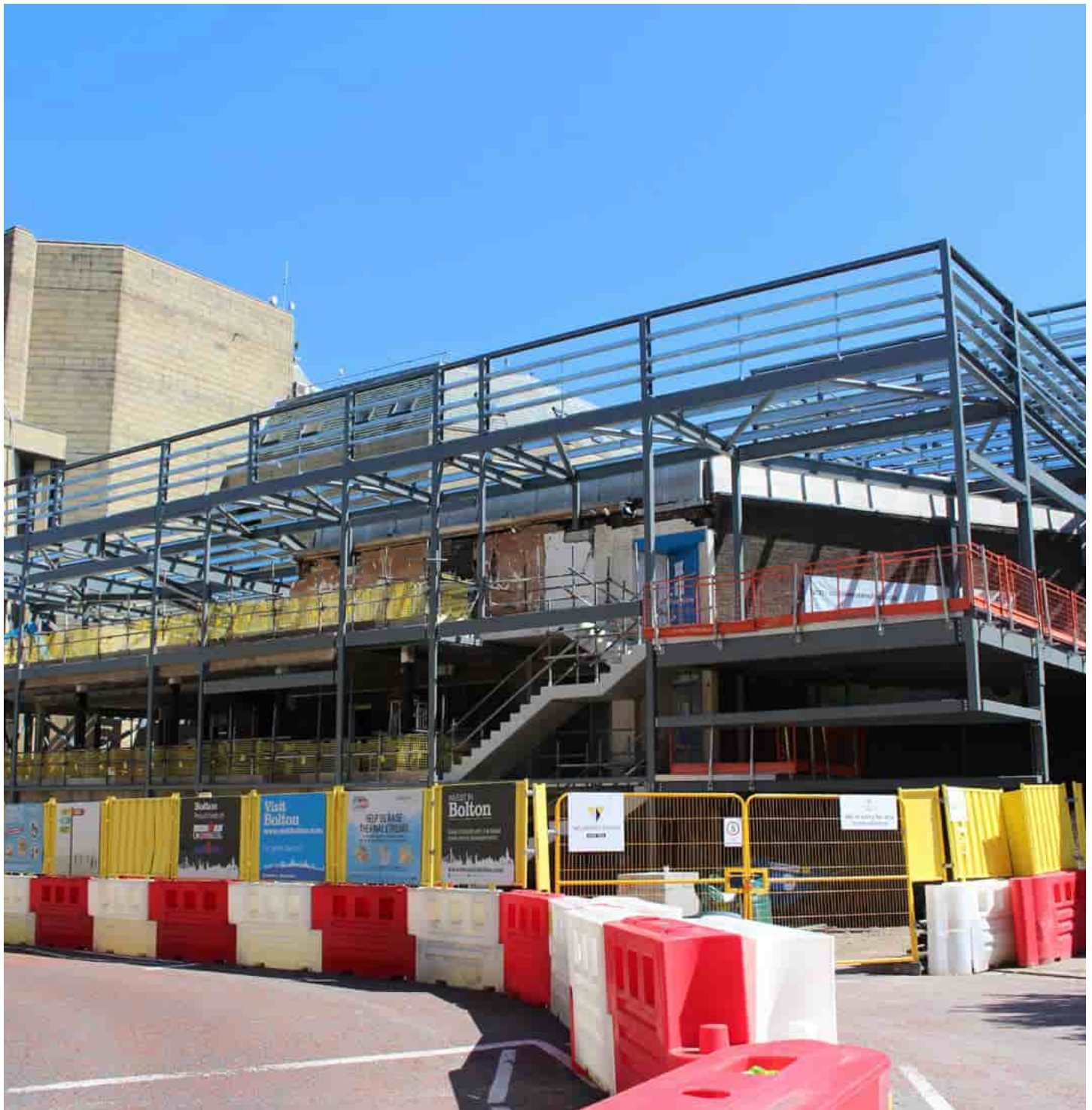


Illustration 1.1

	Production	Capital/ Construction	Goods/ Supplies	Services
£ Spent	7,260,083 (2023-2024)	9,305,552 (2020-2024)	4,910,489 (2023-2024)	2,718,496 (2023-2024)
Average £ per theatre	518,577	930,555	409,207	226,541
Increase on previous year	+7%	-	+14%	+18%
% spent within theatres drive-time	Data not available	56%	77%	43%
Number of theatres (base)	14	10	12	12



SOCIAL IMPACT

4. SOCIAL IMPACT

Appendix 7

Mid-scale theatres are invaluable spaces for culture and entertainment, but this research evidences how they are also vital civic and social hubs within their communities.

Their work positively impacts on the health and wellbeing of local residents, including some of the most marginalised and disadvantaged, through creative participation programmes that support social prescription models. These social benefits include:

- Increasing social confidence
- Reducing social isolation
- Increasing life and social skills
- Providing an emotional and psychological outlet for participants (and their carers)

Mid-scale theatres are also valued partners to schools, colleges, universities and third sector agencies, amplifying the social impact of their partners' work, supporting their sustainability and offering CPD opportunities to their partners' employees.

◆ Invaluable social hubs for culture and entertainment

- Total audience attendance across fifteen of the theatres in the last financial year was 1,447,143, an average of 96,476 per theatre
- From the data available, we estimate that the average audience drive time was 37.5 minutes
- Audience ratings demonstrate that the theatres deliver on a high-quality social experience (see illustration 1.2)

Illustration 1.2

Audience star rating for productions and/or theatre (rating out of 5)			
	Rating out of 5		% giving 4 or 5 stars (*)
Octagon Theatre Bolton	4.8	Mercury Theatre Colchester	85% give venue 5*s
Hull Truck	4.6	Stephen Joseph Theatre Scarborough	4 or 5*s In-house productions = 97% Visiting shows = 92%
Lichfield Garrick	4.7	York Theatre Royal	% giving 4 or 5 stars Productions = 88% Venue = 93%
Mayflower Studios Southampton	4.6		

- The average cost of a performance/event ticket in 2023–24 was £39.68, demonstrating value for money compared to other high-quality social experiences
- In combination, this data illustrates how theatres offer a unique and affordable social experience for many people within their catchment

- ◆ Creative participation programmes that positively impact the health and wellbeing of local communities
 - The sixteen venues ran a total of 748 creative participation programmes in their local communities over the last financial year, which equates to 9,614 creative participation sessions
 - Total attendance at participatory events in the last financial year was 154,611, an average of 11,893 per theatre (13 theatres)
 - The average fee paid for a participatory event was £3.19, indicating their accessibility in terms of financial means
 - The theatres are doing this work with some of the people most marginalized and disadvantaged groups within their local communities (see illustration 1.3)

Target groups for the 748 creative participation programmes	
Children/Young People (54%)	Refugees/asylum seekers (3%)
Lower socioeconomic (8%)	Dementia (2%)
Families/Intergenerational (6%)	Community Productions (2%)
Learning difficulties/disabilities (6%)	LGBTQ+ (1%)
Older people (4%)	Mental Health (1%)
Carers/young carers (3%)	Other (9%)

- The following case study demonstrates how this work improves mental well-being and reduces social isolation, and also evidences how these programmes offer a positive social return on investment



Case Study: Mercury Theatre (Colchester) and Essex University

Appendix 7

Mercury Theatre run Taking Part, a creative participation programme, that:

- includes 34,127 participants across 3,831 participation sessions a year
- is targeted at different ages and demographic groups within their local community – children, young people and adults – and at some of the most marginalised people in their local community – within their programme for children and young people, 1 in 4 participants have a neurodiversity, access need or disability, 12% are from the global majority and 6% are Looked After Children.

They evaluated the social impact of this work with Essex University. That research found that:

- 92% of participants reported improved mental health and wellbeing (Warwick/Edinburgh Mental Well-being scale)
- Low levels of wellbeing amongst participants more than halved
- 90% of participants felt less isolated and lonely as a result of taking part

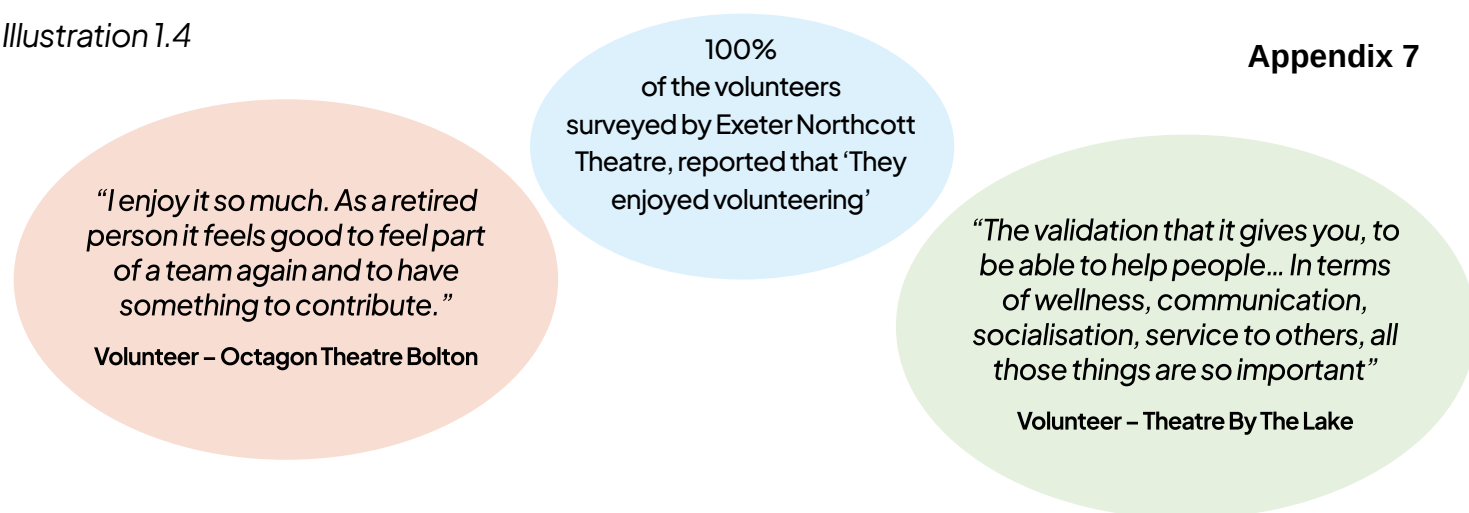
A social return on investment assessment, conducted by Essex University, demonstrated that there was a social impact of £6.59 for every £1 invested in the programme.

Other case studies evidence this work has additional positive impacts on participants and communities by: increasing social confidence; increasing life and social skills and; providing an emotional and psychological outlet for participants (and their carers). (See appendix)

◆ The social benefit of their work with volunteers

- All but one of the theatres offer volunteer opportunities
- 1,084 volunteers work in some capacity across those fifteen theatres, equating to a total of 75,227 hours of volunteering over the last financial year
- Around 97% of those volunteers come from within the theatre's drive-time
 - (62% from the town/city the theatre is located within and 35% outside of the town/city but within its drive-time)
- Data and testimony indicate that this work benefits the volunteers' well-being by reducing social isolation, giving them a sense of purpose and by providing skills that help their professional and/or personal development (see Illustration 1.4)

Illustration 1.4



◆ Valued partners to schools, colleges, universities and third sector agencies

- All of the participating theatres work with local partners and, in total, they support the work of 738 other local organisations/agencies
- These partnerships are mainly in the education (schools 59%, sixth form/further education colleges 6% and universities 3%) and voluntary/charitable (31%) sectors
- The following case study illustrates how these partnerships strengthen and amplify the work of other local statutory and third sector agencies

Case Study: Hull Truck Theatre and the RSC Associate School Programme

Hull Truck Theatre collaborates with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) as an Associate Regional Theatre to deliver the RSC Associate Schools Programme.

The programme involves theatre practitioners from both the RSC and Hull Truck Theatre delivering high-quality CPD for classroom teachers, introducing rehearsal room-style approaches to Shakespeare and broader literacy.

This initiative supports the language, social, and emotional development of children and young people, while also fostering a love of theatre and Shakespeare's work.

Randomised control trials (RCTs) across 45 state-maintained primary schools indicate that the theatre-led initiative improved children's language development and self-confidence (Time To Act, 2023).

This year, 11 primary schools participated in the programme, resulting in:

- 13 teachers taking part in CPD training
- 80% of teachers using the activities in the classroom
- 319 students benefiting from the programme, participating in sessions and staging a section of *The Tempest*, performed in Hull Truck Theatre's Main House
- 405 audience members attending three performances, with 77.5% being first-time bookers to the theatre





LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND PLACEMAKING

5. LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND PLACEMAKING

Appendix 7

Mid-scale theatres are also local leaders and agents of change, generating significant investment for social change in their communities, in relation to local social issues, social regeneration and environmental sustainability.

Many of the theatres play local leadership roles in terms of local cultural strategies and strategic education partnerships. They are also active in local business leadership structures such as BIDs.

The following case studies highlight some of the work that they are doing in these areas.

- ◆ Agents of social change and regeneration
 - All sixteen theatres were working in this area

Case Study: Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch

Havering Changing is a consortium of eight organisations, led by Queen's Theatre Hornchurch.

The project supports local people, living and working, in Harold Hill, Orchard Village, Rainham and Romford, three disadvantaged and culturally underserved areas.

In 2019, Havering Changing joined Arts Council England's [Creative People and Places programme](#), generating a significant investment to help regenerate the lives of the people living within this underserved area. Since then, they have been trialling radical new ideas that engage local residents in arts and culture in a variety of new ways, to promote belonging, social connection and ambition as programme outcomes.

The theatre is also involved in Creative Health Havering, a network of local grassroots community organisations, third sector services and medical professionals exploring opportunities around social prescribing and the benefit of arts activity for health and wellbeing to address many of the health and social inequalities of an outer-London borough. The initiative aims to help tackle these inequalities through moving away from an exclusively medical model of care towards a more community-based, person-centred approach, which brings together the expertise and experience from all parts of the cultural community and health care system.

The partnership is currently developing a three-year programme of activity in response to research, which will build on the early success of its pilot year.

- ◆ Working with BIDs to help regenerate towns and city centres
 - Just under half (44%) of theatres reported their leadership teams play significant roles on local and regional business improvement and development initiatives

Case Study: The Stephen Joseph Theatre

The Stephen Joseph Theatre sit on the Town Centre Team – a small group of individuals all with businesses in the town centre focused on the regeneration of the High Street in Scarborough. Alongside active lobbying around anti-social behaviour, street cleaning and drinking in public spaces they have: created a Town Centre Charter for businesses to sign up to; funded local artists to create vinyls to make disused shop fronts more attractive; purchased and installed new planters and benches; raised funding for free activities in the high street over half-term to increase footfall and business spend; contributed significantly to the creation and subsequent roll-out of the 'This is Scarborough' Brand; and are currently commissioning a data study to be used to increase inward investment.

◆ Championing environmental sustainability

Appendix 7

- All Arts Council England funded organisations are expected to evaluate and improve their environmental sustainability, but just under a third (31%) of the theatres also described local leadership initiatives in this area

Case Study: The Mercury Theatre

The Mercury are founder members of the Colchester City Sustainability Board and have committed to:

- support the ambitions of the landmark Paris Agreement of December 2015
- work in partnership with Colchester City Council to implement their Climate Emergency Action Plan (January 2020).

To action those commitments, they have undertaken a capital building project, which has achieved 'Very Good' BREEAM certification, making it the most sustainable building in Colchester and in the top 25% of non-domestic/public buildings in the UK. This certification recognises the Mercury as a model of best practice nationally and they seek to be sector leaders in communication around climate change, with a view to influencing practice among industry peers, partners, staff, audiences, participants, practitioners and their supply chain. Of the £11.3 million spent on the building, £10 million was spent in the local economy, with local suppliers.

◆ Leading local cultural strategies

- Many of the network have played roles in their town/city's cultural delivery and strategy, with several also working at a district/regional level





Case Study: New Wolsey Theatre – Start East

StartEast began as a £1.2 million project funded by the European Regional Development Fund and the Arts Council England Creative Local Growth Fund. It was developed by the New Anglia Culture Board as part of its strategic ambition to make Norfolk and Suffolk places where enterprising, creative people can start up and build sustainable cultural enterprises.

The StartEast programme was managed by Norfolk County Council, in partnership with Suffolk County Council, and delivered by the New Wolsey Theatre in Ipswich. StartEast provided targeted, specialist business support to cultural and creative SMEs and potential entrepreneurs in Norfolk and Suffolk over a two-and-half year period.

Other leadership examples can be found in the appendix.



CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ECONOMY

6. CULTURAL AND CREATIVE ECONOMY

Appendix 7

The theatres demonstrate high standards of creative impact and strengthen the creative freelance sector and local SMEs through professional development initiatives and talent pipeline opportunities. It is important to note that some of these initiatives are cross-sector and focused on business development.

In addition to their local impact, case studies demonstrate the role they play in the national creative economy, in terms of cultural impact, revenue generation and talent pipeline.

◆ Support for creative freelancers

- The total spend on freelance creatives in the last financial year was £4,674,987, an average spend of £359,614 per theatre (13 theatres)
- This spend increased by 13% compared to the previous financial year
- A third of the spend was within the theatres' drive-time and two-thirds outside, suggesting that mid-scales theatres are creative hubs for freelancers across their region
- When freelancers were brought in from outside the local area, many theatres used the opportunity to enrich their local creative economy through creative learning and CPD opportunities

◆ Spaces enabling creative collaboration

- A quarter of the venues reported that Individual creatives and micro-SMEs regularly use their venue as an ad hoc space to conduct meetings and discuss projects
- Dukes Theatre Lancaster and York Theatre Royal estimated that 30–60 and 70 creative professionals used their spaces for meetings, respectively, over the last financial years

◆ Talent pipeline

- Nearly all of the theatres offered training and development sessions for local creatives professionals and people/young people interested in working in the arts, equating to over 3086 opportunities in total, an average of 280 opportunities per theatre (based on the 11 theatres who record this information)
- 69 (2%) of those opportunities were run digitally to promote breadth of reach and accessibility
- These initiatives included business development skills, as well as professional creative development
- A number of venues reported specific professional initiatives aiming to address sector issues around underrepresentation, for example, Derby Theatre who run:
 - an EMBAA black artist training programme, where each participant received £10k to work on a co-creation piece with the local community
 - In Good Company Fundraising for D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent artists workshops

- Some of the initiatives were for creatives outside the performing arts sector: Mercury Creatives, a programme run by the Mercury Theatre, was specifically designed as a 3-year professional development programme for 100 SMEs working in creative industries allied to the performing arts, in order to deliver business skills and networks
- The following case studies demonstrate how mid-scale theatres, and their talent pipeline initiatives, can have a national and international creative impact

Case Study: Octagon Theatre Bolton – The Book Thief

The theatre premiered a production of the global best-selling book in 2022. The show has attracted commercial investment, been licensed for remounting in the UK, and is receiving international interest in reproductions from the US, Australia, and Pacific Asia.

◆ Support for other local organisations

- The qualitative interviews revealed how the theatres are regularly called upon to provide technical and other support to other local organisations who work outside the confines of their theatre spaces
- This included production advice and the provision of technical support to other organisations delivering events and festivals in the local area
- The following account by the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre highlights the breadth of other local organisations that rely on this support

Case Study: Yvonne Arnaud Theatre

Yvonne Arnaud Theatre in Guildford works with and support partners across a wide range of local organisations, including: Guildford Shakespeare Company, Guildford School of Acting, Performance Preparation Academy, Italia Conti Woking, Royal Grammar School, Tormead School, George Abbott School, Broadwater School, East Berks Opera Society, Chiddingfold Pantomime, Watts Gallery, Secretts Garden Centre, G Live, Guildford High School, The Boiler Room, The Britannia pub.

Footnotes and references

<https://solt.co.uk/economics-of-theatre/>

² 'Creative hubs: A critical evaluation', Andy Pratt, City, Culture and Society Journal, 2021

<https://www.campaignforthearts.org/reports/the-state-of-the-arts/>

https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Analysis_theatre_England_16112016.pdf

7. FINAL THOUGHTS

Mid-scale theatres are more than a collection of buildings: they are dynamic, civic institutions embedded in the creative, social, and economic fabric of their communities. This research confirms their role as engines of local regeneration, talent development, and public wellbeing, with ripple effects that extend far beyond their immediate vicinity. They are an integral part of our world-class theatre ecosystem. Their ability to attract inward investment, stimulate footfall, and deliver targeted social impact places them at the heart of place-making strategies and the wider creative economy.

Yet this impact is not guaranteed. In an era where touring models are increasingly outdated, 28% of theatres are running deficits, and one in five venues require substantial capital investment simply to remain operational, the mid-scale sector is among the most vulnerable. These theatres face a critical tipping point, where rising costs, fragile funding models, and growing expectations — often operating as the leading cultural venue in a large area — risk outpacing organisational capacity. Their contribution must be supported not just to survive, but to thrive. Strategic investment at regional and national levels is essential to safeguarding these powerhouses so they can continue to drive local prosperity and shape our national cultural story.



APPENDIX

Appendix 7

Case study 1: Derby Theatre

Themes: Generating inward investment, leadership, social impact and placemaking

Derby Theatre has been the lead partner of many city-wide strategic projects that have generated significant amounts of inward investment for capital development and community programmes, which benefit many cultural partners in the city and the community. Their ability to act as a convenor of partnerships, creating a crucible of ideas informed by their deep engagement with communities has proven most beneficial to the local ecology. Some projects include:

- Reimagine - £1.1m investment
- Derby CAN - £1.5 m investment
- CANVAS - £700k investment
- Derby Creative Arts Network - £1.5m investment
- Levelling Up Funding - £10m Capital investment
- Speak Out - £165,000 investment.

Example: Speak Out is an innovative project funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to connect arts practitioners and teachers together in a joint ambition to build oracy skills and so impact on the social inclusion of targeted students. Working with 6 primary schools in the St Ralph Sherwin Catholic Multi Academy Trust, 12 teachers and members of the SLT worked with 5 artists with a specific focus on pupils who have English as an additional language.

The Institute of Education at the University of Derby measured the impact of the project and found:

- 100 % of participants had an overall improvement of oracy skills which was significant and noticeable
- 100% of teachers would recommend the continued use of these strategies
- 100% of teachers believe that drama can improve oracy

One of the schools was inspected by Ofsted just as this project came to a close and they were specifically commended on the level of oracy skills. The school attributed that success to this project.

“Ofsted were literally blown away with the way oracy was demonstrated by the pupils... and that is definitely down to this project.”

St Elizabeth's Primary



Case study 2: The Octagon Theatre**Appendix 7****Themes: Economic and social impact, and return on investment**

The Octagon Theatre is a 390-seat venue in Bolton.

Economic research by Amion Consulting in 2021 found that the Octagon's overall activity:

- Generates an annual economic impact of £10.8m per year
- Generates a social impact of £0.89m per year, through health, education and volunteering
- Provides a benefit ratio of £43 to £1 of investment by Bolton Council.

Case study 3: Mercury Theatre**Themes: Generating inward investment and placemaking**

The Mercury Theatre is a producing theatre in Colchester that has two performance spaces.

The team raised £14.2m for their Mercury Rising Capital Project, which they used to update the fabric of their building and build a new 'piazza' around the theatre, that is now used for monthly farmers markets, outdoor performances and community events. The project has put their building at the heart of their local community, increasing both participation in it and the activities they run.

Case Study 4: The New Vic Theatre**Themes: Education – nurturing early years development, fostering inclusion, and building foundations for lifelong learning**

The New Vic Theatre is a 605-seat venue in Newcastle-under-Lyme, home to a vibrant programme of community and education work that in 2024–25 reached over 42,000 children and young people. One strand of this work is the Story Treasures Project, a creative learning initiative designed to support communication, confidence, and literacy development in early years education.

Delivered in partnership with local schools, the project uses immersive storytelling, drama, and arts-based pedagogy to help children aged 3–5, particularly those in Stoke-on-Trent's most disadvantaged communities, to develop the foundational skills they need to thrive in school.

85% of children showed sustained, significant improvement in verbal and communication skills, which supports developing literacy skills

95% demonstrated increased confidence and social skills, encouraging participation in the classroom

85% showed marked improvement in school readiness, ensuring children can engage meaningfully with the curriculum from day one.

"The programme is completely different to any literacy schemes we have experienced, it is fun and engaging, well-placed and pitched at the correct level for our cohort."

Participating Teacher, Story Treasures Programme

Case study 5: The Yvonne Arnaud Theatre

Appendix 7

Themes: Social impact and working in partnership

The Yvonne Arnaud Theatre is a 586-seat venue in Guildford.

Their Discover Theatre Project engaged children with Special Educational Needs. At the end of the project, there was a:

- 50% increase in the number of children who described themselves as feeling happy
- 30% increase in the number who described themselves as feeling confident
- 40% increase in the number who described themselves as a 'creative person'

Supporting testimony:

"The children have become more confident in their speaking and listening skills. They have challenged themselves to have a go at unfamiliar activities in new venues with new adults."

Catherine Kneller. Woodpeckers Teacher, Gosden House

Case study 6: Theatre By The Lake

Themes: Addressing social issues through culture

Theatre by the Lake is a producing theatre in Keswick, Cumbria, that houses two stages.

Communities within Cumbria suffer from social isolation, and suicide rates in the area are 50% higher than the national average (Suicide Rates in England and Wales by Local Authority 2021). In response to that, Theatre By The Lake programmed 'Every Brilliant Thing', a production that explored the challenging subject matter of suicide and depression, and proactively toured it to isolated rural communities, with the aim of using theatre to bring communities together to talk and connect about issues that were affecting them. They worked on the project in partnership with regional and national suicide prevention charities. Testimony from an employee of one of those charities, Every Life Matters, evidences the impact of the initiative.

"It was really powerful and impactful to take it into rural locations."

Vicky Boggon – Every Life Matters (on *Every Brilliant Thing* rural tour)



Case study 7: The New Wolsey Theatre

Appendix 7

Themes: Social impact, mental well-being and community cohesion

The New Wolsey Theatre is a 400 seat in Ipswich.

The theatre ran a social prescribing programme in conjunction with the NHS. Tell Your Story was a nine-session well-being programme led by an award-winning artist and photographer.

Surveyed participants reported:

- 97% felt that had done something they didn't know they were capable of
- 94% agreed that it had a positive impact on their mental wellbeing
- 84% agreed that it helped them feel connected to people in the community



Case study 8: Theatres of sanctuary

Themes: Social impact and community cohesion

Three of our theatres – Derby Theatre, Mercury Theatre, Hull Truck Theatre and Octagon Theatre, Bolton – have all been awarded Theatre of Sanctuary Awards for going above and beyond to welcome asylum seekers and refugees seeking sanctuary into their communities.

In addition, following the onset of the war in Ukraine, the Lichfield Garrick Theatre set up Ukrainian language film screenings as a way of welcoming Ukrainian refugees to the venue and their local community. Testimony from an audience member illustrates the impact of that work:

“Thank you so much for showing these films. It made us feel like we were back in our home town for a couple of hours.”

Audience member

This work demonstrates how responsive the work of theatres can be to support people in their local communities.

Case study 9: Oxford Playhouse**Appendix 7****Themes: Social Impact and Community Cohesion**

Oxford Playhouse is a producing theatre in Oxford with a main stage and studio space.

In response to historic ongoing, institutional and systemic racism in the area, the theatre co-founded and are steering group members of the Oxfordshire Culture Anti Racism Alliance (OCARA).

The purpose of OCARA is to convene and initiate actions in pursuit of the Alliance's vision of an Oxford free of racism and discrimination. They focus on organisational culture and practices, and programme events as a means of proactively working to support and challenge each other, to achieve their vision, through the leadership of its arts and cultural sector.

Case study 10: Environmental Sustainability**Themes: Leadership**

A number of the theatres had initiated strategic leadership in relation to environmental change.

The New Vic Theatre have partnered in 'Zero Carbon Rugeley (From coal mining town to zero carbon community)' with Keele University and Chase Community Solar. The aim of the project is to produce an innovative design for a town wide Smart Local Energy System (SLES). The project uniquely utilises pioneering User-Centric Design processes to enable the community to help engage with and thus shape the design of the SLES.

The New Wolsey Theatre's environmental impact achievements were recognised in 2023 with a Carbon Charter Silver Award. They are part of the Good Journey Scheme, which promotes car free travel to arts and heritage venues, and proactively educates through programming environmentally themed work.

York Theatre Royal also perform an education role around these themes, in addition to improving their own environmentally responsible practices. In summer/autumn 2023 they presented the Alive Season, a programme of activity which highlighted environmentally sustainable initiatives, and also co-produced 'A Play for the Living In A Time Of Extinction' with Headlong and Barbican.

Hull Truck Theatre signed up to 'Oh Yes Net Zero', a Humberside-wide initiative to drive down carbon emissions in the region. They are a lead cultural partner, hosted the 'Oh Yes Net Zero' conference last year and have been awarded Gold Status and a modal of best practise within the initiative.

Photography credits:**Front cover (l-r):**

Stephen Joseph Theatre, Scarborough
 New Vic Theatre, Newcastle-under-Lyme
 Dukes Theatre Lancaster
 Derby Theatre
 Octagon Theatre Bolton
 Yvonne Arnaud Theatre Guildford
 York Theatre Royal
 Exeter Northcott Theatre
 Lichfield Garrick
 Theatre By The Lake Keswick
 Hull Truck Theatre
 Queens Theatre Hornchurch
 Mayflower Studios Southampton
 New Wolsey Ipswich
 Oxford Playhouse
 Mercury Theatre Colchester

Tony Bartholomew
 David Hughes
 Gabi Dawkins
 Chris Seddon
 Grant Archer
 Tom Hurley
 Alex Holland
 Ralph Whitehead
 Dan Ingleby
 Creative Cactus
 Tom Arran Photo
 Gary Summers, SMD Photography
 Stuart Martin
 Anthony Coleman
 Zemi Photograph
 Xav Marseille

Page 2	Derby Rises Performance	Chris Webb
Page 7	Stephen Joseph Theatre audience	Craig Spaven
Page 8	Northcott Bar	South West Photography
Page 10	Octagon Theatre capital works	Ray Jefferson, Bolton Camera Club
Page 12	Taking Part, Mercury Theatre	Bea Maynard
Page 14	Mercury Young Company	Pamela Raith
Page 17	RSC Workshop	Sarah Beaumont
Page 20	Farmer's Market, Colchester	Xav Marseille
Page 21	Start East funded project	SubMotion Productions
Page 22	<i>The Book Thief</i> , Octagon Theatre	Pamela Raith
Page 25	<i>Gogol's Underdogs</i> , Mercury Theatre	Will Green
Page 26	Departure Lounge Derby	Chris Webb
Page 28	Every Brilliant Thing at Theatre by the Lake	Chris Payne
Page 29	Derby Mela	Graeme Braidwood

Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Subject: Change of operation / service use Prince of Wales Theatre

Date of Completion: New version 29.01.25

Equality Impact Subject: Cessation of Operation of Price of Wales Theatre

Impact Assessing Officer: Corinne Caddy

Service Area: Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Assessment Date: New version 29.01.25

Is this policy or service: New or Proposed **X** Existing and being reviewed

1. What is the overall purpose and intended outcomes of this policy or service?

Cannock Chase Council is considering the future operation of the Prince of Wales Theatre located in Cannock town centre. The theatre is managed for the Council by its leisure partner, Inspiring Healthy Lifestyles (IHL).

To help understand the best way forward for the future, an independent review of leisure, heritage and culture services was commissioned and the condition of the buildings managed by IHL were surveyed.

Based on this work, the Council is proposing the closure of the Prince of Wales Theatre by the end of April 2025 to ensure a sustainable future for other leisure and wellbeing services in the district for all.

These would deliver the following outcomes;

- help contribute towards a need to save £1.3m to balance the Council's budget;

This EQIA is a live working document and will be updated and reviewed to consider feedback from consultation work.

2. Who does this policy or service affect?

Employees

Wider Community **X**

Service Users **X**

Other (Please provide details) e.g. Members, businesses

- Employees of the contracted leisure partner

3. Describe how the main aims of the policy or service will support the Equality Duties outlined below

Those subject to the equality duty must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

There have been a number of theatre closures across the country with several local authority run theatres in the same position as the Prince of Wales theatre.

It is noted that while there is theatre provision in Rugeley and in neighbouring areas, the Prince of Wales theatre is a long-established theatre and the only provision within the town of Cannock.

Cannock Chase Council is actively working with community groups to understand the impact of a potential closure on communities. There is a commitment by Cannock Chase Council to understand equalities impact on service changes.

Cannock Chase Council has considered its population overview which is as follows:

Around 100,500 people were living in Cannock Chase in 2021 across 43,500 households.

Of the total population of the district in 2021, around 17.9% were aged 15 years and under, 62.6% were of working age (16-64) and 19.5% were aged 65+. The largest age group was age 50-64, comprising 21.3% of residents. Females make up 50.2% of the populations and males, 49.8%.

In Census 2021, 94.5% of Cannock Chase residents identified with the ethnic group White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British.

95.35% of Cannock Chase residents who responded to the Census 2021 question on gender identity stated that they have a gender identity which is the same as that registered at birth. 0.33% of respondents identified that they had a gender identity different from their sex registered at birth. 92.08% of Cannock Chase residents aged 16+ who responded to the Census 2021 question on sexual orientation identified that they were straight or heterosexual. 2.51% of respondents across the District identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Other (LGB+).

The proportion of Cannock Chase residents who assessed their daily activities as being limited a lot or a little by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses in Census 2021 (including those related to old age) was above the England average of 17.7% at 20.3%. The proportion of residents who identified that their daily activities were limited a lot was 9% in Cannock Chase.

The census also reported that 20.2% of the District's population are classed as disabled under the Equality Act which is higher than the figure for England (79.8%)

In 2021, 41.1% of residents in Cannock Chase reported having no religion. This is an increase on the figure reported in 2011, which was 23.7%. In 2021, 52.4% of the district's population described themselves as Christian. The other religions reported amongst the population are Buddhist (0.2%), Hindu (0.2%), Muslim (0.3%), Sikh (0.4%) and 'other religions' (0.4%). The remaining population did not state a religion in response to the related question in the Census 2021 (4.9%).

Census 2021 shows that 35.3% of the resident population aged 16 and over have never been married and never registered a civil partnership; 45.6% are married, and 10.1% are divorced. A further 2.3% are separated but still legally married or in a civil partnership. The remaining 6.7% are widowed.

89.72% of the Cannock Chase population engaged in arts in person in 2023 (including performing arts). This is higher than the West Midlands average, but slightly lower than national participation. In 2023/24, the theatre had just over 63,000 visits.

4. Is this project due to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors or through commissioned services?

Yes **X** No

If 'yes', have you done any work to include equality considerations into the contract already? You should set out how you will make sure that any third party you work with complies with equality legislation.

Cannock Chase Council is working with IHL as the contracted supplier of services to ensure compliance with the Equalities Act. There is an equalities clause within the contract (B01-Core-Specification-FINAL) to ensure the principles of the Equality Act underpin all work and operations.

"The Contractor shall comply with all relevant legislation relating to the provision of Services within this Specification including for example, Insurance, Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), Fire Safety Certificates, Human Rights Act, Equalities Act, Environmental legislation, Licensing requirements, etc."

This document has identified the operator will be required to undertake some further actions (See Question 12) around some protected characteristic groups is collected and monitored.

This document has identified the operator will be required to undertake some further actions (See Question 12).

5. What impact will the implementation of this policy or service have on employees, service users or other people who share a protected characteristic?

You should consider each protected characteristic and decide a level of impact as follows:

- *Positive Impact* The impact on a particular group is more favourable (this should be justified by the overall aims of the policy or service).
- *Neutral Impact* The group is neither positively nor negatively affected by the policy or service (same or similar impact upon everyone).
- *Negative Impact* The impact on a particular group is less favourable - putting one or more groups of people at a disadvantage through direct or indirect discrimination.

To evidence and explain an impact you should consider: if the impact can be justified on the grounds of promoting equal outcomes for disadvantaged groups; if the policy or service can be adjusted to overcome an impact; or if you may need to suspend this assessment and seek further advice due to a potentially unlawful impact.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	What level of impact has been identified?			Evidence and explain your answer
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Age Consider implications across all age ranges - older and younger people. This can include safeguarding and child welfare issues.	Reduced availability of a performance venue for younger people. Reduced performing arts venue for older people reliant on public transport.		X		The Prince of Wales Theatre serves a number of young people around Cannock district. This includes as a performing arts development venue - theatre, musical theatre and dance as well as a venue to enjoy educational visits and performances. Respondents to the consultation highlighted the need for provision for young people as important; a low proportion of respondents were under the age of 25 (3.7%), whilst 43.3% stated they usually go to the Prince of Wales Theatre with children. 28.2% of respondents were aged over 60. During the consultation, older people highlighted the importance of a venue being accessible and affordable by public transport. 8.4% of respondents do not visit because the location is not accessible. Consideration should be given for future provision for these groups.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	What level of impact has been identified?			Evidence and explain your answer
Disability Consider any physical and social barriers for disabled service users, employees or the wider community.	Reduced availability of a performance venue for groups with disabilities. Reduced provision of a performance space people with disabilities can access independently.		X		Almost a quarter (24.6%) of people considered themselves to have a disability or health condition. Consultation survey respondents felt providing performing arts activity for people with additional needs was important. The theatre provides a space for groups with disabilities to both perform and enjoy performances. As part of the consultation officers met with one user group to gather feedback on the proposals. The theatre provided them space to perform on a big stage helping them gain confidence as well as being able to acquire new technical skills. In terms of attending performances, accessibility of transport was important whether that was using their minibus, or people travelling independently and affordably by public bus or taxi. There was concern that travel could become a barrier for them and some similar groups. They also highlighted the value of the venue being close by in terms of delivering rounded experiences (travelling in by bus, getting a pizza, enjoying a show, going to the pub). It was noted that the group saw the theatre as a safe space where they could enjoy more independence when inside and the venue was also known to some group members as a safe place they could go to if they were ever in town and felt worried. They did comment that the stage would be better if it had an accessible wheelchair lift. The Prince of Wales Theatre does not have wheelchair access to the stage and although we recognise that not all disabled people are wheelchair users, there remains a lack of safe access to the stage for anyone with mobility challenges. The Prince of Wales Theatre has a single passenger lift to serve people with mobility challenges in accessing the auditorium, bars and toilets; this is limiting access. Other local venues can provide level access from the street, directly into the auditorium and throughout bar and toilet areas, swiftly and conveniently. The Prince of Wales is less equipped to support multiple people with access challenges through age or disability, in addition to its lack of stage access for performers with mobility challenges, there is the risk of lift breakdown which is also limiting, inconvenient and detrimental. Given the provision of more accessible venues locally, and assessment of the issues with Prince of Wales's accessibility, overall, the impact is determined as neutral - the broad population disability protected characteristic group is neither positively nor negatively impacted by the closure.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	What level of impact has been identified?			Evidence and explain your answer
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Marriage and Civil Partnerships Consider implications for people in marriages/ civil partnerships. Civil partners should be treated the same as married couples in legal matters.	It is not thought any changes to operation would affect this group.		X		62.5% of consultation survey respondents stated that they usually attend the Prince of Wales Theatre with their partners. Only 7% visit alone. There is no indication or data to suggest there will be any positive or negative impact on this group.
Pregnancy and Maternity Consider implications for pregnant women and new mothers. This could include working arrangements and childcare responsibilities	It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group.		X		43.3% stated they usually go to the Prince of Wales Theatre with children. New parents can be considered in terms of their ability to access venues and services through affordability, physical access to buildings/locations and the welfare facilities available to support those caring for infants and young children, similarly to the mitigations captured through the age and disability characteristics. Consideration should be given for any employees who may be pregnant or on maternity leave.
Race Consider implications in respect of race, colour, nationality or ethnic national background.	It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group.		X		A small number of respondents (45) to the survey identified themselves with ethnicity from a Black and Minority Ethnic group. Some responses to the equality survey indicated 'consultation fatigue' within these groups, where people feel less willing to be involved and as such have experienced further reductions in access and voice. 22 people answered 'prefer not to say' or otherwise commented on the relevance of the question on ethnicity. It is therefore not possible to fully reflect the perspectives of BAME communities. There is an opportunity to increase the representation of BAME performers and participants in theatre. The council should ensure that through the development of future cultural offers and opportunities, co-production and co-research is used to understand the expectations, identity and cultural views of minority groups. Any future consultation and engagement should promote cultural sensitivity and actively reduce discrimination, racism or unconscious bias in the design and delivery of services.

Protected Characteristic	Impact	What level of impact has been identified?			Evidence and explain your answer
		Positive	Neutral	Negative	
Religion or Belief Consider implications of different religions or individual's beliefs. This could include consideration of religious customs and festivals.	It is not known if any changes to operation would affect these groups.		X		56.4% of respondents to the equality survey stated their religion is Christian, 36.4% stated no religion or belief. It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group. A forward plan should identify non-users of services and opportunities to increase engagement.
Sex Consider implications for men and women.	No specific data around visits by this group has been collected. It is not thought this group would be impacted significantly; however it should be noted that female engagement with performing arts is slightly higher and may be partially affected by a reduction in provision.		X		Consideration should be given to the proportion of female employees on the site by the leisure service operator. This should be considered during any realignment of roles. It should be noted that female attendance at theatre is proportionately higher nationally (23% female/17% male) and there could be some reduced performing arts provision for this group. Of those responding to the equalities survey, 71.1% were female; 27.5% male and 0.9% preferred not to say.
Sexual Orientation Consider implications for heterosexual people as well as lesbian, gay and bi-sexual people.	It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group.		X		86.9% of respondents to the equality survey are heterosexual. 7.4% preferred not to say. It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group. A forward plan should identify non-users of services and opportunities to increase engagement.
Transgender Consider implications for transgender and transsexual people. This can include issues such as privacy or data protection.	It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group.	X			98% of respondents to the equalities survey stated that they identify as the gender which is the same as their sex registered at birth. It is not known if any changes to operation would affect this group. A forward plan should identify non-users of services and opportunities to increase engagement.

6. What data, research and other information have you considered? Please tick all that apply

Service Targets **X**
 Performance Targets **X**
 Service Take-up
 Consultation Responses **X**
 Previous EqIA
 Media Coverage
 Workforce Data **X**
 Community Data & Research **X**
 Internal Audit
 Complaints & Comments
 Contractual & Commissioning **X**

Other **X** Please provide details: **See below**

Please provide details on the available evidence/information you have selected.

Campaign for the Arts, Data Culture change: Participation in the arts, culture and heritage survey data by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Arts Council England: Culture and Place Data Explorer - interactive data for the district detailing uptake on in-person arts visits and online access to museum materials.

West Midlands Combined Authority: Cultural Sector Research Project Analysis

Staffordshire County Council: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2024,

Museums Association data

Statista Theatre attendance data

Cannock Chase District Council Culture and Heritage Consultation survey and equalities survey

7. If you have identified any gaps in relation to the previous question, please provide details of additional research or data required.

[Equality and Diversity within the arts and cultural sector in England.](#)

In December 2013, Consilium Research and Consultancy was commissioned by Arts Council England to undertake a wide-ranging review of current and past evidence about equality and diversity within the arts and cultural sector in England.

The majority of studies included within the review, explored equality and diversity across more than one protected group. For studies which focused on one protected group the most frequent related to disability, race, age and sex/gender. Fewer studies were identified that focused specifically on the protected groups of sexual orientation and religion and/or belief. No studies were identified specific to the arts and cultural sector that covered pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership status or gender re-assignment.

Amongst its recommendations, the report identified the following need: In the context of the arts and cultural sector, undertake in-depth qualitative research on equality and diversity issues facing the protected groups of sexual orientation, religion and/or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership status or gender re-assignment.

8. List any consultation that has taken place in the development of this policy or service with individuals or groups who are likely to be affected or interested in this subject.

Examples of relevant consultation could include informal discussions, focus groups or surveys.

You should provide a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents.

Target Groups

Sex: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. 71.1% of respondents were female.

Marriage and Civil Partnerships: N/A

Race: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. Most people considered their ethnic group to be white with most people describing themselves as White English or White British. There were a small number of people from other background and ethnicities (under 2%)

Religion or Belief: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. Just over half of people (56.4%) described themselves as Christian with just over a third of people (36.4%) stating they had no religion or belief. Under 1% of respondents selected other religions and 6.4% stated they preferred not to say what their religion or belief is.

Pregnancy and Maternity: N/A

Disability: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. Almost a quarter (24.6%) of people considered themselves to have a disability or health condition. As part of the consultation, officers met with a group of users with learning and physical disabilities to enable them to feed into the consultation.

Gender Reassignment: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. While most respondents identified with the same sex they were registered with at birth. 10 people said they did not and 22 said they preferred not to say.

Sexual Orientation: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. Heterosexual 86.9% stated they were heterosexual, 1.3% gay, 0.9% lesbian and bisexual 1.9%.

Age: Consultation Survey - 2072 responses. Most respondents were aged between 40 and 74 (70.2%). Fewest respondents were aged under 16 to 29 (7.1%)

Additional comments: Equalities Survey - This was completed by 1,641 people. Just under half of respondents (40.8%) had caring responsibilities, primarily for children under 18 (21.2%) followed by people who were primary carers for older people (7.1%)

9. Provide details of any changes that could be made to the policy or service to avoid any negative impact on equality identified in question 5.

Active engagement is required with a small number of specific user groups to identify alternative provision.

10. What mechanisms are in place to monitor and review the impact and effectiveness of this policy or service?

Include how any changes you are making will be monitored and reviewed.

Monitoring will be undertaken around evaluating future delivery against budget and service KPIs as well as taking into account public thought gathered within the consultation response. In addition, this EQIA will form part of the paperwork bundle attached to current proposals and will be revisited as part of the process.

11. Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the policy or service will meet the authority's responsibilities in relation to equality.

The EQIA identifies overall that there will be some negative outcomes to some specific user groups, however these are in small numbers and should be engaged to identify alternate or different provision. The Council should continue to keep conversations open with interested parties and local groups around continued performing arts provision in Cannock.

For most people sharing one or more of the nine protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act, they will not be adversely impacted over and above others by the changes. The policy will therefore meet the authority's responsibilities in relation to equality with some minor considerations.

Please decide the outcome of this assessment:

No major change ☒ X

Adjust the policy or service and continue ☒ X

Continue with the policy or service despite negative impact identified

Suspend the assessment and seek further advice

12. As a result of this assessment, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any impacts that have been identified for people who share a protected characteristic?

Impact	Action	Target Date	Responsible Post Holder
All	Ascertain whether historic data around the 9 protected characteristics is available for the site	November 2025	CCDC
All	Identify and engage groups in the consultation	December 2025	CCDC
All	Consider protected characteristics amongst employees	January 2025	CCDC / IHL
All	Understand volunteer provision in place at the theatre	April 2025	CCDC / IHL
All	Work with community groups and interested parties around future performing arts provision	February 2025	CCDC
All	Assist any groups who are seeking alternative provision - most particularly those with disabilities	March 2025	CCDC

Quality Assurance and Sign-Off

The proposed policy or service has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and any concerns have been addressed accordingly.

DECLARATION:

The proposed policy or service has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and any concerns have been addressed accordingly.

Impact Assessing Officer:

Name: Corinne Caddy **Job Title:** Leisure Officer **Service Area:** Housing, Health & Wellbeing

Date: 29.01.25

Concluding statement:

It is recommended that the EQIA accompany policy documentation and are used to inform future planning.

While the assessment does not at this time indicate significant adverse impact to population groups with protected characteristics, the council should be mindful of putting mitigations in place should impacts to service provision for known groups with protected characteristics arise.

Sign Off by the Head of Service:

Name: Anna Nevin

Date: 30/1/25

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Cannock Chase Council
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Cabinet

Held on Thursday 20 August 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

In the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Cannock

Part 1

Present:

Councillors:

R. Craddock	Deputy Leader of the Council and Regulatory Services and Sustainability Portfolio Leader
G. Jeffery	Community Safety and Wellbeing Portfolio Leader
R. Mandry	Housing and Corporate Assets Portfolio Leader (<i>arrived 6:02pm</i>)
M. Deakin	Leisure, Culture and Heritage Portfolio Leader
J. Parkes	Operational Services and Parks Portfolio Leader
M. Bell	Resources and Corporate Services Portfolio Leader

28. Apologies

Apologies for absence were noted for Councillor P. Jones, Leader of the Council and Regeneration and Corporate Strategy Portfolio Leader.

In the Leader's absence, the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Leader.

29. Declarations of Interests of Members in Contracts and Other Matters and Restriction on Voting by Members

None received.

30. Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options

Consideration was given to the Report of the Head of Economic Development and Planning (Item 7.1 – 7.129).

(Councillor Mandry arrived at the meeting during the introduction of this item.)

Resolved:

- (A) That the contents of the report be noted, including the options for the regeneration of Cannock town centre and the associated deliverability, financial implications and risks.
- (B) That the preferred strategic approach for the regeneration of Cannock town centre, in principle, be to retain and refurbish the Prince of Wales Theatre, noting that the wider opportunities identified within the Development Framework would not be progressed at this stage.
- (C) That it be noted that further detailed due diligence, design work and full business cases would need to be undertaken by officers before any final commitment was made to delivery by the Council of either option as set out in report paragraph 2.2.

In addition, the Deputy Leader reported that the refurbishment of Beecroft Road car park and the demolition of the Cabot units in Cannock town centre as agreed previously on 28 March and 12 June 2024, were supported by the Cabinet and so could still proceed as planned.

Reasons for Decisions:

A draft Development Framework had been produced by the Council's advisers (Continuum) for Members to consider, but there were other options to consider.

Members were asked to consider the other options available and the associated opportunities and risks.

Following confirmation of the preferred option, the associated detailed due diligence would have to be completed to enable future funding requirements to be established, the viability of the proposals, their phasing and the outline programme for delivery.



Request for Call-in of a Decision of the Cabinet (Executive)

Date of Cabinet Meeting: **20th August 2026**

Minute Reference / Number: **30(B)**

Subject: **Cannock Town Centre Regeneration Options**

Decision to be called-in:

“That the preferred strategic approach for the regeneration of Cannock town centre, in principle, be to retain and refurbish the Prince of Wales Theatre, noting that the wider opportunities identified within the Development Framework would not be progressed at this stage.”

Reason for Call-In:

The above decision at 30(B) poses an unacceptable financial and reputational risk to Cannock Chase Council.

What are you proposing?

In Section 2 subsection 2.2 that option a) of the report is adopted:

To progress the Development Framework approach, including the redevelopment of the Prince of Wales Theatre site as part of a wider mixed-use regeneration scheme and the further exploration of opportunities relating to the Civic Centre site, major retail provision, housing, commercial development, cultural uses and educational facilities.

Please indicate below who should be invited to the Scrutiny Committee meeting?

Councillor(s)	Officer(s)	Representative from organisations / public
Cllr. Paul Jones, Council Leader	Mr. T Clegg, Chief Executive	-
-	Mr. C Forester, Deputy Chief Executive	-
-	Mr. G Stott, Deputy Chief Executive	-
-	Mr. D Piper, Head of Economic Development and Planning	-

The request for call-in will only be valid if a total of 5 Members* have supported it, and it is returned to the Chief Executive by no later than the deadline date on the published Cabinet Minutes.

**2 of whom must be Members of the relevant Scrutiny Committee, and none of whom may be Cabinet member.*

Request made and supported by:

Councillor	Signature	Date
Councillor Tony Johnson (<i>proposer</i>)	Received via email	26 th August 2026
Councillor Amanda Dunnett (<i>supporter</i>)	Received via email	26 th August 2026
Councillor Maureen Freeman (<i>supporter</i>)	Received via email	26 th August 2026
Councillor Jeff Hill (<i>supporter</i>)	Received via email	26 th August 2026
Councillor Jackie Prestwood (<i>supporter</i>)	Received via email	26 th August 2026

**Procedure for Debating Call-in of Cabinet Decisions at
Meetings of the Scrutiny Committees**

Notes:

Prior to members of the Committee debating the call-in, other Members of the Council present and other invited persons who are not members of the Scrutiny Committee will be requested to sit in the public gallery.

The relevant Cabinet Member may remain in the chamber and answer questions put through the Chairman. The Cabinet Member may speak at any time if invited by the Chairman. The Chairman will invite the Cabinet Member to exercise a right of reply at the end of the debate before the Proposer of the motion exercises their right of reply.

A Scrutiny Committee may exercise their statutory powers to invite such persons and request such information as they consider necessary to facilitate their examination of the matter and they adjourn the meeting if necessary to facilitate this.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee should be present for all of the debate prior to them exercising their vote to ensure that the Committee makes an informed decision based on the evidence presented.

Procedure

1. The Proposer (who must be one of the members of the Scrutiny Committee requesting the call-in) shall read their motion, formally propose the motion and give reasons for the call-in.
2. If none of the members of the Scrutiny Committee who requested the call-in are present, the Chairman shall ask if any other member of the Scrutiny Committee will propose the motion. If no member proposes the motion the call-in will be deemed to have been withdrawn.
3. Once the motion has been seconded, the Chairman shall allow those others of the five members who requested the call-in and who are present to speak before any debate.
4. During the course of the debate members of the Committee may propose minor amendments to the motion with the consent of the Proposer (or the stand-in Proposer).
5. The Committee may:
 - (a) reject the motion, or
 - (b) refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration with a recommendation.
 - (c) refer the matter to full Council with a recommendation for a decision.
6. A formal written decision will be made on the call-in within ten days of the Scrutiny Committee first meeting.

Priority Delivery Plan for 2026-27

Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity

Summary of Progress as at end of Quarter 1

Actions Completed			Total: 5
Ref No	Action		
EP1	Phase One – complete demolition works		
EP1	Phase Two – Complete demolition works for phase 2 (Forum)		
EP1	Promote Cannock town centre regeneration opportunity at UKREiiF		
EP6	Publish Local Plan timetable		
EP6	Complete Notice of Plan Making		

Work in progress but behind schedule			Total: 0
Ref No	Action		
-	-		

Actions due but not started			Total: 0
Ref No	Action		
-	-		

TOTAL NUMBER OF ACTIONS DUE TO END OF QUARTER 1			Total: 5
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Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Delivery of Cannock Town Centre Regeneration scheme (EP1)	• Phase One – complete demolition works	X				Main demolition works complete, final works to foundations underway	✓
	• Phase Two – Complete demolition works for phase 2 (Forum)	X				Main demolition works complete, final works to foundations underway	✓
	• Phase Two – Complete demolition works for phase 2 (Cabot)			X			
	• Promote Cannock town centre regeneration opportunity at UKREiF	X				Meetings held with regional and national developers and operators	✓
	• Present options to Cabinet on next phase of Cannock Town Centre regeneration		X				
Complete new masterplan for Rugeley Town Centre (EP2)	• Present Masterplan to Cabinet for approval		X				
	• Prepare a delivery plan identifying potential projects/site opportunities				X		
Launch of new Business Support programme (EP3)	• Implement new programme of targeted business support		X				
Complete MHCLG requirements for Pride in Place Programme, Cannock North (EP4)	• Confirmation of boundary, Neighbourhood Board and Chair and submission of engagement plan to MHCLG		X				
	• Support the Neighbourhood to submit an initial programme plan to MHCLG				X		

Project	Actions and Milestones	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Progress Update	Symbol
Work in partnership with South Staffordshire College to strengthen the skills offer of the District (EP5)	Work with college to review future growth and opportunities to expand their operation in Cannock town centre				X		
Commence a new Local Plan (EP6)	Publish Local Plan timetable	X				Timetable for New Plan was published on 26 June 2026	✓
	Complete Notice of Plan Making	X				Notice to commence was published on 26 June 2026	✓
	Scoping consultation		X				
	Gateway 1 – publish self-assessment			X			
	Evidence gathering and site assessment			X	X		
	Publish scoping consultation summary				X		
	Draft consultation documents			X	X		
Ensure the next phase of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet supports our local economy and provides opportunities for our residents (EP7)	Commencement of Phase Two construction			X			
	Work in partnership to support recruitment of local people				X		

KPIs for Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity

Summary of Performance as at Quarter 1

KPIs Achieving or Exceeding Target			Total: 4
Ref No	KPI		
	Major Planning Applications determined within time (EP4)		
	Non-major Planning Applications determined within time (EP5)		
	Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined (EP6)		
	Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined (EP7)		

KPIs not achieving target < 5%			Total:
Ref No	KPI		
-	-		

KPIs not achieving target >5%			Total:
Ref No	KPI		
-	-		

TOTAL NUMBER OF KPIs DUE TO END OF QUARTER 1			Total: 4
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Priority 1 – Economic Prosperity

Indicator	Year End 25/26	Target 26/27	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Year End 26/27	Rating Symbol	Comments
Regeneration									
Economic activity rate (EP1)	N/A	New						Annual	
Visitor economy - value and volume of tourism in Cannock Chase (data source tbc) (EP2)	N/A	New						Annual	
Planning Services									
Number of housing completions and affordable homes (EP3)	N/A	New						Annual	
Major Planning Applications determined within time (EP4)	93.75%	60%	100%					✓	
Non-major Planning Applications determined within time (EP5)	98.63%	70%	98.6%					✓	
Major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined (EP6)	1.68%	<10%	5.56%					✓	
Non-major Planning Applications overturned at appeals as percentage of no. applications determined (EP7)	1.97%	<10%	0.36%					✓	