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Whitefield Town Centre Plan

Executive Summary



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Contents

Contributors

This document has been prepared on behalf of Bury Council by Planit.

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1.1 The Whitefield Town Centre Plan

The Whitefield Town Centre Plan outlines how Bury Council and the local community want to improve Whitefield over the next 10 years. It includes short, medium, and long-term goals.

Some projects will be led by Bury Council, while others will be run by community groups and local businesses.

The people of Whitefield will be key to making this plan work. Their input and knowledge are vital for its success. Shaped together with residents and community groups, the plan takes into account their deep understanding of Whitefield.

The plan covers the area from Besses o' th' Barn Church in the south to Elms Square in the north, and from Phillips High School in the west to Whitefield and Victoria Park in the east.



1.2 Purpose and Scope

This document is a place making plan for Whitefield Town Centre which includes broader elements of improvement of the town for communities and businesses. It will also help solidify the town's transition into being a successful 21st century high street.

The plan begins to consider the long-term opportunities and actions required to create important change in Whitefield Town Centre but some of these actions require careful consideration.

For example, Bury New Road is an important route in Transport for Greater Manchester's plans to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling for shorter journeys, instead of travel by car.

Any changes to this road must be studied wisely. We need to understand how these changes might affect traffic flow along this road and on other roads in the area.

This means we can't make quick decisions about Bury New Road without looking at the bigger picture of traffic in the region.



Slattery independent bakery and patisserie

1.3 Vision Statement

Whitefield will be a more prosperous and greener town with a vibrant high street, shaped by the collaborative efforts of its community, businesses, Bury Council, and other stakeholders.

The vision statement is informed by engagement with the community, and captures the essence of their collective input and feedback into the plan making process. As a member of the community stated during the engagement process:

"Whitefield is a town with a heart, and has a strong community spirit, we've just got nowhere to meet!"

The vision objectives highlighted in the adjacent support the vision statement, and begin to explore *how* a change might be achieved in Whitefield. They are presented to guide and steer future action and intervention across the town centre.

In the next section of the document, proposed interventions are organised around each vision objective, providing further detail on the type of intervention required to assist in achieving the vision and delivering the objectives.



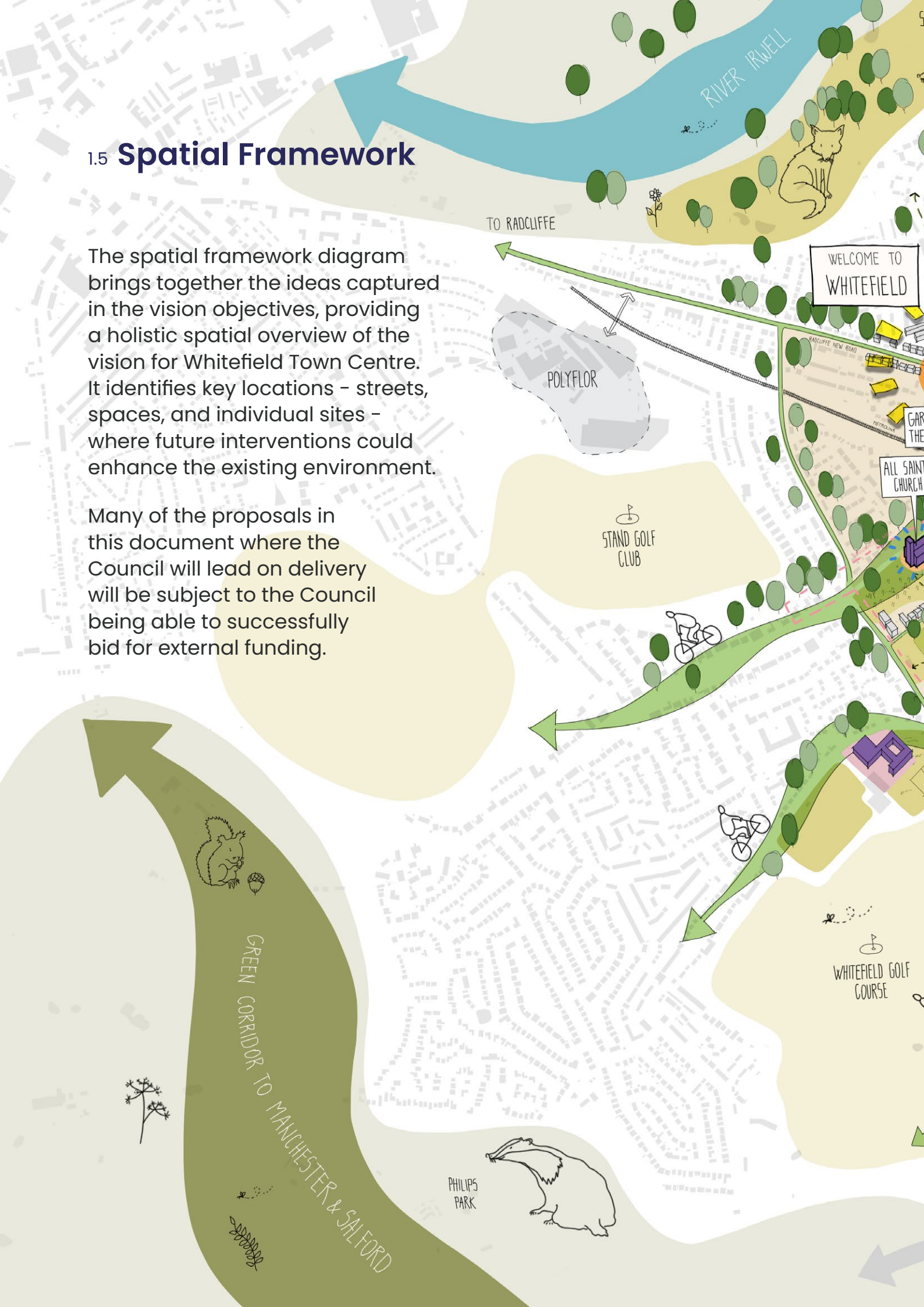
1.4 Big Ideas for Whitefield – The Vision Objectives



1.5 Spatial Framework

The spatial framework diagram brings together the ideas captured in the vision objectives, providing a holistic spatial overview of the vision for Whitefield Town Centre. It identifies key locations – streets, spaces, and individual sites – where future interventions could enhance the existing environment.

Many of the proposals in this document where the Council will lead on delivery will be subject to the Council being able to successfully bid for external funding.





- Key**
- Gateway into town
 - Major junctions
 - Important buildings / spaces
 - Conservation area
 - School grounds
 - High street (Bury New Road)
 - Metrolink route
 - Pedestrian / green linkages
 - Priority areas
 - Residential area
 - Green space
 - Industrial area

1.6 Focus Area

Through analysis and consultation with the community a number of locations have been identified as having potential for future enhancement.

A number of sites have been identified as having the greatest potential to deliver long-term positive change, including the site of Uplands Medical Centre, The former Town Hall site and its surrounding historic gardens, and the site of the former library and day centre on Pinfold Lane.

Where?

The area is located to the west of Bury New Road and stretches from Hamilton Road Park to Pinfold Lane and includes the former library and Pinfold Day Centre



Focus Area - Location Plan



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Site Background

The Uplands medical practice continues to deteriorate. Current proposals include the medical centre moving to the former library building on Pinfold Lane. This leaves the Uplands medical centre site available for redevelopment alongside the currently vacant Pinfold Day Centre.

Why here?

The area has been identified through site analysis and conversations with the community and stakeholders during the public / stakeholder engagement process.

The area represents a major opportunity, underpinned by the following reasons:

1. There is a cluster of sites adjoining each other for greater impact
2. Consultation feedback – many residents consider this area to be the centre of Whitefield
3. Potential for improved green space and footpaths
4. The Council owns much of the land

Potential Features

1. Current Medical Centre Site (The Uplands)

- To be redeveloped into high-quality homes, most likely apartments
- The area to be developed would be located on previously developed land
- Uplands building (heritage asset) considerations:
 - If possible: Convert existing damaged building for future use
 - Alternative: If the building cannot be retained then what replaces it must preserve or enhance the Conservation Area, when considered as a whole across the development site.

Development Guidelines

- The development must preserve or enhance Conservation Area through appropriate siting, scale, appearance, and materials
- The Council will look favourably on buildings of a comparable size and scale to others in the Conservation Area, such as the homes on Pinfold Lane

Environmental Requirements:

- The development must improve biodiversity (Biodiversity Net Gain) and ought to create an improved landscaped area between Hamilton Road and former town hall

Parking:

- The Council will work with the primary landowner (the NHS) to try to retain or re-provide some of the car parking spaces currently located at the Uplands

2. The “Forest” Area

Proposed Improvements (Subject to Council Funding):

- **Vegetation Management:**
 - Remove selected smaller trees. No Tree Protection Order (TPO) trees would be removed
 - Trim lower branches and foliage to increase light
 - Remove overgrown shrubs
 - Reduce intimidating atmosphere
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Collaborate with schools, residents, businesses, and community groups on the redesign and upkeep of the area
 - Develop mini-landscaping plan including shade-resistant planting and the restoration of the pond

3. Former Town Hall Site

Current Status:

- Privately owned
- Existing planning permission (2014) for 60-bed care home but the development is stalled
- The Council will do what it can to enable development to come forward

4. Access Improvements

Footpath Enhancements

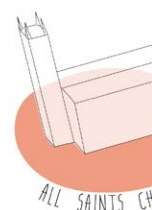
- General improvements (subject to funding):
 - Cut back overgrown areas
 - Improve safety
 - Enhanced lighting appropriate for Conservation Area

New Path Development

- Create route in front of Uplands building:
 - Avoids steep slope
 - Connects new development to Hamilton Road Park

5. Former Library

- **Planned Repurpose:**
 - Bring disused building a function by being the new location for Uplands Medical Practice
 - The site is more accessible to pedestrians than the existing medical centre as a steep slope does not have to be navigated by users



6. Pinfold Day Centre

Site Advantages:

- Set back from roads
- Natural screening from trees

Development Options:

- Option 1: Convert existing building to residential use
- Option 2: Demolish and rebuild on developed land, most likely for high-quality apartments

7. Disused Tennis Court

Current Status: Privately owned

Future Plans:

- Explore sports-related development opportunities



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A low-angle photograph of a historic red brick building with a steep gabled roof. The building features multiple levels of arched windows with decorative brickwork around the arches. The roof is dark and appears to be made of slate or shingles. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The text "Project Proposals" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Project Proposals

1.7 Project Proposals

The project proposals outlined within this section of the document have been identified as being of primary importance to the Whitefield community who engaged with consultation events – both in person and online. They are the 'how' to support the 'what' outlined in the vision.

Bury Council is facing financial challenges and will need to rely on grants from the national government to fund many of the proposals in this plan. One difficulty with this is that the government usually only provides funding to create new projects, not to maintain them afterwards. So, any maintenance of improved public spaces like parks would have to come from Bury Council's already limited maintenance budgets.

As a result, Bury Council will only be able to proceed with some of the plan's projects once they can find additional ongoing funding sources.

Capital receipts may be used to help finance some of the Plan's proposals.

In summary, Bury Council's limited finances mean creativity is needed with funding sources and maintenance arrangements in order to deliver the full scope of this plan for Whitefield. This will require collaboration with other organisations and careful prioritisation of the different project proposals.

Priority projects are highlighted in the tables throughout the following chapter.



Make it easier to walk, wheel, cycle and use public transport in Whitefield.

The table below summarises the projects and initiatives identified as priorities in order to fulfil the vision objectives and strategic design principles.

Key
 High Priority Project

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation
WC&PT1	Audit Whitefield's roads	Assess suitability of Whitefield's roads for improvements relating to walking wheeling and cycling and public transportation. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vehicle count data and traffic modellingAudit of suitability of Whitefield's roads for cycling infrastructure and/ or enhanced public transportation infrastructure (factors to include, road width, vehicle number count, review of impact on car parking)Audit of Whitefield's roads against Transport for Greater Manchester's Streets for All guidanceAudit of car parking spaces within the town centre and within a 5-minute walk of the boundaryAudit number and use of bicycle parking spaces	Bury Council
WC&PT2.1	Improve Whitefield's junctions for those walking, wheeling, and cycling	Ensure all junctions on Bury New Road and Higher Lane within the town centre plan area have pedestrian crossings with push buttons.	Bury Council
WC&PT2.2	Improve Whitefield's junctions for those walking, wheeling, and cycling	Redesign the priority junctions for redevelopment: Higher Lane/ Pinfold Lane/ Park Lane; and Bury New Road/ Pinfold Lane/ Moss Lane. As far as possible, we will prioritise a visually pleasing design for junction upgrades, especially near conservation areas or historic buildings.	Bury Council
WC&PT2.3	Improve Whitefield's junctions for those walking, wheeling, and cycling	When the opportunities arise, redesign all junctions on Bury New Road and Higher Lane to be friendlier to those walking, wheeling, and cycling. As far as possible, we will prioritise a visually pleasing design for junction upgrades, especially near conservation areas or historic buildings.	Bury Council
WC&PT3	Make Whitefield's roads safer	Carry out traffic calming measures including installing road humps and introducing a 20-mph zone (or zones) on appropriate side streets.	Bury Council
WC&PT4.1	Improve Bury New Road and Higher Lane for those walking, wheeling, and cycling	Work with relevant stakeholders to locate and log obstructions (such as inappropriate drop kerbs, damaged pavers, poorly placed street furniture, and signage) along Bury New Road and Higher Lane	Bury Council
WC&PT4.2	Improve Bury New Road and Higher Lane for those walking, wheeling, and cycling	Subject to funding, act upon the recommendations from WC&PT4.1	Bury Council

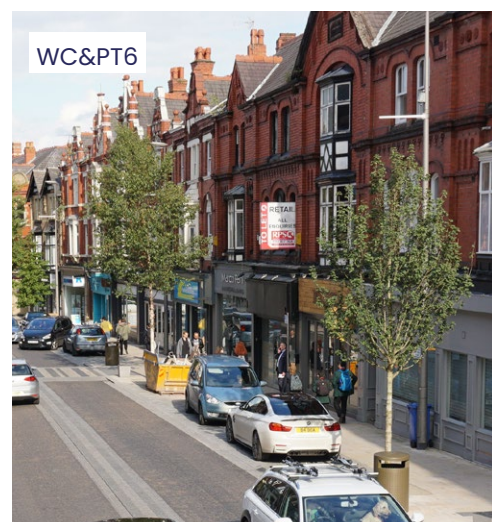
Timescales	Ward (Besses, Pilkington Park, Unsworth)
Quick Win (under 12 months) – Medium Term (1–5 years)	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1–5 years) – Longer Term (5+ years)	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1–5 years)	Besses, Pilkington Park
Long term (5+ years)	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1–5 years) – Long term (5+ years)	All 3 wards
Quick Win (under 12 months)	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1–5 years)	All 3 wards



Granary Square, London



Coal drops yard, London

Stamford
New Road,
Altrincham

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation
WC&PT5.1	Improve walking/cycling routes away from Bury New Road and Higher Lane	Sign a route from Hamilton Road Park to Grosvenor Road then down Church Lane and Bank Street to Radcliffe New Road. All work along Bank Street would be subject to landowner approval. Signage would be installed along the route to direct people to important local facilities such as All Saint's Church, Whitefield Bowling Club, and the Garrick Theatre.	Bury Council
WC&PT5.2	Improve walking/cycling routes away from Bury New Road and Higher Lane	Find out landowner interest for creating a pedestrian/ cycling route from Stanley Road through Whitefield Park to Moss Lane	Bury Council
WC&PT5.3	Improve walking/cycling routes away from Bury New Road and Higher Lane	Undertake the above works if there is sufficient interest	Bury Council
WC&PT6	Car parking	Seek and support opportunities and ways to appropriately increase car parking in and around the town centre. An assessment of on-street parking is due with the forthcoming Bury car parking strategy.	Bury Council
WC&PT7	Bike Library	Find a suitable location for a bike library in Whitefield A bike library lends bicycles free of charge, similar to how a traditional library lends books. Users can borrow bikes for short periods, promoting affordable and sustainable transportation options in communities.	Bury Council
WC&PT8	E-cargo bikes	Building on the success of bordering authorities, Bury Council has ambitions to roll out cargo bike usage across all neighbourhoods, including Whitefield.	Bury Council
WC&PT9	Improve Whitefield Metrolink	Support Metrolink improvements at Besses and Whitefield stops. Although Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) will lead on improvements, Bury Council will lobby for the improvements outlined by Whitefield residents in the consultation events from 2023 - 2024 such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures to improve security at the Metrolink - Install steps along the desire lines of an alternative route in and out of the stop - Create an at-grade crossing over the Metrolink line - Install secure cycle parking as part of a "cycle hub" 	TfGM
WC&PT10	Improve Besses Metrolink	Support Metrolink improvements at Besses and Whitefield stops. Although Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) will lead on improvements, Bury Council will lobby for the improvements outlined by Whitefield residents in the consultation events from 2023 - 2024 such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - measures to improve security at the Metrolink - improve lighting on the route into the stop - create alternative ramped access to the platforms 	Bury Council
WC&PT11	Whitefield car club	Create a car club at Lily Hill Street car park Car clubs provide socially inclusive, low emission mobility which helps to break dependency on private car ownership. They provide self-service vehicle rental by the hour, day or overnight, which are accessible through a membership scheme. All they require is a location (i.e. parking spot/street) and will be operated by a third party. Bury Council is currently looking to procure a car club supplier so any suitable locations in Whitefield could be added to this arrangement.	Bury Council



Timescales	Ward (Besses, Pilkington Park, Unsworth)
Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park
Quick Win (under 12 months)	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1-5 years) - Long term (5+ years)	All 3 wards
Ongoing	All 3 wards
Medium Term (1-5 years)	1 of the 3 wards
Quick Win (under 12 months) - Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
Quick Win (under 12 months) - Long Term (5+ years)	Besses, Pilkington Park
Quick Win (under 12 months) - Long Term (5+ years)	Besses
Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park



Well-integrated cycle parking, London



Whitefield Metrolink stop, Manchester



North New Zealand



Celebrate Whitefield's history.

The table below summarises the potential projects and initiatives to be taken forward under the Whitefield Town Centre Plan.

Key

 High Priority Project

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation	Timescales	Ward (Besses, Pilkington Park, Unsworth)
HIST1	All Saints Conservation Area design guide	In conjunction with the emerging Bury Local Plan, the creation of Supplementary Planning Documentation to act as a design guide for the All Saints Conservation Area, focussing on shop fronts, design principles for other planning applications, and appropriate street furniture.	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park, Besses
HIST2	Improve street furniture in the All Saints Conservation Area	Create a catalogue of interventions relating to the design guide (for example replacing street furniture or paving within the All Saints Conservation Area with more appropriate items/ materials) for use when bidding to external bodies and funds for heritage related funding such as the national Lottery Heritage Fund, funds from Historic England, and Heritage Lottery Fund.	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park, Besses
HIST3	Highlight Whitefield's historic buildings	Work with landowners to provide lighting (such as uplighters) to highlight Whitefield's historic buildings.	Local businesses & Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
HIST4	Shop front improvements	Shop front improvement grants to be made available for Whitefield businesses (eligibility to be announced at a later date).	Local businesses & Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
HIST5	Murals	Progress with mural grant fund. This would only be awarded selectively, and any murals would have to be completed in a sensitive manner taking into account to their surroundings. Opportunities would be sought on appropriate gable ends and on existing roller shutters.	Local businesses & Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
HIST6	Heritage/ Literature/ Town Centre Trail	Work with community groups and businesses to create a trail to help tie Whitefield together as a coherent place. Improved signage and new artwork to help direct people around the town would be included.	Community groups, businesses & Bury Council	Quick Win (under 12 months) – medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards



Create new town centre 'hearts'.

Key

 High Priority Project

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation	Timescales	Ward (Besses, Pilkington Park, Unsworth)
HEART1	Community space	To better co-ordinate space, produce an audit of premises which could be used by the community or to host events across Whitefield Town Centre, to better coordinate space	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park, Besses, Unsworth
HEART2	Improve partnership working	<p>Improve partnership working with organisations and locations which have large facilities, which could be used as community space, such as the Oasis Centre at Whitefield Methodist Church.</p> <p>Should the funding landscape change – review deeper partnership working options</p>	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park, Besses, Unsworth
HEART3	Improve the outdoor public space on the corner of Church Lane and Bury New Road	<p>Obtain funding to equip the outdoor public space on the corner of Church Lane and Bury New Road for use by pop up markets and shops.</p> <p>Turn this area into a centre for Whitefield by rebranding this space, giving it a name and including a marketable piece of artwork.</p>	Bury Council	Quick Win (under 12 months)	Pilkington Park
HEART4	Development at Stone Pale	Work with landowners to promote inclusive growth at this site, which could include residential, workshop, and/ or office units	Local business	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Besses
HEART5	Place branding	<p>Develop a place brand and place marketing materials with members of Whitefield's business community;</p> <p>Target initial improvements relating to place branding at the gateways into Whitefield town centre (from north to south:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The junction of Radcliffe New Road and Bury New Road and Whitefield metrolink stop Victoria Square and the junction between Higher Lane, Bury New Road and Bury Old Road Besses Metrolink stop 	Local business	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
HEART6	Victoria Lane garages	Develop the derelict garages on Victoria Lane into new homes	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Besses
HEART7	Improve Whitefield's gateways	<p>Improve the signage and refurbish the shops on Victoria Square to create a better welcome to Whitefield from the south</p> <p>Taking advantage of a redesigned junction of Bury New Road and Radcliffe New Road, introduce signage and artwork to welcome people into Whitefield.</p>	<p>Bury Council</p> <p>Local businesses</p>	Quick win/ Medium Term (1-5 years)	Besses



Create more things to do in Whitefield.

The table below summarises the potential projects and initiatives to be taken forward under the Whitefield Town Centre Plan.

Key
 High Priority Project

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation	Timescales	Ward (Besses, Pilkington Park, Unsworth)
TODO1	Events co-ordinator	Obtain funding for a Whitefield events coordinator to help co-organise and manage town centre events.	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
TODO2	Events in Whitefield	Using support from the Whitefield events coordinator, set up a calendar of events in Whitefield	Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	All 3 wards
TODO3	Run a Teenage Market Event	Using support from the Whitefield events coordinator, run a Teenage Market at unnamed area of land opposite Morrisons.	Local schools & Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years)	Pilkington Park



Sadler's Yard, Manchester



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Create a greener Whitefield.

The table below summarises the potential projects and initiatives to be taken forward under the Whitefield Town Centre Plan.

Key
 High Priority Project

Project ID	Project Name	Description	Lead Organisation	Timescales	Ward
GREEN1	Planting in Whitefield	Obtain funding for the planting and maintenance to ecologically enrich Whitefield's amenity green spaces and areas of park lands by adding, for example, bee friendly planting areas	Community groups & Bury Council	Medium Term (1-5 years) w	All 3 wards
GREEN2	Continue work with partnership Organisations	Such as City of Trees and Lancs. Wildlife Trust to ensure development is ecologically appropriate. Explore joint projects with such organisations.	Partnership organisations & Bury Council	Ongoing	All 3 wards
GREEN3	Community management	Trial extending community self-management of green spaces. If this proves successful, gradually roll out the trial across areas of amenity green space.	Community groups & Bury Council	Quick Win (under 12 months)	All 3 wards
GREEN4	Adopt a spot – businesses	Allow businesses to adopt areas of green space, planters, and litter bins or install new planters or litter bins. In exchange for appropriate (and permissible from a planning perspective) advertising on the space/ item	Community groups, local business, residents & Bury Council	Quick Win (under 12 months)	All 3 wards
GREEN5	Greener car parking spaces	Install planters, greenery, electric vehicle chargers, and install SuDS and permeable paving where possible and appropriate in new and existing car parking areas developed by Bury Council	Bury Council	Ongoing	All 3 wards
GREEN6	Invest in Victoria Park	Use the investment to improve the park for local sports and exercise	Bury Council	Quick win – medium term (within 12 months – 5 years)	Besses

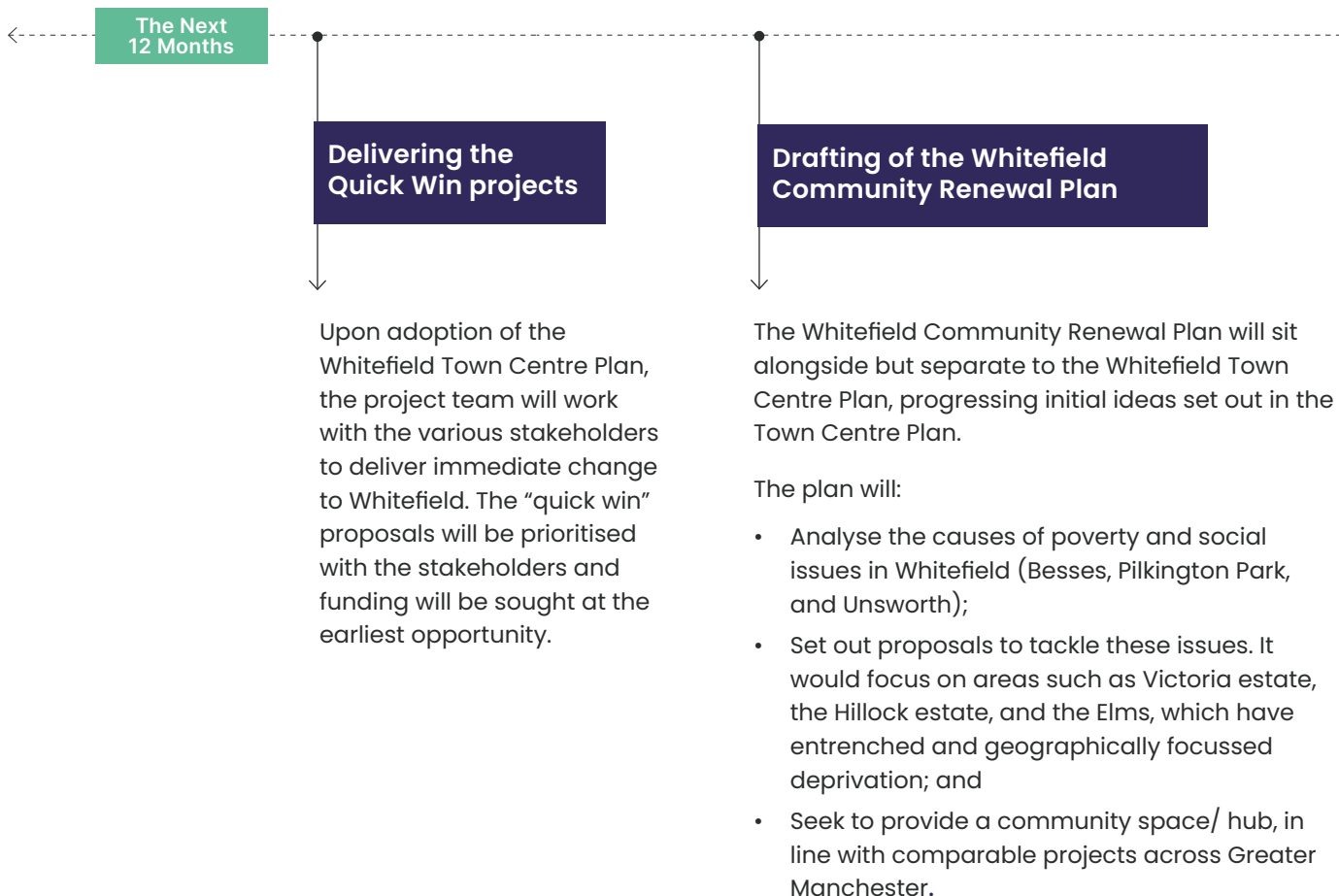
1.8 Next Steps

Following adoption, the project team will begin working with the relevant stakeholders to deliver immediate change in Whitefield and pursue funding opportunities to assist in the delivery of projects outlined in the town centre plan.

The “quick win” proposals will be prioritised, with stakeholders and funding sought out at the earliest opportunity. The council will also begin to scope out longer term transformational projects, requiring more detailed plans and design proposals before they can be progressed.

The timeline summarises the next steps to be taken by the council-led project team, as we work towards delivering the long-term vision for a greener, healthier and more vibrant town centre in Whitefield.

Next Steps Timeline



The Next
1-5 Years

Whitefield Town Centre Plan Phase 2 – Transformative Projects

The council will begin to scope the longer-term transformative proposals outlined in the plan, as well as highlighting further areas for work in Phase 2. These are set out below.

Project 1: A community hub in Whitefield

A more detailed plan will outline what a community hub for Whitefield would deliver, where a community hub space could be located, and approximate programme for opening the space, and how the space could look.

Project Conditions

The project depends on the council's financial position improving to the point that it could invest in either a new build capital project or work more deeply with potential partners, such as the NHS and VCFSE sector.

Project 2: A detailed development brief on the development near to the Uplands

The project will develop detailed information on what the Uplands development must contain for a planning application to be approvable.

Project 3: Transformation of Whitefield Town Centre's road junctions

A more detailed plan to transform Whitefield's problem road junctions will be developed, identifying which junctions would be improved, what the new spaces would look like and project phasing (ie. when the improvements will happen).

Project Conditions

- Whitefield stakeholders are consulted on the proposed amendments; and
- Adequate funding is made available to make the changes.

Project 4: The Wider Township

Phase 1 of the Whitefield Town Plan deliberately focuses on a fairly narrow area along and around the main road. For Phase 2, we will broaden this scope to the wider township and seek to address the social needs of the communities across it.

This will include:

- Access to public services, especially Family Support and Health
- Community spaces
- VCFSE capacity

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