

Warrington Borough Council - Statement of Common Ground

March 2022



1. Introduction

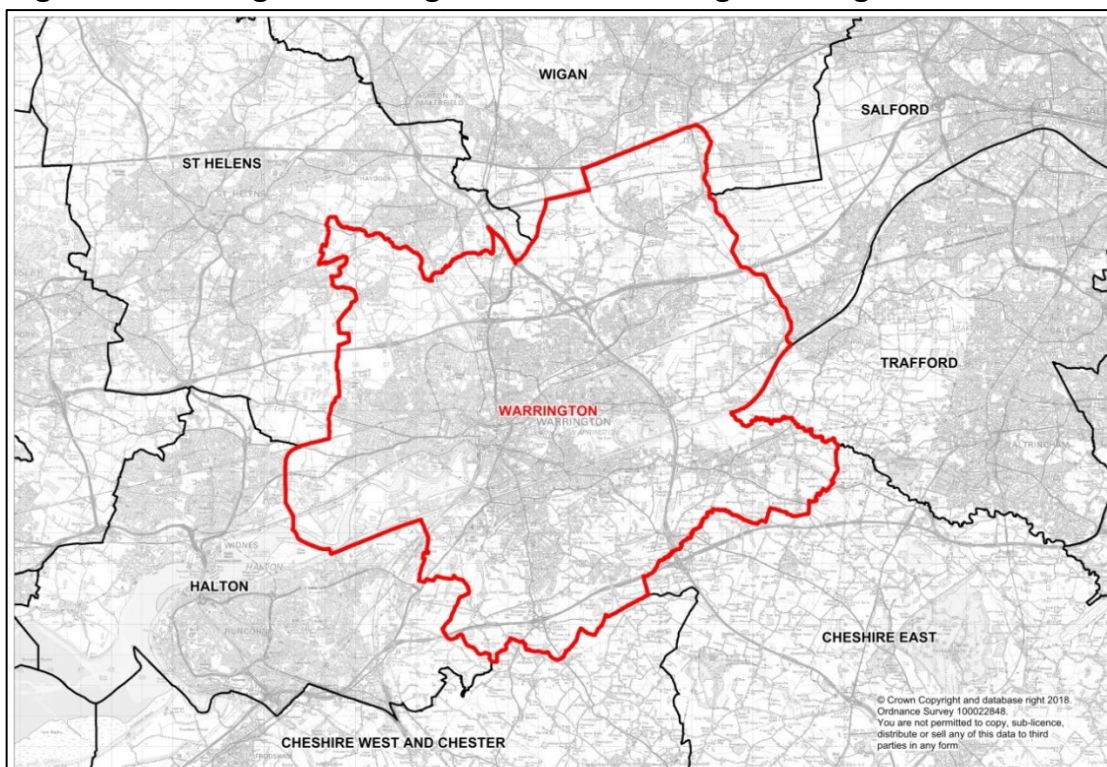
- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared in support of the review of the Warrington Local Plan, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF).
- 1.2 The SoCG outlines the geographical area covered; the key strategic issues it addresses; the plan making authorities responsible for joint working and any additional signatories; and the management and governance arrangements for updating and agreeing the completed statement, in line with the guidance provided in National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
- 1.3 Where strategic issues have been identified which require agreement or ongoing joint working with another local authority and/or statutory consultee, they are highlighted within Section 4 Strategic Planning Matters. A consolidated list of these issues is provided in Appendix 2, with signatures from relevant local authorities / statutory consultees provided in Appendix 3. Through its Duty to Cooperate discussions, the Council has ensured that these strategic issues are reflected in the Statements of Common Ground being prepared by neighbouring authorities.
- 1.4 **It should be noted that all strategic issues have been identified working with officers from the relevant authorities, as part of the Duty to Cooperate. The final Statement of Common Ground, with the required signatures, will be included as part of the submission to the Secretary of State for Examination. It should also be noted that whilst the Council has prepared a separate statement of common ground with National Highways, this is fully consistent with this Statement of Common Ground.**

2. Administrative area covered by the statement

- 2.1 Warrington has a number of geographies. It shares boundaries with Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council, Halton Borough Council, Salford City Council, St Helens Borough Council, Trafford Borough Council and Wigan Borough Council, and lies between the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA). Warrington Borough Council (WBC) is also part of an economic partnership with Cheshire East Council and Chester West and Chester Council through the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). WBC shares a housing market with Halton Borough Council and St Helens Borough Council as part of the Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area (Mid-Mersey HMA) although these authorities are now part of the Liverpool City Region.

- 2.2 The SoCG covers the administrative area of WBC. This is considered to be appropriate given the varied and functional relationships it has with a number of authorities and the fact that WBC is not preparing any joint statutory Plans. It does however identify a proposed allocation site in St Helens which would contribute to meeting Warrington’s employment needs and could impact on key highways infrastructure in Warrington’s administrative boundary.
- 2.3 The statement sets out how WBC is working with the relevant authorities to address strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. It will also enable these matters to be reflected, where appropriate, in neighbouring Councils’ SoCGs to which WBC will be a signatory.

2.4 Figure 1: Warrington Borough Council and Neighbouring Authorities



3. Strategic Context

3.1 WBC Development Plan

Document	Stage	Date
Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 - 2027 ¹	Adopted	21 July 2014

¹ Available at https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200564/planning_policy/1903/local_plan

Document	Stage	Date
Appleton Thorn Ward Neighbourhood Development Plan ²	Made	19 June 2017
Warrington Borough Council Local Plan 2021 – 2038	Updated Proposed Submission Version Draft Local Plan	September 2021

- 3.2 The Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted on 21 July 2014, is the overarching strategic policy document in the Local Planning Framework guiding development in the borough up to 2027. However, following its adoption, a legal challenge was made by a landowner with respect to the housing policies contained within the Strategy which was successful and the High Court decision resulted in the Plan no longer having a housing target. Consequently, WBC is currently progressing with a full Local Plan Review.
- 3.3 WBC completed its Preferred Development Option³ (PDO) Regulation 18, Part 2 Consultation in September 2017. The responses received from this consultation were taken into account in the preparation of the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan, which was subject to a Regulation 19 consultation between April 2019 and June 2019.
- 3.4 In September 2020 Warrington Borough Council paused work on its Local Plan in response to the impact of COVID-19, along with the Government’s proposed planning reforms and new housing calculation methodology.
- 3.5 Work re-commenced following confirmation of changes to the Government’s housing methodology at the end of 2020. The Council updated its evidence base to re-establish Warrington’s future development needs and subsequently re-assessed the Plan’s spatial strategy and potential allocation sites.
- 3.6 Having undertaken this work and considered in detail the key issues raised from the previous consultation, the Council produced an Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021) with a number of significant changes from the previous version of the Plan. The Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan was subject to a period of statutory consultation between September and November 2021.

² Available at <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201369/neighbourhood-planning/2380/adopted-neighbourhood-plans>

³ Warrington’s PDO is available at <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201368/local-plan-2017/2274/local-plan-review>

3.7 Subject to Cabinet and Full Council approval, the Council anticipates the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021) will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination in April 2022.

3.8 WBC has worked and continues to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to address the cross-boundary strategic matters arising as part of the Local Plan Review. These matters are addressed within this SoCG.

3.9 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

WBC together with Cheshire East Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council are part of the Cheshire and Warrington LEP. It is accepted by all the constituent LEP authorities that the LEP area is not a single Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) for the purposes of the NPPF, The LEP's vision is for Cheshire and Warrington to be the healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing economy in the UK. The LEP published its latest Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in 2017⁴ and a series of delivery plans and strategies have been produced that cover Transport, Skills and Education, Energy, Quality of Place, Digital Economy, Housing, and Science and Innovation to promote economic growth within the LEP area. The LEP produced its Covid Recovery Plan, Building a Better Future Together: Supporting Recovery in Cheshire and Warrington in 2021.

3.10 Transport for the North (TfN)

TfN, comprising WBC and 18 other transport authorities in the North of England, was created as a pan-Northern Partnership Board of civic and business leaders. In April 2018 the Sub-National Transport Body (Transport for the North) Regulations 2017 came into force, establishing TfN as the first Sub-National Transport Body in the country. It aims to create a thriving North of England, where modern transport connections drive economic growth and support an excellent quality of life. TfN published its Strategic Transport Plan (STP) in early 2019. This is a statutory document.

3.11 The STP is centred on seven Strategic Development Corridors, and Warrington is part of two of these. The Central Pennines Corridor aims to improve east-west transport connectivity in order to support economic growth. It will also support, align and integrate with pre-existing Local Transport Plans. The Wales and West Corridor aims to improve connectivity and support the growth of Manchester Airport, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zones, Atlantic Gateway, North Wales Arc, Port of Liverpool and Crewe HS2 Hub.

⁴ Available at <http://www.871candwep.co.uk/content/uploads/2017/07/Revised-SEP.pdf>

3.12 Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area (Mid-Mersey HMA)

WBC along with Halton Borough Council and St Helens Borough Council form the Mid-Mersey HMA. These authorities work in partnership and published a Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (January 2016)⁵ to establish the housing market and need in the three Boroughs. Warrington's SHMA was updated in 2017⁶ to inform the Preferred Development Option consultation (Mid-Mersey SHMA Update – Warrington Addendum) taking into account updated population and household projections.

3.13 WBC has subsequently prepared a Local Housing Need Assessment (2021) in support of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021). This reflects the new planning policy context established in the updated NPPF and NPPG, but still considers the context of the Mid-Mersey HMA.

3.14 St Helens Borough Council and Halton Borough Council now form part of the Liverpool City Region. A housing needs assessment has been undertaken for the Liverpool City Region as a whole. This still recognises the Mid-Mersey HMA and the need for close working with WBC. St Helens Council has subsequently prepared a Local Housing Need Assessment in support of its emerging new Local Plan, which is currently going through the Examination process.

4. Strategic Planning Matters

4.1 Housing

The Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan sets a minimum housing requirement of 14,688 new homes for the period between 2021 and 2038. This requirement is derived from the Council's Local Housing Need Assessment, published in September 2021. The Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021) provides sufficient land for an additional 13% on top of this requirement to ensure flexibility of land supply.

4.2 The majority of new homes will be delivered within the existing main urban area of Warrington, the existing inset settlements and other sites identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), which together have identified a deliverable capacity for a minimum of 11,785 new homes.

4.3 In order to meet Warrington's housing requirement, the following sites will be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for development:

⁵ Available at <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/planning/policyguidance/pdf/newdalp/evidence/SHMA-Mid-Mersey.pdf>

⁶ Available at https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201368/local_plan_review/2347/local_plan_review_-_supporting_documents

- South East Warrington Urban Extension– minimum capacity of 4,200 homes of which a minimum of 2,400 homes will be delivered in the Plan Period.
- Thelwall Heys – 310 new homes within the early part of the Plan period.
- Fiddlers Ferry Power Station – minimum capacity of 1,800 homes of which 1,300 homes will be delivered in the Plan period.
- Sites adjacent to the Borough’s outlying settlements - minimum of 801 homes.

4.4 Other authorities in the Mid-Mersey HMA are also progressing with the preparation of their Local Plans and together, it was agreed that each authority will either meet or exceed its Objectively Assessed Need for housing within its boundary. The authorities will keep housing need under review and address any issues arising in the future through the Duty to Co-operate.

4.5 WBC has also indicated that it is not able to accommodate any unmet housing need from other adjacent Local Authorities given it requires the release of Green Belt land to meet its own housing requirement. Similarly, WBC will not be seeking for any other adjacent authorities to contribute to meeting WBC’s needs in recognition of their respective Local Plans either having released Green Belt, or proposing to release Green Belt, to meet their own requirements.

4.6 The Cheshire and Warrington LEP has prepared a Housing Strategy and Delivery Plan which will support growth and the delivery of housing within the LEP⁷. A Sub-Regional Housing Board consisting of the LEP, the three local authorities and Homes England has been established to support the delivery of the Housing Strategy. WBC will continue to work with Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils within the LEP to enable housing delivery to meet the needs identified through their respective Local Plans.

1. Warrington Borough Council, Halton Borough Council and St Helens Borough Council, authorities which are part of the Mid-Mersey HMA, agree to meet their own Objectively Assessed Need for Housing within their Boroughs.

The authorities will, however, keep housing need under review as they progress their Local Plans and address any issues arising in the future through the Duty to Co-operate process.

2. WBC is unable to accommodate any unmet housing need from other adjacent Local Authorities and will not be seeking for these authorities to meet any of WBC’s housing need.

4.7 Employment and Economic Development

4.8 *WBC Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA):*

⁷ <http://www.871candwep.co.uk/content/uploads/2017/07/Revised-SEP.pdf>

WBC commissioned an Economic Development Needs Assessment in 2016 which has subsequently been updated in 2019 and 2021 to support the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021). This indicates that the Borough has a further employment land need of 316 ha to 2038.

- 4.9 The Council can demonstrate a realistic supply of circa 40 hectares in the urban area.
- 4.10 The Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021) proposes the following new employment locations:
- Fiddlers Ferry Power Station (101 ha Gross) – Redevelopment of a former Brownfield Power Station site to provide for a mix of industrial and distribution uses; and
 - Land at M56 Junction 9 (137 ha Gross) – to be removed from the Green Belt.
- 4.11 WBC has agreed with St Helens in principle that the westward extension of Omega (identified as proposed site allocation 1EA in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan), which is within St Helens administrative boundary will contribute to meeting Warrington’s employment land needs, subject to resolving access issues.
- 4.12 It is noted that employment land at Omega West (which includes proposed site allocation 1EA in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan as above) now has consent following the Secretary of State’s decision in November 2021. Further detail is provided under section 4.19 within the Strategic Sites section below.

3. WBC has agreed, in principle that the western 31.2 hectare extension of Omega in St Helens, as defined in the St Helens Local Plan Submission Draft (site 1EA, Omega South Western Extension, land north of Finches Plantation, Bold), will contribute to meeting Warrington’s employment needs.

WBC will continue to liaise with St Helens over the apportionment of the element of employment land at Omega west, which benefits from the planning consent issued by the Secretary of State in November 2021, but is above and beyond the 31.2ha proposed to be allocated in the St Helens Borough Local Plan.

4.13 *The Cheshire and Warrington LEP:*

WBC is working proactively with the Cheshire and Warrington LEP on a number of economic development initiatives with spatial implications for

Warrington's Local Plan. The Cheshire Science Corridor is a crescent that crosses the northern part of the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region linking together nationally and internationally significant research facilities and established science based businesses which includes Birchwood in Warrington. A number of sites in the Science Corridor have Enterprise Zone Status and the corridor is a focus for infrastructure investment to support its growth and strengthen its competitiveness.

The Council is currently working with the LEP on the development of a High Speed Growth Corridor to ensure the economic development benefits of future high speed rail connections across the sub-region are maximised. This includes focussed work around Bank Quay station and the wider Town Centre where the arrival of Northern Powerhouse Rail could transform what is currently an area of relatively low density commercial and industrial uses into a high quality, high density office and residential urban quarter.

4. WBC will continue to work collaboratively with the LEP to support the economic growth of the sub region and in support of the delivery of the LEP's spatial strategies within Warrington.

4.14 *Atlantic Gateway:*

WBC along with other authorities in the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and Greater Manchester are part of the Atlantic Gateway, a privately driven initiative focused on driving growth and productivity along the corridor between Liverpool and Manchester (Atlantic Gateway and the Northern Powerhouse). The Atlantic Gateway published its Business Plan in 2012⁸ which seeks to attract investment in infrastructure and logistics, science and innovation in order to promote sustainable economic growth in the corridor. WBC will continue to work collaboratively with the partners of the Atlantic Gateway in order to support economic growth.

4.15 Green Belt

WBC shares its Green Belt boundaries with Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, Salford, St Helens, Trafford and Wigan Councils. As part of WBC's Local Plan review, it became increasingly apparent that WBC is not able to identify sufficient land to meet its housing and employment needs in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework without the release of Green Belt land. This meant that the

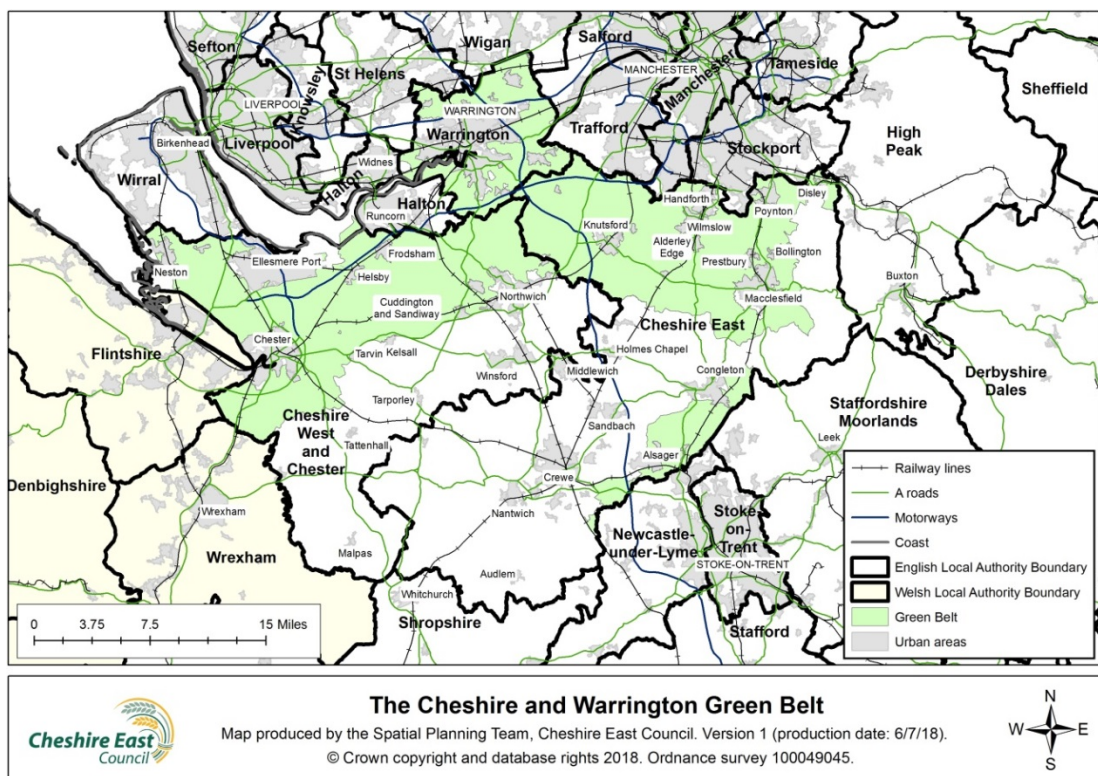
⁸ Available at http://www.atlanticgateway.co.uk/_assets/downloads/ag-businessplan.pdf

Council undertook a review of its Green Belt boundaries which forms key evidence for its Local Plan Review.

4.16 Co-operative working is an essential part of a Green Belt review as some parcels of Green Belt land are adjacent to Green Belt land in neighbouring authorities. WBC informed neighbouring authorities of the intention to undertake a Green Belt Assessment in regular Duty to Co-operate meetings and also consulted with them regarding the methodology. All adjacent Local Authorities consulted considered WBC's Green Belt methodology to be an appropriate basis to undertake the Green Belt review.

4.17 The one exception to this is Halton Borough Council who expressed a number of areas of concern with the methodology in their response to the Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 consultation.

4.18 **Figure 3: Cheshire and Warrington Green Belt Map**



5. All adjacent Local Authorities have been consulted on Warrington's Green Belt methodology and consider it an appropriate basis to undertake the Green Belt review.

The one exception is Halton Borough Council who made representations expressing concern at Regulation 18 stage. Warrington took these representations into account in finalising its Green Belt assessment and in preparing the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan.

6. As WBC and Halton Borough Council progress with their Local Plans, there is a requirement for joint co-operative working to ensure adequate separation between areas of proposed Green Belt release in order to maintain the integrity of the Green Belt between Warrington and Runcorn and between Warrington and Widnes.

4.19 Strategic Housing and Employment Sites

4.20 *South East Warrington Urban Extension (SEWUE) and South East Warrington Employment Area (SEWEA):*

4.21 The Proposed Submission Version Local Plan identifies the SEWUE as one of the main areas for residential growth. It is proposed to provide for a new urban extension of around 4,200 homes (2,400 during the Plan Period) supported by a range of new extensive transport and social infrastructure.

4.22 SEWEA is a new major employment site at the junction of the M6 and M56 and is a proposed allocation to be built out in its entirety within the Plan period.

4.23 The SEWUE and the SEWEA have the potential to have implications on the M6 and M56 motorway as identified by National Highways and on the road network in Cheshire East and in Cheshire West and Chester. The southern extent of the SEWUE and the SEWEA lies close to the boundary between Warrington and Cheshire East.

4.24 WBC has undertaken transport modelling work as recommended by National Highways to identify the likely impacts of the development on the road networks. Together with National Highways' own modelling, this has identified key mitigation requirements which have been reflected in the draft Local Plan policy wording.

4.25 WBC will continue to work with National Highways as the SEWUE and SEWEA proposals are worked up in more detail to ensure that there is a full understanding of the impact of proposed development (both cumulative and

individual). This will agree the detail of the required mitigation measures and to ensure that these measures are both feasible and deliverable.

- 4.26 WBC will share the output from that work and continue to work with neighbouring authorities, including Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester, to address any issues arising from the allocation of the sites in the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan through the Duty to Cooperate process. Following an initial review of the highway modelling, Cheshire East Council have raised particular issues regarding potential highway impacts on Swineyard Lane, High Legh and HGV movements. Cheshire East Council consider that it is essential that measures are taken to discourage HGV traffic being directed towards Swineyard Lane. They also seek the strengthening of measures to enhance public transport with the specific aim of mitigating cross boundary flows with Cheshire East.

7. WBC will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the proposed South East Warrington Urban Extension and South East Warrington Employment Area (both cumulative and individual) and to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures.

8. WBC will share the outputs from the modelling work and seek to address any issues arising from the allocation of the South East Warrington Urban Extension and the South East Warrington Employment Area on the neighbouring authorities on Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester; including agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Cheshire East will be carried out and, in Cheshire West and Chester, if required.

WBC will provide information on the potential changes to commuting and migration flows arising as a result of the overall development proposed through the Local Plan particularly as they relate to Cheshire East, and provide greater clarity on their likely consequences for the transport infrastructure and networks within Cheshire East. This will form part of the Duty to Co-operate discussions.

4.27 Fiddlers Ferry

The former power station site is located to the south of A562 Widnes Road. Together with associated land, the site comprises a total of 324ha, extending south beyond the St Helens Canal and the Widnes to Warrington Railway Line to the River Mersey.

- 4.28 Land at Fiddlers Ferry will deliver a minimum of 1,800 homes, of which a minimum of 1,300 will be delivered in the plan period, and approximately 101 ha (Gross) of employment land.

- 4.29 The new mixed-use community will be supported by new social infrastructure including a new primary school; a health facility, open space and recreational facilities and local shops.
- 4.30 It has been agreed that the housing and employment development at the Fiddlers Ferry site will count towards meeting Warrington's needs. Given the location of the site on the border between Warrington and Halton, it will be important that the development provides mitigation for the impacts on Halton's transport and social infrastructure. It will also be important to ensure a robust Green Belt boundary to maintain separation between Widnes and Warrington.
- 4.31 WBC has undertaken transport modelling work to assess the impacts of the development on the transport network and will continue to work with Halton to resolve any issues arising from the allocation through Duty to Co-operate discussions.

9. It is agreed that the housing and employment development at the Fiddlers Ferry site will count towards meeting Warrington's needs. WBC will seek to ensure appropriate mitigation is provided to address any impacts on Halton's transportation and social infrastructure arising from the allocation of Fiddlers Ferry, including agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Halton will be carried out.

10. WBC will work with Halton, St Helens and National Highways to identify and mitigate any impacts on Junction 7 M62.

- 4.32 *Omega and future employment site served by J8 M62:*

St Helens' Submission Draft Local Plan was subject to a period of public consultation between January 2019 and May 2019, and an Examination In public during 2021. Consultation on modifications to the Plan concluded in January 2022.

- 4.33 St Helens' Submission Draft Local Plan includes a proposal to extend Omega (which is a strategic location for jobs and housing in Warrington), onto land across the boundary into St Helens Borough on the south side of the M62 for employment uses. Through ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions it has been agreed that the western extension of Omega proposed as site 1EA in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan can, in principle, be part of the WBC's employment land supply in the forthcoming new Warrington Local Plan (2021).
- 4.34 The Council had undertaken a programme of improvements to the local and strategic highway networks and the public transport network to facilitate the

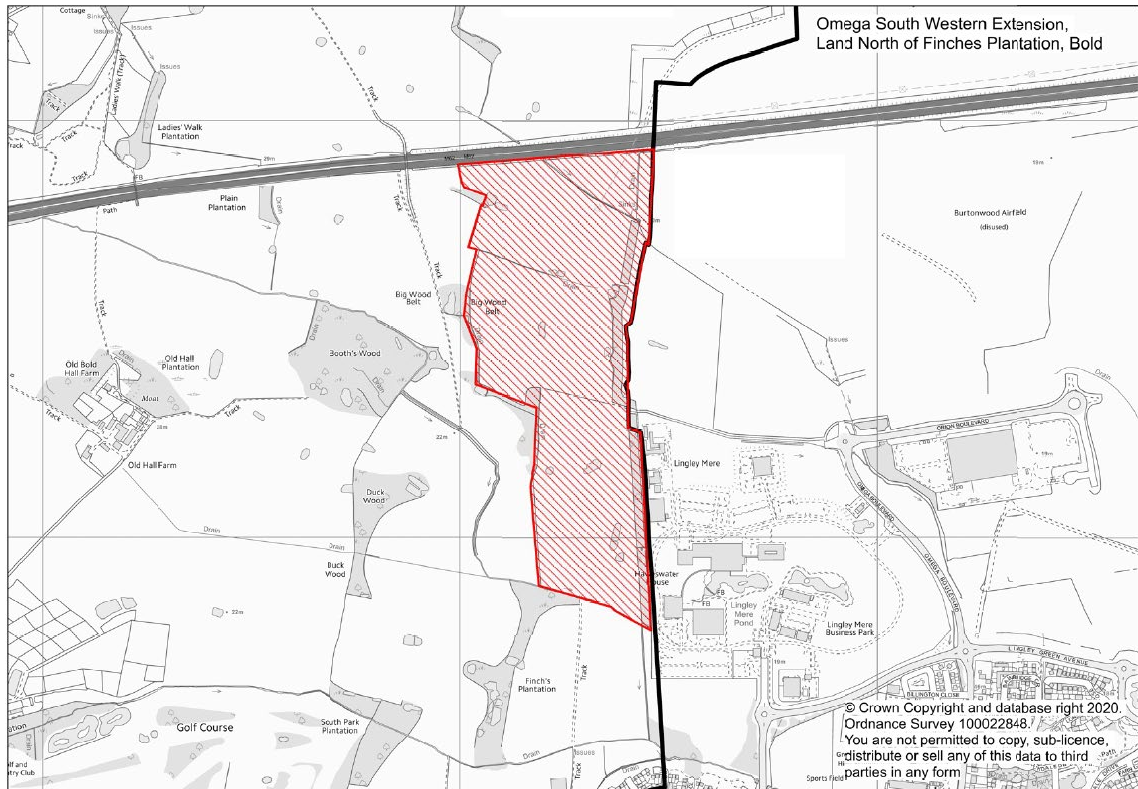
sustainable growth of Omega as a strategic employment location and has taken account of the proposed western extension of Omega in its transport modelling work.

- 4.35 It is noted that the planning consent for employment land at Omega West, following the decision of the Secretary of State in November 2021, whilst incorporating the 31.2ha proposed site allocation 1EA in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan, also extends beyond it covering an area of 75 ha. To date, no agreement has been reached on which Borough's need the additional land (over and above the 31.2ha allocation area) will contribute to.
- 4.36 WBC is concerned about any further growth in this area and considers that this would require significant infrastructure improvements to the local and Strategic Road network.

11. WBC has agreed in principle that the western 31.2 hectare extension of Omega on land to the south of the M62 in St Helens, as defined in the St Helens Borough Local Plan Submission Draft (site 1EA, land north of Finches Plantation, Bold), will contribute to meeting Warrington's employment land needs.

WBC will continue to liaise with St Helens over the apportionment of the element of employment land at Omega west, which benefits from the planning consent issued by the Secretary of State in November 2021, but is above and beyond the 31.2ha proposed to be allocated in the St Helens Borough Local Plan.

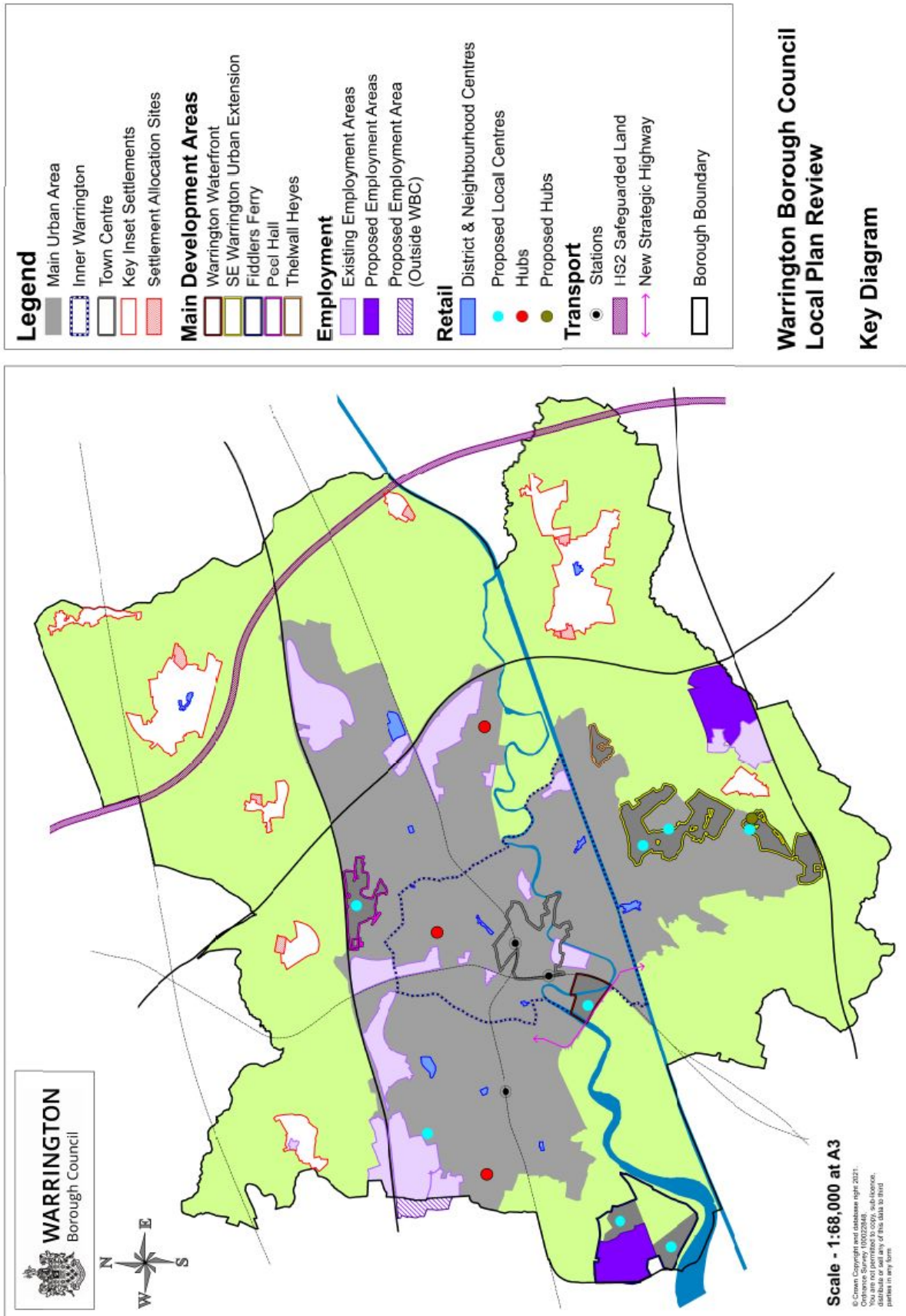
Consideration of any additional land in this area will require a cumulative traffic assessment of the impact on J8 of the M62 and will require a consistent approach between the two Local Plans, agreed through ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions between the two Councils and National Highways.



4.37 Peel Hall

WBC is proposing to allocate Peel Hall, a greenfield site but within the existing urban area, to provide a residential led development of up to 1,200 homes, supported by a local centre. It should be noted that this site now has outline planning consent following the Secretary of State’s decision in November 2021.

4.38 Figure 4: WBC Proposed Submission Version Local Plan Key Diagram Showing Strategic Housing and Employment Sites



4.39 Parkside (St Helens)

The sites at Parkside West and East lie within St Helens Borough immediately abutting the boundary with Warrington. They have a combined area of over 200 hectares and benefit from a location at the heart of the north-west motorway network, a skilled local labour supply and the scope for direct rail access to the West Coast Main Line and the east-west ('Chat Moss') line.

4.40 The St Helens Submission Draft Local Plan proposes to remove the Parkside sites from the Green Belt and to allocate them for a range of employment uses. Proposals have been developed to create a new link road to provide access from the sites onto junction 22 of the M6. The Secretary of State has now approved both the Parkside West Phase 1 and the Parkside Link Road applications. The Submission Draft Local Plan for St Helens contains a range of policies to address the effects of the development at Parkside for example on infrastructure, local heritage and the environment.

4.41 The development will impact on key infrastructure within WBC, including the local and strategic highway network. It is therefore essential that WBC and SHBC, in liaison with National Highways, Wigan Council and the GMCA (as TfGM) work to ensure that these impacts are appropriately mitigated.

12. WBC and SHBC agree to work together, in liaison with National Highways, Wigan Council and the GMCA (as TfGM) to consider any cross boundary infrastructure requirements or other issues relating to the development of the sites at Parkside West and Parkside East for employment uses. This includes provision for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange or other rail served employment development within Parkside East.

4.42 Bold Forest Garden Suburb (St Helens)

The emerging St Helens Local Plan proposes to remove approximately 140 hectares of land at Bold from the Green Belt, to enable it to form a future new Garden Suburb, with capacity for approximately 3,000 new dwellings (proposed site allocation 4HA in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan). Whilst this area is within the Borough of St Helens, it is (at its nearest point) about 1 kilometre from the border with Warrington.

4.43 WBC is particularly concerned about the potential impact on residents in Burtonwood, and as such, has now removed the Burtonwood residential allocation from its Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021). It is expected that the development of the site would be informed by a master plan exercise. This would consider (amongst other matters) any effects of the development on transport infrastructure in Warrington (including junction 8 of the M62), in liaison with National Highways.

13. WBC and SHBC agree to work together, in liaison with National Highways, to consider any cross boundary infrastructure requirements or other issues related to the development of the proposed Bold Forest Garden Suburb.

4.43 Transport

4.44 National Highways:

National Highways is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads. WBC has been constantly engaging and consulting with National Highways during the preparation of its Local Plan.

4.45 National Highways raised concerns regarding the detail of available transport evidence supporting the Draft Local Plan, although they noted that the Plan was in its early stages. Since then work to develop WBC's Multi Modal Transport Model has been completed and WBC is continuing to work positively with National Highways on key allocations in the draft Local Plan, particularly Fiddlers Ferry, the South East Warrington Urban Extension and the South East Warrington Employment Area.

4.46 Together with National Highways' own modelling work, this work has identified key mitigation requirements which have been reflected in the draft Local Plan policy wording and in the improvements to the Strategic Road Network identified in the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan. WBC will continue to work constructively with National Highways as the Plan's development proposals are worked up in more detail, to ensure that there is a full understanding of the impact of proposed development (both cumulative and individual) and to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures, ensuring that these measures are both feasible and deliverable.

4.47 National Highways and WBC recognise the importance of Area Wide Travel Plans and the collective benefits of applying these to wider strategic sites to supplement and/or replace the need for multiple standalone Travel Plans. As part of National Highways 'Net Zero Highways our 2030 2040 2050 plan' there is a firm commitment to integrate a strong modal shift programme in to future roads periods. National Highways and WBC will apply existing commitments and work collaboratively to identify Area Wide Travel Plans and supporting influencing behaviour programmes.

14. WBC will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the development proposed in the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021 (both cumulative and individual), to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures and to keep the Infrastructure Deliver Plan under review in respect of schemes relating to the Strategic Road Network.

4.48 *Government's Road Investment Strategy: Post-2020 (RIS 2):*

The first Road Investment Strategy: 2015 to 2020 (RIS 1)⁹ covered investment in England's motorways and major roads (the 'strategic road network') during the 2015 to 2020 period. This was the initial step in a long-term programme to improve England's motorways and major roads. National Highways also published a Strategic Business Plan 2015 to 2020¹⁰ setting out how they would deliver the investment plan and performance requirements set out within the Government's RIS 1.

4.49 The Government's second Road Investment Strategy: 2020 to 2025 (RIS 2) was published in March 2020¹¹. As with RIS 1, it continues the long-term improvements to motorways and major roads and now includes a committed scheme to mitigate some of the impacts of the Simister Island Interchange.

4.50 *HS2/Northern Powerhouse Rail*

In December 2016 the Government confirmed the alignment of HS2, which included the Hoo Green to Bamfurlong spur connecting the route to the West Coast Main Line (WCML) north of Culcheth. WBC is opposed to this alignment due to it bypassing Warrington as an economic centre and the environmental impact on settlements to the east of the Borough. A further announcement by Government in 2020 included a pause to review the HS2 Phase 2b route north of Crewe, and integrating this with Northern Powerhouse Rail NPR work as a fully integrated railway for the North.

4.51 The council continues to lobby strongly for an upgrade of the WCML as an alternative to the route through the east of the borough and dialogue continues with HS2 and Department for Transport on these matters. However the UK Government introduced a hybrid Bill¹² into Parliament on 24 January 2022 seeking legal powers to build and operate HS2 Phase 2b including the Golborne Link. To this end the council is working with HS2 to make the case for the highest level of mitigation for residents in these areas on issues such

⁹ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-investment-strategy>

¹⁰ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways-england-strategic-business-plan-2015-to-2020>

¹¹ [Road Investment Strategy 2: 2020-2025 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107111/road-investment-strategy-2020-2025.pdf)

¹² [HS2 Phase 2b: High Speed Rail \(Crewe – Manchester\) Bill 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/bills/2022/hs2-phase-2b-high-speed-rail-crewe-manchester)

as noise, visual impact and local accessibility of routes, should the route be constructed as the Government still plan.

4.52 Government published the Integrated Rail Plan¹³ in November 2021. This identifies a core pipeline for Northern Powerhouse Rail that includes:

- 40 miles of newbuild high speed line between Warrington, Manchester and Yorkshire
- Reinstatement of Warrington Bank Quay low level station, allowing passengers to interchange with West Coast Main Line services
- Upgrading and electrifying the Fiddlers Ferry line between Warrington and Liverpool.

4.53 The council's preferred outcome is for a hub station located at an enhanced Warrington Bank Quay station serving both NPR and HS2 services.

4.54 *The Wales and West Strategic Rail Prospectus:*

The Wales and West Strategic Rail Prospectus outlines a vision for rail investment across the North West and North Wales that builds on work by the Constellation Partnership and Growth Track 360¹⁴. The vision was created by public and private sector leads from Cheshire West and Chester, North Wales, Warrington and Cheshire East, with the backing of Liverpool City Region and Manchester City Region. The ambitions in the prospectus, to provide additional rail capacity and improve connectivity, are also identified in the LEP Transport Strategy.

4.55 *Rail Services Studies*

WBC has been working with partners including Transport for Greater Manchester and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority on studies to identify improvements to services on existing rail infrastructure. The recommendations of this work are intended to inform future Transport for the North or Department for Transport investment decisions. An area of this work that has now been completed considers the Cheshire Lines Committee line that connects Liverpool and Manchester via Sankey for Penketh, Warrington West (new station opened 2019), Warrington Central, Padgate, Birchwood, and Glazebrook stations. This is currently a very busy line suffering regular delays and overcrowding and is expected to become more so with growth proposed in both Warrington and Greater Manchester. The study proposes a stopping pattern that would retain semi fast services to Liverpool, Manchester and beyond and provide a metro-like service across the Borough, increasing

¹³ [Integrated Rail Plan for the North and Midlands - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/101222/Integrated-Rail-Plan-for-the-North-and-Midlands-2021.pdf)

¹⁴ Available at <http://www.871candwep.co.uk/content/uploads/2018/01/AI-8-HS2-West-and-Wales-strategic-rail-prospectus-NEW-DRAFT-v11.pdf>

overall capacity and improving reliability on the line. The findings of this work have been incorporated into Network Rail Continuous Strategic Modular Planning¹⁵ process for the line, and work to identify infrastructure improvements is now being led by Network Rail.

4.56 A similar study has been undertaken to identify service improvements on the Chat Moss and West Coast Main Lines.

4.57 *Cheshire and Warrington LEP:*

The Cheshire and Warrington LEP has published a Transport Strategy¹⁶ which sets out the priority transport investments at a local and strategic level required to support the needs of a £50 billion a year economy. This includes improvements and additions to the road and rail network and better, more co-ordinated public transport services within the LEP area. WBC will continue to work with Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester Councils to support the improvement of transport connectivity in order to support the LEP's growth aims.

4.58 Flood Risk and Water Management

4.59 *Warrington Borough Council as lead local flood authority:*

WBC is designated a lead local flood authority (LLFA) under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 and has published a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2017 – 2023¹⁷. The Strategy sets out how WBC will endeavour to manage flood risk and ensures that WBC, the Environment Agency, United Utilities, other partners and neighbouring authorities work together to protect communities, business and infrastructure from flooding. WBC will continue to understand and manage flood risk within the Borough alongside other key risk management authorities.

4.60 *Mersey Estuary Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009):*

The Environment Agency published the Mersey Estuary Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009)¹⁸ which gives an overview of the flood risk in the Mersey Estuary catchment (which includes Warrington, Liverpool, Wirral and St Helens) and sets out their preferred plan for sustainable flood risk management over the next 50 to 100 years. It also establishes flood risk

¹⁵ [How to accommodate forecast growth on the Cheshire line corridor \(networkrail.co.uk\)](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)

¹⁶ Available on <http://www.871candwep.co.uk/content/uploads/2018/05/FINAL-Draft-Transport-Strategy-14.05.2018.pdf>

¹⁷ Available on <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201080/streets-and-transport/2037/flood-risk-and-water-management>

¹⁸ Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mersey-estuary-catchment-flood-management-plan>

management policies which will deliver sustainable flood risk management for the long term.

4.61 *North West Inshore and North West Offshore Marine Plan (2021):*

The North West Marine Plan introduces a strategic approach to planning within the inshore and offshore waters between the Solway Firth border with Scotland and the River Dee border with Wales. The Plan applies legislation and policies across Government in a sub-regional context, ensuring the needs and aspirations of marine plan areas are reflected.

4.62 Marine plans are prepared under the policy framework provided by the Marine Policy Statement, and together they underpin the marine planning system for England. All public authorities must have regard to the Plan and are responsible for applying the North West Marine Plan through the decisions that they make using existing regulatory and decision-making processes.

4.63 The North West Marine Plan has been agreed and adopted by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

15. The North West Marine Plans' remit covers as far inland as the water is tidal including rivers and estuaries. For the River Mersey in the North West Inshore Marine Plan this means as far as Warrington. Given the geographical nature of Warrington, there is a requirement for ongoing co-operative working between WBC and the Marine Management Organisation.

4.64 *Sankey Catchment Action Plan:*

WBC has worked with Halton Borough Council and St Helens Borough Council to create the Sankey Catchment Action Plan which focuses on water management, water quality improvements and water dependent biodiversity within these authorities. The Plan provides for a long term integrated water management approach across the Sankey catchment. WBC will continue to work with these partners towards an integrated approach to Flood Risk Management and both authorities will include reference to this work in their respective Local Plans.

4.65 Environmental and Green Infrastructure

4.66 *Mersey Forest Partnership:*

WBC along with Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and St. Helens, Cheshire West and Chester Councils are part of the Mersey Forest Partnership among other various organisations, community groups and businesses. The partnership continues to deliver an ambitious strategy benefitting the economy

and businesses, natural environment, health and wellbeing and the local community of Merseyside and north Cheshire.

4.67 The Mersey Forest team has been working with colleagues from Woodland Trust and the other Community Forests in the North of England to prepare the plan for the Northern Forest. This is a 25 year vision to plant 50 million trees across the North of England, stretching from Liverpool to Hull; delivering up to £2.2bn of GVA in an area home to 13 million people. The Mersey Forest has also facilitated a common commitment to green infrastructure across the City Region, across the local authorities and a range of businesses, local organisations and other partners. WBC will continue to work with the Mersey Forest Partnership.

4.68 *Great Manchester Nature Improvement Area (NIA):*

The Great Manchester Wetland is a diverse landscape of water, fen, wet grassland, wet woodland and lowland raised bog. It is a Nature Improvement Area covering some 48,000 hectares, focusing on the Wetlands of Wigan (The Flashes), the mosslands of Chat Moss and Risley Moss to the west and south west of Manchester and the Mersey Wetlands corridor stretching from Rixton to Warrington.

4.69 A section of the NIA stretches from Warrington into Salford. Given the cross boundary nature of the designation, there is a requirement for co-operative working between WBC, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Salford City Council, Trafford Borough Council and Wigan Borough Council in order to preserve and enhance this ecological network.

4.70 All relevant authorities are continuing to work with Natural England to address 'in combination effects' on air quality from the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan and the Greater Manchester 'Places for Everyone Plan' for the Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), within the Great Manchester NIA. In particular, at this stage the respective HRAs have not fully assessed the impact on Holcroft Moss within the SAC or confirmed any mitigation measures if they are required. The respective HRAs are therefore incomplete at this stage and will be required to be updated in agreement with Natural England prior to Examination.

16. A section of the Great Manchester Nature Improvement Area stretches from Warrington into Greater Manchester. Given the cross-boundary nature of the designation, there is a requirement for co-operative working between WBC, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Salford City Council, Trafford Borough Council and Wigan Borough Council, together with Natural England, in order to preserve and enhance this ecological network.

- 4.71 Natural England submitted representations to the Updated Proposed Submission Local Plan 2021 raising a number of issues with the Plan's Habitats Regulations Assessment. This included the need for additional information and clarification on a number of areas of the assessment. Through Duty to Cooperate discussions, WBC and Natural England have resolved these issues in principle, but this will require an update of the HRA prior to Examination.

17. Through Duty to Cooperate discussions, WBC and Natural England have resolved in principle the issues raised by Natural England in respect of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021)'s Habitats Regulations Assessment (with the exception of the issue relating to Holcroft Moss as detailed above). WBC will ensure the Habitats Regulations Assessment is fully updated in agreement with Natural England prior to Examination.

- 4.72 *Cheshire Local Nature Partnership:*

WBC along with the LEP, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Wirral Councils are part of the Cheshire Local Nature Partnership which along with other partners, seeks to create a vision and plan of action of how the natural environment can be taken into account in decision making. WBC will continue to work within the partnership in order to improve the natural environment within the Cheshire region.

18. WBC is committed to strengthening its relations with the Cheshire LNP and ensuring effective strategic planning relating to nature conservation.

- 4.73 *Air Quality:*

The majority of Warrington has good air quality but there are areas close to the major roads and around the Town Centre that exceed national limits for nitrogen dioxide, where two Air Quality Management Areas have been designated. In addition, there is growing concern over exposure to fine particulates (PM2.5), which in Warrington meet the national targets but where levels are close to, and have marginally exceeded, the World Health Organization guideline value.

- 4.74 An Air Quality Action Plan has been developed by WBC to try to improve nitrogen dioxide levels within problem areas and is expected to improve concentrations of PM2.5. Whilst actions mainly revolve around local transport and planning policies, it is recognised that there are regional and cross boundary sources outside of the control of WBC.

4.75 Wider actions at regional and national levels can assist in improving local air quality and public health. WBC will continue dialogue with neighbouring authorities and national bodies, as appropriate, now and in the future in order to address air quality issues in the area.

4.76 Energy and Resources

4.77 *LEP Energy Plan:*

The Cheshire and Warrington LEP has published an Energy and Clean Growth Strategy which provides a roadmap for the LEP and its partners to capitalise on the area's strengths in the Energy sector, address the challenges of transitioning successfully to a low carbon economy and putting Cheshire and Warrington at the forefront of the efforts to deliver affordable energy and clean growth.

4.78 *Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study:*

WBC along with authorities in the Liverpool City Region, jointly prepared the Renewable Energy Capacity Study in 2011¹⁹. This study focussed on wind energy, and solely considered wind speeds and high-level constraints with a view to identifying areas suitable for multiple turbine installations.

4.79 *United Utilities Water Resources Management Plan and Revised Business Plan for 2015-2020*²⁰

United Utilities published its Water Resources Management Plan and Revised business plan for 2015-2020 in 2015 which provides an assessment of the available water supplies and the demand for water by their customers over the period up to 2040. The business plan also sets out the proposed strategy for water resources and demand management to ensure that United Utilities have adequate water supplies to serve customers in the North West.

4.80 Minerals

WBC participates in the NW Aggregates Working Party and subscribes to the national Managed Aggregate Supply System through market monitoring and production of an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA), in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

¹⁹ Part 1 available at

[http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/pdf/LC01_LiverpoolCityRegionRenewableEnergyCapacityStudy\(Stage%201\).pdf](http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/pdf/LC01_LiverpoolCityRegionRenewableEnergyCapacityStudy(Stage%201).pdf)

and part 2 available at

[http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/pdf/LC02_LiverpoolCityRegionRenewableEnergyCapacityStudy\(Stage%202\).pdf](http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/pdf/LC02_LiverpoolCityRegionRenewableEnergyCapacityStudy(Stage%202).pdf)

²⁰ Available at <https://www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/about-us/our-future-plans/water-resources/water-resources-management-plan/>

- 4.81 Matters relating to mineral reserves and land banks are monitored and reported annually at this sub-regional level through the LAA. The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), the Merseyside authorities, including Halton (working through Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS)), and the unitary authority of Warrington (known as the 'sub-region') are continuing to work together and have produced a combined LAA.
- 4.82 However, Duty to Cooperate discussions with the neighbouring Cheshire MPAs of Cheshire East & Cheshire West & Chester have raised concerns about the ability of Warrington (and its wider LAA sub-region) to meet its own 7 year aggregate sand and gravel land bank requirements and the potential knock-on implications for these Cheshire MPAs. These concerns are particularly acute for Cheshire East where there is no permitted sand quarry producing aggregate as its main output. A significant proportion of its permitted sand resource produces silica as an output with aggregate sand being only a by-product of this quarrying activity. This means that it is also currently unable to meet its 7 year aggregate land bank requirements.

19. WBC will continue to participate in the NW Aggregates Working Party and subscribe to the national Managed Aggregate Supply System through market monitoring and production of an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

20. WBC will also continue to work with the neighbouring authorities of Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester to ensure that Warrington's unmet needs, as part of the aggregate shortage in the wider AGMA/Merseyside sub region do not place an additional burden on the two authorities and the wider Cheshire sub region. The assumption being that a significant proportion of this shortfall will continue to come from both increases in marine aggregates and imports from beyond the North West region.

4.83 Waste

WBC participates in the North West Waste Network, which is a body of technical expertise that advises on implications of waste planning policy and guidance and monitors and keeps up-to-date a schedule of existing (and future) significant waste management facilities for the wider region.

- 4.84 WBC commissioned a Waste Needs Assessment as part of the Local Plan review which was published in 2017²¹. The assessment forecasts the amount of waste arisings likely to occur through the Local Plan period up to 2037. Whilst it identifies a need for some additional capacity for a range of waste

²¹ Available at https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201368/local_plan_review/2347/local_plan_review_-_supporting_documents

streams these requirements are based on the higher housing and employment projections in the PSVLP (2019). The need for additional capacity will be kept under review in future reviews of the Plan.

4.85 The Council consulted with all the authorities where Warrington were identified as having waste movements between at the Preferred Development Option stage of the Local Plan. No strategic issues were raised that need to be included in the Statement of Common Ground. Where waste cannot be treated or disposed of within the Borough and there is a need for it to be exported, the Council will continue to liaise with other authorities under the Duty to Co-operate to ensure that this waste is accounted for elsewhere.

4.86 Health and Well-being

4.87 *Cheshire and Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Partnership:*

WBC is part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Partnership along with six Merseyside authorities, Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council. The partnership, among other things, is working together under Local Delivery Systems to improve the health and well-being of residents across these authorities.

4.88 *Warrington and Halton NHS Foundation Trust:*

Warrington and Halton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust provides health services within Warrington and Halton. WBC is engaging with and consulting with the Trust as its progresses on its Local Plan review.

4.89 The Trust, together with the Council and other health and social care partners who form 'Warrington Together', has confirmed the requirement for a new Hospital for Warrington. The current hospital is outdated and is not able to meet the future needs of Warrington's growing and aging population. It is currently reviewing the business plan for the hospital in the context of wider NHS service delivery across the north west region and in terms of its relationship with the Warrington CCG.

4.90 The Council is committed to working with the NHS Hospital Trust to deliver the new hospital either through redevelopment of the existing Lovely Lane Site or on a new site. This will be confirmed through a future review of the Local Plan.

4.91 *North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust*

The North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust provides health services in fifteen boroughs of North West England including Warrington. WBC is engaging with and consulting with the Trust as its progresses on its Local Plan review.

4.92 Digital Inclusion

4.93 *LEP Digital Infrastructure Plan:*

The plan sets out a vision to play an integral role in enabling the objectives of the Local Industrial Strategy to be delivered and to leverage infrastructure assets and investments made to date, facilitating a step-change towards the next generation of fixed and mobile connectivity.

4.94 *Connecting Cheshire:*

The Connecting Cheshire Partnership, made up of the four local authorities across Cheshire – Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington Councils was established to deliver faster broadband to areas where it had not been commercially viable to invest previously.

4.95 Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Cheshire Partnership comprises Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington and Halton Councils who work in partnership on Gypsy and Traveller issues. The group agreed in 2017 to update the Cheshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) to replace the 2014 version.

4.96 The revised GTAA provides an evidence base to enable each local authority to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople under the Housing Act 2004, the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and Planning Policy for Traveller Sites 2015.

4.97 There is an agreement from all the Authorities in the Cheshire Partnership that they will meet their own need identified by Borough in the GTAA.

21. All Authorities within the Cheshire Partnership agree to meet their own needs as identified within the Cheshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2018.

4.98 Retail

The current retail hierarchy for the Borough as recognised in WBC's Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 – 2027 identifies Warrington Town Centre as a sub-regional centre, and Birchwood, Stockton Heath and Westbrook as district centres. Chapelford; Honiton Square, Penketh; Culcheth Village; Orford Lane; Lovely Lane; Latchford Village; Fearnhead Cross; Poplars Avenue/Capesthorpe Road and Lymm Village are Neighbourhood Centres and there are also various Local Centres within the Borough.

- 4.99 The 2015 Retail and Leisure Study which provided supporting evidence for Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 – 2027²², indicated that the Borough's retail centres had no significant detrimental impacts on neighbouring town centres.
- 4.100 WBC commissioned a Retail and Leisure Study Update to support its Local Plan Review. The Study Area, which comprises 10 separate zones, stretches beyond WBC's administrative boundaries to incorporate outlying areas, including zones within Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and St Helens. The updated study confirms there is no need for any significant additional retail provision in addition to local provision required to support the proposed strategic allocation sites – South East Warrington Urban Extension; Fiddlers Ferry Waterfront; and Peel Hall.
- 4.101 WBC consulted neighbouring authorities at the publication of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan along with the associated supporting documents including the Retail and Leisure Study Update in order to allow any issues arising from the findings of the study to be addressed as part of future Duty to Co-Operate discussions.

5. Governance and Management

- 5.1 WBC's original Statement of Common Ground was published at the same time as the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan in March 2019. Due to the need for other authorities to obtain the necessary formal approval to become additional signatories and to enable them to review the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan, the Statement of Common Ground was initially published as a draft document.
- 5.2 This version of the Statement of Common Ground has been updated to reflect the new Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation and will form part of the package of supporting documents to be submitted with the Local Plan ahead of Examination.
- 5.3 The Statement will be kept under ongoing review and will be updated at key stages of the Plan making process and/or when new key strategic issues arise which require amendments to the Statement.
- 5.4 The approval of minor amendments will be delegated to the Director of Growth in consultation with the Lead Member responsible for Planning. Updates at key stages of Plan preparation and any other significant amendments will be approved by the Council's Cabinet.

²² Available at <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/200564/planning-policy/1905/evidence-base/11>

5.5 WBC is committed to working with neighbouring authorities, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders, which are listed in Appendix 1. The Statement of Common Ground will form a basis for this engagement and it will also be updated to reflect ongoing Duty to Co-operate discussions.

Appendix 1

Working with Partners

The Council is committed to working with neighbouring authorities, statutory consultees and other key stakeholders in the strategic matters outlined within this SoCG. These partners include:

- Adjoining and other neighbouring Local Authorities - Cheshire West and Chester Council; Cheshire East Council; Halton Borough Council; Wigan Council; Trafford Council; Salford City Council, St Helens Borough Council; Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Combined Authority.
- National Highways
- Network Rail
- Marine Management Organisation
- The Environment Agency
- Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership.
- Mersey Forest Partnership
- Cheshire Local Nature Partnership
- United Utilities
- NW Aggregates Working Party
- North West Waste Network
- Cheshire and Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Partnership
- Warrington and Halton NHS Foundation Trust
- The North West Boroughs Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.
- Connecting Cheshire Partnership
- The Cheshire Partnership
- Transport for the North
- Department for Transport
- Atlantic Gateway
- The Constellation Partnership
- Growth Track 360

Appendix 2

Warrington Borough Council's Key Strategic Matters

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
1. Housing Need within the Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area	WBC, Halton Borough Council and St Helens Council, authorities which are part of the Mid-Mersey HMA, agree to meet their own Objectively Assessed Need for Housing within their Boroughs. The authorities will however keep housing need under review as they progress with their Local Plans and address any issues arising in the future through the Duty to Co-operate process.	Halton Borough Council St Helens Council
2. Housing Need across adjacent Local Authority Areas	WBC is unable to accommodate any unmet housing need from other adjacent Local Authorities and will not be seeking for these authorities to meet any of WBC's need.	Cheshire East Council Cheshire West and Chester Council Salford City Council Trafford Council Wigan Council Greater Manchester Combined Authority Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
3. Employment	WBC has agreed, in principle that the western 31.2 hectare extension of Omega in St Helens, as defined in the St Helens Local Plan Submission Draft (site 1EA, Omega South Western Extension, land north of Finches Plantation, Bold), will contribute to meeting Warrington's employment needs. WBC will continue to liaise with St Helens over the apportionment of the element of employment land at Omega west, which benefits from the planning consent issued by the Secretary of State in November 2021, but is above and beyond the	St Helens Council

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
	31.2ha proposed to be allocated in the St Helens Borough Local Plan.	
4. The Cheshire and Warrington LEP	WBC will continue to work collaboratively with the LEP to support the economic growth of the sub region and in support of the delivery of the LEP's spatial strategies within Warrington.	Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership
5. Green Belt	<p>All adjacent Local Authorities have been consulted on Warrington's Green Belt methodology and consider it an appropriate basis to undertake the Green Belt review.</p> <p>The one exception is Halton where detailed concerns will need to be addressed as part of ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions.</p>	<p>Cheshire East Council</p> <p>Cheshire West and Chester Council</p> <p>Halton Borough Council</p> <p>St Helens Council</p> <p>Salford City Council</p> <p>Trafford Council</p> <p>Wigan Council</p> <p>Greater Manchester Combined Authority</p>
6. Green Belt	As WBC and Halton Borough Council progress with their Local Plans, there is a requirement for joint co-operative working to ensure adequate separation between the proposed Green Belt releases between the two Boroughs and to address any matters arising from both authorities' Green Belt reviews.	Halton Borough Council
7. Proposed Strategic Site Allocations – South East Warrington Urban Extension & South East Warrington Employment Area	WBC will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the proposed South East Warrington Urban Extension & the South East Warrington Employment Area development (both cumulative and individual) and to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures.	National Highways (See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)
8. Proposed Strategic Site Allocations -	WBC will share the outputs from the modelling work and seek to address	Cheshire East Council

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
<p>South East Warrington Urban Extension & the South East Warrington Employment Area</p>	<p>any issues arising from the allocation of the South East Warrington Urban Extension and the South East Warrington Employment Area on the neighbouring authorities on Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester; including agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Cheshire East will be carried out and, in Cheshire West and Chester, if required.</p> <p>WBC will provide information on the potential changes to commuting and migration flows arising as a result of the overall development proposed through the Local Plan particularly as they relate to Cheshire East, and provide greater clarity on their likely consequences for the transport infrastructure and networks within Cheshire East. This will form part of the Duty to Co-operate discussions.</p>	<p>Cheshire West and Chester Council</p>
<p>9. Proposed Strategic Site Allocation– Fiddlers Ferry</p>	<p>It is agreed that the housing and employment development at the Fiddlers Ferry site will count towards meetings Warrington’s needs. WBC will seek to ensure appropriate mitigation is provided to address any impacts on Halton’s transportation and social infrastructure arising from the allocation of Fiddlers Ferry, including agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Halton will be carried out.</p>	<p>Halton Borough Council</p>
<p>10. Proposed Strategic Site Allocation– Fiddlers Ferry</p>	<p>WBC will work with Halton, St Helens and National Highways to identify and mitigate any impacts on Junction 7 M62.</p>	<p>National Highways(See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)</p> <p>St Helens Council</p> <p>Halton Council</p>

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
<p>11. Proposed Strategic Site Allocation – Omega and future employment site served by J8 M62</p>	<p>WBC has agreed in principle that the western 31.2 hectare extension of Omega on land to the south of the M62 in St Helens, as defined in the St Helens Borough Local Plan Submission Draft (site 1EA, land north of Finches Plantation, Bold), will contribute to meeting Warrington’s employment land needs.</p> <p>WBC will continue to liaise with St Helens over the apportionment of the element of employment land at Omega west, which benefits from the planning consent issued by the Secretary of State in November 2021, but is above and beyond the 31.2ha proposed to be allocated in the St Helens Borough Local Plan.</p> <p>Consideration of any additional land in this area will require a cumulative traffic assessment of the impact on J8 of the M62 and will require a consistent approach between the two Local Plans, agreed through ongoing Duty to Cooperate discussions between the two Councils and National Highways.</p>	<p>St Helens Council</p> <p>National Highways (See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)</p>
<p>12. Proposed St Helens Local Plan allocation at Parkside</p>	<p>WBC and SHBC agree to work together, in liaison with National Highways, Wigan Council and the GMCA (as TfGM) to consider any cross boundary infrastructure or other issues relating to the development of the sites at Parkside West and Parkside East for employment use. This includes provision for a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange or other rail served employment development within Parkside East.</p>	<p>St Helens Council</p> <p>National Highways (See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)</p> <p>Wigan Council</p> <p>GMCA (as TfGM)</p>

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
13. Proposed St Helens Local Plan allocation at Bold	WBC and SHBC agree to work together, in liaison with National Highways, to consider any cross boundary infrastructure or other issues related to the development of the proposed Bold Forest Garden Suburb.	St Helens Council National Highways (See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)
14. Working with National Highways	WBC will continue to work with National Highways to ensure there is a full understanding of the impact of the development proposed in the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021 (both cumulative and individual) and to agree the detail of the required mitigation measures.	National Highways (See separate Statement of Common Ground between WBC and National Highways)
15. Engagement with the Marine Management Organisation	The North West Marine Plans' remit covers as far inland as the water is tidal including rivers and estuaries. For the River Mersey in the North West Inshore Marine Plan this means as far as Warrington. Given the geographical nature of Warrington, there is a requirement for ongoing co-operative working between WBC and the Marine Management Organisation.	Marine Management Organisation
16. Great Manchester Nature Improvement Area (NIA):	A section of the Great Manchester Nature Improvement Area stretches from Warrington into Greater Manchester. Given the cross-boundary nature of the designation, there is a requirement for co-operative working between WBC, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Salford City Council, Trafford Borough Council and Wigan Borough Council, together with Natural England, in order to preserve and enhance this ecological network.	Salford City Council Trafford Council Wigan Council Greater Manchester Combined Authority Natural England

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
17. Wider consideration of European Sites	Through Duty to Cooperate discussions, WBC and Natural England have resolved in principle the issues raised by Natural England in respect of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021)'s Habitats Regulations Assessment (with the exception of the issue relating to Holcroft Moss as detailed above). WBC will ensure the Habitats Regulations Assessment is fully updated in agreement with Natural England prior to Examination.	Natural England
18. Engagement with Cheshire Local Nature Partnership	WBC is committed to strengthening its relations with the Cheshire LNP and ensuring effective strategic planning relating to nature conservation	Cheshire Local Nature Partnership
19. Minerals	WBC will continue to participate in the NW Aggregates Working Party and subscribe to the national Managed Aggregate Supply System through market monitoring and production of an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) in line with the requirements of the NPPF.	North West Aggregate Working Party Salford City Council Trafford Council Wigan Council Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Merseyside Local Authorities and Halton Borough Council
20. Minerals	WBC will also continue to work with the neighbouring authorities of Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester to ensure that Warrington's unmet needs, as part of the aggregate shortage in the wider AGMA / Merseyside sub region do not place an additional burden on the two authorities and the wider Cheshire sub region. The	Cheshire East Council Cheshire West and Chester Council

Key Strategic Matter	Agreement or outstanding issues	Partner Bodies
	assumption being that a significant proportion of this shortfall will continue to come from both increases in marine aggregates and imports from beyond the North West region.	
21. Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation needs within Cheshire	All Authorities within the Cheshire Partnership agree to meet their own needs as identified within the Cheshire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2018.	Cheshire East Cheshire West and Chester Halton Borough Council