



# Watford Rural Parish Council

*Serving the Community since 1894*

Parish Council Offices

Oxhey Drive, South Oxhey, Watford, Hertfordshire WD19 7SB

Telephone 0208 4280449 Email [admin@watfordrpc.co.uk](mailto:admin@watfordrpc.co.uk)

Mr Alan Gough  
Watford Borough Council  
Town Hall,  
Watford,  
WD17 3EX

19<sup>th</sup> July 2018

**Re: South Oxhey Market**

Dear Mr Gough,

Thank you for taking the time to meet me to discuss the future of South Oxhey Market.

The Council respectfully ask you to present the following requirements to Committee for their approval:

- 1) To continue with the existing Thursday Market trading arrangement once the Market moves (due in Q1 2020) to its new location. NB 0.055miles nearer to your market approximately
- 2) To allow Sunday trading at the proposed new Market Place being developed in South Oxhey as part of the South Oxhey Initiative Redevelopment Program. We would also be seeking this to be in perpetuity as is the existing arrangement for Thursdays.

## **Background**

In 1990 Watford Rural Parish Council (WRPC) were delegated powers to run a market in South Oxhey under S50 of the Food Safety Act 1984. Watford Borough Council (WBC) were contacted and given permission to run the Market as it did not breach their Charter, established in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, that a market must seek approval before it can be established if it is within a 6.6-mile radius. The permission was granted as, at that time, Watford market did not run on a Thursday.

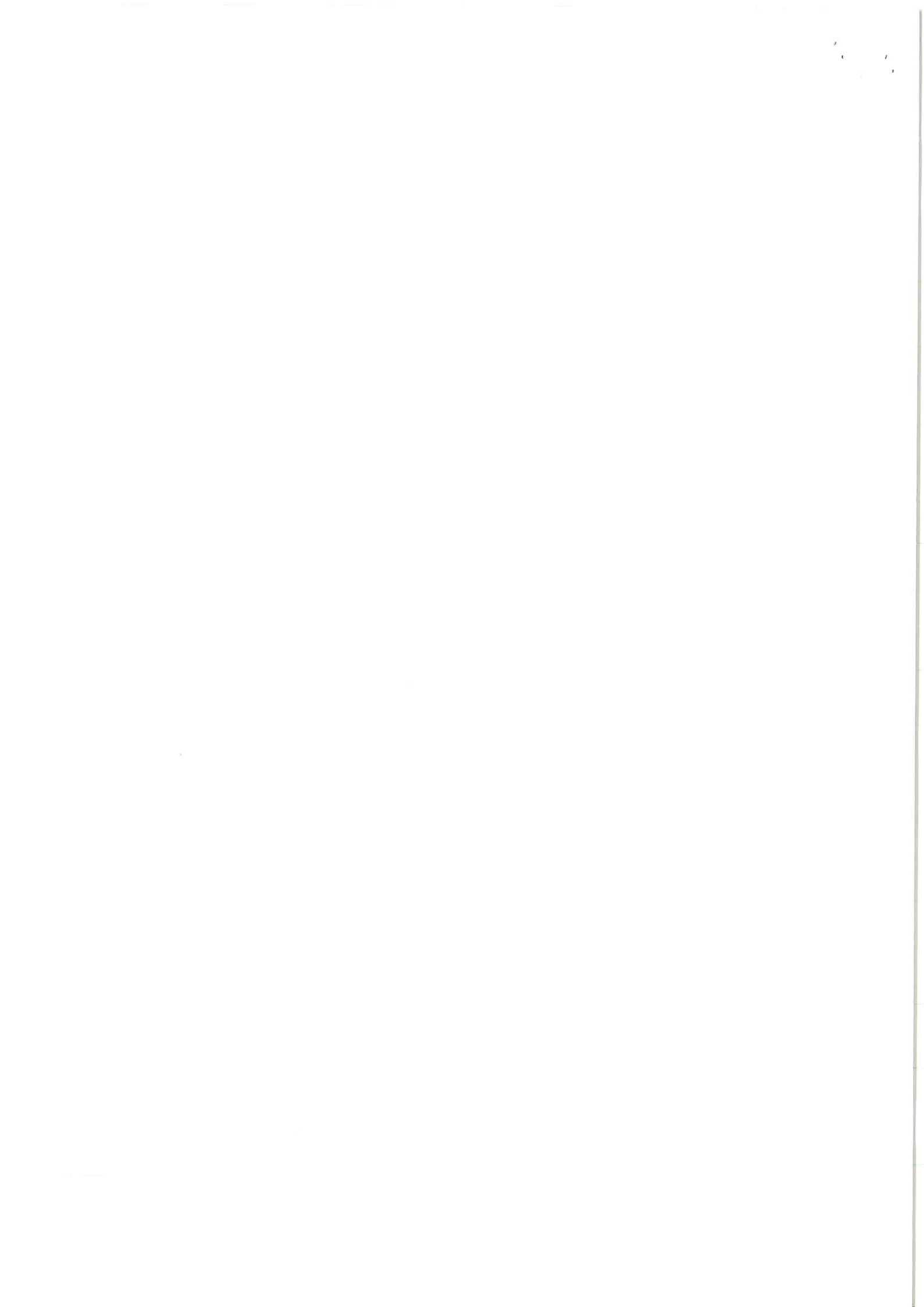
In 2011, Watford Market began running a Thursday market and WRPC contacted WBC to seek assurances that this would not affect their, now established, market (see Appendix item 1A). This permission was duly granted as Watford's Market Traders "raised no concerns about the South Oxhey Market taking place at the same time" (See Appendix Item 1B).

NB. Around 2000 the market was trading for a year, almost exactly on the proposed site, so a precedent was set for the newer location.

## **Current Situation**

As you are aware, the South Oxhey Initiative (SOI) is a £150 million redevelopment of the Main Shopping Area and Railway Station as well as two other satellite sites redeveloped for housing. When initial proposals went in our Councillors requested that the current market area (see Appendix Item 2A) on St Andrews Parade be relocated to allow the continuation of the Market on a Thursday. Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) and the developers Countryside allocated the area opposite the Railway Station on Prestwick Road (see Appendix items 2B). This was agreed, and the application went ahead with this new designated space included (see Appendix item 3).

Due to the redevelopment shoppers in South Oxhey are travelling further away to shop as more and more shops are closing down, either due to footfall or the proposed increase in rent which is reportedly three times as much as they are paying now, and a substantial deposit has been asked for too. This has also had a negative impact on the market and only six traders are currently trading on this site and some of those are sporadic.





## Ongoing

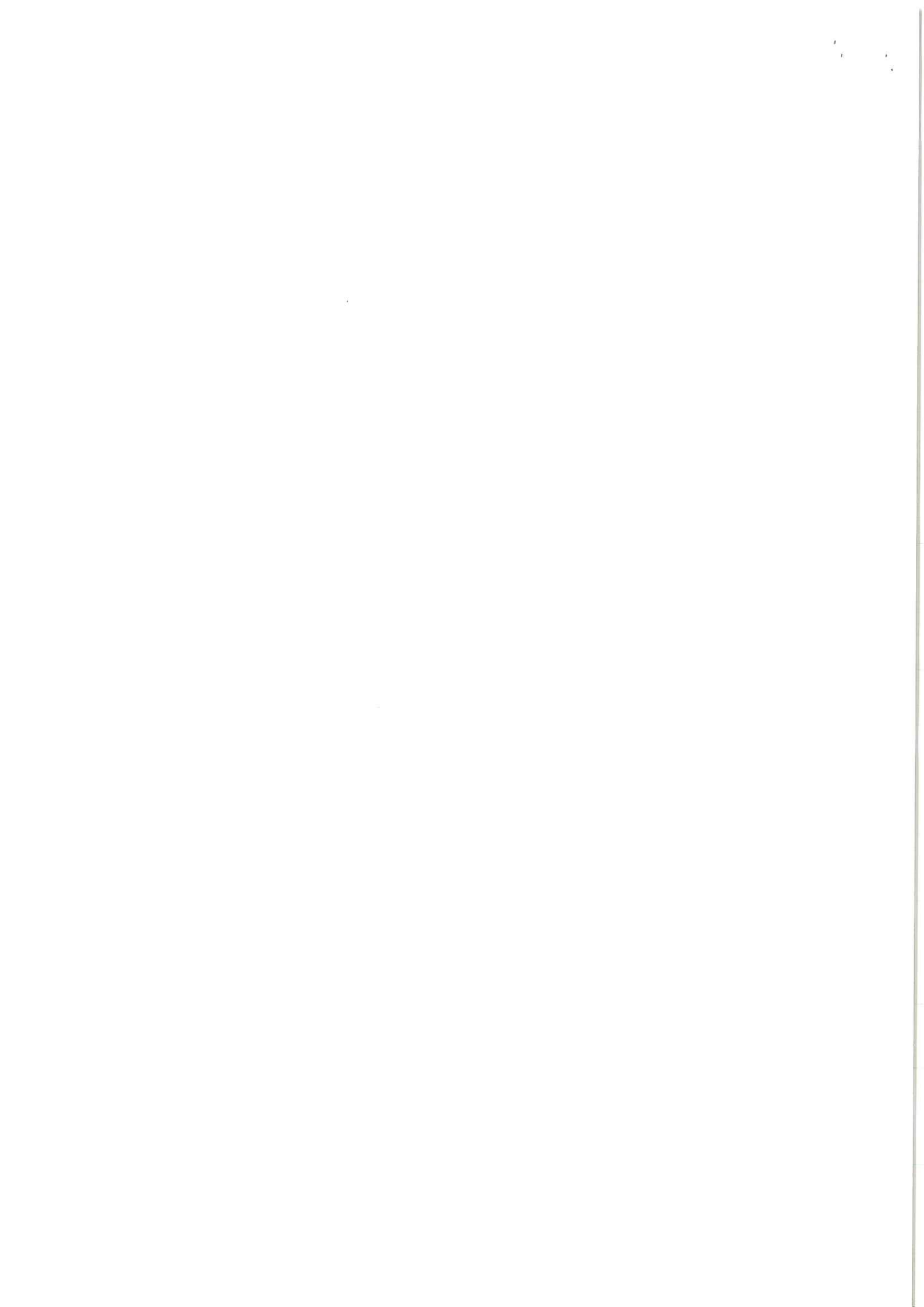
WRPC have made the sustainable growth of the Thursday Market as a key priority over the coming years mainly since South Oxhey is losing a significant number of retail outlets (approximately 35) once the redevelopment is complete. Some of our continued aims and initial aims are as follows:

- 1) To attract more trade to South Oxhey, WRPC are looking to bring in a market operator to oversee the growth of the market to its new capacity of 14 stalls. A thriving market may encourage more footfall to the area and boost the retail outlets. Three operators have been approached to present to Full Council in September of this year.
- 2) WRPC will invest in new Market specific branding with a logo, website and advertising to ensure the new Market will have very chance of growing and sustaining itself. Use of Social Media and working with partnership organisations will be used too.
- 3) South Oxhey has a higher number of elderly than the average nationally, or at county level. Having a market locally will significantly aid the elderly in the area who find it hard to travel (whether financially or physically).
- 4) The redevelopment will have a huge influx of new people to the area and a thriving market will ensure that some of their needs are met without any greenhouse footprint, especially for food as we aim to bring in a greengrocer, butcher and fishmonger, none of which are currently planned for a retail unit.
- 5) Similarly, with the steady decline of public transport facilities which are taking place, it is essential that the standards of South Oxhey, and the Parish as a whole, are maintained and enhanced particularly as many of our residents have no private transport.
- 6) The Thursday market will contribute to competition to existing shops and improve services to local shoppers by offering a greater variety of goods for sale.
- 7) South Oxhey Residents are currently experiencing high levels of development in an already crowded location and many are concerned with the number of retail outlets being lost. Having a successful thriving market will raise spirits and show their needs are being looked after by some sectors; we want to build something they can be proud to support.

## Sunday Market Provision

The new Market Place has been designed for no secondary use. By that I mean that the area will not have any secondary function such as parking and it is simply deemed a place for shoppers and visitors to the area to rest up or have conversation. WRPC believe that this space must be utilised to maximise its potential. Early on in discussions, it became clear that one of our aims is to run specialised Markets at the weekend. It was decided that Sunday would be the best day as Watford Market is closed that day. The aims listed above are still relevant, but we would also like to point out the following:

- Have researched ourselves, and spoken to several market operators, WRPC, with WBC's assent, aim to run a pilot farmers market one Sunday to gauge how popular they are. The aim initially would be to run Bi- Monthly markets so we keep the markets fresh and we can advertise each one as a "special event".
- Other markets discussed were French, German, Christmas, Flea Market, Antiques Fair and rotate accordingly.
- The influx of new residents on the site of the precinct will primarily be of a different social-demographic we believe. Having a diverse mixture of previous resident and new should add to the Sunday markets success we hope.
- Should the Sunday market prove to be the driving force for footfall then WRPC would discuss options around increasing regularity once residents have been consulted.




**Conclusion**

WRPC hope that WBC will consider the existing arrangement we have had on a Thursday and continue this market in perpetuity. Only a small Market is planned which will have approximately 10-14 stalls mainly serving food though we aim to keep the two clothes stalls, a seller of rugs and the mobile phone repairer as they have remained loyal through these extremely difficult times. As mentioned previously Watford Traders did not have a problem then and I do not foresee them losing any business from it being moved to our location, even with better management and efficiencies. Parking is a major issue in South Oxhey and Watford residents would continue to park and shop there I would imagine.

With regards to the Sunday market, we have chosen a day your market is closed so this won't cause any issues for your traders and we hope that partnering our weekly market with one-off speciality markets will become part of everyday life here in South Oxhey ongoing which is why we are requesting assent for this to run in perpetuity.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this report. Should you wish WRPC to have a representative present to discuss this at committee please let me know the date and we shall happily attend.

Yours Sincerely,



Gareth Williams  
Clerk to the Council

For, and on Behalf of, Watford Rural Parish Council

Cc Chris Fennell, Watford Borough Council

Appendix Items 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 3





**Watford Rural Parish Council**  
(in the District of Three Rivers)

**APPENDIX ITEM 1A**

Local Council covering the following Wards: Ashridge, Carpenders Park, Hayling, Northwick & Oxhey Hall

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Oxhey Drive  
Watford  
Hertfordshire  
WD19 7SB

*Clerk of the Council:*  
Michele Fundrey

Tel: 020 8428 0449  
e-mail: [admin@watfordrpc.co.uk](mailto:admin@watfordrpc.co.uk)

18<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Mayor Dorothy Thornhill  
Watford Borough Council  
Hempstead Road  
Town Hall  
Watford  
Hertfordshire  
WD17 3EX

Dear Councillor Thornhill,

**SOUTH OXHEY MARKET / WATFORD MARKET**

My Councillors have requested that I write to Watford Borough Council regarding the above markets.

At our Full Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2011, a discussion took place regarding the recent press release advising that there is a proposal for Watford Market to open on Thursdays. This announcement has caused some concern to us as our South Oxhey Market operates on a Thursday, which has been the case since 1991.

Watford Market was consulted (approx 1990) and had no objections to the South Oxhey Market operating on a Thursday, as it did not breach the charter condition "that no other market was to operate on the same day as Watford Market within a 6 mile radius".

With this in mind, please could you advise whether the charter is still in place and if so, will this mean closure for the South Oxhey Market?

We are at present in the very early planning stages of carrying out a consultation regarding the South Oxhey Market, but clearly the consultation would not be carried out if the future of our market is uncertain.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Michele Fundrey  
Clerk







Dorothy Thornhill - Mayor of Watford

Liberal Democrat · Town Hall · Watford · Hertfordshire · WD17 3EX  
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Ms Michele Fundrey  
Clerk  
Watford Rural Parish Council  
Oxhey Drive  
Watford  
WD19 7SB

Contact: Fran McKillop  
Direct Dial: 01923 278371  
Our ref: FMM/  
Date: 23 February 2011

Dear Ms Fundrey,

**South Oxhey Market/Watford Market**

Thank you for your letter of the 18th February 2011.

As far as Watford Borough Council is concerned it has no intention at this time of withdrawing the authorisation it has given the Parish Council under the market charter for you to have the South Oxhey Market.

The proposal to have the extra day opening for the Watford Charter Market came from the market traders themselves and they raised no concerns about the South Oxhey Market taking place at the same time.

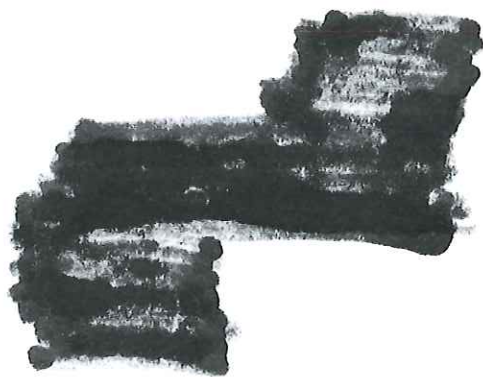
I hope this reassures your members.

Yours sincerely



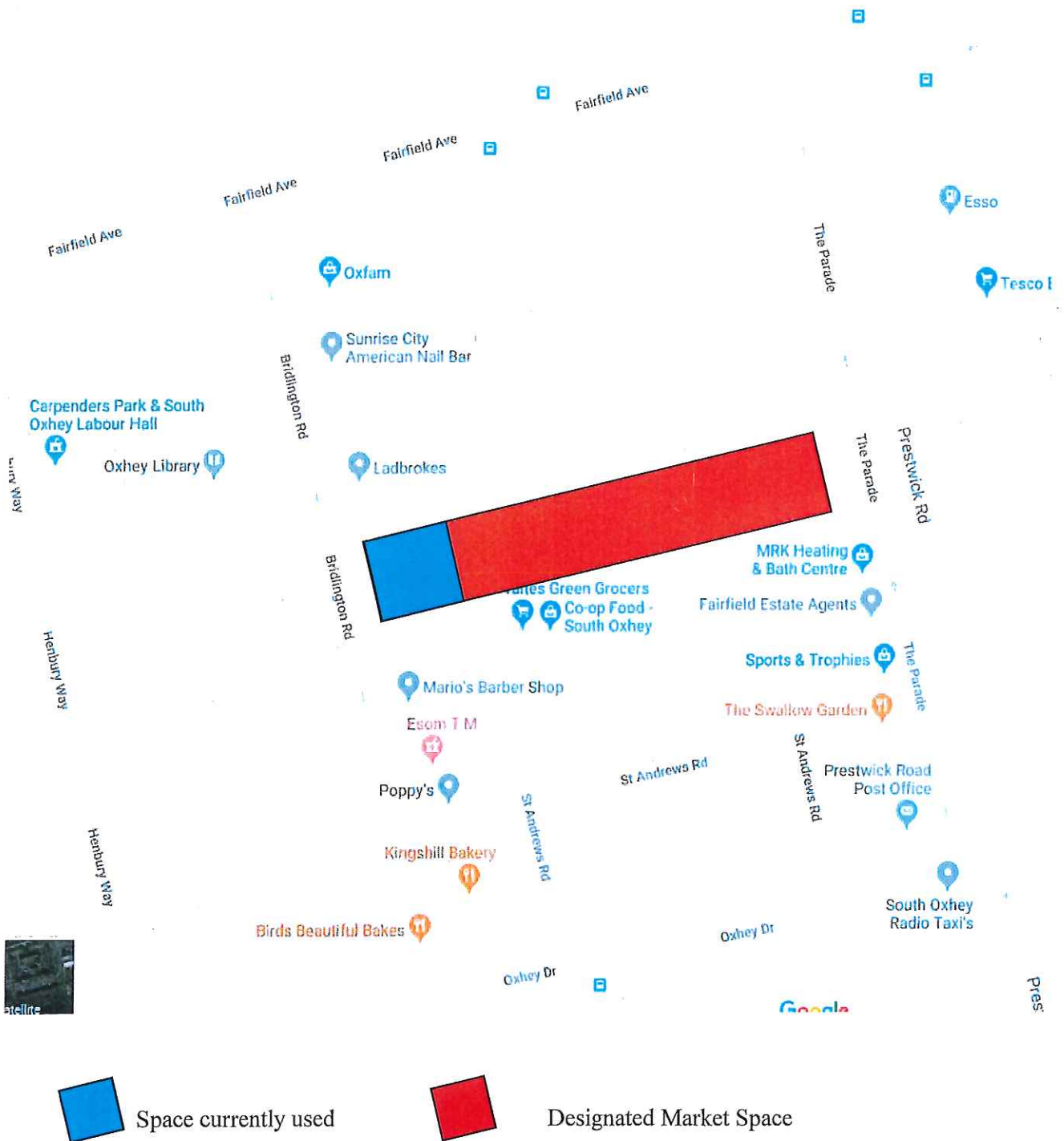
**Dorothy Thornhill**  
Elected Mayor of Watford





# APPENDIX ITEM 2A

## Existing location of South Oxhey Market (With existing Infrastructure)





# APPENDIX ITEM 2B

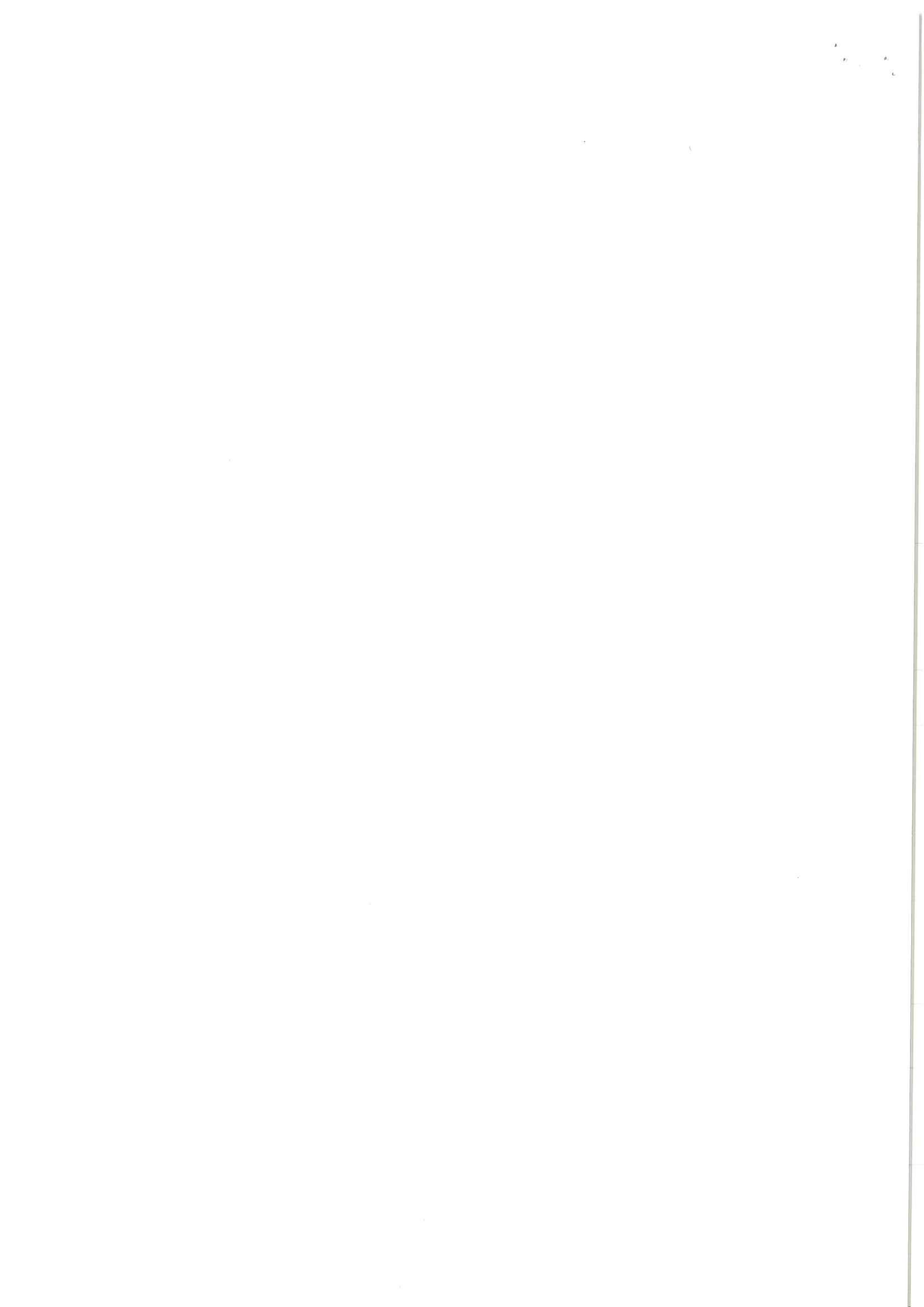
## Proposed location of South Oxhey Market from Q1 2020 (With existing Infrastructure)



Agreed Market Space (approximate) See Appendix Item 3 for more details

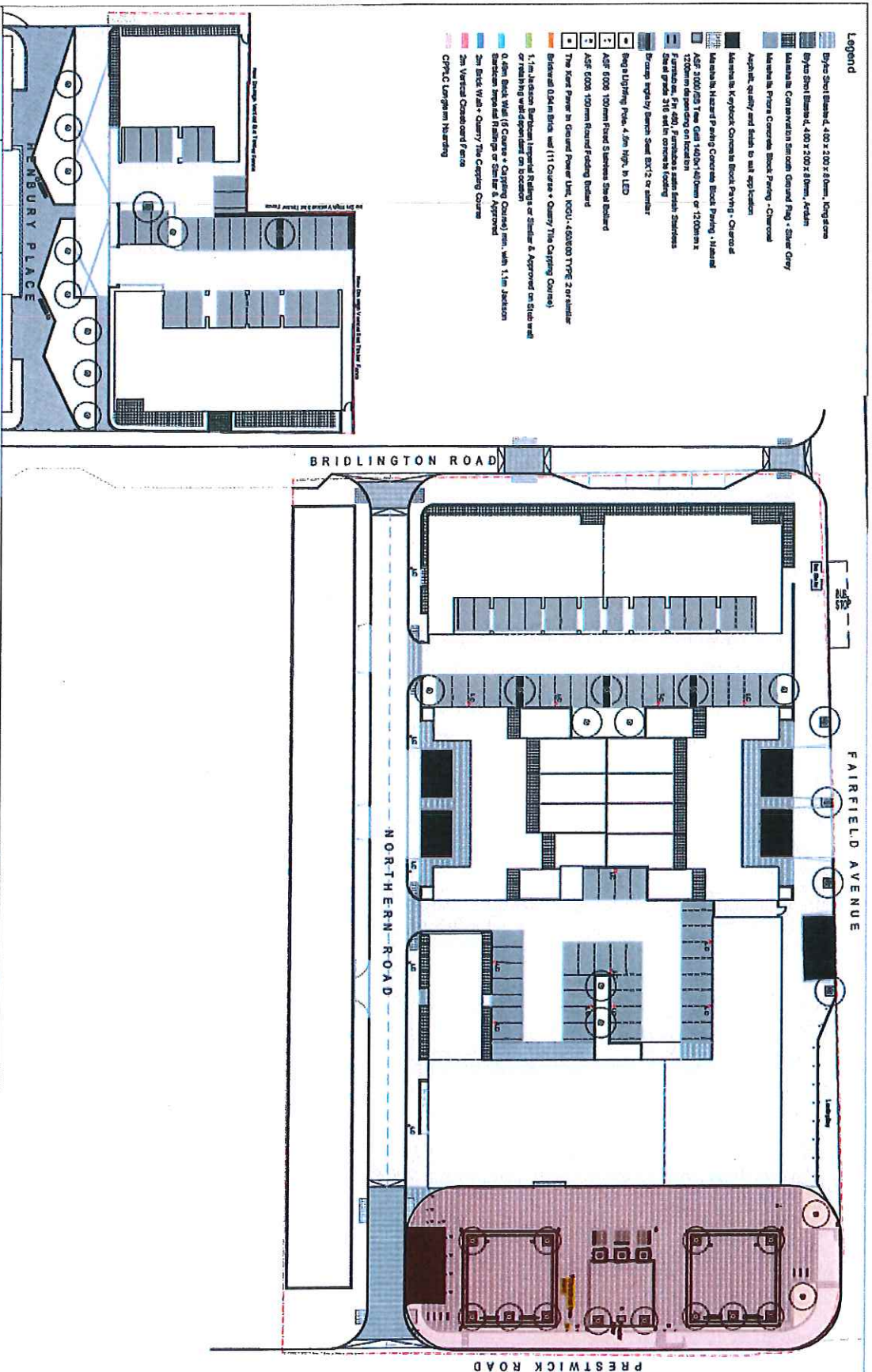
Part of Phase 1B redevelopment See Appendix Item 3 for more details





# APPENDIX ITEM 3

## Architectural plans for new Market Place



New Market Place

