

Statement of Common Ground
Portsmouth City Council & James Brothers,
Wellingborough Limited
May 2024

**In respect to 200 - 204 Commercial Road,
Portsmouth, PO1 1HB**

As part of Portsmouth City Centre Strategic Site



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1. Introduction

What is a Statement of Common Ground?

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SCG) is a jointly agreed statement between Portsmouth City Council (PCC) and James Brothers, Wellingborough Limited (JBW). It sets out the position and understanding with respect to key issues between the City Council and JBW in respect to the draft allocation in the Pre-Submission Local Plan of 200 - 204 Commercial Road as part of the City Centre Strategic Site. It follows on from letters written between the two parties, included as appendices 1 and 2. It is not binding on either party but sets out a clear and positive direction to inform ongoing strategy and plan making. It should be noted that this is a bilateral agreement between these two organisations only.
- 1.2 The following documents form appendices to the SCG:
1. Letter on site allocation (winter 2023/24)
 2. Letter of response to site allocation (winter 2023/24)
 3. Draft Policy PLP6 of the Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan (May 2024)

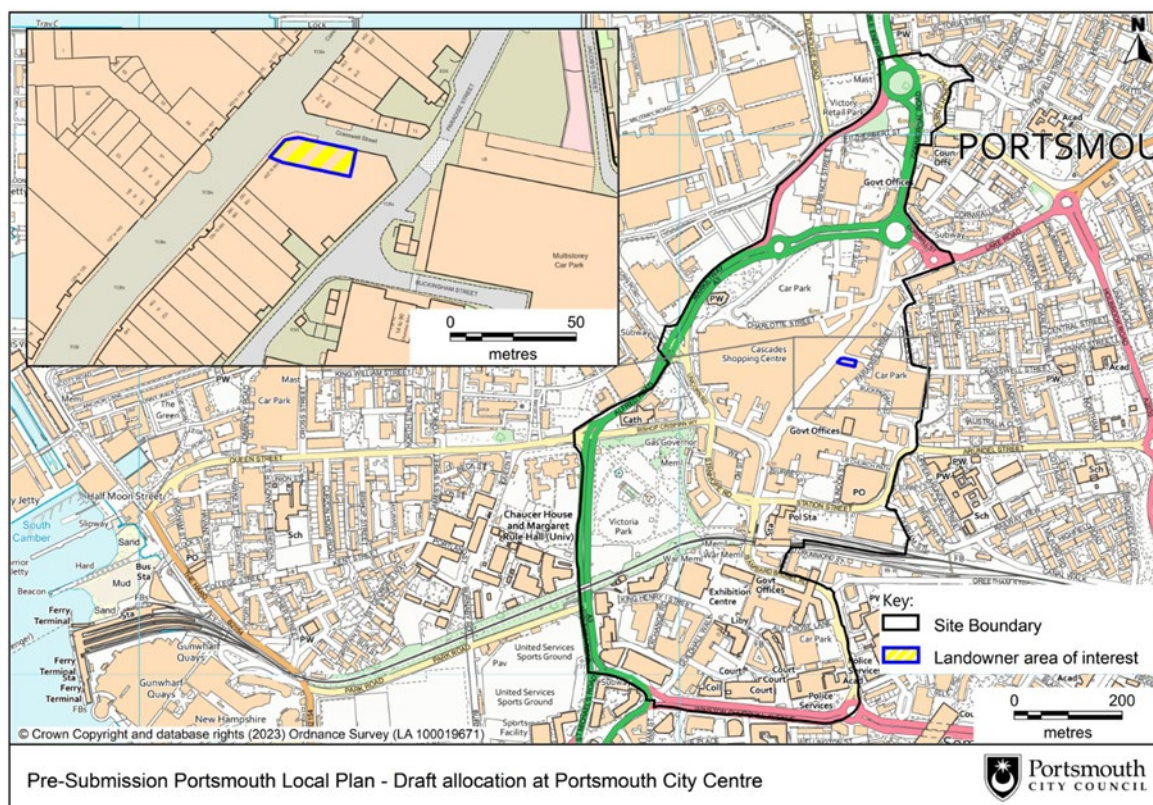
Role of the two Parties

- 1.3 In respect to this SCG, PCC is the Local Planning Authority and as such is responsible for the preparation of the Local Plan for Portsmouth.
- 1.4 JBW is the landowner in respect to 200 to 204 Commercial Road, a site which is subject to a draft allocation in the Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan.

2. Location of the Site

- 2.1 200 - 204 Commercial Road, is located within the City Centre Strategic Site on the corner of Commercial Road and Crasswell Street. Both parties agree that the extent of the landownership of JBW in respect to 200 to 204 Commercial Road as shown in figure 1 below is correct.

Figure 1 landownership of JBW Properties Limited in respect to 200-204 Commercial Road



3. Key Matters

3.1 This section sets out matters where agreement has been reached, or where further work to reach common ground is required. This section covers the key matters as identified by the PCC and JBW.

(a) Housing Growth

3.2 200 - 204 Commercial Road is expected to provide housing within the plan period as set out in table 1. There is potential for a more substantive scheme if the property was to come forward in parallel with the neighbouring site at 194 -198 Commercial Road.

Table 1: Housing Delivery for 200-204 Commercial Road

5 Year Period	Pre 2025	2025 - 30	2030 -35	2035 - 40	After 2040	Total
Number of Dwellings		40				40

Deliverability and Viability

3.3 JBW does not at this point in time, have evidence to support the delivery as set out in table 1. Delivery of the site would be dependent on the future viability.

Policy compliance

3.4 Draft Policy PLP6 of the Pre-Submission Local Plan sets out the development requirements for 4,158 dwellings of which 20 dwellings and replacement commercial use at ground floor level are expected at 200 - 204 Commercial Road. JBW does not know of any material consideration that would make it impossible to meet all these development requirements and agrees to submit a policy compliant planning application.

4. Signatories

4.1 Both parties agree that this statement is an accurate representation of matters discussed and issues agreed upon.

4.2 Both parties agree that they have engaged positively on an ongoing basis and that on this basis the Duty to Cooperate has been met.

4.3 Both parties agree that there are no substantial areas of disagreement between the parties relating to the emerging Portsmouth Local Plan and will both continue to work proactively on the key issues identified in this SCG.

Signed: 	Signed: 
Name: Lucy Howard	Name: Anthony James
Position: Planning Policy Manager	Position: Director
Portsmouth City Council	James Brothers Wellingborough
Date: 24/10/2024	Date: 06/06/2024

Appendix 1: Letter on site allocation (winter 2023/24)



Portsmouth City Council
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2NE

Anthony James
James Brothers Wellingborough Limited
Springfield House
Springfield Road
Horsham RH12 2RG

By email and letter: antsjames@googlemail.com

12 December 2023

Dear Anthony,

RE: Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan - Draft allocation at Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 to 204 Commercial Road

Portsmouth City Council is currently preparing its draft Local Plan, which it expects to publish for pre-submission consultation in May 2024, in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The draft Local Plan contains a vision, objectives, development strategy and comprehensive range of policies to guide development in the City up to 2040. Key to delivery of the Plan's objectives and strategy are site allocations. These are sites that the Council considers suitable for development, and is seeking to actively promote development for housing, employment and other uses.

We are contacting you as we understand that you have an interest in land we intend to allocate in the draft Local Plan. The City Centre as a whole is allocated for a large scale mixed use regeneration scheme. The draft proposed site, development type and quantum of housing for the City Centre as a whole and your parcel of land are set out below:

Site	Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 – 204 Commercial Road
New homes (net additional)	4,158 across the City Centre of which 20 are anticipated at 200 – 204 Commercial Road

It is important that we only include sites within the draft Local Plan that have a high prospect of delivering policy compliant development and coming forward within the Plan period.

Therefore, as part of our early and continuous engagement, we are seeking to ascertain your support for and view on inclusion of the site above in the draft Local Plan. We are also seeking your view on whether development is feasible and viable. To this end, please find attached to this letter:

- Site information including the site address; and a map identifying the proposed site allocation boundaries and, to the best of our knowledge, the land under your ownership or interest, at Appendix 1;
- Questions on the deliverability of the site, including its availability, feasibility and viability, at Appendix 2.

We would be very grateful if you could complete the forms in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 and return to us no later than Monday 22nd January 2024. Once we have received your response, we will consider your comments and update the draft Local Plan as appropriate. We will be in contact with any further queries.

Please note that your response may be made public as part of the Examination in Public of the draft Local Plan. If there are specific aspects of the information you provide that you would like us to keep confidential, please make this clear in your response. You should be aware that under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) the Council may be required to disclose information if it considers no exemption under the legislation applies. The Council will, whenever practicable, consult with individuals who may be affected by disclosure of information.

Portsmouth City Council is the data controller of any personal data you provide in connection with the Draft Local Plan. It will only be used by the Council and only for closely associated purposes. It will be kept for a period of six weeks after the adoption of the Local Plan. For full details of how the Council processes personal data, please see the [Data Protection Privacy Notice](#) and the [Planning Policy Consultee Database Privacy Notice](#).

We will be in contact again in the early part of 2024 to establish a Statement of Common Ground with regard to proposed development at the site.

As above, we intend to publish the pre-submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan for public consultation in May 2024, and at that point you will have the opportunity to view the detail and submit formal representations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at tom.bell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

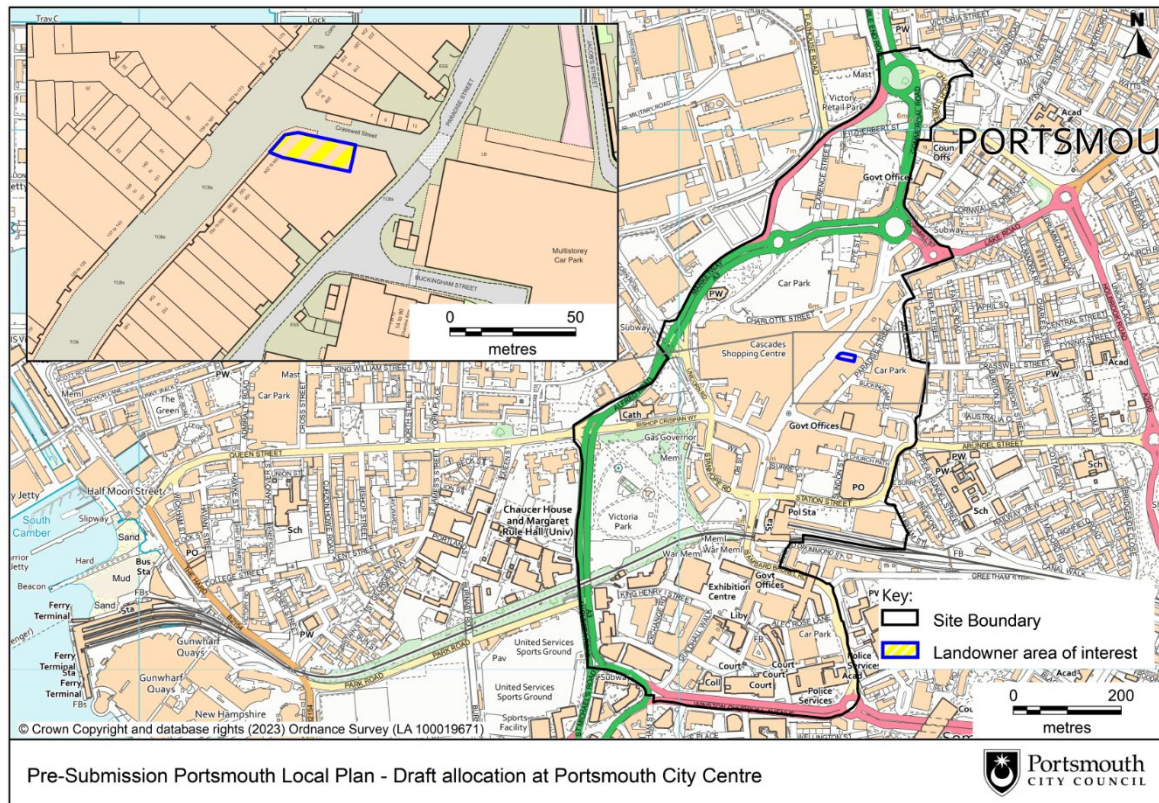


Tom Bell
Principal Planning Policy Officer
tom.bell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Site information for Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 – 204 Commercial Road

Full Address: 200 - 204 Commercial Road, Portsmouth, PO1 1HB

Map of Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 - 204 Commercial Road



Please amend the thick black line boundaries within the map above to reflect your ownership, leasehold or interest in the site, or send a map to show this, as appropriate.

Appendix 2: Site deliverability

Your details	
Name	
Organisation (if relevant)	
Representing (if applicable)	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	

Please answer the following questions as comprehensively as possible. Leave blank any questions that are not relevant.

Question	Response
Site availability and achievability	
What is your interest in the site? (e.g. are you a landowner, agent, developer, etc?)	
If you are not the landowner, who owns the land?	
Is the site in multiple ownership? If yes, who else owns the site (please include contact details, if you have them).	
Is the landowner(s) supportive of development of the site, and are they willing to make it available for development?	
Is the land currently leased or sub-leased to another party? If so, please provide lease length, clauses etc	
Where relevant, can you briefly describe your working relationship or partnership with other landowners and/or leaseholders on the site.	
Is the land for sale or being sold to another party? If so, please provide detail of current marketing and acquisition status, (e.g. is the site under an option agreement, land promotion agreement, exclusivity or joint venture, conditional or unconditional purchase, other?)	
Are you aware of any constraints that could hinder land acquisition or assembly? E.g. ransom strips, right of way, compensation measures including Compulsory Purchase Orders?	
Are there any other factors that would affect availability?	
Deliverability	
Are other uses to those in the attached letter proposed, and if so, what are they?	
Anticipated delivery of development prior to 2025. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	

Anticipated delivery of development 2025-2030. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	
Anticipated delivery of development 2030-2035 Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	
Anticipated delivery of development 2035-2040. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	
Anticipated delivery of development after 2040. Please provide detail on uses.	
Any further issues that may affect timing or phasing of development.	
Is there a proposed indicative block plan or layout for the site? If so, please attach to you response.	
Is pre-application advice being sought? Please provide detail if so.	
Are you intending to submit a planning application, and if so, when?	
Viability	
Has economic viability of developing the site been assessed, and what was the outcome of that assessment?	
Are there any abnormal or exceptional build costs?	
Have you considered how the site will meet the 10% requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain? if so, how will this be done?	
Have you considered how your site will meet requirements for Nutrient Neutrality? if so, how will this be done?	
Are there any further issues or constraints that may influence the achievability, feasibility or viability of development?	
Do you have any further comments on the site or the draft proposal for its allocation?	

Appendix 2: Letter of response to site allocation (winter 2023/24)



Portsmouth City Council
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2NE

Anthony James
James Brothers Wellingborough Limited
Springfield House
Springfield Road
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By email and letter: antsjames@googlemail.com

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We will be in contact again in the early part of 2024 to establish a Statement of Common Ground with regard to proposed development at the site.

As above, we intend to publish the pre-submission (Regulation 19) Local Plan for public consultation in May 2024, and at that point you will have the opportunity to view the detail and submit formal representations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at tom.bell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

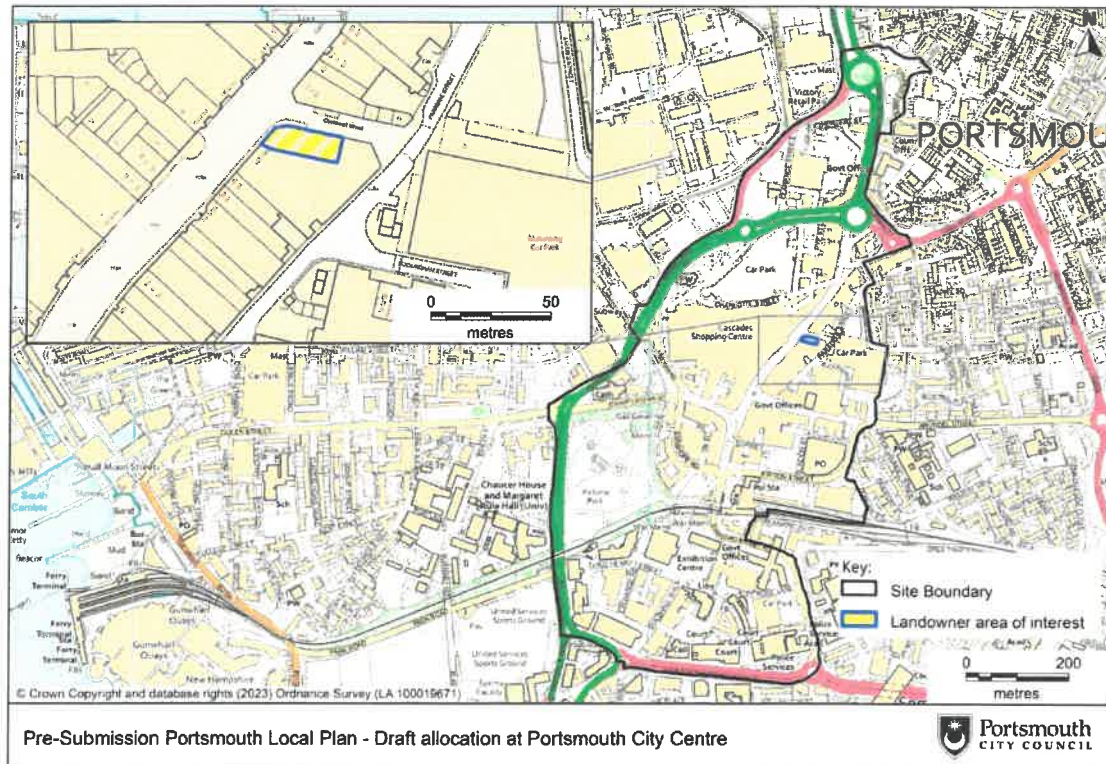


Tom Bell
Principal Planning Policy Officer
tom.bell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Site information for Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 – 204 Commercial Road

Full Address: 200 - 204 Commercial Road, Portsmouth, PO1 1HB

Map of Portsmouth City Centre as it relates to 200 - 204 Commercial Road



Please amend the thick black line boundaries within the map above to reflect your ownership, leasehold or interest in the site, or send a map to show this, as appropriate.

Appendix 2: Site deliverability

Your details	
Name	ANTHONY JANEJ
Organisation (if relevant)	JONES BROTHERS UELINGBOUGH LIMITED
Representing (if applicable)	
Address	58 LEBOW ROAD, LONDON SW10 0HX
Telephone	0796601 3231
Email	antjanese@gooplermail.com

Please answer the following questions as comprehensively as possible. Leave blank any questions that are not relevant.

Question	Response
Site availability and achievability	
What is your interest in the site? (e.g. are you a landowner, agent, developer, etc?)	Landowner
If you are not the landowner, who owns the land?	
Is the site in multiple ownership? If yes, who else owns the site (please include contact details, if you have them).	No
Is the landowner(s) supportive of development of the site, and are they willing to make it available for development?	Yes
Is the land currently leased or sub-leased to another party? If so, please provide lease length, clauses etc	Leased to Boots UK Limited until May 2027
Where relevant, can you briefly describe your working relationship or partnership with other landowners and/or leaseholders on the site.	None
Is the land for sale or being sold to another party? If so, please provide detail of current marketing and acquisition status, (e.g. is the site under an option agreement, land promotion agreement, exclusivity or joint venture, conditional or unconditional purchase, other?)	No
Are you aware of any constraints that could hinder land acquisition or assembly? E.g. ransom strips, right of way, compensation measures including Compulsory Purchase Orders?	No
Are there any other factors that would affect availability?	No
Deliverability	
Are other uses to those in the attached letter proposed, and if so, what are they?	Residential above commercial
Anticipated delivery of development prior to 2025. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	

Anticipated delivery of development 2025-2030. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	Residential above commercial
Anticipated delivery of development 2030-2035 Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	
Anticipated delivery of development 2035-2040. Please provide detail on all uses included in the proposal.	
Anticipated delivery of development after 2040. Please provide detail on uses.	
Any further issues that may affect timing or phasing of development.	No
Is there a proposed indicative block plan or layout for the site? If so, please attach to you response.	No
Is pre-application advice being sought? Please provide detail if so.	No
Are you intending to submit a planning application, and if so, when?	Likely to be in 2026
Viability	
Has economic viability of developing the site been assessed, and what was the outcome of that assessment?	Yes. Converting upper to residential is viable. Also expanding on existing.
Are there any abnormal or exceptional build costs?	No
Have you considered how the site will meet the 10% requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain? if so, how will this be done?	We will require input from a consultant.
Have you considered how your site will meet requirements for Nutrient Neutrality? if so, how will this be done?	We will require input from a consultant.
Are there any further issues or constraints that may influence the achievability, feasibility or viability of development?	
Do you have any further comments on the site or the draft proposal for its allocation?	

Appendix 3: Draft Policy PLP6 of the Pre-Submission Portsmouth Local Plan (May 2024)

Portsmouth City Centre

Introduction

4.65 Portsmouth City Centre is recognised as a focal point for new development and regeneration for the City and the sub-region. Given its importance to the City and wider region, the Council is committed to the regeneration of the City Centre to create a thriving, attractive, and vibrant environment for its residents, businesses and visitors. A map of the site is shown as figure 4.5.

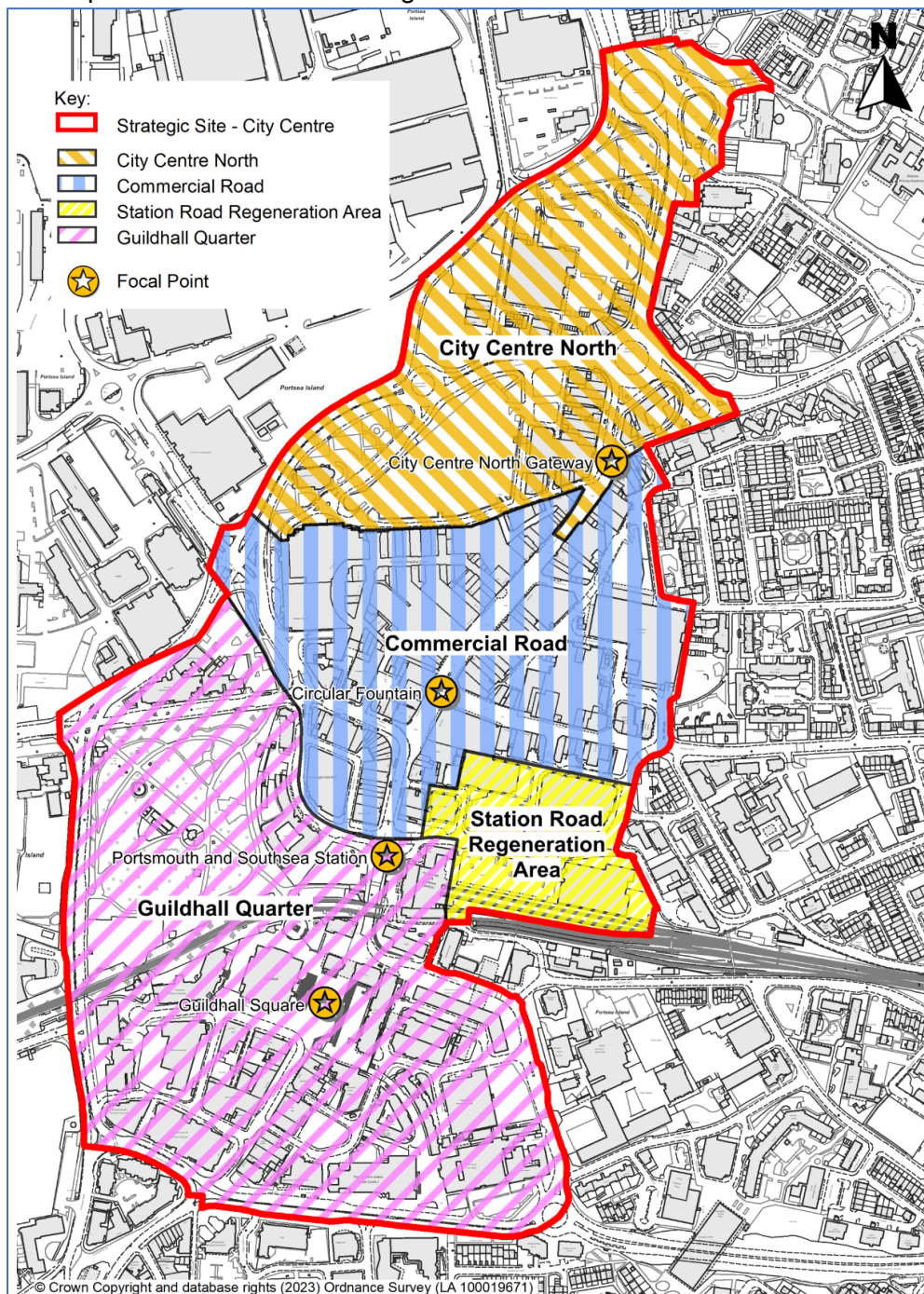


Figure 4.5: Map of Portsmouth City Centre

- 4.66 Located to the centre-west of Portsea Island, the City Centre is an area of some 60 hectares extending from Hope Street in the north to Guildhall Walk and Winston Churchill Avenue to the south. Directly adjacent to the west of the City Centre lies the HM Naval Base. To the east and south lies the respective residential areas of Buckland, Landport and Somerstown. At the heart of the City Centre is the Commercial Road shopping area, which also includes the shops and commercial uses on Arundel Street and in the Cascades Shopping Centre. To the south of Commercial Road lies Portsmouth & Southsea Railway Station, itself a Grade II listed building, with a railway viaduct forming a physical barrier to the area to the south. This area has seen some recent development in the form of purpose-built student accommodation. To the west lies the ever popular Victoria Park (Grade II listed Park and Garden) and Portsmouth St John RC Cathedral (Grade II listed building). The southern area of the City Centre comprises the civic areas of the Guildhall and its square. Opposite the Guildhall lies the Civic Offices. To the South is Guildhall Walk, which is known for its cultural and leisure offer with pubs, restaurants and cafes plus it is the home of the refurbished and extended New Theatre Royal. Adjoining Winston Churchill Avenue are the law courts, the police station and student accommodation.
- 4.67 The site is currently located within flood zone 1, although it is predicted that by 2122 the southwest portion of the site will be located within flood zones 2 and 3. More vulnerable development should provide mitigation and ensure safe access in these locations. Development should take account of the recommendations set out within the SFRA Level 2, in particular, relating to surface water flooding.
- 4.68 It is considered that, through long-term redevelopment, the City Centre has the potential to become a diverse, vibrant and attractive area that has the capacity to deliver a large number of new homes, business premises, social/leisure venues and community facilities. This will make a major contribution to meeting the City's development needs and strengthen the identity and vitality of the City Centre and its economy including both the daytime and nighttime activity.
- 4.69 There have been several attempts to redevelop the City Centre North, which lies north of Charlotte Street. The area occupied by the former Tricorn Centre was proposed for redevelopment in the 2000's as a retail led scheme. Changes in the retail market away from high street retailers and to online shopping combined with the late 2000's recession meant that these proposals were not realised. In 2013 the City Council published a City Centre Masterplan¹. This sets out a development strategy for the City Centre, including an approach to development for the following specific areas:
- Commercial Road Shopping Area: Proposals focused on the reconfiguration of the road network to improve pedestrian connectivity, the delivery of environmental improvements to Commercial Road including the pedestrianisation of Edinburgh Road and Commercial Road south to create a new space for the city centre's market.
 - North of Market Way: Proposals for this area focused on the reconfiguration of the road network and improve pedestrian and public transport.

¹ <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/development-and-planning-city-centre-masterplan-supplementary-planning-document-SPD.pdf>

- Station Square and Station Street: Proposals for this area included the development of a business hub for the City supporting at least 10,500m² of office space, and encouraged the creation of a transport interchange on Station Street.
- The Guildhall Area: Proposals for this area were for the Guildhall to become the heart of the City's civic and cultural life. Guildhall Walk was identified for its early evening economy role. Though restrictions to the amount of drinking establishments, takeaways and nightclubs were also proposed.

4.70 In 2021 the City Council published a City Centre Development Strategy². The Development Strategy set out 12 design principles for the City Centre to be Welcoming, Connected, Diverse, Delightful, Beautiful, Green, Healthy, Safe, Enduring, Resilient, Intelligent and Playful. The Development Strategy divided the City Centre into five areas with proposals for each. The areas were as follows:

- Landport Gate (north of Hope Street) - For this area the Development Strategy considered a mix of residential and employment options across a number of blocks of up to 20 storeys in height.
- New Landport (between Charlotte Street and Hope Street) - For this area the Development Strategy proposed a residential led mixed use development including commercial and civic uses. The Strategy proposed development heights of between 3 and 10 storeys in this area.
- Paradise (Commercial Road and the surrounding retail areas) - For this area the Development Strategy proposed retail at ground floor level with residential above in buildings of up to 6 storeys. The Strategy also proposed a new park within this area of the City Centre.
- Work Station (bordering Stanhope Road and Station Road) - For this area the Development Strategy proposed a mix of commercial and residential buildings in a range of between 6 and 20 storeys. In addition a new square / public open space was proposed for Portsmouth and Southsea Station.
- Guildhall and Victoria (north of Winston Churchill Avenue / south of Portsmouth and Southsea Station and Victoria Park) - For this area the Development Strategy proposed a residential led mix of uses in the 4 to 15 storey range.

4.71 Since the City Centre Masterplan and City Centre Development Strategy were written there has been a significant amount of new and proposed development proposed in the City Centre. There has been significant purpose-built student accommodation built in the City Centre including Catherine House, Stanhope House and Crown Place. Some of the most notable proposals coming forward include the: Outline planning application (22/01243/CS3) for City Centre North which proposes the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of up to 2,300 residential units, and up to 10,000 m² non-residential uses. City Centre North also proposes the realignment of the Road network, most notably the diversion of traffic onto Hope Street and developing part of the area currently occupied by Market Way. There have also been proposals for residential and hotel uses for the Slindon Street Post Office (20/00407/OUT / 20/00152/FUL) and proposals for residential / hotel development at land adjacent to Catherine House (17/01807/FUL). There are also further proposals in pre application planning for the former Debenhams site and former Matalan sites.

² https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Portsmouth-City-Centre-Development-Strategy-Jan-21_compressed.pdf

4.72 There is a range of evidence based studies supporting the allocation of this strategic site. This includes the HELAA, which identified a total of thirteen sites in the City Centre with potential to deliver 4,158 dwellings and 20,000 m² of gross employment floorspace (1,546 m² net gain when losses are taken into account). The Portsmouth Emissions Based Assessment³ looked at the City Centre because poor air quality is a recognised issue with three AQMAs designated in the vicinity (7, 11 and 12). The assessment found that there is a predicted increase in NO_x in the short term impacting parts of AQMA 11, however it is expected that the NO_x emissions will substantially decline across the plan period, due to changes in the vehicle fleet. Further detailed modelling may be needed to investigate if additional short-term mitigation is required.

Vision

4.73 In 2040, Portsmouth City Centre will fulfil its potential as a centre of culture and creativity for the City. There will be a thriving business and retail offer centred around Commercial Road and enhanced cultural provision focused on Guildhall Square and Guildhall Walk. The new park at City Centre North and the historic Victoria Park will, along with tree lined thoroughfares, make it a green and pleasant centre for residents and visitors. People will live in good quality homes, which are carbon neutral and located close to jobs and bustling services. People will make fewer journeys by car and instead will make use of new and improved public transport connections including the enhancing Portsmouth and Southsea Train Station. Rapid Transit Improvements will provide easy access to wider South Hampshire including its two national parks, London and the continent. It is the home of Portsmouth University, which will be one of the top one hundred young universities in the world. Overall, the new City Centre will be a green cultural centre for the City, which is home to a happy, healthy and thriving community.



Strategic Site Allocation Policy PLP6: Portsmouth City Centre

1. Portsmouth City Centre, as shown on the Policies Map, is allocated for the comprehensive mixed-use development of the following uses:
 - a) 4,158 dwellings;
 - b) 20,000 m² office class E(g)(i) floorspace (1,546 m² net);
 - c) A new 2.9 ha park at City Centre North; and
 - d) Culture, arts, civic and leisure uses.
2. Development proposals for the above named uses will be permitted provided that where appropriate they meet the following site-specific development requirements:
 - a) Enhance the range of City Centre commercial uses;
 - b) Protect and enhance the existing open spaces as shown in figure 4.5;

³ <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/newlocalplanevidencedocx>

- c) Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the surrounding residential areas;
 - d) Incorporate car-free streets wherever feasible, with 'Mobility as a Service' and sustainable transport modes prioritised;
 - e) Deliver or contribute proportionally to the relevant transport and highways mitigation measures identified within the Local Plan Strategic Transport Assessment and/or Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - f) Any severe impacts on the highways network identified as resulting from development as part of the City Centre strategic site must be mitigated following a robust assessment and reduce the impact of traffic to an appropriate level;
 - g) Provide evidence that air quality in adjoining AQMAs is not worsened;
 - h) Evidence is provided on the current and historical contaminative uses of the site and provision made for any necessary remediation;
 - i) Complement the proposals set out in the University of Portsmouth Estate Masterplan where relevant;
 - j) Major development in the City Centre should demonstrate how its design enhances the centre's appearance and considers the needs and safety of all its users including reducing crime, through the provision of a design code;
 - k) Major development including major commercial development should provide an employment and skills plan to demonstrate how the proposals provide opportunity for local workers;
 - l) Major Development should provide a travel plan to demonstrate how it is contributing to a shift to sustainable and public transport in the centre; and
 - m) Development protects trees within the City Centre and takes opportunities to plant more and provide enhanced greening; and
 - n) An Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Arboricultural Method Statement and associated Tree Protection Plan is submitted and implemented that protects trees throughout the site;
3. Proposals for the comprehensive redevelopment of the City Centre North (as shown in figure 4.5) for 2,300 dwellings and 20,000 m² of new office floorspace and provision of a new green space will be supported. These proposals will have to demonstrate that they create a new residential community with a focus on delivering integrated green space, connectivity and promote community integration. Proposals at the City Centre North Focal Point should look to create a gateway to the City Centre North Development linking it to the northern end of Commercial Road. Proposals in City Centre North should include the following elements within a master plan; a Large Urban Green green space; Improved Connections to wider neighbourhoods and amenities; Streets and Squares for

play and socialising; commercial opportunities; a new Primary Mobility Hub at Commercial Rd; and creation of a cyclable and walkable neighbourhood. Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 20% is demonstrated and secured in perpetuity (at least 30 years) on site. Proposals must take into account the character and significance of the Mile End Conservation Area by minimising harm to the significance and appreciation of the conservation area, and responding sensitively to St Agatha's Church (Grade II*) and All Saint's Church (Grade II) in terms of massing, scale and orientation.

4. Proposals falling within the City Centre Commercial Area (as shown in figure 4.5) should include town centre uses at ground floor level. Proposals which retain and enhance active frontages in this area including outside / street seating will be supported. Outside of the commercial frontages schemes that deliver high-density mixed-use development will be permitted provided they improve connectivity between the retail area, and the surrounding areas and contribute to a modal shift to sustainable transport. Proposals within this area should provide space to accommodate and avoid negative impact on the markets which use Commercial Road. Interventions at the Arundel Street Focal Point should protect and enhance the fountain and take opportunities to utilise the space for cultural events.
5. Development within the Station Road Regeneration Area (as shown in figure 4.5) will be permitted where they provide a significant contribution to the City's housing and other needs by providing good quality, high density and tall buildings. Proposals impacting the area around Portsmouth and Southsea Train station should contribute to improved connectivity and street scene within the City Centre, without unacceptable harm to the historic environment. Proposals in this area should create a gateway to the City linking the commercial core around Commercial Road to the Cultural and Civic Centre focused on Guildhall Square and Guildhall Walk.
6. Proposals within the Guildhall Cultural Regeneration Quarter (as shown in figure 4.5) will be permitted where they contribute to the existing mix of cultural, civic and town centre uses. Development within this area should protect and enhance the significance including the setting of heritage assets and look to raise the overall quality of the area's built environment. By sensitively incorporating the area's listed buildings and responding positively to their significance and the wider historic environment, proposals should help to enhance the character and appearance of and the Guildhall & Victoria Park Conservation Area. The Guildhall Square and Guildhall Walk will be a focal point for cultural, community, and civic development. Proposals that reinforce this role will be supported. Proposals that create active frontage facing onto Guildhall Square will also be supported.

Supporting text

- 4.90 The purpose of this policy is to shape new development within Portsmouth City Centre so that it will adapt and thrive into the future. The City Centre will be a culture and leisure destination and provide a large number of new homes and significant office space to meet the future needs of the City.
- 4.91 The City Centre is one of the main locations for residential (4,158 dwellings) and commercial (20,000m² sqm gross, 1,546m² net) development in the City to 2040. Within

the City Centre there are a number of existing commercial buildings such as the Slindon St Post Office which are proposed to be reused for residential; this results in a reduction in the overall gain in office space. Within the City Centre that main area of development is expected to be City Centre North with provision for a total for 2,300 dwellings and all of the commercial floorspace. In addition to City Centre North, there is a cluster of residential development coming forward around Station Road, with large development sites at Debenhams, Matalan, the former sorting Office and adjacent to Catherine House. In addition to these areas there is anticipated to be further infill housing development within the centre.

4.92 Proposals should protect and enhance the retail offer of the City Centre, as set out in Policy PLP28: Town Centres and have regard to enhancing / complimenting the main focal points for intervention as set out in this policy. It is anticipated that with current retail trends away from traditional big box retailers and the large scale of new residential development proposed in and around the City Centre that the role of the centre will change over the plan period. The City Centre will become more a culture and leisure focused destination with an increase in the food and drink offer and more independent retailers.

4.93 With the exception of Victoria Park there is little open space within the City Centre. It is important therefore that any proposals which impact the open spaces within the City Centre seek to protect and enhance these spaces and their role. This needs to include careful consideration of active frontages/ and access to these spaces as well as the visual impact of buildings on the spaces.

4.94 The proposals at City Centre North include the provision of a significant open space in the form of a new green space. It is important that any revised proposals retain this provision and consider carefully the green space's future users and potential for delivering biodiversity net gains.

4.95 The City Council is seeking the provision of 20% biodiversity net gain on strategic sites, which it owns. The City Centre North portion of the City Centre allocation is Council owned, and therefore a target for 20% BNG is being applied to this area. As the City Centre has a low baseline level of biodiversity, there is a significant opportunity to make a positive impact in increased biodiversity. This should be done in accordance with Policy PLP40: Biodiversity Net Gain and the version of the Government metric current at the time of the application.

4.96 Proposals should deliver or contribute proportionally to the relevant transport and highways mitigation measures identified within the Local Plan Strategic Transport Assessment; Infrastructure Development Plan and / or Local Transport Plan (LTP4). Any severe impacts on the highways network identified as resulting from development as part of the City Centre strategic site must be mitigated following a robust assessment and reduce the impact of traffic to an appropriate level. Any assessment must consider the projects included within the LTP4 and contribute to their delivery where appropriate.

4.97 Proposals should encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport incorporating 'mobility as a service' such as Electric Cycle and Scooter Hire and should incorporate increase cycle parking provision as set out in Policy PLP47: Movement & Transport.

- 4.98 Air quality in proximity to the City Centre Road network is a recognised issue and in response to this the City Council has implemented a Clean Air Zone which covers the City Centre Area which imposes charges on the most polluting vehicles. The Portsmouth Emissions Based Assessment⁴ found that air quality in the City Centre is substantially impacted by how the road network of the area is laid out due to the volumes of traffic passing through the Centre. Proposals such as City Centre North that propose revised road layouts should ensure that these improve and do not worsen air quality. Development proposals should take opportunities to improve air quality and mitigate negative impacts on air quality in the adjoining AQMA's as required.
- 4.99 Proposals within the City centre should consider the provision of reduced levels of parking in line with Policy PLP48 and the emerging Parking Supplementary Planning Document, and inclusion of infrastructure for sustainable forms for transport in order to create further modal shift. Wherever possible development should include car free streets, which should link to the existing pedestrianised routes in the City wherever possible. Proposals for further pedestrianisation and for closing roads to private cars will be welcomed. Major Development should provide a travel plan as part of the evidence submitted in order to demonstrate how it is meeting these objectives.
- 4.100 Proposals on the southern edge of the City Centre should take account of the Estate Masterplan⁵ produced by the University of Portsmouth, and developers should work positively with the University as the major landowner in that part of the City.
- 4.101 The City Centre is one of the least green parts of the City. Proposals should wherever possible retain tree cover, protect trees cover by TPO (TPO148, TPO0050, TPO069), and take opportunities to green both spaces and buildings in the City Centre through the use of the Urban Greening Factor in line with policy PLP38: Green Infrastructure.
- 4.102 Major development in the City Centre should demonstrate how its design enhances the centre's appearance and considers the needs of all its users, through the provision of a design code. This should include detailed consideration of the needs as defined through equalities impact assessment, and the protected characteristics of those users.
- 4.103 The following sections of supporting text relates to the areas and focal points identified in figure 4.5.

City Centre North

- 4.104 City Centre North currently comprises a surface level car park to the north of the Cascades formerly occupied by the Tricorn Centre, the site of a former Sainsbury's store and a number of tired commercial units and surrounding surface level car parks. In addition the listed church, of St Agatha's, falls within the site area. The area is proposed for significant redevelopment for 2,300 dwellings, and 20,000 m² of commercial floorspace. The following paragraphs set out the key aspects of the development proposals.
- 4.105 A substantial new green space will create a new link between St Agatha's and All Saints Church with extended links to the south to Victoria Park and enabling future

⁴ <https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/newlocalplanevidencedocx>

⁵ <https://www.port.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-10/uop-estate-masterplan-section-3-and-4-sep-2016.pdf>

connections to the north creating a safe network of cycle paths and pedestrian routes. Creating green connections to the City through the implementation of green corridors, green spaces parks and playgrounds will be used to improve the well-being for the wider community as well as the residents on site. Green avenues will be created to reach out from the central green space and aim to link out to the wider city centre. These additional green spaces will aim to promote an active lifestyle whilst allowing the community to rediscover the local ecology. City Centre North is expected to deliver 20% Biodiversity Net gain, this is over and above the standard applied elsewhere in the City Centre and wider City centre as a whole as the site is in City Council ownership and the Council intends to take a proactive approach to Biodiversity on its assets. Proposals should protect and incorporate the existing mature trees on the eastern side of Flathouse Road, which the City Council is proposing to protect with TPO's.

4.106 City Centre North is the single largest development site in the City with the potential to deliver 2,300 dwellings. In order to do this the development will need to make careful use of both density and height. Proposals will need to carefully consider how larger buildings fit within the setting of the area. The northern part of the City Centre North site is potentially suitable for larger / taller buildings. Consideration will need to be given to the interaction with Hope Street and the Dockyard, as well as the frontages facing the new green space. There is potential within the scheme to create new landmark taller buildings, with heights of upwards of 20 storeys possible if well designed. An additional important consideration will be how development, especially any tall buildings, would impact on the character of the Mile End Conservation Area, including the birthplace of Charles Dickens, which is a Grade I listed building. This area manages to remain a haven of relative tranquillity. The Mile End Conservation Area Guidelines state that "The Conservation Area is separated from modern development by the boundary wall which blocks off Old Commercial Road at its southern end and serves both as a pedestrian entranceway into the Conservation Area and as a screen to mask the area from modern development". The effectiveness of such screening needs to be considered when large scale development is proposed.

4.107 The development of City Centre North should encourage a modal shift away from the use of the private car to prioritise use of sustainable transport given the sustainability of its location. This should be done in a number of ways including: removing Market Way and associated junctions; ensuring pedestrian and other sustainable transport connection to the wider City Centre and City; creating slower routes along Commercial Road that connect back to Queen Street; allowing for a safer and more enjoyable Proposed Pedestrian Routes; providing safer route connections to the wider cycle network in Portsmouth; creating pedestrian routes around the Cascades Centre, Victoria Park, Flathouse Rd, Ferry Port, Commercial Road retail & Conservation areas.

City Centre North Gateway Focal Point

4.108 The large-scale development at City Centre North will need to connect to the City Centre at the northern end of Commercial Road. This gateway will play an important role in the success of both the City Centre North development scheme and Commercial Road as a retail destination. The gateway should look to use active frontages to blend commercial use into the City Centre North scheme and create a welcoming and accessible space for both residents of city Centre North and the wider area.

City Centre Commercial Area

- 4.109 The cultural and leisure destination of the City Centre Commercial area is focused on the key retail and commercial streets of Commercial Road and Arundel Street, as well as the Cascades Shopping centre. This area forms the Core Commercial Area of the City Centre allocation. Proposed uses, should include retail, commercial, leisure, and culture and service use as set out in Policy PLP28 Town Centres. Within the City Centre Commercial area proposals for non-town centre uses will need to be carefully considered to ensure they do not create adverse impacts upon the commercial role of the centre. Proposals should protect and incorporate the existing mature trees on Commercial Road which are being considered for future protection by TPO. Within much of this area non town centre uses may be acceptable at above ground floor level only; Policy PLP28: Town Centres sets out the detailed requirements related to town centre use. The role of the centre is anticipated to change over the plan period as retail continues to move away from the traditional large national High Street retailers it is expected that the centre will have an increased independent retailer and food and drink offer. The proposal for significant levels of new residential development in the wider City Centre will support these types of business which in turn will support the culture and leisure offer of the centre. Proposals for these types of users in the centre will be supported. Proposals will also be supported for businesses creating additional active frontage and using the street for outdoor seating, where they accommodate the markets and other on street events.
- 4.110 Within this Area there are limited opportunities for large scale redevelopment due to a larger number of landowners and occupiers. The main exception to this is the site currently occupied by the Tesco superstore and NCP car park. This site has potential to deliver additional residential development in conjunction with a re-provided supermarket. There is opportunity to encourage a shift to sustainable transport modes in the City Centre through a reduction in the overall parking provision and improving the connectivity of the site to Commercial Road and Arundel Street, and to improve pedestrian linkage between the City centre and the adjoining Landport residential Area.
- 4.111 Within the City Centre Commercial Area there are two listed buildings namely St Agatha's and All Saints Churches. Proposals for redevelopment within this area must retain these buildings and respond to sympathetically to their settings. The southern portion of the area borders the Guildhall & Victoria Park Conservation Area and proposals on adjoining sites should respond sympathetically to the park and the Cathedral.
- 4.112 Within the City Centre Commercial Area space will need to be set aside to accommodate the ongoing provision of the market. The Commercial Road Market currently runs every week on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Arundel Street Fountain Focal Point

- 4.113 The fountain at the junction of Arundel Street and Commercial Road will be the focus of streetscene improvements. Interventions should protect and enhance the fountain and take opportunities to utilise the space for cultural events.

Station Road Regeneration Area

- 4.114 This Area of the City Centre has seen extensive redevelopment in recent years with more development proposed. The Area forms the setting of one of the main entrances to the City at Portsmouth and Southsea Station and links the commercial centre around

Commercial Road to the City's main cultural offer around the Guildhall Square. The area was formerly characterised by mid twentieth century commercial uses of a moderate height with the exception of the former Zurich Building (now Catherine House) and the former Post Office Sorting Office. The Area has seen significant tall building construction in recent years, with Catherine House, Stanhope House, Crown Place and the Travel Lodge having all significantly increased building heights and densities in this area of the City Centre. In addition to the schemes that have already been developed significant further construction at height is proposed within this area of the City Centre including: Land adjacent to Catherine House (17/01807/FUL), at 19 storeys providing 147 dwellings and a 222 bed hotel; Debenhams site (subject to pre app) (partly in the City centre Commercial Area) for 523 units; The former Slindon Street Post Office (20/00407/OUT) 19 Storeys providing 176 dwellings; Matalan subject to pre app for 615 dwellings over three towers.

- 4.115 This area of the City Centre has significant potential to deliver mixed use development at density and height including a large quantum of residential development. Proposed buildings of height and density should consider the setting of Portsmouth and Southsea Station (Grade II listed), the Cenotaph (Grade II* Listed, and Victoria Park Grade II listed). Advantage should be taken of the space created by the railway line to incorporate taller buildings. Proposals for development fronting Commercial Road Adjacent to Portsmouth and Southsea Station should have active ground floor frontage comprising town centre uses. This is intended to improve connection between Commercial Road and Guildhall Square connecting the two areas of the city.

Portsmouth and Southsea Train Station focal point

- 4.116 This area is key for the implementation of sustainable transport measures and promoting modal shift in the City Centre. The area in front of the Station has the potential to act as a significant gateway to the City, and proposals that enhance the setting of the station and improve the street scene / landscaping of the area will be welcomed. The Station building is listed, however, its quality has been impacted by later additions and poor maintenance, leading to it feeling unkept and unwelcoming. Enhancements to the Station building in order to improve its role as a gateway, and its legibility, permeability and accessibility for users will be encouraged. Commercial uses in the Station will be supported.

Guildhall Quarter

- 4.117 The southern portion of the City is the focus for cultural and civic offer of the City. In addition to the Guildhall itself, the Area includes the Civic Offices Central Library, New Theatre Royal, Law courts and numerous Portsmouth University buildings. The area includes a significant portion of the Portsmouth University Campus including both teaching buildings and student accommodation. This area of the City Centre is the focal point of its cultural and leisure offer.
- 4.118 Guildhall Walk connects to the southern side of Guildhall Square and as well as being the home of the New Theatre Royal forms a throughfare of cultural and entertainment uses and the supporting and complementary uses in the form of pubs and restaurants and cafes. Guildhall walk is well used by the wider population of the City most notably the student population and is one of the City's main cultural and evening economy destinations. Policy PLP28: Town Centres seeks to support opportunities to enhance and grow this part of the City's economy.

- 4.119 To the north west of the Guildhall and university campus lie Victoria Park and the City's Roman Catholic Cathedral. The Registered Park (grade II listed) is an important green space with a large number of mature trees, and historic monuments and features. It lies within the Guildhall & Victoria Park Conservation Area. The park is protected by conservation area no 18 'Victoria Park'. The park is well loved, and used by the public, and is the only large area of public open space currently in this part of the city.
- 4.120 This area of the City is characterised by mid-rise development. The overall quality of the buildings is mixed although there are a number of buildings of high value with much of the area protected by conservation area status. Not every building is of a high quality and there are areas of ground level paved parking within the area which do little to add to its setting. Proposals for development / redevelopment within this area of the City Centre should respect the character and setting of the Guildhall & Victoria Park Conservation Area (no.18) and aim to raise the overall quality of the townscape of the area through careful use of high quality materials reflecting the finer architectural examples around Guildhall Square and Guildhall Walk. Proposals for mid-rise development of a scale similar to the those in the vicinity should be sympathetic. Proposals will need to take account of the settings of heritage assets, which include among others Victoria Park (Grade II), the Grade II* Cenotaph and listed buildings along Guildhall Walk including the New Theatre Royal (Grade II*). These and other assets make an invaluable contribution to the character of the area and their heritage significance needs to be protected and better revealed through sensitive design."

Guildhall Square - Focal Point

- 4.121 Guildhall Square is one of the most important and recognisable public spaces in the City Centre. It is already an attractive and well used space with a programme of events and is used as a setting for formal occasions by the University, City Council and the Royal Navy. The square also provides a strong civic function as well as adjoining key cultural and entertainment venues including the Guildhall and the Central Library.
- 4.122 The Square is also at the junction of key pedestrian routes through the City Centre particularly the north / south route from Commercial Road past the Station and into Guildhall Walk. The square is busy with a through-flow of people, particularly during the day and thought should be given to community safety after dark.
- 4.123 The Civic Offices are showing their age and do not meet modern standards for energy efficiency. In addition following COVID and the rise in working from home the offices are occupied to a lesser degree than previously. Any proposals for the redevelopment on the Civic Offices should provide an enhanced level of active frontage onto the Square to make more use of it as a space when not being used for events.
- 4.124 The Guildhall, Guildhall Square and Guildhall Walk should act as a focal point for cultural and civic activities and create enhanced connectivity between Commercial Road and Portsmouth and Southsea Station to the North and Guildhall Walk and the University to the south.

Monitoring and Delivery Framework

Types & amounts of development	Timescale	Delivery	Monitoring	Triggers & potential actions
4,158 homes	1,721 dwellings to 2030, 2,437 dwellings between 2030 and 2040.	Through the development Management process; working in partnership with developers and land owners	Housing number and Employment floorspace monitoring in the AMR	Development progress will be monitored through the AMR. If there is a lack of progress further work will be undertaken to ascertain the reason and propose interventions
Commercial floorspace 1,546 m² (20,000 m² Gross) office	2030-2040 years	Through the development Management process; working in partnership with developers and land owners	Housing number and Employment floorspace monitoring in the AMR	
Provision of supporting infrastructure including but not limited to street scene improvements, new open space at City Centre North and improved provision for the market	2020-2040	Through the development Management process; working in partnership with developers and land owners	Infrastructure Delivery monitoring in the AMR in line with the requirements set out in the IDP	

Table 4.5: Monitoring and Delivery Framework for Portsmouth City Centre