Employment Site Assessment

An integral part of the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan

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1 Introduction

1.0.1 From the summer of 2012, groups from the Brixham Peninsula Neighbourhood Forum (BPNF) have been meeting to discuss issues and ideas about the economy of the town and villages and what the residents would like to see happen in their town in the future. The groups have included local business people, residents and Councillors as well as members of the Community Partnerships in the Plan area. Public consultations have been held to gather ideas with a good cross section and number of attendees.

1.0.2 In preparing our plan we have looked at and taken account of the Torbay Strategic Planning website, Torbay Harbour Authority Port Master Plan, the Torbay Local Plan, the Princes Foundation Trust report and the executive summary of a report to the TDA concerning Brixham's industry by Peter Brett Associates carried out in October 2013, and feedback from consultations. In identifying sites and their usage we have been mindful of other work which has been undertaken, specifically the Transport and Town Centre groups reports.

1.0.3 The mix of land use, residential, commercial, light industrial, marine, fish landing and agricultural still make the Brixham Peninsula distinct.

1.0.4 Employment, job creation and retention, business expansion and a healthy retail centre are vital to the sustainability of the area and are a core consideration.

1.0.5 We have been tasked to find a minimum of 2,700 square metres of new space, and an area of 2,920 square metres, all brownfield sites, has been identified which are or could be available for employment use allocation.

1.0.6 This report identifies many of the sites currently used for industrial/ warehousing/production in the plan area, looks at the constraints, identifies where other employment/industrial sites could be located and lists the currently available/unoccupied units (Tables 1 and 2).

1.0.7 We look first at the aspirations for the town and villages which have been drawn from consultations and work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Forum economy group.

1.0.8 Finally, we list the identified areas (Table 3) which are, or may be, available for new employment during the plan period. From this, and much previous work and consultation, policies have been formed, which can be found in the body of the Neighbourhood Plan.

2 Our aspirations

2.0.1 Brixham and the villages have vibrant communities – more jobs locally will generate income and improve the economy of the area.

2.0.2 Superfast Broadband and better mobile coverage throughout the town is essential to provide vital communications infrastructure for our businesses to attract and support new employment to the area.

2.0.3 It is important to the people of the Brixham Peninsula:

- To support and enhance traditional employment and skills and encourage employment that offers apprenticeships
- To sustain and improve the marine infrastructure, jobs and fleet maintenance by provision of extra facilities on the harbour estate. The development of a Northern Arm is considered a priority
- To encourage full-time and better paid employment as many of the present local jobs are seasonal, as well as higher-skilled and technical jobs to retain college leavers and graduates
- To seek a balance between an increase in employment and the associated rise in local traffic problems, by encouraging an increase in work hubs, home-based jobs, web-based commerce and work/live units
- To see employment increased in the care industry that will provide quality healthcare for our community and its increasing older population
- To increase the quantity, quality and range of tourist accommodation in the town to encourage an evening and night time economy
- To increase the sport and leisure facilities throughout the plan area, with emphasis on the development of more marine sports
- To ensure that all types of employment contribute to the well-being of the area.

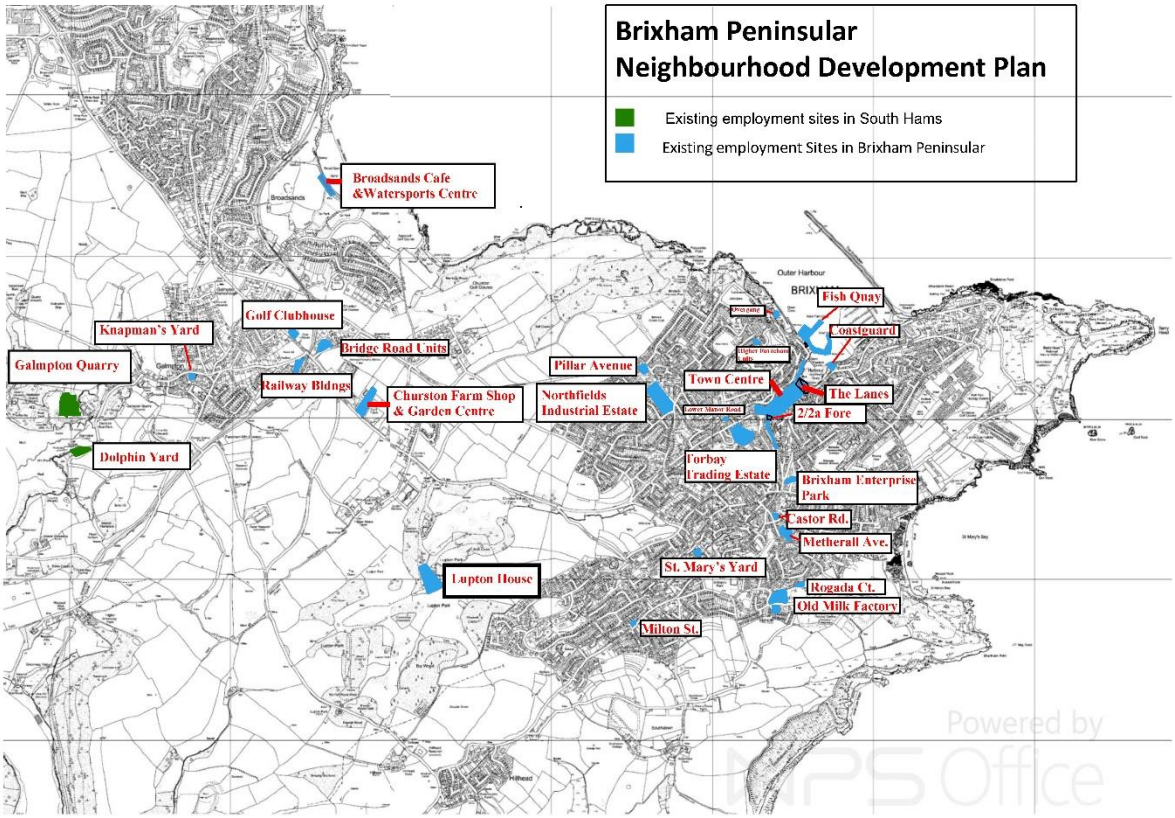
- To maintain and grow the existing agricultural and food distribution businesses as well as encouraging new and diverse food processing industries.

3 Where we are at the moment

3.0.1 The Brixham Peninsula does not have much industrial space and that which it does have is bounded by residential areas, with many having poor-quality road access and low-quality units.

3.0.2 There are about 150 units of varying sizes with only a small number currently unoccupied.

3.0.3 The sites and locations of the existing industrial, production and storage facilities within the Peninsula are detailed in Map 1 and Table 1 below.



Map 1.

Table 1: Employment land in use in the forum area.

	Size	**Age/Sustainability**
Brixham		
Central Town Centre Commercial Area	The area comprises the Inner Harbour, Middle Street, the Town Hall, Bolton Street and Fore Street	Aged shops in a conservation area, any development needs to be in keeping with existing character
Northfields Lane Industrial Units	This area is presently developed and consists of newer rented factory units with a foundry and other older store units to the rear. About 7,900 sqm as well as 2,900 sqm in 3 older units including the foundry	The front industrial units were built in the 1980/1990s but the rear units including the foundry are many years older
Pillar Avenue	Very small units of 111 sqm to rear of Vix Court	Deliveries constrained due to Vix Court
Metherall Avenue Industrial Units	This is a small industrial estate of about 1,210 sqm, again surrounded by houses	The units are between 30 and 50 years old, and are difficult to access with large vehicles See Table 2
Brixham Enterprise Park	This is a small industrial estate of about 800 sqm set in a quarry but surrounded by houses	Can be accessed by large lorries but with difficultly. 1 unit is two storey and incorporates office accommodation See Table 2
St Mary's Yard, Horsepool Street	Small set of garage units, 743 sqm	15 garage style units, many years old but serving a useful purpose for small start-up industries, including arts and craft workshops. Inaccessible by large vehicles
Old Milk Factory (St Mary's Road)	Very old units, 1,860 sqm	Currently 8 units which include marine and automotive engineering

	Size	**Age/Sustainability**
Torbay Trading Estate (New Road)	Very old units, about 3,350 sqm	Held in various hands. Currently used for automotive-related industry, job centre and a rear area currently used as a car park
Rogada Court Units	Old established garage style units, with area of approximately 700 sqm	Very old site with two-storey buildings. Dilapidated on an odd parcel of land, previously used by a building maintenance company
Castor Road industrial estate	Small storage and garage units of about 325 sqm	Adjacent to Metherall Avenue industrial estate but otherwise surrounded by housing including a listed building. Difficult access
The Old Coast Guard Station	3 units totalling 430 sqm	Owned by MTS (Brixham Pilots) presently being refurbished before occupation
The Fish Quay	There is about 1,860 sqm floorspace of new units on the quay, which are two storey. Additionally there are the existing small units and the BTA auction etc essential for the fishing industry	New units accessible by large lorries. The units on the first floor are used as office accommodation. Completed as the first part of the town redevelopment plan
Overgang Unit	Old unit of about 70 sqm	Marine engineering unit, very old and adjacent to residential property
The Lanes (between Pump St. and the Strand to include Paradise Place)	Small multi-ownership units	Occupied but somewhat dilapidated. Seven units including marine engineering, steel and construction company, restaurant and retail
2 & 2a Fore Street (Threshers)	Demolished corner unit	Original shop demolished to widen Bolton Cross and aid access to Central area. Planning permission exists for 2 small "starter" retail units with accommodation over

	Size	**Age/Sustainability**
Lower Manor Road	2 units approx. 218 sqm	2 units in automotive engineering and sales
Higher Furzeham Road	4 units approx. 640 sqm	4 units which include the chandlery
Milton Street	Central Garages plot approximately 2,510 sqm	Automotive engineering and sales
Galmpton		
Bridge Road Units	5 units totalling 930 sqm	Car repair and Hatton House offices and workshops
Railway Buildings and Churston Bus Depot	Units used as part of the Steam Railway and Churston Bus Depot. 1,020 sqm plus the station	Essential for the railway operations
Knapmans Yard	About 280 sqm of workshop	Difficult for large lorries. Used by Knapmans as builders' yard and carpentry workshop
Churston Golf Club	18-hole Golf Club and Club House. Private Members Club but course is noteworthy as designed by Harry Colt	A golf club with 18 holes and usual clubhouse facilities
Lupton House	Grade II listed Regency mansion	Used for meetings, weddings, skills training, café, shop and small-scale crafts. Ongoing restoration
Churston Farm Shop and nursery	Farm shop with café, nursery and car wash centre	Is the largest employment centre in Churston
Broadsands		
Café/ Restaurant	Useful and contributory unit serving tourism	Three-storey facility providing public toilets, retail, café and some holiday hire. Seasonally occupied

3.0.4 The following two sites are just on the edge of the BPNF area, on a strip of land adjacent to the River Dart, and are in the South Hams area. However, it is likely that all the employment on these sites is likely to be drawn from the Brixham Peninsula (or the wider Torbay area).

	Size	**Age/Sustainability**
Dolphin Yard	Old units which could be redeveloped. There is about 370 sqm of semi-derelict space	Very old site. Requires redevelopment for commercial use. Planning Authority South Hams District Council (SHDC) but can only be accessed via the Brixham Peninsula area
Galmpton Quarry and industrial units	A mix of old and new units administered by Marina Developments Ltd (MDL), 9 new units of about 840 sqm with the remainder being old units of about 930 sqm	Not easy to get to and inaccessible for large lorries. Planning Authority SHDC but can only be accessed via the Brixham Peninsula area See Table 2

3.0.5 See Table 2 for the existing premises presently unoccupied.

Table 2: Existing premises with currently available units.

	Available units as of December 2015
Brixham	
Brixham Enterprise Park	110 sqm
Metherall Avenue	190 sqm
Town Centre	Various office premises above Fore Street and Bolton Street shops
Brixham Laboratory (old Astra Zeneca site)	Some available space
Torbay Industrial Estate	Former Jewsons unit fronting New Road
Galmpton	
Galmpton Quarry and industrial units (South Hams area)	4 units available (3 modern and 1 old), 280 sqm

4 Constraints

4.0.1 Brixham Peninsula has the great fortune to possess many attributes which make it an excellent place to live and to visit. The Peninsula adjoins the English Channel and the River Dart and possesses some of the finest sailing and fishing waters in the UK. Brixham is the largest fishing port, by value of catch, in the UK and the pastures of the Peninsula are of high quality – ideal for cattle grazing. Much of the Peninsula is within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Conservation Area and several rural designations. These attributes also contribute to the creation of the major constraining factors which impede economic development and job creation in the 21st century business environment. These constraints can be categorized as follows:

- Demographics
- Accessibility
- Seasonality
- Heritage
- Skills availability
- Financial resilience
- Employment space
- Competing forces
- Environmental protection.

4.1 Demographics

4.1.1 Department of Communities and Local Government statistics show that roughly half of the local population is made up of people past working age. Income per head, amongst the working population, is around the lowest in the South West. A large proportion of properties in the peninsula are second homes.

4.2 Accessibility

4.2.1 The Peninsula is geographically and physically difficult to access, which forms a cost barrier for those enterprises seeking to establish new locations in which to operate their businesses. Access to those existing employment units is also difficult, involving the use of narrow and tortuous lanes and minor roads mixed in with residential properties.

4.3 Seasonability

4.3.1 Due to its attractiveness as a holiday resort, much of the employment in the Peninsula is seasonal by nature and jobs are often taken by seasonal migrants from adjoining areas and further afield. Fishing, one of the main pillars of commercial activity, is regulated and is climate dependent. These factors, together, produce a patchy and unstable infrastructure in which full-time employment and dependable income generation are both scarce and difficult to sustain.

4.4 Heritage

4.4.1 Brixham's position as a premier fishing port and the use of local landscape for farming has established a dichotomy of light industrial and support services which are focussed on these two industries. Modification to suit future business requirements in other fields having a broader customer base may not be easy.

4.5 Skills and availability

4.5.1 The predominance of low-paid and seasonal jobs conspire to provide a workforce who lack the levels of vocational education and relevant skills needed to break out of the low-paid employment trap. Furthermore, those youngsters who strive to do so by attainment of higher level education find that it is necessary to commute daily or move out of the Peninsula to obtain suitable employment and to progress their careers.

4.6 Financial resilience

4.6.1 Although the Peninsula is undoubtedly an attractive place for visitors and residents it is not able to create and sustain a financially resilient infrastructure

necessary to encourage incoming investment of a scale aimed at stimulating employment into new fields.

4.7 Employment space

4.7.1 Most of the locations and premises in which employment currently takes place are in poor order. Where there is available employment space there is not an active or overarching development plan yet able to deliver more attractive and modern workspace units necessary to appeal to new employers or to provide incubators for aspiring local entrepreneurs.

4.8 Competing forces

4.8.1 The other towns of Torbay and adjoining towns in the South Hams and Teignbridge are also eager to develop employment and arguably are better placed geographically and financially to achieve success.

4.9 Environmental protection

4.9.1 Because of its rural nature and attractive topography the Peninsula is home to species of protected wildlife, including Greater Horseshoe Bats and Cirl Buntings. Much of the farm land is calcareous grass land that is protected for use as pasture land. Consequently, the landscape of the Peninsula is constrained from both employment and residential development.

5 The way forward

5.0.1 The sites shown in the maps at Appendix 1 to this document and listed in Table 3 below show the potential areas that could be used for industrial employment.

Table 3: Land which is, or may be, available for employment.
The cross-referencing within the table refers to the classifications in Appendix 1.

Site name		**Use classes**	**Additional area in sqm**
J1 – 1 Central Town Centre Car Park and Town Square	Recognised for employment *See Town Centre Master Plan for redevelopment details*	Mixed use – Residential and Employment – classes A/C1 (none class B)	500
J1 – 2 Oxen Cove and Freshwater Quarry	Marine-related employment including marine engineering, boat repair and storage Car parking, surface and multi-level, public slipway and facilities, and small amount of housing *See Town Centre Master Plan for details*	Primarily B1/B2/B8 marine-related uses	2,000
J1 – 3 Torbay Trading Estate (New Road)	Small area within the industrial area available for employment development	B1/B2	200

Site name		**Use classes**	**Additional area in sqm**
J1 – 4 74 New Road	Planning granted for mixed use (Application P/2015/0235)	3 storey building for commercial purposes (B1/B8 use) with upper floor living quarters for employees; 2 storey residential dwelling; and a residential bungalow	220
Total sqm			2,920
Target sqm			*2,700.*

Notes

1 All sizes are approximate.

2 Northfields Industrial Site (included in Torbay Local Plan) has been considered but rejected as it is fully built out as confirmed by the Peter Brett Associates report dated October 2015, and has no additional land available for development. It is also surrounded by an established residential development. However, some units are old and would benefit from renovation/renewal.

6 Summary

6.0.1 Brixham Peninsula has adequate space for new employment areas without building on greenfield land, and the regeneration and refurbishment of older units will be encouraged.

6.0.2 Subject to the constraints identified in this plan, the bringing forward of employment land will be a priority. It is noted land known as Brokenbury East (adjacent to the Brokenbury West rejected housing site) was considered as an employment site as it was supported at consultation events. It has not been allocated because the site is greenfield and there are already more than twice the amount of brownfield sites to meet Local Plan floor-space targets. The lack of inclusion of that site at this stage should not be interpreted that the site has been "rejected".

6.0.3 Improving the quality and number of units is a top priority, especially for small businesses who wish to expand to larger premises.

6.0.4 The mere allocation of employment space, however, will not in itself deliver jobs. Only 10% of corporate transactions succeed and less than 5% of new businesses survive.

6.0.5 If, as the plan rolls forward, the number of net jobs does not achieve the planned level, the number of new residential developments should be restricted proportionally.

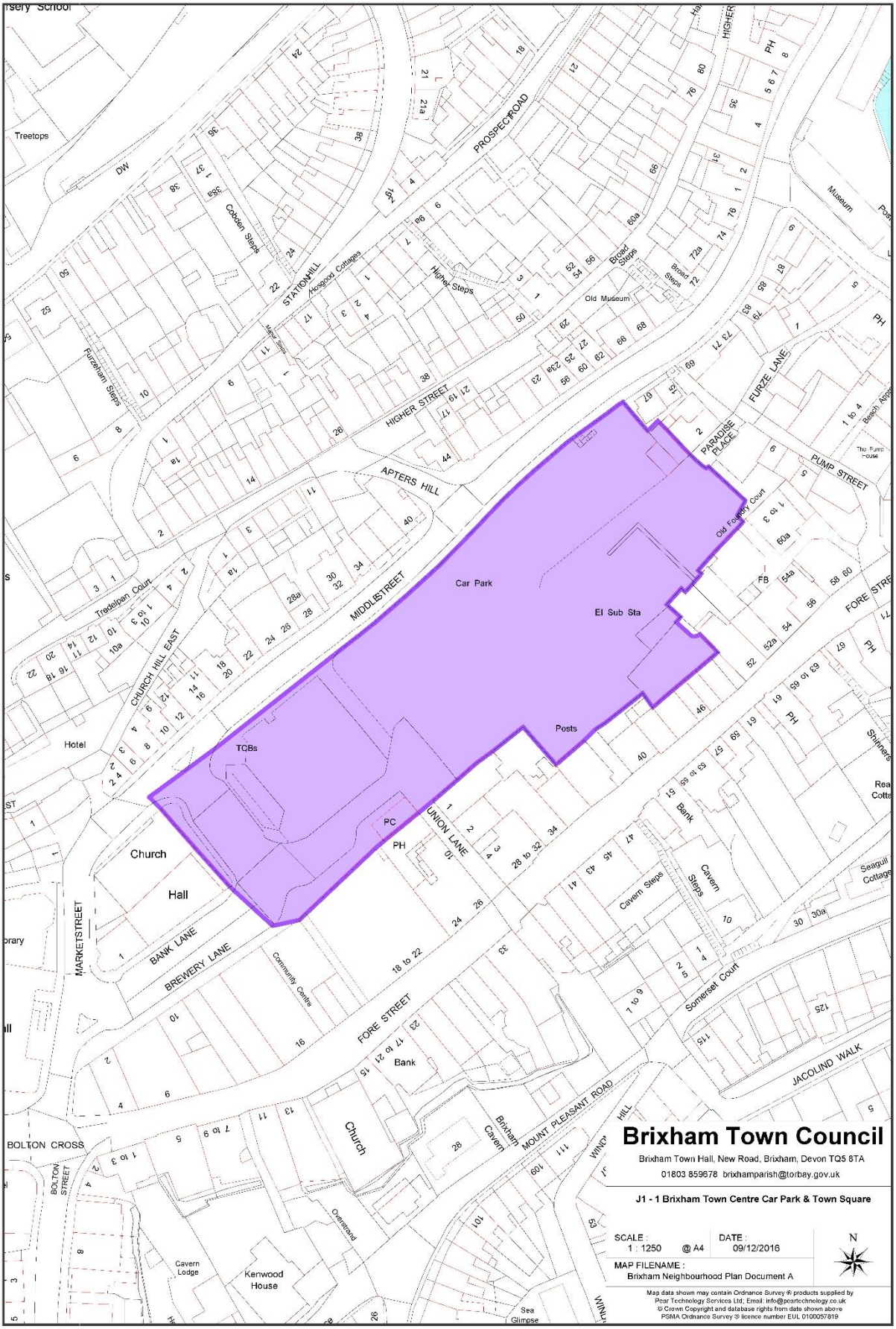
6.0.6 **The policies formed from this report and previously collated information, undertaken by members of the Forum, are to be found in the Policies section of the main Neighbourhood Plan.**

7 Acknowledgements

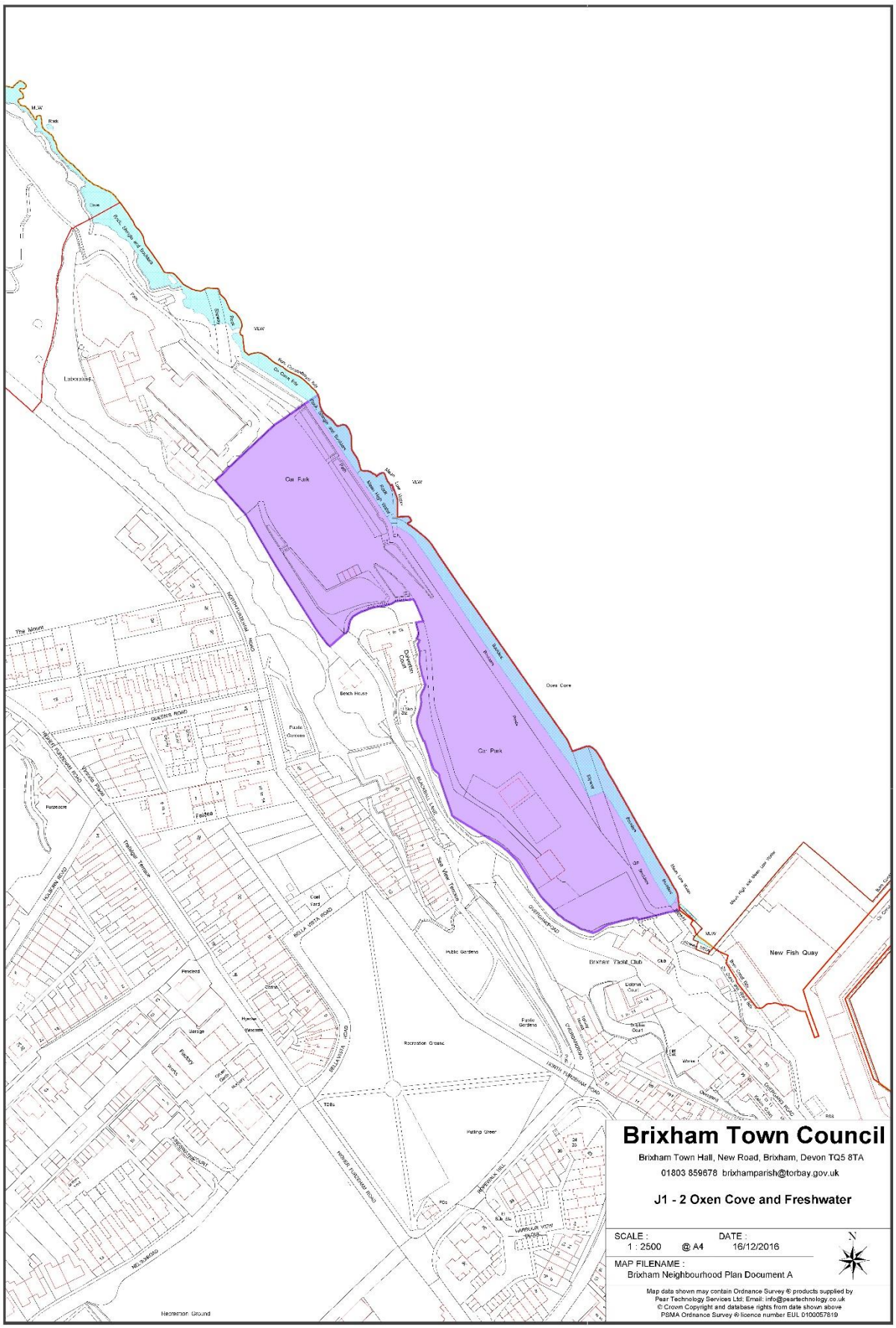
7.0.1 The following residents have been involved in the production of this report: Geoff Melbourne, Mona Stock, Matthew James, Sue Dawes, Roger Richards (who has declared an interest in the Metherall Avenue Industrial Units).

Appendix 1

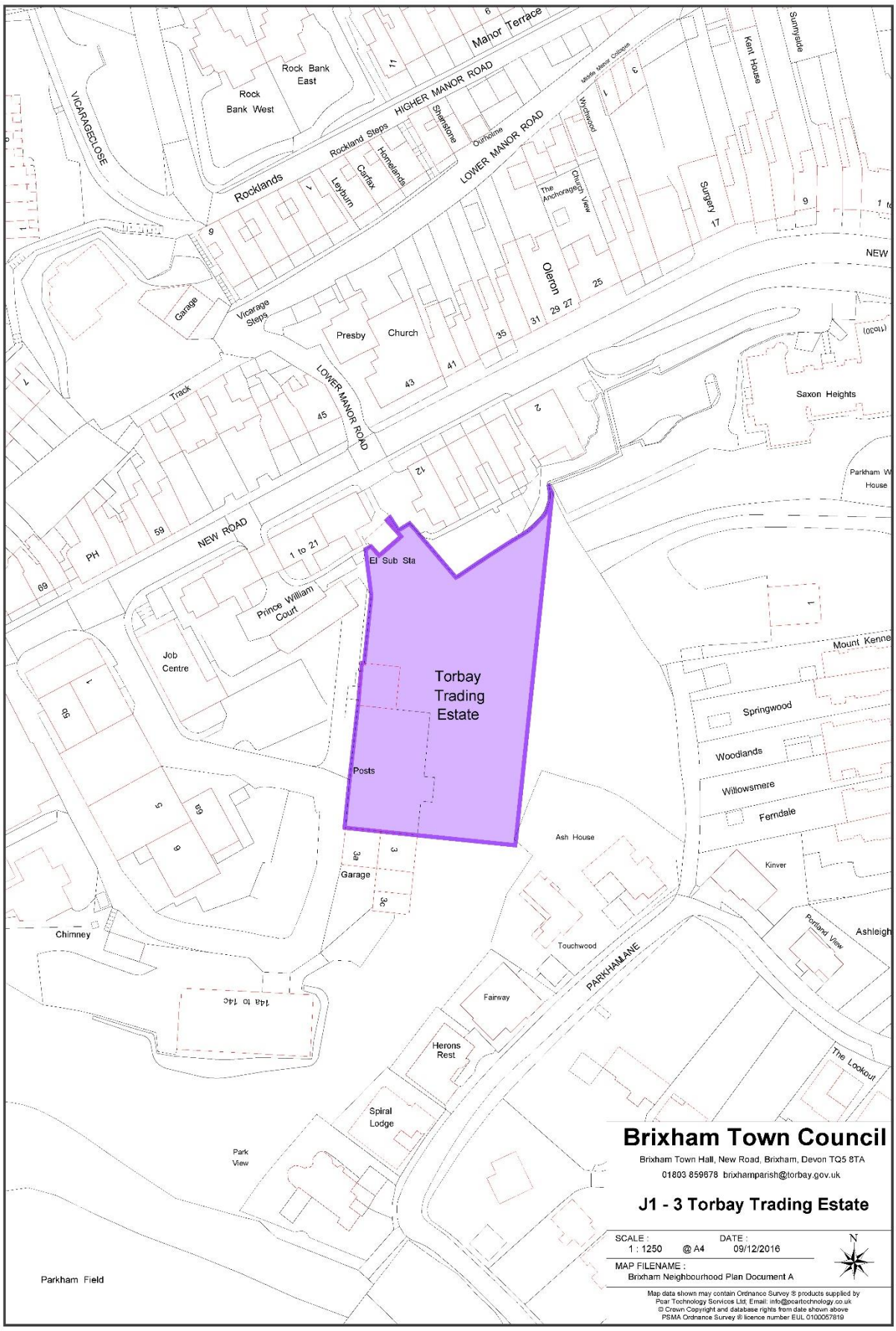
A1.1 Map of Brixham Town Centre Car Park and Town Square (J1 – 1)



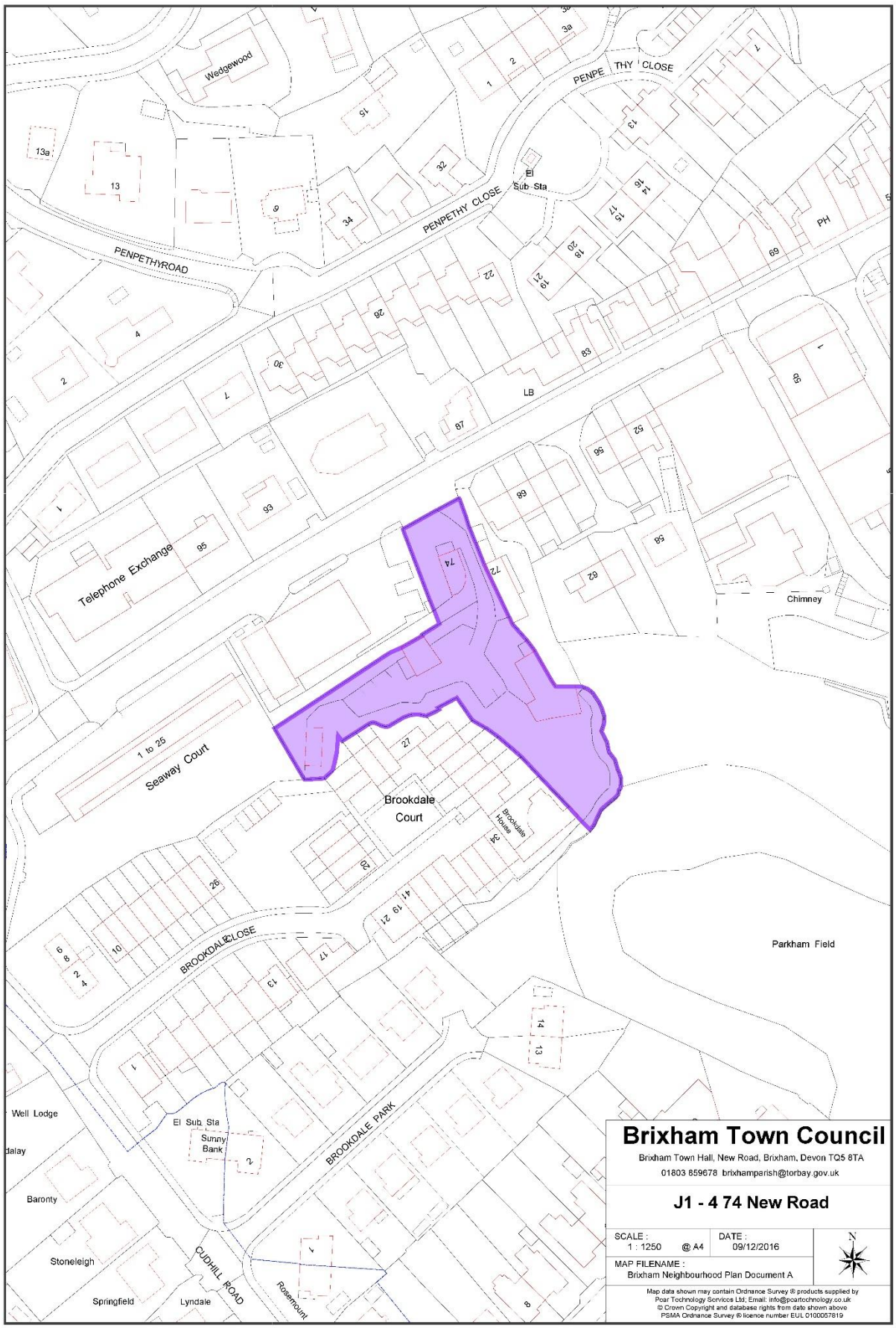
A1.2 Map of Oxen Cove and Freshwater (J1 – 2)



A1.3 Map of Torbay Trading Estate (J1 – 3)



A1.4 Map of 74 New Road (J1 – 4)



Typeset by Sunrise Setting Ltd, Brixham

Submission Document August 2017