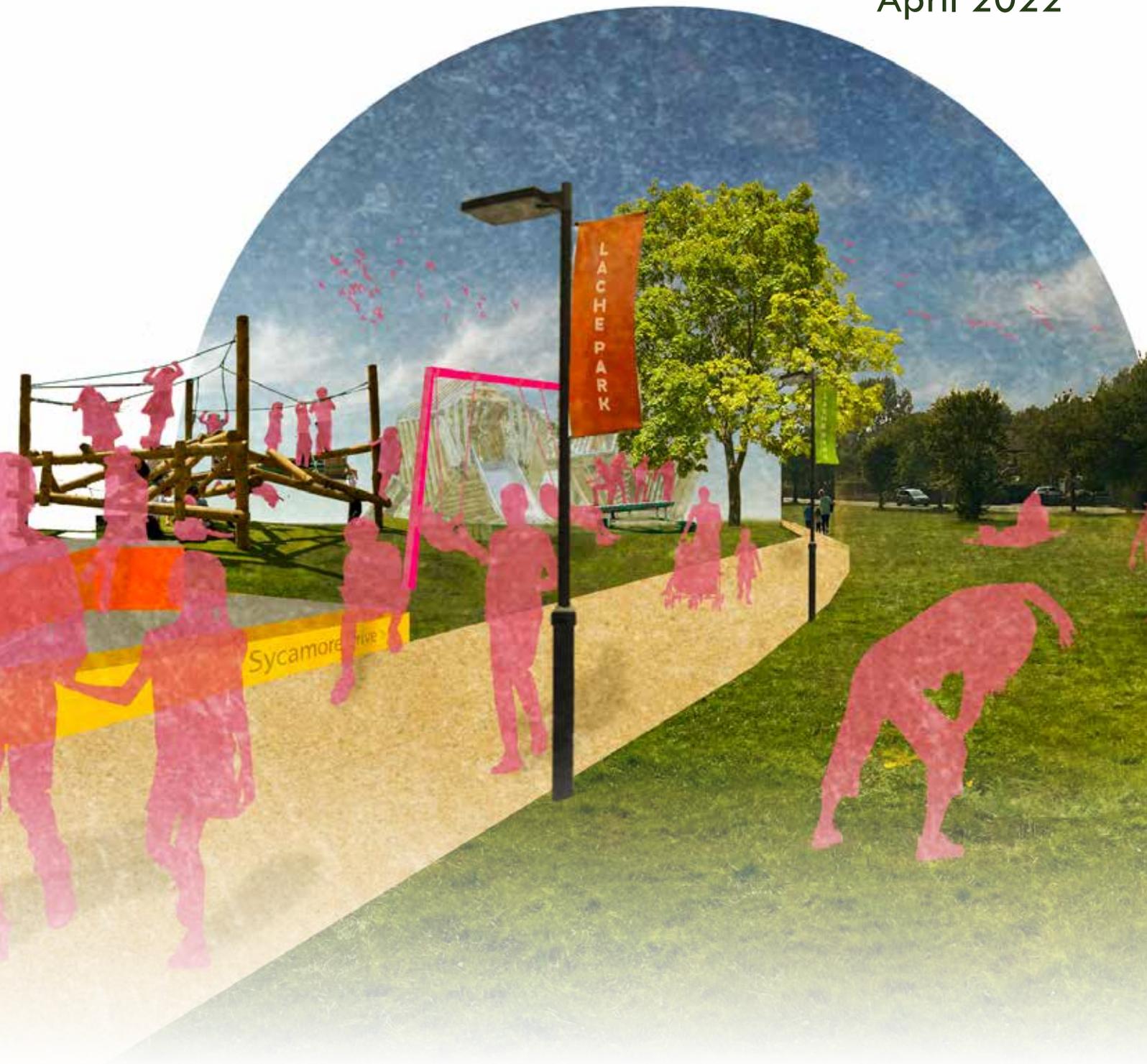


Your Lache:

A Future Vision and Masterplan

April 2022



Prepared by: LDĀ DESIGN

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On behalf of:

 Cheshire West
and Chester



FOREWORD

NB. This report articulates a vision for the future of Lache that is based on community and stakeholder engagement. Delivery of the projects within this vision will need sufficient public sector and private sector funding being identified. Certain projects will also require site acquisition or landowner partnership. The content of the Plan may be subject to change following further community engagement and detailed design.



Councillor Val Armstrong
Lache Ward

“I would like to thank everybody who has taken the time to respond and contribute to the development of our new vision for Lache.

This document sets out our collective vision and ambition for the community across a number of important themes including housing, local services, transport and open space improvements which we will work together to bring forward.

This Masterplan brings together ideas from local residents, schools, youth groups and other stakeholders and has taken into account in depth analysis of the area. Building on these ideas, we can make sure the plans will lead to improvements so that residents can be proud of where they live.

The Masterplan marks a starting point, and we will continue to work with and engage the local community as we develop our actions and bring forward improvements for Lache.”



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This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015



Executive Summary

LDA Design have been leading a team of consultants who have been working closely with Cheshire West and Chester Council to help the local community and stakeholders in the Lache Ward to articulate a “Vision” and Masterplan for the area.

The Vision and Masterplan, developed through engagement activities with local people, is described in this report and has resulted in a series of actions and potential projects aimed at helping to transform the neighbourhood positively in the future.

The Masterplan should be used to help focus investment and development, as well as raise the aspiration and expectation of those living in Lache by providing clear opportunities to become involved and drive projects forward as community-led initiatives and to hold those accountable who are responsible for the delivery of other projects.

Our Vision

It was important that our Vision for Lache was been developed through a “grass-roots” approach so has been informed by conversations and activities undertaken with local people and stakeholders through a series of engagement events. This included street pop-up events, workshops, drop-in sessions and activities with local school pupils and youth groups.

Participants in the engagement events were asked to identify the features which make Lache a great place to live and visit, what could be improved, and what sort of place they would like it to be in the future. These have been adapted by the consultant team into a Vision Statement (opposite) and a series of Objectives to guide the future development of Lache.

“Lache in the future is a vibrant place with an active and engaged community, where people help each other and can get the help they need. Regular events and activities bring people of all ages together in buildings and spaces which are attractive, fit for purpose and well looked after.

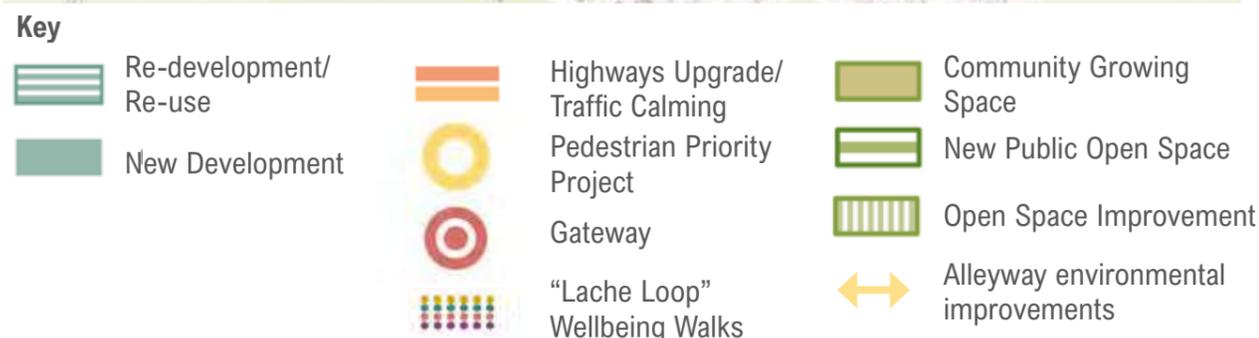
It is connected and accessible to all, where young people can safely walk to school or the park, adults can access education and local jobs while the less able can easily get around.

The surroundings are green and biodiverse, creating a healthy environment which is resilient to climate change, where people are active, and nature can flourish.

Above all it is a distinctive, beautiful neighbourhood that people are proud to call home.”



An artist's impression of a new and revitalised Sycamore Field.



Our Objectives

We have developed eight objectives for future development of Lache. These will act as a guide for future projects and changes in the area. Setting out what is important to local people and serving as a way to measure the success of any actions or interventions. They are:

1. Reinforce Community Pride
2. A Green and Welcoming Neighbourhood
3. A Connected and Accessible Place
4. Clean and Pleasant Spaces
5. Active and Healthy People
6. Create Opportunities
7. Meet Local Housing Needs
8. Celebrate Lache

The objectives have been used to guide the proposals and potential projects identified in the Masterplan

Our Masterplan

Our Masterplan identifies a series of opportunities and possible interventions which will help to deliver the Vision and Objectives (opposite). The potential projects ranges from environmental improvements, new developments, re-purposing of sites and buildings and community activities.

Some of these opportunities are "quick wins" and could be initiated with less cost and permission required, while others will take more time to develop the designs and identify funding opportunities as well as undertake further community engagement and co-design. Subsequently it is likely that many of the potential projects will evolve and change over time as needs and opinions may evolve. The Masterplan intends to provide these potential projects as a "menu" of ideas, some of which may be taken forward subject to the right conditions.

Our masterplan presents the potential projects in three categories:

- **Development and Community.** Outlining opportunities for physical change through re-use, re-development and new development, providing housing and space for commercial and community activity
- **Movement and Streets.** Describing opportunities to improve the safety and appearance of the streets in Lache and encourage more active and healthy lifestyles.
- **Public Spaces.** Offering solutions and opportunities to enhance the open spaces around Lache, making them more usable and attractive.

All potential projects identified should be subject to further engagement with the community and stakeholders prior to initiation and where possible, follow a co-design approach.

Next Steps and Delivery

Our Vision and Masterplan set out in this report is the first step in an ongoing and longer term masterplanning and development process. The responsibility for taking potential projects and opportunities forward is shared by the community, Cheshire West and Chester Council as well as local stakeholders.

To guide this process we have collated the potential projects into an Action Plan and Project Index, which contains currently available information about each opportunity as well as suggesting project leads and responsible partners. This should be used as a guide to help plan and assign actions, which can be targeted by project time-frames and priorities.

Delivery and funding advice is provided towards the end of the report, which is not exhaustive but sets out some advice on what next steps and considerations can be taken into account to ensure the best chance of the opportunities in our Masterplan becoming a reality.

A photograph showing a large, vibrant green grassy field in the foreground. To the right, a paved path or road runs parallel to the field. In the background, there are several large, leafy green trees and residential buildings with brick walls and gabled roofs. A few cars are visible on the road, and a person is walking on the path. The sky is clear and blue.

Introduction



Introduction

Cheshire West and Chester Council [CW&C] have commissioned a team led by LDA Design to articulate a Vision and Masterplan for the Lache Ward in Chester. The study was wholly funded by CW&C.

This report summarises that process and presents the Vision, Objectives and a series of proposed projects which form our Masterplan. The intention is for this report to be used as the basis for funding bids, to inform the private sector of the aims and objectives for the area and to identify where the community could take the lead on improvements with support from the council.

The outputs have directly resulted from ideas put forward by stakeholders and the community in a process summarised in the “Engagement” section of this report. The team has developed and explored these ideas into a co-ordinated set of targeted projects. The latter sections of the report include an Action Plan and delivery advice. It is important to note that while some design consideration has been given to the approaches and projects contained within this report, at this stage they are recommendations and therefore with the opportunity for further consultation and community co-creation and development of ideas, it is likely that these will evolve and change over time.

Our Masterplan is underpinned by a baseline assessment of the townscape, highways, environmental, property market and socio-economic conditions of the ward, a summary of which is set out in the first chapter.

Purpose of the report

Our work provides an updated Vision and Masterplan for the Lache Ward learning from the successes and failures of the previous masterplan for Lache produced with the community in 2007. In addition, recent events such as the Coronavirus Pandemic and recognition of the Climate Emergency has called for a fresh look at the objectives, principles and opportunities that neighbourhoods such as Lache should offer, which our Masterplan seeks to address.

The Masterplan should be used to focus investment and development, as well as raise the aspiration and expectation of those living in Lache by providing clear opportunities to become involved and drive projects forward as community-led initiatives and to hold those accountable who are responsible for the delivery of other projects.



Lache Today





Wider and Socio-Economic Context

The Lache ward occupies an area in the suburbs of Chester on the edge of the city's south-west limits. Further to the south is open countryside, while to the north and west are neighbouring built-up areas of Curzon Park and Westminster Park. To the east, Lache borders with Wales and the neighbourhood of Saltney, with which it is closely associated and shares some local amenities.

Just over 2km from Chester City Centre, Lache is close to the amenities that are offered there, however the surrounding geography leads to a sense of detachment from the city. This is particularly true on foot or by bike, requiring navigation over the River Dee as well as the sometimes busy Overleigh Roundabout. Lache itself is relatively compact however, measuring around 1km long by 0.5km wide, making it easy to access all parts of the ward on foot.

Lache has a population of c.5700 people. The population is younger than average, comprising 25% under 18's and only 14% over 65 (compared to 20% and 22% respectively on average in Cheshire West). The area also has a higher than average number of single occupancy (23%) and lone parent family households (14%).

70% of the population are economically active, however the area has higher than average occurrences of persons with no educational qualification and a lower than average number of people with level 4 qualifications. Council Tax benefit claimants (24%) and Job Seekers Allowance/Universal Credit claimants (3.8%) are higher than average and car ownership in Lache is low at 69% (81% av.).

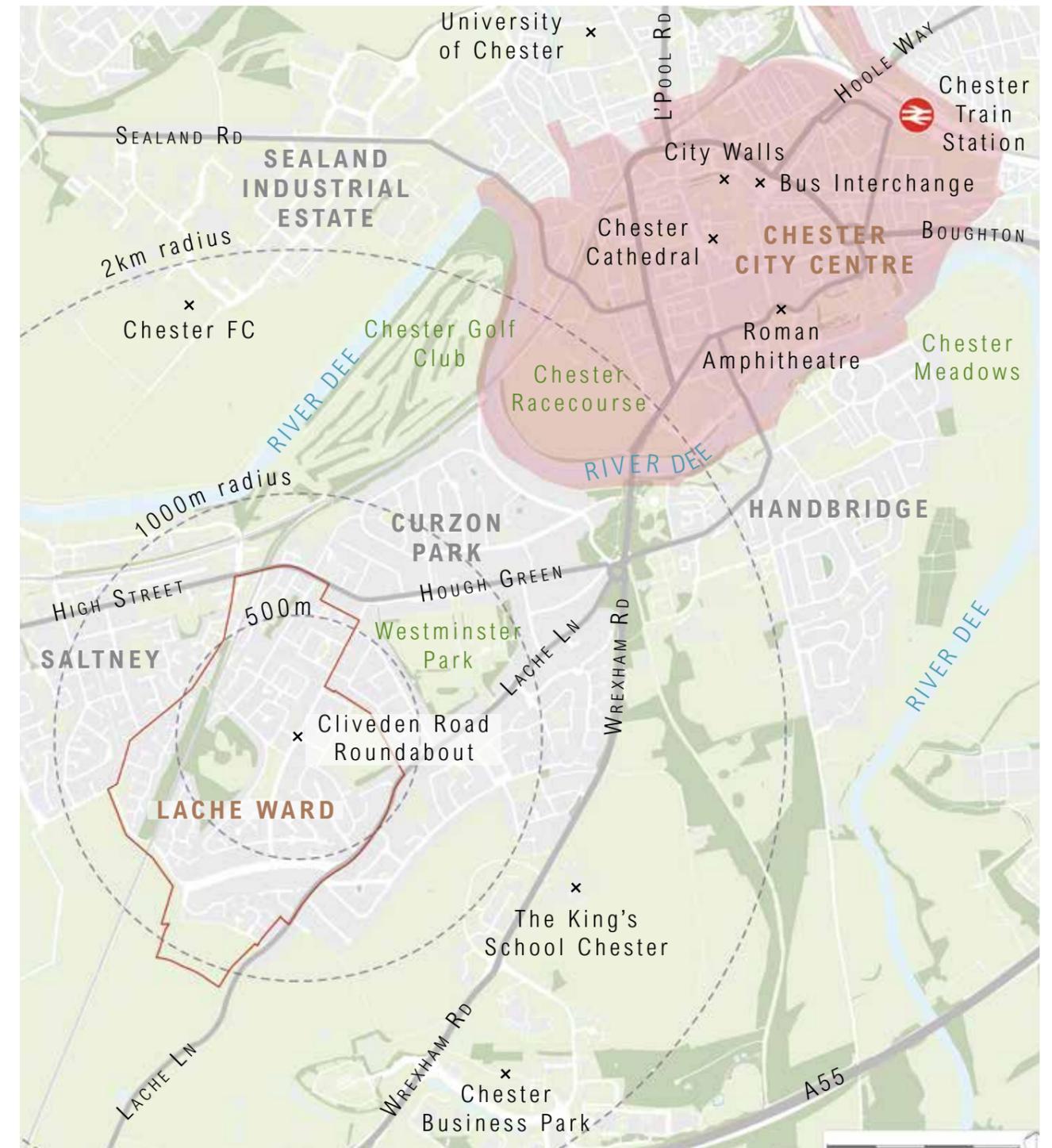
(All data - ONS (2011 - inc. 2019 ONS population estimates & Experian (2021))



▲ Chester City Centre offers a range of amenities, services and public transport connections.



▲ A good range of local shops and amenities are located along Chester Street nearby.



Map showing Lache in its wider context.



The Local Area

Townscape

The area in and around Lache can be described broadly as “suburban” in character, with medium to low densities in a variety of building forms and ages. The street pattern for most of the area is formal, arising from the planning of the estate in 1919 by Sir Patrick Abercrombie, a nationally leading post-war town planner. St Mark’s Road is the most historic street, with higher density terraced housing from the late 19th and early 20th century. The remainder is made up of infill housing estates of a variety of ages, which exhibit noticeably less formal street arrangements.

Parts of the area feel isolated from each other as well as from the surroundings. The streets are not naturally permeable, often taking circuitous routes while a number of barriers negate easy access. This includes physical barriers such as the railway line and other built structures, as well as social barriers, such as the perception that certain areas nearby are not meant for residents of Lache to use.

Sycamore Field provides the primary open space located roughly central to the area, however the largest open space - “The Baccies” also known as the LAPA Field which was a well-used adventure playground site until 2006 when it was closed by Chester City Council due to contamination levels - is only now lightly used owing to its limited accessibility, lack of maintenance and associated anti-social behaviour.

Key to plan opposite

-  Listed Building
-  Barrier to movement/ impermeable edge
-  Landmark/node
-  Public Space
-  Key View/Vista



▲ “The Baccies” (LAPA Field). An under-appreciated natural asset in the area, which is hidden behind buildings and with limited access.



▲ A typical street in central Lache. The formal layout offers a number of pleasant vistas, however it can feel repetitive.



▲ The Shrewsbury-Chester rail line forms a physical barrier separating most of Lache from Saltney to the west.



Plan of Lache showing key townscape features.



Land Use

Conceived as a residential area, Lache predominantly comprises of housing in a variety of typologies, but which is mainly two-storey terraced and semi-detached.

Roughly in the middle of the area, along Cliveden Road is a cluster of shops set around a roundabout and is what many residents would associate as being the centre of Lache. Adjacent, along Hawthorn Road is a collection of community and education buildings including: Lache Primary School, St Clare's Primary School, Lache Community and Health Centre, Children's Centre, Youth Club, Hawthorn House and St Clare's Church.

To the north on Chester Street is the historic centre of Saltney, now a parade of local shops, which offers a variety of nearby retail, food and commercial amenities. Next to these is St Mark's church, which also provides further community functions. While these are close geographically, many residents in Lache would prefer to have amenities nearer to the centre of Lache.

While a need for additional local housing and improved services has been identified by the community and stakeholders, there are few vacant sites and opportunities for development throughout Lache.

Key to plan opposite

- Employment
- Community Use
- Residential
- Retail
- Education
- Place of Worship
- Major Residential
- Planning Application
- Vacant Site/Building



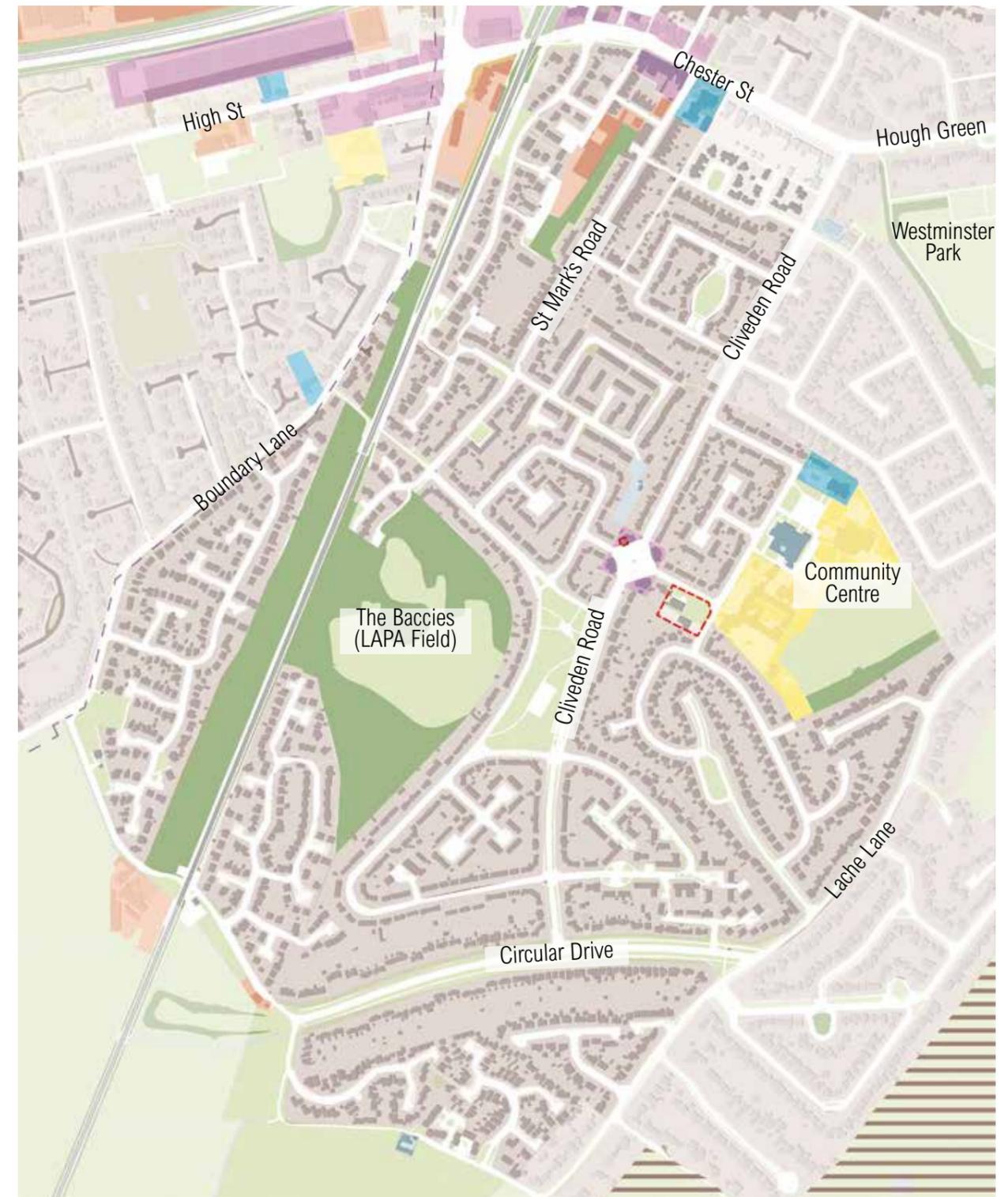
▲ Local shops on Cliveden Road include a convenience store, social supermarket and fast food outlets.



▲ Lache Primary School on Hawthorn Road is a daily place of visitation for many residents in Lache.



▲ Lache Community Centre is an important hub for the community with Lache Health Centre sharing the facility.



Plan of Lache highlighting land uses.



Open Spaces

Lache has a variety of open and green spaces of differing character and quality. Sycamore Field is the primary green open space which while not unpleasant, can feel uninviting, with poorly maintained play equipment and paths which don't follow desire lines. A lack of enclosure from the surrounding roads can make the space feel unsafe, particularly for those with younger children.

The primary schools share a large field, which although not publicly accessible is used by local sports teams for practice. The schools also share a MUGA facility available for use by the public after school hours. Owing to its location the MUGA is not well overlooked, leading to some anti-social behaviour issues.

In addition to formal recreation spaces there are a number of general green amenity spaces and verges which add to the visual attractiveness of the area. These have good potential for enhancement and more active uses.

The roundabout on Cliveden Road, has the potential to form an area of public realm, however is currently dominated by highways.



▲ Sycamore Field. A medium sized grass area with some play equipment although it lacks good facilities for all ages.



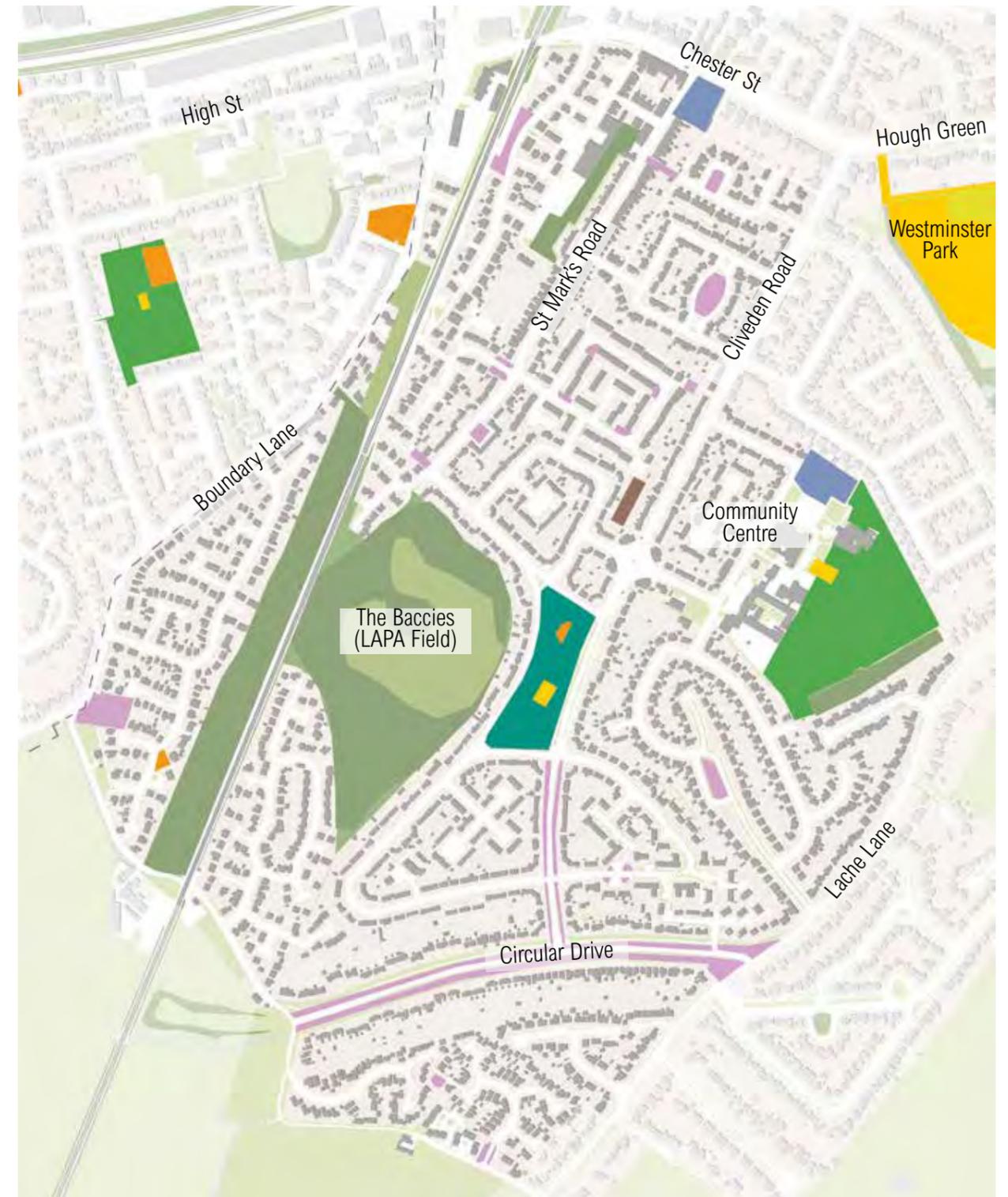
▲ Circular Drive stands out for its green qualities and generous space compared to other streets in Lache.



▲ Lache roundabout. A large space dominated by vehicles is an opportunity for the creation of new public realm.

Key to plan opposite

- Playing Field
- Play Space
- Sports
- Religious Green
- Allotment
- Park
- Green open space
- Woodland
- Green amenity areas



Plan of Lache highlighting public open and other green spaces.



Movement

Chester Street and Hough Green to the north of Lache provide the primary vehicular route into Chester City Centre from the area and is fed local traffic via Boundary Lane and Lache Lane. Anecdotally Green Lane, Circular Drive and Cliveden Road are utilised as a bypass to these two roads, bringing traffic through the middle of the area. Never-the-less vehicle traffic in Lache remains relatively low, particularly in streets away from the main routes.

Lache is served by Buses on Route 16 providing frequent service during the day (15 minute frequency) and most of the estate is within 400m of a bus stop. In the early mornings and evenings however, the frequency significantly reduces, resulting in an unrealistic proposition for those working shifts or outside core business hours.

For pedestrians and cyclists the quieter streets are of benefit, however long straight roads can lead to excessive speeds and narrow roads, meaning parking on the pavement is common, reducing accessibility.



▲ Traffic calming on Cliveden Road. While helping to manage traffic the features do not enhance the character of the street.



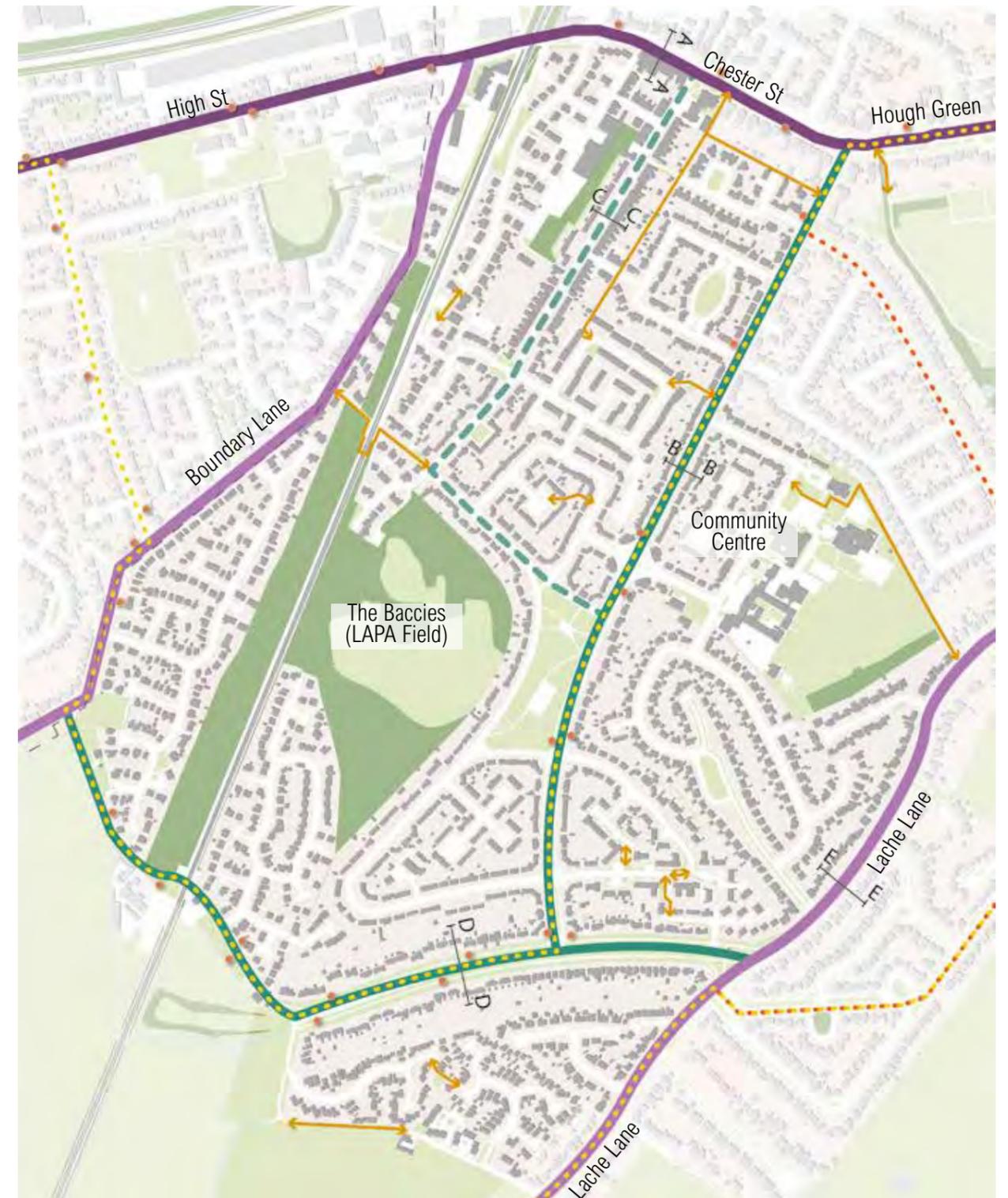
▲ Pedestrian alleyways. Offering pedestrian only permeability, the alleyways are prone to fly-tipping and are poorly maintained.

Key to plan opposite

- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Primary Local Street
- Secondary Local Street
- Bus Route
- Bus Stop
- Cycle Route
- Pedestrian Only Links

Travel times to Chester City Centre (from Cliveden Road roundabout):

37 min	11 min
10 min	17 min



Plan of Lache highlighting main movement corridors.



Engagement

Engagement with local stakeholders and the communities of Lache has been sought to inform the Vision and Masterplan by providing a better understanding of the area as well as to capture the aims and aspirations of the people that live there. Engagement has occurred in two stages:

- Stage 1, at the start of the study to inform the Vision and gather design ambitions; and
- Stage 2, to provide feedback on the developed proposals.

A range of interactive activities with the community as well as one-to-one conversations with stakeholders and community representatives have been undertaken. These have directly informed the aims, objectives and proposals in the plan.

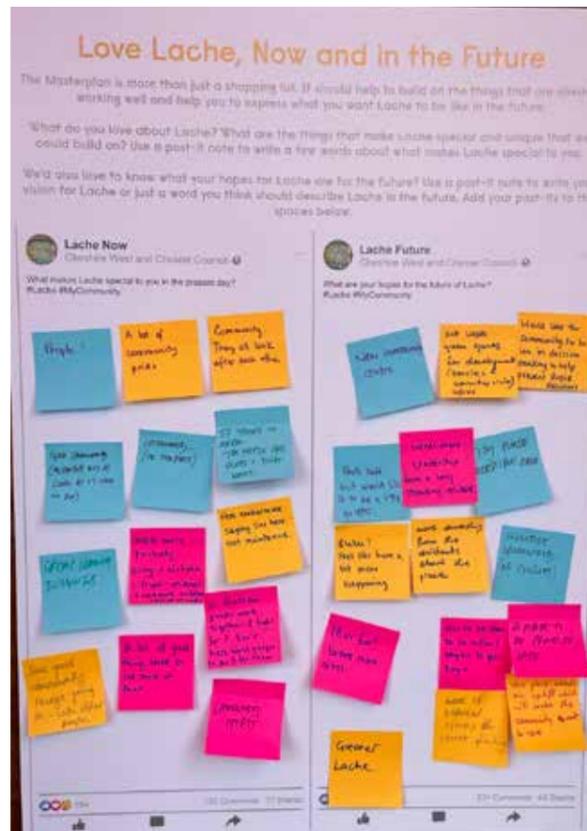
The summary here describes the general response and feelings from those who took part as well as the key themes explored. It does not represent all the views expressed. A more detailed report is contained within Appendix B.

Pop-up Event

Marking the start of our engagement activities, a pop-up event was held on Cliveden Road on the 6th October 2021. This was an opportunity for passers-by to comment broadly on issues and to identify some of the positive attributes of the area, as well as describe their hopes for the future of Lache.

Key points raised during discussions included:

- Lache has a fantastic community spirit, which residents would like to see continue and grow.



- ▲ Images from the pop-up public event.
- ▶ Comments were gathered during conversations and recorded using sticky notes.

- Litter and fly-tipping are particular issues especially in less trafficked areas.
- There are some issues with drug dealing and use in parts of the estate.
- Cliveden Road and the roundabout are dangerous for pedestrians.
- Pride in the area is dropping as there is a sense that it has been neglected.
- The Baccies (LAPA field) is a fantastic asset which should be preserved, but should also be better looked after.
- Often residents are not aware of or feel excluded from the community activities that are taking place.
- Lache (Ward) is made up of a number of different areas, some of which are more associated with other areas, such as Saltney or Westminster Park.

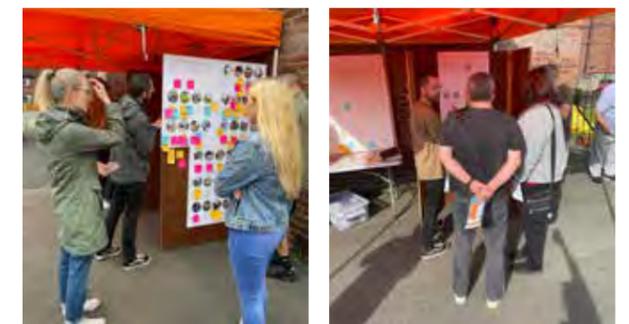


When asked what Lache should offer in the future the most popular answers were around activities for young people, natural spaces, local amenities and pop-up events.

The information gathered at the event was used to guide the further engagement activities as well as shape the emerging Masterplan.

Online Survey

An online survey was live throughout October 2021 which asked similar questions to the pop-up events. There were around 37 respondents.





Workshop & Drop-In Session

Following the pop-up event and in order to draw out more detailed ideas from the community and stakeholders a co-design workshop and drop-in event was held at the Community Centre on the 3rd November 2021.

During the event registered attendees were asked in groups for their design ideas for four priority sites:

- Sycamore Field;
- The Baccies (LAPA Field);
- Cliveden Road roundabout; and
- The Community Centre and Hawthorn Road.

Ideas were recorded using craft and collage as well as written notes. Each group presented their ideas prompting wider discussion of the merits and drawbacks of some of the proposals.

Key comments and ideas for each site included:

- Sycamore Field should have improved play equipment for all ages as well as more interesting landscaping, with natural areas, better lighting and pathways.
- The Baccies should have a new identity as a space for recreation and nature. A small amount of development was generally accepted if it helped to fund improvements.
- Cliveden Road roundabout should be redesigned and maintained as a safer, greener and more attractive space for pedestrians.

- The Community Centre should be retained or replaced on its current site, but that it could be upgraded to host more services as well as provide a more attractive and welcoming environment.

At an open drop-in session following the workshops, all the material created was displayed and attendees were asked for further opinion and comments on what was presented.



▲ Images from the co-design workshop group activity.

Engagement with young people

The final part of our first stage of engagement sought to both create interest and gather ideas from young people who live in the area. This occurred across two elements:

- Teacher-led workshops at Lache Primary School (nursery to year 6) and at St Clare's Primary School (KS2) using material prepared by the consultant team.
- A workshop with the local youth group led by the group leaders using material prepared by the consultant team.

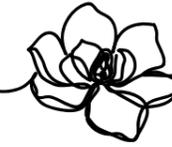
Activity packs encouraged the young people to engage in critical thinking about their local area, mapping their surroundings to capture its positive and negative attributes, as well as model making and creative thought generating ideas for some of the key parts of Lache.

Some of the common ideas included:

- Better and more exciting play equipment (particularly for older young people).
- Craft or creative activities for young people (arts cafe).
- A better connection with nature for all.
- A more attractive environment (planting, flowers, water features).
- Better local amenities, including scooter and bike hire.



▲ Examples of outputs by the local primary school pupils.



Challenges and Opportunities

In summary Lache can be seen to have a number of issues which the Masterplan should seek to address. Conversely there are also a number of positive attributes, assets which could be enhanced as well as opportunities for development and growth which will lead to other physical and socio-economic improvements.

Arising from our baseline research (summarised in the preceding sections) these issues, attributes and ideas are summarised below as key challenges and opportunities faced by Lache.

Challenges

The key challenges fall into a number of categories:

Streets and Environment

- Long straight alignment of Cliveden Road leading to fast vehicle speeds, despite existing traffic management;
- The use of Cliveden Road as a rat-run to avoid congestion on Lache Lane, Boundary Lane and Wrexham Road;
- Anti-social and illegal parking on pavements and restricted areas, taking up pavement space and causing visibility issues;
- Some narrow streets leading to accidents and localised congestion;
- Large roundabout on Cliveden Road is difficult for pedestrians to navigate and presents a road dominated environment;
- Some localised flooding and water logging issues.

Community

- Anti-social behaviour causing people to avoid some areas;
- Issues with persistent fly tipping and littering;
- Sense of apathy towards improving the area leading to an unwillingness to be involved in community projects;
- High levels of unemployment and lower education among adults than average resulting in a less mobile population.

Amenities and Services

- Digital poverty and difficulty communicating leading to exclusion of some residents;
- Poor local bus service out of peak hours;
- Unhelpful comparisons with other areas in Chester and a sense that Lache does not receive the same level of service and investment as elsewhere;
- Limited opportunity/spaces for additional local amenities or community projects;
- Limited opportunity/space for new residential development to meet local housing need;
- Limited physical accessibility to some places such as The Baccies (LAPA Field) and Westminster Park.



▲ Fly-tipping issue often appear by alleyways.



▲ Existing traffic calming measures.



▲ Poor streetscape around the schools.



▲ Alleyways often lack maintenance.



▲ Long, straight view along Cliveden Road.



▲ Key green space provides limited opportunities for the residents.

Our Vision





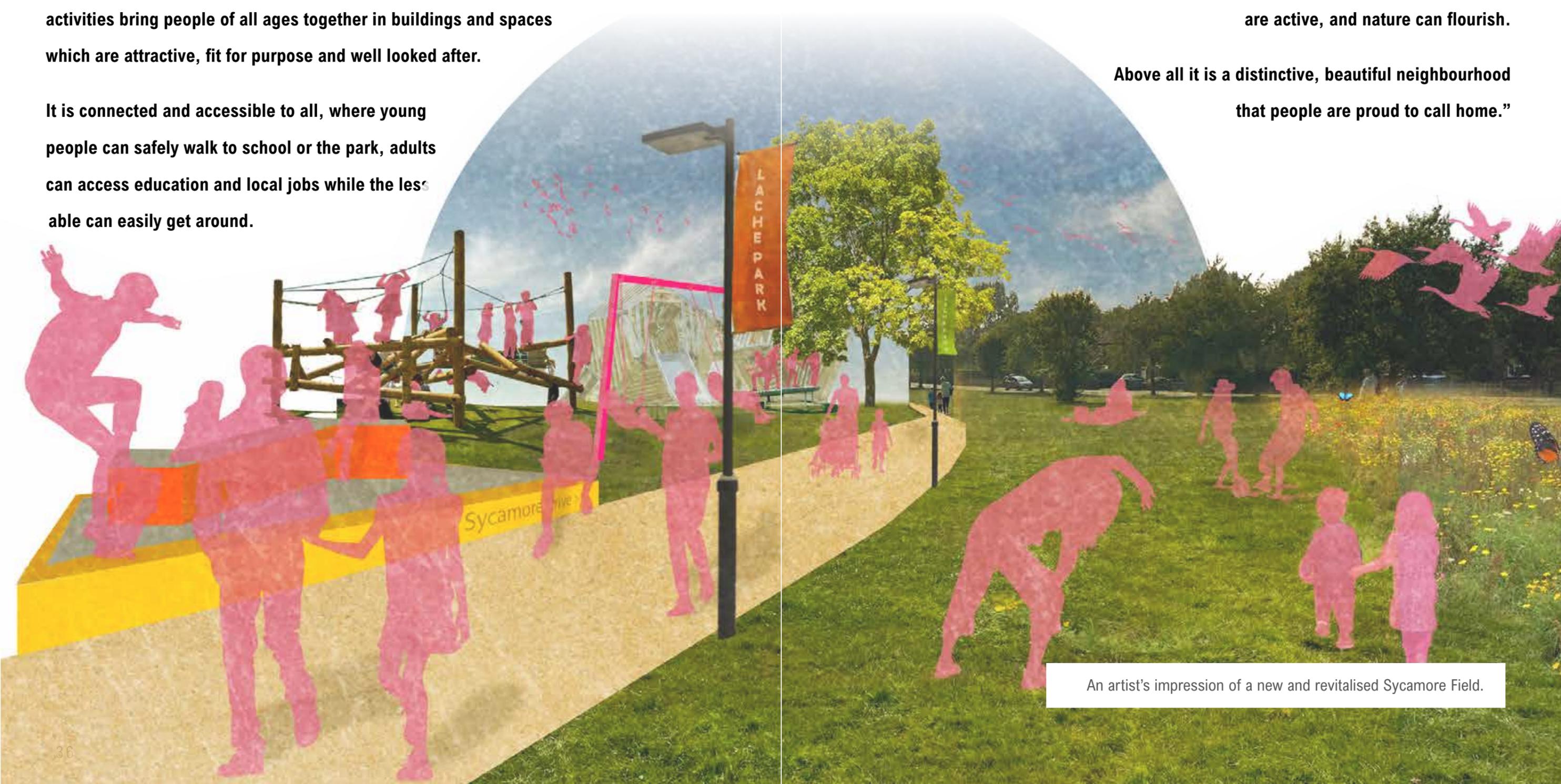
Future Lache: A Green & Healthy Neighbourhood

“Lache in the future is a vibrant place with an active and engaged community, where people help each other and can get the help they need. Regular events and activities bring people of all ages together in buildings and spaces which are attractive, fit for purpose and well looked after.

It is connected and accessible to all, where young people can safely walk to school or the park, adults can access education and local jobs while the less able can easily get around.

The surroundings are green and biodiverse, creating a healthy environment which is resilient to climate change, where people are active, and nature can flourish.

Above all it is a distinctive, beautiful neighbourhood that people are proud to call home.”



An artist's impression of a new and revitalised Sycamore Field.

Our Objectives

A series of Objectives have been created to guide the development of future projects in Lache and to help facilitate the vision. The objectives describe exactly what the community is striving to achieve in order that any proposal to change Lache can be equally reviewed and considered for its benefits to the area and community.

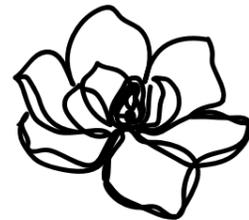
Our Master plan describes a series of key projects and interventions which are designed to respond to these objectives which are detailed in the following chapter(s). The objectives have helped to guide the project and will be used to assess, prioritise and monitor their success.

There are eight objectives we have developed for Lache which are described adjacent.

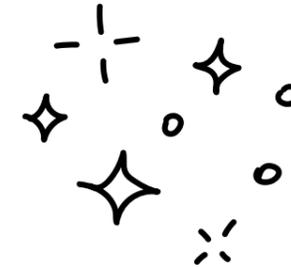
1. Reinforce community pride: create a cohesive community that is enabled and involved in decision making in the neighbourhood.



2. A Green and welcoming neighbourhood: present an attractive and inviting place, creating space for nature as a priority and encouraging an awareness of Climate Change.



3. A Connected and accessible place: form a neighbourhood which is safe and easy to navigate with good links to surrounding areas.



4. Clean and pleasant spaces: create beautiful spaces which are nice to spend time in and discourage bad behaviour and crime.



5. Active and healthy people: encourage walking and cycling through the design of streets and spaces which prioritise the pedestrian experience.



6. Create opportunities: provide good physical and digital connectivity with access to learning and advice to help employment and self esteem.



7. Meet local housing needs: provide modern and sustainable homes which meet the local housing demand and which are attractive and fit for purpose.

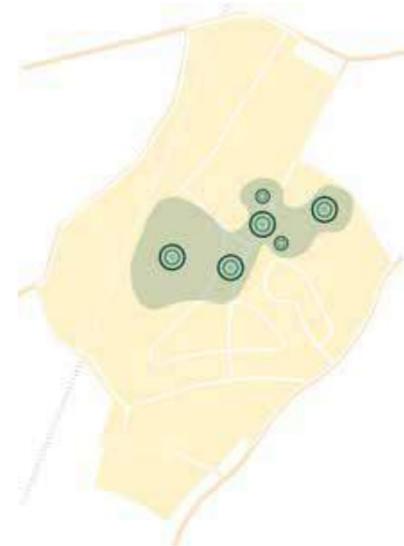


8. Celebrate Lache: provide development that is locally distinctive and considers the needs of those who live there.



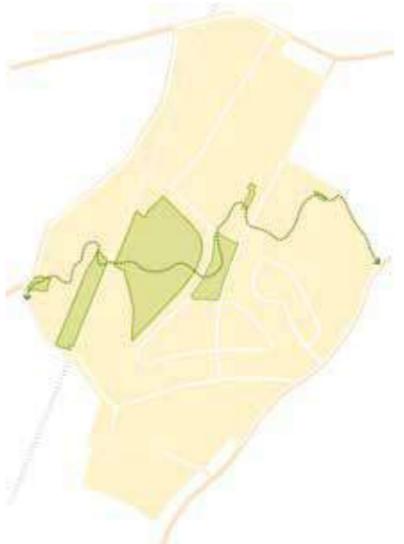
Key Principles

The Key Principles underpin the approach to our Masterplan and aim to directly address the Vision and Objectives. The principles should be considered by all future development in Lache.



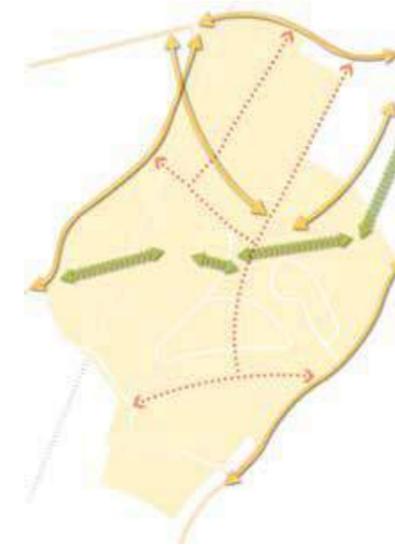
Define the Heart of Lache

Enhance key public assets to form an attractive community offer that is connected by high quality streets and spaces to give Lache a centre to be proud of.



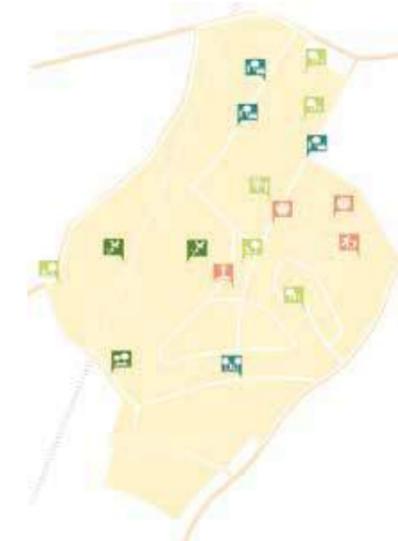
Create Network of Green Spaces

Improve the access to and quality of existing open spaces, which should be linked by walkable routes to form a network of attractive and usable green spaces throughout Lache.



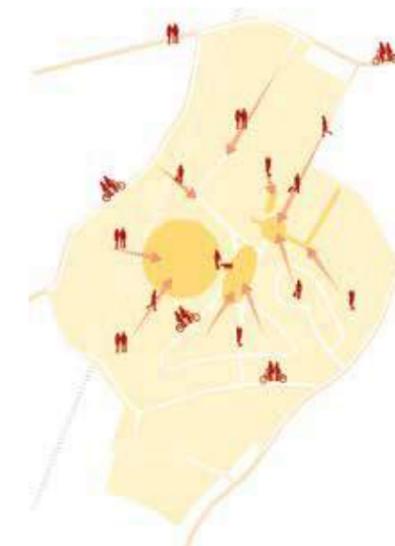
Make Safe and Accessible Connections

Safe and accessible routes should be created across Lache and towards the surrounding areas suitable for all users, allowing people to easily access family, local amenities and employment opportunities.



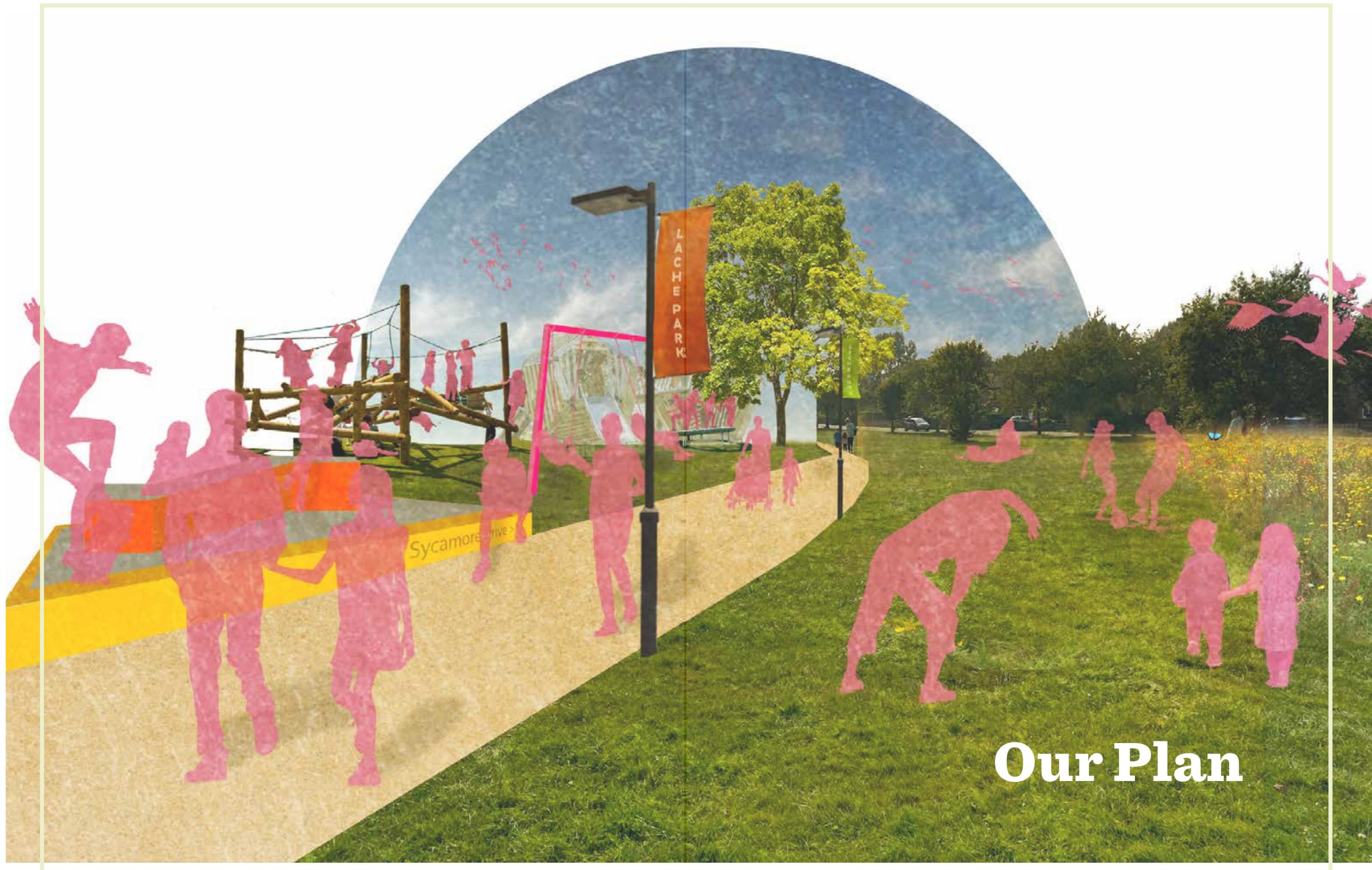
Enhance the Image of the Area

Ensure management of streets and spaces to keep them clean and tidy. Make people aware of what Lache has to offer through better communication with residents and signage.



Bring the Community Together

Create opportunities to bring the community together by providing the space and means for activities and events to take place.



Our Plan



Summary



Our Masterplan for Lache

Our Vision described in the preceding section describes what the community would like their neighbourhood to look like, and be, at the end of this process. It has been developed as a direct output of our engagement, bringing the thoughts and expressions together in a coherent way. The Vision is aspirational, as it should be, but importantly it is achievable with the right level of co-ordination, commitment and funding, as well as support from both the Local Authority and community.

To frame the route to achieving the Vision we have developed a Masterplan which sets out a range of potential projects and interventions to both act as a guide as well as to serve as inspiration for other projects. The Masterplan has three distinct “layers”, relating to different categories of projects, these are:

- Development and Community;
- Movement and Streets; and
- Public Spaces

The following chapter provides more details of these proposals that are referred to with project reference numbers, which are then categorised and recorded within an Action Plan and Project Index (Appendix A). The Action Plan provides key details for each potential project as well as advising on the next steps and responsible parties for moving the projects forward. This will include more community engagement to shape and develop the projects in more detail.

A number of the projects are developed in more detail than others as they are seen to be of greater interest or priority by the community, capturing more of the Vision and Objectives. While developed, the proposals described in this report are for illustrative purposes only and designs should be developed in more detail and with further engagement with the community before they are delivered.

Key to plan opposite

<i>Development and Community</i>	<i>Movement and Streets</i>	<i>Public Spaces</i>
Re-development/ Re-use	Highways Upgrade/ Traffic Calming	Community Growing Space
New Development	Pedestrian Priority Project	New Public Open Space
	Gateway	Open Space Improvement
	“Lache Loop” Wellbeing Walks	Alleyway environmental improvements

Projects and Interventions

Our Masterplan for Lache has identified over 25 potential projects and interventions, which are explained in this following section. These range from environmental improvements and places for the community, through refurbishment and development opportunities. Some of the more significant projects have been developed in a little more detail to explore the opportunity further, however these and all projects identified should be subject to further design and technical consideration if taken forward.

At this stage all projects have been identified for their potential to be delivered and selected for the benefits they bring to the community. All the projects will require financial appraisal and external funding or partnerships that may involve third parties, as well as community co-creation opportunities. Some of the sites identified accommodate existing uses, therefore the delivery of the project will depend on the future intentions of the landowners and any lease arrangements, which may also require the relocation of the current uses. Projects of this nature can only be achieved with local leaderships and collaboration with stakeholders.



An illustrative plan showing key proposals in the central area of Lache including new community facilities, public realm, street interventions and redesigned open spaces.



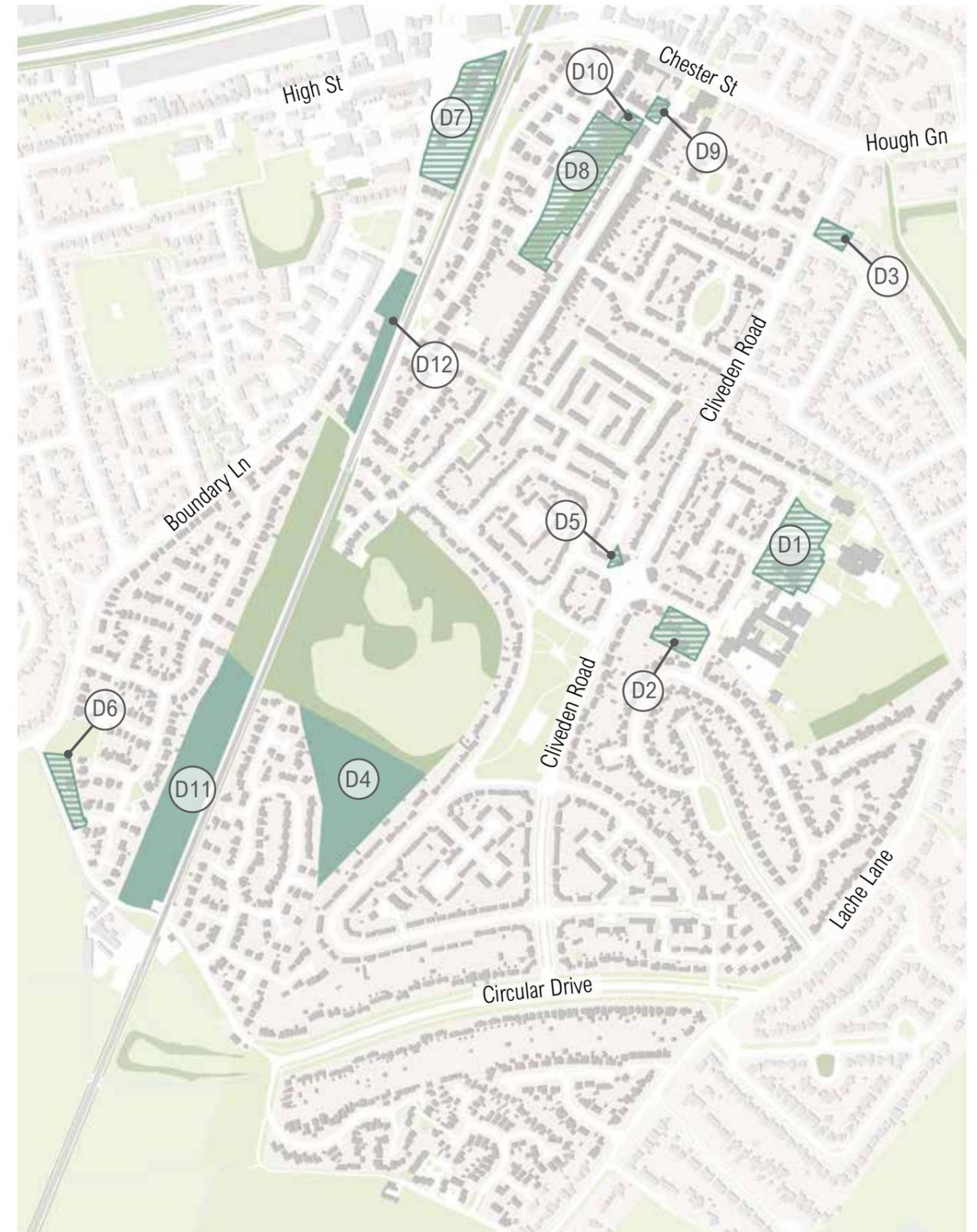
Development and Community

Supported by market research our Masterplan has identified several sites that could be potentially developed or redeveloped in order to deliver new housing as well as other community of commercial uses. Identified in the plan opposite these are generally sites where consideration could be given to more intensive and efficient development or they are vacant and within areas that were historically subject to other urban uses. Where possible, in sites where existing uses are present an alternative location for those functions has been considered within the masterplan.

The identified opportunities are described in more detail over the next pages. Key details including land ownership, possible time frames, assumed priority, links to objectives and other associated projects summarised in the Action Plan and Project Index (Appendix A).

Key to plan opposite

- Re-development
- Re-use / New Development



Our plan showing development opportunities.



D1. Community Hub

The existing Community Centre provides a key service to the community as a place to come together for events, classes, support and to socialise as well as being home to the Health Centre. The site however, is unattractive and poorly laid out, resulting in an unwelcoming appearance. The building is well used, but due to its age and adjustments to the layout over time performs poorly and is unsustainable.

Our proposal is for a new Community Hub that brings together and upgrades the existing uses with other council offered services, such as the Library, into a custom built facility that is shared with a new Health Centre. This would provide a modern building which is future proofed as well as the opportunity to re-think the layout of the site to create a more inclusive and welcoming space, which caters for pedestrians, cyclists and cars more equally.

▼ The existing Community Centre and Health Centre appear uninviting and dilapidated in a site dominated by roads and fences



Another advantage of redevelopment is the ability to create more accommodation on the site by adding floor levels, providing an opportunity to build new homes at upper levels, which would also help to animate the site throughout the day and evening.

Key development principles:

- The new building should accommodate all existing uses within the community centre.
- The new building should be welcoming and accessible to all.
- Car parking should be accommodated on the site at an appropriate level that does not lead to parking and traffic issues elsewhere.
- The site should be laid out to provide a safe and attractive approach to St Clares Primary School and the MUGA.



The Limelight, Old Trafford is an award winning example of an integrated service building which operates as a health and wellbeing hub for the local area. It offers a range of community activities and council services alongside a GP, pharmacy, nursery and residential accommodation. Attractive hard and soft landscaping around the building provides a welcoming and open setting.



D2. Hawthorn House/ Little Lache

Currently not in use, the two sites on the corner of Poplar Road and Hawthorn Road are in a key location within sight of both the Community Centre and Cliveden Road and a good opportunity to help link together these two assets through their re-animation.

In the short term, they are suited to re-instatement as community facilities: the buildings are currently in a manageable state of repair and if offered to locally run organisations, such as sports teams or other clubs it would provide additional valuable space for the community to come together and care for.

With the formation of a new Community Hub (Project No. D1) however, where such functions could be consolidated, there is an opportunity to redevelop the site. This could bring additional benefits such as public realm improvements, new residential accommodation and a more animated street scene.

The site is well suited to a development of mixed, complementary uses such as a nursery and retirement or co-living accommodation (option 1), or a larger single development of extra-care, retirement or co-living accommodation (option 2), which could include an element of communal accommodation at street level. Option 2 could be a second phase of development.



▲ Option 1 - a mixed use development re-instating the existing nursery and providing new single occupancy residential accommodation (c. 10no. homes).



▲ Option 2 - a mixed use development re-instating the existing nursery and providing a mix of residential accommodation (c.15no. homes).

D3. Library Site

The existing library offers a vital service to the community in Lache and should not be lost. However it is currently situated on the edge of the area and could be closer to the centre of Lache to more easily engage with more of the residents in the community.



▲ New infill family housing with off-street parking

If the library service is accommodated within the new Community Hub (Project No. D1) the site would become available for redevelopment. It offers a good opportunity to form new family accommodation with private garden space and off street parking (6no. houses).



▲ The site has potential to accommodate new family housing with private open space.



D4. The Baccies (LAPA Field)

The Baccies, or LAPA Field as it is also sometimes known, is a hidden asset in Lache. Historically used in part as an adventure play facility and youth club as well as being used as a tip, the area has now been left for nature to take over and occasionally attracts anti-social behaviour, meaning the site is less attractive and accessible to large numbers of the local community.

It is known that there are viability challenges in relation to its development potential as there is recorded ground contamination due to its former uses, as well as some ground water issues in places. Never-the-less the site presents one of the few opportunities for larger scale development in Lache and it has the potential to accommodate around 50no. new homes for local people if developed in part. These could provide new accommodation for families in both privately owned and social housing, as well as providing a good opportunity for co-housing or similar collective living models.

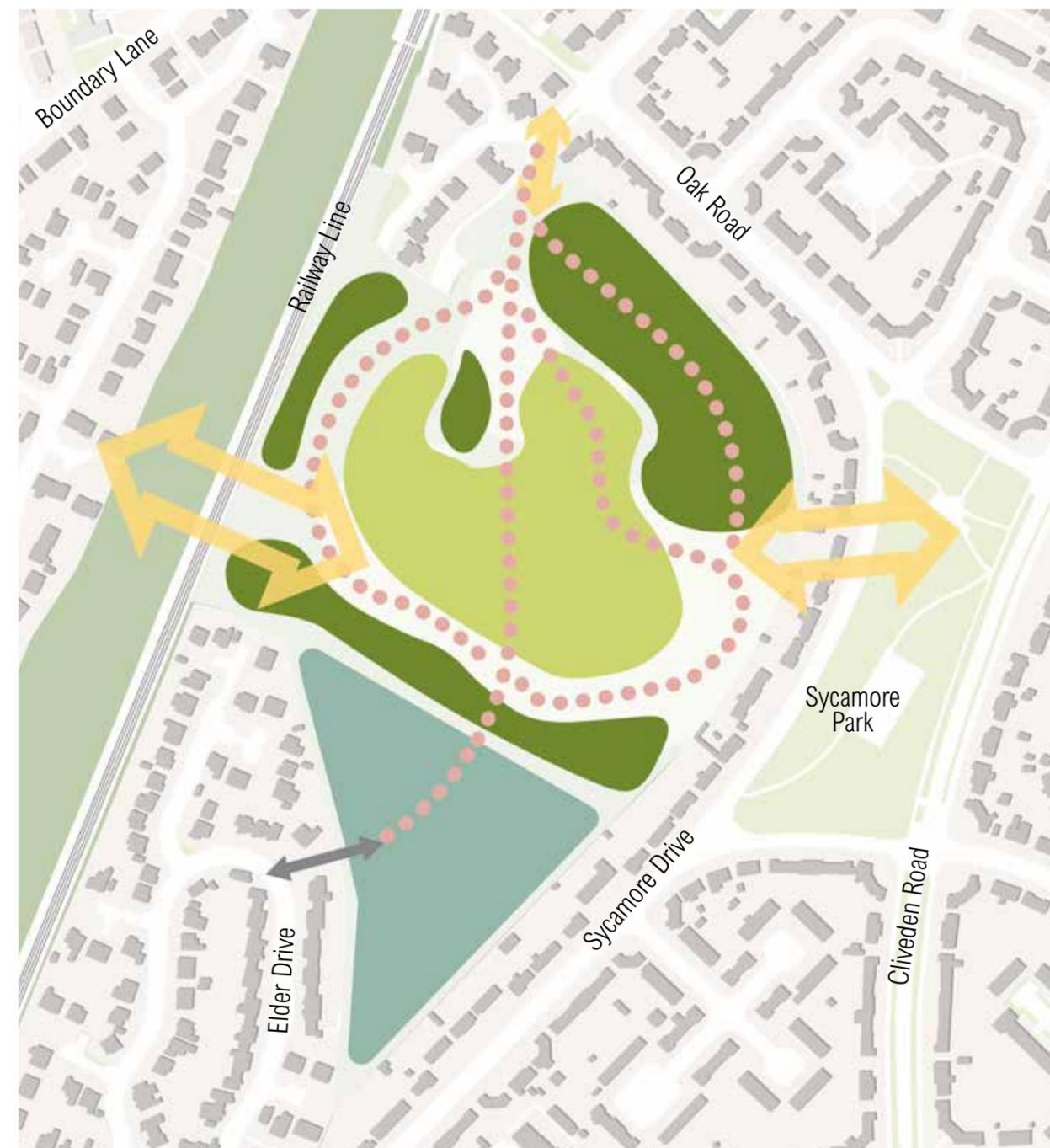
Some of the additional benefits development of the site would provide is the ability to leverage funding to improve the remainder of the site as a nature park (Project No. P4) as well as physical improvements to the sites' safety through improved passive surveillance. This ideally would also include the creation of new access points, better connecting the site with its surroundings and encouraging more positive interactions with the space.

In order for part of the site to be developed further viability testing should be undertaken, as well as technical studies, dealing with matters such as access (vehicular), ground conditions, flooding, ecology and arboriculture. Where possible existing trees should be maintained and incorporated into proposals. Further engagement with local residents should be sought.



▲ The site has the potential to provide new homes in a natural setting.

- Key to plan opposite**
- New Development
 - Meadow Area
 - Woodland Area
 - New Footpath
 - New Vehicle Access
 - Existing Pedestrian Access
 - Beneficial location of new pedestrian access



A site masterplan for The Baccies, showing development, retained open space and locations where new pedestrian access would be beneficial.



D5. Former Butchers, Cliveden Road

Currently vacant, the former butchers shop on the roundabout is a good opportunity to provide a home for a local business or enterprise. It could provide a service led by the community in a multi-purpose and active space for meeting, workshops or knowledge exchanges, arts and crafts related activities and pop-up shops. Use of the space in this way would ensure it is available to be used by all, bringing positive engagement and activity to the roundabout.



▲ The former retail unit could provide a creative hub for the community to share ideas, experience and educate.

D6. Water Pumping Station, Green Lane

Currently occupied by a water pumping station, the site has the potential to be developed in part or fully (if the existing use ceases) to provide a small number of new infill houses (c. 7no.) with attractive views across open farmland toward the Welsh hills.



▲ Existing site on Green Lane.



▲ The site could be developed to provide attractive housing.

D7. The Sidings Business Park, Boundary Lane

Already a commercial/employment site, development could intensify these uses, bringing the benefit of further employment and enterprise opportunities as well as boosting the local economy.

The site is well situated for localised increased scale and density which could offer a variety of commercial spaces: from start up units to larger premises. This could also include businesses currently located in the nearby Red Hill House, which could then be made available for residential development (Project No, D8).

In the shorter term increase in space could be created using “pop-up” or semi-permanent units such as shipping containers located in the car park. This would be well suited to creative enterprises or start up businesses.



▲ Pollard Yard in Manchester, a creative business hub based in Shipping Containers.

D8. Red Hill House, Hope Street

Currently a commercial/employment site set amongst housing development. If the current businesses were to relocate it provides a good opportunity to provide new homes (c. 45 houses and apartments) in a sustainable location in Lache.

Redevelopment of the site could include the renovation or re-provision of nearby social housing stock to form a larger opportunity to provide new and more energy efficient homes.



▲ Redevelopment of the Red Hill House Site could include development of larger homes and apartments in a sustainable location.

D9. Saltney Service Station, St Marks Road

Currently used as a car garage if the existing use were to cease or relocate, the site has good potential to provide a small number of infill homes (c. 4-6 apartments).

D10. Deva Mowers, Coronation Street

A small site occupied by an independent business, if the current use were to cease or relocate it could be developed to provide a small number of infill homes (c. 3no. houses).

D11. Former Railway Sidings Development

The former railway sidings are currently inaccessible and overgrown, although there is evidence of illegal access and fly tipping. Owned by the Council, the site has the potential to provide an enhanced green corridor as public open space (Project No. P5) alongside part development which could help fund the environmental improvements.

With access from Green Lane, the development could bring new homes (c. 30no. houses) as well as improved permeability and an active travel corridor towards the shops at Saltney which is separated from the busier Boundary Lane route.

Where possible existing trees should be retained in any proposals that are brought forward, and further engagement with local residents should be sought.

D12. Land behind Lindfields (off Boundary Lane)

Currently undeveloped the site has the potential to be developed to provide new homes (7no. houses) and public open space which could connect to the existing pathway and footbridge over the railway line. Any new development should front onto Boundary Lane to provide an animated street scene.



There are a number of opportunities in Lache to provide new high quality homes which are much needed in the area.



Movement and Steets

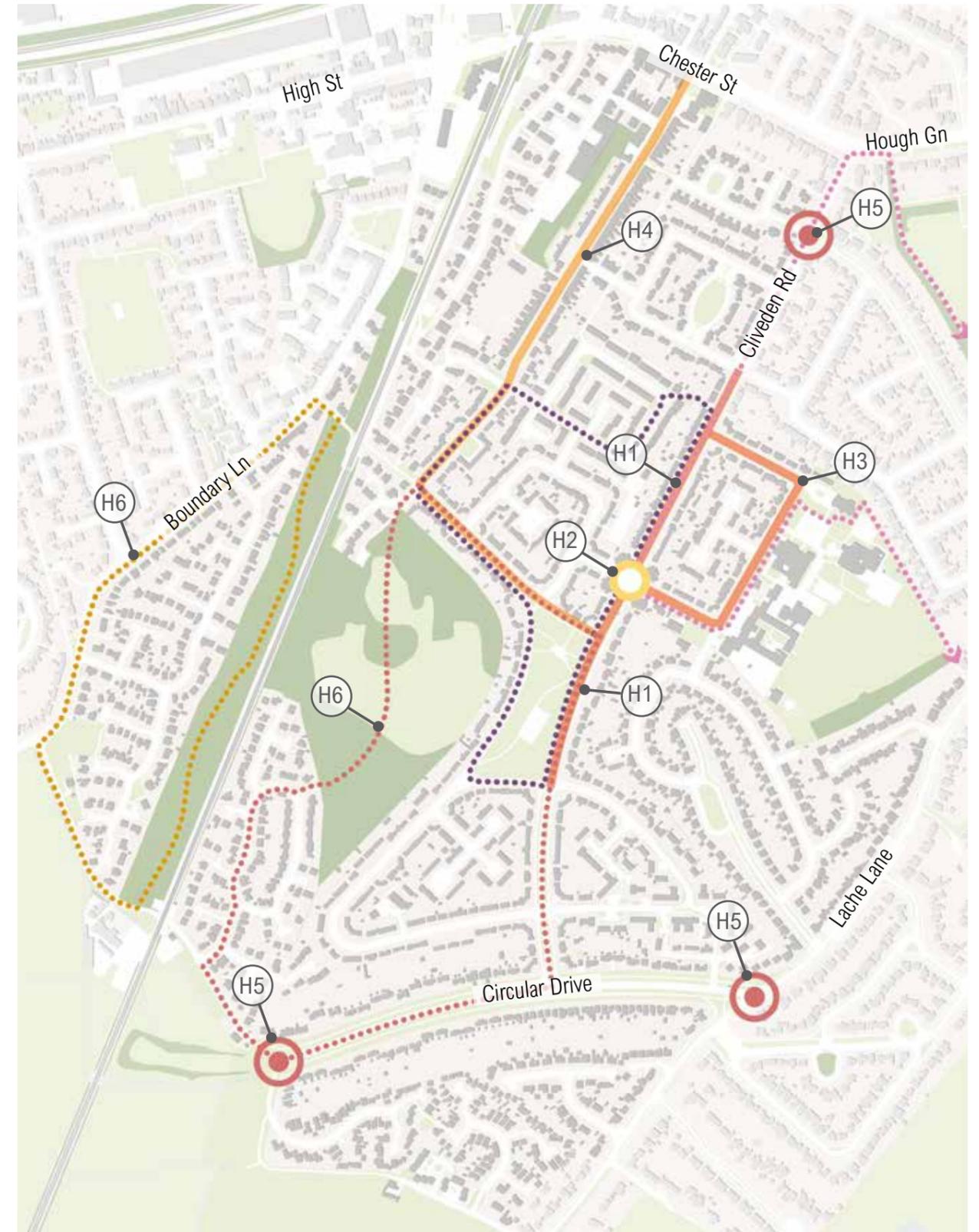
Lache has relatively low recorded incidents of traffic collisions and the streets are largely well planned, there are a number of opportunities to improve the streets and spaces using a place-based approach. This will have the benefit of helping to elevate the importance of key areas in Lache as well as make them safer and more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists. It is well documented that more walkable and active neighbourhoods have improved health among residents, greater social cohesion and more buoyant local economies.

While the full extent of interventions is endless, our Masterplan identified a number of key streets and spaces which could be enhanced to maximise the benefit for the most number of people living in Lache. The majority will require funding and action by the Council's Highways Department, but a number have been identified for their potential to be driven by the community with the appropriate permissions.

The identified opportunities are described in more detail over the next pages. Key details including land ownership, possible time frames, assumed priority, links to objectives and other associated projects are summarised in the Action Plan and Project Index (Appendix A).

Key to Plan Opposite

-  Highways Upgrade/ Traffic Calming
-  Ped. & Cycle Awareness/Traffic Calming
-  Pedestrian Priority Scheme
-  Gateway
-  "Lache Loops" Wellbeing Walks



Our plan showing movement and street interventions.



H1.Cliveden Road (Central Section)

As a relatively long and straight section of highway, Cliveden Road has a number of associated issues resulting in a street environment which is experienced by many residents as feeling unsafe and unattractive to pedestrians. The road does have existing traffic calming measures and Traffic Regulation Orders, such as a 20mph zone, however there is a perception that generally these are not respected.

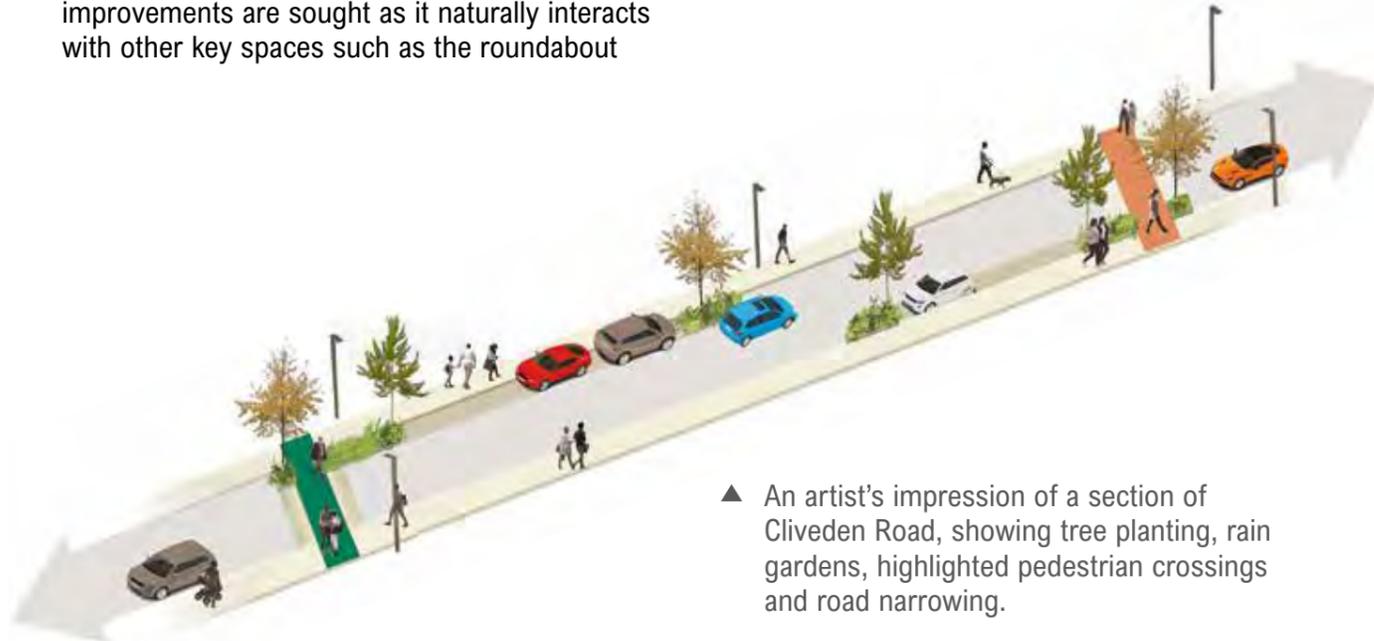
There is however good potential to improve the street environment through a series of interventions which could lead to increased greenery, greater resilience to flooding, improved provisions for cyclists and pedestrians and a reduction in the visual dominance of vehicles.

We have identified the central section of Cliveden Road as having the most impact if improvements are sought as it naturally interacts with other key spaces such as the roundabout

(Project No. H2) and Sycamore Field (Project No. P3) as well as connecting to Hawthorn Road (Project No. H3).

The following should be considered in any highways improvement scheme:

- Increased and more visible pedestrian crossing points.
- Pavement build outs to formalise parking bays and pedestrian crossing points.
- Single lane priority road narrowing.
- Tree planting.
- Rain gardens and other Sustainable Urban Drainage Solutions.
- Introduction of other soft landscaping.



▲ An artist's impression of a section of Cliveden Road, showing tree planting, rain gardens, highlighted pedestrian crossings and road narrowing.



▲ A pedestrian crossing point made more visible to vehicles through a change of materials.



▲ Formalised parking bays using planted pavement build outs can increase the attractiveness of the street.



▲ A plan of Cliveden Road illustrating the proposed extent of highways improvements.



H2. “Poplar Place” - The Cliveden Road Roundabout

The existing roundabout on Cliveden Road is recognised by most as the “centre” of Lache, being geographically in the middle and as a place where a limited amount of other uses are located. Despite this association the space does not currently offer an attractive or welcoming environment as it dominated by the large amount of road resulting from the roundabout. It also suffers from a lack of provision for

pedestrians with no defined crossing spaces and limited areas of footpath at the edges.

There is however lots of space available, which if re-proportioned provides a good opportunity to re-think the function of the space, claiming back road as public realm for footpaths, planting and street furniture.

Our vision for the space is as a piece of public realm which will become a true centrepiece for Lache. The highway will be claimed back for pedestrians with being vehicles required to slow down and be aware as they cross it, simultaneously creating room for public gatherings and events.

Achieving the full vision will require a full technical design to be prepared, considering the safety of all road users, as well as requiring significant funding. In order to achieve some of the benefits sooner we have identified the opportunity to phase the transformation of the space. This means a more immediate change can be achieved by using more cost-effective and temporary solutions to change the way the street functions, without having to invest in large amounts of engineering. The proposed phases and interventions are detailed further in the following pages.



An artist's impression showing the roundabout re-imagined as a new public space



Phase 1

Low-cost measures can be used to re-shape the space altering the way it is used through a “tactical urbanism” type approach. These measures could be implemented on a temporary basis to cater for events and activities as well semi-permanently to change the way that vehicles access and move through it.

Items of street furniture like planters, barriers or bollards can be used to guard or close off areas from vehicles creating a safer environment for people. Simultaneously these could also be used to soften the space by introducing vegetation and flowers.

Artwork painted onto the floor can be used to visually reduce the scale of the road, encouraging drivers to be more aware of their surroundings, while also brightening the environment through introducing colour and interest.

A number of these interventions could include local residents in their inception or implementation, which would add to their value in the community, encouraging support for more permanent measures in Phase 2.



▲ Phase 1 measures could include semi-permanent modal filters, pop-up events or street artworks to alter the way that the space is perceived by road users.



An illustrative plan of the roundabout showing how a combination of low-cost measures could start to re-form the space, making it more attractive and safer for pedestrians.



Phase 2

Phase 2 would see some of the ideas which have been tested during phase 1 made formal and permanent. This would see the transformation of the roundabout into “Poplar Place”, a new public square in the heart of Lache.

The closure of one side of Poplar Road would allow the creation of a multi-purpose pedestrianised space, while changing the roundabout into a simpler junction form.

Moving kerb lines will create wider pavements for outdoor seating and planting helping the space to feel on a more human scale. Reducing the road width will also require vehicles to travel more cautiously as well as making it easier for pedestrians to cross. Crossing locations can be used as gateways into the space, defined through road markings or changes in material.

Introducing soft landscaping will help alleviate localised surface water flooding, as well as filter water of many pollutants before it reaches the nearby water courses.

Design solutions for the space should consider road safety for all users as well as ensuring safe and easy access for servicing, deliveries and short term car parking for those that are required to use their cars.



▲ Phase 2 measures could see a widening of pavements to claim back space for outdoor seating, soft landscaping and a change in road layout including clear pedestrian crossings.



An illustrative plan of the roundabout showing how a combination of low-cost measures could start to re-form the space, making it more attractive and safer for pedestrians.



H3. Hawthorn Road

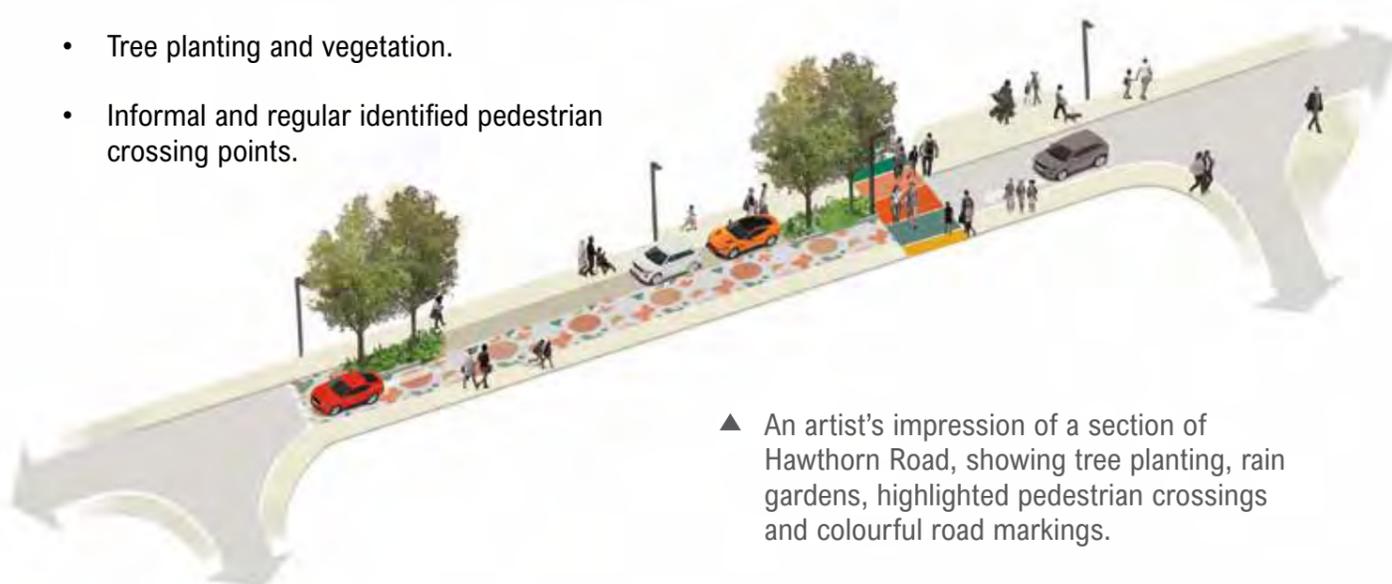
Hawthorn Road is the setting for a number of key public assets in Lache including a church, two primary schools, the community and health centre, youth club and children’s centre as well as residences. The road width is limited and reduced further by parking, which combined with its relatively frequent use often results in localised congestion, nuisance parking blocking resident’s access as well as parking over the pavements. This ultimately leads to a less safe and inviting environment for pedestrians and in particular children.

There are a number of interventions which could improve this condition and should be considered including:

- The adoption of a one-way system taking in Poplar Road, Hawthorn Road and Downsfield Road.
- Formalised parking bays using pavement build outs.
- Tree planting and vegetation.
- Informal and regular identified pedestrian crossing points.

Any proposed change to the road should account for the safety of all road users, consider the needs of those who require the use of a car and not lead to congestion elsewhere.

One of the key aims should be to encourage more people to walk and cycle to school and the other facilities nearby.



▲ An artist’s impression of a section of Hawthorn Road, showing tree planting, rain gardens, highlighted pedestrian crossings and colourful road markings.

H4. St Marks Road

St Marks Road is an historic route linking Lache directly with the shops on Chester Street and Saltney. Subsequently it is an important route for pedestrians and cyclists. The long, straight and narrow road does lead to increased vehicle speeds as well as presenting hard and environment without much greenery.

There is potential to change the character of the street to make it safer and more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists by considering the following:

- Raised tables at junctions and narrowing bellmouths.
- Implied zebra crossings at junctions.
- Formalised parking planting.
- Painted cycle symbols in the carriageway.



▲ Implied crossings and painted cycle symbols reinforce the idea that motorists should expect cycling and pedestrians along the street

H5. Gateways

As well as defining an arrival into an area, gateway features can improve the appearance and presence of a place as well as signal to motorists that they should behave differently in this area.

Features could include:

- Signage and other street furniture.
- Road and junction narrowing.
- Material changes and raised tables.
- Trees and other planting.
- Implied pedestrian crossings.



▲ A “soft” gateway feature using trees and other planting, localised narrowing and bollards can help signify to motorists that a change in behaviour is required.



H6. “Lache Loops” Wellness Walks

As a relatively compact and quiet neighbourhood Lache is well suited to walking. There are a number of assets within walking distance of most residents including the local parks and open spaces, the open countryside to the south, Westminster Park and nearby shops and amenities. Building on the existing Lache Wellness Walk arranged by Cheshire West Communities Together we propose that a series of defined walking routes are established to encourage and provide additional impetus for residents to be active, socialise and interact with the local area.

We have suggested four routes of different lengths and which passing through different areas, however any number of routes could be defined in collaboration with local people and stakeholders. Some of our proposed routes show the potential to pass through areas not currently accessible with the intention that they can tie-in with other projects described in this Masterplan. These should be subject to further community consultation and engagement.



Key to Plan Opposite

- Saltney Loop
- Nature Loop
- Central Loop
- Westminster Loop

▲ The routes could be highlighted through signage, formal and informal wayfinding. Positioning of new street furniture and planting such as benches, litter bins and trees should ideally be positioned along the routes.



Our plan showing proposed “Lache Loop” routes.



Public Spaces

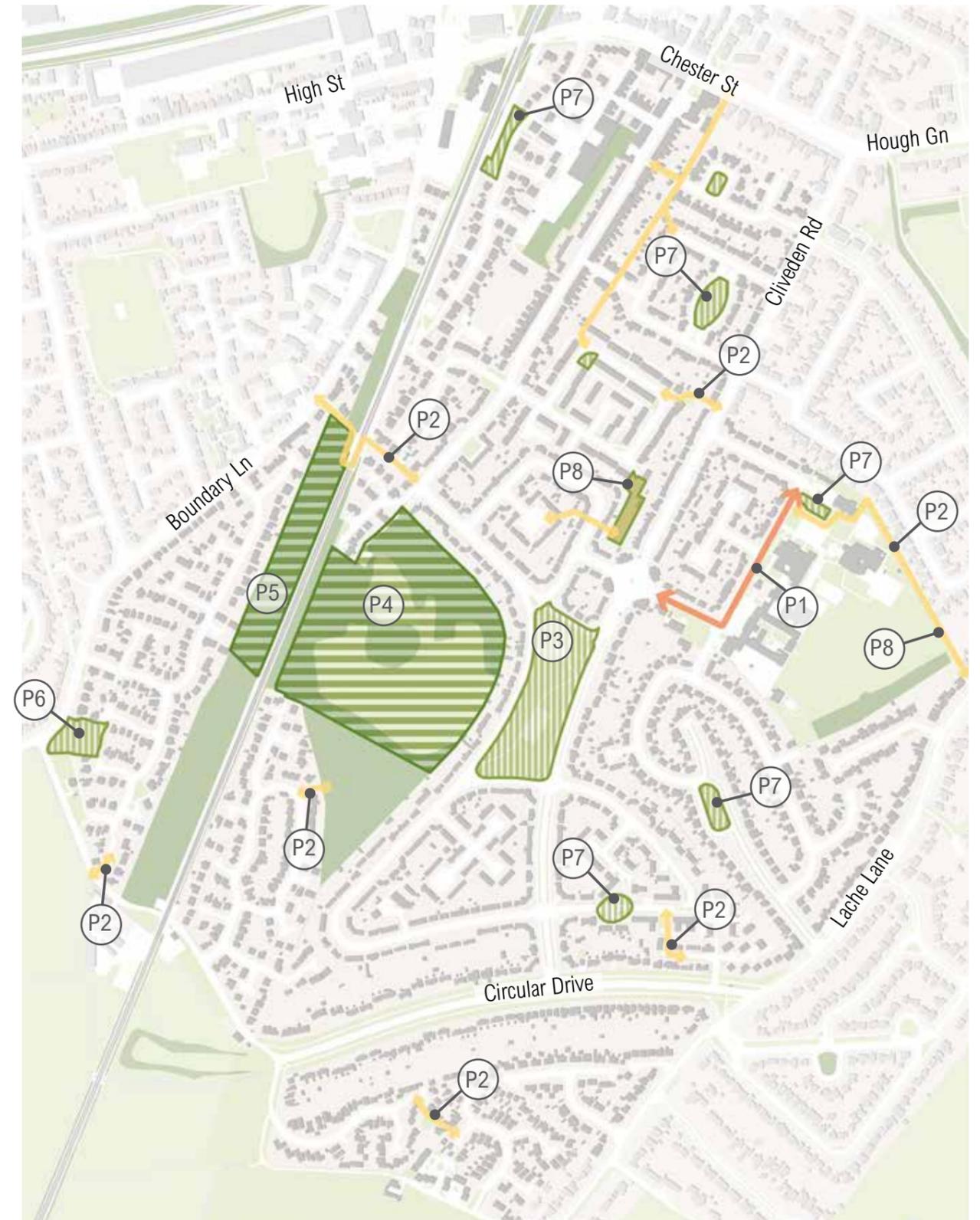
Lache has a good amount of open space generally and a variety of characters. Some of those spaces are less accessible than other meaning their full potential for the community is not realised, while some of those which are readily accessible are poorly defined and maintained.

We have suggested a selection of projects which seek to enhance the key existing public spaces as well as open up new ones. Alongside some of the projects proposed in the previous section focussed on changing the way people get around Lache, it is only by creating environments that people want to spend time in that they will start to use them and care for them.

Nature, too can benefit from these opportunities, by bringing greater biodiversity and better managed habitats. This will have the added benefit of making more attractive places through planting and natural settings.

The identified opportunities are described in more detail over the next pages. Key details including land ownership, possible time frames, assumed priority, links to objectives and other associated projects summarised in the Action Plan and Project Index (Appendix A).

- Key to plan opposite**
-  Community Growing Space
 -  New Public Open Space
 -  Open Space Improvements
 -  Alleyway Upgrade/ Pop-up Park
 -  Environmental Improvements



Our plan showing public space interventions.



P1. Hawthorn Road Environmental Improvements

Alongside the proposed physical changes to the highway (Project No. H3) there is a good opportunity to improve the environment along Hawthorn Road and around the Community Centre in the shorter term. By adopting a similar approach to the proposals for Poplar Place (Project No. H2), the environment could be transformed through a series of low-cost and immediate actions.

Using a “Tactical Urbanism” approach these actions could be in-part led by the community and users of the space, identifying things which would resonate most with the area. These could be as simple as painting railings or planting seeds and flowers or involve the construction of benches and planters.

A key aim of these interventions is to establish a visual change in the street environment in front of the schools and community centre. This would help define it as a pedestrian or “school zone”, making drivers more aware and pedestrians more comfortable on the street. And as well as improving the image of the area, the projects area a great opportunity for team building or bringing community groups together, which could lead to further similar action elsewhere.



▲ Small projects including the construction of planters or other street furniture could bring more interest and local identity to Hawthorn Road.



▲ Painted communications boxes arranged by the community in Gorse Hill, Manchester (Gorgeous Gorse Hill Group)

P2. Alleyways

As we have identified there are several alleyways throughout Lache which are valuable routes for pedestrians and cyclists. They are often, however, uninviting spaces and suffer from littering and fly tipping.

Appropriate and adequate lighting would benefit a number of the alleyways, which should be separately reviewed. However we propose that a number of other environmental improvements would be of benefit in changing the attractiveness of these vital spaces. These could be in part led by the community and delivered with the council to create pocket parks for the residents living close by, providing spaces to

socialise for those who are less mobile, as well as inviting more positive ownership of the spaces.

Improvements could include:

- Seating and other furniture.
- Planters and community growing space.
- Lighting in a variety of forms.
- Wayfinding
- Management of hedges and planting.
- Painting and artworks.



▲ An artists impression of an alleyway transformed into a usable public space.



P3. Lache Park

Sycamore Field is the largest managed green space in Lache and ideally located in the middle of the neighbourhood. However it does not live up to its full potential as a place for the whole community to enjoy and the facilities that are provided are not always maintained and cared for.

Our vision is to transform Sycamore Field into “Lache Park” providing a new range of robust play facilities in a re-imagined setting.

The landscape is sculpted to provide greater variation and interest, while new planting creates a sense of enclosure to the park as well as providing habitats for wildlife. New illuminated footpaths follow desire lines to provide better links and create a safer environment for all to enjoy throughout the day and seasons.

Above all it is a green and welcoming place which becomes a focal space for the community to socialise in and gather for events and celebrations.



An artist's impression showing Lache Park with new facilities, planting and lighting.



Proposals for the design of Lache Park should consider:

- Provision of robust play equipment for all ages, but with separate secure areas for younger children.
- Provision of seating and tables within the play areas.
- Provision of seating and tables elsewhere.
- The use of planting to provide enclosure to the park, avoiding the need for railings or fences.
- Increased diversity of planting, considering the creation of wild areas.
- Redesign of footpaths to better follow desire lines and to create walking loops.
- The potential to create wildlife areas including ponds and mini-woodlands.
- Improved lighting.
- Signage and wayfinding.



▲ Examples of robust play equipment, natural landscaping and pathways which would encourage more positive uses of the space.



An illustrative plan of how Sycamore Park could be redesigned to offer more to the community.



The Baccies (LAPA Field) could be enhanced to provide a natural biodiverse space for the enjoyment of visitors and residents of Lache and the wider area.

P4. Lache Nature Park

As identified in the preceding sections there is potential for development on part of the available open space at The Baccies (see also Project No. D4). However it is important that the majority of the space remains open for the enjoyment of local people and nature.

Presently the site functions as a wild area and although afforded some access, it does not cater well for all people and the habitats could be better managed to provide greater biodiversity. Through a “light-touch” approach, accessibility and safety could be improved through the creation of pathways, clearance of some overgrowth as well as provision of signage, benches and informal play equipment.

A nature first approach should be taken, seeking to retain and enhance the area as a habitat for wildlife, while providing greater opportunities for people to engage with and enjoy the environment.

Improvements could help reduce instances of anti-social behaviour through better surveillance and community policing. It could also provide a natural asset for the enjoyment of the wider area of South Chester, helping to elevate the image of Lache and add to the local economy.



▲ The area could be made more accessible through a series of light touch interventions.



P5. Former Railway Sidings Green Corridor

As identified in the preceding section there is potential for some development on part of the area of the former railway sidings (Project No. D11). In conjunction the area could also be opened up as a managed ecological area, creating an accessible green corridor, linking Green Lane to the footbridge over the railway line.

It is a good opportunity to form a green active travel corridor as well as more accessible open space, which has the potential to reduce anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping.



▲ The linear shape of the former railway sidings could make an ideal active travel corridor and have better managed environments.

P6. Land between Capeland/Shannon Close

The land currently offers general green amenity space which could be enhanced to be better enjoyed by local residents. Enhancements could include wildflower or bulb planting, benches or pathways which would make the area more attractive and usable.

P7. General Green Amenity Spaces

Common throughout Lache, these general green amenity spaces serve a good function in improving the setting as well as providing areas of soft landscaping helping with drainage and absorption of pollutants.

There is good potential in these spaces to offer more to the nearby residents as social and active spaces. This could be through the addition of seating, community planting and growing spaces. Surfaces suitable for light recreation such as boules or yoga could animate these spaces also, making them more integral to the community. The design of these interventions could be led by the local residents and delivered in collaboration with the council, with each area taking on its own character, building up a patchwork of amenity spaces throughout Lache.

P8. Community Allotment

The existing community allotment is an established service in Lache which has seen fluctuating levels of interest historically. Nevertheless it is a valuable and integral part of the community who use it.

The facility provides small growing spaces for families and individuals, alongside other shared facilities.

As with many facilities of this type there is a need for ongoing upkeep and maintenance, so opportunities to invest in and improve the access and quality of the space should be sought. This could come about as a result of other development elsewhere or through direct investment. Engagement with those who run and use the facility should be sought for any other associated development or activity in Lache.



The Lache Allotment Project is a well established community, asset which interacts with a number of other groups such as the local schools, young people and the elderly. It should be preserved with opportunities for investment and enhancement sought where possible.



Next Steps



Summary



Our Masterplan for Lache

The Action Plan provides a summary and assessment tool for the potential projects described in the preceding section. It is intended to enable the projects to be integrated and co-ordinated into a comprehensive set of actions.

The Action Plan collates the projects, providing key information about each one, describing the opportunity, scope and capacity. Also where possible other known details about each site are provided such as landowners and delivery partners. Indicative timescales and priorities are also suggested enabling a programme of potential activity to emerge. This section provides an overview of the Action Plan and delivery recommendations, full project details are included within the Project Index (Appendix A).

We have also identified a series of “Quick Wins” which are linked to the main projects that are identified. These will be essential in generating an early sense of momentum and confidence from the local community that Lache can and will change.

There is clearly much more work required in developing each potential project but the Masterplan and Action Plan can be used to co-ordinate them moving forward and can be used to assist with funding bids that will help them to be realised. Further consultation, engagement and co-production with the community will be adopted ahead of all potential projects.

Key to plan opposite

<i>Development and Community</i>	<i>Movement and Streets</i>	<i>Public Spaces</i>
Re-development/ Re-use	Highways Upgrade/ Traffic Calming	Community Growing Space
New Development	Pedestrian Priority Project	New Public Open Space
	Gateway	Open Space Improvement
	“Lache Loop” Wellbeing Walks	Alleyway environmental improvements



Quick Wins

Many of the proposals in our Masterplan are more strategic and wider in scope which will require a longer time to be delivered. This is because they require further analysis, community engagement, testing and detailed design to ensure their deliverability as well as time needed to identify and secure funding.

It is essential that some projects are able to be delivered more quickly and easily and with less funding. These “Quick Win” projects will bring about more immediate change in the area, generating impetus, boosting confidence in the ability to deliver change and even help in attracting further funding and investment.

A lot of these Quick Wins are able to be brought forward and delivered directly by residents in Lache. Resident involvement should be sought and encouraged as each idea is progressed, allowing different community groups a sense of ownership.

Projects identified in our Masterplan which have the ability to be delivered in part or whole as Quick Wins include project no’s:

- D5. Re-use of the former Butchers Shop.
- H2. Poplar Place Phase 1.
- H6. Lache Loops.
- P1. Hawthorn Road Environmental Improvements.
- P2. Alleyways.
- P7. General Amenity Spaces
- P8. Community Allotment.

Some of the principles of these projects could also be applied elsewhere in Lache, bringing other community led changes throughout the area. Any community led initiative should seek the relevant permission from the landowner and council.



▲ Art projects and pop up events are a good way of changing the perception of places helping to instil a sense of community pride and inclusion.

Non-physical projects

There are also a number of non-physical interventions which would go a long way towards helping to deliver some of the projects and objectives of our Masterplan. These could include support for existing community organisations or the formation of new ones. These groups are vital in driving forward change in the area by drawing attention to some of the specific needs within the community as well as lobbying for and showing support for development and change.

Ideas for events and organisations which would be beneficial to Lache include:

- Street markets or other pop-up gatherings.
- An annual gala or other seasonal events.
- Local history trails and meetings.
- Adult education classes.
- Chatty benches and walks.
- Knowledge exchanges to help pass on experience and skills.
- A repair workshop.
- Arts and crafts classes for young people.
- Community gardening.



▲ Community gardening projects can help transform smaller and forgotten spaces.



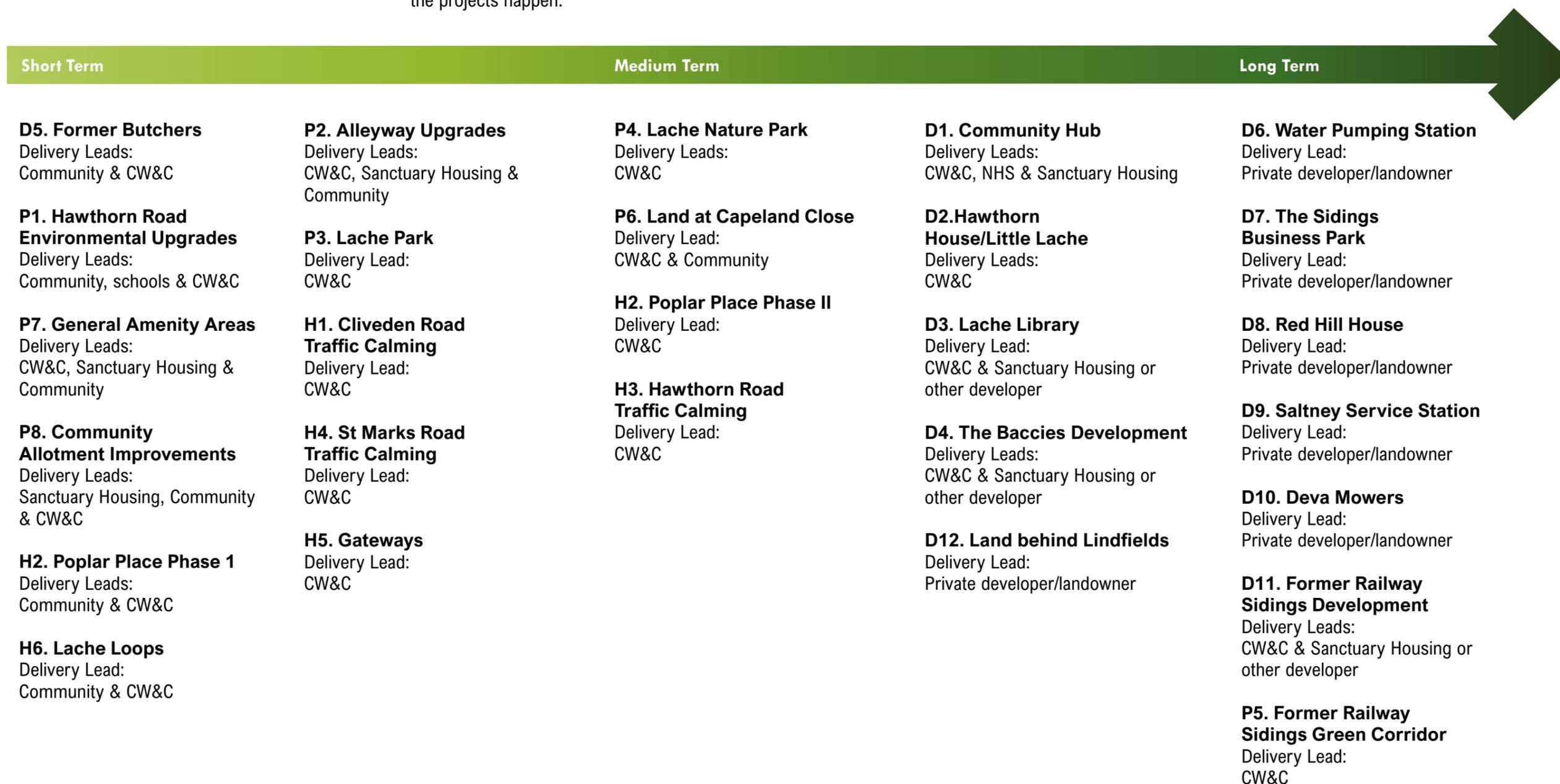
▲ Education classes offering skills and training will help people to become more mobile and confident.



Action Plan

The time line below arranges the potential projects in order of the length of time in which they are likely to be delivered. It allows an understanding of where to focus effort now and when to start planning for longer term projects.

By their very nature it is likely that these will change and shift over time as a result of further engagement, co-creation and design evolution. The identified key delivery leads are those who are likely to be primarily responsible for making the projects happen.





Delivery

Delivery of the projects identified within our Masterplan will depend on several factors including: landownership and the willingness of owners to lead project delivery; financial viability; community engagement; and the availability of funding.

The deliverability situation is helped in Lache in that much of the land required is owned by the public or third sector ownership, principally CW&C or Sanctuary Housing Association. For these projects it will require each to take a leading role in delivery which will in turn need to fit within each organisations own priorities and be identified within their budgets and spend programmes.

There are also other key public sector service providers and partners that will also need to play an important partner role in delivering several projects, whether these are specific departments of the Council or other organisations. For example: the local NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Lache Community Centre and the Lache Primary Schools; or CW&C Library Services, Highways Department or Parks and Open Spaces.

Other community groups and public services could also play an important role in helping to deliver projects, and potentially providing services from the new facilities. All of these groups and partners are fundamental to delivering the vision. The consultant team has engaged with them all throughout this commission and the current vision and projects have been designed to align with their known priorities and aspirations for Lache.

There is also an important ongoing role for the wider community of Lache in many of these projects, where local people can and should take ownership and help to shape places and more detailed consultation is recommended in these cases. For example, residents could influence how the new Sycamore Park could look, or decide what should be added to their local green amenity space.

The delivery of projects can be explored according to their type in the following pages.



Further engagement with the community is fundamental to the successful delivery of future projects in Lache



Public sector/community development projects

Projects D1 to D4 involve public sector owned assets and the potential relocation of existing and new services to new or refurbished accommodation. This can result in more effective use of land and buildings, savings and cost efficiencies with shared facilities as well as other benefits of co-locating facilities and bringing services together.

This can also present opportunities for other development such as new homes, either on site (for example apartments above a new Community Hub (Project No. D1)) or on land released (such as the existing library site (Project No. D3)). These scenarios will create an additional revenue that will significantly contribute to viability enabling the proposed enhanced public facilities to be provided. Revenue streams could also be provided within the proposals such as a public café or bar within the Community Hub.

It is generally more cost-effective to demolish existing buildings and provide new purpose-built mixed-use accommodation, rather than seeking to refurbish or extend buildings that may no longer be fit for purpose. There are many good examples of projects of this type being brought forward showing that they can be delivered viably (for example The Strand Community Hub in Kirkholt, Rochdale and Limelight in Old Trafford, Manchester).

Key to these projects being successfully delivered is the ability of service providers to come together and commit to locating within these schemes. Their individual funding programmes and objectives will need to align,

as will their timescales. The new developments will need to meet the needs of all users. Our current proposals have been informed by our initial engagement with stakeholders. For example we are aware that Sanctuary are seeking new one-bed apartments and that the NHS CCG would like to update their Lache Health Centre accommodation. Clearly there is much more work to be done between the relevant stakeholders, however there is real potential for a series of deliverable projects to emerge.



▲ The Community Centre site provides a good opportunity to achieve a number of the Masterplan objectives, however there is a need for close co-ordination and work between stakeholders to successfully deliver the vision.

Greenfield/brownfield potential development opportunities

A number of the potential development sites are on vacant brownfield or greenfield land (projects D5, D6, D11, D12). These are in a mix of CW&CC and private ownership. The land identified does not appear to be of significant recreational, arboricultural or ecological value, however this will need to be confirmed through appropriate surveys.

It will also be necessary to develop an effective strategy to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain. There may also be constraints, such as easements, flood risk or ground conditions that prevent their development or require significant mitigation. These projects will therefore all require further work to explore their feasibility.

If they are found to be developable then the landowner will need to progress an appropriate development scheme. Pre-application engagement with the local community is recommended and the projects should form part of the wider vision and be co-ordinated by the wider stakeholder group.



Private sector redevelopment schemes

In the case of redevelopment projects (i.e., D6-D10) we have identified sites where we consider that the existing uses may represent an under-utilisation of the site in terms of the land uses, level of occupancy or the quality of accommodation. These sites are in private ownership. For example, existing employment and trade uses but which may be better located to alternative sites where better accommodation can be provided away from residential neighbours. Alternatively, the accommodation on-site could be rationalised, providing better quality employment space on a smaller footprint. Both of these approaches could unlock other residential development opportunities, providing space to help diversify and enhance local housing choices.

These projects will all be dependent on the willingness of landowners – to either deliver redevelopment themselves or to partner with a developer. As such they will need to be viable and deliver a financial return. They will also be dependent on existing leases, and on the ability of existing tenants to find suitable new accommodation. Significant additional work will be required on feasibility to understand potential development capacities, although our initial view is that there a potential here that is worth exploring.

◀ The Baccies (LAPA Field) does hold potential for development, however further viability work is required to explore its feasibility.



As these projects will be led by third parties they are included in the masterplan in order to pre-empt change and identify opportunities for change that would be consistent with the vision. It is right that the masterplan should be forward-looking in this regard, helping to influence future change. Including these projects and sharing the masterplan will also help to encourage landowners and developers to progress these projects, as they will see that these sites will form part of wider transformation of Lache.



- ▲ Sites such as Deva Mowers offer valuable infill opportunities for housing, if the landowner and tenants are willing to engage in discussions.

Highways & Transport Projects

Highways projects will need to be delivered by CW&C Highways Department. They will need to be supported by the Council and meet their programme objectives, for example to assist public safety or to promote walking and cycling.

The Council will then need to include the projects within their Local Transport Programme and deliver them in accordance with other identified priorities. In preparing these projects we have engaged with CW&C Highways Officers and projects have been designed to meet shared objectives. CW&C Highways will need to lead on detailed design and costing of projects.

Further engagement with officers will be important in moving these projects forward, making sure that their contribution to the overall vision is understood and their links to other projects recognised.

Public Spaces and Community Projects

The delivery of projects to enhance open spaces and the public realm will require a joint approach. As principal landowner of these spaces CW&CC will need to lead most of these projects. However, they will need to work closely with Sanctuary and local residents (including owner-occupiers as well as tenants). The public spaces form an important part of Sanctuary's estate but are outside of the Housing Association's ownership and management responsibilities, so both parties will need to work together.

Lache is a priority estate for Sanctuary and they have already been active in delivering community space projects, such as the allotments on Oxford Road on the site of redundant garages. In many cases the definition of public, semi-public and private space is not clear and an holistic approach is required. The alleyway improvements for example, will be principally within Sanctuary's remit but will also need to involve engagement with owners of right-to-buy properties.

In all cases, engagement with the local residents and co-design and production will be key. None of these projects will be successful if the residents do not take informal 'ownership' of them, using them appropriately and making them reflect their own aspirations and sense of pride in being residents of Lache.

The identified "non-physical" projects will rely on the energy and enthusiasm of service providers and community groups and will not be delivered without being embraced by the local residents. A series of example projects have been described, which reflect identified priorities and based on discussions with residents and experience of similar projects being delivered elsewhere. However, the key here is to be flexible and not prohibit innovation, instead enabling and facilitating projects identified by the community and stakeholders, that are consistent with the vision for Lache, to come forward.

All of the public space and community projects identified will be net cost projects with no revenue streams or capital receipts. They will therefore need to be delivered within spending budgets from CW&C, Sanctuary or from charities, fundraising and other service providers.



Potential Funding Sources

It is important to monitor other potential funding sources that could help to deliver some of the projects for Lache. There may well be public sector funding available as part of the wider 'levelling-up agenda'. Whilst there are not relevant programmes available for immediate bids it will be important to monitor these moving forward and await further bidding rounds to be announced. In the meantime it will be important to progress further work on the projects identified so that costs and benefits can be further detailed, in readiness for bidding opportunities.

Potential future funding sources include the following.

The HM Treasury Budget Spending Review in October 2021 announced the following:

- £11.5 billion in the Affordable Homes Program helping to build up to 180,000 new affordable homes.
- £560 million new funding for youth services in England over the next three years, enough to fund 300 youth clubs .
- Allocation of the first 21 projects to benefit from the £150 million Community Ownership Fund, which will help communities across the UK protect and manage their most treasured assets.

Levelling Up Fund (April 2022):

The Levelling Up Fund will invest in local infrastructure that has a visible impact on people and their communities. This includes a range of high value local investment priorities, including local transport schemes, urban regeneration projects and cultural assets:

- The Fund is open to all local areas. The amount of funding each area receives will be determined on a competitive basis to ensure value for money.
- Capacity funding will be allocated to local authorities most in need of levelling up in England, as identified in the index published alongside the prospectus.
- With regards to eligibility The Fund will focus investment on projects that require up to £20m of funding. However, there is also scope for investing in larger high value transport projects, by exception.
- First round of the fund focuses on transport investments, regeneration and town centre investment and cultural investment.

Using this index, places have been placed into category 1, 2, or 3, with category 1 representing places with the highest levels of identified need. While preference will be given to bids from higher priority areas, the bandings do not represent eligibility criteria, nor the amount or number of bids a place can submit. Bids from categories 2 and 3 will still be considered for funding on their merits of deliverability, value for money and strategic fit, and could still be successful if they are of exceptionally high quality. Cheshire West and Chester is Category 2. In making bids the following should be noted:

- Applications for funding should clearly demonstrate how proposed investments will support relevant local strategies and their objectives for improving infrastructure, promoting growth, enhancing the natural environment and making their areas more attractive places to live and work

- Once these funds are awarded the relevant local institutions are wholly responsible for their delivery. Further contributions from the fund will not be provided to meet cost overruns after funding has been agreed.

The second round of bidding opens on 31 May 2022 and has a closing date of 6 July 2022. Bidding is open to local authorities. Only Category 1 local authorities are eligible to receive capacity funding to assist with the costs of bidding (and so CW&C are excluded from this). A capital bid can be for an individual project or a package of up to three projects, of up to £20 million in grant value per bid.

Applications will be assessed at the bid level against Index of Priority Places, Strategic Fit, the Economic Case and Deliverability. These three criteria, together with the Index of Priority Places criteria will carry equal weighting during assessment. Funding can be sought for the following elements:

Transport - standard outputs

- New public transport routes
- Transport nodes with new multi-modal connection points
- Public transport improvements
- New or improved cycle ways
- New or improved pedestrian paths
- Roads converted to pedestrian or cycling ways
- Newly built roads
- Resurfaced/improved roads
- New or improved car parking spaces
- Alternative fuel charging/re-fuelling points

Regeneration - standard outputs

- New or improved residential units
- Green retrofits to existing residential units
- Green retrofits to existing non-residential units
- Dilapidated buildings improved
- Sites cleared
- Land rehabilitated
- Public realm created or improved
- Green or blue space created or improved
- New trees planted
- Public amenities/facilities created, improved, or relocated
- Floor space rationalised
- Increased 5G coverage
- New public Wi-Fi hotspots installed
- Additional commercial units with broadband access of at least 30Mbps
- Additional residential units with broadband access of at least 30Mbps
- Healthcare space created or improved
- Educational space created or improved
- Community centre space created or improved
- Sports centre space created or improved
- Retail space created or improved
- Hospitality space created or improved
- Office space created or improved
- Industrial space created or improved
- Other commercial space (not captured elsewhere) created or improved



Culture - standard outputs

- Cultural space created or improved
- Heritage buildings renovated/restored
- Volunteering opportunities supported

Further information on bidding can be found here: [levelling-up-fund-round-2-technical-note](#)

Estate Regeneration Funding Opportunity

Estate regeneration aims to improve the quality of living environments and opportunities for communities living in social housing estates. This typically involves demolition or refurbishment of housing which is no longer at a suitable standard, rebuilding with better quality housing and community facilities and improvements to the public realm

Capital grant funding was made available in 2021 to help the delivery of estate regeneration projects by contributing to the capital costs of implementation. It forms part of the Government's wider £100 million Brownfield Land Release Fund delivered through the One Public Estate programme.

The first round of applications has officially closed at the time of this document but the possibility of re-application may occur in the future. Applications will need to be submitted directly to the Department for Levelling UP, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

Applicants are expected to demonstrate a requirement for grant funding and funding will be considered for any reasonable capital cost for the proposal.

The Affordable Housing Programme 2021-2026

The Affordable Homes Programme provides grant funding to support the capital costs of developing affordable housing for rent or sale. As the Government's housing accelerator, Homes England will be making available £7.39 billion from April 2021 to deliver up to 130,000 affordable homes by March 2026, outside of London.

The funding is for the supply of new build affordable housing.

Around half of the homes delivered are expected to be homes to rent. These will include both social rent and affordable rent homes. The other half will be for routes into homes. This will include shared ownership properties, home ownership properties for people with long term Disabilities, Older persons Shared Ownership (OSPO) and Rent to Buy.

The funding supports the development of:

- Supported housing (10% of homes delivered) - any housing scheme where accommodation is provided alongside care, support, or supervision to help people live as independently as possible in the community.
- Rural Housing (10% of homes delivered) - housing delivered in settlement with a population fewer than 3000
- Traveller Pitches
- Empty Homes - affordable homes can also be created by bringing existing empty homes back into use.

Funding does not provide grant for:

- Regeneration
- Section 106
- Major repairs

Two routes to access funding include:

Scheme by scheme bidding through continuous market engagement (CME)

This route allows providers to apply for funding for individual schemes. All schemes funded through CME must have started on site by 30 September 2025 and be completed by 31 March 2026.

CME application will be assessed against the following criteria:

- **Cost minimisation** - the primary assessment metric is grant per home. This is benchmarked against national, local and scheme type averages to ensure bids are competitive on both costs and outputs.
- **Deliverability** - to ensure the scheme can be delivered within the funding timeframe, deliverability will take account of the level of planning, land ownership and progress on contracting at the point of bidding. We will also consider past performance for current partners and forecasts from comparable schemes for new partners. Bids will also be tested on how they are supporting local authorities in meeting local housing needs.

The second route, Strategic Partnerships, is for schemes of over 1500 homes and so is not relevant for Lache.

Brownfield Land Release Fund

One Public Estates is a partnership between the Office of Government Property in the Cabinet Office, the Local Government Agency and the MHCLG. The main aim is to bring public sector bodies together to create better places by releasing land for housing and development

The National Home Building Fund (NHBF) was founded in 2020 with the objective of supporting the Government's ambition to deliver 300,000 homes pa. Part of the NHBF is the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) which will support local authorities to bring forward brownfield sites for housing development and self and custom-build serviced plots. Further details include:

- the BLRF is offering up to £75 million of capital grant funding to unlock and accelerate the release of sites. Of this £25 million will be allocated for self and custom-build projects.
- All English local authorities are eligible to apply, except for the seven Mayoral Combined Authorities and their constituent lower tier authorities that have already had the opportunity to receive funding under the £400 million Brownfield Fund.

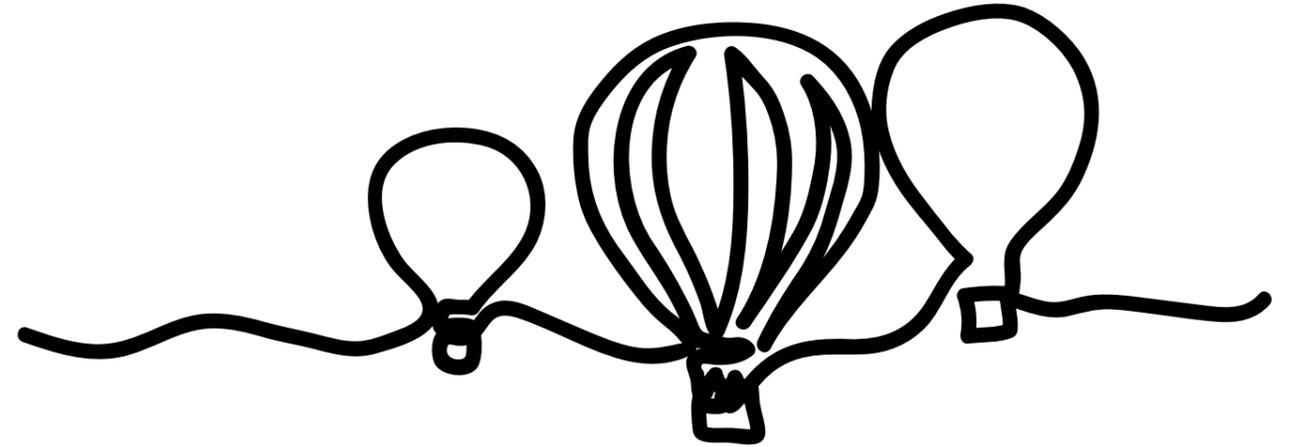
Assessment of Applications:

BLRF is open to local authorities across England, other than those in Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) areas that had the opportunity to receive funding under the £400 million Brownfield Fund.

The assessment will be based on the material provided within the application template, basic details form and technical annex which contain further guidance.

APPENDIX A

PROJECT INDEX



D1. Community Hub

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Modern community facilities with residential development, environmental enhancements, improved access to MUGA, consolidated car parking
- Description: 0.65 ha site delivering mixed use community / residential development
- Development Potential: Community and health hub and 17 no. apartments

Land Ownership: CW&C

Timescale: Medium to Long

Priority: High

Link to Objectives: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8

Link to Other Projects: P1, D3, H3, P9

D3. Lache Library

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Infill residential development if library relocates to new community hub
- Description: 0.10 site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 6 no. houses

Land Ownership: CW&C

Timescale: Medium to Long

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 7

Link to Other Projects: D1

D2. Hawthorn House/Little Lache

- Type: Re-use/New Development
- Opportunity: Re-use of empty buildings, with potential for infill residential development.
- Description: 0.28 ha site delivering community uses and new residential development
- Development Potential: 15 no. later living apartments and communal space

Land Ownership: CW&C (Leaseholders: MBNA and Lache Park Ltd)

Timescale: Medium to Long

Priority: High

Link to Objectives: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8

Link to Other Projects: -

D4. The Baccies Development

- Type: New Development (part of land)
- Opportunity: Potential for residential/ community/health development, subject to further technical study
- Description: 2.55 ha (approx. $\frac{1}{3}$ of whole site) delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 50 no. houses

Land Ownership: CW&C

Timescale: Medium to Long

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 1, 5, 7

Link to Other Projects: P4

D5. Former Butchers

- Type: Re-use
- Opportunity: Re-use of empty shop as community or craft café/drop in
- Description: Community drop-in / café focussed on young people
- Development Potential: N/A

Land Ownership: CW&C

Timescale: Short

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 1, 6

Link to Other Projects: H1, H2

D7. The Sidings Business Park

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Medium sized residential development
- Description: 0.85 ha site delivering mixed-use commercial space (office - retail - studios)
- Development Potential: To be determined

Land Ownership: Brymau Estate Ltd

Timescale: Long

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 7

Link to Other Projects: -

D6. Water Pumping Station, Green Ln

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Infill residential development (if existing use ceases)
- Description: 0.19 ha site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 7 no. Houses

Land Ownership: DWR CYMRU CYFYNGEDIG

Timescale: Long

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 7

Link to Other Projects: -

D8. Red Hill House

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Infill residential development (if existing uses vacate / relocate)
- Description: 0.99 ha site delivering new residential development (assumes existing commercial uses are relocated)
- Development Potential: 45 no. apartments and houses

Land Ownership: Sandyford Property Investments Ltd

Timescale: Long

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 7

Link to Other Projects: D7

D9. Saltney Service Station

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Infill residential development (if existing uses vacate / relocate)
- Description: 0.03ha site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 6 no. apartments

Land Ownership: Private**Timescale:** Long**Priority:** Low**Link to Objectives:** 7**Link to Other Projects:** -**D10. Deva Mowers**

- Type: Re-development
- Opportunity: Infill residential development (if existing uses vacate / relocate)
- Description: 0.04ha site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 3 no. houses

Land Ownership: Deva Movers Ltd**Timescale:** Long**Priority:** Low**Link to Objectives:** 7**Link to Other Projects:** -**D11. Former Railway Sidings Development**

- Type: New development (part of site)
- Opportunity: Medium sized residential development, green pedestrian/cycle route, public open space
- Description: 1.4 ha site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 30 no. houses

Land Ownership: CW&C**Timescale:** Long**Priority:** Low**Link to Objectives:** 7**Link to Other Projects:** P5**D12. Land behind Lindfields (off Boundary Lane)**

- Type: New Development (part of site)
- Opportunity: Infill residential development, green pedestrian/cycle route, public open space
- Description: 0.94 ha site delivering new residential development
- Development Potential: 7no. houses

Land Ownership: Private**Timescale:** Medium to Long**Priority:** Low**Link to Objectives:** 2, 3, 4, 5**Link to Other Projects:** P5**H1. Cliveden Road**

- Type: Highways upgrade / traffic calming
- Opportunity: Improve pedestrian/cycle safety, environment enhancement
- Description: Road narrowing, planting, pedestrian crossings, signage/wayfinding
- Approx. Area: 10 546 m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council**Timescale:** Short to Medium**Priority:** High**Link to Objectives:** 3, 4, 5, 8**Link to Other Projects:****H2. Poplar Place (Lache Roundabout)**

- Type: Pedestrian priority scheme
- Opportunity: Create new public space, improve pedestrian/cycle safety, environmental enhancement
- Description: Modal filter, road narrowing, planting, removal of roundabout, formalised parking
- Approx. Area: 2 526 m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council**Timescale:** Phase 1 - Short/Phase 2 - Medium**Priority:** High**Link to Objectives:** 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8**Link to Other Projects:** H1, D4, P9**H3. Hawthorn Road**

- Type: Highways upgrade / traffic calming
- Opportunity: Improve pedestrian/cycle safety, prevent pavement parking, environmental enhancement
- Description: One-way traffic, road narrowing, formalised parking
- Approx. Area: 4 302m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council**Timescale:** Medium**Priority:** Medium**Link to Objectives:** 3, 4, 5**Link to Other Projects:** D1, P1**H4. St Marks Road**

- Type: Pedestrian / cycle awareness
- Opportunity: Improve pedestrian / cycle safety
- Description: Signage/wayfinding
- Approx. Area: 7 214 m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council**Timescale:** Short to Medium**Priority:** Medium**Link to Objectives:** 3, 5**Link to Other Projects:** -

H5. Gateways

- Type: Traffic calming
- Opportunity: Improve pedestrian / cycle safety, environmental enhancements, improve image
- Description: Road narrowing, planting, signage/wayfinding
- Approx. Total Area: 6 671 m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Short to Medium

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 1, 3, 4, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: -

H6. Lache loops

- Type: Wellness / Community Walks
- Opportunity: Encourage social interaction and activity
- Description: Identified and signed walking/exercise routes
- Approx. Total Area: TBC

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Short

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 3, 5

Link to Other Projects: -

P3. Lache Park

- Type: Upgrade to existing space
- Opportunity: Improve facilities and environment to encourage usage by all ages and abilities, ecological benefits
- Description: New play equipment, new landscaping, signage etc.
- Approx. Area: 16 084 m² (1.61 ha)

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Short to Medium

Priority: High

Link to Objectives: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: -

P4. Lache Nature Park

- Type: Open Space Improvement (part of the site)
- Opportunity: Ecological benefits, improved safety and access, deter fly-tipping
- Description: Management of natural landscape/habitats, improved access, security, signage/wayfinding
- Approx. Area: 5.11 ha (approx. ²/₃ whole site)

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Medium

Priority: High

Link to Objectives: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: D4

P1. Hawthorn Road Environmental Upgrades

- Type: Tactical urbanism
- Opportunity: Improve safety and awareness around schools and community centre
- Description: Colourful floor/wall graphics, painted railing/posts, signage, planters, temporary artworks, seating
- Approx. Area: 2 351 m²

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Short

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 3, 4, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: D1, H3

P2. Alleyway Upgrades

- Type: Tactical urbanism
- Opportunity: Improved safety and perception of alleyways, deter fly-tipping
- Description: Colourful floor/wall graphics, painted railing/posts, signage, planters, temporary artworks, seating
- Approx. Total Area: 2 685 m²

Land Ownership: Sanctuary Housing Association

Timescale: Short to Medium

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 1, 4

Link to Other Projects: -

P5. Former Railway Sidings Green Corridor

- Type: Open Space Improvement (part of the site)
- Opportunity: Ecological benefits, improve safety and awareness of the space, access for all, deter fly-tipping, green pedestrian/cycle route
- Description: Managed ecology area, with potential for access to provide trim trail/linear park
- Approx. Area: 17 992 m² (1.80 ha)

Land Ownership: CW &CB Council

Timescale: Long

Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5

Link to Other Projects: D11

P6. Land between Capeland/Shannon Close

- Type: Open Space Improvement
- Opportunity: Ecological benefits
- Description: Managed ecology area
- Approx. Area: 2 617 m²

Land Ownership: Sanctuary Housing Association

Timescale: Medium

Priority: Low

Link to Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5

Link to Other Projects: -

P7. Green Amenity Areas

- Type: Pocket Park(s)
- Opportunity: Encourage social interaction, improved appearance, ecological benefits
- Description: Community gardens, seating, lighting, games
- Approx. Total Area: 5 218 m²

Land Ownership: CW&CB Council / Sanctuary HA / Mason Davies Homes

Timescale: Short

Priority: High

Link to Objectives: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: -

P8. Community Allotment

- Type: Upgrade to existing facilities
- Opportunity: Encourage plot uptake, increase awareness, crossover with other community initiatives
- Description: Improve access and signage, creation of seating area, communal kitchen
- Approx. Area: 6 671 m²

Land Ownership: Sanctuary Housing Association

Timescale: Short

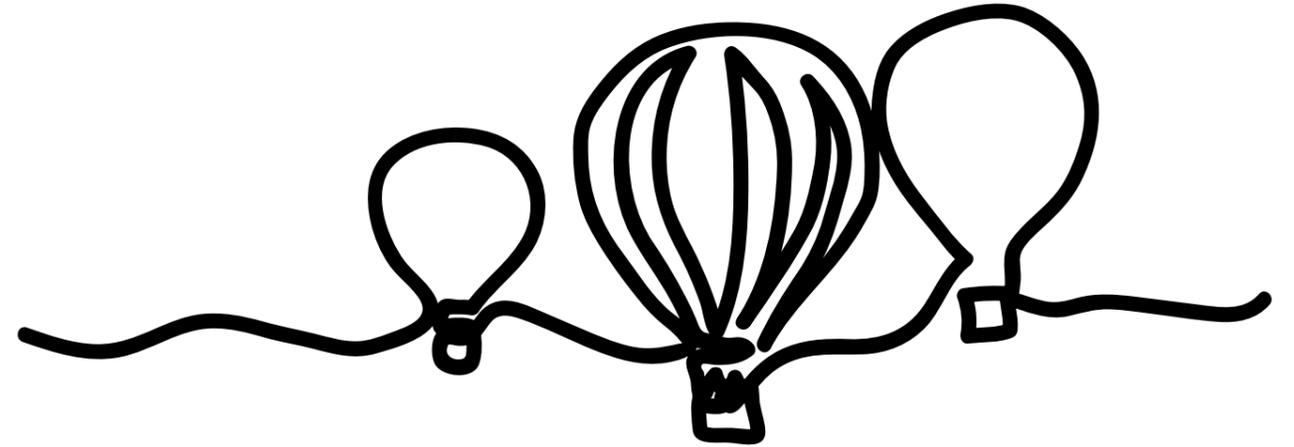
Priority: Medium

Link to Objectives: 1, 5, 8

Link to Other Projects: -

APPENDIX B

ENGAGEMENT REPORT





PLACED

PLACE EDUCATION

Lache Masterplan
Community Engagement Report
March 2022



Introduction

PLACED was commissioned by Cheshire West and Chester Council as part of a design team led by LDA Design, in partnership with Lambert Smith Hampton and Phil Jones Associates, to understand what the residents of Lache want to prioritise for their neighbourhood to shape a new masterplan. Engagement was split into two phases. Phase 1 being more exploratory and Phase 2 presenting the draft Masterplan and gaining feedback.

Engagement approach and questions

In Phase 1 PLACED delivered a range of creative and interactive events that were open to the public, alongside an online survey for those who couldn't attend in-person events. The early engagement events and activities for Phase 1 are summarised in Table 1.

Across the various events in Phase 1 we broadly asked people to consider the following questions.

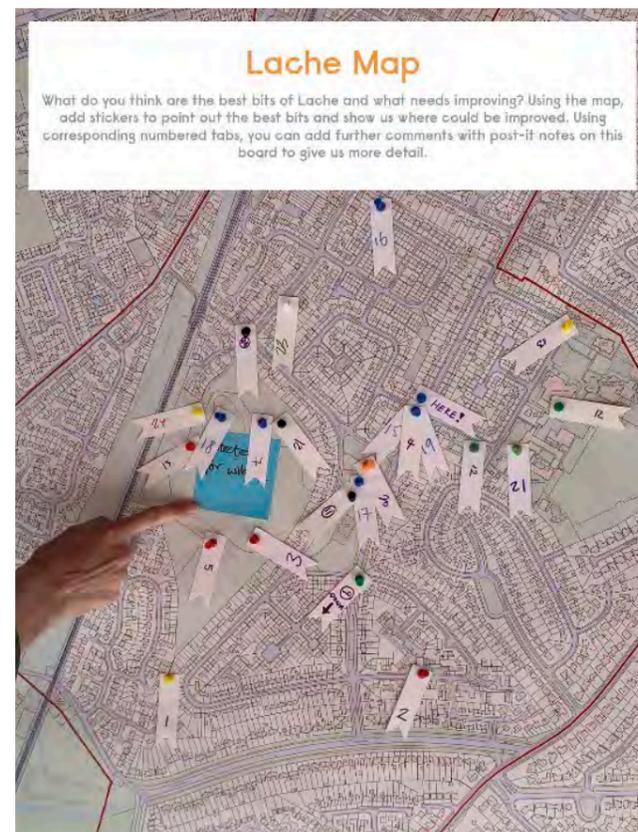
1. **What are the best bits of Lache now?**
(Using a large map to pinpoint areas)
2. **What needs improving?**
(Using a large map to pinpoint areas)
3. **What should Lache offer in the future?**
(Using a series of precedent images as inspiration)
4. **What do you love about Lache now?**
5. **What should Lache be like in the future?**

We also made use of model making and collage to enable participants to show their designs and collect ideas. Image(s) 2 shows these questions as presented for the pop-up camper van event and community centre drop-in, and Image(s) 3 shows some of the models and collages produced.

In Phase 2 PLACED presented the draft masterplan and our findings from Phase 1 at an event in The Venue, Lache Community Centre on the 24th February 2022. 71 people attended the event, and more contributed in the two weeks after the event when boards were displayed at the Community Centre and Lache Library.



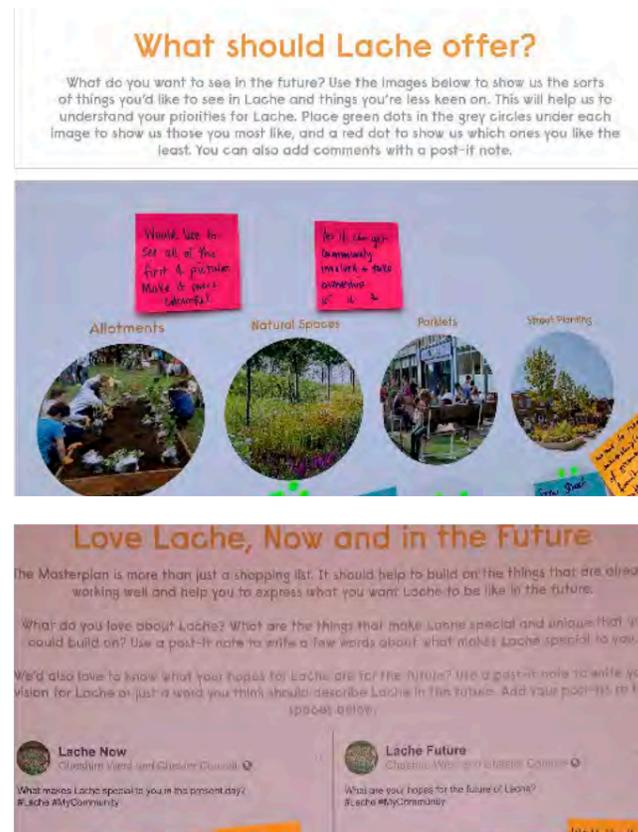
Image(s) 1 shows a sample of photographs from Phase 1 engagement events, including model making and group design work



Image(s) 2 shows the boards as used for the camper van pop-up event and Community Centre drop-in



Image(s) 3 shows some of the models created by local young people, and Lache Primary and St Clare's Catholic Primary School pupils, for example ideas for litter bins with animal themes.



Date	Event type	No.	Advertised	Demographics	Engagement approach / activities
1st Oct. – 8th Nov.	Online survey	37	PLACED website, social media, and stakeholder emails	Demographic information was not collected to keep participation as open as possible.	This survey replicated engagement tools used at the pop-up event (see below).
7th Oct.	Pop-up camper van event	≈50	PLACED website, social media, and stakeholder emails	A range of people local to the area including, older residents, parents and children, and other residents.	Using visual boards showing maps and precedent images, PLACED collected feedback from local people through conversations captured on post-it notes, and votes in support or against specific ideas.
Oct.	Workshops at Lache Primary and St Clare's Primary	320	Contacted schools directly	Nursery to year 6 (Lache Primary) and KS2 (St Clare's Primary)	We delivered activity packs to the schools. Using maps and precedent images, we invited children to think of the best bits of Lache and those that needs improvement. We also encouraged them to think of the needs of diverse people, and to imagine what they would like Lache to be in the future.
5th Nov.	Workshops with youth group	20	Contacted youth group directly		We delivered activity packs to the youth organisation. The workshop structure was similar to the primary school workshops, but allowed young people have more in-depth reflections.
3rd Nov.	Stakeholder workshop	16	PLACED website, social media, and stakeholder emails	Local residents, local artist, and representatives from local community groups, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Sanctuary Housing, Chester Zoo, local charities, and the NHS.	PLACED invited attendees to do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the whole area, before working in groups on a specific site. Craft materials and precedent images were provided to support this work.
3rd Nov.	Drop-in at the Community Centre	11	PLACED website, social media, and stakeholder emails	A range of people local to the area including, older residents, parents and children, members of underrepresented groups, and other residents.	The boards used at the pop-up events were displayed at the Community Centre for members of the public to add their contributions.

Table 1 summarises Phase 1 community engagement events and activities

Phase 1 Findings

This section summarises our findings across all Phase 1 engagement activities, on people's perception of the area and their vision for the future, before focusing on specific sites that were identified as key during engagement.

1. Current situation and vision for the future

a) Lache now

Participants shared the idea that there were a lot of positive things in Lache but that more of them were needed.

Positives

- **Community spirit** - The people of Lache and the mutual support amongst community members were seen as a strength. Some people expressed pride in living in this area.
- **Good facilities** - People are happy with the health and community centres, the schools, library and children's centre. Although some recognised room for improvement or under-utilised facilities (e.g. Hawthorn House).
- **Green spaces** - Participants considered their area to be green, thanks to the Sycamore Field and the informal green space behind the houses on Sycamore Drive, known as The Baccies.
- **Shops** - In particular, the Lache Larder was praised.



Image(s) 4 shows a sample of photographs from Phase 1 engagement events

Negatives

- **Apathy** - Some participants expressed low expectations for what their area could be, perhaps as a result of previous experiences with masterplanning not delivering the promised benefits. Others were prone to comparing Lache with other nearby areas, with a sense of feeling left out or not catered for.
- **Lack of maintenance** - While they considered the facilities and buildings to be of good quality, people highlighted a lack of upkeep. Fly tipping and littering were identified as problems and the quality of play areas were seen as pressing issues.
- **Feeling unsafe** - A lack of street lighting, along with anti-social behaviour issues, contributes to making some local people feel unsafe in the area.
- **Poverty and unemployment** were also pointed out as issues in Lache.
- **Lack of, or short-term, funding** were seen to be an issue, making it difficult to provide continuity in service delivery. This also contributed to negative feelings about possible improvements.



b) Lache in the future

At our pop-up event and on our online survey, we presented a list of 32 precedent images, detailing design elements and services, asking participants what they would like to see in Lache in the future. Graph 1 shows the most and least popular ideas.

We have analysed these findings using the numbers presented above and combining them with comments and inputs obtained at our in-person events and through our online survey. The main emerging themes can be organised into the following categories:

Design and maintenance

- **Develop and refurbish green spaces** - The Baccies and Sycamore Field in particular. People who spoke about this wished for a greener Lache with more natural spaces, street planting and natural play. Some expressed the fear of losing green spaces to new developments.

- **Improve the estate's general appearance** - People discussed the need to redesign the roundabout on Cliveden Road, to update street name signs, to increase street lighting, renovate the alleyways, and the need for double yellow lines in front of primary schools.
- **Addressing fly tipping and littering** is seen as a key issue by local people.

Service provision

- **Existing assets** - Participants who made this suggestion thought that better use could be made of the Community Centre and other community assets.
- **Economy** - People expressed the wish to see more local shops and other pop-up events.
- **Activities** - The need for more activities for children of different ages, and more occasions for adults to have fun, was seen as critical across all our engagement work.
- **Transport** - Although the transport links across Lache were seen as OK, young people specifically asked for a better provision around school times, and more buses in the evenings.

(concerns about transport connectivity were also raised in phase 2 and are discussed later in this report).

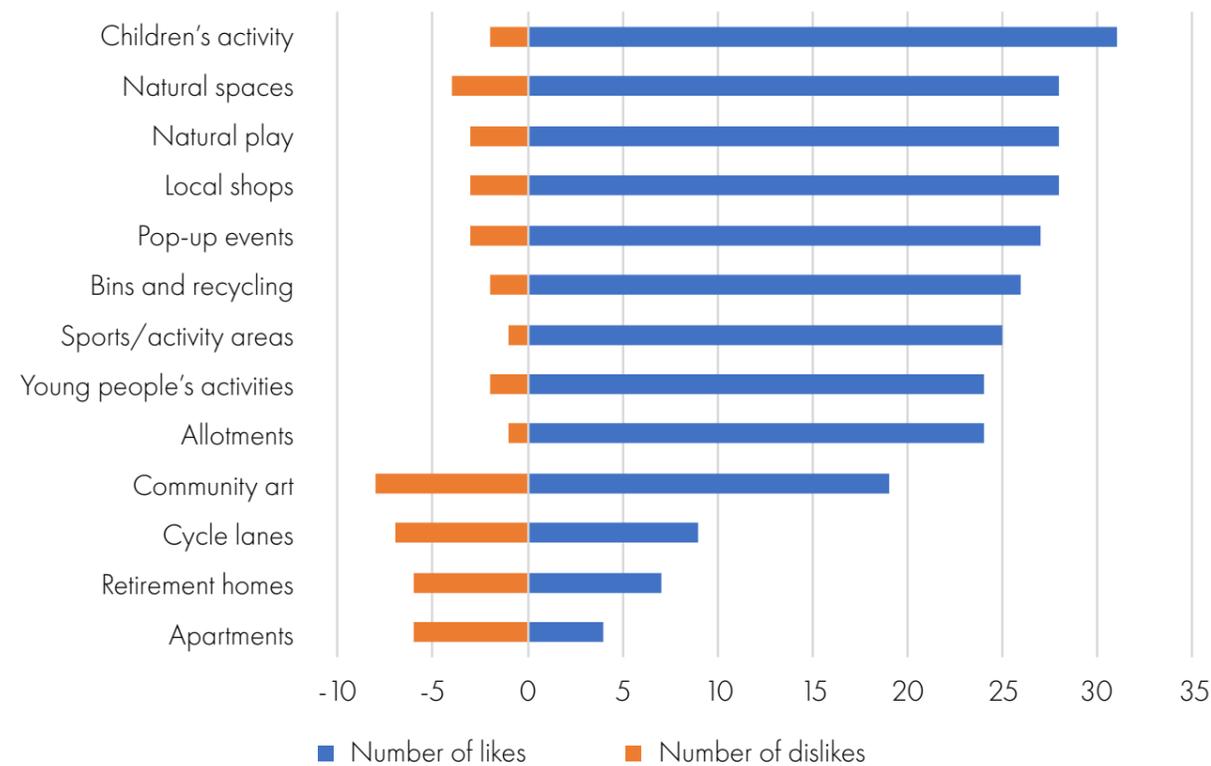
Community involvement

- Some people felt they had not been consulted on previous planning or design decisions and wished to be more involved in the future. Others wished to see residents take ownership of their area and form an inclusive community.

2. Key sites

From early discussions and engagement events, we identified four key sites needing targeted intervention. They are the roundabout on Cliveden Road, The Baccies, Sycamore Field and the Community Centre site.

What should Lache offer?



Graph 1 shows participants' responses to the question 'What should Lache offer?'



Image(s) 5 shows models and collages created by workshop participants showing the key sites identified for Lache, including Cliveden Road roundabout, Sycamore Field, the Community Centre site and The Baccies.

a) Roundabout - Cliveden Road and shops

The general wish for this area is to have it redesigned and maintained to be more attractive, safer, and greener.

- **Attractive** - Participants liked the idea of a community café with accessible prices and an outdoor seating area.
- **Safety** - People asked for bus stops to be moved from the roundabout into the adjacent streets, and for more zebra crossings.
- **Greenery** - A popular idea was to have wildflowers and green planting spaces that are maintained.



Image 6 shows a photograph of Cliveden Road

b) The Baccies (informal green area behind houses on Sycamore Drive)

This area is seen as a space for recreation and nature that needs a new identity. The following suggestions were made:

- The **natural environment**, or some of it, should be preserved.
- **Access** needs to be opened with walkways that are pushchair and wheelchair accessible.
- Some people suggested building a small number of **houses** to fund improvements.



Image 7 shows a photograph of The Baccies

c) Sycamore Field

Participants stated they enjoy living near this green space but generally considered it needed more maintenance. The play area was mentioned across all engagement as a facility that has potential but needs updating. The main ideas for a redesign of the park were as follows:

- **Add a pond** with benches.
- **Improve the play area** and create a separate one for young people. Climbing frames were frequently suggested.
- **A wiggly trail and paths** with lighting, trees and planting.



Image 8 shows a photograph of Sycamore Field

d) Community Centre site

People declared regretting the closure of some services and facilities. They stated it was important to ensure that any space that is demolished is replaced. The main suggestions for this area were as follows:

- **Bring services together** as a hub.
- **Improve green space** for people and wildlife.
- Provide **informal community meeting spaces**.



Image 9 shows a photograph of the Community Centre entrance

Phase 1 recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the feedback we collected throughout our Phase 1 engagement activities. We presented and discussed our findings with the rest of the design team as they started their design work and reported our findings to Cheshire West and Chester Council and the Lache Masterplan steering group.

- Go gently with the idea of a single Lache identity. Our discussions revealed that the administrative boundaries of Lache Ward do not match the way people feel about their area. The global vision of Lache that emerged from our work is one of **diversity**, with no single Lache, but a plurality of identities, spaces and experiences.
- **Communicate clearly** on the range of possible interventions, to encourage residents to have higher aspirations for their area and to ensure action is possible and visible to residents.
- **Target the four specific sites** presented in this report, as participants viewed them as key.

- Improve street lighting, and road and personal **safety** across Lache.
- Ensure the area is **maintained in the long term** after any renovation or improvement works are done.
- Encourage the **economic development** of the area, in particular the opening of local shops and the provision of activities for all generations.



Image 10 shows an ideas model of a running track by a St. Clare's Catholic Primary School pupil

Phase 2 findings

The draft masterplan was generally received positively, people thought it responded well to their concerns and that it included a good selection of ideas. In particular, people commented on the benefits of the engagement with local young people and ideas they produced, which were presented together as 'Lache Gallery' (appended to the end of this report).

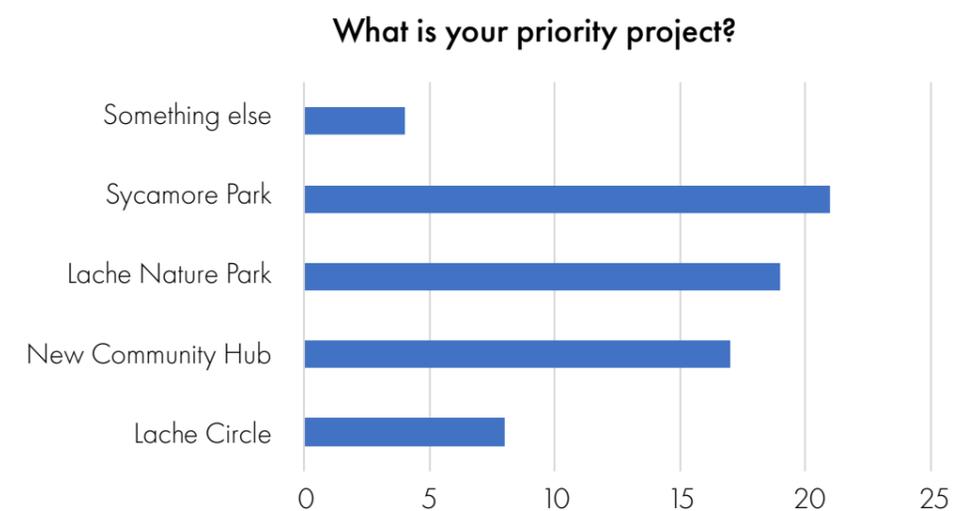
People also gave positive feedback on specific areas:

1. **The Community Hub**
2. **The nature area in The Baccies**
3. **The proposition to remove the roundabout in two stages . There was some discussion about the idea of closing one road but in general, people agreed with this idea.**

However, we also received comments providing a series of caveats and suggestions. These are presented in the further sections of this report.

Priorities

We asked people: 'What is your priority project?'. Scores were as follows:



Graph 2 shows participant responses to 'What is your priority project?'



Image 11 shows an ideas sketch by a Lache Primary School pupil (Phase 1)

It is important to note that votes are a reflection of the popularity of Sycamore Park and The Baccies (Lache Nature Park), more than a rejection of the roundabout. The fact that the roundabout area was renamed 'Lache Circle' might also have confused people who did not realise which area it was.

Outside of this question, a priority that was frequently brought up was the Community Hub and associated services. It was frequently given in response to questions around 'What is your priority & caveat / concerns?', reflecting concern about the possible loss of services or spaces that are currently available to residents. Also considered important was ensuring a continuity of services, particularly healthcare, during any future construction phases. People also talked about the need for a community café and for regular activities for all ages.

Another priority that emerged from our conversations was to have a usable green space and to preserve and/or enhance nature in general.

Finally, it was also mentioned that quick wins were needed, with the suggestion to focus on the environment with some dog waste bins and flowers / grow boxes.



Image 12 shows a photograph of the activity for 'What is your priority project?'

Concerns and conditions

We asked people 'Is there anything which you think is missing or could be improved?'. The following section is a summary of concerns and issues that participants thought were essential to keep in mind while developing the masterplan.

Comments on key areas

- **Sycamore Park** - People insisted that the park should have an enclosed space for children and fencing around the park for general safety. The idea of a water feature was questioned by some participants who had concerns regarding safety and flooding risks. The ground was described as boggy due to drainage issues in the area. The need for sheltered seating was also pointed out. Some asked for a smooth bike loop with ramps. Planting a variety of species providing many wildlife habitats was praised and we received comments about the importance of retaining existing mature trees to preserve biodiversity.

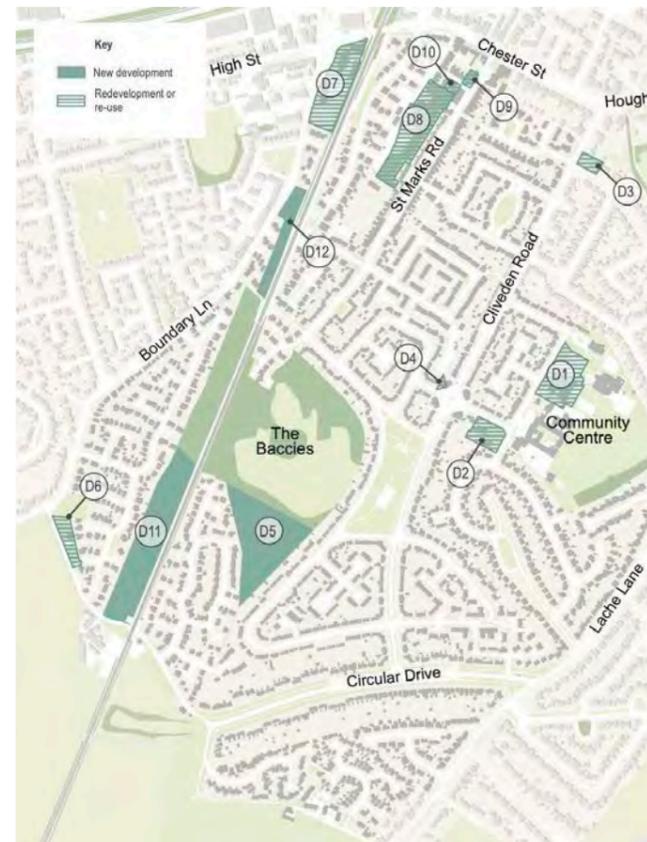


Image 13 shows an overview drawing of the masterplan development zones, produced by LDA Design

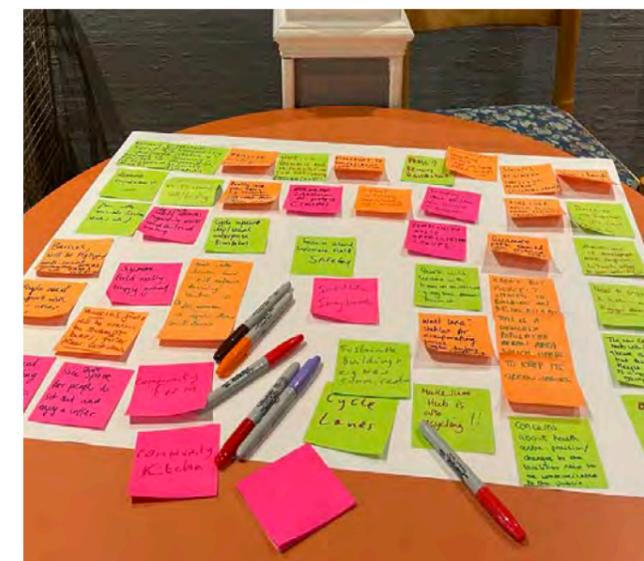
- **The Baccies** - Participants discussed issues of antisocial behaviour, such as using scramble bikes, setting fires and cutting down trees. People wished for The Baccies to remain a natural and wooded area, and emphasised the importance of the field to the local community. Suggested improvements included a dedicated play area, and making the field accessible by taking off the current barriers, although there are also worries that this would lead to increased vandalism. Comments were also made to retain as many existing trees and shrubs as possible, and to consider the skyline behind Sycamore Field from different viewpoints.
- **Community Hub** - The design for a new building was positively received but it was pointed out that the existing double height sports hall is needed and must be kept. It was also noted that adequate parking spaces need to be provided, particularly due to proximity of the local church and schools.

Comments on the masterplan

- **Changes in site uses** - Some areas that were indicated to be future sites for development were questioned, in particular the green space and wooded areas by the railway (see Image 13). It was noted that this is used by people walking their dogs. If the use of some sites changes to incorporate new developments there should be good communication surrounding what this means. People have highlighted that before any of these developments happen, there should be more engagement to find out how people use the site as this level of detail has not been captured at this stage.
- **Potential increase in traffic** along Hawthorn Road was a concern, as this road has tight corners with high footfall due to the proximity of the two schools.

Public services and facilities

- **Communication** - People expressed the wish to be informed of any decisions and changes impacting their area. In particular, they expressed worries related to the health centre and healthcare provision, and changes to the facilities. There is a need to ensure and sustain an engaged community as this masterplan is taken forward. Wider input was also requested by residents living near to the potential new location for the library, the wider Lache Ward, and neighbouring areas, e.g. Saltney.
- **Social issues and need for support** - It was pointed out that people in Lache experience other difficulties which should be remembered. Some people in the area need financial support and anti-social behaviour is also a pressing issue.
- **Service quality** - The need for continuity of services was highlighted. It was also pointed out that new facilities or redeveloped spaces should be accessible and inclusive throughout construction and in the future.
- General wish not to move the **library** from those engaging at the current library site. Moving this facility would require more detailed engagement.



Image(s) 14 shows a photograph of the activity for 'Is there anything which you think is missing or could be improved?'

Additional requests

The question 'Is there anything which you think is missing or could be improved?' also prompted participants to talk about additional requests or elements they wished to see included in the masterplan.

Community uses

- **Links with the Roma community** - We spoke to members of the Roma community who explained that there is a connection between Lache and their community, as the community is nearby and might draw on the services available in Lache.
- They felt retaining the Community Centre **laundry facilities** was important.

Activities and assets

- **Animal sanctuary, petting zoo and farms** - People wished for support to be given to the Animal Sanctuary and for farms or a petting zoo to be created, possibly in connection with Chester Zoo.
- **Arts and performance** - An idea for a satellite Story House was suggested.
- **Community groups** - People suggested variety of interest groups and activities which they felt could be successful in Lache. Examples include a music appreciation group, a community kitchen, a community farm, and a cycle repair shop or social enterprise (such as Bren Bikes in North Chester).

Design

- **Lache Circle (roundabout)** - People questioned how vacant shop units and buildings could be filled, and wished to see attractive shops and a space for people to sit out and enjoy a coffee.
- **Buildings should be sustainable** and have waste recycling facilities.
- **Speed bumps** are needed on Circular drive to prevent speeding.
- **Public service** - Maintenance of development once complete and regular collection of waste / skips.

- **Self defence training centre** - Suggestion that this would be popular and could be carried out in the community centre.
- **Green spaces** and existing natural environments need to be retained as much as possible.

Transport

Whilst we acknowledge that transport issues are largely beyond the scope of this project, we are conscious that comments made about this theme still inform how residents feel about the project. The following is an overview of comments made around connectivity and transport issues:

- **Public transport** should be more frequent and reliable.
- **Connectivity is needed** to ensure that services, if they are centralised, are accessible to people living in all parts of Lache. In particular, some of the peripheral areas can feel quite remote, especially to older or disabled residents. Some felt that they would not benefit from improvements that are done to areas that are not in the vicinity of their home. Suggestions made to improve this included a satellite community centre, a notice board for residents and new public transport links between peripheral areas and the shops / community centre.

Towards a Community Action Plan

We asked people "How could you help kickstart some of these ideas?" to start a conversation around community engagement and planning. People who answered this question suggested the following:

- **Maintenance of the estate** - Helping with litter picking, tending planters and gardening.
- **Volunteering at the Community Hub** - with support and activities.
- **Linking with organisations** such as Arts and Performance groups and starting an NHS Vehicle Assistance programme.



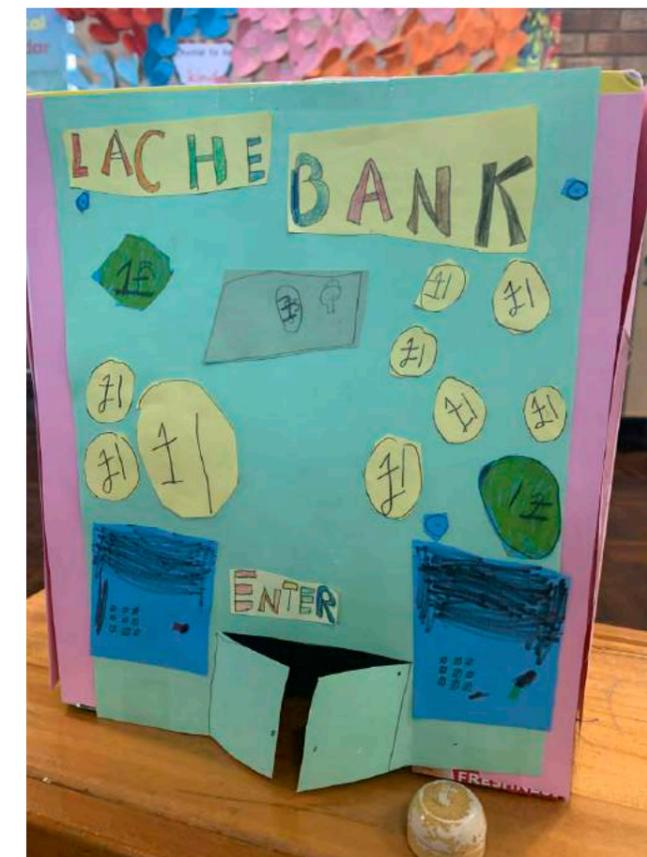
Image(s) 15 shows exhibition materials at the Phase 2 engagement event

Phase 2 recommendations

The following recommendations build on our Phase 1 findings, and on the feedback we collected throughout the Phase 2 engagement activities.

- Although many of the ideas suggested through the engagement process, both Phases 1 and 2, have been incorporated into the Lache Masterplan, we feel that Cheshire West and Chester Council should continue to reflect and work on the recommendations from Phase 1 (page 9).
- There is a need for continued and greater communication of the future of the Lache Masterplan. In our conversations with people many asked about how or when these ideas will be delivered. Cheshire West and Chester Council will need to continue to communicate the status of the Lache Masterplan, it's purpose and how they will use the ideas contained within it to kick start development.

- Also, rather than being a set of pre-determined projects to pursue, these ideas should be further developed with more engagement and consultation with local people.
- To help demonstrate commitment and possibility for change, a set of short-term actions or funded projects would increase residents' levels of trust that some of the ideas presented in this work can and will happen.

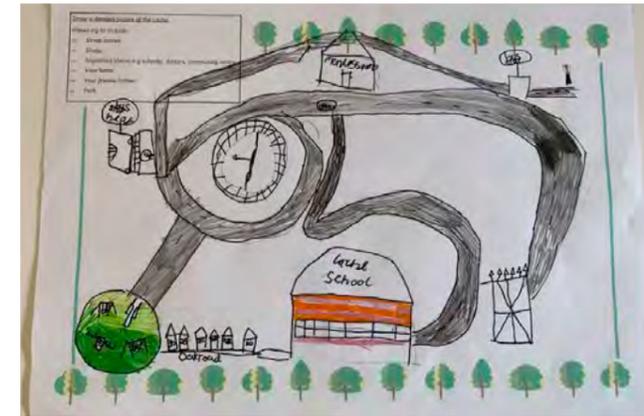


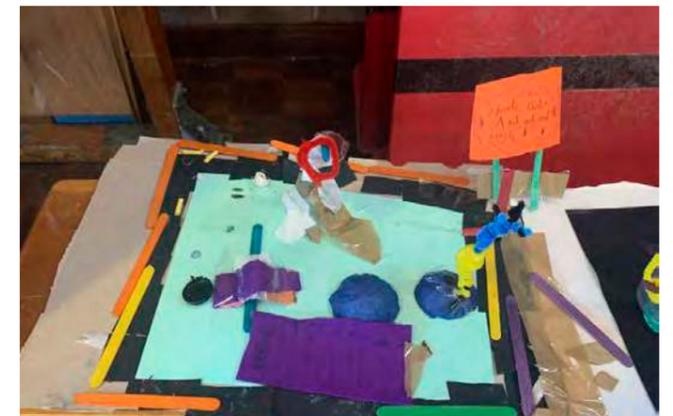
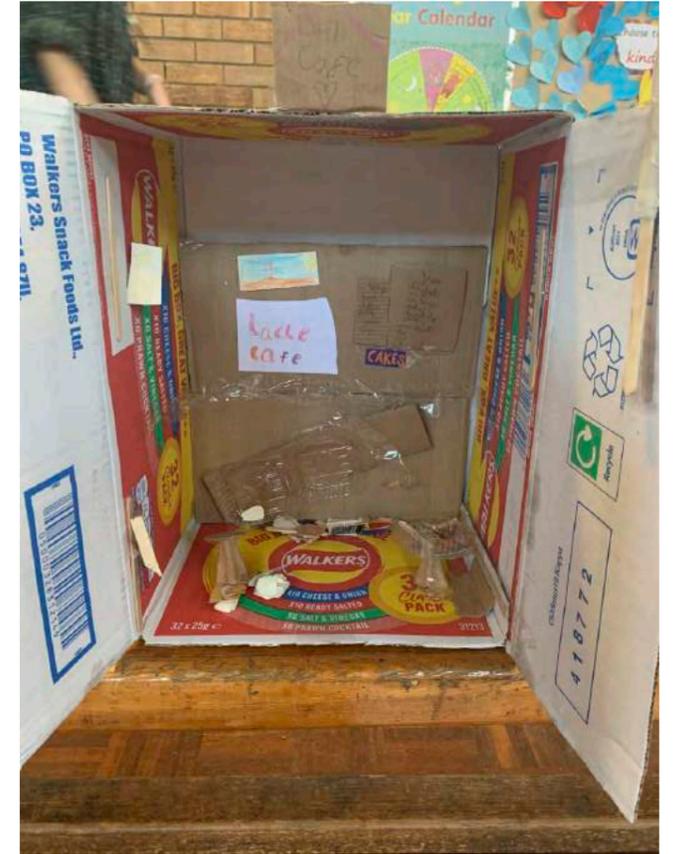
Image(s) 16 shows ideas models by St Clare's Catholic Primary School pupils (Phase 1)



Appendix 'Lache Gallery'

A selection of images presenting ideas for Lache in the form of creative models and sketches, by local young people and Lache Primary School and St. Clare's Catholic Primary School pupils.







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