

South East Warrington Urban Extension

A Deliverable Proposition

Homes England With Miller Homes

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South East Warrington Urban Extension – A Deliverable Proposition

This note has been prepared jointly by WSP, Optimised Environments, Savills and Barton Willmore on behalf of Homes England and Miller Homes (the “principal landowners¹”). It provides a narrative to the accompanying indicative masterplan (prepared by Optimised Environments) and is informed by an initial viability assessment (by Savills); together outlining the Deliverable Proposition for the new South East Warrington Urban Extension (“SEWUE”).

The Urban Extension will deliver in excess of 4,200 new homes meeting the capacity indicated in the draft Local Plan Policy, of which an anticipated 30% will be affordable housing in line with draft Policy MD2.

The note responds to a request from Warrington Borough Council to outline how the ownerships present a deliverable proposition in line with our understanding of revised Local Plan Policy MD2. It should be noted that this Deliverable Proposition (and accompanying plans) are indicative, and subject to change, as the landowners prepare further technical and masterplanning work.

It is envisaged that the proposed ‘Development Framework’, required by Local Plan Policy MD2, will be the main vehicle to advance detailed masterplan proposals for the site and for agreeing the extent, timing and delivery of the required supporting infrastructure. This will be prepared by the principal landowners, who will look to progress the drafting of the document in parallel with further preparation of and examination of the Local Plan.

¹Homes England own the land freehold but that Miller are acting on behalf of a number of individual freehold interests

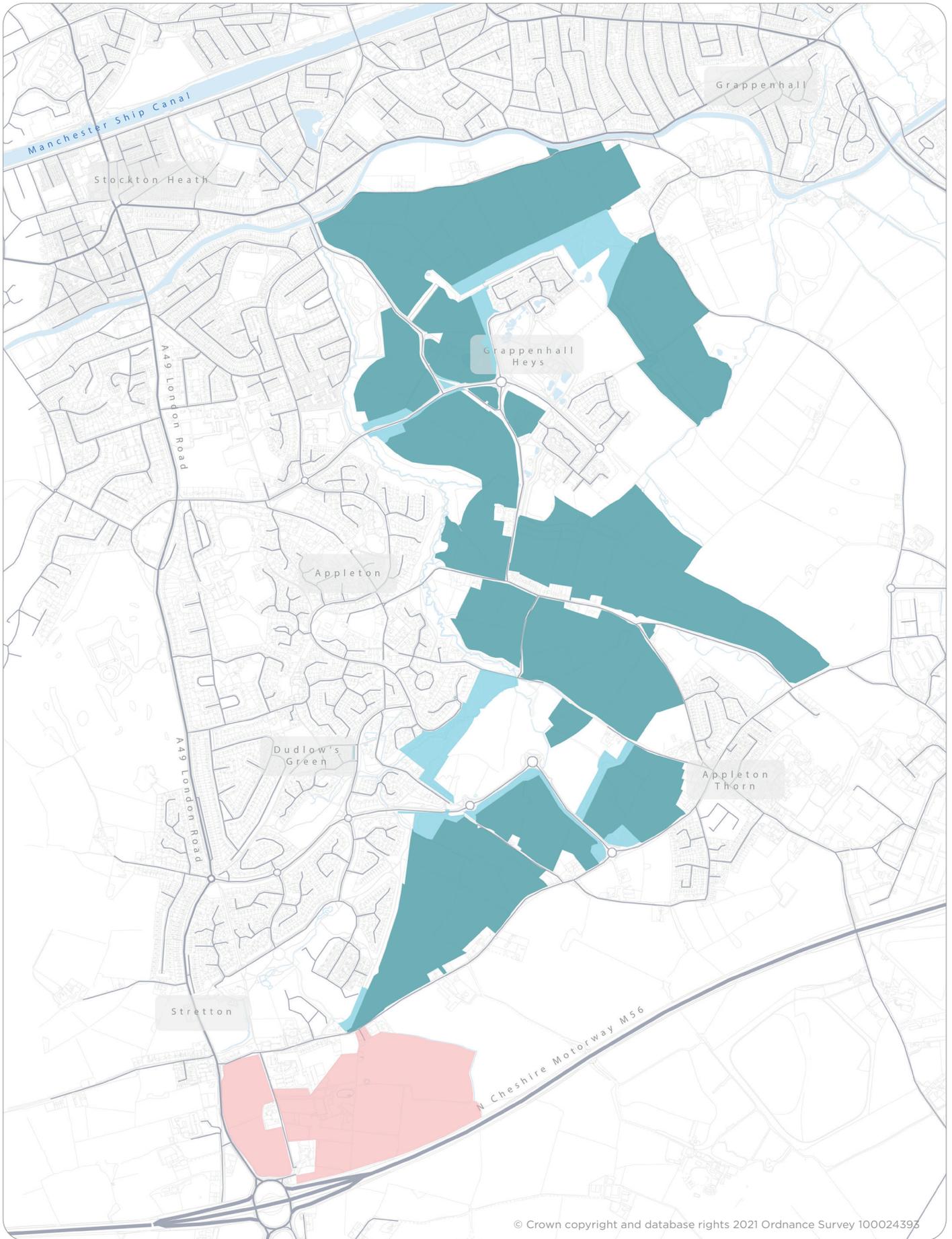


Figure 1. Principal Landownership Boundaries

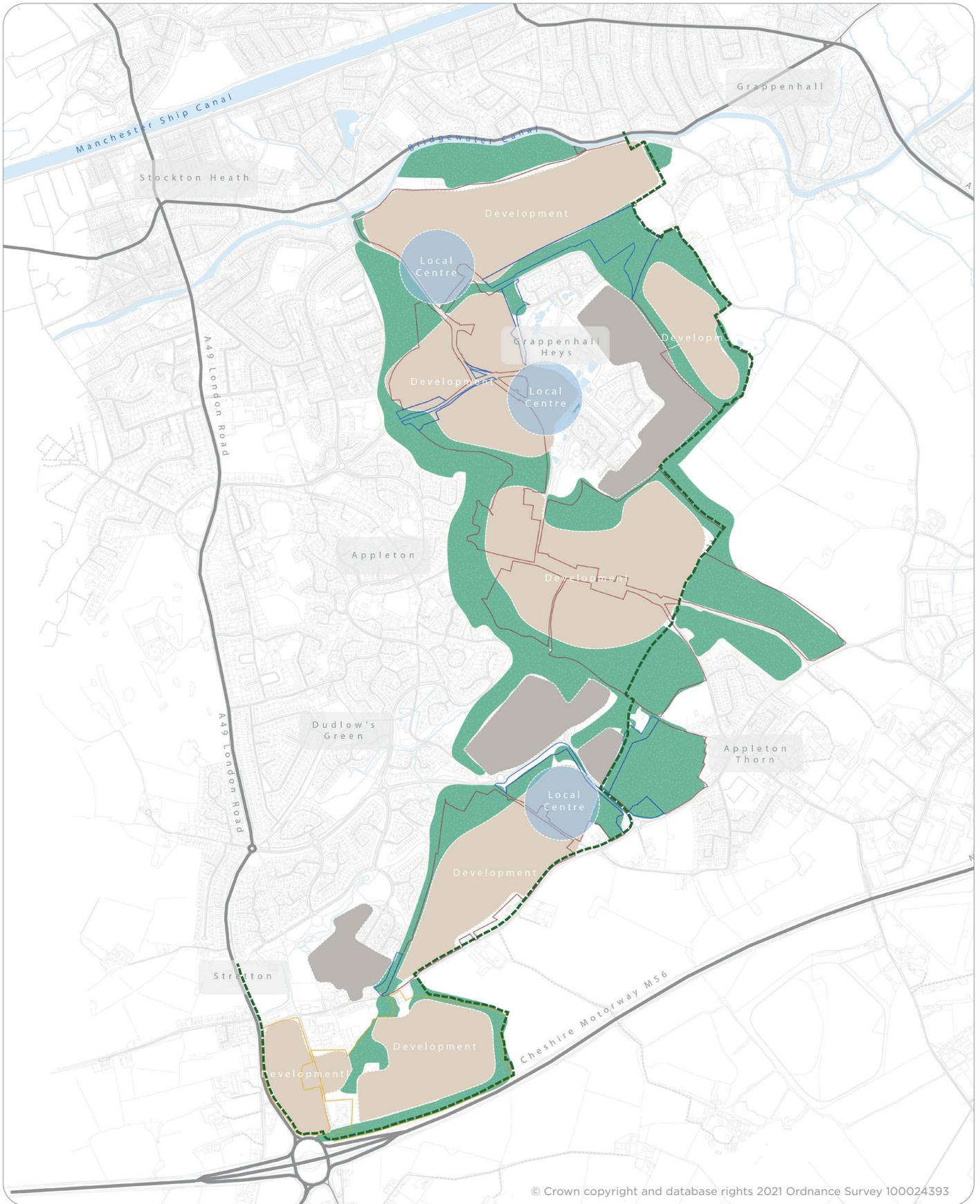
- Homes England Ownership
- Homes England Ownership, Gifted to Land Trust
- Miller Homes Ownership

The Proposed Allocation

The Urban Extension will have placemaking and design at the heart of its development principles; and will create a new sustainable community with strong links into the existing urban area and town centre. The strength of connection to Warrington and surrounding settlements will ensure that the Urban Extension will deliver tangible benefits to existing communities in the Borough. It will provide better cycle and pedestrian linkages, access to schools, shops and community facilities, delivering on everyone's physical, social and environmental infrastructure needs within the totality of the principal landownership. The development is a logical sustainable urban expansion of Warrington, rounding off and extending the existing settlement profile; whilst avoiding coalescence with Appleton Thorn.

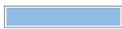
The site landownership extends to **approx. 252.21ha**. Save for those parcels which already benefit from planning permission, the remainder of the site is currently designated Green Belt land (**requiring a release of 224.57ha**). The consented Homes England schemes have been considered within the wider indicative proposal to ensure that the development comes forward as one comprehensive, masterplanned Urban Extension.

The Urban Extension will create a new urban-rural fringe with a strong defensible Green Belt boundary. Compensatory improvements can be secured to the remaining Green Belt within the principal landowners' control.



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Figure 2. Allocation Boundary

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|---|---|---|---------------------------------|
|  | Homes England Ownership |  | Indicative Green Infrastructure |
|  | Homes England Ownership, Gifted to Land Trust |  | Indicative Development |
|  | Miller Homes Ownership |  | Indicative Local Centres |
|  | Revised Green Belt Boundary |  | Consented Development Schemes |

Proposed Land Uses

There will be variety, interest and character in the Urban Extension. Our approach to layout and the community connector running north-south helps us to create a series of character areas focused around local centres and amenities with a clear identity. With the good connections

back into Warrington, Grappenhall, Appleton Thorn, Stockton Heath and Stretton, the Urban Extension will integrate into existing communities whilst still creating a distinctive new place.

In accordance with the draft Policy, the landownerships can secure delivery of:

Total new homes estimated through local policy	4,200
Total new homes estimated to be delivered in plan period	2,400
Site wide residential coverage (ownership)	45%
Site wide average net density (dph)	36.7

Table 1. Indicative capacity of development and density assumptions

The density allows for a mix of homes from apartments for smaller households and first time buyers, family housing and extra care.

The following indicative land uses are deliverable within the ownerships:

Land use	Gross (ha)	Gross (Ac)
Residential & Mixed Use	112.79	278.70
Healthcare	1.57	3.89
Community Hub	2.91	7.19
Education (*)	12.32	30.44
Green Infrastructure (**)	67.67	167.21
Highways & other non-developable	54.95	135.79
Total	252.21	623.22

Table 2. Indicative mix of land uses (approximate)

(*) includes all associated playing fields for Primary and Secondary Schools.

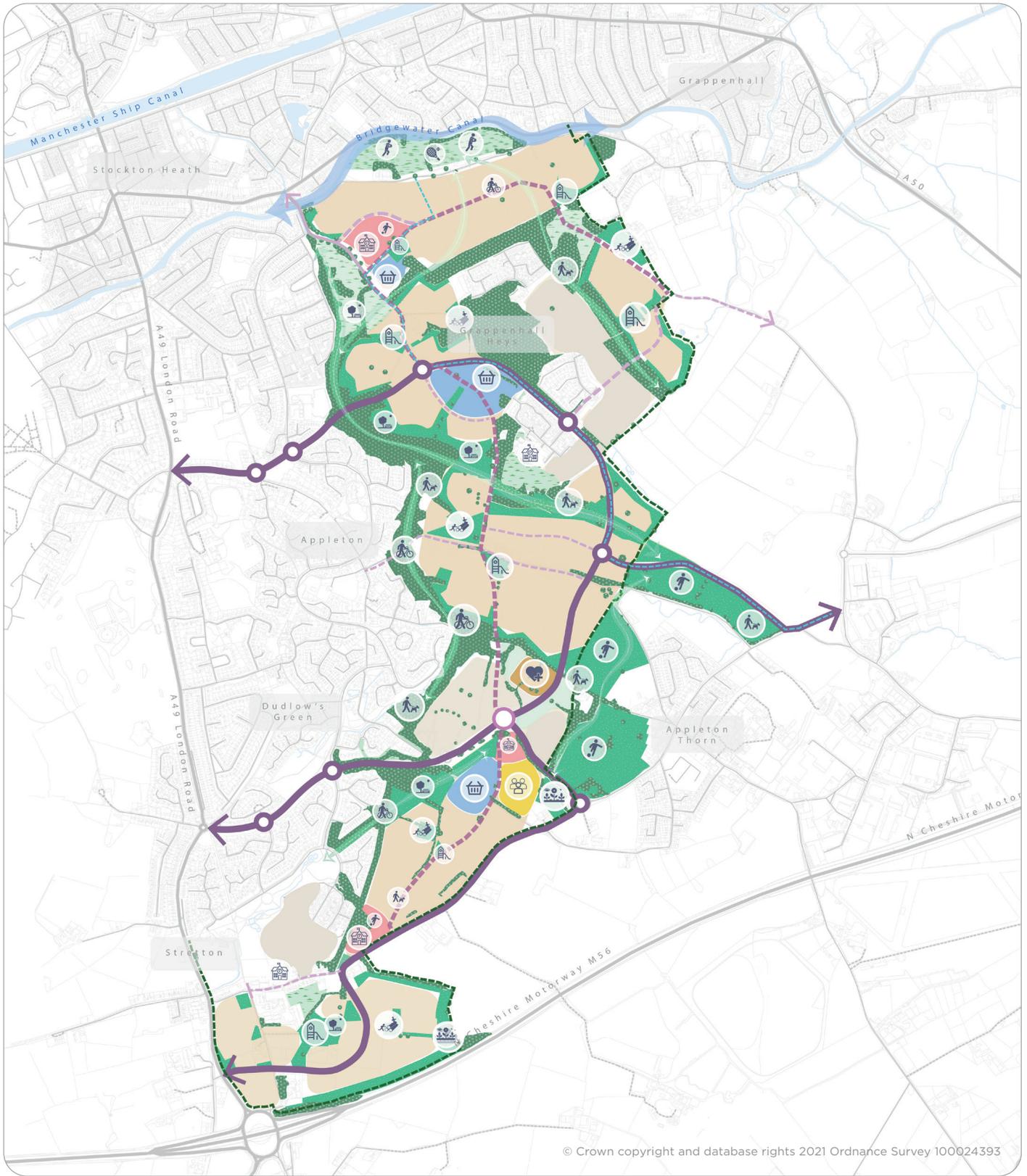
(**) excludes playing fields associated with education uses.

The SEWUE will be set within a network of linked Green Infrastructure. The following indicative breakdown of green infrastructure is deliverable within the ownerships:

Typology	South East Warrington Urban Extension (ha)
Parks and Gardens	18.85
Natural / semi-natural green space	26.60
Outdoor sports (*)	19.51
Equipped play	3.96
Informal play	5.76
Mass Transit Green Infrastructure	1.99
Allotments	0.93
Total	77.60

Table 3. Indicative proposed Green infrastructure - open space typologies (gross ha)

(*) includes playing fields associated with education uses



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Figure 3. Indicative Masterplan Framework

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | Established Tree Groups | | Indicative Strategic Highway Network |
| | Existing Open Space | | Indicative Mass Transit Safeguarded Corridor |
| | Indicative Green Infrastructure | | Indicative Low Traffic Community Connector |
| | Indicative Residential Development | | Local Links |
| | Indicative Local Centres | | Green Links (to include active travel) |
| | Indicative Education | | Consented Development Schemes |
| | Indicative Healthcare | | Existing Connection Along Bridgewater Canal |
| | Indicative Community Hub | | Revised Green Belt Boundary |

Supporting Infrastructure & Other Considerations

The SEWUE indicative masterplan (Figure 3) looks to create a series of central / community uses along the north-south 'Community Connector' route, providing linkages into Warrington. This provides a pedestrian and cycle focused link between a range of social infrastructure and commercial spaces that will help to create a sense of place and identify for the Urban Extension.

Supporting infrastructure will include:

- **Lumb Brook Green** - new primary school and small convenience retail offering of circa. 500sqm.
- **Grappenhall Heys** - up to 1,000sqm of commercial/non-residential space and potential for extra care or later life housing.
- **Appleton Cross** - providing the primary centre close to the proposed allocation of health provision at Appleton Cross with a mixed use plot with supermarket or larger retail units offering up to 2,500sqm. A further mixed use plot can provide an additional 500sqm of retail / non-residential space in smaller format. The proposed Secondary School, and Community Hub, including leisure facilities (approximately 3ha), are also in this location.
- **Stretton Road** - new primary school.

Compensatory Green Belt Improvements

Land within the principal landowners' ownership and remaining in the Green Belt will support the delivery of compensatory improvements. The extent of ownership is such that circa. 27.64ha of controlled land will be retained within the Green Belt boundary (equal to 13% of total land ownership).

A number of potential compensatory improvements could be achieved, including:

- Improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision;
- New or enhanced green infrastructure;
- Woodland planting;
- Landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);
- Improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital; and
- New or enhanced walking and cycle routes.

The Local Plan will set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be compensated.

Green Infrastructure Network / Natural Environment

South East Warrington Urban Extension will be set within a mature landscape setting. The relatively contained nature of development will limit impact on existing properties, agricultural land and the natural environment. In addition, many of the existing natural green infrastructure linkages and spaces will be retained and a new permanent green buffer to Appleton Thorn will be created.

Biodiversity Net Gain

There are also significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through:

- Reinforcing the wildlife corridors along Dingle Brook;
- Creation of strategic landscape corridors and new areas of informal open space;
- Support existing habitats through additional natural green spaces around mature tree groups and defining green links to open countryside; and
- Planting of new hedgerows and landscape buffers to strengthen the new Green Belt boundary.

Subject to confirmation of the Policy approach, the detail of the proposed enhancements and their impact will be developed through the Development Framework.

Transport and Accessibility

The overall approach to transport and accessibility has been to ensure site connectivity at all levels whilst maximising the use of existing assets and minimising the need for new road infrastructure (thereby lessening impacts on the environment).

The transport strategy will be achieved by:

- Reinforcing established connectivity with existing communities;
- Creation of a low-traffic 'Community Connector' route providing safe and convenient connection between key community amenities, primarily for sustainable travel modes;
- Improving and providing new pedestrian and cycle networks, including contributing towards off-site improvements;
- Linking into existing bus routes and safeguarding land for future connection to a mass transit network; and
- Providing new highway links to facilitate appropriate access to new communities and to alleviate pressures on the existing highway network (including off-site improvements).

Viable and Deliverable Urban Extension

The delivery and viability of the development proposals has been appraised by Savills, based on our current understanding of the Policy position and development requirements. All new residential development in the Urban Extension will be wholly on land under the ownership of Homes England and Miller Homes which ensures that the principal landowners can control and deliver the proposals.

Savills has undertaken a development appraisal of the deliverable proposition to assess the viability of the Urban Extension. This work has been based on the assumptions adopted by Cushman and Wakefield in their updated Local Plan Viability Assessment. These assumptions relate to the gross development value, build costs, external works, abnormal/infrastructure costs, accessibility costs, energy performance costs, developer contributions, contingency, professional fees, finance and profit. The adopted strategic infrastructure costs are based on information provided by the principal landowners' technical consultants.

It is important that infrastructure is delivered when it is needed, in particular highway infrastructure that will help to mitigate the impact of development early on. To achieve this, some residential land parcels will be released early in the construction programme to provide the necessary funding. This will ensure that the Urban Extension begins to deliver on its infrastructure and housing needs as soon as possible, to the benefit of the wider site.

The appraisal has been assessed against the benchmark land value of £250,000 per acre which aligns with the Local Plan viability assessment, and it can be confirmed that allowing for the strategic infrastructure costs and all the other assumptions, and policy compliant affordable housing, the proposals are viable.

The principal landowners look forward to continuing to work with Warrington Borough Council in support of the Local Plan, and on the detail of the South East Warrington Urban Extension Development Framework in due course.



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