

KNUTTON

MASTERPLAN



CONTENTS

1 Introduction & Context

2 Market Review

3 Local Context

4 Areas of Focus

5 Masterplan

6 Viability & Delivery



Quay West at MediaCityUK, Trafford Wharf Road,
Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1HH
Tel: +44 (0)161 872 3223
www.wyg.com

Document verification

Client:	Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Aspire Housing & Staffordshire County Council
Project:	Knutton Town Centre
Job number:	A112426-5
Document title:	Knutton Masterplan
Status:	Final
Date:	18.05.2020
Document reference:	A112426-5 Knutton Masterplan Rev A

This report is copyright: © WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited, 2020 All drawings and photographs are by WYG Environment Planning Transport Limited unless stated otherwise. Drawings based on the Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 1000240. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.

INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

1

INTRODUCTION

Aims & Objectives

WYG has been commissioned by Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council, Stafford Borough Council and Aspire Housing to prepare a regeneration masterplan for the centre of Knutton, Newcastle-under-Lyme.

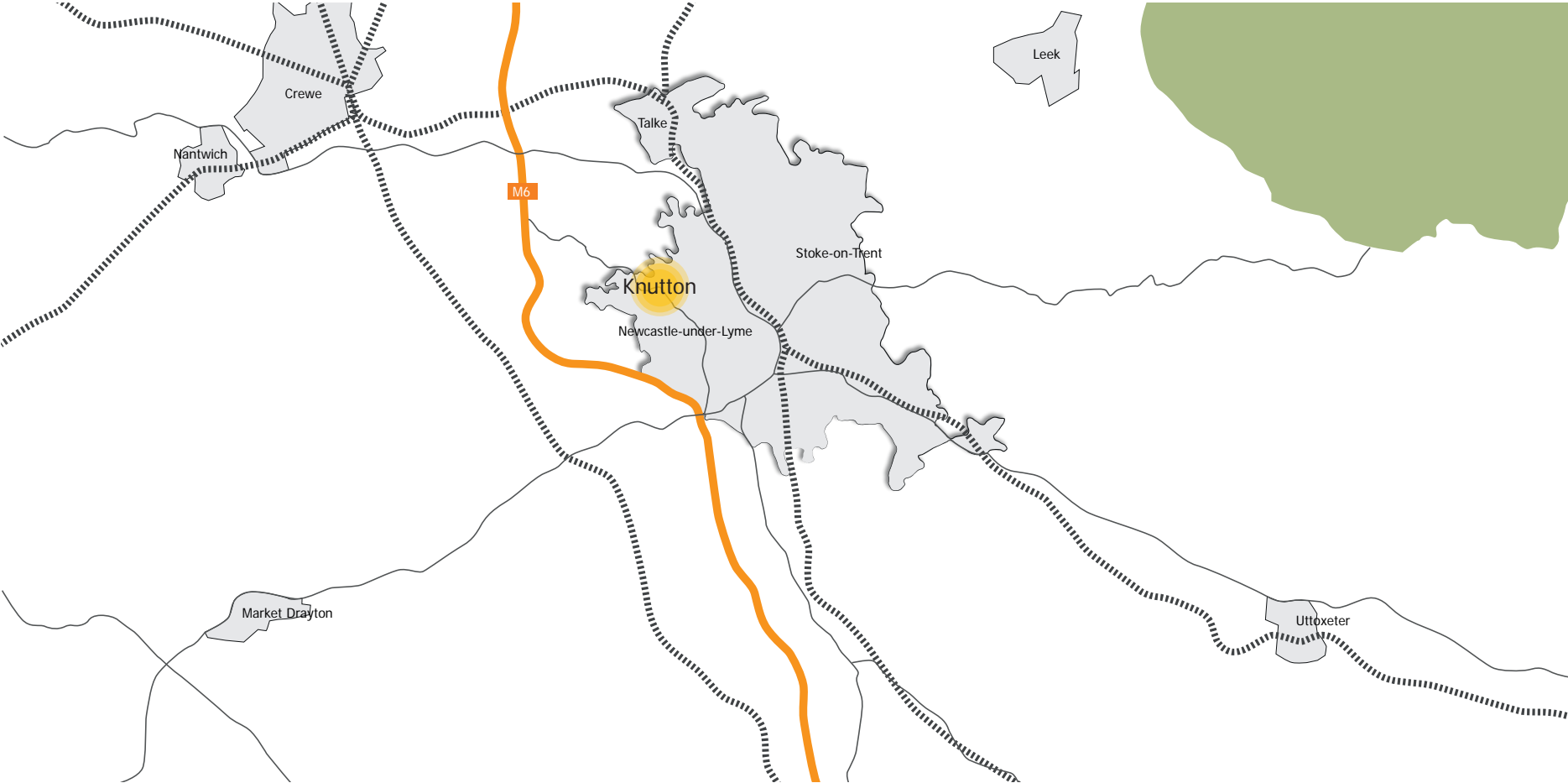
The aim of the masterplan is to put the heart back into the centre of Knutton. This will be achieved through creating a greater sense of place and a strong gateway to the High Street; by providing facilities for the local community; and by delivering new, aspirational housing for the local centre.

*"Putting
the heart
back into
Knutton"*



CONTEXT

Wider Context



MARKET REVIEW

2

MARKET REVIEW

Summary

This section provides a summary of the full Market Assessment, produced by Thomas Lister as appended to this document. It aims to inform the masterplan by undertaking a review of the current market conditions for both residential and employment uses within the vicinity of Knutton.

The review has taken into account competing schemes within the area and potential demand based on current market activity.

Knutton

As you may expect from a former mining village location, Knutton's facilities are limited with only a few small local shops. The area benefits from a primary school, St Mary's C of E Academy, which is OFSTED rated Good.

There are a number of community facilities within Knutton, including an Ex-Serviceman's Club, Community Centre, Medical

Centre, Enterprise Centre and a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), which form part of the identified sites to be considered as part of the masterplanning proposals.

Knutton is served by an hourly bus service that runs along Lower Milehouse Lane and Church Lane. The service provides public transport access to Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre, as well as Meir situated off the A50 and Audley situated to the north of Knutton.

Economic Overview

Broad baseline statistics have been gathered from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and NOMIS, along with generic housing market information in order to set out the context for more detailed analysis in relation to proposals to bring forward the subject area, detailed later within this report. The statistics opposite relate to the area of Newcastle-under-Lyme.



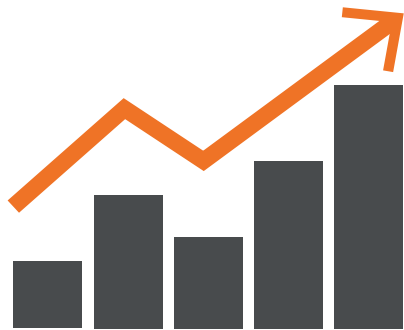
76.7% of population economically active



Over 46% of employed residents estimated to be working in higher income occupations



37.5% achieve NVQ4 and above, 4.4% higher than West Midlands average



Wholesale & retail trade and repair of vehicles are most dominant business sectors



87.4% of businesses are micro enterprises



Gross weekly pay of £494.50 against GB average of £571.10

Residential Overview

Current Market Conditions

A detailed analysis of supply, demand, take up rates and values has been undertaken in order to ascertain the current position within the market and any variations between demand and supply.

Housing Stock

Dwelling Type	Existing Stock Numbers		Percentage Stock Total	
	Knutton and Silverdale	Newcastle-under-Lyme	Knutton and Silverdale	Newcastle-under-Lyme
Detached	126	13,301	6.6%	24.5%
Semi-detached	971	23,761	51.1%	43.8%
Terraced	667	10,963	35.1%	20.2%
Flats	138	6,180	7.2%	11.4%
Other	0	49	0	0.1%
Total	1,902	54,254		

Source: Census 2011 via Nomis

Property Type & Price

A review of the Land Registry Price Paid Database has been undertaken in relation to existing stock sold within the ST5 post code over the last 12 months. A total of 1,038 transactions have taken place over this time and an overview of these have been provided within the table below:

Property Type	Number Sold	Average Price Paid	Highest Price Paid	Lowest Price Paid
Detached	248	£276,019	£1,000,000	£90,000
Semi-detached	441	£152,497	£373,000	£50,000
Terraced	311	£104,105	£418,000	£45,000
Flats	38	£100,475	£230,000	£46,000

Rental Values

A breakdown of the median rental values established based on the number of bedrooms is provided within the table below:

Size of Property	Number of Properties Surveyed	Average Rent Per Month
Room	30	£345
Studio	-	N/A
One Bedroom	60	£420
Two Bedrooms	330	£500
Three Bedrooms	220	£600
Four or more Bedrooms	60	£850

Source: Valuation Office Agency, 2019

Following a Rightmove search, it was noted that there are currently some 241 properties advertised as being available to let within the Newcastle-under-Lyme area, there are only seven available to let within Knutton with four of these being rooms within shared accommodation. By extending the search area by a radius of 0.25 miles from Knutton, a total of 29 properties are being advertised as being available. The average asking rents per calendar month are as follows:

Property Type	One Bedroom	Two Bedrooms	Three Bedrooms	Four or More Bedrooms
Detached	-	-	£900	£1,000
Semi-detached	-	£690	£795	£820
Terraced	-	£668	£475	-
Flat	-	£550	£625	-
Shared Accommodation	-	-	£920	£1,518

Source: Rightmove, 2019

Affordable Housing

As reported within the updated SHMA in 2017, there is a total affordable housing need within Newcastle-under-Lyme of 242 dwellings per annum, which is considered required for a period of five years from 2017 to meet the unmet demand for affordable housing within the Borough. After this unmet demand is met, it is considered that there will be a demand for 199 dwellings per annum. The affordable housing need by size for the Borough is reported within the below table:

	One bedroom	Two bedroom	Three bedroom	Four plus bedroom	Total
Shortfall in affordable housing	23	17	2	2	44
Annual net new need	58	45	88	7	199
Net annual affordable housing need (five years)	81	63	90	9	242
Percentage	33%	26%	37%	4%	

Source: Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update Stoke-on-Trent City Council and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, June 2017

It is clear that there is a need for affordable housing across the Borough and there is a historic unmet need, that is increasing the requirement for delivery of new accommodation. It is considered that there is a requirement for a range of property types within the Borough, however, the focus should be on the delivery of smaller properties of between one and three bedrooms, with the greatest need being for three bedroom properties. This requirement is broadly in line with the likely demand for open market sale units.

Older Persons Accommodation

Elderly persons accommodation is considered a key area for review and therefore a review of existing elderly persons accommodation has been undertaken. The search has reviewed elderly persons accommodation within a circa 2 km radius of Knutton.

Based on those properties found within the search there is in region of 288 flats for older people, which predominantly comprise of affordable rent units. There are in the region of 161 bungalows within the area for older people and as with the flats are predominantly on an affordable rent tenure. 369 care home beds have been identified as part of the research undertaken, these are owned and managed by a mix of private care providers (or individuals) and social landlords.

As reported within the updated SHMA in 2017, it is predicted that

the growth in the older population will increase the number of residents living in communal establishments and there will be a requirement for circa 1,450 bed spaces between 2013-2039.

It is clear that there will be demand for older persons accommodation on the basis of the predicted growth in the older population within the area. It is noted that generally care and retirement living providers look to deliver schemes that are within close proximity to local facilities such as shops and therefore Knutton may not be an attractive opportunity. There may, however, be an opportunity to deliver single level private accommodation, such as bungalows. Whilst not specifically aimed at older persons this accessible accommodation type could be attractive to the older persons demographic, such as bungalows. Bungalows could also help meet the affordable housing

need for smaller properties of one and two bedrooms.

The map opposite identifies the location of older persons accommodation within the vicinity of Knutton.



Over 55s Housing

It is noted that based on those properties found within the search that there is in region of 288 flats for older people, which predominantly comprise of affordable rent units. There are in the region of 161 bungalows within the area for older people and as with the flats are predominantly on an affordable rent tenure.

It is clear that there will be demand for older persons accommodation on the basis of the predicted growth in the older population within the area. It is noted that generally care and retirement living providers look to deliver schemes that are within close proximity to local facilities such as shops and therefore Knutton may not be an attractive opportunity for older persons accommodation such as an extra-care facility, unless a greater range of facilities are provided as part of the wider proposals.

There may, however, be an opportunity to deliver single level private accommodation, such as bungalows, or maisonettes, aimed at over 55's without any care or communal facilities, aimed at those looking to downsize. Bungalows and maisonettes could also help meet the affordable housing need for smaller properties of one and two bedrooms.

It is noted from the above information that there are far more older persons accommodation available on an affordable rent basis, than that of shared ownership / market sale. It is possible that within any new scheme the older persons accommodation provision of either maisonettes / bungalows, or both, could be a mixture of market sale, shared ownership and affordable rent.

Employment & Commercial Market Overview

Research has been undertaken to assess the current employment and commercial market and market conditions within Knutton and the surrounding areas.

The location of Knutton itself is not a predominantly commercial area with the current commercial / employment uses within the immediate vicinity of the high street extending predominantly to small locally operated retail outlets, servicing the residential catchment, in addition to The Enterprise Centre, a collection of workshop / starter units, owned and managed by the council.

There is a cluster of units to the south west of the high street, on Brock Way, off B5368 and on Stonewall Way, off B5044 which comprise of units of a variety of sizes and specifications, including yards, warehouses and small

industrial units. Further commercial properties are located to the north of Knutton, in Cross Heath / Broad Meadow providing a wide variety of commercial and employment properties including trade counter, automotive, distribution warehouses and office accommodation of varying sizes.

Given the current offering of retail and convenience stores within Knutton and the surrounding areas, including a large Morrisons supermarket, a Co-op Food store and Sainsbury's (all within 1 mile) in addition to smaller retail stores in closer proximity (Knutton Village Stores, Bargain Booze and Barmy Bills), it is unlikely that there would be demand for any further retail or convenience within the locality, particularly given the close proximity of Newcastle-under-Lyme Town Centre and the strong retail offering there.

It is also likely that the sites currently under consideration would not support retail development given the area that would be required.

Newcastle Enterprise Centre

The Enterprise Centre, owned and managed by Staffordshire Council provides 36 workshop units ranging from 14 to 59 sqm (151 to 601 sq ft) on flexible rolling monthly licence agreements. The workshops are provided with communal and fully maintained WC's and kitchen areas. The accommodation provides basic, storage / workshop units, which are occupied by a variety of businesses. It is understood that there are currently vacant units to let within the Enterprise Centre.

Our team met with Nicola Kent who represents the Enterprise Centre at Staffordshire County Council in October 2019.

Nicola informed the group that there are 36 units at the Centre, the majority of which are small workshop units. There are four offices, however there has been no market interest in these for some

time. There are current plans to knock together two of these office spaces to form another workshop space. One of these spaces is used by the caretaker and one for desk storage.

The Council do not make a large profit on the NEC, but that the low rents provide a niche opportunity for local small businesses. If we were to provide a new Enterprise Centre elsewhere the investment in the facility would require an increase in rents, thereby driving out many of the existing businesses. It was therefore agreed that retaining the existing facility would be preferable.

There are a number of businesses with similar uses within the Centre. It would be useful to cluster these together. It was suggested that a local produce small store might work at the front of the site adjacent to High Street. Occupiers have included caterers,

brewers, metal and wood workers. Occupants make lunch time trips to the local shop in Knutton.

The building at the front of the site, closest to High Street, has the lowest occupancy level. This building and the parking in front could potentially be used to improve the setting to High Street.

LOCAL CONTEXT

3

LOCAL CONTEXT

Constraints & Opportunities

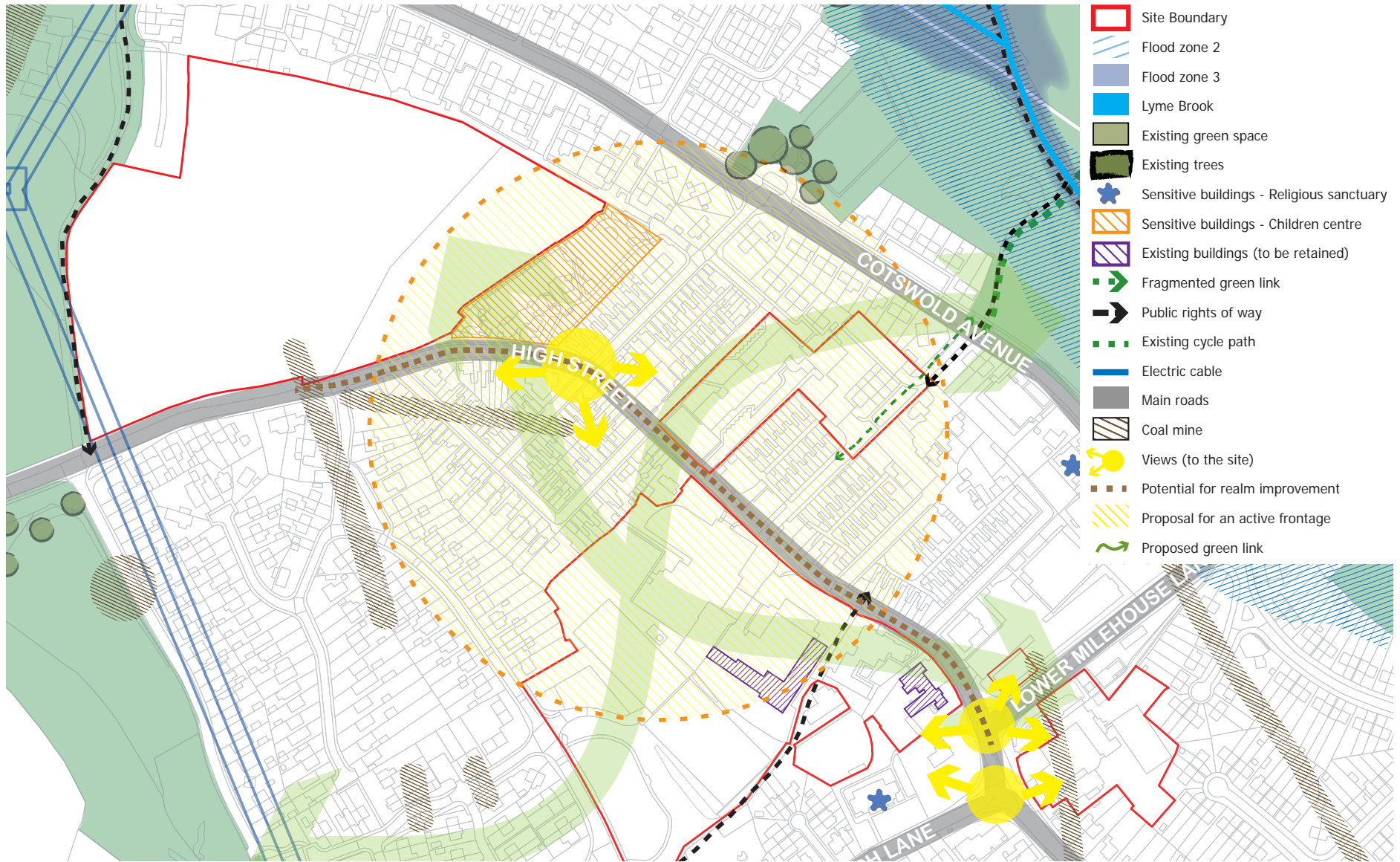
Although detailed technical constraints studies have not been undertaken at this stage, a review of available constraints information for Knutton has been undertaken. The plan opposite illustrates these constraints, alongside opportunities for improvement and development. A number of potential constraints have been highlighted, which include:

- Ground conditions associated with coal mining
- Barriers created by traffic on High Street
- Flood risk
- Existing uses adjacent to potential development sites
- Potential demolition costs

Opportunities include:

- Vacant sites including the former recreation centre
- Opportunity to create a strong gateway to Knutton
- Change of character at High Street






- Site Boundary
- Flood zone 2
- Flood zone 3
- Lyme Brook
- Existing green space
- Existing trees
- ★ Sensitive buildings - Religious sanctuary
- Sensitive buildings - Children centre
- Existing buildings (to be retained)
- ➔ Fragmented green link
- Public rights of way
- Existing cycle path
- Electric cable
- Main roads
- Coal mine
- ⦿ Views (to the site)
- Potential for realm improvement
- Proposal for an active frontage
- ➔ Proposed green link

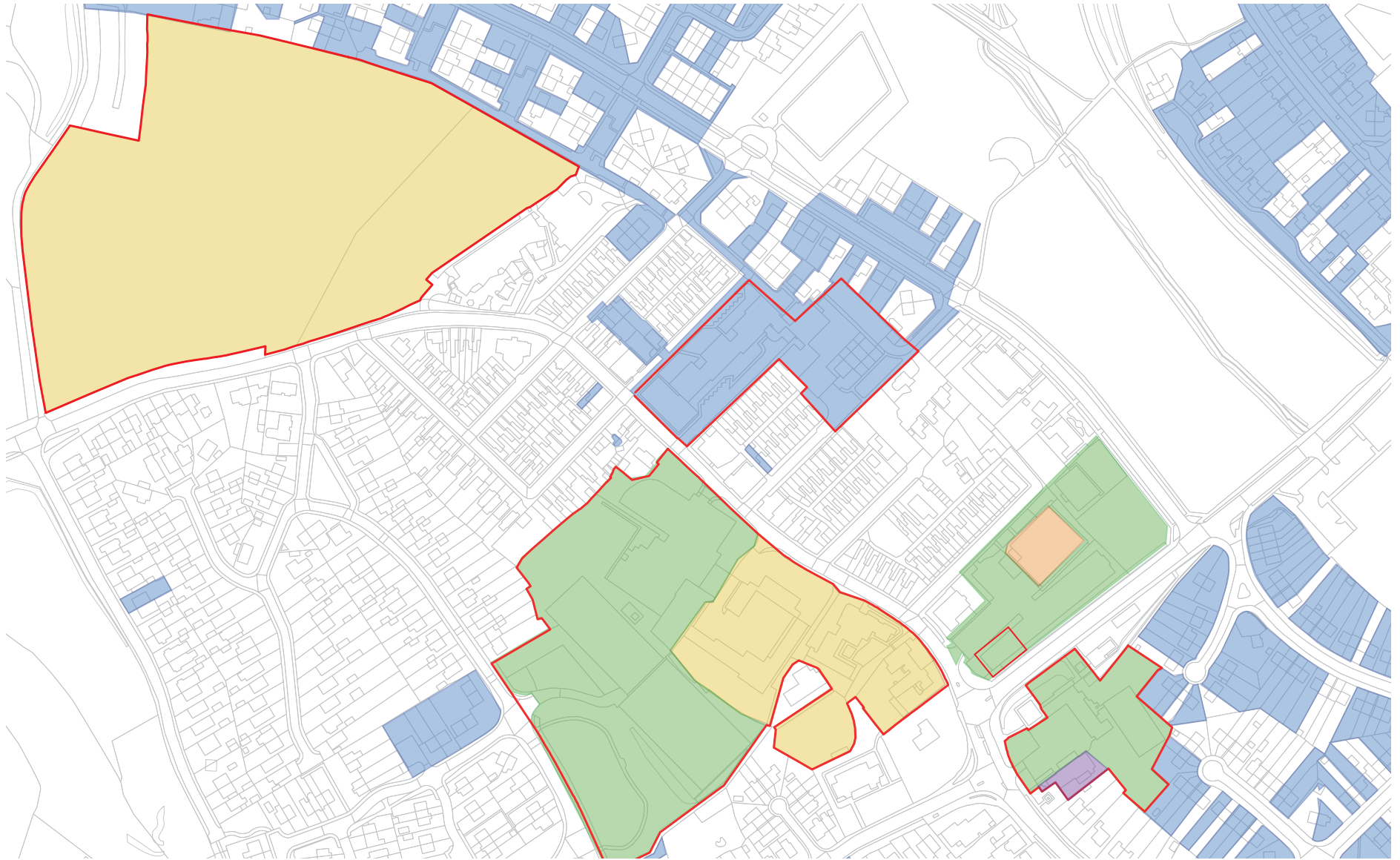
LOCAL CONTEXT

Land Ownership

There are a number of large areas in Knutton which are owned by Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council and by Staffordshire County Council. The plan opposite illustrates these land ownerships, along with land owned by Aspire Housing and the NHS.

-  Site Boundary
-  Aspire Owned Land
-  Newcastle Borough Council Owned Land
-  Staffordshire County Council Owned Land
-  Privately Owned Land
-  NHS Owned Land

The areas identified on the plan illustrate key opportunities for development by the Councils and Aspire Housing and provide a strong starting point for the consideration of masterplanning proposals.



AREAS OF FOCUS



AREAS OF FOCUS

Key Development Sites

Section 2 highlighted the land within Knutton which is owned by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Staffordshire County Council and Aspire Housing. As the three key stakeholders in the masterplanning process, their landholdings formed a starting point from which to consider proposals to improve the centre of Knutton. A series of development opportunity sites have been identified, these include:

- Land between High Street / Acacia Avenue
- Land at Blackbank Road
- Community Centre and former Knutton Clinic
- Land at Lower Milehouse Lane
- Gordon Court (Aspire)
- Castletown Grange (Aspire)

The following section sets out the constraints and opportunities associated with each of these sites. These factors will feed into the development appraisal and delivery strategy for each site.

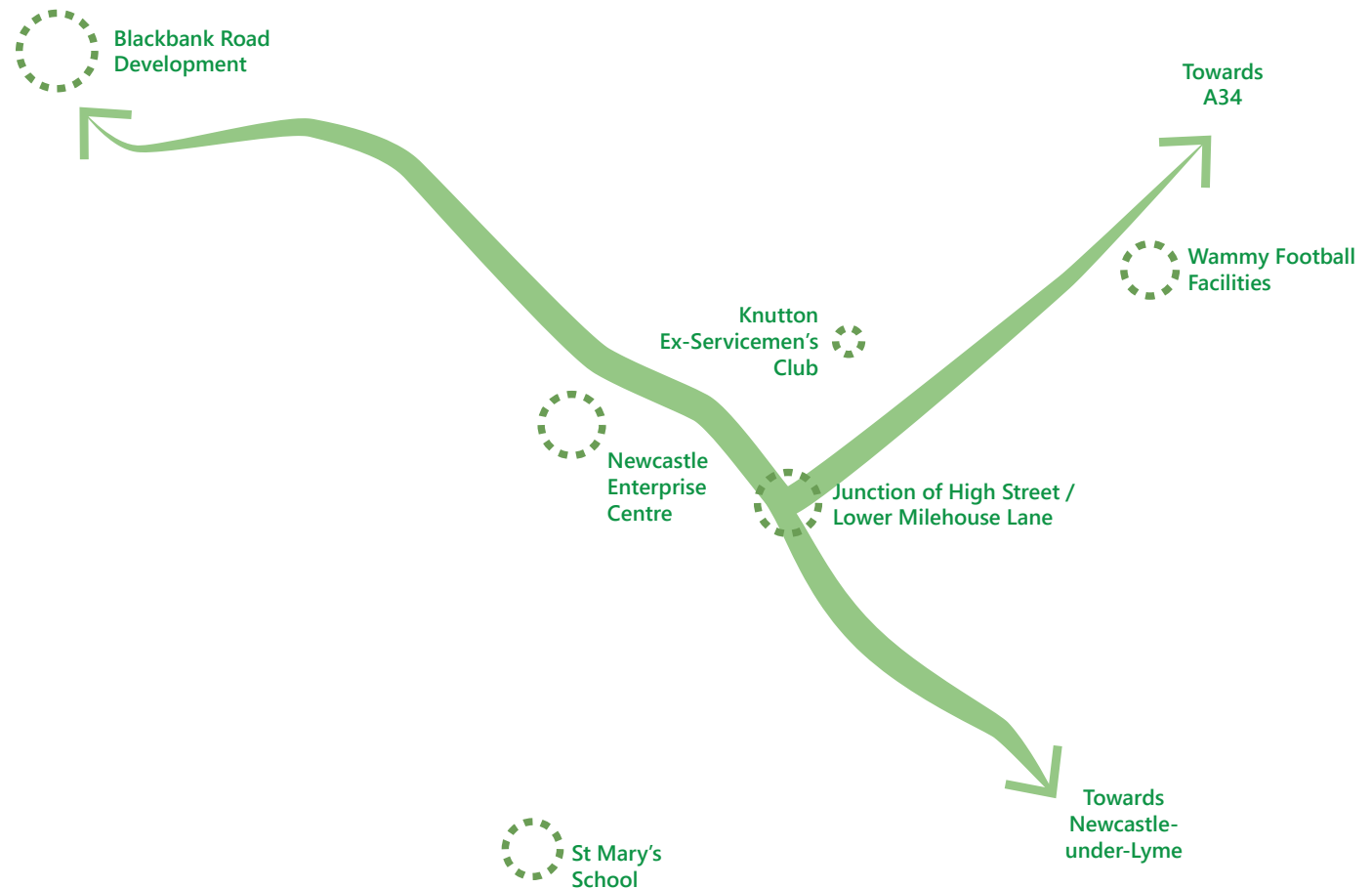


The sites identified will be considered in the context of the wider area, including how they link together and to existing facilities.

Consideration needs to be given to the overall picture of Knutton and how these development sites work together to deliver the Vision. Phasing will be important, as will a strategic view regarding the type and tenure of development and how this is strategically located throughout Knutton.

This will be particularly important with regard to Aspire Housing's wider housing provision strategy and how development at Gordon Court and Castletown Grange is incorporated.

A strategic consideration will also be important with regard to the proposed delivery strategy. Due to the achievable sales rates locally, viability will be a constraining factor, meaning that these sites will need to be considered as a whole.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Aspire Housing

The most central area of Knutton, between High Street and Acacia Avenue, forms one of the key redevelopment opportunities. Knutton Recreation Centre was formerly located on High Street, in the northern corner of this site. The Centre had been vacant since 2012 and was demolished and the site cleared in 2016.

A bowling green was formerly accessed through the site, however this is now inaccessible and is no longer in use.

Existing Buildings

Three buildings remain on the site, these include Newcastle Enterprise Centre, the CEDARS short stay school and pupil referral unit and the former School House.

The Market Review in Section 2 summaries the Council's position with regard to the Enterprise Centre. It is important that this building remains in Knutton as it provides a specialist service which could not be replicated elsewhere. There is an opportunity to improve the visual amenity of the buildings and the Centre's presence on the High Street.

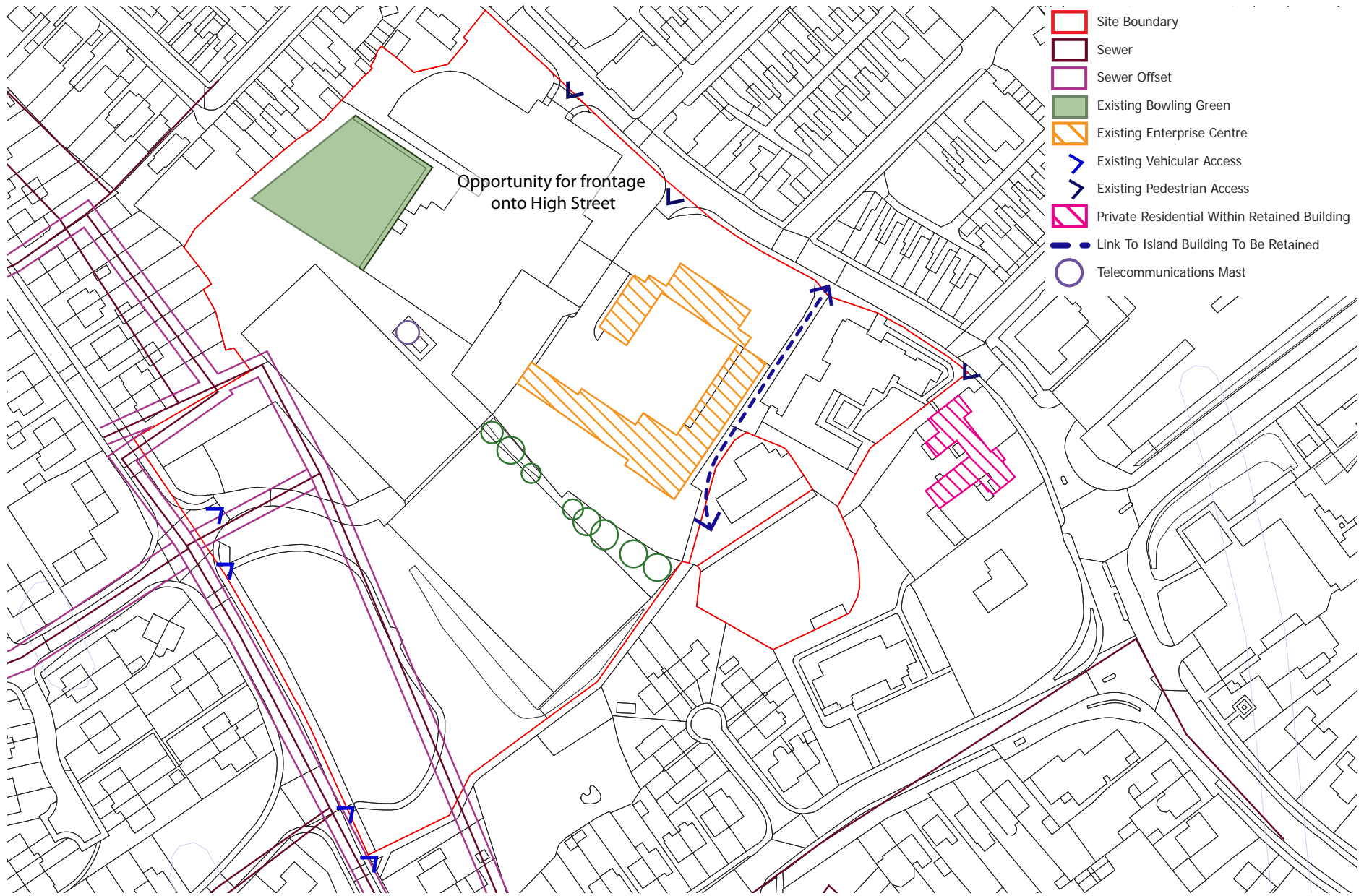
At the time of writing, Staffordshire County Council are undertaking a review of the CEDARS pupil referral unit and its location. It is understood that a new purpose built facility is likely to be best provided in Newcastle-under-Lyme or surrounding area.

The former School House, located adjacent to St Mary's Vicarage, is privately owned. It is understood that the current owner has plans to convert this building to residential use.

Utilities

Severn Trent Water combined and surface water sewers run across the south-west of the site.

A telecoms communication mast is located in the centre of the site. At the time of writing, contact had been made with the service provider's agent. It is recommended that the mast is moved away from the site. The associated cost is included in the appraisal produced by Thomas Lister which sits alongside this document.



- Site Boundary
- Sewer
- Sewer Offset
- Existing Bowling Green
- Existing Enterprise Centre
- ↗ Existing Vehicular Access
- ↘ Existing Pedestrian Access
- Private Residential Within Retained Building
- - - Link To Island Building To Be Retained
- Telecommunications Mast

Opportunity for frontage onto High Street

AREAS OF FOCUS

High Street / Acacia Avenue

Sports Facilities

An assessment has been undertaken of the sports facilities associated with the site. This includes the former 3g pitch located to the south of the County Council's Enterprise Centre and the former tennis courts and bowls green, located to the south of the site of the former Recreation Centre.

Through site visits a further grassed space was identified in the masterplan area, adjacent to the former Recreation Centre, part of the land adjoining Acacia Avenue. The site is general open space and its status and future use / replacement should therefore be subject to general open space policy and considerations as opposed to playing fields policy. It was therefore not included in the formal sports facilities assessment.

In terms of the 3g pitch the Council confirm that the pitch was grant funded in 2005 by the Football Foundation. The grant conditions are in place for 21 years, however, negotiations have been held and accepted for these conditions to be transferred to the new 3g pitch at Keele University, for the balance of the agreement. The football development programme previously run at Knutton now takes place at Keele in partnership with Port Vale FC.

These arrangements are reflected in the PPS and Local Football Facilities Plan (LFFP), which in terms of 3g pitches, identifies King's School in Kidsgrove as a priority.

Nothing has changed since the 2015 PPS. The former 3g pitch is therefore considered to have been addressed in planning terms, with mitigation via the new 3g pitch at Keele University. The site can therefore be re-developed without any further mitigation.

In terms of the former tennis and bowls provision the 2015 PPS states the following. Significant spare capacity is identified on the bowling green and given the rest of the site is unsustainable, the PPS recommends relocation of the current bowls usage to Silverdale.

In terms of tennis, four disused tennis courts were identified but there was no identified demand to retain these courts and they were deemed suitable for disposal. This position has not changed since 2015 and in policy terms it is considered that the tennis courts can therefore be classed as surplus to requirements.

Further detail on the former sports facilities on this site is included in Knutton Masterplan Sports Planning Statement, prepared by WYG in November 2019.



Top left - bottom right
Knutton Enterprise Centre
'Kick-about' space at
Acacia Avenue
Former 3G pitch
Old School building at
High Street
Children's play area and
telephone mast

AREAS OF FOCUS

Blackbank Road

There is an opportunity to expand the housing type and tenure in Knutton through the development of the land at Blackbank Road. The development of this site would infill the western edge of Knutton.

Opportunities & Constraints Boundaries

To the north of the site is existing residential development off Cotswold Avenue. The eastern edge of the site bounds the Newcastle-under-Lyme Children's Centre. To the south the site is bounded by High Street, from which access would be taken. Adjacent to the north-eastern corner of the site are allotments.

Utilities

Overhead electricity cables run north-south adjacent to the western edge of the site. The cable crosses the south-westernmost corner of the site. The stand-off distance may vary dependent on the height of the pylon and specific

requirements of National Grid. This will need to be explored further through a utilities survey.

Flood Risk and Drainage

The site is located within flood zone 1. Anecdotal evidence suggests that flooding may have occurred on the site historically. It is therefore recommended that a drainage assessment is undertaken for the site.

Sports Facilities

The Knutton Masterplan Sports Planning Statement, referenced in the previous spread, provides an assessment of the sports facilities provided at Blackbank Road.

Sport England confirmed that the 2015 PPS identifies Blackbank Road as a site for disposal in the PPS Action Plan (extract below). Given it is listed as providing two youth pitches, but has no changing facilities/car parking on site (as illustrated by the aerial shot below), Sport England were happy to

accept £140,000 compensation (the cost equivalent of two youth pitches) to be re-invested into football within the local catchment in accordance with the priorities set out in the PPS and agreed via the leisure team at the Borough and Sport England.

The strategic site identified at the time for the Knutton area was the Wammy and it was agreed that any mitigation should be available to support this site. There have however been developments over the past 4-years, in respect of Blackbank Road. Where the site was previously un-used, Knutton Community FC have now been given a new 3-year lease on the site, its previous status as lapsed / disused is therefore less certain. The lease was completed to Staffordshire Council of Voluntary Youth Services, at £1 per annum, term of 3 years from 30/08/2018 ending 29/08/2021 - subject to 3 months-notice/break date at any point. Furthermore, the Council's existing Playing Pitch Strategy

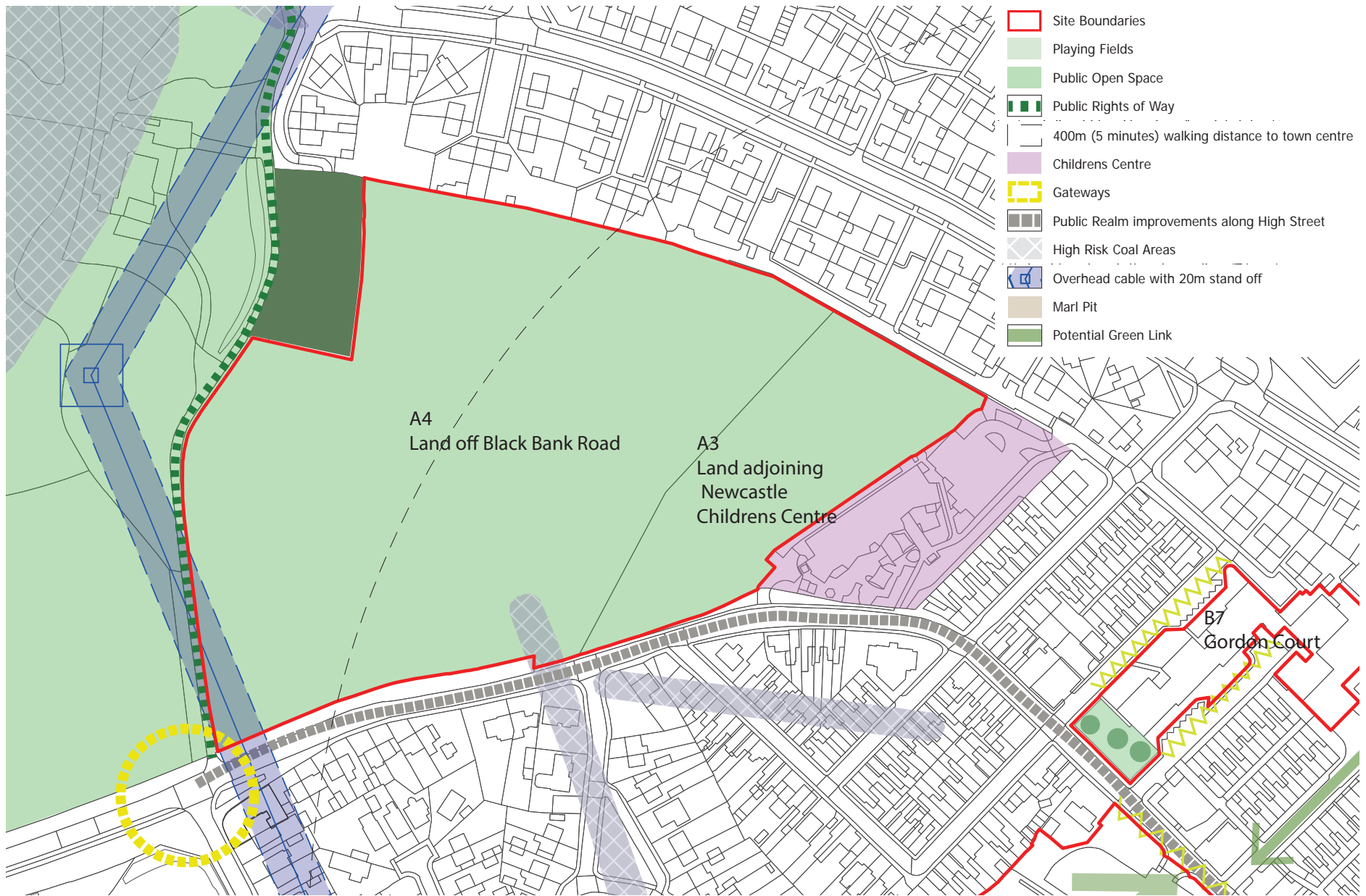
(PPS) is also being updated, as at over 3-years old it is considered to be out of date. This is likely to be completed in September 2020. A detailed assessment of the site was undertaken, and concluded that the existing demand at Blackbank Playing Fields can be relocated to the Wammy without displacing any teams that already use the facility.

Mining

The areas hatched purple on the plan opposite identify areas of high coal mining risk. There is however limited data available on ground conditions for the site. It is therefore recommended that a ground investigation assessment is conducted.

Landscape planning

The site is designated as an area of landscape regeneration – Policy N22. Where development can be permitted, developers will be expected to use the opportunity provided by the development to make a positive contribution towards landscape regeneration.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Community Centre & Clinic

The site to the south-east of the High Street / Lower Milehouse Lane junction is currently occupied by three buildings; Knutton Community Centre, the former Knutton Clinic (now vacant) and the privately owned First Scan Clinic.

The Community Centre is owned by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and is run by a team from the local community. The building is in need of significant investment. A Building Condition Survey was undertaken by WYG in September 2019. The survey identified a number of elements of the building which are in poor or unacceptable condition and estimated a significant projected expenditure associated with repair and replacement works required.

The Council have indicated that there is limited funding available to address these costs and that the relocation of the Community Centre would be the preferred option.

Early stage discussions are currently taking place with regard to providing a replacement community facility alongside changing facilities adjacent to the football pitches at the Wammy Football Field.

Additional Care Facility Opportunity

Staffordshire County Council have identified a future opportunity to provide a service hub for an additional care facility in Knutton. The support is currently provided directly to residents' homes, but would benefit from a central live-in facility for c. 20 people, with up to 40 residential staff. This is considered as an option for this site.





- Site Boundary
- High Risk Coal Area
- Existing Trees
- Existing Sub Station
- > Existing Vehicular Access
- Existing Garage
- Existing Private Building
- Existing War Memorial

AREAS OF FOCUS

Lower Milehouse Lane

To the north of the Lower Milehouse Lane / High Street junction is the Knutton Ex-Servicemen's Club. The Club is set back from High Street, with a large car park adjacent to the road. A number of mature trees are situated along the boundary of the site.

Early consultation has been undertaken with the Ex-Servicemen's Club. Representatives from the Club highlighted the success of the business, related to the size of the facility and associated parking available. They are therefore keen to retain both of these assets.

Gateway to Knutton

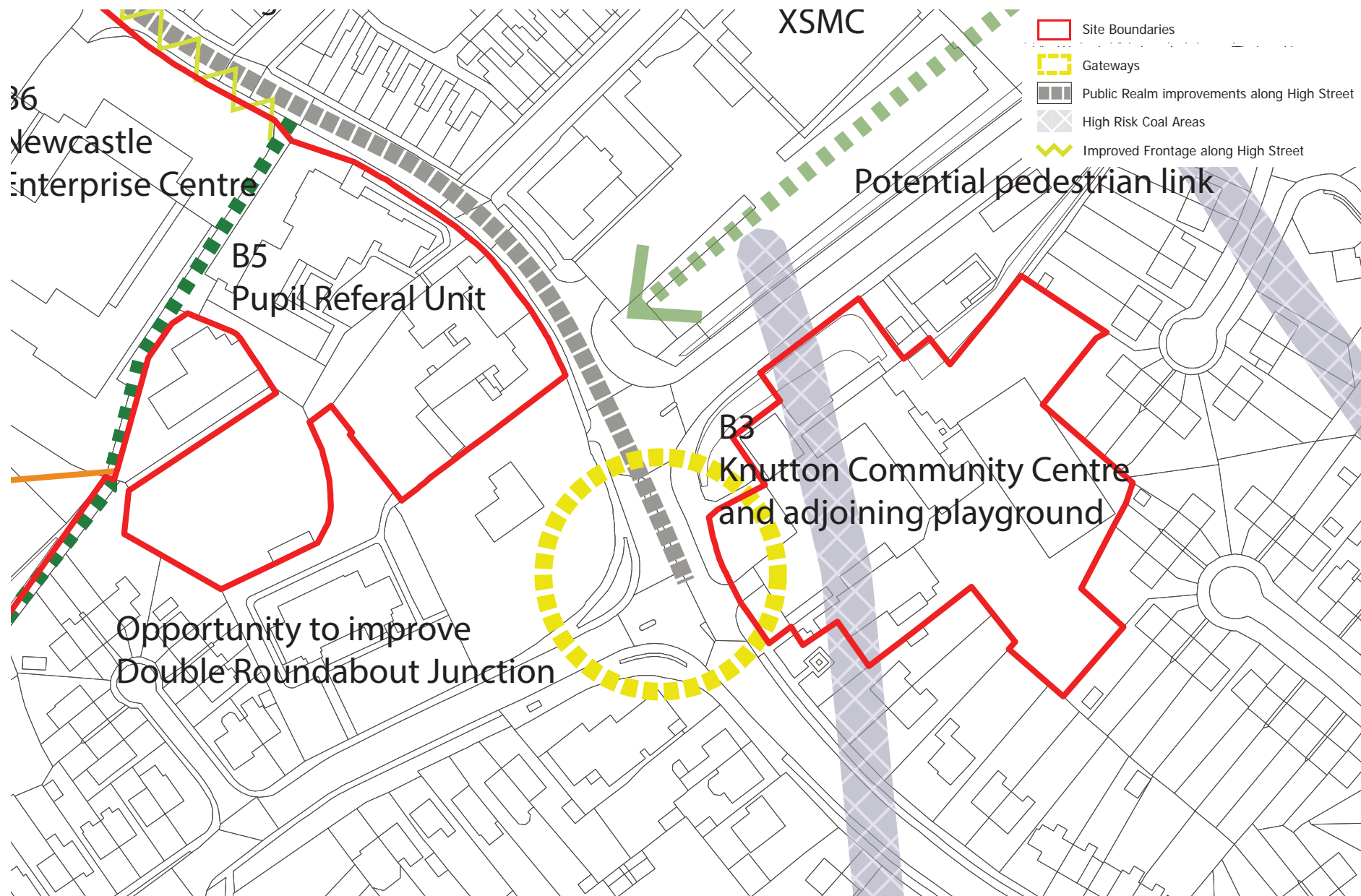
The southernmost corner of this site sits at the gateway to the High Street. At present there is nothing to highlight arrival into the local centre. This corner provides a major opportunity to locate a focal building.

Connectivity to the Wammy

This site sits along a strategic pedestrian link between the High Street and the Wammy leisure facility. These two important parts of Knutton are not far from one-another, but the route between them is not attractive.

There is an opportunity to provide an improved pedestrian and cycle experience between High Street and Lower Milehouse Lane, including new activity on a small part of this site. .





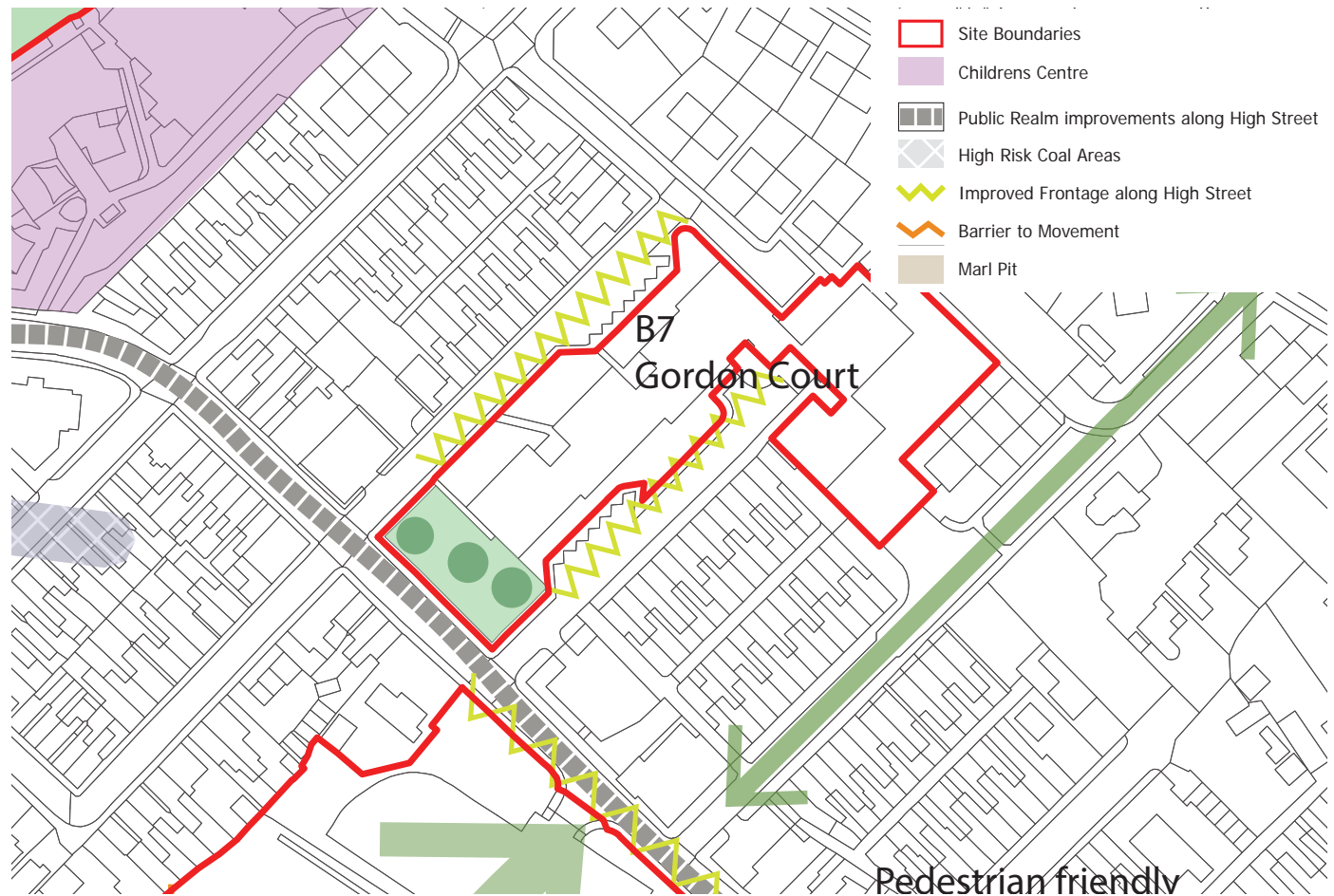
AREAS OF FOCUS

Aspire Housing

Gordon Court

The current Aspire Housing properties at Gordon Court are identified for renewal in the wider Aspire housing strategy. There is therefore an opportunity to provide some new, aspirational housing in the centre of Knutton. Due to their central location the site would potentially be appropriate for older-persons accommodation. Aspire provide a range of house types and tenures and have suggested that maisonettes or two bed houses would be appropriate in this central location. This is supported by the Market Assessment produced by Thomas Lister.

Site constraints are likely to include risks associated with mining. It is recommended that a ground investigation study is undertaken.



Castletown Grange

Although Castletown Grange is not situated in the centre of Knutton, it is an important site in Aspire Housing's strategic provision. The existing Castletown Grange block is located between Ronaldsway Drive and Tynwald Grange. The level of the site drops significantly from north-west to south-east. There are a number of mature trees within the site which should be retained where possible.

A second site is situated to the west of Ronaldsway Drive. The site currently includes bungalows situated around parking courts. There is a significant amount of open space and vegetation to the rear of these homes.



MASTERPLAN

5

MASTERPLAN

Strategic Plan for Knutton

The strategic masterplan has been developed through an assessment of the opportunities for regeneration, along with improved landscape, public space and connectivity.

The strategic opportunities for Knutton have been considered in conjunction with individual assessments of, and masterplans for key development sites. The key features of the masterplan include:

- 1** Improved frontage and increased activity on High Street. A new community centre will replace the existing provision. New wings will be added to the Enterprise Centre
- 2** Residential development will infill the area between Acacia Avenue and High Street
- 3** Aspirational new housing at Blackbank Road
- 4** Improved gateway to Knutton
- 5** Improved public realm including links along High Street, Lower Milehouse Lane and Peake Street
- 6** New changing facility for Knutton Football Club at the Wammy



MASTERPLAN

High Street / Acacia Avenue

Existing Site

The site includes the former recreation centre and associated tennis courts, former 3G pitches, bowling green, children's play area and informal open space. These sit alongside the Enterprise Centre and the Pupil Referral Unit.

The site is bounded by High Street to the north-east and by Downham Road / Acacia Avenue to the south-west. There is an existing public footpath which runs adjacent to and through the site. This route is not well overlooked, it is therefore considered that re-routing this link through the site would be of benefit.

The following pages provide an overview of the options which have been considered for the redevelopment of this site. A preferred development option and associated appraisal is provided.



SITE COMPONENTS OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

BENEFITS

CONSTRAINTS

New Residential

There is an opportunity to provide new, aspirational housing in the centre of Knutton. This would create a strong presence on High Street and provide a range of types and tenures, including homes for older people.



- Development of currently vacant sites
- New, quality housing including bungalows
- Presence onto High Street

- Viability of the development when taking into account ground conditions and other technical constraints as well as local values

New Community Centre

The current Community Centre is not fit for purpose and so there is an opportunity to provide a new facility which could create a new central hub on High Street.



- Central community hub
- Quality building
- Presence on High Street

- Funding for a new Community Centre at this location is less likely to be achieved than at the Wammy
- Revenue and running costs constraints

Enterprise Centre

The Enterprise Centre provides an important facility for local businesses. Retention of this building is important and there is an opportunity to enhance the presence onto High Street through a new northern wing.



- Expansion of niche provision for local businesses
- Presence on High Street

- Funding source to be identified for refurbishment / rebuild of High Street wing

Pupil Referral Unit

Staffordshire County Council are in the process of assessing the options for a new, purpose built facility. It is considered that the current site is not the optimum location.



- Awaiting outcome of Staffordshire County Council assessment

- Awaiting outcome of Staffordshire County Council assessment

Village Green & Play Space

High Street would benefit from a new village green style open space, including children's play facilities. A replacement 'kickabout' space would also need to be provided.



- New attractive open space
- Community space on High Street
- Required by NULBC Landscape

- Reduces the amount of built form on the site, therefore impacting on viability of the development

Retail Offer

Local residents would like to see a new convenience store with post office in the local centre.



- Expanded local retail offer
- Within walking distance of Knutton residents

- Market Assessment states that there is not a market for retail in Knutton

MASTERPLAN

Hight Street / Acacia Avenue

Village Green

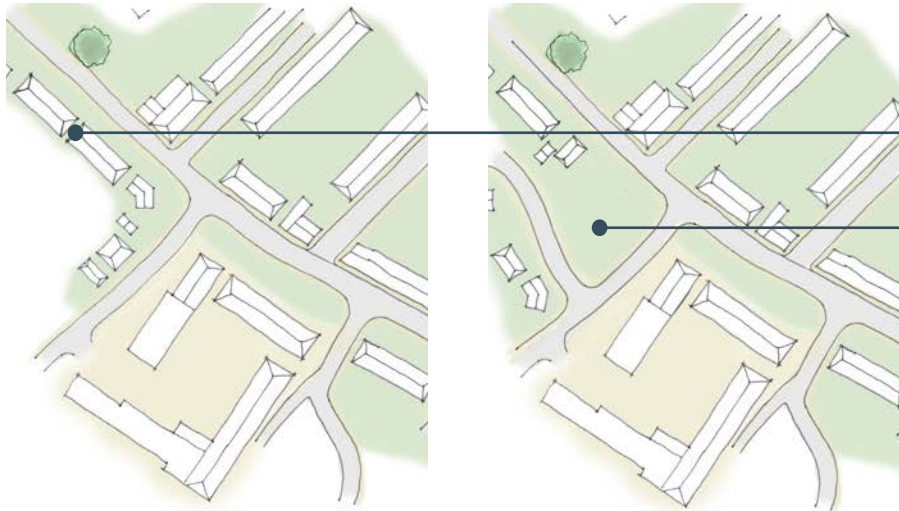
Two masterplan options have been considered as follows:

- village green on High Street
- no village green, open space provided elsewhere on the site

By providing a village green on the site, fewer residential units could be provided. This is however offset by the placemaking benefits of the open space adjacent to High Street, in the centre of Knutton. The open space in this location creates a strong central space in the village to be used by the community.

An identified outcome of the stakeholder consultation workshop held in March 2020 was the opportunity to situate the war memorial in the centre of Knutton. Following the reconfiguration of the double-mini roundabout junction, the memorial was moved from its former location in the centre of the main roundabout, to its current position adjacent to the former clinic.

Although relocating the memorial a second time would need to be addressed in a sensitive manner, there is a real opportunity to locate this symbol of local pride within the centre of the village.



Providing dwellings to the north west of the site will create additional frontage onto High Street

The alternative option at this location is to create a village green. The war memorial would be positioned in a prominent position and there is also the opportunity to provide a children's play area





Indicative images of how the village green could look

MASTERPLAN

Hight Street / Acacia Avenue

Community Centre

Consideration has been given to the opportunity to co-locate community services in a single building in the centre of Knutton. Services such as the former clinic are no longer located in Knutton. An indicative plan of the preferred community centre layout is provided opposite.

The layout is based on discussions with the existing community centre and before- and after-school club, and provides a compact facility from which to run events, meetings and to undertake child-care.

Through stakeholder consultation it is clear that providing a facility on High Street is important in putting the heart back into Knutton. Providing a new space to replace the existing Community Centre which is not fit for purpose will be important. There is an opportunity to link the Community Centre to a village green and children's

play facility and potentially to a community cafe associated with the Enterprise Centre.

It is estimated that the cost to construct the new community centre will be in the order of £790,000, which would not be covered by the capital receipt received from the disposal of the sites. There is also a viability consideration with regard to the running costs of a new community centre.

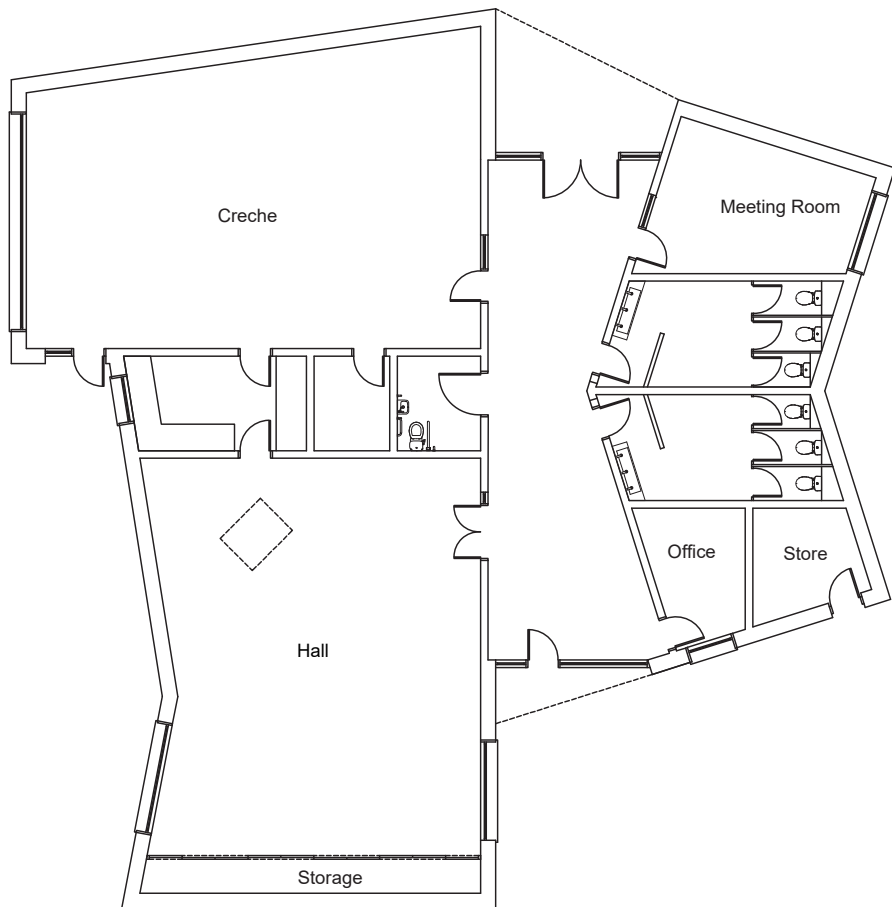
Due to the constraints with regard to the viability of the new facility, consideration has been given to the costs / benefits of providing a facility which does not provide space for the existing before and after school club. It is estimated that the construction of the reduced size building would be £550,000. This would be a small community hall with associated kitchen, meeting room and toilet facilities.

Positives of Reduced Size Centre

- Cost saving with regard to construction and management requirements

Negatives of Reduced Size Centre

- Smaller community hub building
- Potential increase in child care cost for existing users
- Opportunity to share supporting facilities between two uses in preferred option



Indicative images of how the community centre could look

MASTERPLAN

Hight Street / Acacia Avenue

Enterprise Centre

Newcastle-under-Lyme Enterprise Centre provides commercial space for local businesses. The size and rental price of the units serve a niche market, targeting smaller local enterprises. It is therefore important that this facility is retained.

It does not currently positively support the placemaking value of the High Street as the buildings are set back from the street, separated from High Street by a small car park.

Discussions with the Council's Enterprise Centre Manager have revealed that there are a number of office units within the Enterprise Centre which have a low occupancy rate. It is therefore recommended that two new wings are redeveloped to replace the existing north-western and north-eastern wings.

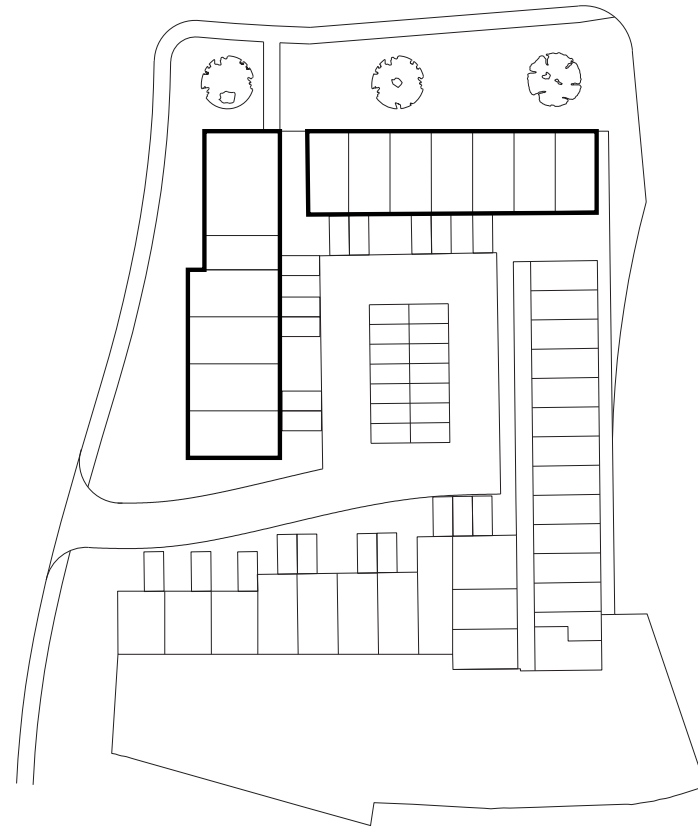
These would be situated so as to provide more direct frontage to High Street and the car parking moved into the central courtyard.

The new wings to the north and west could provide 11 new business units. The northern wing totals 347sqm and the west wing 409sqm.

There is a potential opportunity to provide a community cafe connected to the Enterprise Centre to provide a hub for activity in the centre of Knutton.

A consequence of an increase in activity will be a visual indicator to passing traffic that slower speeds should be adopted through the village.

The north-western wing is made up of two new buildings totalling 371sqm. The north-eastern wing totals 354sqm.



Pupil Referral Unit

The High Street masterplan shows the relocation of the PRU and development of 5no. 2 bedroom mews houses and 4no. 3 bedroom detached houses. The associated appraisal produced by Thomas Lister shows the impact on viability of retaining the PRU.



MASTERPLAN

High Street / Acacia Avenue

Preferred Masterplan Option

The key elements of the preferred masterplan option, as illustrated opposite, include:

- 1** new, quality residential units
- 2** new green space with children's play facilities
- 3** opportunity to relocate war memorial to new village green
- 4** new community centre
- 5** attractive new frontage to Enterprise Centre and opportunity for community cafe
- 6** new open space adjacent to Downham Road
- 7** attractive landscaping along High Street

Having considered the benefits and constraints, the masterplan shows the PRU as being relocated. The existing PRU building is replaced with new mews style housing, creating an attractive frontage onto High Street. It is assumed that demolition of the existing building and construction of new properties would be the most viable option. It is however recommended that, upon confirmation of the relocation of the PRU, a demolition survey is undertaken on the existing building.



Schedule

House Type	No.	%
2 bed mews	15	22.1
2 bed semi-detached	14	16.3
2 bed bungalow	3	8.3
2 bed TOTAL	32	45.6
3 bed semi-detached	27	31.4
3 bed detached	16	18.6
3 bed TOTAL	43	54.4
TOTAL	75	100.0

Indicative images of house types





MASTERPLAN

Blackbank Road

Existing Site

The site at Blackbank Road is currently used by Knutton Football Club, however as noted in Section 4, the current Council guidance states that the club is to be relocated to the Wammy. The Council's Playing Pitch Strategy is currently being revised. A detailed review of the sports requirements is included as an appendix to this document.

There is an opportunity to develop this site, infilling the western edge of the developed area of Knutton. The development of this site would provide attractive, quality homes and would maximise the opportunities associated with the views to the Apedale Valley to the north-west. This site would support residential values towards the higher end of those seen in Knutton. An associated developer contribution would be sought towards the provision of new changing facilities for the Football Club at the Wammy.



Open Space

As noted in Section 4 of this document, Policy N22 of the Local Plan states that developers will be expected to use the opportunity provided by the development of this site to make a positive contribution towards landscape regeneration. This will include retaining and enhancing the setting of existing trees and hedgerows, as well as providing new areas of open space and pedestrian and cycle links to existing open spaces.

There is also an opportunity to orientate houses so as to benefit from the views to the west of the site towards the open countryside.



MASTERPLAN

Blackbank Road

Preferred Masterplan Option

The Market Assessment undertaken by Thomas Lister provided guidance on the mix of residential units appropriate for this site. As an edge of urban area site, there is an opportunity to provide some larger, high quality homes maximising the views across the open space to the west.

It is important that the development is sympathetic to the existing buildings adjacent to the site, particularly the houses to the north off Cotswold Avenue.

The masterplan should provide a landscaped buffer, with development density decreasing towards the western edge of the site. Higher density development should be provided adjacent to existing residential development to the north. Landscaping is used to provide a central community green space, as well as an offset from the children's centre.

Schedule

House Type	No.	%
1 bed	4	3.3
2 bed mews	24	27.9
2 bed bungalow	5	4.1
2 bed TOTAL	29	23.6
3 bed semi-detached	48	39.0
3 bed detached	34	27.6
3 bed TOTAL	82	66.7
4 bed detached	8	6.5
TOTAL	123	100.0



Indicative images of house types



MASTERPLAN

Former Community Centre

Preferred Masterplan Option

The proposals for this site include the demolition of the community centre and acquisition and demolition of the former clinic building. Discussions are currently ongoing between the County Council and NHS regarding the acquisition process, supported by guidance from Thomas Lister.

Section 6 of this document outlines the viability assessments and delivery advice with regard to each of these sites. It is proposed that this site is delivered by Aspire Housing, providing a mix of affordable and market housing. These units could be appropriate for older persons accommodation, including maisonettes.

Schedule

House Type	No.	%
1 bed maisonette	10	47.6
2 bed semi	11	52.4
2 bed TOTAL	11	52.4
TOTAL	21	100.0



Alternative Options

Options were produced which illustrate alternative ways in which the opportunities and constraints of the site, including the existing trees, level changes, electricity substation and private clinic, can be addressed. It is noted that there is an opportunity to relocate the war memorial to the centre of Knutton, however, as this has not yet been tested through public consultation, these options allow for its retention in-situ.

It is noted that in all options the existing private clinic is retained as the acquisition of the building would have a negative impact on viability.



Option B



Option C

Option B below left uses a bespoke house type to maximise the number of units on the site. This house type is architecturally interesting and supports the aspirational goal of the strategic masterplan. Use of this house type would however have a negative impact on the viability of the site.

Option C below right uses a more traditional combination of two and three bedroom houses.

MASTERPLAN

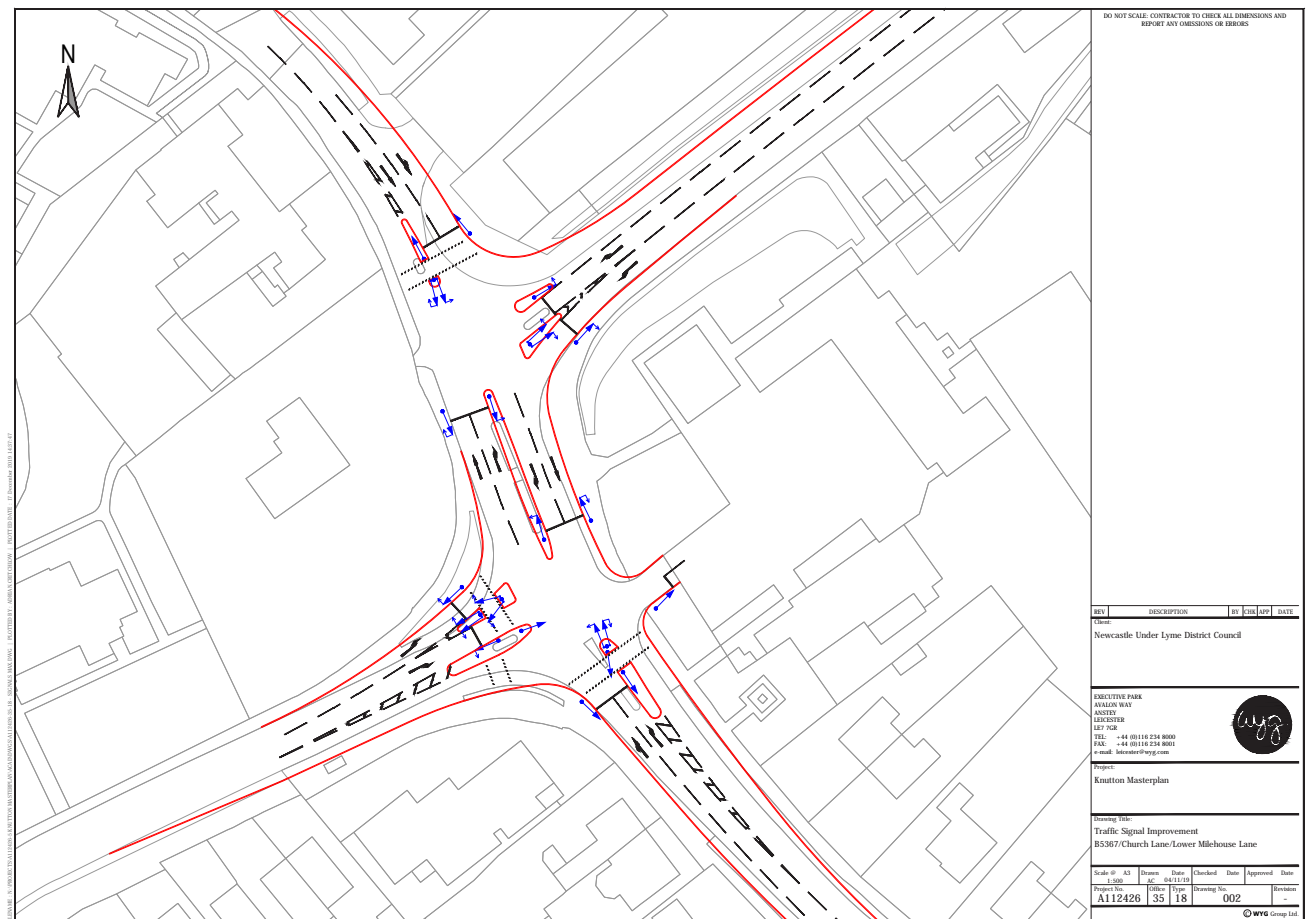
Lower Milehouse Lane / High Street

Preferred Masterplan Option

The double mini-roundabout junction at High Street / Lower Milehouse Lane is the gateway to the centre of Knutton, although at present there is no indication that you are approaching a local centre.

A modelling exercise undertaken on the junction confirms that it currently operates over capacity. The inputs and results of which are appended to this document. The assessment takes into account future development and uplift in traffic and based on this an indicative layout has been designed to improve the junction capacity.

Although the improvements would not allow the junction to operate under capacity, it would lead to an improvement in traffic flow.

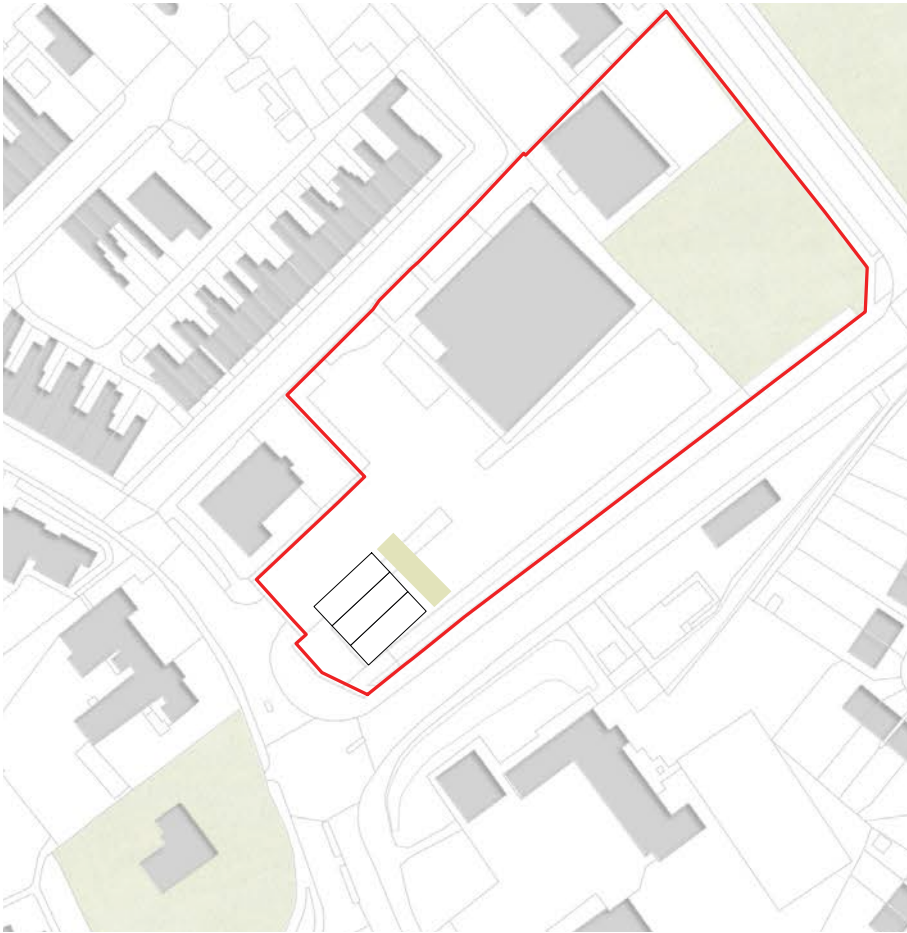


At present development is set back from the road in this area, however there is an opportunity to provide a 'gateway' marking a sense of arrival to the local centre using aspirational, high quality architecture.

This would take the form of three residential units sited on the corner of the site currently occupied by the Ex-Servicemen's Club car park. Agreement is required between Newcastle Borough Council and the Ex-Servicemen's Club with regard to development of this land and the associated opportunities for investment in the Club building.

Schedule

House Type	No.	%
3 bed mews	3	100.0
TOTAL	3	100.0



Indicative images of house types

MASTERPLAN

Gordon Court

Preferred Masterplan Option

A number of options have been considered at Gordon Court. The proposals include the demolition of the existing Aspire Housing buildings and replacement with new, high quality homes. Due to the location in the centre of Knutton, close to local facilities, it is considered to be an appropriate location for an element of older persons accommodation.

The preferred option uses classic house types to improve the viability of the site, in a back-front arrangement to ensure that both Gordon Street and Chapel Street benefit from active frontage.

At this strategic stage consultation has not been undertaken with the local planning authority. This would be undertaken at planning application stage. It is however considered that the preferred option would be planning policy compliant, as would options B and D. Although in option C back to back distances do not meet recommendations they are in keeping with the surrounding environment.

Schedule

House Type	No.	%
2 bed semi	27	100.0
TOTAL	27	100.0



Alternative Options

Consideration has been given to alternative layouts which could be considered at Gordon Court. **Option B** illustrates how a bespoke dual-fronted house or maisonette could be used to provide frontage onto Gordon Street and Chapel Street. These units would be served by frontage parking.

Option C most closely replicates the existing street structure, with a terrace of houses reflecting the surrounding area. It is noted that this layout does not provide the 21m distance between backs of houses which is typically requested by planning authorities.

Option D uses maisonettes across the site, with a communal open space. This option does not provide the active frontage onto Gordon Street.



Option C: 34 units



Option B: 24 units



Option D: 28 units

MASTERPLAN

Castletown Grange

Preferred Masterplan Option

The masterplan opposite illustrates how new housing and maisonettes could replace the existing Aspire Housing provision at Ronaldson Drive. The proposals for the eastern site take into account the site levels and retain all existing trees. The layout for the western site maximises the use of this space, but does not impose upon the mature trees around the edges of this site, some of which will fall within rear gardens.

Schedule

House Type	No.	%
1 bed Maisonette	14	32.6
2 bed semi	12	27.9
2 bed detached	3	7.0
2 bed TOTAL	15	34.9
3 bed semi	11	25.6
3 bed detached	2	7.0
3 bed TOTAL	13	32.6
TOTAL	42	100.0



VIABILITY & DELIVERY



VIABILITY & DELIVERY

Viability

In order to assess the viability of the sites proposed for residential development, development appraisals have been undertaken in order to derive the residual land values for each of the sites, so as to ascertain the potential receipt generated for the landowner. Other costs associated with the overall project, including the construction of a new community centre and improvement works to the Enterprise Centre have then been considered to understand whether the potential land receipts could also cover those costs.

The gross development value has been estimated for each site, with total development costs and an allowance for developer's profit deducted, in order to arrive at a residual land value. For the purpose of this exercise, initially the proposed schemes have been assumed to be planning policy compliant, with affordable housing provision of 25%, to be split between social rent (50%)

and shared equity / intermediate housing (50%).

To inform the development appraisals, research has been undertaken to establish comparable residential sale transactions within Knutton and the surrounding areas – ST5 postcode, in order to arrive at an opinion of value on a £ per sq m basis. Residential values within Knutton and the surrounding areas, including Cross Heath and Silverdale within the ST5 postcode are relatively low. From the comparable evidence gathered, it is noted that the Baldwins Gate residential development scheme has achieved significantly higher values than other schemes. It is considered that this is due to the more rural setting of the development and it is considered that the Blackbank Road site, would achieve values closer to those achieved at Baldwins Gate given its slightly more rural nature than that of the other two sites. Therefore, values circa 10% higher have been

adopted for the Blackbank Road scheme compared to the other two schemes, and this is akin with the council's instructions.

A number of indicative costs have been provided by the council and Aspire Housing and by various teams within WYG, highlighting a number of 'known' abnormal development costs. Each site has 'known' abnormal costs, which are listed below, though the figures themselves are estimates provided by WYG, based upon existing information. These costs impact considerably on viability, both with regard to the capital cost but may also take considerable time to be resolved, which would delay any development from commencing.

Blackbank Road

- Provision of sports changing facilities at a new site - £250,000

High Street

- Relocation of telephone mast - £165,000

- Potential demolition of the PRU building - cost not provided

Community Centre

- Acquisition of former NHS building - £62,000
- Demolition of existing community centre & NHS building - £40,000

In addition to the above known costs, it is considered likely, following conversations with Aspire Housing, having regard to the investigations carried out by WYG and the ex-mining nature of the locality, that there will be other abnormal costs associated with the developments. At the current time site investigations have not been undertaken, and therefore indicative abnormal foundation costs has been estimated at a rate of £4,000 per dwelling, on each of the sites. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that the site at Blackbank Road experiences flooding, therefore it is considered likely that abnormal drainage costs may be associated with any development

on that site – however, no allowance has been made for this within the development appraisal.

In the scenario whereby the PRU is demolished, the construction of 75 units is possible on the High Street site. Demolition of the existing PRU building would be required, though no allowance has been made for this cost as the costs have not been provided, this would therefore impact further on the negative land value of the scheme. The other scenario for the High Street site is that the PRU remains, which would result in a 66-unit scheme, a loss of 9 units. An appraisal has been carried out on both scenarios.

Construction costs within the appraisals have been based upon a base cost of £968.75 per sq m (£90 per sq ft), excluding external and preliminary costs. Externals have been allowed for at 10% of construction costs, whilst preliminary costs have been allowed for at 12% of base construction costs.

Section 106 contributions have been estimated at a rate of £3,000 per market home and £500 per affordable home. These figures are assumptions and would need to be verified with planning officers.

Professional fees have been calculated at 8% of total construction costs, with contingency at 5% of total construction costs. A finance rate of 6% has been adopted.

Planning and Building Regulation fees have been estimated at £50,000 for the sites at High Street and Community Centre and £75,000 for the Blackbank Road site, given the larger number of units. Sales agents and legal fees have been calculated at 1.5% and 0.5% respectively of gross sales figures.

As per standard market rates, developer’s profit has been calculated at 20% of gross development value on market sales

and a reduced profit of 6.5% on the affordable housing value, to reflect the reduced risk, assuming that all affordable homes would be sold to a registered affordable housing provider.

None of the three identified sites are cleared, readily developable sites and this, coupled with relatively low local residential

values causes viability issues, when the sites are appraised on a market basis, i.e. assuming a developer’s profit and a planning policy compliant scheme.

The residual values arrived at from the development appraisals for each of the sites is included in the table below:

Site	Number of Units	Residual Land Value
High Street	75	-£151,722
High Street retaining PRU	66	-£182,901
Community Centre	21	-£195,526
Blackbank Road	123	£920,287
Overall position without PRU	219	£573,039
Overall position retaining PRU	210	£541,860

Based upon the assumptions listed above, and the relative ‘high level’ appraisal undertaken, adopting the limited information available, the Blackbank Road site is the only viable scheme in its own right. The overall position would therefore be a land receipt available to the council of c.£570,000.

It is estimated that the cost to construct the new community centre will be in the order of £790,000, which would not be covered by the capital receipt received from the disposal of the sites, nor would the costs of the improvement works to the Enterprise Centre be capable of being met.

Further appraisals have been undertaken on a non-policy compliant basis, assuming no affordable housing requirement, but including s106 costs as these are likely to be required. The appraisals have been prepared to demonstrate whether a relaxation in planning policy could result in the High Street and Community Centre schemes becoming viable. The residual land values arrived at on this basis are shown opposite:

Site	Number of Units	Land Value
High Street (no affordable)	75	£335,191
High Street retaining PRU (no affordable)	66	£463,177
Community Centre (no affordable)	21	£43,527
Blackbank Road (policy compliant)	123	£920,287
New Overall Position Without PRU	219	£963,814
New Overall Position Retaining PRU	210	£1,426,991

When a non-policy compliant scheme (no affordable housing) is adopted the Community Centre and High Street sites both become viable, resulting in an overall potential capital receipt for the three sites of between £1,425,000 and £1,520,000 depending on the number of units developed at the High Street site. As noted above, it is understood that the to construct the new community centre would cost in the order of £790,000, in

addition to the capital expenditure required to improve the Enterprise Centre, it is likely that there would still be a shortfall of capital receipt to be able to meet these costs in full, although this would be lower than in the scenario whereby the schemes were delivered on a policy compliant basis. The section 106 contributions received from the developments may also help to contribute to the costs, though the proposed junction improvement

works are likely to be costly and it is unlikely that the total capital expenditure required can be obtained solely through the disposal of the sites.

It is not considered that the values could be increased or the costs reduced enough to make the High Street or the Community Centre developments viable, coupled with the additional risk that costs potentially may increase once further site investigations have been undertaken.

We are aware from experience on other projects that Homes England operate funding programmes in order to assist Local Authorities and County Council's with housing delivery. Homes England is the government's housing accelerator and the main objective is for Homes England to assist in getting housing stock delivered. This is achieved by providing financial assistance where necessary to address viability issues, which could

arise due to infrastructure costs or other abnormal development costs associated with a particular development, due to market failure, or a combination of these issues.

These programmes (subject to discussion with Homes England) could present an opportunity to secure funding to address the viability issues presented at the subject sites. The programmes which could assist with the identified development sites include the Small Sites Fund (SSF) and the Local Authority Accelerated Construction Programme (LAAC). The primary objective of these programmes is to unlock delivery of housing projects, addressing viability and wherever possible accelerating the pace of housing delivery.

The SSF can provide loan funding to meet upfront infrastructure costs or grant funding to meet any cost/value deficit that has been demonstrated to exist. This

funding programme may therefore be able to bridge the viability gaps demonstrated in the Community Centre site and the High Street Site appraisals. This would result in a more positive overall position for the council, and would likely require less additional funding to construct the new community centre and carry out the Enterprise Centre improvements.

The LAAC programme can provide loans or grants to viable development sites, with the primary objective of accelerating the delivery of housing beyond the pace that the market would typically deliver. Where this results in a reduced land value or viability gap, funding can be provided under the programme to mitigate impacts.

For example, given a greater number of dwellings that would be bought to the market at the same time, this can serve to reduce values of the dwellings

which becomes necessary in order to increase sales. Developer's profit also increases to reflect the higher risk faced by the developer through releasing dwellings at a rate in excess of perception of market rates. The purpose of the funding programme is to fund the costs of accelerating the construction of the scheme by covering the difference in land value and/or viability between a normal delivery scheme and an accelerated delivery scheme.

In respect of the subject sites, it is considered that the SSF could be investigated in respect of the High Street and Community Centre site, with the LAAC programme investigated in respect of Blackbank Road. It is considered that given the High Street and Community Centre schemes are not viable in their own right, the LAAC would not be appropriate for these schemes.

Further appraisals have been undertaken for the Blackbank Road site assuming accelerated

construction of 50% and 100% to show the impact this has on the residual land value. The impact on values is contained within the table below:

Profit	Increased Pace of Acceleration	Land Value
20%	0%	£920,287
22%	50%	£365,361
24%	100%	-£48,801

In conclusion it is considered that public sector assistance, either from an external source such as Homes England, or from the council's own resources will be required to bridge the viability gaps associated with the High Street and Community Centre schemes and to cover the overall costs of the proposed improvements to Knutton.

VIABILITY & DELIVERY

Deliverability

The overall ambition of the council is to regenerate Knutton village centre, to improve the quality of the housing stock within the village, whilst accelerating housing delivery if possible. When assessing the deliverability options, it is essential for the council to consider how it can retain an element of control over the quality of the housing that is to be delivered.

The three identified development sites at the Community Centre, Blackbank Road and High Street provide for a total of 210-219 residential units. In addition, the council wish to improve the existing Enterprise Centre and to construct a new community centre upon the High Street site, whilst exploring the potential of improving the highway network in the village.

Each of the identified sites has development constraints that would need to be overcome / resolved in order to pursue delivery of the proposed residential

schemes, without which it is considered unlikely that the new community centre would be constructed or the improvements to the Enterprise Centre would be undertaken.

The Blackbank Road site (parcels A3 & A4) requires removal of the allocation as football pitches from Sports England, which is understood requires the provision of changing room facilities at another location along with the reprovision of the football playing pitches. The council's playing pitch strategy is currently under review and the outcome of this will be known at the end of the year – which will either present this opportunity as one to be progressed, or could sterilise the development opportunity.

It has been suggested that the Wammy could provide adequate space for the reprovision of the pitches and it is understood that circa half of these costs are already

available to the council, with a further sum potentially available from other funding sources – this should be investigated at the earliest opportunity.

Also to consider is that there is an existing lease in place at Blackbank Road, which is understood to expire in 2021. Therefore the delivery of this scheme cannot be bought forward prior to the lease expiry.

The High Street site (A1 & A2) requires the EE telephone mast to be re-located at the cost of the site owner, which involves identifying a suitable alternative site and obtaining planning permission for the erection of a new telephone mast. The process for the removal of the mast is indicatively described below;

The existing Community Centre site (B3 & B4) requires the acquisition of a property owned by a third party (the NHS) and demolition of the existing buildings on site.

Prior to the existing Community Centre site being available for development, the new community centre on the High Street site would need to be constructed.

Each of the sites also requires planning permission for the proposed developments, in addition to an agreement between the three parties (Aspire, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council) as to how they can work collaboratively in order to achieve the desired outcomes.

Given the constraints presented at each of the sites, it is considered unlikely that a developer would be prepared to acquire these sites prior to what surmounts to considerable risks being alleviated by the land owners. It is therefore considered that the land owners should seek to de-risk the sites as much as possible, prior to offering the sites to the market in order enhance prospects of sale

in a low value area and maximise potential sales receipts. It is therefore considered that formal arrangements should be pursued with Sports England in relation to Blackbank Road, EE in relation to the former Recreation Centre site and NHS in relation to the Community Centre site.

There are a number of methods of disposal available to the land owners in relation to the potential development sites in order to deliver the proposed schemes.

The sites could be packaged together or offered to the market individually by way of traditional marketing, instructing an agent to promote the sites, directly advertise and seek bids from the private sector. This method of disposal is likely to represent the fastest method of disposal, once the constraints have been addressed and sites effectively de-risked. The sites could then be sold either on a subject to planning basis or by way

of an option agreement.

The council could look to undertake development, which would negate the need for the typical 'developers' profit' and may therefore lower the viability gap created on the High Street and Community Centre site and thus reduce the overall public sector financial subsidy required. It may also be possible for the local authority to borrow money more cheaply than the private sector, through prudential borrowing. This method of disposal / delivery would ensure that the residential schemes were delivered in-line with the council's timescales, and offer the quality that the council is hoping to achieve in the area and ultimately would mean that the council retains control over the delivery of the developments. This may also make it easier to control the delivery of the new community centre building and the improvements to the Enterprise Centre.

The council could look to partner with Aspire or A.N. Other organisation and deliver the developments by way of a joint venture / partnership agreement - this method of delivery may assist with some of the viability issues presented and may also assist with the council's wider housing strategy. It is understood that Aspire and both the County and Borough council are already in dialogue regarding council owned land elsewhere and how Aspire and the council could work in partnership to deliver required housing, using council owned land.

The council could seek to utilise Homes England's Developer Partner Panel (DPP3) to market and dispose of the properties. This method of disposal is not reliant on Homes England having any financial involvement with the schemes but does require consideration of accelerating delivery and utilising Modern Methods of Construction (MMC). Although not legal

obligations, as there are standard overage provisions incorporated within the disposal documentation, the incentive to developers is to maximise pace and MMC so as to reduce future overage. This method of disposal, should in theory result in a faster disposal of the sites, and is therefore likely to secure delivery more quickly, however it does limit developers that can be approached, and a number of developers have previously intimated that the bidding process is too onerous and would prefer to acquire sites through normal disposal procedures.

It is considered that the Community Centre site (B3 & B4) is the site most 'readily available' for disposal and delivery, however it is noted that in order for this site to be bought forward, the new community centre / village hall would require construction, to ensure the continuous delivery of services. It is considered that the

new community centre, could be constructed prior to the telephone mast being relocated, which would allow for the delivery of the proposed 21-unit scheme on the existing Community Centre site. It is noted that the council is considering applying for Town Deal funding in order to assist with delivery of 'putting heart back into Knutton' and this could cover or contribute to the costs of constructing the new community centre.

If the construction of the new community centre / village hall cannot be funded prior to the disposal of any land, it is considered that the delivery of sites A3 & A4 could be pursued in the first instance in order that the parties could generate a land receipt which could assist with the construction of the new community centre, thus freeing up sites B3 and B4 for development. This could however take some time, given that the development of the Blackbank

Road site (A3 & A4) is itself reliant upon other factors.

It is also considered unwise to 'flood' the relatively weak housing market at this time. Therefore, it would not be recommended for both the Blackbank Road site and Community Centre site to be bought to the market at the same time.

In the scenarios outlined above, it is considered that prior to making a decision as to the course of action to be adopted, the land owners should establish contact with Homes England, to discuss the potential of any financial assistance that may be available to assist with the viability issues identified above. It is considered essential that any correspondence with Homes England is carried out on a transparent and open basis collectively by all land owners in order that they can appraise the three sites to consider what, if any funding may be available to deliver

the proposed residential schemes.

The Towns Fund should be pursued in order to obtain funding to assist with the Enterprise Centre Improvements and the construction of the Community Centre.

Given the number of scenarios that could occur with this masterplan, it is considered difficult to set out a defined implementation plan, as until further information is understood and investigated, the proposed programme is difficult to establish. This is due to the extent of identified development constraints requiring further investigation and clarification from external parties, which will in-turn feed into any proposed programme to bring forward the proposed developments.

Given the issues highlighted above, at this stage in the masterplan it has only been possible to create an indicative, high level implementation plan for each of

the individual sites, which sets out the processes required in order to facilitate delivery on each of the identified proposed development sites. This plan assumes that public consultation has been undertaken, the three parties have agreed a collaborative approach and any required financial assistance has been obtained and therefore demonstrates a 'best case scenario'.

In conclusion, the deliverability of the residential schemes and the proposed improvements to the Enterprise Centre and the construction of the new community centre is reliant upon financial assistance in some capacity, given that the overall land receipts potentially available to the council from the proposed developments, would not cover the total costs of the community centre and Enterprise Centre improvements. Funding options that should be explored are that of Homes England to bridge the viability gaps associated with the residential

developments, and the Towns Fund to contribute to the costs associated with the construction of the community centre and the Enterprise Centre improvements.

VIABILITY & DELIVERY

Implementation Plan

Due to the strategic nature of the proposals for Knutton the implementation plans produced for each site have been undertaken at a high level and are dependent on the more detailed work required, including technical investigations as per the commentary throughout this document.

Blackbank Road

	Stage	Timescale
1.	Review published playing pitch strategy	3 months
2.	Relocate Knutton Football Club to Wammy Site	3 months
3.	Conclude discussions with Sports England to remove the site from its current allocation	3 - 6 months
4.	Submit and outline planning application and undertake site investigations and drainage surveys	6 months
5.	Discuss site with Homes England in relation to the Local Authority Accelerated Construction funding programme	3 - 6 months
	Total programme time to commencement of delivery (either by sale or development)	24 months

High Street Site

	Stage	Timescale
1.	Commence negotiations with EE regarding the relocation of the telephone mast	3 months
2.	Identify potential relocation sites	3 months
3.	Whilst the above is being undertaken, submit a planning application for the construction of the new Community Centre and construct	18 months
4.	Agree site with telephone mast operator and submit planning for the proposed new site	3 - 6 months
5.	Relocate PRU to another council owned building in the County (subject to Country Council decision)	3 - 6 months
6.	Submit an outline planning application and undertake all necessary site investigations and surveys	6 - 9 months
7.	Discuss site with Homes England in connection with the Small Sites Fund programme in order to address viability issues	3 - 6 months
	Total programme time to commencement of delivery of residential (either by sale or development)	36 months

Telecoms Mast Relocation Process

The process for moving a telecoms mast are as follows:

- Establish who it belongs to – in this case it is an EE/Three mast. The asset is managed by agent GVA
- Request that the agent organise a survey of the mast and surrounding area to find a new suitable location (survey is chargeable to the client) this may be on a public road or could allocate a better position on the site. There will be specific location criteria required by EE including topographical level, distance from existing position and potential barriers.
- Planning permission may be required for the new site to be arranged by the agent
- Agent will arrange for building of new mast then swap over of the service – any new

utility connections and utility disconnection would also be arranged by agent. The old mast site would not generally be decommissioned until the new site is up and running.

This process usually takes a minimum of 12 months to arrange the move including gaining planning permission (where necessary).

We would recommend allowing minimum of £150K to move the mast plus additional for surveys (£10-15K).

Wayleaves should pick up lease arrangements for the site – rent details etc.

Existing Community Centre Site

	Stage	Timescale
1.	Negotiate acquisition of NHS building	3 - 6 months
2.	Whilst the new community centre is under construction, submit an outline planning application for the demolition and redevelopment of the site	6 months
3.	Discuss site with Homes England in relation to the Small Sites Fund programme to address viability issues	3 - 6 months
4.	Once new community centre is constructed, demolish existing buildings	3 months
	Total programme time to commencement of delivery (either by sale or development)	40 months

Ex-Servicemen's Car Park

	Stage	Timescale
1.	Obtain full lease documentation and review	3 months
2.	Commence discussions with Ex-Servicemen's Club owners	6 months
	Total programme time to commencement of delivery (either by sale or development)	40 months

