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Architecture + Building Surveying + Town Planning

# Appendices to Hearing Statement - Matter 11 Transport and Infrastructure - Document 2 of 2

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04<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Joint Statement Produced by:

**VECTOS - PART OF SLR**



And

**CASSIDY + ASHTON**



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**APPENDIX CAV6 – LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM WARRINGTON  
NORTH MP**



To whom it concerns

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear Sir / Madam,

I would like to express my support for the proposed mixed use public transport and employment scheme known as South Station Place.

Birchwood station is not only constrained by its limited access from the north but is also limited in terms of its ability to contribute to lowering carbon emissions due to a lack of capacity.

By providing a park and ride facility for 300 cars together with a new access from the south, accessibility and capacity of Birchwood station will be significantly increased. The proposal also demonstrates capacity for growing the park and ride element, which aids in future proofing this proposed public transport asset.

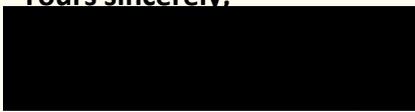
With adjoining much needed employment space this proposal will make a significant contribution to Warrington's environmental and economic obligations.

The infrastructure and facilities that would be delivered, as part of this proposal not only meet employment needs in a highly sustainable location. This proposal supports local residents and existing business in the locality. The principles of this proposal were generated and are supported by local residents, who want to see improved access / parking and station facilities. The improved and new pedestrian and cycle links are also well received by the local community.

This proposal is transport improvement led and makes a significant and valuable contribution to local transport infrastructure links. If we wish to encourage people onto public transport, then we need to create public transport opportunities, that save people time and money and are easy to use. The proposal at South Station Place is a positive step towards achieving this goal.

Given many local residents and the surrounding business community support this proposal, I would therefore like to express my support.

Yours sincerely,

  
**Charlotte Nichols MP**  
**Labour MP for Warrington North**

Constituency Office:

**APPENDIX CAV7 – SOUTH STATION PLACE PROPOSAL  
DOCUMENT**

# South Station Place



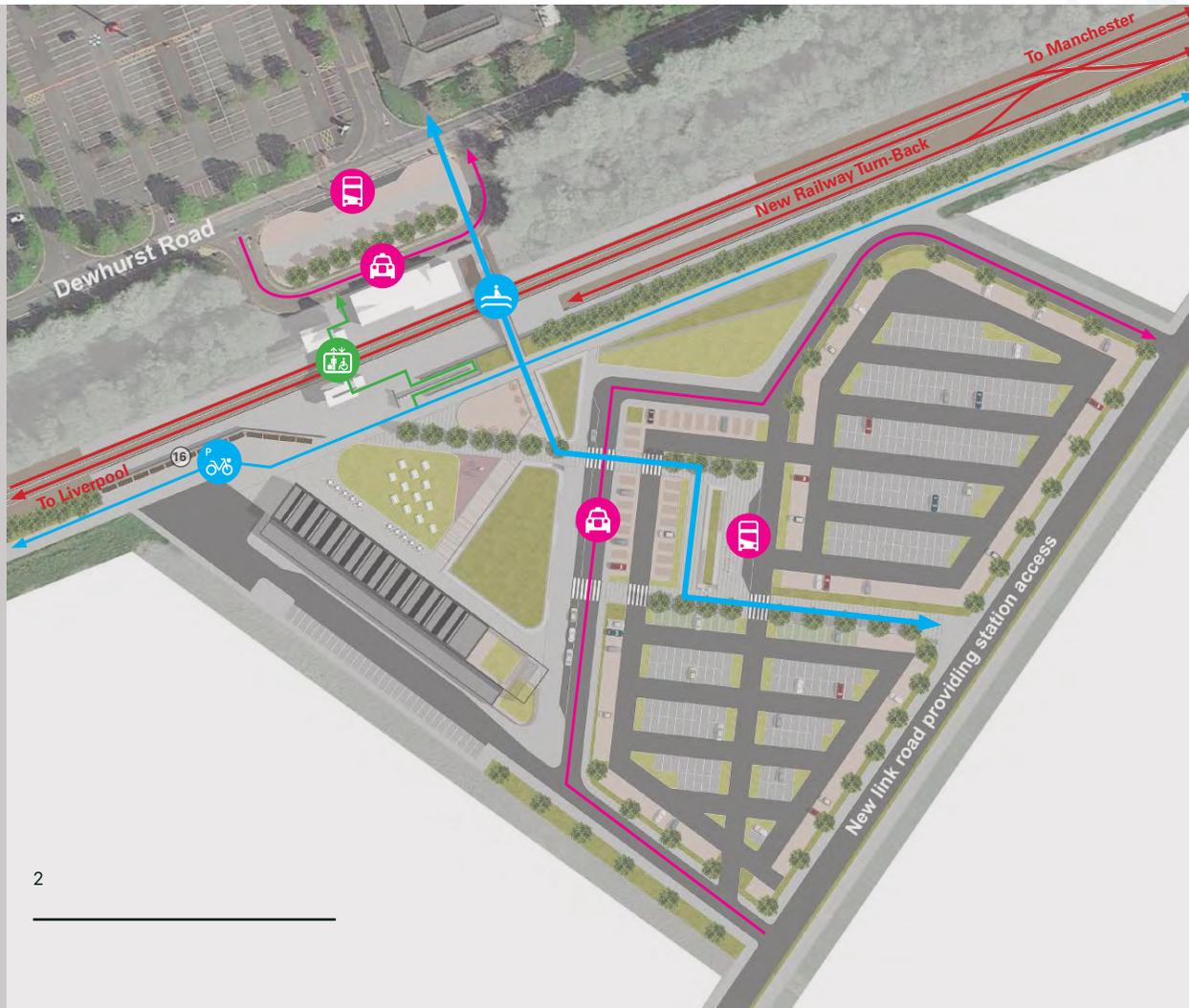
PATRICK PROPERTIES

A New Net Carbon Zero Public  
Transport-Led Community  
and Employment Hub



“If we want to encourage people into public transport, then we have to make public transport more easily accessible, user friendly and save commuters time and money”

$$S + C + P = \text{Icon}$$



KEY

- Pedestrian & Cycle Connections
- Accessibility Across Railway
- Railway Connections
- Vehicular Connections
- Cycle Parking (approximately 100 spaces)
- Footbridge
- Footbridge with Lift
- Bus Stop / Rail Replacement
- Taxis / Kiss and Ride

Issued by:

Cassidy+  
Ashton



T [redacted]  
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**Title: Framework Document**  
**Submission Version**  
**Date: November 2021**



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# 1.0 Vision and Key Development Objectives

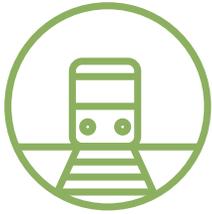


**“To create a high-quality, sustainable development that opens up a new access and facilities at Birchwood Station whilst promoting an attractive, healthy and environmentally-conscious development, which promotes connectivity within and throughout the local and wider area, and contributes significantly to the local economy.”**



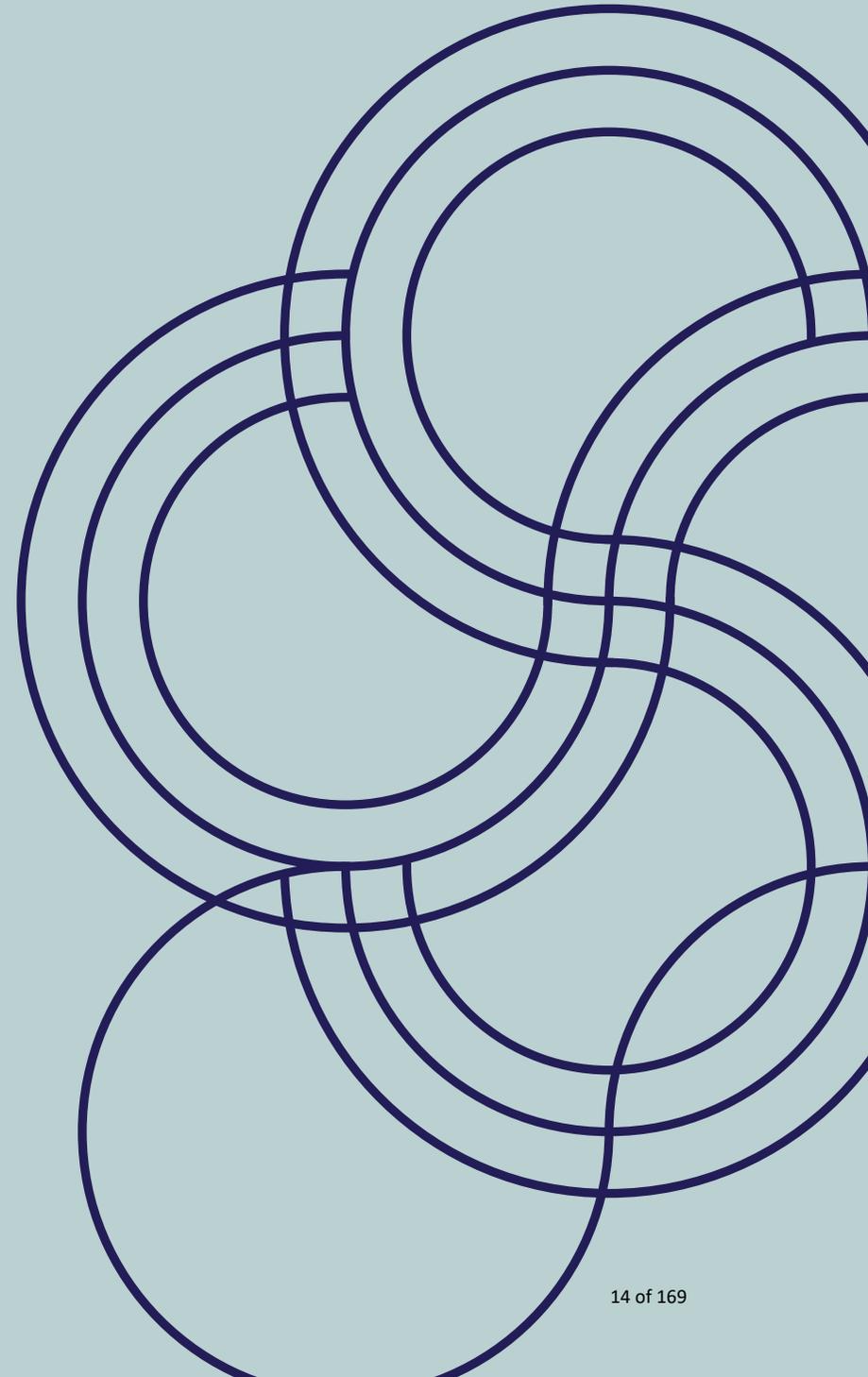


# Vision and Key Development Objectives



- To deliver key strategic public transport Infrastructure which is aligned with the aspirations of Network Rail, Warrington Borough Council and the wider regional and local transport sector.
- To create a new southern access to Birchwood Station, allowing for future expansion, an increase in usability and improved customer satisfaction.
- To create an opportunity for rail infrastructure enhancements and support the CLC line with rail turn backs and bay platforms.
- To create a new park and ride that has opportunity to grow to suit future demands.
- To provide enhanced station facilities and public realm areas, supporting the existing business community and local residents with investment into public transport.
- To meet the aspirations of 'levelling up' through considerable private investment in public infrastructure.
- To create and enhance pedestrian and cycle links.

# 2.0 Introduction



# Introduction

**Birchwood Railway Station lies in a key location on the Liverpool-Warrington-Manchester railway line but suffers from poor pedestrian and vehicular accessibility.**

Although there is a large shopper's car park at Birchwood Shopping Centre, there is only limited all day parking, whilst the presence of the Centre itself, together with the railway station and business park, means that at peak times congestion is at such a high level that it deters potential travellers from accessing the rail network. Whilst it is recognised that the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted traffic levels, this congestion issue is expected to return to pre-covid levels within the 3-5 years these proposals would be delivered.

There is a lack of available land north of the railway station and railway line to address these issues, as much of the adjacent land is already in use by Birchwood Shopping Centre and there is minimal parking at the station itself. The only realistic solution to these issues is to open up the southern approach and provide new facilities on the southern side of the station. Alongside measures to increase the capacity of the line, this will create the opportunity for a large increase in travellers to and from Birchwood whilst reducing existing traffic congestion at the station.

Patrick Properties are therefore delighted to present their proposals to open up the southern approach to Birchwood Railway Station as part of a mixed use, public transport-led development proposal, to be known as South Station Place [SSP], which is being submitted to Warrington Borough Council as part of their Local Plan process.

With a focus on investment in public transport, SSP are working with Network Rail and operator Northern Rail to enhance the CLC corridor, which will represent an urban extension at the gateway to Warrington's largest employment and central innovation area.

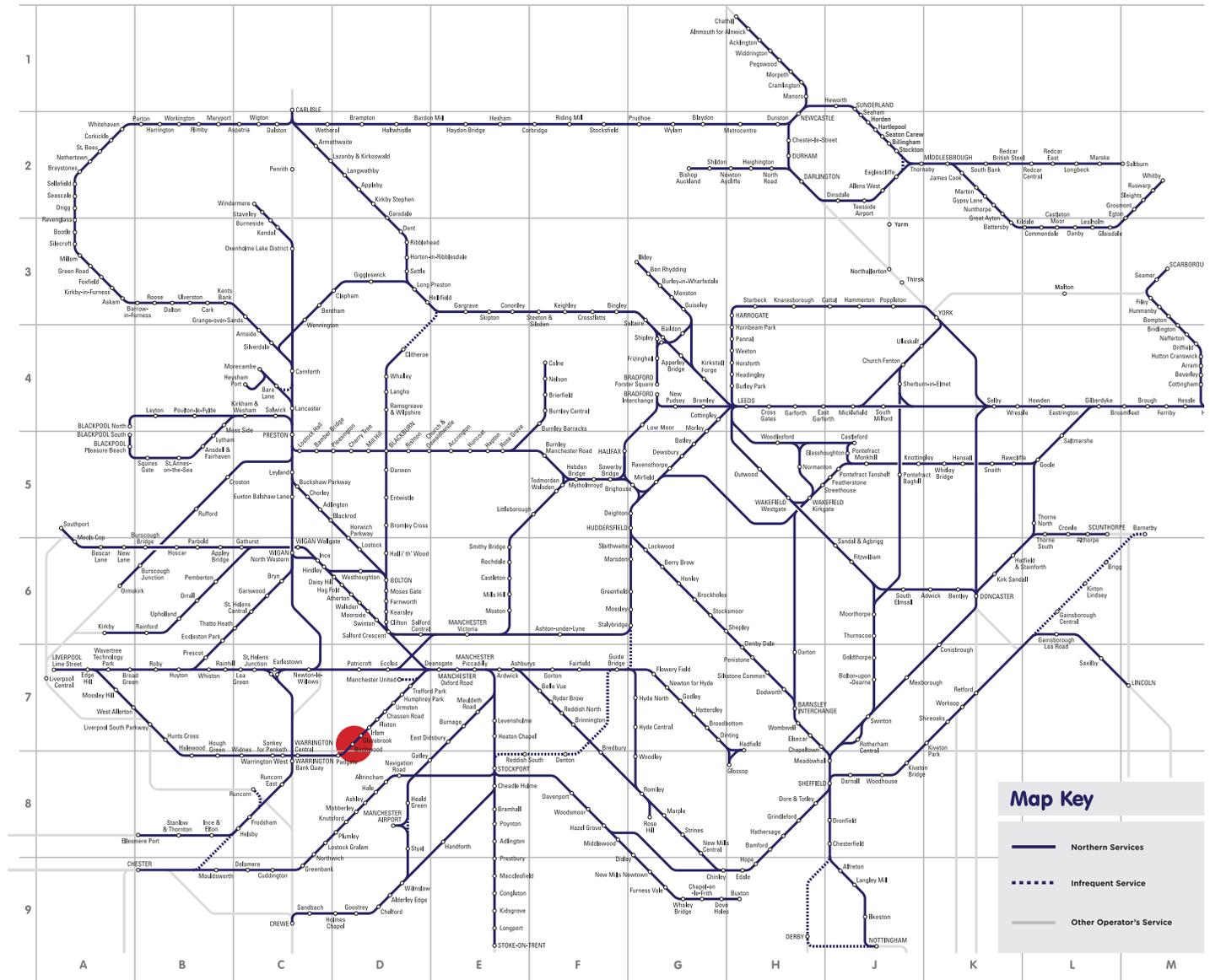
The purpose of this document is to outline the proposed development, demonstrating the need for the improvements to Birchwood Railway Station and how this would form an integral element of a wider sustainable urban extension which would deliver much needed employment opportunities within a sustainable net carbon neutral development.

The document will demonstrate the opportunities afforded by opening up the southern access to create a railway station that is fit for the 21st century with an extensive park and ride facility, alongside a community hub with local shops and services. The new access opportunities, to ensure that the existing highway network can accommodate the development, are identified, with new employment also an integral part of the scheme. These proposals will be set within a green landscape infrastructure to ensure that not only will the scheme be net carbon neutral but it will also make a considerable contribution to biodiversity net gain and crucially protect and enhance the adjacent mossland.



# Introduction

Birchwood Railway Station lies in a key location on the Liverpool-Warrington-Manchester railway line but suffers from poor pedestrian and vehicular accessibility.

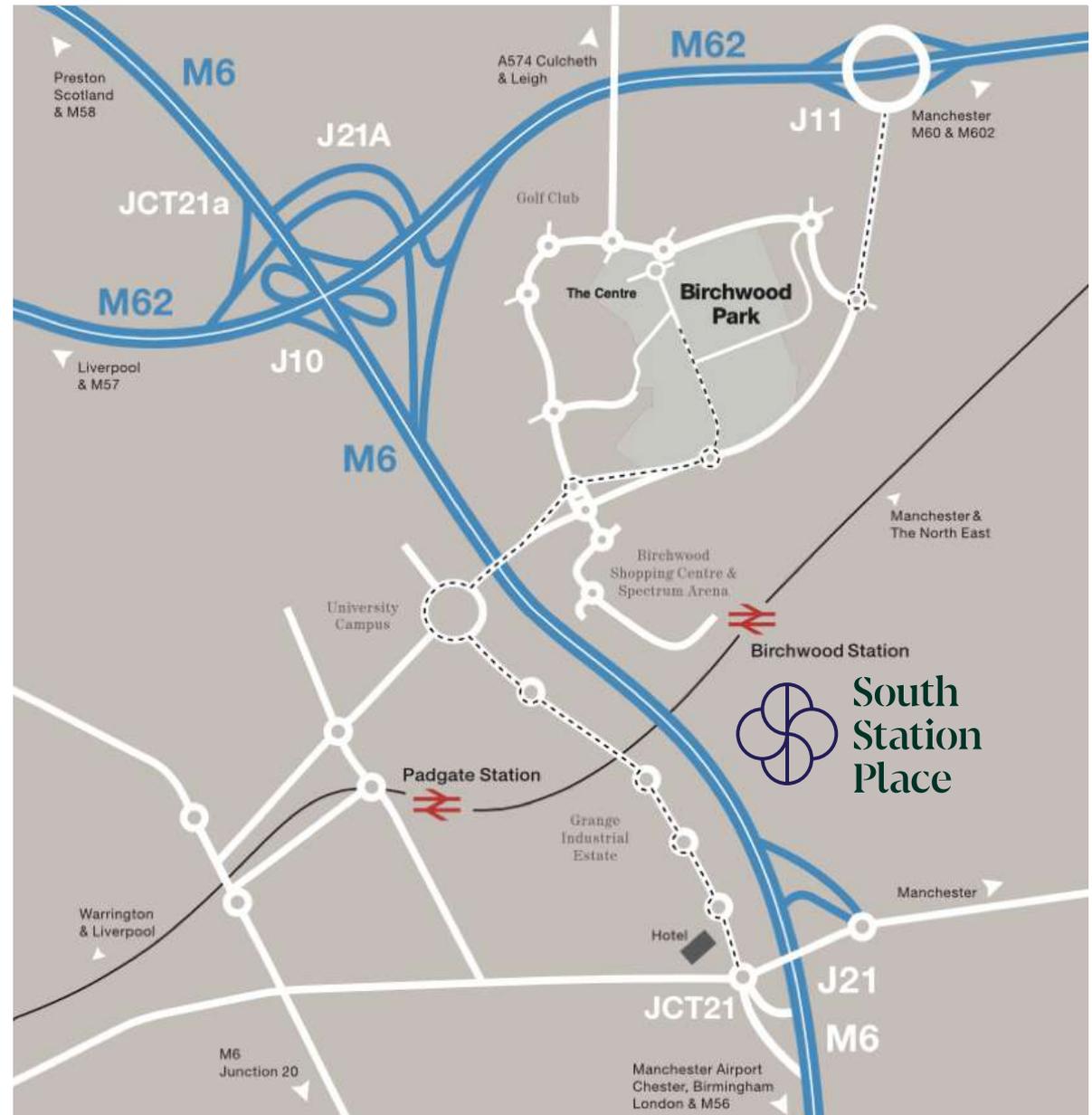


# Introduction

The document concludes with a proposed masterplan approach to the development which is based upon detailed studies into accessibility, landscape, ecology, flood risk, hydrology, ground conditions and other technical concerns such that it is demonstrated that the proposal is genuinely deliverable and can make a tangible contribution to the development needs of Warrington, alongside providing considerable benefits to the public transport infrastructure of the Borough and beyond.

It is acknowledged that the site currently lies within the Warrington Green Belt, but it is considered that the development would not conflict with the key purposes of the green belt as it relates to Warrington but also that the opportunities afforded provide the exceptional circumstances necessary to justify releasing the land from the green belt at this time.

South Station Place will provide exceptional and unique benefits that cannot be provided elsewhere within Warrington and the site should be allocated within the emerging Warrington Local Plan to assist the Borough in meeting its development targets and producing a Local Plan that can be regarded as sound and in full compliance with legal requirements.



# 3.0 Project Team and Stakeholders



# Project Team



PATRICK PROPERTIES

**Patrick Properties are working with a group of landowners to develop the site collectively. Currently two opportunities are being promoted and this document therefore presents two Masterplan options in line with each eventuality.**

The Latium Enterprises Group (“LE”) controls a number of companies operating in the United Kingdom and the United States in diverse business sectors, all of which are either totally or materially controlled by Brian Kennedy & Family, working with specialised management teams. Latium launched its first company over 30 years ago, and now controls eight separate companies from its UK headquarters in Manchester, England and from New York in the USA. The group has a combined annual turnover of £300 million and employs over 3,500 staff. Business sectors have included; Renewable Energy Development ownership and operation, Industrial and Commercial property investment and development, strategic land and sustainable development, Plastic Extrusion Manufacturing, Home Improvements and outdoor living, modern methods of construction, conservatory roof manufacturing, Glass Sealed Unit Manufacturing, Software and technology businesses, Feature Film Production, Professional Sports Team Ownership and E-commerce. The group operates with almost zero debt from third parties and is fully self-funding.

Patrick Properties is part of the family Latium group and has been established for over 20 years having developed over 4 million sq. ft. of commercial space within the United Kingdom. The business prides itself on its family ethos and principle of putting its customers first. With a real focus on sustainability and the environment. All new developments are delivered to BREEAM standards and include an array of additional benefits such as solar and EV charging. Building from the ground up, Patrick Properties sees each development through from inception of an idea, to creation of a world class product. Creating places is a key driver in breathing life into new communities by creating homes, jobs and community infrastructure. The group has a diverse range of investments and ownership and with operations which have active requirements for new business and employment space along the M6 corridor for both start-up and well-established businesses, ranging from 10,000 sq. ft. – 400,000 sq. ft. and including a need for distribution and manufacturing floorspace.





# Deliverability

## Patrick Properties – High quality sustainable developments



# Stakeholders



Network Rail have been fully engaged and consulted throughout the evolution of these proposals and are key partners in delivering South Station Place.



Northern Rail have been fully consulted and whole heartedly support these proposals which generate improvements to passenger experience through improved facilities and greater accessibility to additional service operations.



Warrington Borough Council have been engaged with throughout the preparation of these proposals and see South Station Place as a prosperous opportunity for the Borough and its transport infrastructure.



The Highways Agency have been consulted and support the principle of this project.



Transport for Greater Manchester have been consulted on and whole heartedly support these proposals.



Merseytravel have been consulted on and whole heartedly support these proposals.

J&J  
BRADBURY

BroadwayMalyan<sup>BM</sup>

Cassidy+  
Ashton

C+A

vectos.

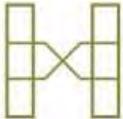
 VEXTRIX

 TylerGrange

S T R  A L A | architects

 bowland  
ecology

H | M HILSON  
MORAN

  
HARLEX

MILLER GOODALL   
ACOUSTICS AND AIR QUALITY

 ekosgen

 e3p

# 4.0 Site Context and Characteristics



# Site Location

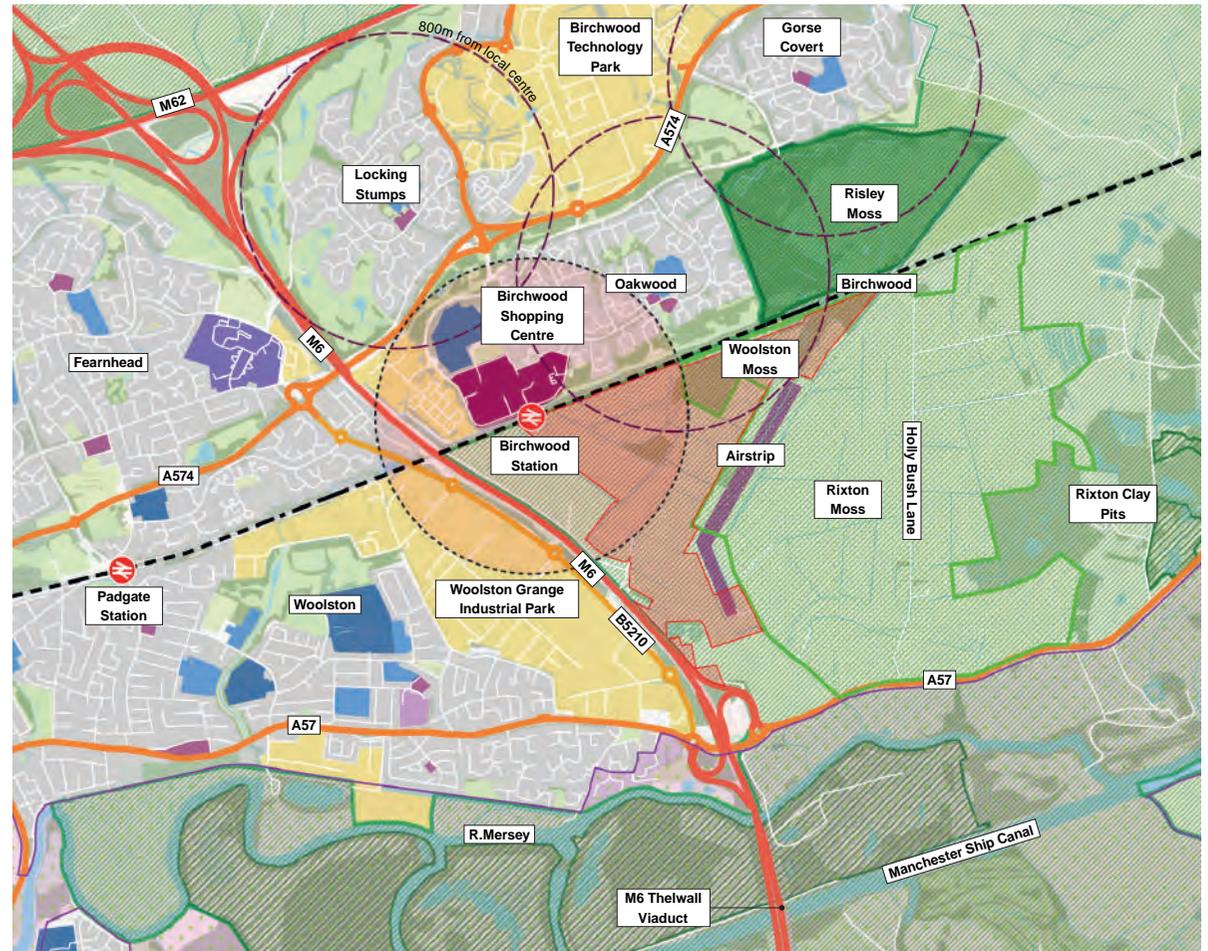


# Site Location

The representation site consists of land largely enclosed by the Manchester-Warrington-Liverpool railway line (to the north), the M6 (to the west) and the A57 Manchester Road (to the south).

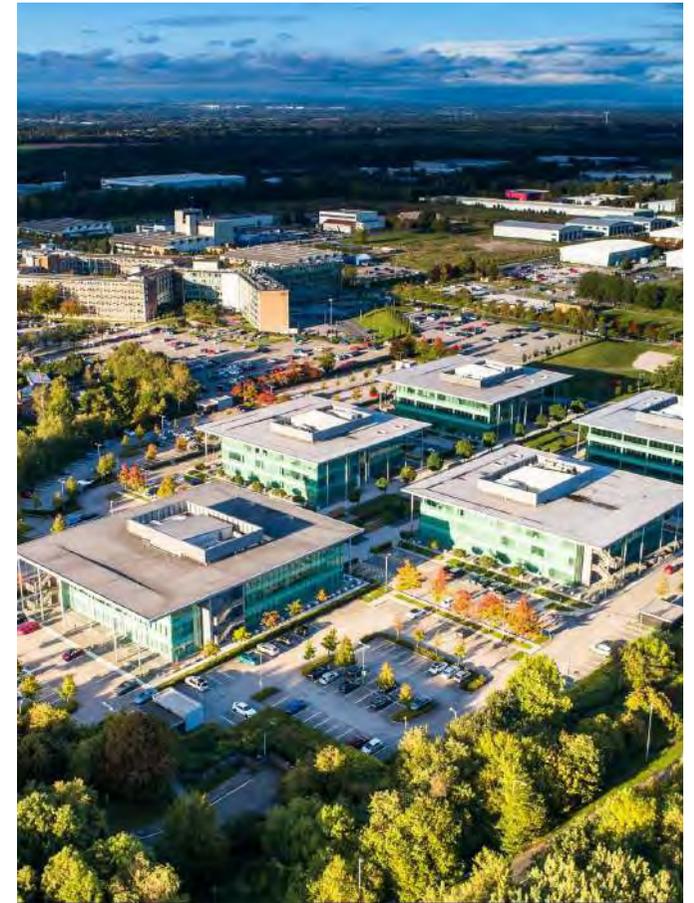
These boundaries, together with Birchwood to the north and Woolston to the west, provide a substantial degree of containment with dense urban built development on two of the site's three sides.

The town centre of Birchwood and Birchwood Railway Station and Shopping Centre lie immediately to the north, whilst Warrington Town Centre lies 4.7km to the west. Birchwood lies almost halfway between Liverpool and Manchester. Birchwood Technology Park lies to the northeast, whilst Woolston Grange Industrial Park lies to the west. Given the close proximity to a range of services and facilities, the site is considered to lie within a highly sustainable location.



Key	
	Indicative Site Boundary
	Motorway
	A road
	B road
	Railway Line
	District / Neighbourhood Centre
	Local Centre
	Community Hub
	Employment / Industrial Area
	Primary School
	High School
	University Campus
	Open Space
	Woodland
	Green Belt
	SSSI
	Local Nature Reserve
	LP CS6 Strategic Green Link

# Gateway to Birchwood Park and Science Corridor



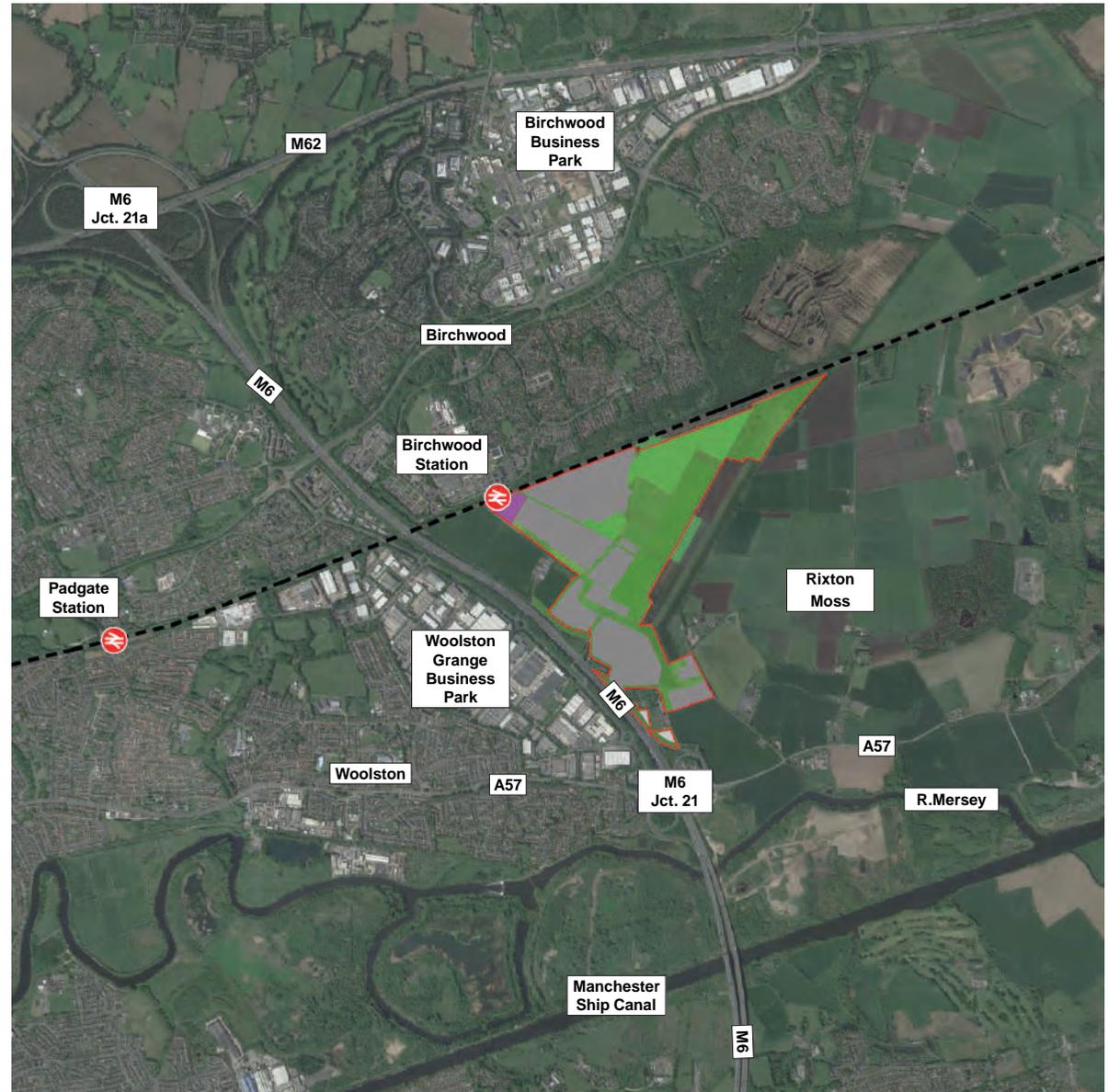
# Site Description & Accessibility

The total land area available for which this document is concerned totals well over 100 ha, consisting largely of monotonous agricultural land with scattered dwellings and a light airfield. The land is generally fairly level with a series of ditches used to drain the land in the past.

## Accessibility

Despite being located centrally between Liverpool and Manchester along the Cheshire Lines Railway, the operational capacity of Birchwood Railway Station is restricted. However, the station is also well served by bus routes, with frequent services to Warrington, Gorse Covert, Oakwood, Leigh and Callands.

Within the current Local Plan Policies Map, the South Station Place land area is designated green belt, which surrounds the settlements of Birchwood and Warrington. However, given the very dense urban development to two of its three sides, this provides an urban fringe environment and creates a unique opportunity for an urban extension whilst respecting the existing urban form.



# Site Boundaries

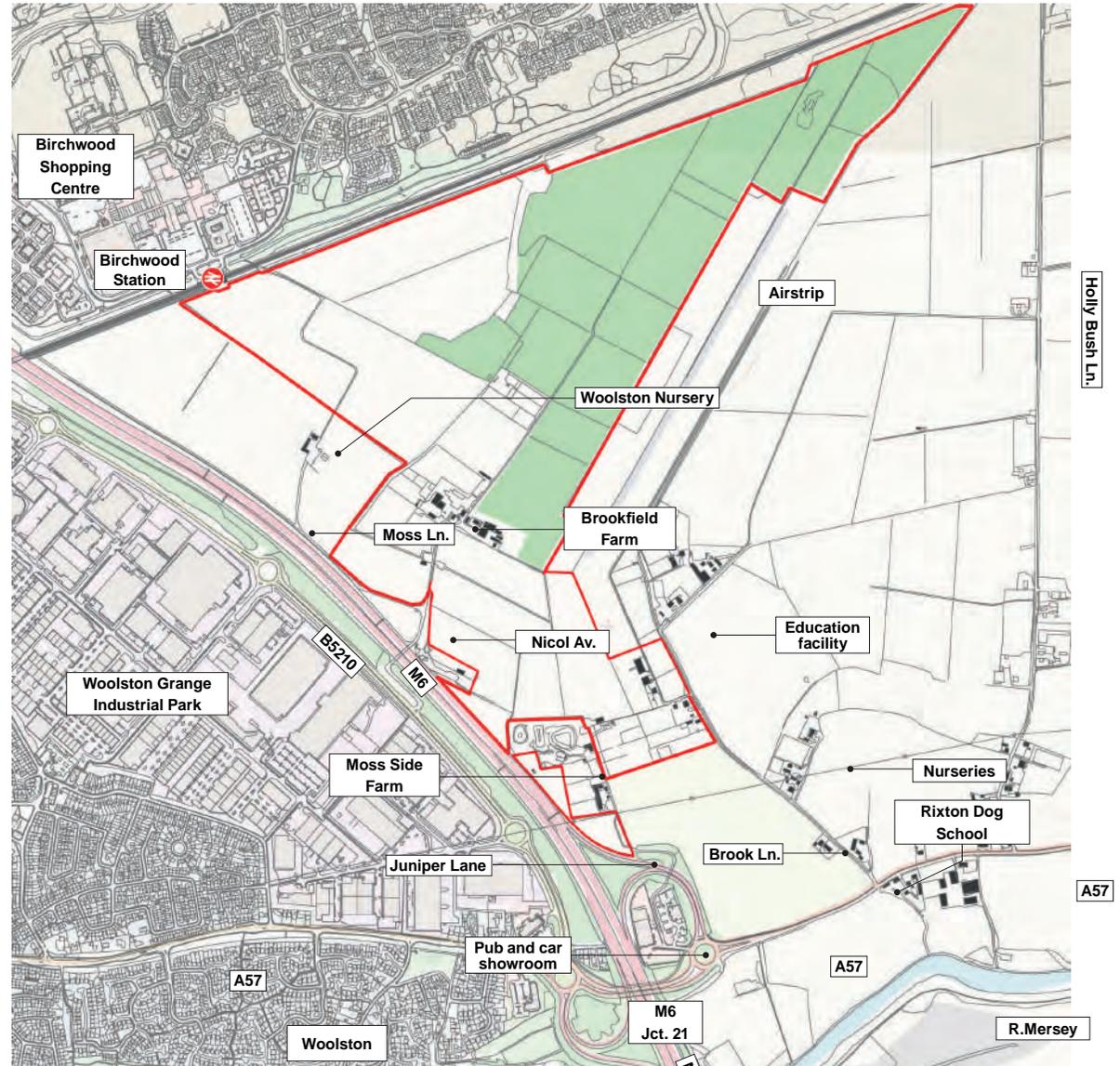
The SSP site has very strong, definable boundaries – the railway line to the north, the M6 Motorway to the west, Birchwood Airport / Airstrip to the east and the A57 / River Mersey to the south. The edges containing the development site are therefore logical revised Green Belt boundaries which strictly encapsulate the land area and therefore prevent any risk of urban sprawl.

The triangular nature of the site presents South Station Place as a logical urban extension ‘infilling’ the existing development line which borders two of its three triangular edges.

## A Sustainable Urban Extension

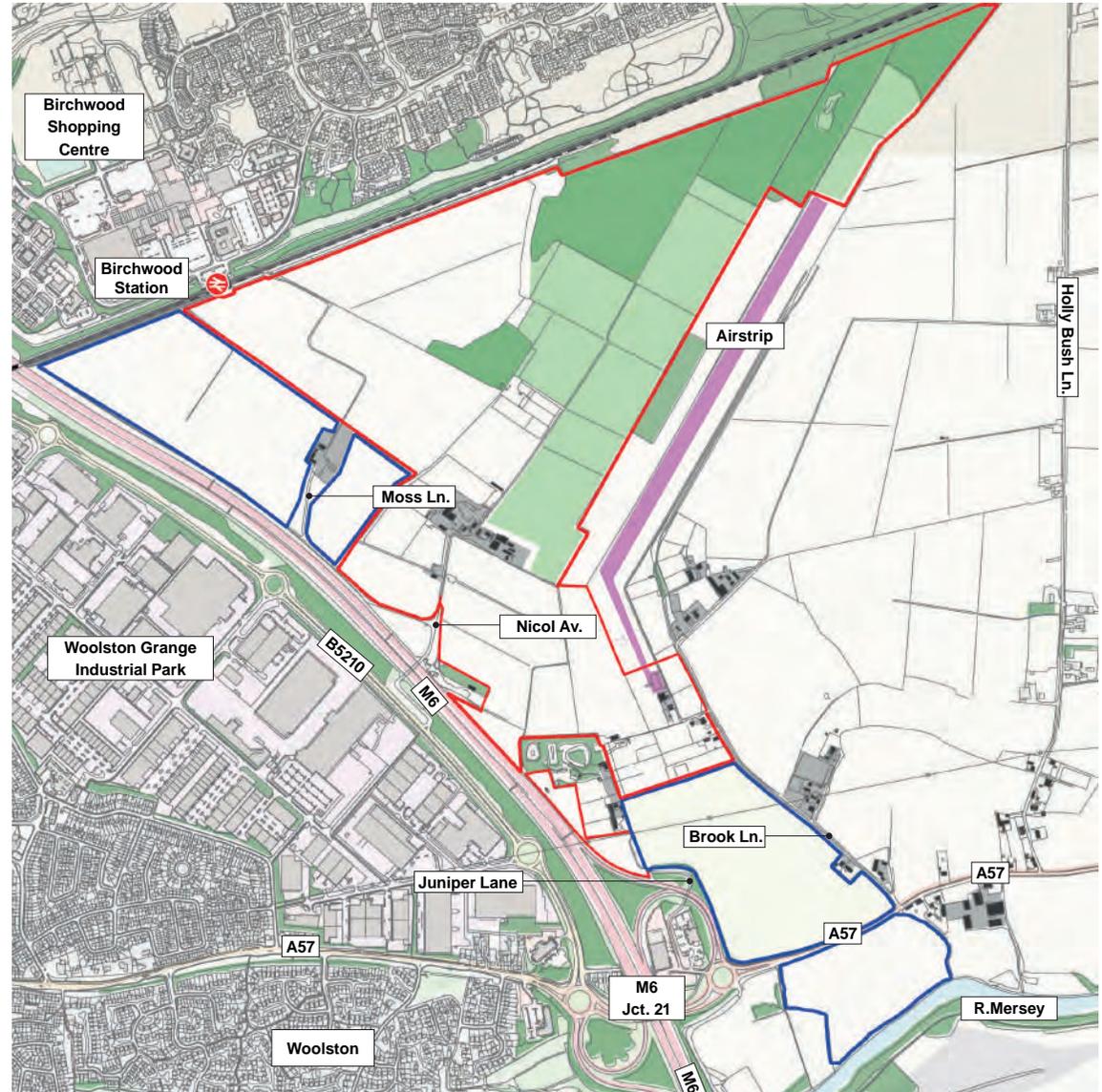
South Station Place is well connected to its adjoining urban area. In delivering a southern access to Birchwood Station the proposals seek to enhance the connectivity to neighbouring facilities.

Birchwood Park is located just 1 mile from the site, affording itself as an existing vibrant business park, which the SSP proposals seek to complement. The facilities across the wider area of Birchwood would be equally as accessible from the site, extending the southern aspect of the town and improving usability of its key services and amenities, in turn generating further urban economic growth.



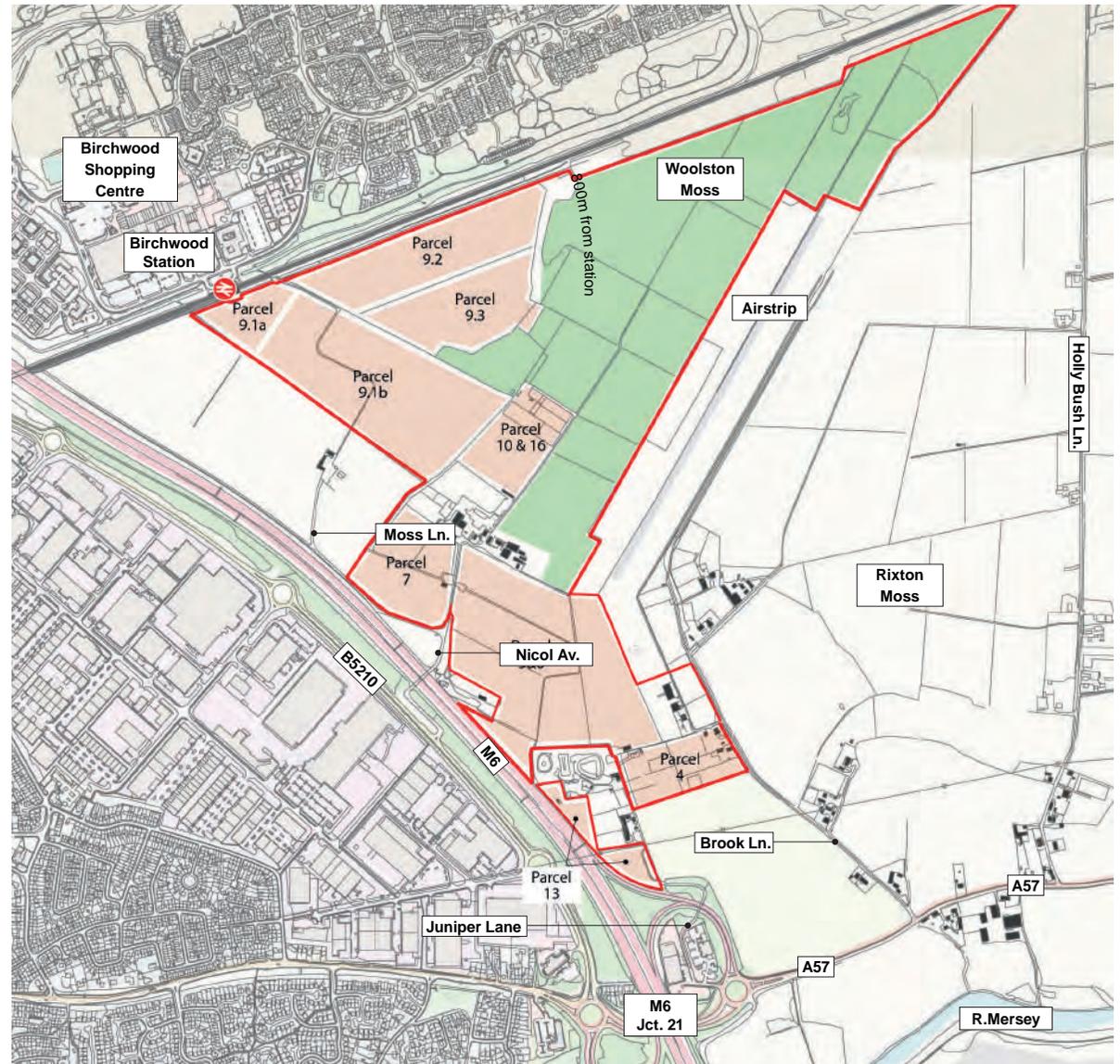
# Site Boundaries

In addition to land controlled by Patrick Properties, the land outlined in blue is controlled by others and can be brought forward for development. This site is deliverable with or without the neighbouring land.



# Schedule of land parcels

Parcel	Gross area (ha)	Gross area (acres)
4	2.7	6.67
5 & 6	10.93	27
7	2.56	6.32
9.1b	9.66	23.86
9.2	5.34	13.19
9.3	5.53	13.66
10	3.39	8.37
16	0.57	1.41
13	1.09	2.69
9.1a	1.7	4.2
Total	43.47	107.37



# Site History

The land to be known as South Station Place falls on the edge of a large area of former mossland which formed part of the original Risley Moss. According to T. Lloyd-Morgan, the land originally lay between two Danish settlements, namely Eric's Town [Rixton] and Wulfige's Town [Woolston]. Martinscroft became established as a small hamlet to the south of Woolston.

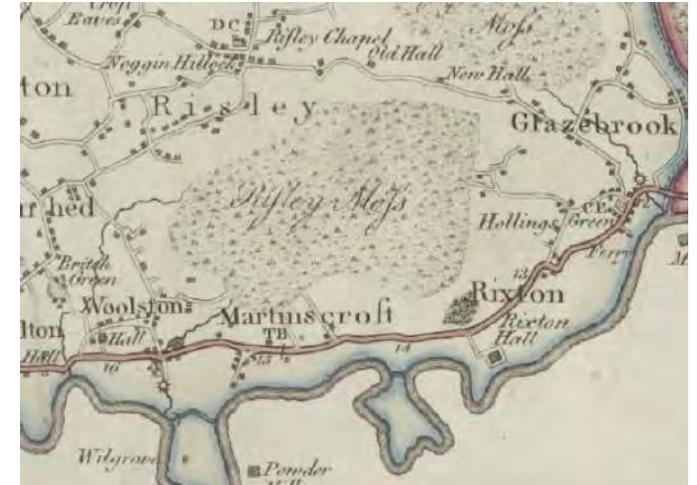
Historically, the wider local area was under the domain of the Culcheth family, when following the death of Gilbert de Culcheth in 1246, the estate was divided between his four daughters with the Risley area falling to Ellen who married into the de Hindley family and took the name Risley which was a small hamlet north of Woolston. The family held the land until 1736, after which it was sold and broken up a number of times.

Much of the land was subsequently drained and became some of the most productive agricultural land in the country. Land was also used for commercial peat cutting until 1928, whilst the army removed large areas of peat in the area now enclosed by the railway line and M6 motorway to be used as fuel during the Second World War.

Drainage and construction works also took place in the mid to late 19th century to facilitate the building of a second Liverpool to Manchester railway line following the opening of the first in 1830. This second route opened in 1873 and is still in use today as part of the Cheshire Lines Committee route. This line forms the northern boundary of the promotion site.

In 1939, Risley Moss was acquired by the Government to build an Ordnance factory, reputedly as the frequent fogs would make the factory more difficult to spot for enemy aircraft. The factory was subsequently taken over by the Admiralty and then the Atomic Energy Authority before becoming vacant whereby it fell into disrepair. This land was subsequently promoted to be Birchwood New Town which eventually led to the creation of the Warrington and Runcorn New Town.

Birchwood and Woolston grew rapidly in the 1980s and 1990s and are now densely built up areas of residential, industrial and retail uses. Rixton in contrast has remained a small hamlet with almost no growth, whilst Martinscroft has been absorbed into the larger built up area of Woolston.



**1849**

The 1849 [1st Edition] Ordnance Survey map shows an area of small farming units, matching the tithe map of 1840 surrounding Woolston Moss which forms part of the larger Risley Moss. Other than Manchester Road and Brook Lane there is little in the way of a road network.

**1896**

By 1896 the distinctive feature of the Cheshire Lines railway had cut through Risley Moss with subsequent land drainage leading to the creation of new and amalgamation of former farm fields to create a more agricultural landscape. The remaining area of mossland within the site, remains largely untouched to the present day other than a short stretch to the west of what is today the airfield. The road network however, remained simple.

**1908**

By 1908 the agricultural landscape that is there today had largely been completed with the remaining moss sitting in the north east corner of the site and the current field patterns having been created by this time.

**1929**

Little changed in the period to 1929 other than land in the vicinity of the modern airfield was drained and changed to agricultural use.

**1955**

By 1955 little further change had taken place on the site itself but the lack of mapping to the north would seem to indicate the presence of the Ordnance factory. Additional sidings alongside the railway had also been created.

**1967**

The two most substantial changes by 1967 were the construction of the M6 motorway and the revealing of the Ordnance factory to the north. The site itself however experienced little further change.

**1977**

The Ordnance factory remained in 1977 although by now plans were well advanced for Birchwood and subsequently Warrington New Town. Again, little changed on the site itself. To the west, development was beginning to grow around Woolston.

**1991**

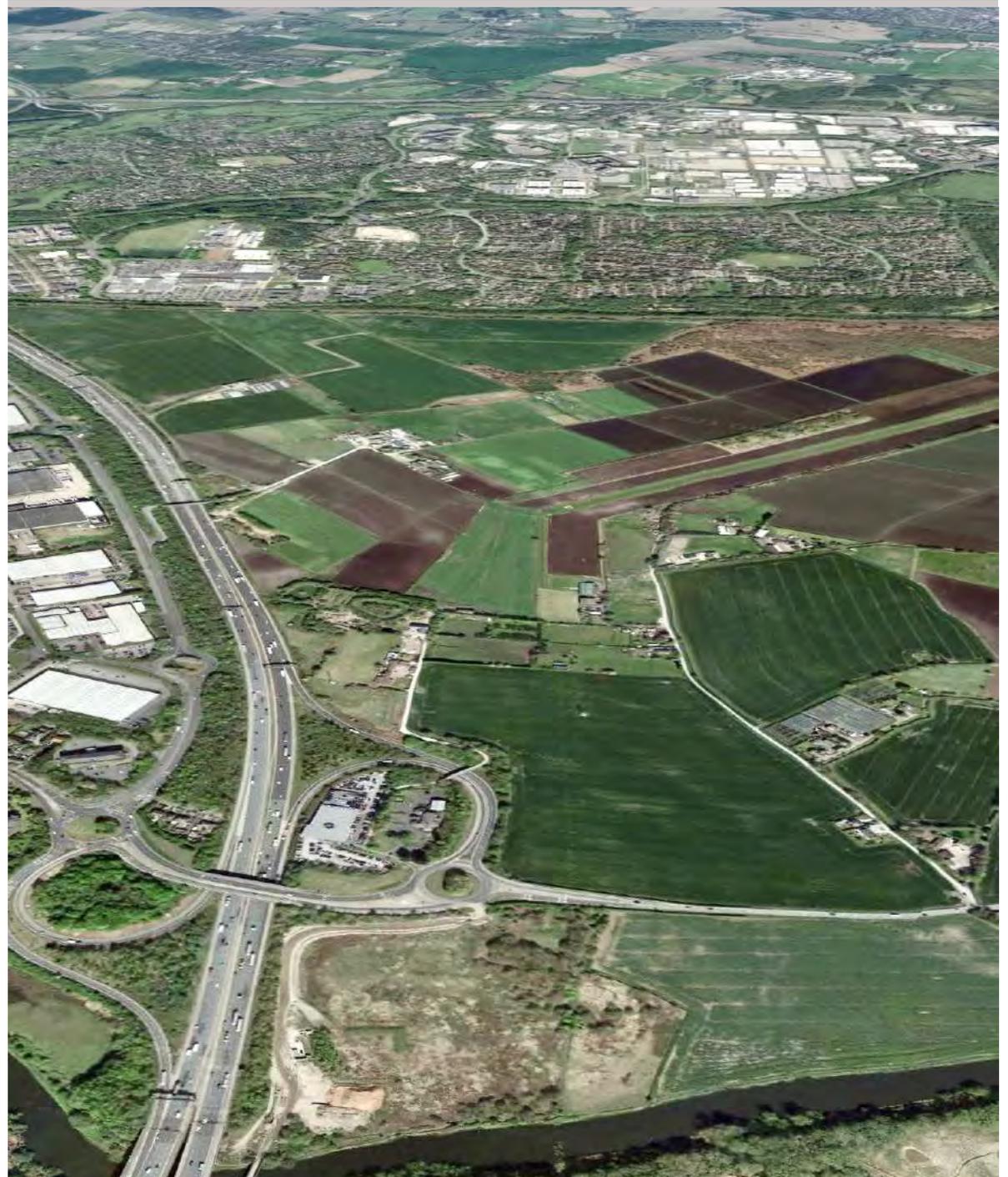
A significant growth spurt took place in the period to 1991 with Woolston extending its residential development and adding a large industrial estate known as the Grange. Birchwood by now was well established with Birchwood Centre alongside the new railway station and the Oakwood residential district largely complete. To the north east of the site, Risley Moss Country Park was welcoming visitors.



# Present Day

Although the site area itself remains fairly undeveloped, the surrounding area has evolved significantly over time. As indicated by the modern day aerial view, the adjoining land is therefore comprised of dense urban development, to which South Station Place would feature as a natural urban extension, infilling the land between Birchwood and Woolston.

It has always been an aspiration to deliver a second access to Birchwood Station. South Station Place seeks to facilitate this, by providing this access. The new link road intends to alleviate traffic congestion at the station, enhancing its appeal, usability and service offering.



# 5.0 Planning Context



# Planning Context

The Development Plan for Warrington is presently comprised of the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy to 2027, which was adopted in 2014.

Work on a replacement plan began in 2016 and a submission plan was consulted upon in 2019. Due to the extent of responses received and the outcome of the Housing Delivery Test - an annual review of housing delivery - that version of the local plan was abandoned and the new submission draft commenced consultation in October 2021. It is this plan that this document is submitted in response to.

A full set of representations to the submission draft will be made separately and this document concentrates upon the exceptional circumstances that apply to the land at South Station Place which justify it being allocated for a public transport led mixed-use and sustainable development.

## Existing Status

The site is shown in the adopted Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy as lying within the green belt, with existing employment and residential areas to the north and west. Birchwood District Centre lies immediately north of the railway station and Rixton Moss local wildlife site lies to the east but outside of the area being proposed for development.



# Submission Draft Local Plan

The Submission Draft Local Plan acknowledges the need for land to be released from the Warrington Green Belt to meet the future development needs of the Borough and follows national planning guidance in providing justification for this.

The National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] sets out five purposes of green belts [para. 138]:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraph 140 asserts that exceptional circumstances should and could support amendments to Green Belt boundaries, whilst Paragraph 142 goes on to define that sustainable patterns of development should be promoted when making any such changes to Green Belt boundaries, giving priority to land which is well served by public transport.

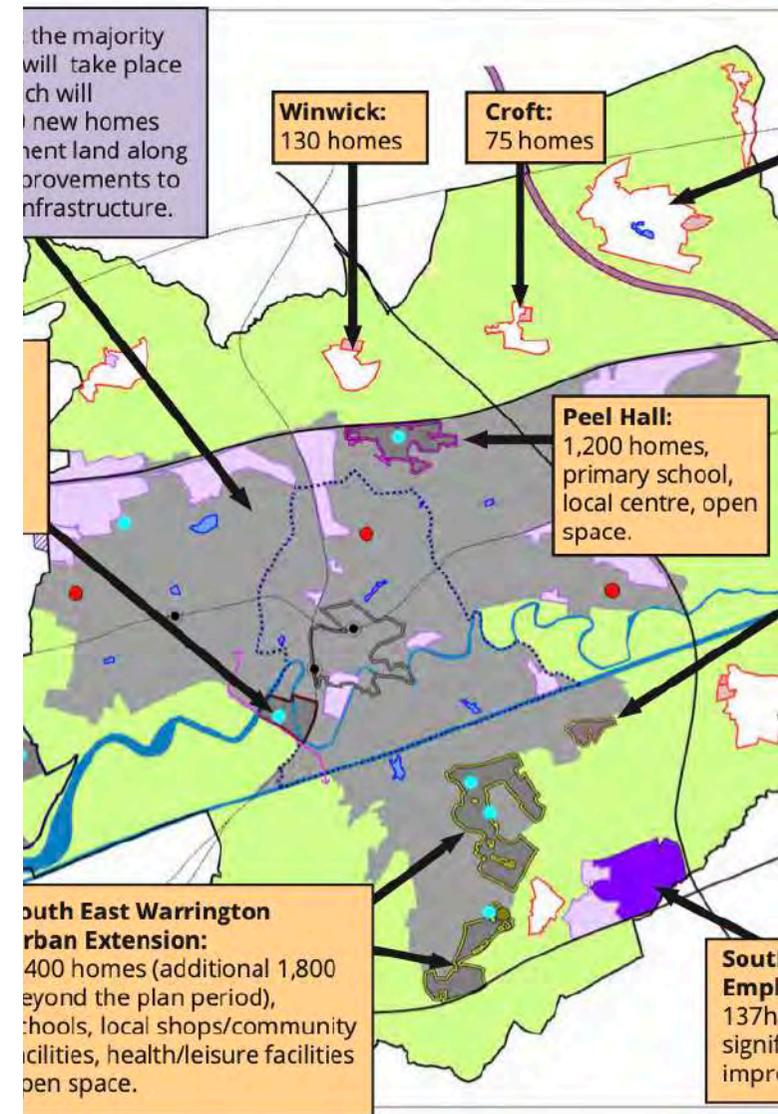
**Green belt boundaries [para. 143] should:**

- a) ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;
- b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
- c) where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
- d) make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;
- e) be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and
- f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

**The 2021 Submission Warrington Local Plan states that:**

"3.4.1 The Council is able to fully evidence and justify the exceptional circumstances required for Green Belt release, in accordance with the NPPF.

3.4.2 In accordance with paragraph 141 of the NPPF the Council has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting Warrington's identified need for development before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify Green Belt release."



# Submission Draft Local Plan

## It was also noted that:

“3.4.4 The Council recognises that some of these opportunities will fall outside of the Plan period. Together with the longer term delivery from the Plan’s site allocations and other potential sites within the wider existing urban area, this negates the requirement to take any additional land out of the Green Belt as Safeguarded Land.”

## Alternative locations outside of the Borough were also given consideration but:

“3.4.6 St Helens are making a contribution to meeting Warrington’s employment land needs through the proposed western extension of the existing Omega development. This is demonstrated in the Council’s Statement of Common Ground. It is also apparent that all of Warrington’s neighbouring authorities are having to release Green Belt themselves to meet their own development needs.”

## Reaching a conclusion on Green Belt release, the submission local plan states:

“3.4.7 The starting point for Warrington’s exceptional circumstances is the requirement to ensure that sufficient land is provided to meet Warrington’s development needs. The Plan’s proposed housing requirement will ensure that issues of affordability are addressed and that sufficient homes are provided to support the planned level of economic growth, but this can only be achieved with the release of Green Belt. Similarly, if Warrington is to provide sufficient employment land to meet its future needs, then this can only be achieved with the release of Green Belt.

3.4.8 The exceptional circumstances are further justified through the spatial strategy of the Plan. The Plan will enable the creation of new sustainable communities but in a manner which will support the delivery of strategic infrastructure required to address existing issues of congestion and unlock major development sites with significant brownfield capacity.

3.4.9 This will ensure that the release of Green Belt land will work in parallel with brownfield development and infrastructure delivery to provide a comprehensive Plan for Warrington as a whole.”

The draft plan also provided what were regarded as exceptional circumstances for each area of Green Belt release. It is not the purpose of this document to critique other proposed green belt releases, but it is noted that the justification for the various sites included:

... a major proportion of Warrington’s need for housing and employment land can be met sustainably through comprehensive planning and infrastructure delivery. The scale of the urban extension will also provide capacity for growth well beyond the Plan period, ensuring the permanence of the revised Green Belt boundaries.



# Purposes of Green Belt

The release of the land at SSP from the green belt would not compromise the five purposes of the green belt in Warrington and would also accord with the requirements of national planning guidance in respect to the establishment of a new, long term green belt boundary.

The nature of the site which is broadly triangular in shape and has existing development on two sides is such that the development will not appear as unrestricted sprawl or result in the merging of existing towns as the next settlement is a substantial distance away. The development will be well planned, mixed use and incorporate substantial areas of green space. As such it will not appear as an encroachment into the countryside and will relate well to the existing extent of development to the north and west.

Turning to the issue of preserving the setting of historic towns, it is not considered that this is a primary purpose of the Warrington green belt as the adjacent built-up areas are both relatively modern and the only heritage feature is a listed milestone to the southeast of the site. The historic heart of Warrington will not be affected by the proposed development.

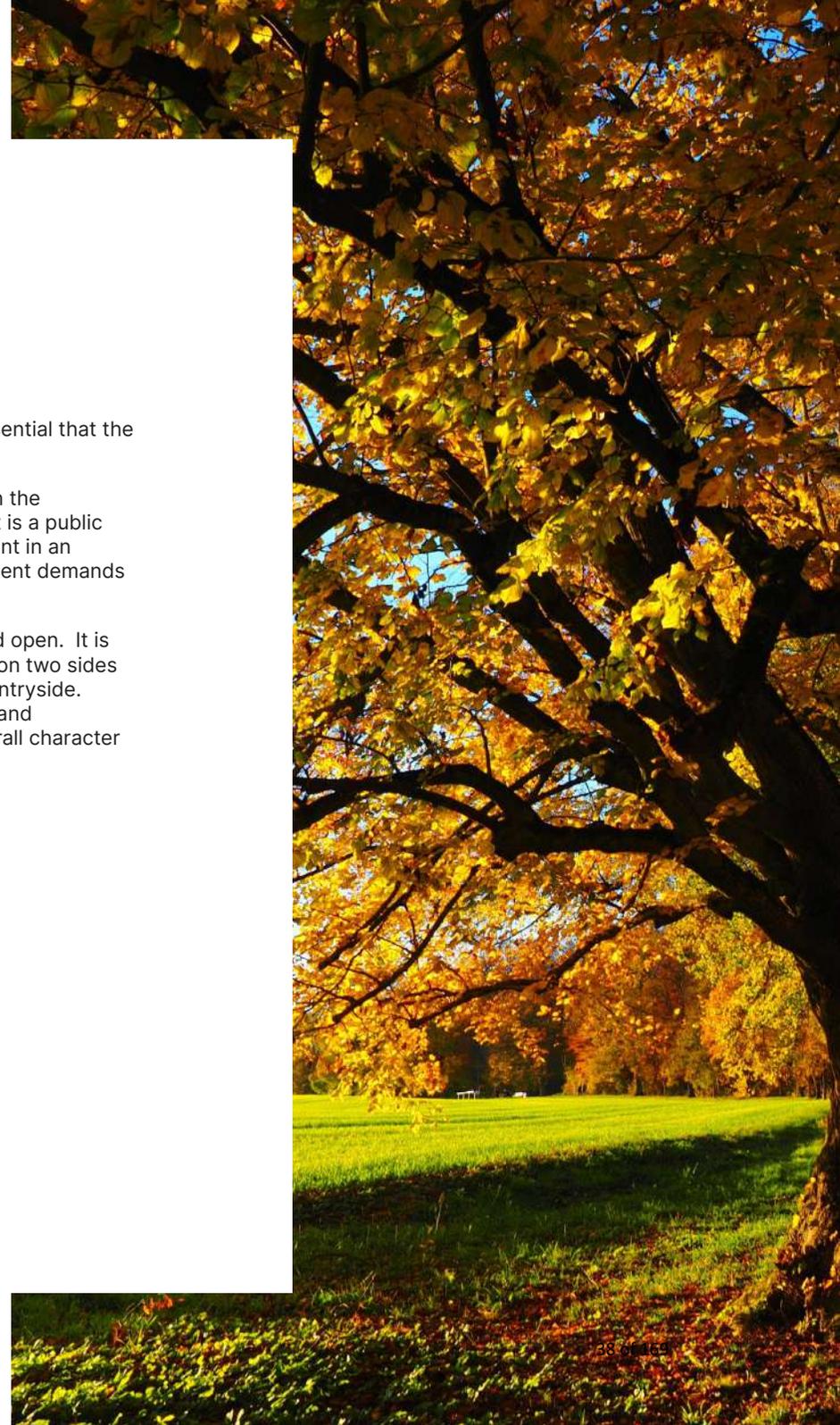
Given the accepted exceptional circumstances for green belt release have been accepted by Warrington Council due to a lack of available land within the urban area, it is not considered that the release of the site will harm regeneration initiatives within the town.

## Green Belt Boundaries

When making changes to the green belt it is essential that the guidance set out in the NPPF is adhered to.

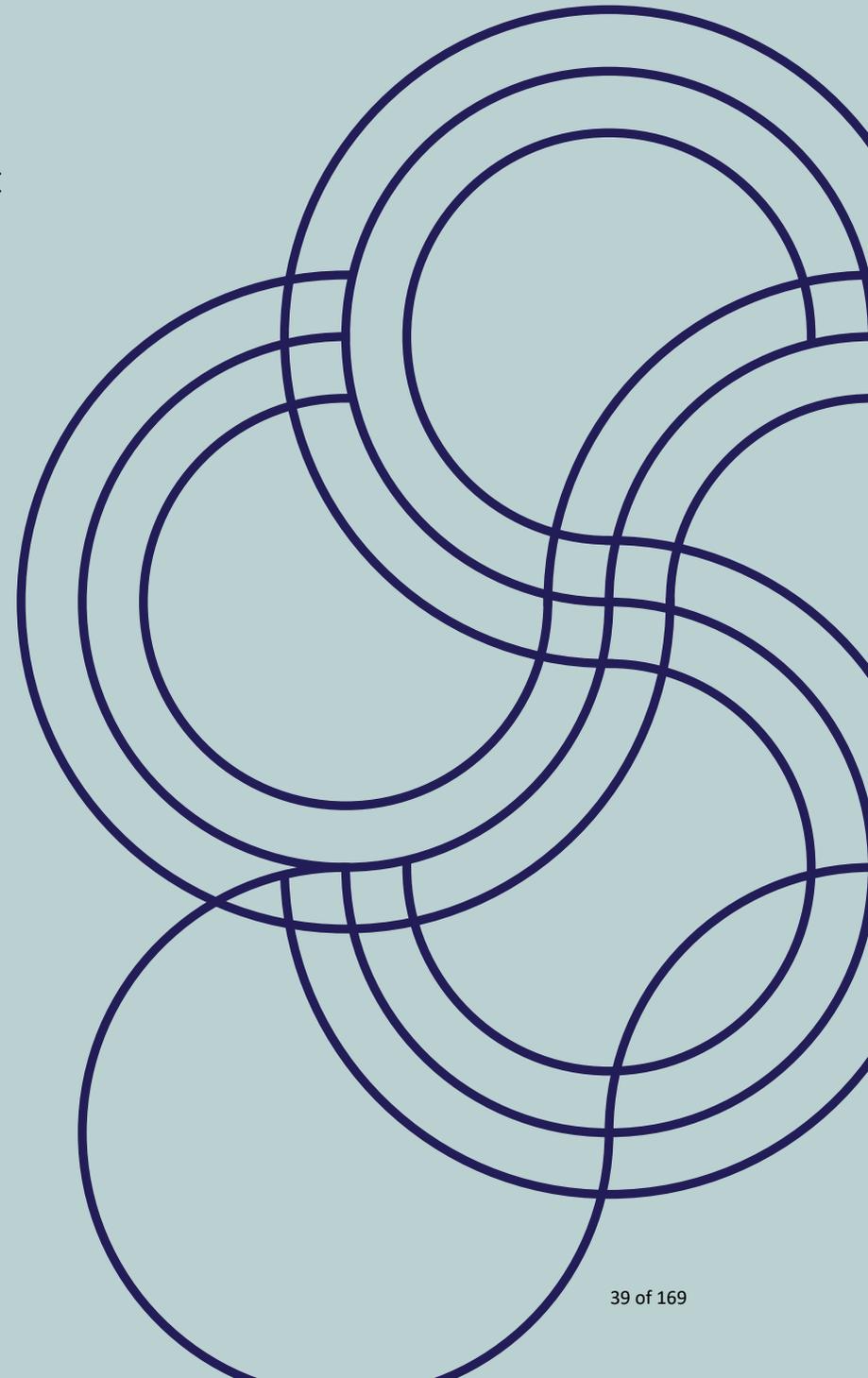
The proposed development of SSP accords with the development strategy of the Local Plan in that it is a public transport-led sustainable mixed-use development in an accessible part of the Borough where development demands are high but existing opportunities are minimal.

There is no particular benefit in keeping the land open. It is visually dominated by the existing built up area on two sides which partly enclose it from the wider open countryside. It has no particular landscape or heritage value and its development would not compromise the overall character and purpose of the Warrington Green Belt.



These reasons are all applicable to South Station Place but in addition, the specific exceptional circumstances include:

- The delivery of key public transport infrastructure through private sector investment
- The creation of new access to the south of Birchwood Railway Station
- The opportunity to enhance and upgrade Birchwood Railway Station to increase capacity, usage and customer satisfaction
- Aligns with rail and transport stakeholders aspirations, by facilitating enhancements along the CLC rail corridor. Not only benefiting Warrington but serving enhanced regional connectivity.
- The provision of a substantial park and ride scheme, with capacity for growth. This represents a significant opportunity to take cars off the road and encourage people onto public transport
- An improved gateway to Warrington major employment area and science corridor. The proposal serves the existing business community by delivering a significantly improved public transport infrastructure
- Assist carbon landscaping and carbon reduction
- The creation of a community hub with Doctors / Dentist and other community uses
- The provision of 1.6 million sq ft industrial floorspace
- The creation of an Employment Park/Business Hub to boost new business growth and support the opportunity for the creation of approximately 3,000 new jobs within the local economy once built
- Safeguarding and enhancement of key designated Moss land and protected habitats
- Creation of new green links and ecological havens
- A logical extension to existing settlement is in a highly sustainable location
- Deliverable within the next 3 to 5 years



# Submission Draft Local Plan

## **The draft plan also identifies the implications of not meeting Warrington's full development needs. These include:**

- In the short term the Council considers that Warrington's economic strength and attractiveness will result in ongoing development pressure. This may initially be accommodated in the existing urban area through higher density development but these options still require Green Belt release.
- A lower level of development may reduce the ability of the Council to plan comprehensively for growth and as a result infrastructure delivery could be piecemeal and reactive.
- It is likely that there will be an absolute and proportionate increase in the number of people commuting into the Borough to work. The consequences from this are likely to include increasing congestion on Warrington's transport network and a risk of worsening air quality on some of the busier transport corridors where people live.
- If the Council does not release additional land for employment, then the Council is concerned that in the medium and longer term Warrington's status as a key driver of the North West economy will be threatened.
- As development land is used up, potential development and investment could be lost to other regions of the UK and potentially overseas. The Council's Economic Development Needs Assessment is clear that there is already suppressed demand for employment land.

There is clearly not only an overwhelming argument that exceptional circumstances for green belt release in Warrington do exist but that there are also exceptional circumstances to justify the release of the land at South Station Place, particularly in view of the unique nature of the railway led development that will come about as a result of the allocation of the land for a mixed use scheme.

Failure to allocate the land would potentially result in the Warrington Local Plan failing to deliver the full development needs of the Borough, thus making the Plan unsound.

# South Station Place

# South Station Place

# National Planning Policy Framework

There are a number of other policies in the NPPF which provide the framework for considering the merits of high quality, sustainable development. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, with the key purpose of the planning system seen as being to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development [para. 7]. There are three overarching objectives to sustainable development, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways; an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective [para. 8].

Paragraph 81 highlights that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt.

Paragraph 82 goes on to state that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the locational requirements of specific sectors highlighting preferences for suitably accessible locations.

Paragraph 92 requires planning decisions to aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places, which; promote social interaction, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles.

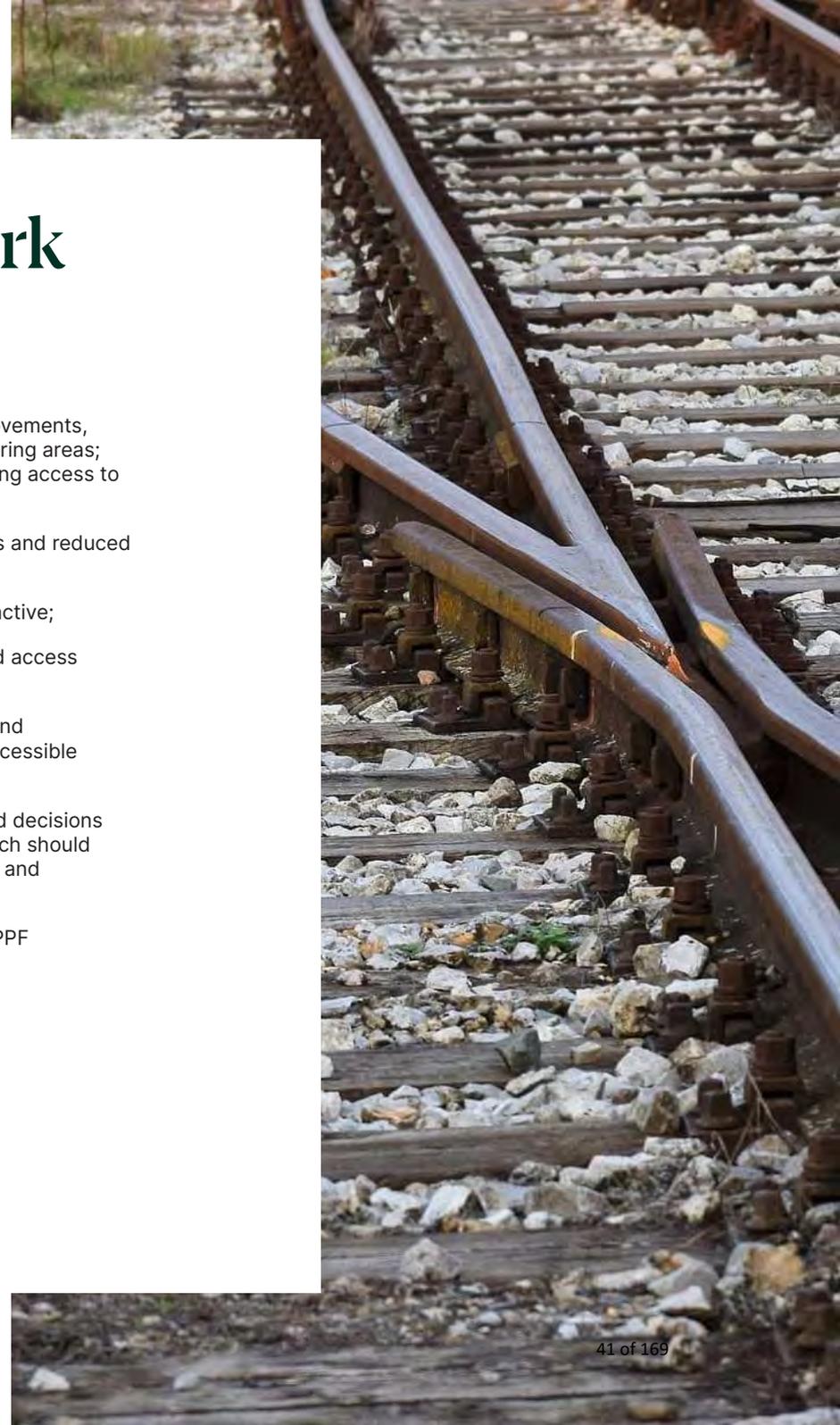
Paragraph 105 supports development focused in sustainable locations, which reduce the need to travel and are well connected to key transport nodes.

Paragraph 112 requires developments to:

- Give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and within neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport.
- Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- Create places that are safe, secure and attractive;
- Allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- Be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations

Paragraph 122 asserts that planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in demand for land, which should be informed by regular reviews of available land and allocated land.

SSP satisfies all of these requirements of the NPPF and will result in a high quality, accessible and sustainable development.



# Site Opportunities and Constraints

The site area has been subject to an extensive suite of surveys and analysis, which have identified a number of specific characteristics materialising as opportunities and constraints. Each of these have informed the design process, allowing the inclusion of appropriate enhancement and mitigation solutions. This evaluation exercise has then guided and will continue to guide the design evolution.

The technical characteristics of the site are set out in further detail in the supplementary Technical Appendices, however are summarised within Chapter 10 of this document.

## Opportunities:

- There is a unique opportunity to open up access to the southern side of Birchwood Railway Station
- The development provides the opportunity for transport enhancements and other public infrastructure, including new footpaths and cycle links
- The site will be highly accessible from the M6 and from the railway network as well as from the local area through a network of existing and proposed cycle and footpaths
- The site is in close proximity to existing local facilities and services, including those within Birchwood District Centre
- The site is considered to be within a sustainable location
- The site provides the opportunity for environmental safeguarding and enhancement including peat restoration and protection of the adjacent mosslands
- The topography of the land is relatively flat and the area is readily available for development
- The development can provide net zero carbon live-work units

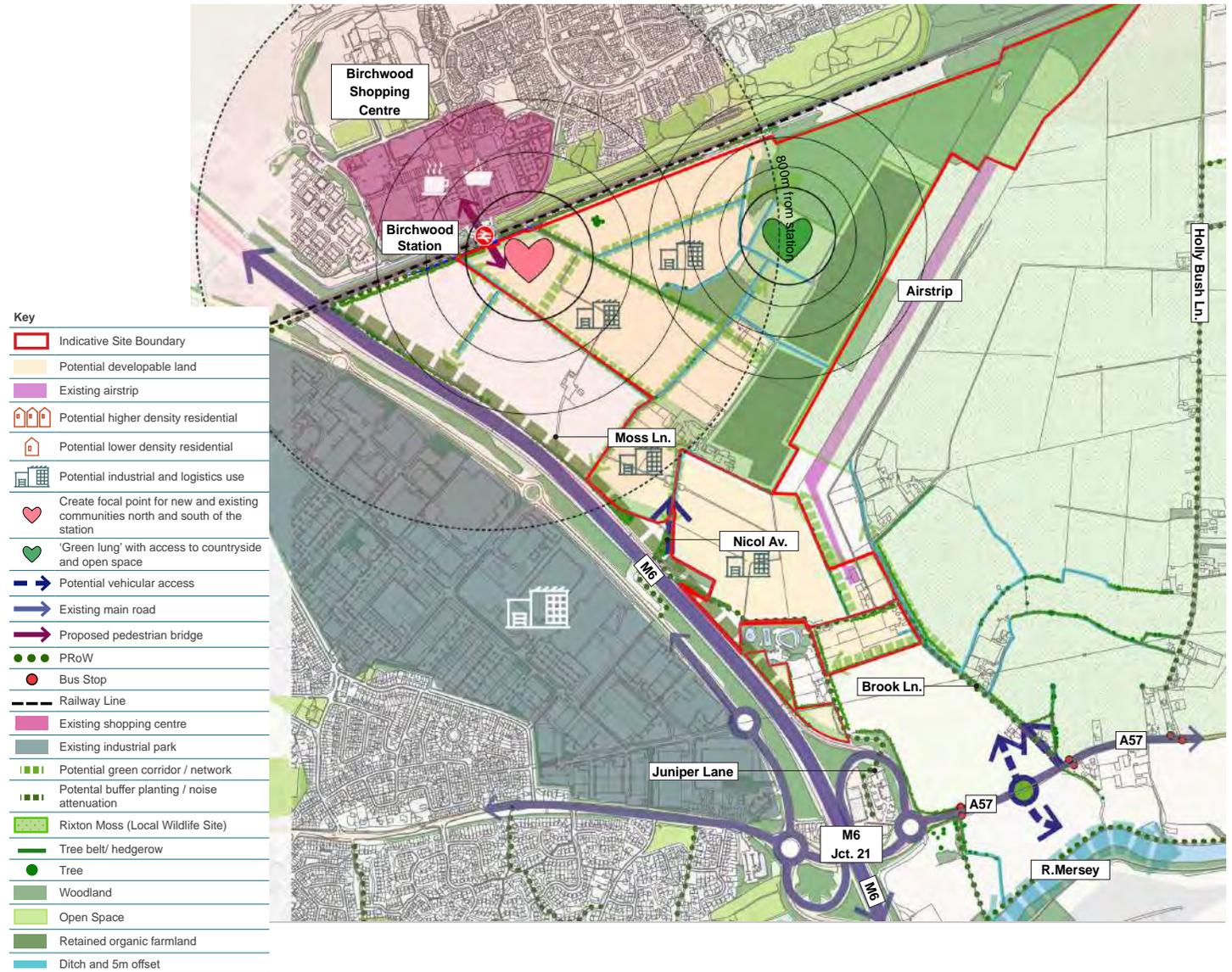
## Constraints:

- The site is a greenfield site
- The site is allocated within the green belt under local planning policy
- Birchwood Airport and the Airstrip lay adjacent to the site
- There is a need to identify two access points to the site and the existing Nicol Avenue route into the site would require highway improvements
- There are potential issues with noise due to the proximity to the development will result in additional traffic movements at the M6 Junction 21
- The site is located adjacent to land identified as mossland and due regard should be given to this

Both the opportunities and constraints have informed the proposed masterplan to ensure the creation of an inclusive sustainable development.

# Site Opportunities

- The delivery of key public transport infrastructure through private sector investment
- The creation of new access to the south of Birchwood Railway Station
- The opportunity to enhance and upgrade Birchwood Railway Station to increase capacity, usage and customer satisfaction
- Aligns with rail and transport stakeholders aspirations, by facilitating enhancements along the CLC rail corridor. Not only benefiting Warrington but serving enhanced regional connectivity.
- The provision of a substantial park and ride scheme, with capacity for growth. This represents a significant opportunity to take cars off the road and encourage people onto public transport
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- A logical extension to existing settlement is in a highly sustainable location
- Deliverable within the next 3 to 5 years



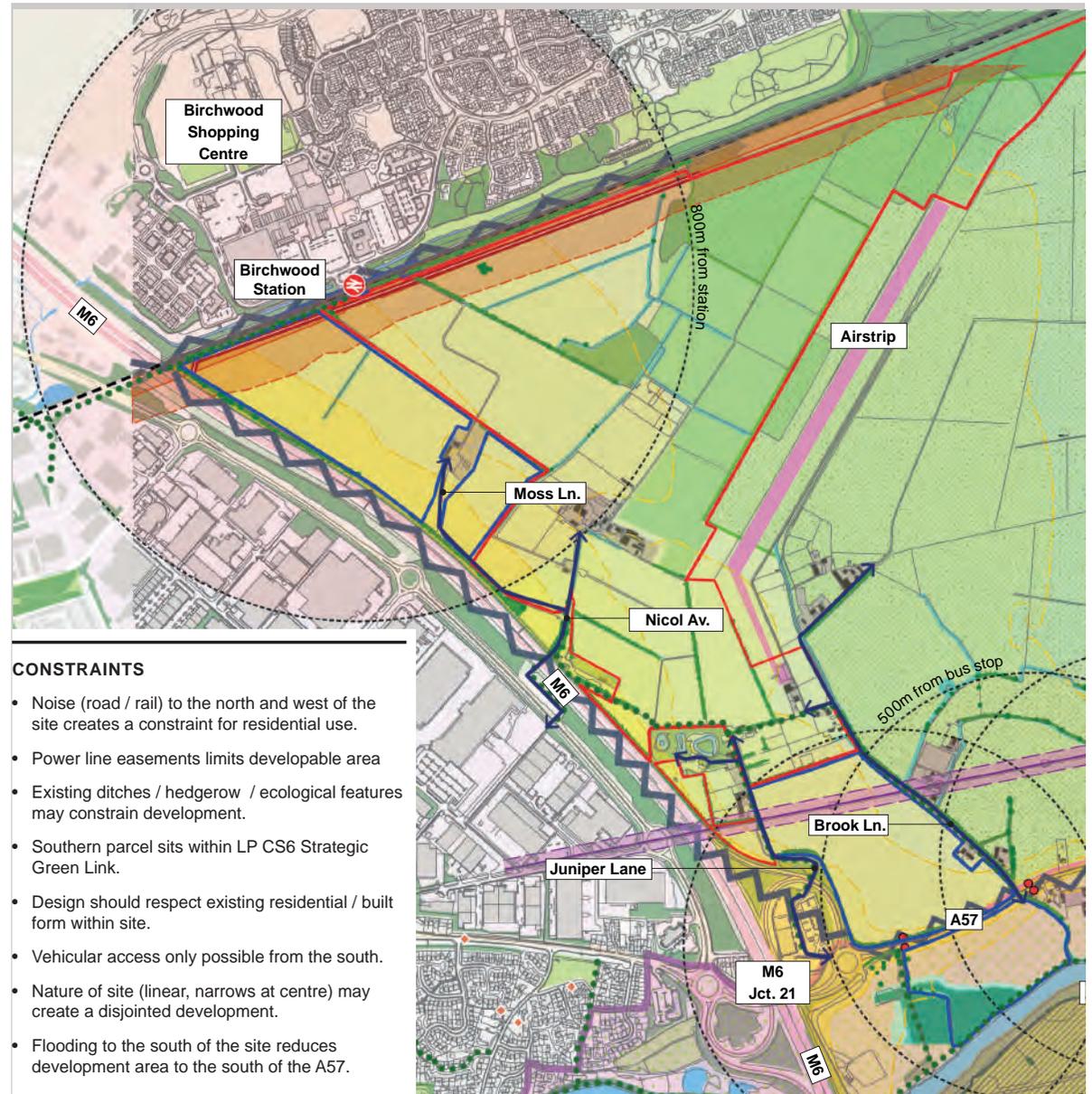
# Understanding Constraints

The mapping of key features, characteristics and constraints has facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the site. As such, these factors have each been carefully considered, providing a basis for an effective, appropriate masterplanning process.

The enclosed constraints plans have enabled the careful location of suitable land uses in line with specific contextual factors, guiding community services away from the M6 Motorway and closer to the railway station, enabling the formation of a 'community hub'.

Development has also been guided away from important peatland areas so as to protect these habitats.

Key	
	Indicative Site Boundary
	Land controlled by others
	Existing built form
	Existing vehicular access
	Existing airstrip
	PRoW
	Bus Stop
	Railway Line
	Hard edge / barrier
	Rail line extension reserve land
	Power line
	30m power line easement
	Rail noise - 75+Db
	Rail noise - 70-74.9 Db
	Road noise - 75+ Db
	Road noise - 70-74.9+ Db
	Road noise - 65-69.9 Db
	Road noise - 60-64.9 Db
	Green Belt
	Rixton Moss (Local Wildlife Site)
	LP CS6 Strategic Green Link
	SSSI
	Tree belt/ hedgerow
	Tree
	Woodland
	Open Space
	Surface water
	Ditch and 5m offset
	Flood risk 1 100 yr (Lidar survey)
	Flood risk 1 200 yr (Lidar survey)
	Flood risk 1 1000 yr (Lidar survey)
	Ward boundary
	Listed building / feature



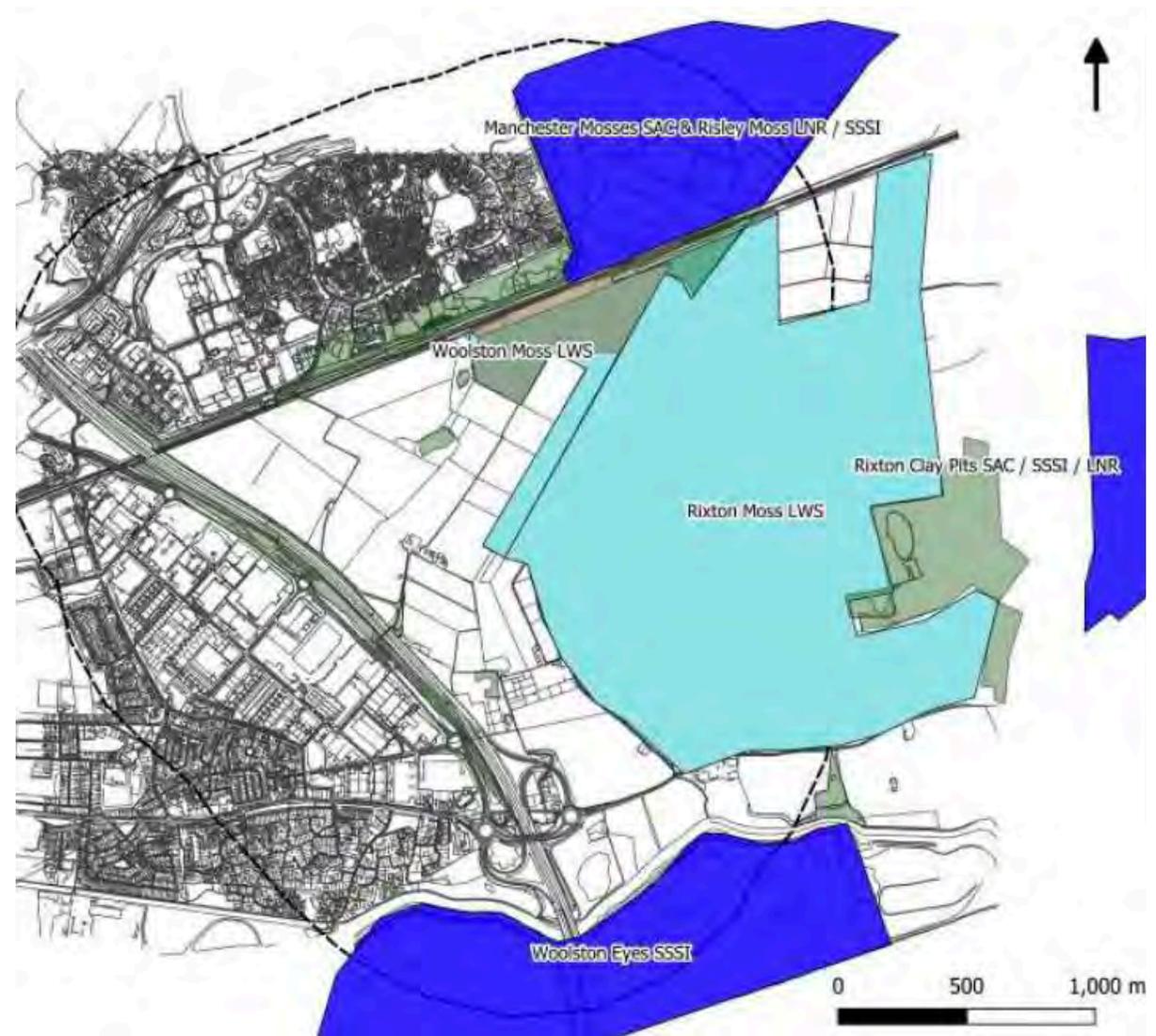
- CONSTRAINTS**
- Noise (road / rail) to the north and west of the site creates a constraint for residential use.
  - Power line easements limits developable area
  - Existing ditches / hedgerow / ecological features may constrain development.
  - Southern parcel sits within LP CS6 Strategic Green Link.
  - Design should respect existing residential / built form within site.
  - Vehicular access only possible from the south.
  - Nature of site (linear, narrows at centre) may create a disjointed development.
  - Flooding to the south of the site reduces development area to the south of the A57.

# Constraints Designated Sites

The Designated Sites Plan demonstrates the relationship of SSP land with regard to statutory and non-statutory designated sites within a 1km buffer. The proximate assets highlight site area's where additional consideration is needed with regard to land use in pursuing any development at this site.

Accordingly, the biodiversity value associated with protecting and enhancing these assets has been prioritised in designing the SSP proposals. It has therefore been a key development objective, seeking to secure biodiversity net gain across the development.

The mossland areas highlighted within this plan are a key site characteristic considered throughout the design evolution, as adjoining the site area their absolute protection from development is key. Whilst the mossland areas are most certainly not part of the proposals, it is the intention of SSP to allow for this safeguarding throughout the lifetime of the development and beyond.



# Design Development

It was originally the intention to pursue residential development at this site neighbouring the station hub. However, following discussions with Warrington Borough Council, we were encouraged to focus on provision for employment development.

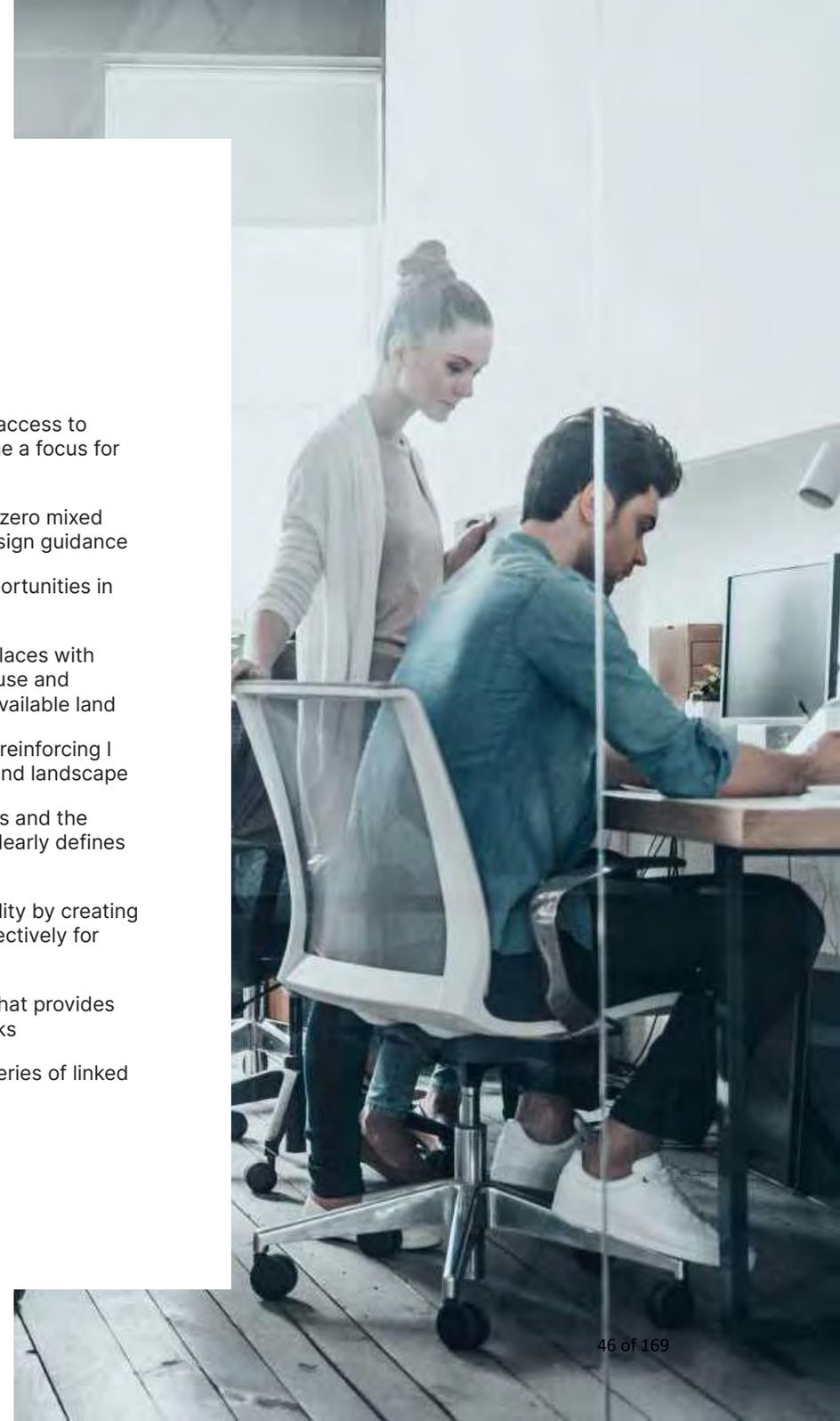
The proposals will continuously evolve throughout the design process, which will take on board the following:

- The site's constraints and opportunities, in respect of physical attributes and planning considerations;
- The context analysis; and
- Discussions with sub-consultants

The land to be known as South Station Place presents itself as a logical urban extension, infilling the triangular parcel which is bordered by key transport corridors and dense urban development. A baseline analysis of the site and surrounding context has allowed the development to be guided by a series of design principles, centred around the vision for the area, including:

## Urban Design Objectives

- To concentrate development upon the new access to Birchwood Railway Station which will become a focus for the new community
- To create an attractive walkable net carbon zero mixed use community using the best of current design guidance
- To create new and modern employment opportunities in an accessible location
- To encourage good design that will create places with distinctive character, which are pleasant to use and suitable in scale & to make efficient use of available land
- To promote character by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development and landscape
- To promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by development which clearly defines private and public spaces
- To promote accessibility and local permeability by creating routes that are attractive, safe and work effectively for all users
- To promote legibility through development that provides recognisable routes, gateways and landmarks
- To create an attractive public realm with a series of linked streets, squares and spaces



# Design Development

The proposed development objectives and design principles draw upon the aspirations of the Garden Village principles, which include:

- Strong vision, leadership and community engagement
- Land value capture for the benefit of the community
- Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets
- A strong local jobs offer in the Garden City itself and within easy commuting distance
- Generous green space, including: surrounding belt of countryside to prevent unplanned sprawl; well connected and biodiversity-rich public parks; high quality gardens; tree-lined streets; and open spaces
- Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable neighbourhoods
- Integrated and accessible transport systems

## Green Network Opportunities

Garden Village principles seek to create generous green space within developments including well connected and biodiversity-rich public parks, high quality public gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces.

The proposed development will seek to provide a firm and defensible long-term boundary to the green belt to the east whilst providing a soft outer boundary to the existing urban area in order to prevent unplanned urban sprawl.

The proposals seek to enhance and promote the existing green infrastructure, through a series of green corridors, which connect the site and the surrounding area. In turn, this will provide a series of ecological corridors to enhance and promote biodiversity within the site and enhance the biodiversity value of the site and surrounding mossland for both the residential and employment areas.

These qualities will provide a key design framework for the development of the site. The green corridors are to be designed alongside pedestrian and cycle movement which navigate across the site, alongside a 'blue' network of sustainable urban drainage systems.

The Garden Village principles place emphasis on creating walkable neighbourhoods, which can be applied to a business context and which will be encouraged throughout these green networks, decorated as tree-lined streets to encourage travel via foot or cycle through an attractive landscape. This in turn promotes a healthy, sustainable community.

It is anticipated that the landscaping treatment for the 8 live-work units will be characterised with high-quality and wildlife-friendly garden spaces. This includes, but is not limited to, the provision of bird boxes and baths, and the introduction of native plant species.

The landscaping provision, including provision for new open spaces and public parks, will be determined through the proceeding masterplanning process.



# Network Opportunities

## Blue Network Opportunities

The landscape analysis acknowledged the importance of the existing 'blue' network of watercourses within the site's landscape.

The integration of the existing blue network into the development's design has been a critical element to ensure that the scheme responds positively to any future impacts of climate change.

The proposals seek to introduce a series of new Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), which will allow the Masterplan and future development the opportunity to prevent any surface water increase and control discharge rates into the existing and proposed network. These will be across all areas of the site.

## Urban Network Opportunities

The development's design has sought to retain, incorporate and enhance the local landscape and site assets, including the character of the local mosslands.

Given the site's location between a rural and urbanising context, the design process has acknowledged the need to approach the development character of the site in a distinct way, which directly responds to the density, scale and design languages (architectural, landscape and movement) of the surrounding areas, and thus creates new character areas within the development.

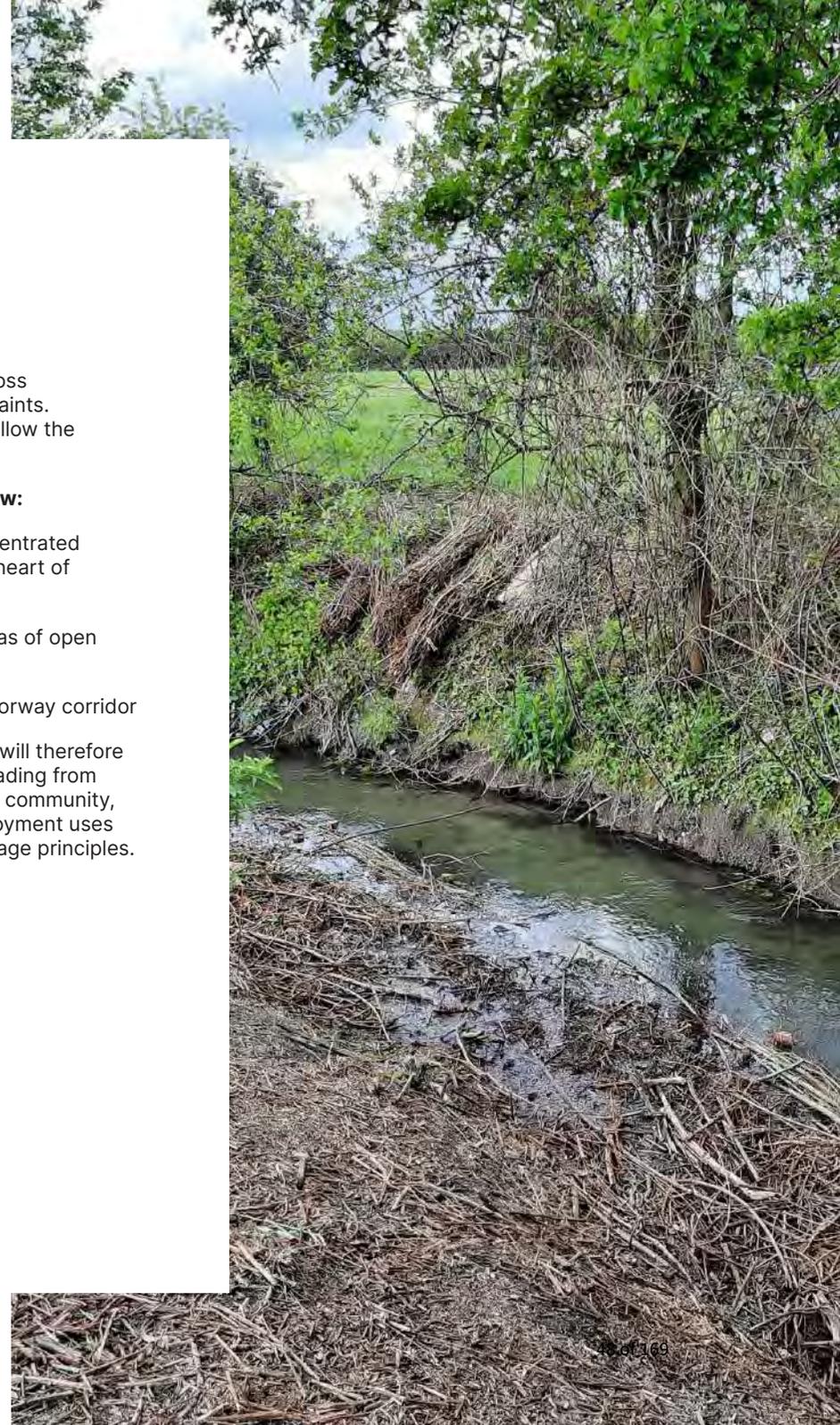
This contributes to a passive approach to wayfinding and connectivity through improved interventions on legibility, such as key nodes, vistas and materiality.

The nature and density of land use will vary across the site, to reflect contextual factors and constraints. The detailed design scheme will be set out to follow the following guidelines.

### Land use and density design principles to follow:

- Community and Business Hub facilities concentrated close to Birchwood Railway Station and the heart of the development
- Lower density development towards the areas of open space and ecological corridors
- Heavy industrial development along the Motorway corridor

The response to the surrounding urban context will therefore contribute to the creation of character areas, leading from the strong vision, which will deliver a mixed-use community, providing an enhanced station, a range of employment uses and community facilities, in line with Garden Village principles.



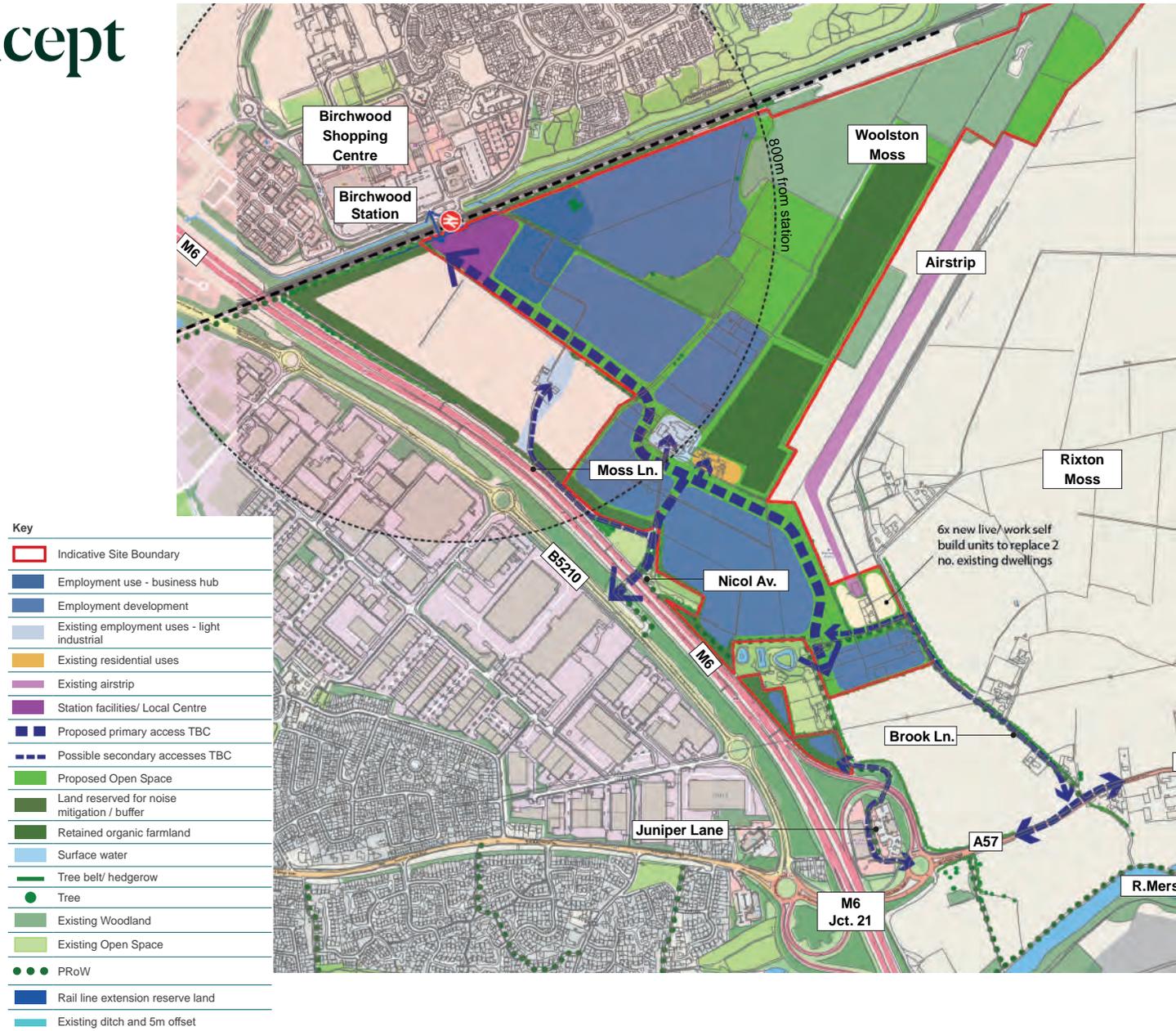
# The Masterplan Concept

The proposed development has not been subdivided into distinct 'zones', however, the site analysis informing the design evolution has influenced land use location across the site, representative of various opportunities and constraints and the associated best use of certain land. As such, the more substantial commercial development has been located adjacent to the M6 Motorway, ensuring the business hub is situated away from the Motorway and closer to the enhanced station facilities, in turn forming the community hub.

As the business hub has been situated around the enhanced station, this allows for the utilisation of the facilities in extending the presence and use of the station's community hub. Accordingly, akin to the settlement pattern of Birchwood, the live-work units would be positioned away from the surrounding highways network, and towards the existing semi-rural setting, to enhance the 'living in a park' concept.

The various site areas identified for green network opportunities have been located adjoining the proposed new green belt boundary, so as to provide a softer outer boundary.

Patrick Properties are working with landowners and two development scenario's are being considered, both of which are deliverable.

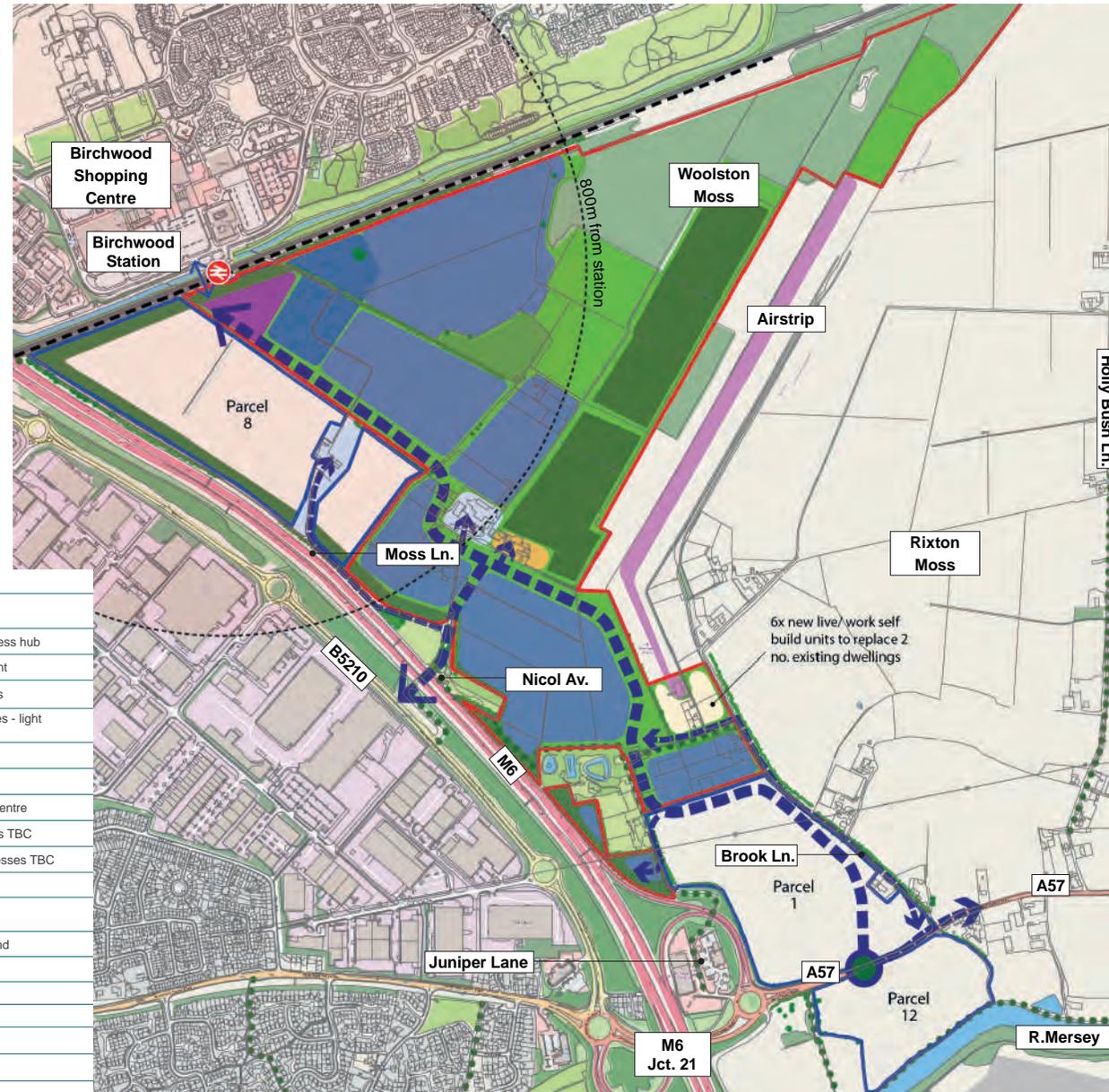


# Masterplan Option 2

The constraints set out for the site have helped to shape the nature, form and location of development across the site area. This analysis process has led to the production of the site's development framework, identifying key areas of opportunity.

Key

	Indicative Site Boundary
	Employment use - business hub
	Employment development
	Land controlled by others
	Existing employment uses - light industrial
	Existing residential uses
	Existing airstrip
	Station facilities/ Local Centre
	Proposed primary access TBC
	Possible secondary accesses TBC
	Proposed Open Space
	Land reserved for noise mitigation / buffer
	Retained organic farmland
	Surface water
	Tree belt/ hedgerow
	Tree
	Existing Woodland
	Existing Open Space
	PRoW
	Rail line extension reserve land
	Existing ditch and 5m offset

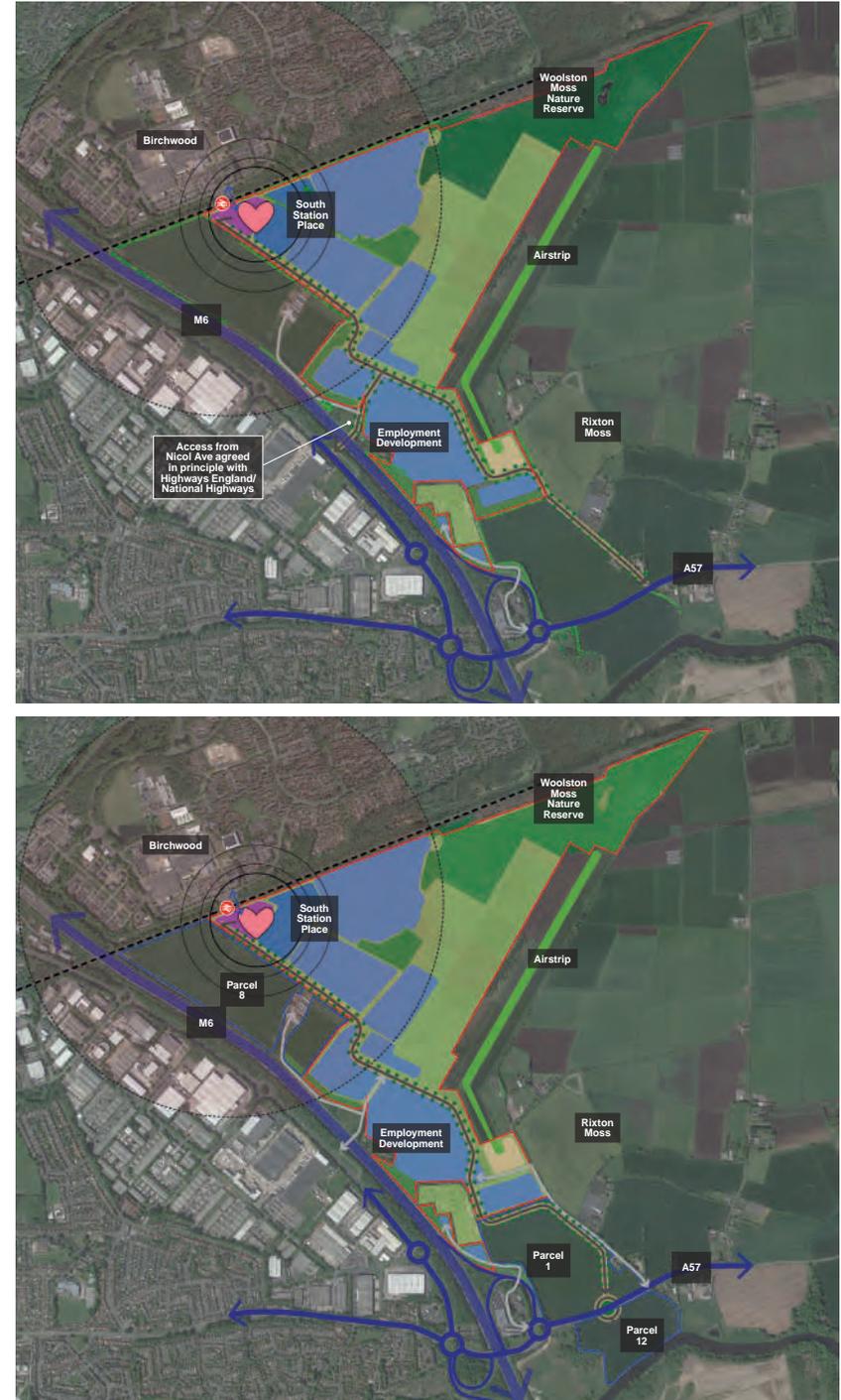


# SSP Masterplan

The vision of SSP to deliver a new link road, park and ride, a new community and employment hub, through allocation in the draft Local Plan, is demonstrated to be exceptionally justified and 'sound'. Alongside this new development and associated infrastructure, the proposals will also provide the opportunity for new parklands and the creation of a new Nature Reserve and Country Park area, including over 45 acres of public open space and woodland for informal use. These areas will assist in providing a robust long term boundary for the green belt and will generate significant benefits for the local community and wildlife, as links to the existing residential areas both by foot and cycleway will be enhanced. This section will set out the masterplan and development framework for South Station Place.

This site represents an integral opportunity for an urban extension, whilst seeking to provide much needed enhanced rail services and facilities, along with employment development within the local area. The proposed development will provide substantial transport, employment, economic and environmental benefits in a sustainable location that will make a major contribution to the needs of Warrington over the next decade. However, the opportunity for enhancement of the station and the creation of a new southern access will be one of the first elements taken forward, thus ensuring the key benefits are experienced early on in the process. The proposed scheme has evolved through a series of appraisals, planning and design consultations, with detailed discussions between the promoters of the site, their design team and relevant stakeholders, prior to being presented to the Council.

**Patrick Properties are working with landowners and there are two development scenario's being considered.**



# SSP Masterplan

In addition to the infrastructure improvement flexibility this scheme offers, the development of the station is an additional integral aspect of this proposal, which would provide substantial improvements to the transport facilities across the area, whilst enabling wider regional benefits.

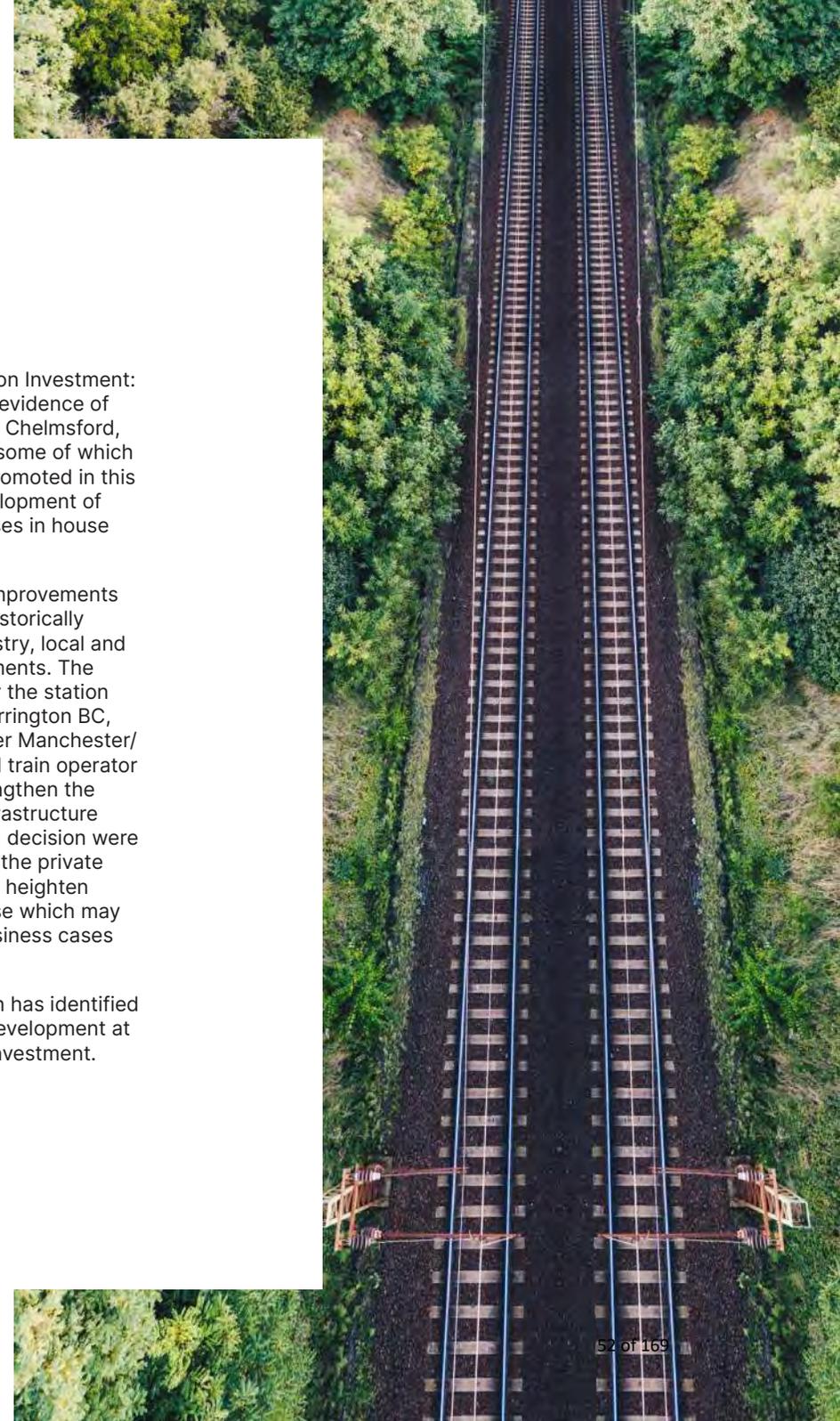
## These benefits are considered to comprise of:

- An enhanced provision of rail services and therefore capacity of the station
- Improving the accessibility of Birchwood as a destination and supporting its growth and development
- Supporting the reduction in traffic congestion through the new link road and being better served by public transport, therefore reducing car reliance
- Reduction in vehicle emissions in Birchwood, Padgate, Woolston through to Warrington Town centre by providing a park and ride facility supporting the clean air agenda and improving air quality in these areas
- Enhanced station facility - Improved desirability and therefore usability of the railway station as a key transport service
- Opening up job opportunities throughout the Birchwood area, being considered a more sustainable location for business
- Open up the land to the south as a key development site, with the station acting as a gateway

A recent study by the Rail Delivery Group “Station Investment: A Catalyst for local economic growth” provides evidence of how recent improvements made at Nottingham, Chelmsford, Strood and Burnley Manchester Road stations, some of which funded through Public/Private Partnership as promoted in this scheme has led to wider regeneration and development of areas, growth in service sector jobs and increases in house prices for the local community.

Whilst the need for service and infrastructure improvements have been proven by the industry it has been historically difficult to unlock the funding from the rail industry, local and national government to undertake the improvements. The commitment to private development funding for the station that we propose, with the added support of Warrington BC, Merseytravel/Liverpool CA, Transport for Greater Manchester/GMCA and Network Rail and the publicly owned train operator (Northern Trains Limited), can only further strengthen the case for funding from the treasury for these infrastructure improvements to come forward. Conversely, if a decision were taken not to commit to these works and secure the private investment that would be generated would only heighten the costs of any development to the public purse which may potentially make the scheme unviable when business cases are tested.

Warrington Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan has identified a private-public opportunity for transport-led development at Birchwood station, equating to a £37,000,000 investment.



# Development Objectives:

- To deliver key strategic public transport Infrastructure which is aligned with the aspirations of Network Rail, Warrington Borough Council and the wider regional and local transport sector.
- To create a new southern access to Birchwood Station, allowing for future expansion, an increase in usability and improved customer satisfaction.
- To create an opportunity for rail infrastructure enhancements and support the CLC line with rail turn backs and bay platforms.
- To create a new park and ride that has opportunity to grow to suit future demands.
- To provide enhanced station facilities and public realm areas, supporting the existing business community and local residents with investment into public transport.
- To meet the aspirations of 'levelling up' through considerable private investment in public infrastructure.
- To create and enhance pedestrian and cycle links.
- To create a sustainable urban extension that maximises connectivity and linkages across and beyond the Borough of Warrington, in addition to wider services and facilities.
- To secure high quality design that follows the principles of sustainable development.
- To create sustainable patterns of development which exploit and improve accessibility to public transport.
- To create substantial new employment opportunities in a location accessible by a variety of forms of transport, including pedestrian, cycle and public transport accessibility.
- To protect and enhance adjacent mossland whilst creating new green links and ecological havens and understanding peat restoration.
- To provide high quality, safe and publicly accessible open space and community facilities.
- To provide a flexible and adaptable scheme that ensures inclusive access for all end user requirements.

**The above objectives have been largely predicated upon the Garden Village principles.**



# Design Approach

The SSP masterplan has been designed in line with various forms of site analysis and assessment, therefore ensuring the process be well informed regarding site context, characteristics, opportunities and constraints. This design approach has therefore sought to facilitate the creation of a truly integrated urban extension, materialising itself as a sustainable community. Accordingly, the masterplan has been shaped positively by these characteristics in line with the defined development objectives. The design approach has been led by the intention to secure a mixed-use development of this site with a focus on transport, in particular a new link road and park and ride facility.

South  
Station  
Place  
Community

South  
Station  
Place  
Workplace

South  
Station  
Place  
Connectivity

South  
Station  
Place  
Commercial

# Accessibility and Transport

The mixed-use development at South Station Place will include the Park and Ride scheme and improved station facilities, new access by means of a new southern link road that will connect into the local road network and Junction 21 of the M6 that is located immediately adjacent to the site. The Park and Ride development – initially providing 300 car parking spaces, including 30 disabled spaces and 10 electric vehicle charging points - will have capacity for growth, to accommodate higher levels of commuters subject to demand. It is anticipated that phase 2 of the car park could extend the capacity up to 500 spaces. The proposal also includes provision for rail turn back facilities that would serve both main lines to Manchester and Liverpool. The station enhancements will include the creation of a community hub, whilst improving the service provision, seeking to make the rail experience more user friendly and accessible. As such, this is a public transport-led proposal with a focus on park and ride at Birchwood Railway Station to facilitate 'greener' travel, and there are also opportunities for bus service provision to the area to be improved. The South Station Place proposals will provide improvements to pedestrian and cycling facilities in the area, including upgrades to existing footpaths, new crossings, linkages to external networks and the creation of new foot and cycleway routes.



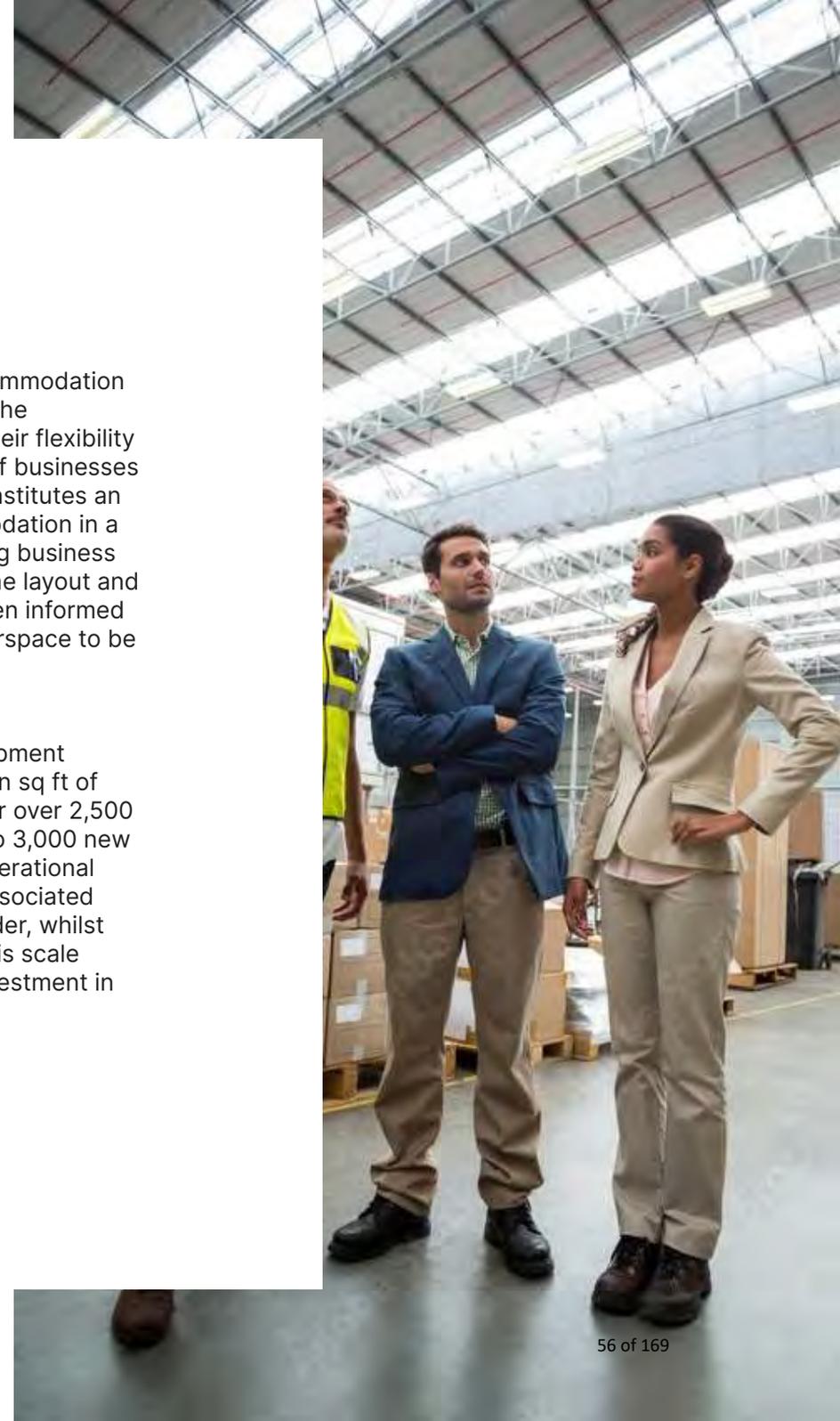
# Employment

The site represents a promising development opportunity due to its advantageous location, adjacent to the M6 motorway, close to the M62 interchange and local railway facilities. The SSP development seeks to build upon Warrington's strong position within the regional economy, taking advantage of the site's location and therefore providing opportunities for businesses to invest and to provide employment within the target markets of transport, storage, logistics and manufacturing. The site is in the ideal location to attract occupiers to its commercial development, through its connectivity to the national motorway network and to major population centres.

The heavy commercial aspects of the development will be concentrated on land adjacent to the M6 motorway, being expected that the majority of employment land will be more suited to this location. The South Station Place proposals include almost 75 ha of land for employment development, in Use Class B8, with 20% for B2 use. The masterplan also includes a 'business hub' adjacent to the station enhancements, for lighter employment use.

Allocation is also made for Grade A accommodation and larger scale units. The intention for the employment areas of SSP is to ensure their flexibility so as to facilitate attraction by a range of businesses to the site. The level of development constitutes an efficient use of land, providing accommodation in a range of sizes and types, to meet varying business and employment needs. The nature of the layout and the units constructed at this site has been informed by BE Group, identifying warehouse floorspace to be of shortage across the Borough.

The economic analysis undertaken by Ekosgen concluded that the SSP development would facilitate the provision of 2.1 million sq ft of new employment floorspace, catering for over 2,500 employees during construction and up to 3,000 new employment opportunities during the operational phases. The extent of indirect effects associated with this scheme are important to consider, whilst the investment shown to a scheme of this scale would encourage further growth and investment in the Borough.



# Nature Conservation and Open Space

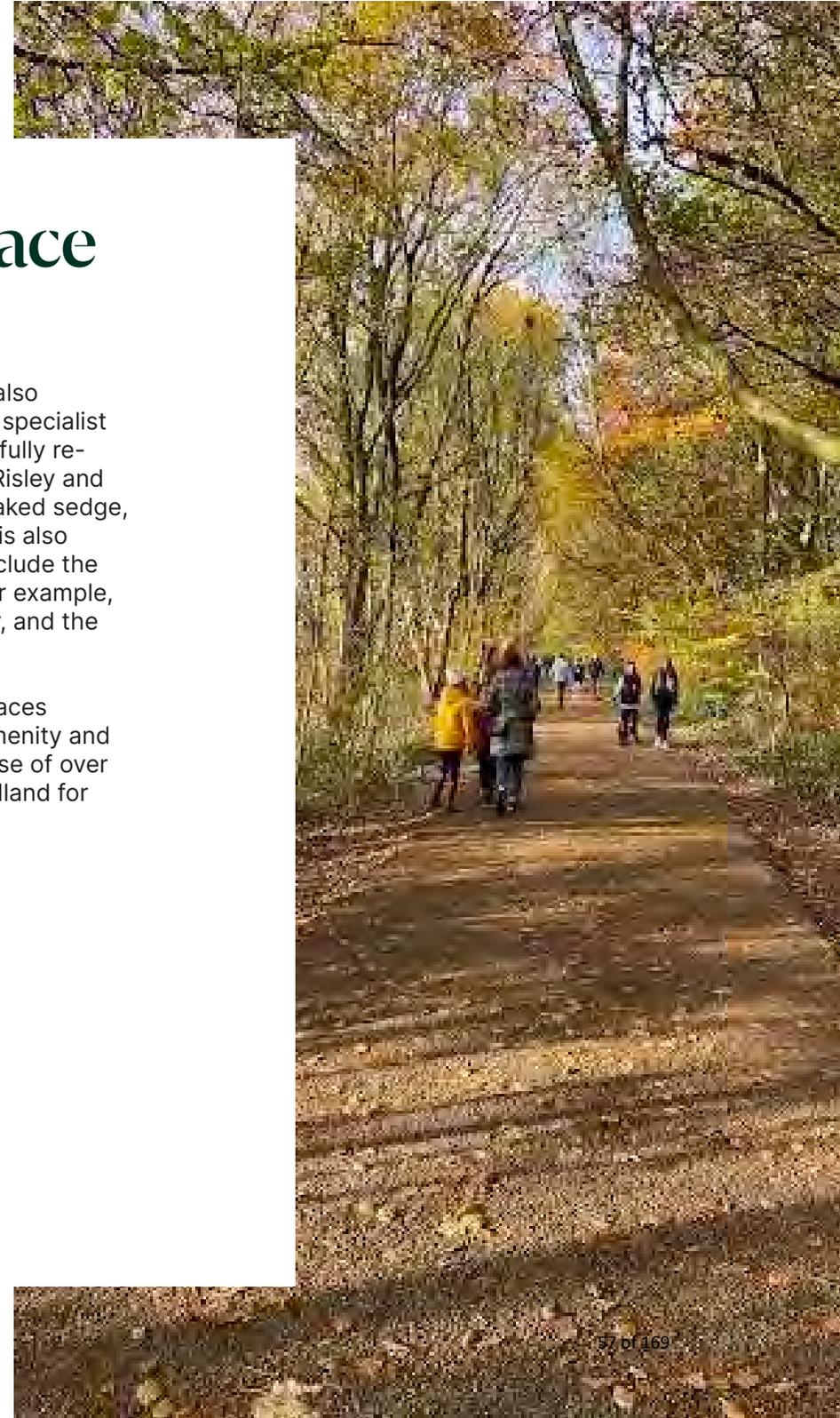
## Nature Conservation and Open Space

As set out through the design evolution, the SSP proposals have been designed with due consideration to the site's distinct context. As such, the scheme has sought to protect and enhance the existing environmental assets across the site and the surrounding land, with the intention to make a material positive impact upon nature in the local area.

Peat restoration and enhancement is identified as the key area for environmental enhancements and thus biodiversity net gain across the site. Opportunities for further habitat creation are also identified across the more eastern edge of the site. This will include maximising opportunities to improve wildlife connectivity through and outside of the site.

During the restoration process, there is also ample opportunity to introduce rare and specialist plant species (which have been successfully re-introduced to other mosslands such as Risley and Cadishead), such as sundews, white beaked sedge, and a variety of sphagnum moss. There is also potential for the local Wildlife Trust to include the site in future re-introduction projects (for example, large heath butterfly, white-faced darter, and the bog bush cricket).

A series of formal and informal green spaces across the site will provide a range of amenity and recreational functions, which will comprise of over 45 acres of public open space and woodland for informal use.



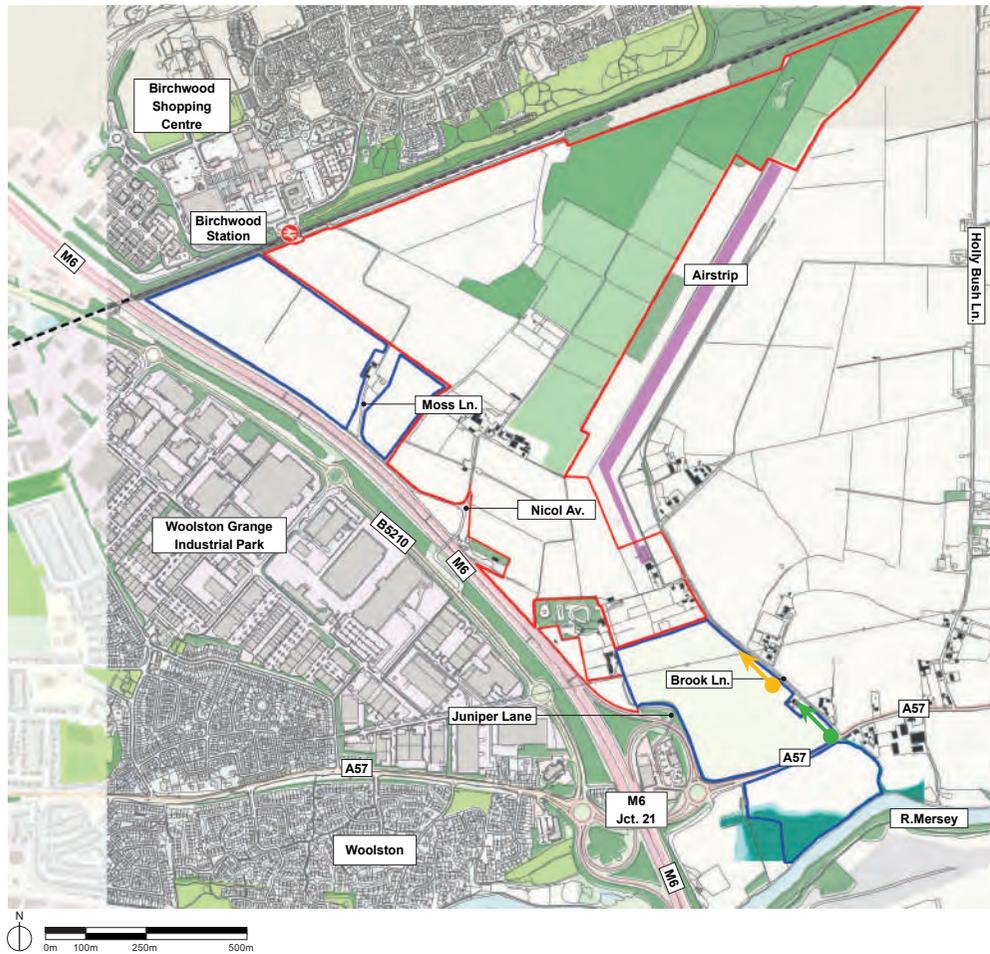
# 6.0 South Station Place Masterplanning



# Landscaping

The revised Green Belt boundaries proposed in line with the SSP development are strong and logical, in line with natural and developed boundaries. These boundaries are formed by both mature hedging and tree planting, along with existing built form and transport corridors. The following landscape boundary analysis highlights this.





**View 1**

Southern end of Brook Lane, looking north-west along the site's eastern boundary.

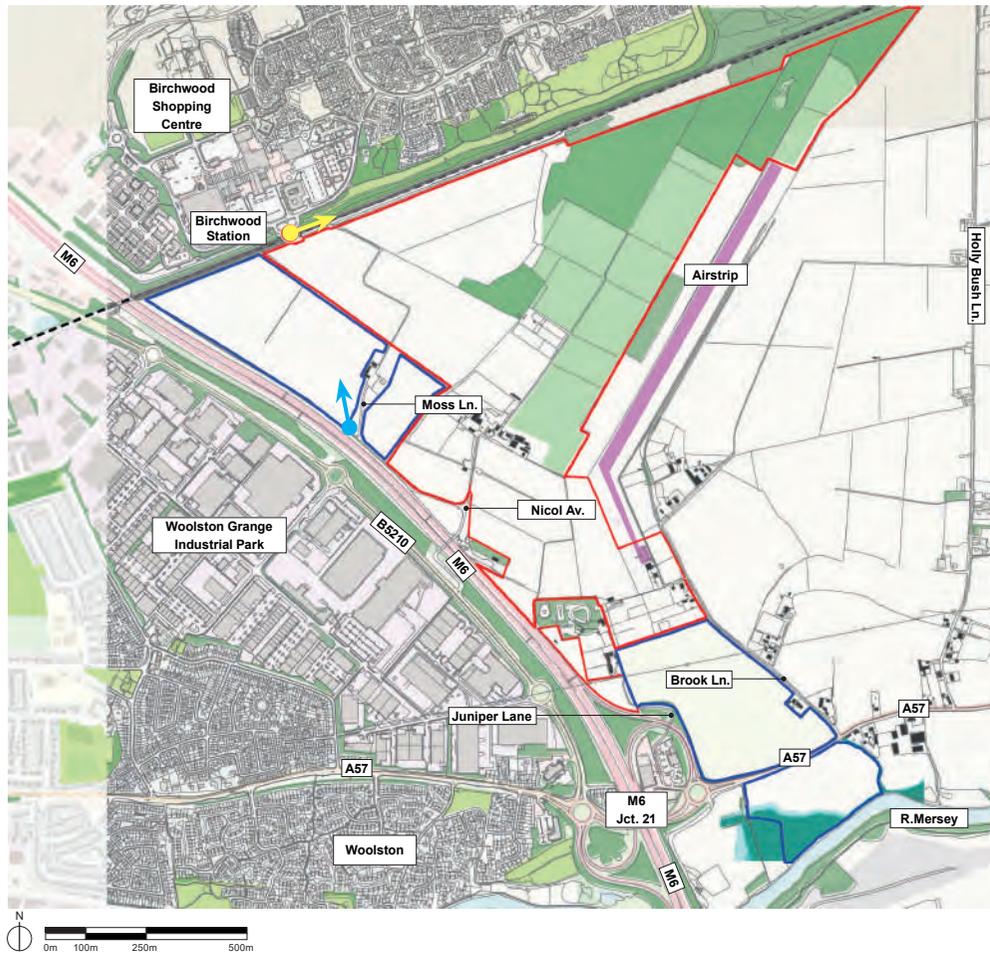
The existing residential development here and the mature tree line beyond demonstrates a strong boundary, making a clear distinction between SSP land and the neighbouring mossland to the east.



**View 2**

Brook Lane looking north-west along the site boundary.

The view highlights the nature of the proposed boundary, characterised by further mature tree planting, along with an extent of existing development forming a strong, logical development boundary.



**View 3** 

Moss Lane looking north towards Birchwood and the railway station.

The view highlights the strength of the site's northern boundary, significantly formed by mature trees and hedging, whilst the town's built development is



**View 4** 

Birchwood Railway Station looking east along the CLC line.

This view highlights the defensible boundary of the railway line, along with the screening to its north and wider boundary hedging across the more eastern aspects of the site in the distance.

# 7.0 Birchwood Station



# Background

Birchwood Railway Station is serviced by the Cheshire Lines Railway, which runs across Lancashire and Cheshire. The route is also referred to as the 'CLC Corridor', an important route between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington.

British Rail first opened Birchwood Station in 1981. However, the railway line dates back to the 1860's and was key in supporting the development of the area, transporting the explosives for, and products of the nearby Royal Ordnance Factories through World War II. The line was also used pre-war, to transport farming goods from the then named farming community of Risley.

## Current Situation

The existing access to Birchwood Station is poor and only available via heavily trafficked routes. It is not easily accessible for rail users. The high level of traffic inevitably leads to condensed carbon emissions around the station and poor air quality.

The station building itself is tired and provides very little in the manner of customer focused amenities whilst there is only limited dedicated station parking in the region of 18/20 spaces, which is of no benefit to commuters.

Although accessibility around the station itself is inclusive, the layout and access arrangements close off the south side of the station and any local residents approaching from that side. The station itself is not fully accessible and, especially out of hours, is regarded as unsafe.

Previous studies undertaken have indicated an industry desire to improve service volume/capacity along the line of the route.



# Station Potential

The station is somewhat restricted with regard to the rail services it is able to provide. The development of a turnback facility at this station would significantly enhance its rail capacity and as such, support its growth as a key transport hub.

Accordingly, the provision of a 'Park & Ride' facility is anticipated to support this growth of Birchwood Railway Station and the wider area, with good quality, reliable, convenient and user friendly transport facilities.

Accessed from Dewhurst Road to the north, access to and around the station itself is limited. Access to the station from the south and eastern directions is obstructed by the adjoining green belt land, cutting off these areas from the station. The M6 Motorway further restricts the ease of access from the west. As such, pedestrian permeability around the area is limited due to these obstructions. The development of this land area therefore provides an opportunity for the opening up of access to the station from this southern direction.

In line with the enhancement of rail services, Birchwood Railway Station holds the opportunity for the modernisation of its facilities, opening it up as a key transport node and therefore better supporting its presence as a competitive transport opportunity and wider destination.

**The development would deliver improved station facilities including a community-hub and public realm enhancements.**



# Benefits

The development of the station is understood to be an integral aspect of this proposal, which would provide substantial improvements to the transport facilities across the area, whilst enabling wider regional benefits. These benefits are considered to comprise of:

- An enhanced provision of rail services and therefore capacity of the station:
  - Improving the accessibility of Birchwood as a destination and supporting its growth and development
  - A new access road would serve Birchwood Station from the south and this would alleviate existing traffic congestion and parking issues at the station, enhancing its appeal, usability and service offering, therefore reducing car reliance.
- Enhanced station facility:
  - Improved desirability and therefore usability of the railway station as a key transport service
- Opening up job opportunities throughout the Birchwood area, being considered a more sustainable location for business;
- Open up the land to the south as a key development site, with the station acting as a gateway
- The proposal aligns with National Highways aspirations for improved rail infrastructure as noted in National Highways ( former Highway England's formal comment on the emerging local plan 12th June 2019. Please see attached within Appendix
- The proposal aligns and facilitates rail aspirations for the CLC corridor as identified in Network Rails document " How to accommodate forecast growth on the Cheshire Line Committee (CLC) corridor?" Please see attached in Appendix
- The proposal aligns with the Urban Transport Group definition of transport oriented development. Please see attached Appendix
- The proposal aligns with Keith Williams and the Governments shared vision for improving Great Britain's Railways. Please see attached Appendix



The Department for Transport's Rail plan – 'Great British Railways' sets out the following vision and key principles.

# The railways in Great Britain

### Economy

Rail helps to boost productivity and growth, opens up job opportunities and directly employs over 240,000 people.

### Society

Rail connects communities across the country, fosters placemaking and acts as a catalyst for regeneration across our towns and cities.

### Environment

For every mile a person travels, passenger trains produce a third of the emissions of the average petrol car.

### Safety

Rail is the safest mode of transport, and the UK has one of the safest railway networks in Europe.

### Funding

The government has invested over

**+£150bn**  
in the railways since the mid-1990s.

Rail makes up more than **50%** of all public spending on transport.

Chapter One – The railways since privatisation

# The railways need fundamental change

Before COVID-19, the railways were the busiest they have ever been. They must adapt to new journey patterns as we build back better.

Steady decline coinciding with growth in car ownership.

Journeys more than doubled since the mid-1990s.

1950: 1bn

1982: 0.6bn

1994/95: 0.7bn

2019/20: 1.7bn

Nearly 60% of adults travelled by train in 2019.

### Passenger experience

The customer experience can be stressful, inconvenient and unsatisfactory at various points throughout a journey.

- Passengers find pricing confusing and fewer than half of journeys offer value for money.
- At stations, some passengers find it difficult to get around or a lack of comfortable waiting spaces. Two thirds of disabled passengers report at least one problem when travelling by rail.
- Service punctuality and reliability is the number one priority for improvement amongst passengers. 1 in 3 trains were late in 2019-20.
- Experience on board trains is inconsistent, from toilets and disabled access, to wifi and sockets.
- Communication to passengers before, during and after journeys is often unclear and can cause anxiety.

### Stations

The 100 busiest stations catered for half of all passenger journeys in 2019-20. Great Britain has over 2500 stations.

### Workforce

87% of the workforce is male. Around 30% of the workforce are over the age of 51.

### Freight

The rail freight market has transformed from carrying coal to carrying construction and container goods. However, almost 9 times as much freight is moved by road.

The Department for Transport's Rail plan – 'Great British Railways' sets out the following vision and key principles.

# How the railways will change for the better

Keith Williams and the government have a shared vision for Great Britain's railways that can be summarised in 10 outcomes.



- ### 1. Modern passenger experience

Passengers must receive high-quality, consistent services day in, day out. This means accessible, reliable journeys that are well connected with other transport services and include new customer offers at stations and on trains.
- ### 2. Retail revolution

A new customer offer will be driven by clearer, easy-to-understand information, simpler travel with contactless and cashless payment and clearer prices. Compensation will be simpler to claim and journeys will become easier across transport services.
- ### 3. New way of working with the private sector

Passenger Service Contracts will replace franchising, bringing a new focus on reliability, performance and efficiency. New opportunities for innovators, suppliers (including small and local partners) and funders will be created through streamlined contracts and more contestability.
- ### 4. Economic recovery and financially sustainable railways

The railways are a public service, paid for by taxpayers and passengers to connect places and foster economic growth through leveling up across our towns, cities and regions. Bringing together responsibility for cost and revenue across the system will ensure the railways become more financially sustainable.



Chapter One – The railways since privatisation



- ### 5. Greater control for local people and places

Railways will be more responsive to the needs of local communities and customers, whether from Woking, Wrexham or Wick. Empowered, locally-led teams will support leveling up and be accountable to the people and places they serve.
- ### 6. Cleaner, greener railways

Britain's railways can and will spearhead the nation's ambition to become a world leader in clean, green transport. Decarbonisation, greater biodiversity and improvements in air quality in towns and cities will ensure rail is the backbone of a cleaner, greener public transport network.
- ### 7. New offer for freight

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of freight to our country and economy. National co-ordination, greater opportunities for growth and strong safeguards will put rail freight on the front foot.
- ### 8. Increased speed of delivery and efficient enhancements

Restoring lost rail links and accelerating the delivery of critical upgrades to the network will help level up places across the country; spark new economic growth and improve public transport connectivity and prosperity across our nations and regions.
- ### 9. Skilled, innovative workforce

Enhancing skills, leadership and diversity across the sector will create new opportunities for the hundreds of thousands of people working on our railways. High-value jobs for the future will be created and make the most of data and technology to better support customers.
- ### 10. Simpler industry structure

Track and train will come together in a 'guiding mind' for the system, Great British Railways. It will be made up of regional railways that are locally rooted and accountable, with new cultures and incentives focused on serving customers. A 30-year strategy will enable the sector to modernise efficiently.




The opportunity set out to make enhancements to the rail service offering at Birchwood through the implementation of turn backs and park and ride, in line with station facility enhancements has received significant support from the rail industry. This support is set out in the accompanying letters of support.



Ref: 1227/SSP\_RSPG211103  
3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

FAO : Patrick Properties Group  
[REDACTED]

Dear Sirs,

**NETWORK RAIL REGIONAL STRATEGY PLANNING GROUP (RSPG) AND INDUSTRY CONSULTATION – BIRCHWOOD STATION – SOUTH STATION PLACE**

Further to our representations made to Network Rail Regional Strategy Planning Group (RSPG) on 10<sup>th</sup> August I am writing to confirm that the scheme was well received by the panel and the development received strong support and endorsement. The panel were specifically pleased to see how the plans align/support the improvements being investigated along the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) Route serving Warrington, Liverpool and Manchester.

Following endorsement minutes of the meeting have been circulated by Network Rail which are enclosed along with correspondence received from Rory Kingdon, Senior Commercial Scheme Sponsor, Network Rail expressing their support for the development.

Following this endorsement we have undertaken further engagement and presentation of the proposed works for South Station Place, and the infrastructure improvements and flexibility the development provides, with Northern Trains Limited (Train Operation Company), Merseytravel/Liverpool City Region (David Jones/Liam Robinson) and TIGM (Simon Elliot representative of Andy Burnham) all of whom again support the scheme and are providing/have provided further letters of support having giving valuable input into the further design development.

I have noticed recently that within Warrington BC's own Infrastructure Delivery Plan they have include the scheme for Birchwood Station access strategy including Park and Ride as a transport led proposal which can only be a positive for us. It was apparent during our meeting with Stephen Hunter and Alan Dickin that they also support the scheme and acknowledged it could be delivered independent of the local plan as a transport led/exceptional circumstances scheme.

On a whole the scheme is seen as a major positive for the rail industry and a development that will support future improvement on the CLC route. The plans for South Station Place are seen as something that the industry, and Warrington, could be proud off with the development outputs and specification supporting industry development of creating Stations as a Place that people visit not only to travel by train but to use as a community facility and hub. I look forward to continuing our work on this development and developing the plans further.

Yours sincerely  
[REDACTED]

Phillip Marsden BSc (Hons) MRICS  
**Managing Director** For and on behalf of **Vextrix Management Ltd**  
[REDACTED]

TELEPHONE: [REDACTED] EMAIL: [REDACTED]  
COMPANY REGISTRATION NO. 6756289

OFFICIAL



Vextrix Management Limited  
[REDACTED]

**Reference:** BIRCHDEV/OUT/LET/003

**Date:** 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021

For the attention of Phillip Marsden

**Title: Proposed Development Adjacent to Birchwood Station**

Network Rail regard Birchwood Station as a key station along the CLC corridor, due to its central location between Liverpool and Manchester and with its easy access to Warrington Central. It is popular with commuters and provides regional accessibility and onward connectivity for rail use.

Pre Covid, we were aware of parking restrictions and accessibility issues around Birchwood Station, and are pleased to see Warrington BC has listed the potential for park and ride within its recent infrastructure plan.

Network Rail have been in discussion with the team promoting South Station Place for several years. It is encouraging to now see the detailed design concept for South Station Place as presented at our Route Strategy Planning Group (RSPG). The South Station Place proposal appears to offer long term solutions, which can help encourage commuters onto public transport by making it more easily accessible, with facilities that enhance customer experience and note the developers intentions to deliver the improvement within the next 3 – 5 years, subject to planning, which would aid aspirations for enhanced facilities along the CLC corridor.

The South Station Place presentation for RSPG demonstrated that the proposal can facilitate opportunities which have been identified as potential options under review for improvement as part of the CLC line studies looking at delivering improvements along the CLC corridor. The plans presented provide flexibility for an enhanced station with opportunities for platforms / bay platforms / rail turn-backs and park and ride facilities from the South side of the station and provide a means to overcome long standing constraints.

If progressed in their current guise the enhanced community facilities, new link road and access, Park and Ride represents a significant investment in public transport from the private sector.

If you have any queries on this matter please do not hesitate to contact myself.

Yours faithfully,  
[REDACTED]

Rory Kingdon  
On behalf of Network Rail

Network Rail Infrastructure Limited Registered Office: Network Rail, One Eversholt Street, London, NW1 2DN Registered in England and Wales No. 290487 [www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)



Phillip Marsden  
[REDACTED]

Dwain Roberts  
[REDACTED]

8 November 2020

Dear Phillip,

**Proposed Development Adjacent to Birchwood Station**

I previously wrote to you on 8 December 2018 to express Northern Trains' support for the proposed development at Birchwood Station.

As one of our top 40 stations by football Birchwood is a key station for us. Your plans to develop the south side of the station would make the station much more accessible for our customers and we anticipate could lead to further use of rail services taking people away from the busy road network and encourage use rail for journeys into Manchester and Liverpool City Centres. The links that the south side of the station has to the three major motorways serving the local area around the station makes this location a prime site for development.

We are pleased that your plans and investment in this area would also greatly improve facilities at the station allowing us to deliver on our plans to make our stations places our people and customers can be proud of and enjoy using.

As we referenced in our previous correspondence post industry work undertaken by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) in conjunction with Merseytravel and Warrington Borough Council suggested that Birchwood could be an important future strategic station to improve services along the Liverpool-Warrington-Manchester corridor. To this end the station has been identified as the most suitable place to turn back Merseyrail services if the existing Liverpool-Manchester local stopping services were to be split resulting in the Warrington to Liverpool portion becoming integrated into the Merseyrail network (services from Manchester turning back on a loop to the west of Warrington West). This would require a new platform to be constructed to the south of the station, so I am pleased to see this has been considered in your plans.

We would encourage further consultation on your plans with ourselves, Network Rail, TfGM, Merseytravel and Warrington Borough Council as development of the scheme progresses.

We acknowledge that subject to the feasibility of railway infrastructure planning the proposal presents a unique and valuable opportunity to facilitate improved rail services at Birchwood Station with improved access and park and ride provision. We look forward to continuing to work with you on this important and public transport led development proposal.

Yours sincerely  
[REDACTED]

**Dwain Roberts**  
Stakeholder Manager

**northernrailway.co.uk**

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The proposal facilitates regional improved connectivity please see attached letters of support from Liverpool and Manchester stakeholders.



METRO MAYOR  
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

10 November 2021

DJ/LR/CHAIR/20686

Phillip Marsden



Dear Phillip,

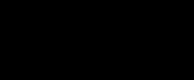
The Liverpool City Region is supportive of the development at Birchwood.

This proposal will improve access to the station making rail travel more appealing. This will support the use of a sustainable transport form both into and out of the City Region.

It also supports the development of rail services on the CLC route which the LCR also supports.

The LCR is currently building battery operated Class 777's for operation on the line out to a new station at Headbolt Lane. These units could be used in developing the extension of the Merseyrail service along the CLC route to Birchwood. With this in mind, the LCR would like to see any proposal developed to have incorporated within it a Liverpool facing turnback facility at Birchwood capable of handling a service operated by eight car Class 777 units.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Liam Robinson

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Transport Portfolio Holder  
Chair of Transport Committee

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

Telephone: [Redacted]  
E-mail: [Redacted]

[liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk](http://liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)



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0161 244 1000  
[www.tfgm.com](http://www.tfgm.com)

Phillip Marsden



Our ref Birchwood Station  
Your ref

5<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Phil

**Proposed Development Adjacent to Birchwood Station**

Thank you for taking TfGM through your proposals for the development of Birchwood Station with the introduction of a new link road, station building and 300 space car park south of the existing station and CLC Line, with the capacity to add additional spaces subject to demand.

I am aware of the strong commuter flows from Warrington and surrounding areas into Manchester and also recognise the highways and parking constraints around Birchwood Station that may preclude use of the railway, therefore exacerbating issues on the GM road network, with additional commuter journeys into Manchester City Centre. As such we would welcome this development and believe it will have a positive impact on road congestion in Greater Manchester, an issue we are working hard to address.

You are aware of our plans to work with DfT, Network Rail, Warrington Borough Council and Merseytravel in developing a scheme in and around Birchwood to deliver an improvement in rail services. I am pleased that you are working with my team to understand the detail of these proposals and I welcome your assurance that your developer will make the necessary passive provision for this in their plans.

Please keep us updated on the above-mentioned passive provision, so we can consider how best we could potentially support this project.

Yours sincerely

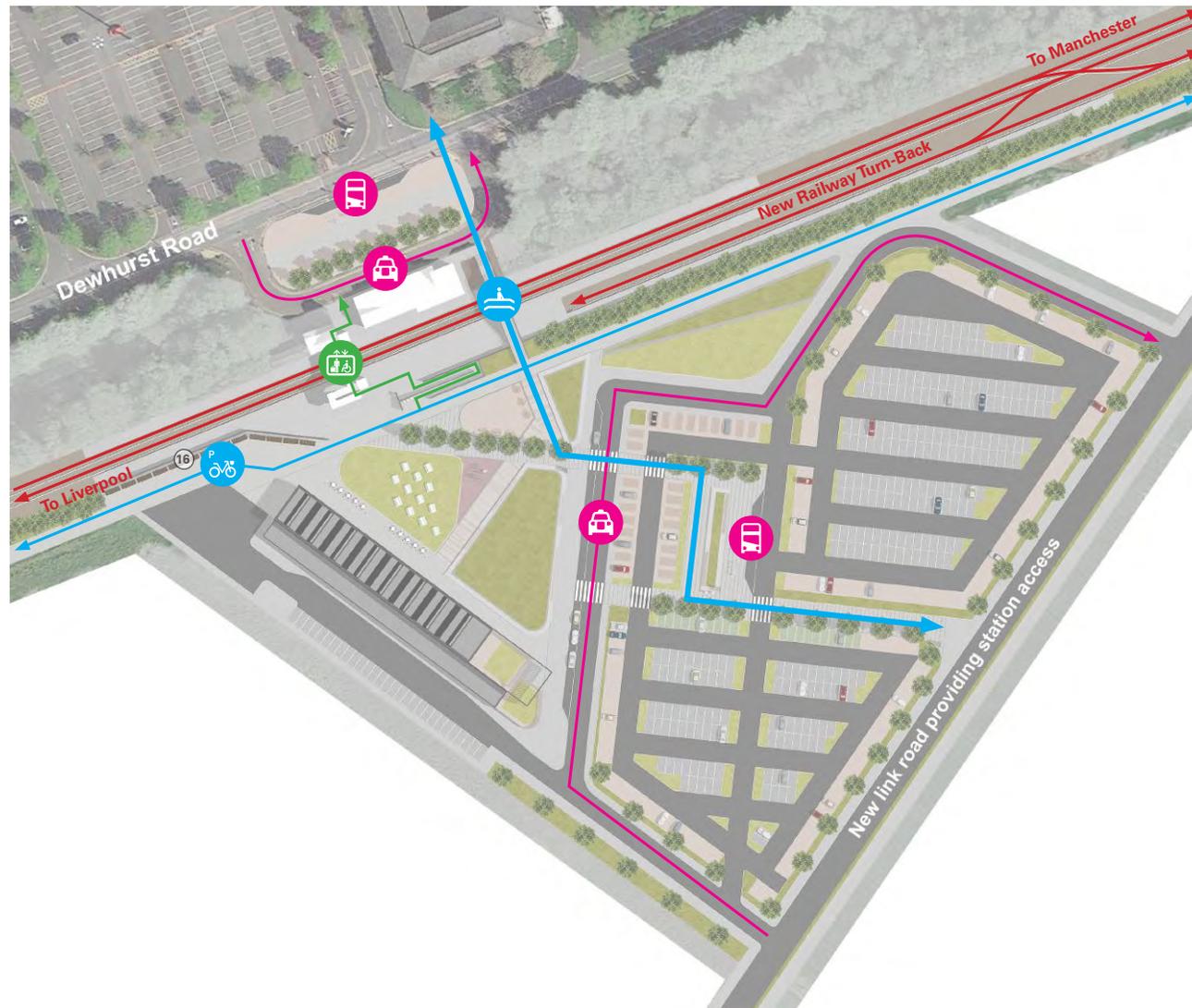


Head of Rail Programme

Direct line [Redacted]  
[Redacted]

Transport for Greater Manchester is an executive body of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority

# South Station Place Integrated Transport



- KEY**
- Blue arrow: Pedestrian & Cycle Connections
  - Green arrow: Accessibility Across Railway
  - Red arrow: Railway Connections
  - Pink arrow: Vehicular Connections
  - Blue circle with bicycle: Cycle Parking (approximately 100 spaces)
  - Blue circle with footbridge: Footbridge
  - Green circle with footbridge and lift: Footbridge with Lift
  - Pink circle with bus: Bus Stop / Rail Replacement
  - Pink circle with taxi: Taxis / Kiss and Ride

# South Station Place Development



### 1. New Local Retail / Community Units

5 no. units (dependant on configuration) for retail / community use, providing 10,000 square feet of space with back of house service areas. Potential uses include: Coffee Shop, Bakery, Convenience Supermarket, Pharmacy / Healthcare, Nursery / Childcare and Community use / pop-up.

### 2. New South Station Entrance

Hard landscaping steps and ramped access between station and new public realm, allowing for full disabled access

### 3. Public Footbridge Enhancements

Existing public footbridge to be refurbished and re-clad to upgrade passenger environment, structurally independent staircases may be added to both intermediate landings either side of the bridge to create a direct pedestrian route across the railway line

### 4. New Public Realm

Green landscaped public realm to front of retail units and south station entrance to provide space for outdoor seating, public events etc.

### 5. Playground

Small public playground with play apparatus to public realm

### 6. New Public Realm & Bus Interchange

Revamp the existing station frontage to the north and provide new bus interchange facilities with feature bus shelter / ticketing facility

### 7. New Park and Ride Car Park

300 space surface car park to south of station including 30 no. disabled parking spaces and 10 no. electric vehicle charging points

### 8. Electric Vehicle Charging Spaces

Approximately 10 spaces within car park to be designated for electric vehicle charging in premium position

### 9. Rail Replacement / Bus Park-and-Ride

Integrated bus stop and ticketing facilities within car park, including car park pay points, to allow use of parking for bus park-and-ride or rail replacement services

### 10. Pick-up / Drop-off

Vehicle pick-up and drop-off point to the south side of the station in close proximity to station entrance

### 11. Existing Station Building

To be retained

### 12. Existing Overbridge with Lifts

To be retained and used to provide public access across the railway line

### 13. New Cycle Parking

Array of cycle shelters to provide high quality and secure cycle parking for the development and station

### 14. Rail Turn-backs

Position of rail turnbacks to TBC pending further study by others, masterplan to keep space reserved for turnbacks

### 15. New Bay Platforms

Bay platforms incorporated either side of the station for services to and from Manchester and Liverpool

# Station of the Future, for the Community Delivered in Public/Private Partnership

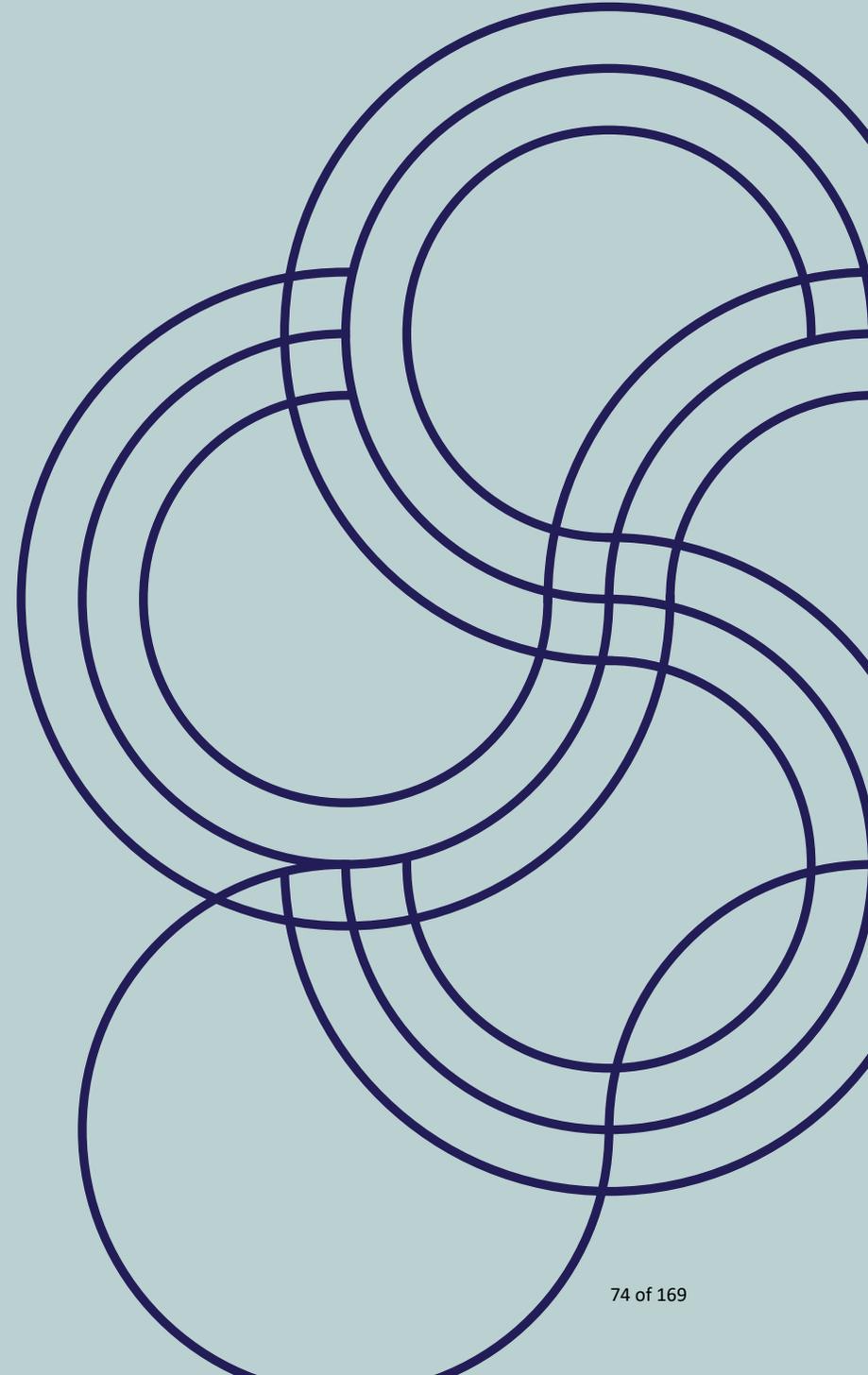


# Sustainability / Environmental Development

Image 4: Aerial view with sustainability call-outs



# 8.0 Employment



# Employment

The South Station Place proposals include almost 75 ha of land for employment development, falling within Use Classes B2, B8 and E. South Station Place is considered to represent a significant development opportunity due to the advantageous location of the site, adjacent to the M6 motorway, close to the M62 interchange and local train facilities.

Warrington is considered to be a strong performer within the regional economy, with a higher-than-average employment rate, higher jobs density and workplace-based employment growth over the last ten years, in comparison to the North West average. Therefore, these proposals seek to build upon this by providing further employment opportunities within the target markets of transport, logistics and manufacturing – with in particular, transportation and storage, the sectors of fastest growth in Warrington.

Sites close to the national motorway network and to major population centres are considered most attractive to occupiers and as such the development site is within a prime location to respond to these requirements.

In recognising the market demand, it is intended that approximately 80% of the employment land will accommodate B8 requirements and 20% B2 requirements, with a small element of service employment space to be located adjacent to the station. The development site not only provides for additional B2 and B8 floorspace but as part of this for the construction of Grade A accommodation and larger scale units. Whilst the proposals are capable of providing flexibility in the scale of development, the current layout, informed by research undertaken by BE Group, is based upon logistics and industrial requirements of approximately 250,000 sq ft, with a number of circa. 20,000 sq ft units anticipated to satisfy other operational needs.

The employment area will comprise principally single storey large warehouse units, reflecting the industrial nature of the uses. However, the proposals have flexibility for potential occupiers in enabling supporting and ancillary uses to be located together. The flexibility in scale of plots will also allow it to respond to both current and future needs as businesses grow. Units would have associated hardstanding areas to contain their required car parking, vehicle manoeuvring and storage provision.



# Employment

Soft landscaping within the areas proposed for employment use may be limited, however, further landscaping can be provided on site boundaries or through the provision of drainage solutions such as swales and ponds. Direct access would be provided from J21 via new primary roads with the ability to have active frontages along these highways. The design and appearance of units would be of a modern, high specification to suit this landmark development.

Ekosgen analysis of the South Station Place proposals have concluded that the construction phase of the development will support 2,670 direct full-time equivalent jobs during the 3 to 5 year construction period, which is increased to 3,551 jobs with the inclusion of multipliers (indirect effects). There would be opportunities both for skilled labour as well as for apprentice programmes, leading to longer term benefits for the Warrington economy.

In addition to the main logistics areas, a Business Hub is to be created alongside the Community Hub which will provide smaller business and starter units under Class E.

**Table 1: Forecast for Proposed Construction Jobs created by the development proposals (source: Ekosgen).**

The provision of jobs once the site is operational will depend upon the scale and variety of opportunities brought forward by employers, however it is estimated that once fully operational, the development could accommodate for approximately 3,000 jobs across a variety of occupations and skills bases.

Forecast Operational Impacts		
	Jobs (FTEs)	GVA
Direct	3,019	£188.4m
With multipliers	3,894	£245.3m
Source: Ekosgen calculations using HCA Employment Densities Guide and ONS Regional Accounts		

**Table 2: Forecast for Proposed Operational Jobs created by the development proposals (source: Ekosgen)**

The proposed uses would introduce a range of skills roles to support the employment opportunities of local residents, with opportunity for career progression evident.

Forecast Construction Impacts		
	Jobs (FTEs)	GVA
Direct	2,670	£173.7m
With multipliers	3,551	£231.0m
Source: Ekosgen calculations using Annual Business Survey, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) and the Annual Population survey, ONS Regional Accounts and HCA Additionality Guidance		

# Employment

Patrick Properties are industry leaders in the provision of logistics and other industrial floorspace and as such the proposals brought forward in this location will represent exemplar facilities. Whilst units are intended to be built speculatively, due to experienced demand, a high level of pre-lets are anticipated.

**As such, the overriding economic benefits of the scheme comprise:**

- The provision of 1.6 million sq ft of new employment floorspace catering for over 2,500 employees during construction and up to 3,000 new employment opportunities during the operational phases;
- The payment of business rates by new businesses;
- The support and investment shown to a scheme of this scale would encourage further growth and investment in the Borough;
- The opportunity to provide larger units would also enable existing businesses to stay in the area as they expand;
- The wider proposals comprising a part of this development, including improvement of the local train station facilities and provision of new homes, will also have a positive impact upon the employment proposals, providing users with improved transport links and the opportunity to live close to their place of work, reducing reliance on the private car;
- The wider proposals provide employees with access to public open space with associated health and wellbeing benefits.

**Table 3: Forecast for Occupation Types created by the development proposals (source: Ekosgen)**

Skills and Occupational Profile		
	FTEs	%
<b>Skills Profile</b>		
Level 4+	490	16%
Level 3	617	20%
Level 2	606	20%
Level 1	1,306	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,019</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Occupational Profile</b>		
Managers, Directors & Senior Officials	297	10%
Professional Occupations	223	7%
Associate Prof. & Technical Occupations	292	10%
Admin & Secretarial Occupations	235	8%
Skilled Trades Occupations	295	10%
Sales & Customer Service Occupations	192	6%
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives	179	6%
Elementary Occupations	1,306	43%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,019</b>	<b>100%</b>
Source: ONS Annual Population Survey and SOC Code Methodology		

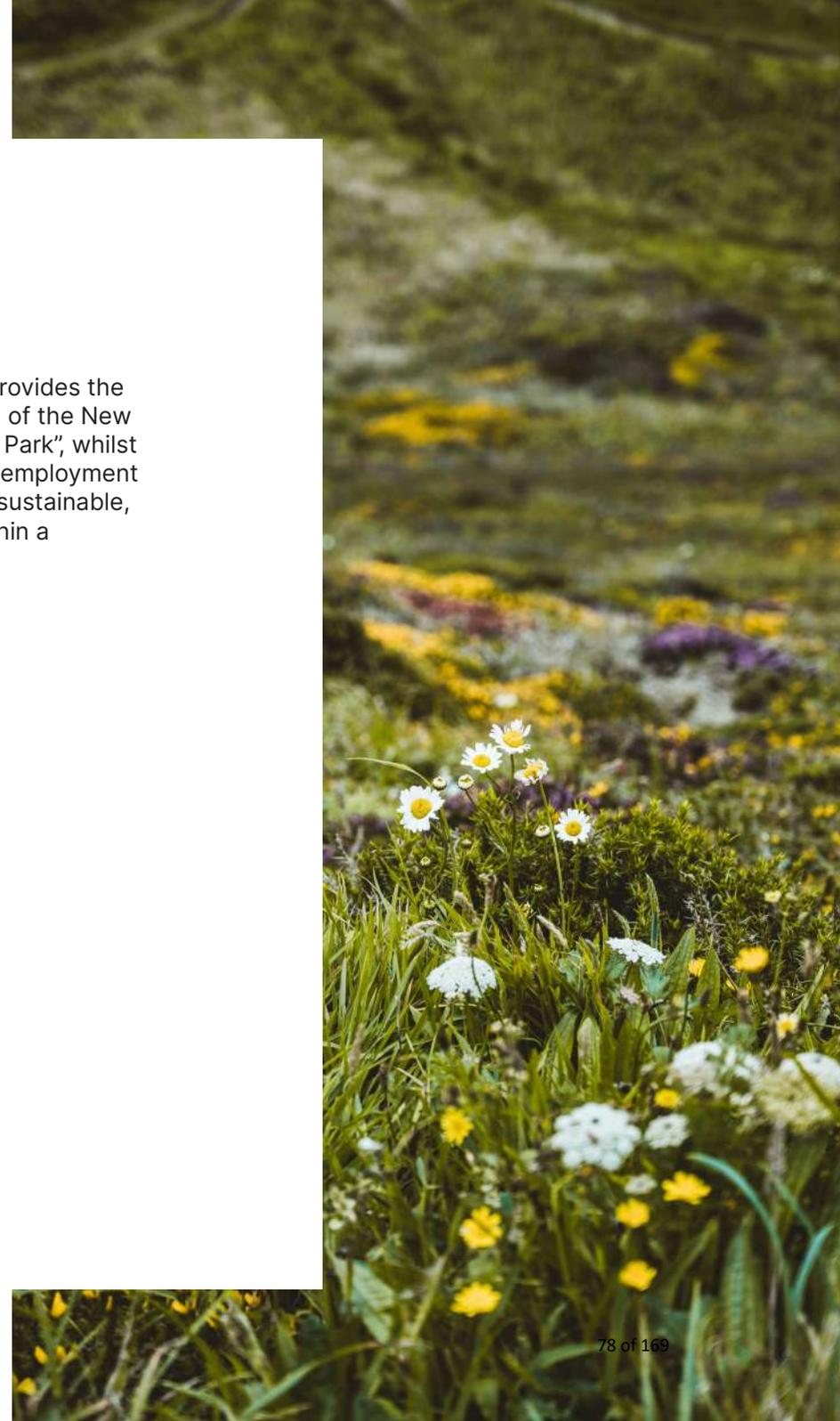
# “Working in a Park”

Birchwood Forest Park was originally the name given to the entirety of the Birchwood area at the time the New Town was first established. The intention of the New Town was to create one of the country’s most natural looking towns, described as somewhat “Living in a Park.”

However, such aspirations have proven challenging to maintain with the growing demands and growth of the local economy and population.

Ekosgen have prepared a Birchwood Socio-Economic Assessment, in relation to the development at South Station Place, which understands that by 2040, Warrington will be home to almost 217,100 people – an increase in population of 6,468 (+3.1%) over 20 years, as suggested by ONS Population Projections. The age structure of Warrington has also seen significant changes. In 2040, those aged 65 and over are forecast to account for 25.7% of the Borough’s population and those aged 80 and above will account for 8.0% of the population.

The ‘South Station Place’ development provides the opportunity to return to the earlier vision of the New Town, in effect to facilitate “Working in a Park”, whilst satisfying local and regional demand for employment space, through the provision of a highly sustainable, net carbon neutral business hub, set within a biologically diverse, green environment.



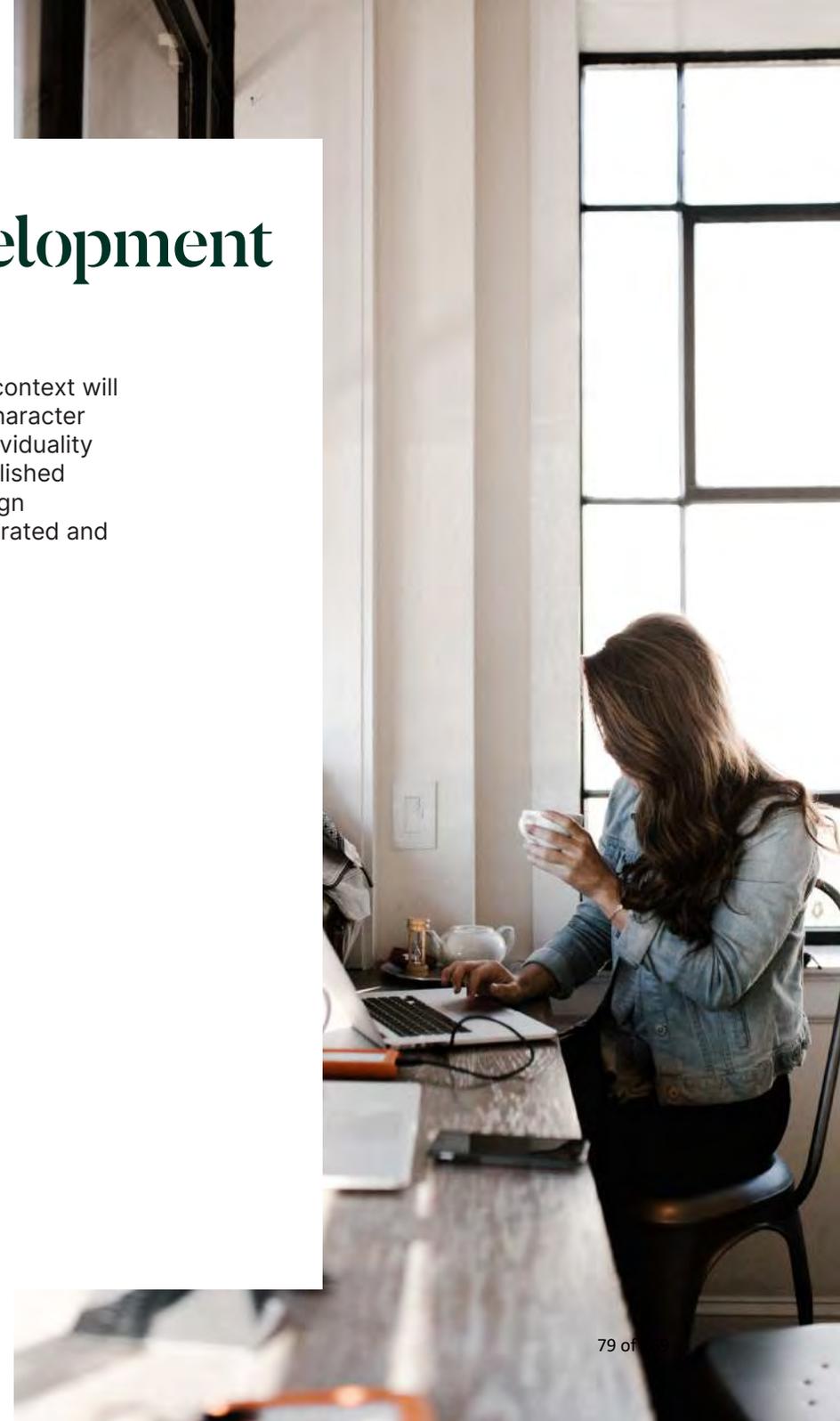
# Character Areas & Masterplan Development

The Framework Masterplan sets out the overall aspirations of the site's development. The development of the Masterplan derived from a study of the site's features and associated constraints and opportunities, which assessed the most feasible and practical options concerning the type of development and appropriateness of the positioning of each element of the scheme within the site boundary.

As the scheme presents an opportunity for an appropriate urban extension, the layout seeks to respond to the surrounding urban context of the immediate area, particularly mirroring the settlement pattern of Birchwood to the north.

The proposed employment land is expected to sit adjacent to the M6 Motorway, in a similar nature to that of the Woolston Grange Industrial Park to the west, and the office and retail development to the north of the site, within Birchwood itself.

The response to the surrounding urban context will therefore contribute to the creation of character areas, which provide some extent of individuality within the site, whilst ensuring the established 'vision' of the scheme is focal in the design development, which is to create an integrated and sustainable working environment.



# Development Mix

The proposed development mix will be subject to detailed design, site extent and the requirements of the market but will broadly consist of up to:

The proposal has already secured significant interest from end occupiers. Further evidence to support this can be provided.

Use	Gross area (ha.)	Acres
Industrial and Logistics	40.68	100.48
Other Employment Use and new station facilities/ parking	2.79	6.89
Other Station Reserve land (within red line)	0.24	0.59
Noise Buffer zone/ green corridor	6.05	14.94
Retained farmland	15.13	37.37
Retained mossland	21.51	53.13
Rixton Moss Retained Land	29.56	73.01
Existing residential uses retained	0.57	1.41
Replacement residential	0.64	1.58
Existing employment uses retained	2.74	6.77
Airstrip land retained	1.09	2.69
Spine Road - 18.8m corridor assumed (Width/ route to be determined)	4.68	11.56
Sub-total	125.68	310.43
Remainder assumed open space/ mitigation	22.73	56.14
<b>Total Site Area</b>	<b>148.41</b>	<b>366.57</b>

**NB: To be read in conjunction with Broadway Malyan drawing 34799-03-001**

# 9.0 Nature Conservation and Open Space



# Nature Conservation and Open Space

**The aim of the proposal is to create a development that is as nature friendly as possible, whilst creating an attractive place to work, commute and enjoy.**

Tree planting will form part of a comprehensive landscaping scheme across the site. It is encouraged that existing trees and hedgerow within and around the site will be maintained where possible and incorporated into the proposed landscaping scheme. The planting scheme would focus on the use of local provenance nature species and the establishment of appropriate habitats to the area. Where it is not possible to retain a specimen, replacement provision will be ensured. Planting will be retained where possible along the site boundaries to act as a buffer between the development and the surrounding land uses and road network. The existing woodland within the site will also be retained, ensuring it is well protected throughout the construction period.

Garden Village principles seek to create generous green space within developments including well connected and biodiversity-rich public parks, high quality gardens, tree-lined streets and open spaces. Accordingly, the integration of accessible, usable and thus effective public open space (POS) has been a key priority throughout the design evolution of South Station Place and will continue to be an increasingly high priority in the detailed design and development of this new community.

The proposals seek to enhance and promote the existing green infrastructure, through a series of green corridors, which connect the site and the surrounding area. In turn this will provide a series of ecological corridors to enhance and promote biodiversity within the site and enhance the biodiversity value of the site and surrounding woodland for both the residential and employment areas of the site.



# Nature Conservation & Enhancements

The SSP proposals have been designed with strict consideration toward ecological assets across the site and the surrounding landscape. The development holds the intention to make a material positive impact upon nature in the local area, with corresponding benefits for ecology and nature. The ecological surveys undertaken by Bowland Ecology confirmed the extent of areas of peatland as a key feature of a small part of the site but also the adjacent mossland.

The site includes approximately 11.5 ha of birch woodland and mossland and therefore provides significant opportunity for habitat restoration and wider ecological enhancements.

## Species Reintroduction

During the restoration process, there is also ample opportunity to introduce rare and specialist plant species (which have been successfully re-introduced to other mosslands such as Risley and Cadishead), such as sundews, white beaked sedge, and a variety of sphagnum moss. There is also potential for the local Wildlife Trust to include the site in future re-introduction projects (for example, large heath butterfly, white-faced darter, and the bog bush cricket).



# Peat Restoration

The ecological surveys completed by Bowland Ecology identified significant potential for habitat restoration within the site, in particular lowland peat bog ('moss land') restoration. Successful examples of mossland restoration can be seen in the neighbouring Risley Moss and across the wider surrounding area. It is recognised that these Peat bogs are a vital habitat and valuable carbon sink when preserved in good condition, however, when dry and degraded they release stored carbon back into the atmosphere. The fragment of peat currently on site is of this condition and is therefore making a detrimental impact with regard to carbon storage.

**Peat covers just 3% of the world's surface area, whilst holding nearly 30% of all the carbon stored on land.**

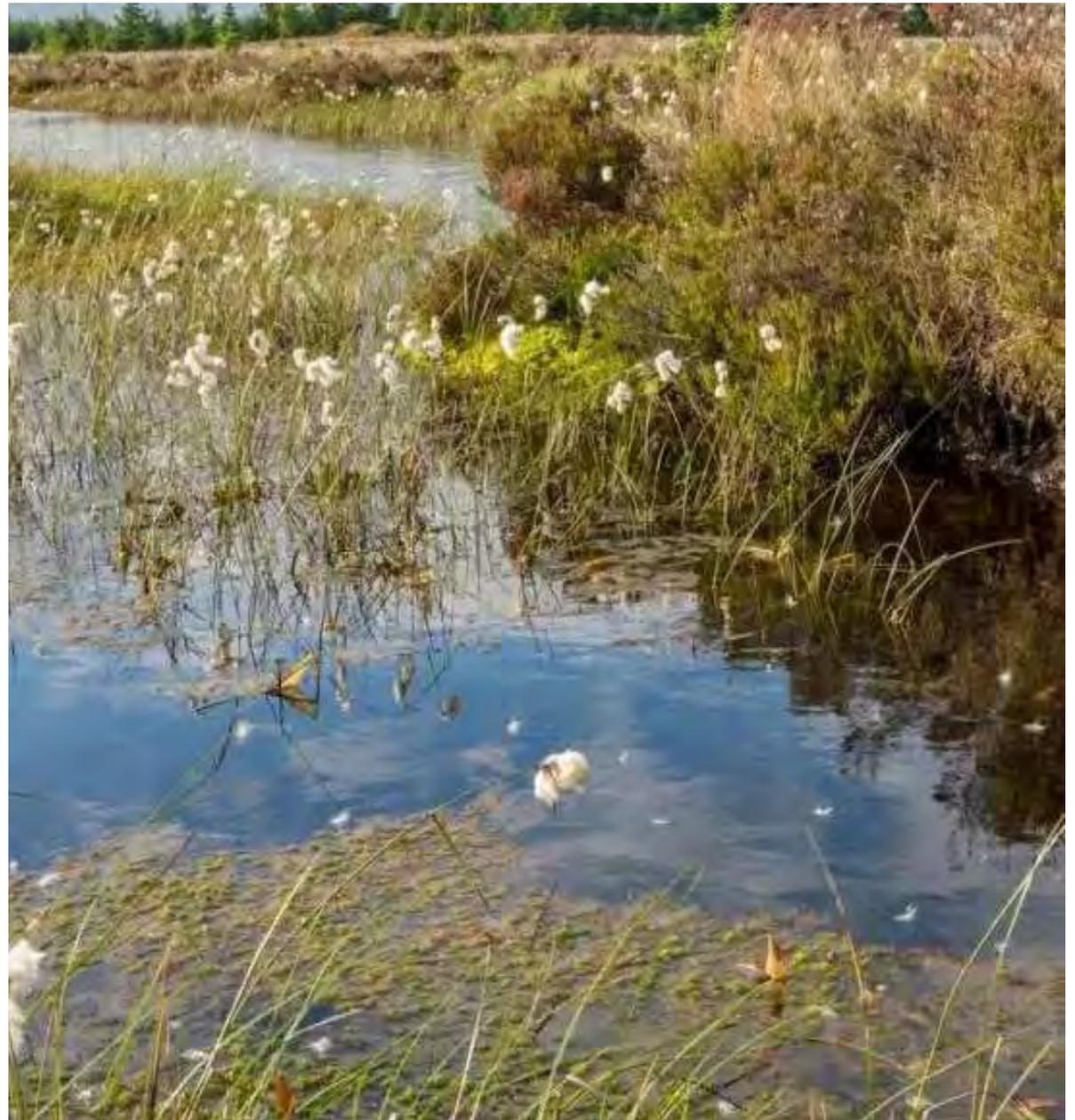
Whilst it is understood Woolston and Risley once connected to form a large mossland, peat restoration in line with these proposals would allow for habitat enhancements, reduced fragmentation and the creation of quality linkages between Risley, Woolston and Rixton moss, which in turn will expand the existing peatland significantly.

It is understood that following restoration of Risley moss, animal species would naturally migrate towards favoured habitats and there would be the opportunity to introduce rare and specialist plant species, including sundews, white beaked sedge and a variety of sphagnum moss. In proceeding with these works, the peatland would be regenerated through re-wetting the and, filling in ditches and using peat 'bundling' to retain the water. Site investigations, including hydrology, are and will be undertaken to support the peatland restoration purposes.

Areas identified for peat restoration and other wider habitat creation opportunities are indicated in the 'potential habitat restoration and creation areas' plan.

It is important to highlight that these proposals have been suitably designed ensuring that any areas where peat is identified will not be developed and will instead be maintained and restored to achieve positive impacts for nature and ecology.

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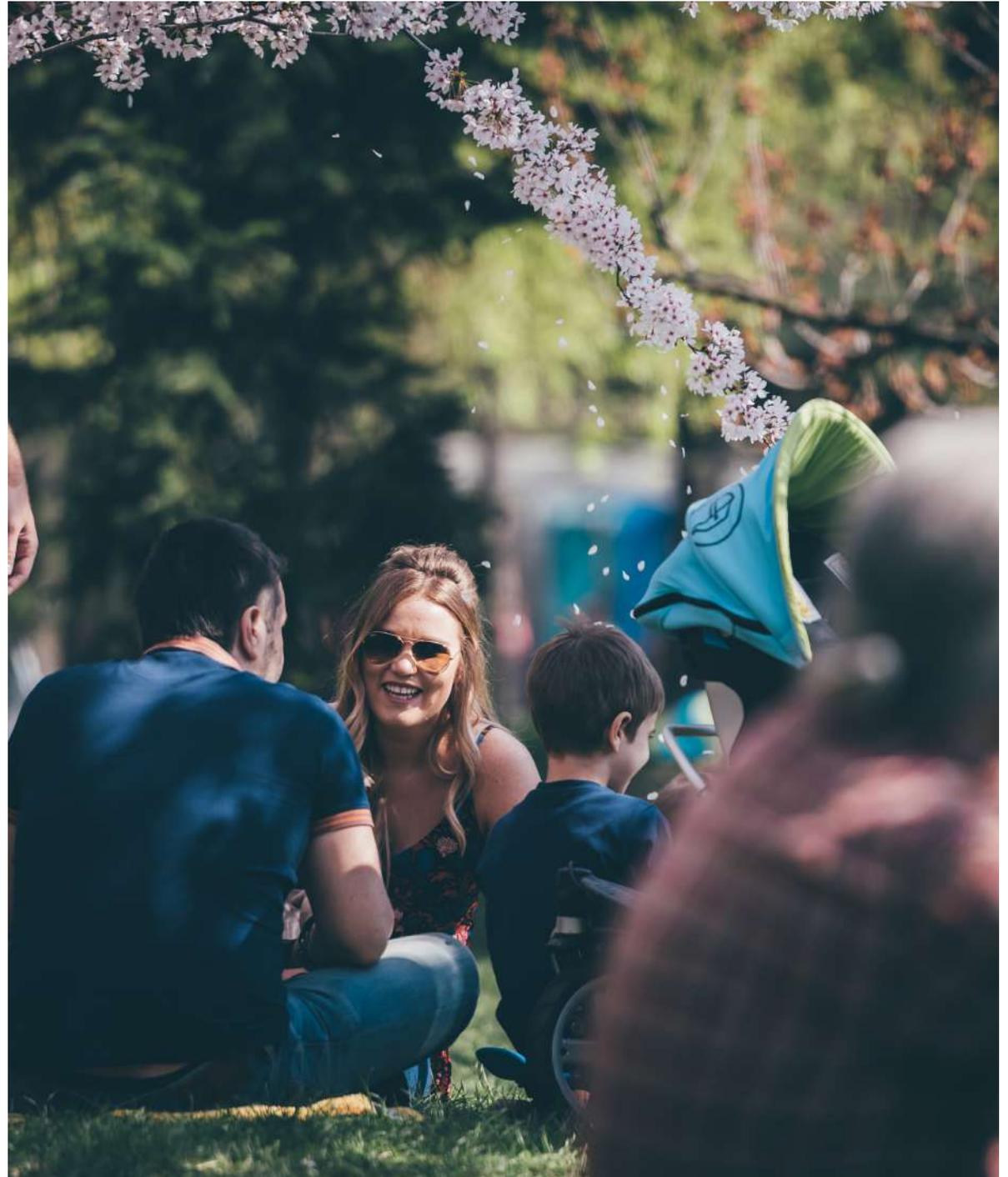


# Public Open Space

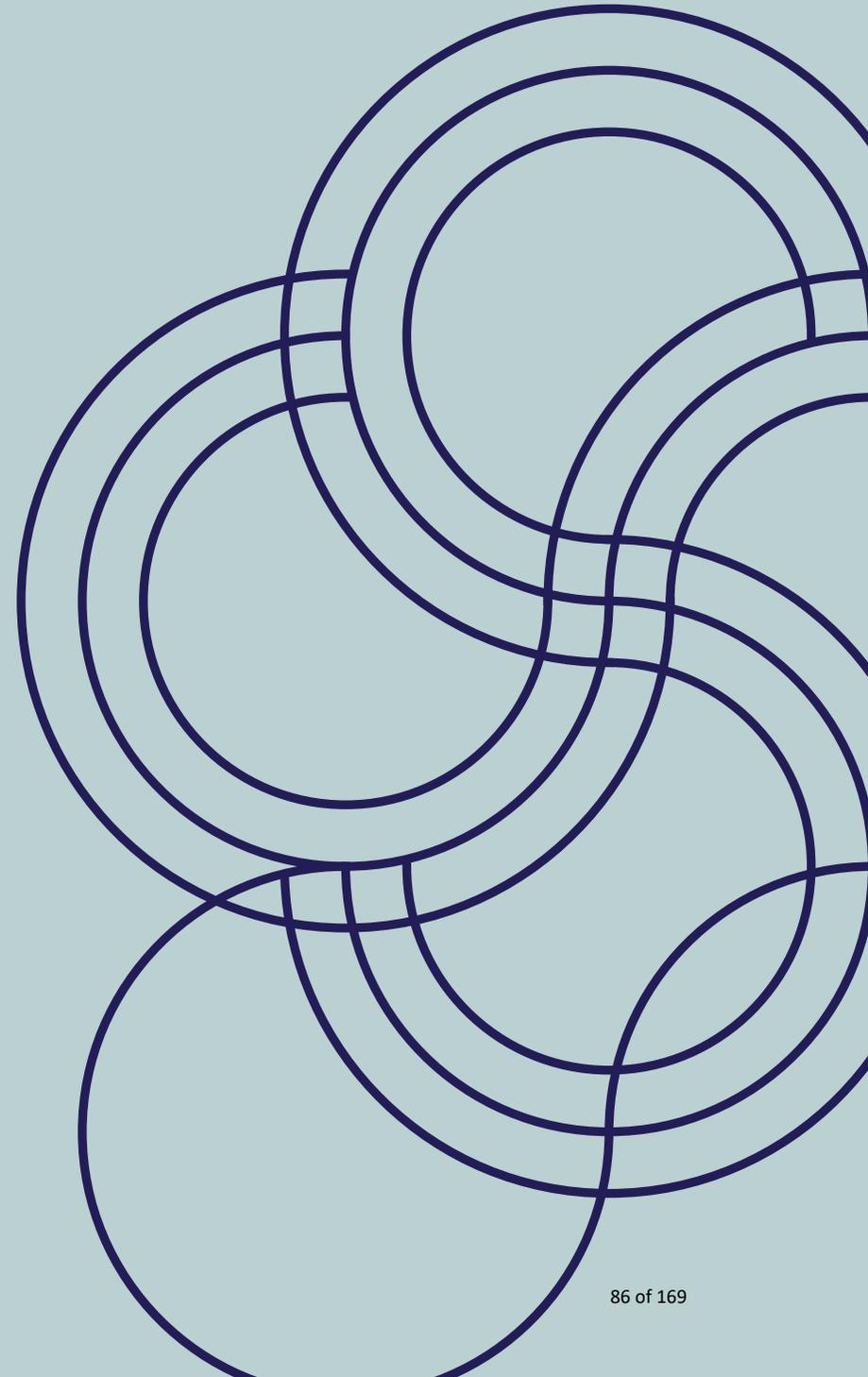
A series of formal and informal green spaces across the site will provide a range of amenity and recreational functions, which will comprise over 45 acres of public open space and woodland for informal use.

The future SSP community will therefore benefit from a vast area of green, open space, which has gained particular importance following the COVID-19 pandemic and the transition to a 'working from home' lifestyle, with a greater desire to be in closer proximity to green space.

In line with the Garden Village principles, ensuring the creation of generous green space within developments will be prioritised across the SSP development. These spaces will comprise of well connected and biodiversity-rich public parks, tree-lined streets and open spaces.



# 10.0 Technical Considerations



The SSP development framework has been informed by a range of technical assessments and appraisals to understand and demonstrate the suitability of this site for development, comprising:

- ◆ Transport Appraisal
- ◆ Ecology Technical Note
- ◆ Landscape & Visual Greenbelt Review
- ◆ Landscape & Visual Technical Assessment
- ◆ Flood Risk and Drainage Assessments
- ◆ Hydrological and Hydrogeological Risk Assessment
- ◆ Preliminary Site Investigation
- ◆ Noise Screening Assessment
- ◆ Air Quality Assessment
- ◆ Socio-Economic Assessment

As demonstrated by the below extracts, these surveys and reports have not highlighted any issues to indicate notable concerns or constraints towards the development of this site. It is in fact clear that South Station Place represents a strong opportunity for an urban extension, which has been tailored to the contextual factors of the site.



# Technical Considerations

## Ecological Appraisal

Bowland Ecology have completed ecological surveys for the site. The site itself is considered to comprise arable and pasture fields separated by a network of ditches with fields of semi-natural grassland and approximately 11.5ha of birch woodland and mossland. The survey has confirmed the presence of peatland as a key feature of the site and surrounding landscape, with peat bogs considered a vital habitat.

The associated appraisal has confirmed that a strategic approach to development is important to this site, with consideration to be given to:

- The retention, protection and restoration of areas of deep peat
- Ensuring adequate buffering of habitats
- Increasing connectivity for wildlife in the local landscape
- Consideration of the sites context with nearby international, national and locally protected wildlife sites.
- Ensuring that appropriate measures are identified to protect and enhance existing species interests of the site.

## Flood Risk and Drainage Assessments

An assessment in respect to flood risk at the representation site has been prepared by Hilson Moran. Large parts of the site had, until recently, been identified on the Environment Agency Flood Map as being within Flood Zones 2 and 3. However, as part of a modelling update for the Manchester Ship Canal, the EA removed sections of this covering the M6 and reclassified it as Flood Zone 1 (this included large portions of land within the southern and western areas of the development site). An area of land within the development site, associated with the Fishington Brook remains in Flood Zone 3. In the opinion of our drainage consultant, this remaining area is an artefact from national broad-scale JFLOW modelling of the Brook, carried out in 2004 by the EA, with more recent, detailed and reliable remodelling undertaken in 2006 demonstrating that all of the development site in fact lies in Flood Zone 1. The EA have acknowledged that this later modelling is more realistic of the extent of flooding within Warrington. As such, our consultants are working with the EA to rectify this to remove the identified area of flooding associated with the Brook.

However, it is possible to avoid this area and incorporate it within the SUDS scheme for the site if required.



# Technical Considerations

## Air Quality Assessment

### **A feasibility study in respect of air quality has been undertaken for the representation site by Miller Goodall.**

It is concluded that with the implementation of mitigation measures, dust impacts associated with construction are considered to have no residual effects. Nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter and fine particulate matter concentrations are considered likely to be below their respective long-term and short-term objectives at the development site and therefore the site is considered suitable for commercial use.

Further assessment requirements are set out as follows:

- The provision of a Construction Phase Risk Assessment
- Detailed assessment using air dispersion modelling
- Ecological assessment
- Consideration of site design to incorporate non-sensitive uses in air quality areas of concern
- The full air quality assessment will inform the level of mitigation required but this is expected to include a travel plan and incorporation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure

## Transport Appraisal

A Transport Appraisal Report for the development has been completed by Vectos. The site is considered to lie within an accessible location, owing to its proximity to the M6 Junction 21 and Birchwood Railway Station. The site and proposals for South Station Place pay due cognisance to the schemes and future priorities that are identified in the Warrington Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2021), the Transport for the North Investment Programme and Warrington's Fourth Local Transport Plan (2019).

The transport-led development would comprise a new southern entrance to Birchwood Railway Station and improvements to the public footbridge linking the northern and southern side, alongside improved bus interchange facilities, a 300-space car park, electric vehicle charging points, new cycle parking shelters and rail turn-backs. Such improvements would further increase the attractiveness of rail as a key mode of transport. The assessment recognises the opportunity to improve upon the existing pedestrian and cycle connections in and around the site.

The access options are still under consideration, however an initial access feasibility exercise has been undertaken that presents potential access solutions utilising the land available fronting the A57 Manchester Road. Access to the development via an upgraded Nicol Avenue is also an option that is being considered in detail as part of the masterplanning process. The traffic impact resulting from the development scheme will be assessed in detail at the planning application stage - subject to successful allocation - and through working closely with Warrington Borough Council and National Highways, to demonstrate that the development traffic can be accommodated by the surrounding highway network with the appropriate level of mitigation.

It is intended that the proposed development will be assessed within the Warrington SATURN model at the earliest opportunity, in line with the emerging Local Plan testing process for strategic development sites and in agreement with WBC. As part of any future planning application, a more detailed operational analysis, using relevant junction models, will be undertaken to assess the impacts of the development trips upon the surrounding highways network.

## Ground Investigations

Surveys of the site have identified the limited presence of peat within the site, as much was removed during the Second World War for use as fuel. It has been determined through assessment by ecology consultants, Bowland Ecology, that areas of peat restoration can be incorporated as part of the landscaping proposals for this development, ensuring that this species rich habitat is retained.

# 11.0 Sustainability Assessment



“Transit Oriented Development is at the very heart and soul of sustainability, and brings together compact, walkable communities with high quality rail systems. This creates low carbon lifestyles by enabling people to live, work, and play without depending on a car for mobility.”



# Sustainability Assessment

An assessment of the existing vehicular and pedestrian movement framework and accessibility of the site has been undertaken. The site lies in a highly accessible and sustainable location, and the proposed development offers a unique opportunity to enhance upon the existing modes of public transport and pedestrian accessibility, to promote further sustainable development.

The design process has been, and will be, guided by a number of key principles to deliver the overall goal of sustainable development:

- Enable flexibility and adaptability to respond effectively to the changing environment and lifestyles of residents;
- Create high quality and attractive public spaces that make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness within the area;
- Create an environment that encourages good mental and physical health;
- Optimise the use of natural and local resources during and post construction;
- Enhance the natural environment and biodiversity within the development and wider site;
- Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and viability of the local economy;
- Reduce inequalities in the built landscape.
- Avoid unnecessary air, noise and visual pollution.
- Reduce waste production and increase reuse and recycling.

- Reduce the need to travel by private car and promote infrastructure improvements and sustainable modes of transport.

The Government is committed to delivering sustainable development, encouraging local planning authorities to promote urban regeneration to improve the wellbeing of communities, promote high quality and safe development and create new opportunities in sustainable locations. There are three overarching elements of sustainable development, as stated in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF; environmental, economic and social objectives.

## Environmental

The aim of the development is to create a highly sustainable, net carbon neutral community for housing, employment, biodiversity, health and wellbeing.

Birchwood benefits from an existing Railway Station upon the Manchester-Warrington-Liverpool railway line. However, the existing access to the Station is inadequate for both pedestrian and vehicular access. The vehicular access route towards the Station is often heavily congested, which has inevitable, negative environmental impacts. In addition, the station itself is not accustomed to the needs and requirements of the modern end user.



# Sustainability Assessment

The transport-led development seeks to open up the southern access to create a railway station that is fit for the 21st century with an extensive park and ride facility, alongside local shops and services and a residential core. The improvements to the railway services and thus the capacity of the Station, will promote and encourage the use of the Birchwood Railway Station as a key mode of travel daily for local residents, employees and visitors alike. The Station is already served by a number of bus services to access the wider area, and further services will be provided as part of the development scheme.

It is acknowledged that the bus services operating along the surrounding highways network are insufficient, as existing. The proposed development offers an opportunity to upgrade the facilities as part of its sustainable transport strategy and reduce the reliance on private transportation.

The development will also promote pedestrian and cycle accessibility, with the provision of a new pedestrian access bridge between the existing Railway Station and the new facilities to the south. This will also promote connectivity for the new residents and employees with the wider Birchwood area.

The scheme adopts Garden Village principles to create a sustainable community that provides connectivity within the site area and with the surrounding urban area. The aim of the development is also to create a scheme that is as nature friendly as possible, whilst creating an attractive place to live. Preserving and enhancing biodiversity will be encouraged as part of the proposed development, via a variety of ecological protection and enhancement measures, given the wealth of biodiversity surrounding the development site.

## Economic

The scheme will create new employment opportunities, both during the construction period and once operational. The development will require the purchasing of local goods, materials and services. A high priority will be placed on the use of construction materials with a low environmental impact over the life cycle of the development. The specification of construction components for new build elements will focus on responsibly sourced materials for key building elements and as far as possible, thermal insulation will be specified that has low embodied environmental performance relative to its thermal properties.

The proposed improvements and enhancements to the rail services and thus capacity of the Birchwood Railway Station, will improve the accessibility of Birchwood as a destination in its own right, in turn promoting the growth and development of the area. The Station will also act as a gateway to promote the employment opportunities provided at the proposed development site.

In the long-term, future businesses and their employees, along with nearby residents will support local facilities and services, of which are all within walking distance or a short bus journey from the application site. The employment element of the scheme will positively contribute to the vibrant range of industrial premises found in the local area and provide employment opportunities for local residents.



# Sustainability Assessment

## Social

The development seeks to create an attractive, safe and inclusive environment, which aims to encourage a sense of community throughout. The diverse nature of the type and size of the proposed employment units, promotes diversity and inclusivity as the foundation to community cohesion. This ensures that all businesses and groups in society have access to suitable and affordable accommodation.

Future employees will benefit from a range of facilities and services within the local area, aided by the proposed improvements to pedestrian connectivity and public transport opportunities afforded by the proposed development site, including, but not limited to the following; primary and high schools, supermarkets, local convenience stores, retail and leisure uses.

The site is in a highly accessible location on the edge of the existing settlement of Birchwood and the proposed employment land could provide opportunities for local residents, ultimately strengthening the local skills base.

South  
Station  
Place  
Community

South  
Station  
Place  
Connectivity

South  
Station  
Place  
Workplace

South  
Station  
Place  
Commercial

# 12.0 Construction Charter



# Construction Charter

**This Development Construction Charter is a commitment by Patrick Properties to deliver wider benefits and opportunities through the construction of South Station place, for the local community.**

The principal of this Development Construction Charter is to demonstrate how the local community can benefit from a local development project by identifying opportunities and giving due thought and consideration to the development process, to ensure maximum social and economic value can be delivered through the construction process by reputable developers working with Warrington Council / Local College / Chamber of Commerce and Local Enterprise Partnership, in addition to local community groups. It is hoped that this Development Construction Charter will provide a method of delivering greater economic and social benefits to local communities through the construction of South Station Place.

Patrick Properties is a family owned Development Company, with significant experience in delivering major projects world wide. They work with local authorities / development partners and their client base to provide the highest quality of developments in the Housing, Care, Retail, Employment, Logistics, Leisure and Renewable Energy sectors. Patrick Properties have a long history of active community engagement and employment, and have created apprenticeships and learning opportunities through their commitment to training in all that they do. They aim to make a valuable and long-lasting contribution to the people, communities and local economies that they work in.

## Method of delivering a Development Construction Charter

This Development Construction Charter is to form a lawful agreement through the planning process between Patrick Properties and the local planning authority. This Development Construction Charter is proposed to be delivered through the construction of South Station Place

## Development Construction Charter Key Commitments

In order to maximise the impact of investment in South Station Place, we aim to create a thriving and diverse economy and reduce our environmental impact on the community. We will deliver a Social Value Strategy based around employment and skills, local labour and social responsibility. We will make a significant contribution to Warrington Council's vision to "secure investment to improve the borough assets and public transport infrastructure links through the creation of high quality jobs, fairness in working lives and practices, accessibility to affordable energy and high quality affordable living"



# Construction Charter

Our key commitments through the construction of South Station place are as follows:

1. To work with Warrington Councils Social and Economic officers, to secure opportunities and benefits through the construction of South Station Place. Providing sustainable employment and training opportunities
2. Job creation for local people; providing full and fair access to all jobs, apprentice, trainee and work experience roles. Creating new apprenticeship positions and supporting the learning / development of existing apprentices.
3. Delivering training courses to local people to recognised training and industry standards
4. Offering two week work experience placements working with Educational providers to deliver a bespoke Employment and Engagement Strategy, including making links with local Job Clubs across Warrington and the payment of the Living Wage
5. Delivering positive local economic benefits;
  - Meet local supply chain target by sourcing labour and other services from Warrington and North West region.
  - Provide opportunities for local businesses to access procurement contracts which we have available through the project.
6. Delivering positive community impacts
  - Commit to the prompt payment of subcontractors - 100% supply chain payments within 28 days
  - Host a Meet the Buyer Event to give an opportunity for smaller local businesses to get access to works on this or our other sites in the North West
  - Make a significant contribution through buying local and up-skilling local supply chain partners
  - Undertaking a contract launch event to update the community and local partners on the scheme
  - Supporting sustainability, by working with local people to co-design community projects linked to the scheme and effective tenancy management, including:
    - Making a fund available to invest on a community initiative supported by local people
  - Work with local partners to deliver additional community activities, drawing on our existing experience
  - Provide access to a dedicated youth employability mentor based in Warrington and a dedicated community worker in Warrington
  - Deliver a health and safety talk and careers fair workshop to raise the profile of the industry amongst younger generations
7. Considerate contractor
  - By Acting as a considerate contractor by acting in an ambitious but safe and environmentally friendly way. Patrick Properties are proud to ensure the development is delivered through a Considerate Constructors Scheme, implementing a Code of Considerate Practice which ensures that they: care about appearance; respect the community; protect the environment; secure everyone's safety; and value their workforce. All construction parking requirements will be met on site to ensure minimum impact to the local community and transport network. In addition to a car sharing policy for their employees.
8. Engagement with local community and key partners.
  - Engaging with the local community and key partners on an ongoing basis, including being accessible pre construction, during and post construction and monitoring and reporting back to local community and groups on the delivery of this Community Charter. We will provide a variety of different engagement methods, building on work already done to publicise the scheme via a community consultation event, a dedicated website and telephone line and other local correspondence

# Construction Charter

## Delivering on our Development Construction Charter Commitments

We are committed to both working with partners and being open and transparent to ensure that we deliver on all of the commitments made, as well as ensuring comprehensive, continuous and effective community involvement. This will include regularly monitoring and reporting progress against our commitments to partners (including the local community). We will pulled together an experienced Social Value Team. The team will ensure that there is a long term, positive impact on the local area through the delivery of this scheme and propose to meet with the local authority when convenient to demonstrate the delivery of the commitments made within this document during the construction process.

Patrick Properties wish to develop a beneficial and deliverable Development Construction Charter working with;

### Warrington Council

### Local Education Providers

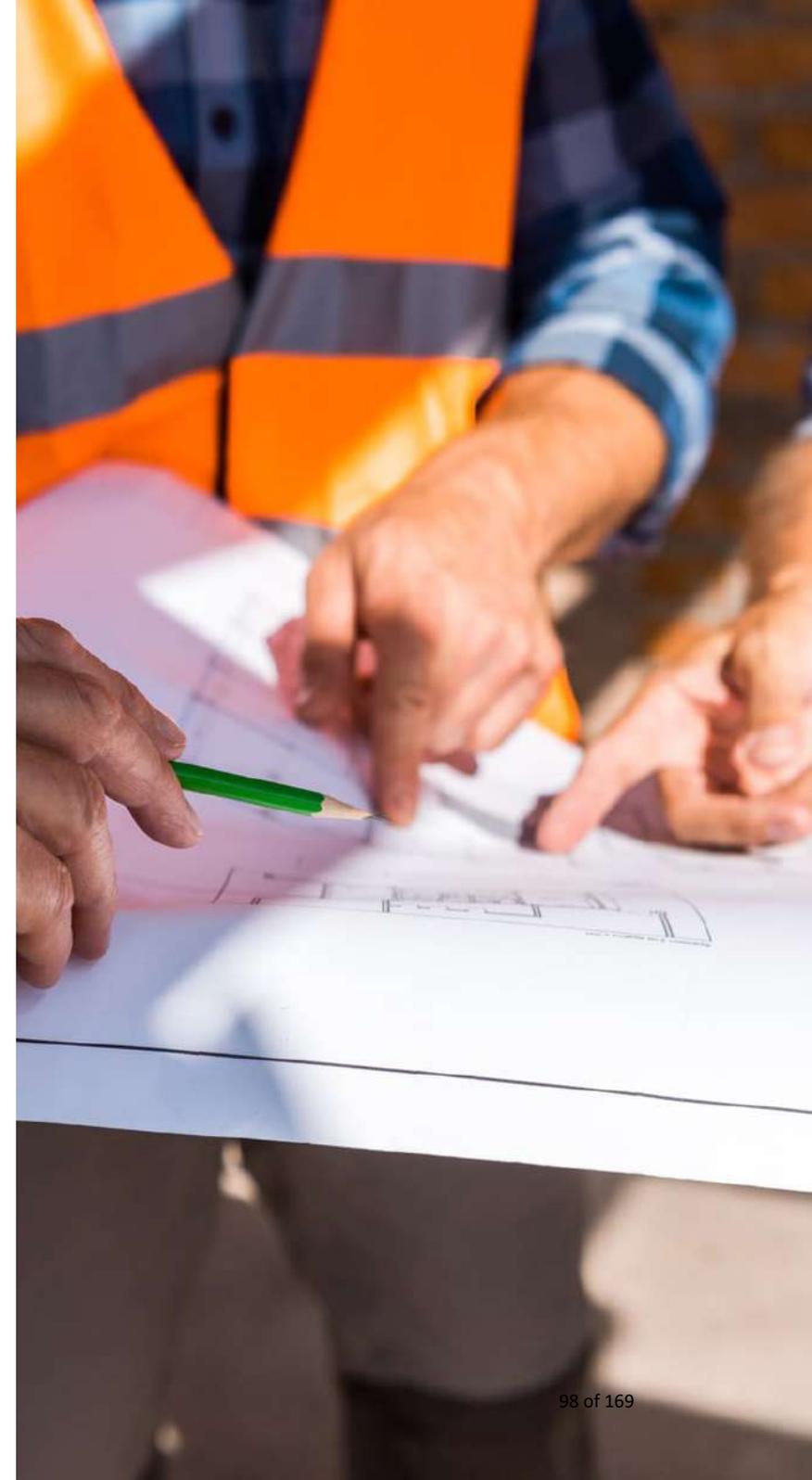
### Local Enterprise Partnership

### Chamber of Commerce

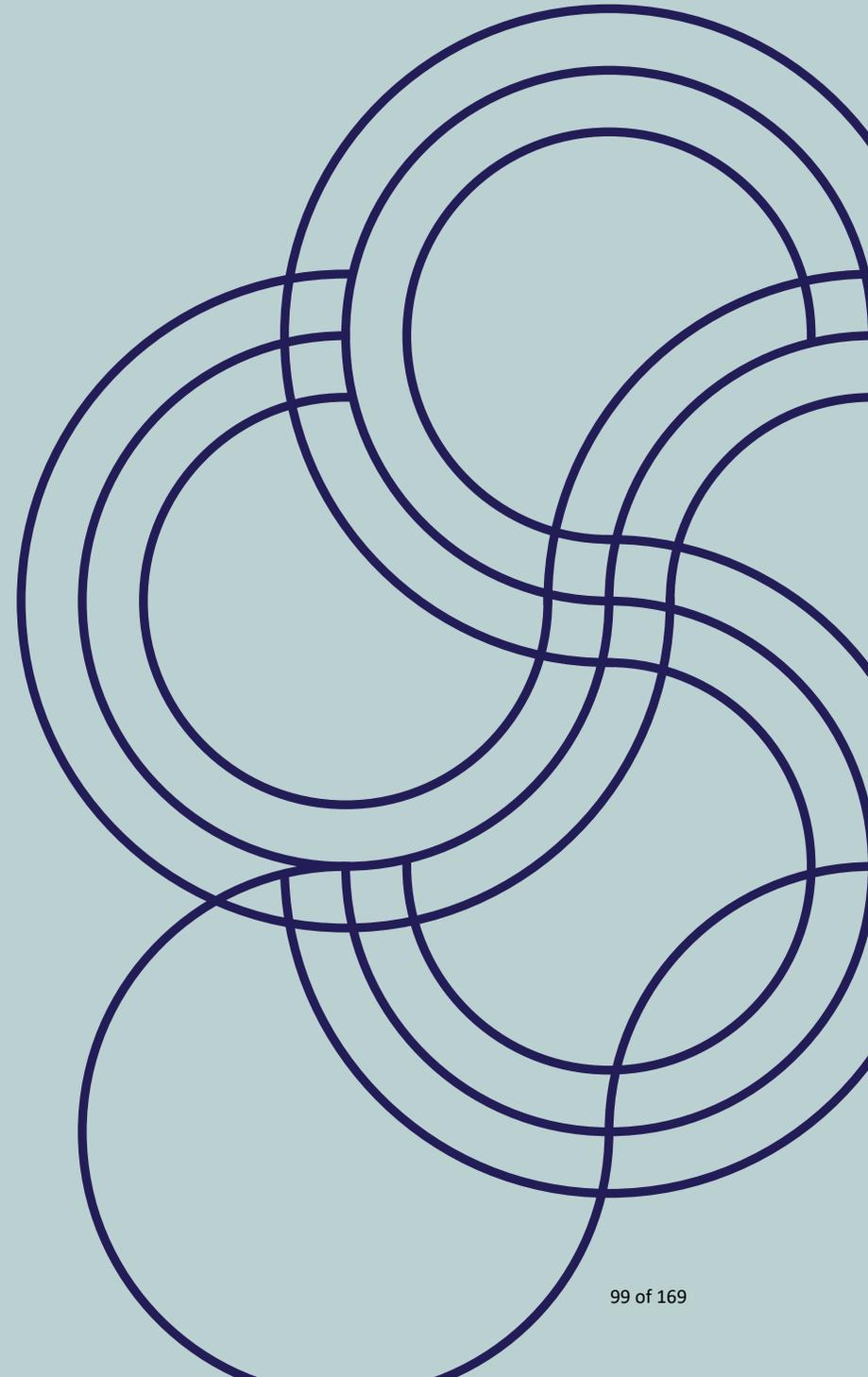
### Local Community Groups

### Councillors

We are keen to ensure that the actions and commitments within this document reflect local priorities, and would be happy to discuss further.



# 13.0 Timescale



# Delivery and Timescale

Subject to allocation, a full planning application will follow almost immediately, within 6 months. Following this, we would plan to deliver the development of this site within 1 to 5 years.

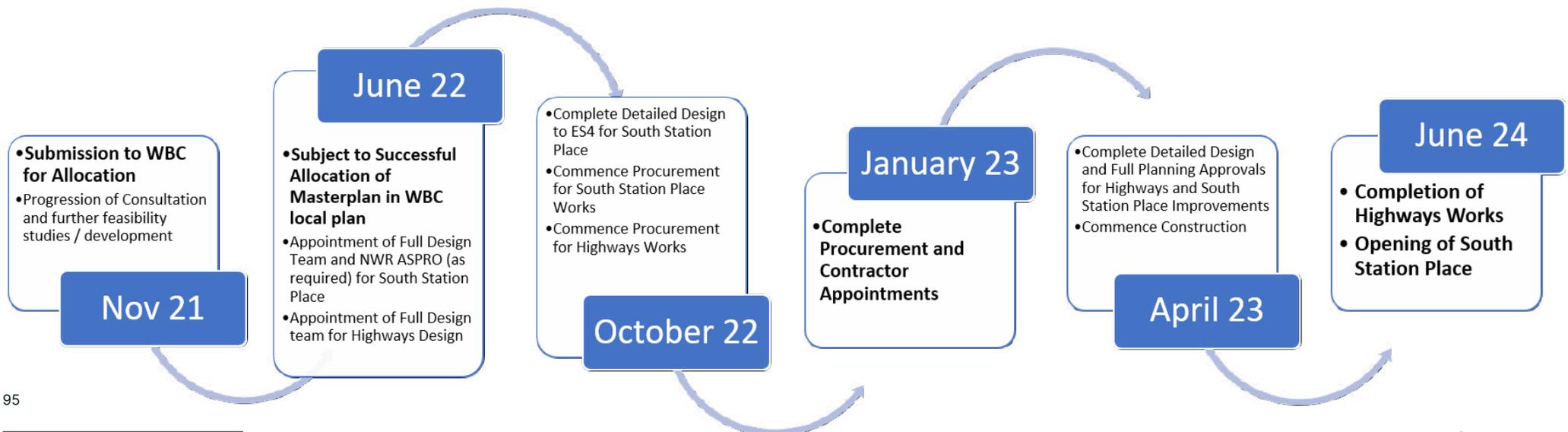
Being the key driver for the proposal, the link road, park and ride and wider station enhancement works will be built out as Phase 1, prior to any of the wider enabling development being sold.

**A detailed timeline in respect of the development of this site is set out below.**

Following submission of these proposals, it is the intention that successful allocation in the emerging Warrington Borough Council Local Plan will be successful in 2022, whereby a full design team would be appointed, and detailed design works would commence. Following this, it is anticipated that detailed designs for South Station Place would be agreed by October 2022, enabling the commencement of procurement for the SSP and highways works. By January 2023, we intend to have all procurement and contractor appointments complete, prior to the completion of detailed design and full planning approvals, allowing for construction commencement by April 2023.

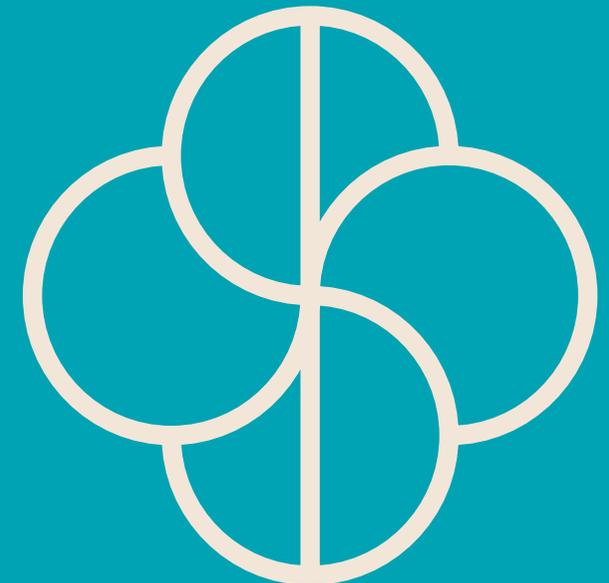
Upon completion of the Highways works, it would be the intention that South Station Place will open, enabling the operation of the wider site by June 2024.

Although conversations with both key Councillor's and various Council Officer's have suggested there may be justification for a planning application at this site on the basis of very special circumstances, in respect to the benefits of the enhancements to Birchwood Railway Station, it is the preference of the development partners and wider project team to continue with promotion in the Local Plan.



We would like to thank the Council for their consideration.

Patrick Properties remain committed to working with all parties to deliver this significant transport-led, public infrastructure development.



**APPENDIX CAV8 – PARTICK PROPERTIES AND ST MODWEN  
DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED JOINT STATEMENT**

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022

Kerry Trueman

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Trueman

WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

LAND TO THE EAST OF JUNCTION 21 OF THE M6

JOINT STATEMENT PREPARED ON BEHALF OF ST MODWEN DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED AND PATRICK PROPERTIES

This letter is issued to the Inspectors examining the emerging Warrington Local Plan on behalf of St. Modwen Developments Limited and Patrick Properties. It is provided in advance of the Examination in Public ('EiP') and its purpose is to outline the position of St. Modwen and Patrick Properties who are promoters of two parcels of land identified on Drawing Ref. 3479901-212A that are located adjacent to the east of Junction 21 of the M6 in Warrington.

**St. Modwen and Patrick Properties' (herein referred to as 'the Parties')** parcels of land measure 71.5 and 100 hectares respectively and would be accessed from Manchester Road that provides access to Junction 21 of the M6. The parcels of land have the potential to deliver approximately 40 hectares of land each for employment development (i.e. a total of approximately 80 hectares), together with the opportunity to provide substantial benefits to public transport infrastructure.

Both Parties are in discussions with each other and agree that there is an opportunity for wider comprehensive development of the Site, given their respective land parcels lie adjacent to each other, delivering significant economic, social and environmental benefits to the Warrington area.

The Parties have been in dialogue with Warrington Council in relation to the allocation of the parcels of land and will be appearing at the forthcoming EiP separately to put forward the case for the allocation of the parcels of land for employment development and associated development. The case put forward by St. Modwen is that there is an objectively assessed need for employment land development in Warrington that significantly exceeds the land that has been allocated for such development in the emerging Local Plan. That need has been assessed by Savills (UK) Limited on behalf of St. Modwen and is considered to be a methodologically sound basis for assessing the requirements for employment land in Warrington in accordance with both the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance. **By contrast, the LPA's assessment of need is flawed and unsound. St. Modwen consider the Plan should be based on the Savills' assessment of employment**

land need. Patrick Properties support St. Modwen by confirming that the analysis undertaken by Savills is the appropriate basis under which employment land needs for Warrington should be considered and will endorse that position at the forthcoming EiP.

Accordingly, the Plan is currently unsound but can be made sound through a further call for sites and the allocation of further employment land.

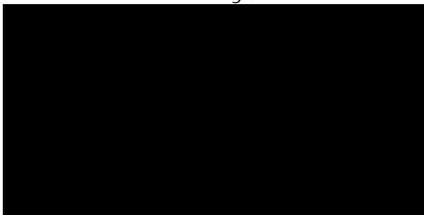
Patrick Properties also consider there is a need for additional employment land to be allocated in the emerging Local Plan and has confirmed its position in promoting its parcel of land that there are wider substantial infrastructure benefits that could be delivered by its site in addition to meeting employment land needs including the provision of and improvements to sustainable travel infrastructure. These measures include the opening of a new southern access to Birchwood railway station and the provision of park and ride facilities alongside the station. This would assist in increasing the capacity of the railway network and provide a sustainable travel hub at Birchwood Railway Station for which Patrick Properties will be putting its case forward at the EiP. St. Modwen recognises the benefits that the sustainable travel infrastructure could deliver.

With the above in mind, the Parties confirm that if the Inspectors are minded to seek the allocation of the whole of both parcels of land for employment and infrastructure development, both of the Parties are committed to working with each other to ensure the comprehensive development of both parcels of land to realise development that delivers sustainable economic growth in Warrington and provides for wider social and environmental benefits in the delivery of sustainable development at the site.

The Parties trust that this letter will be acknowledged and taken into account by the Inspectors and are happy to review and discuss the matter further with them at the EiP.

We would be grateful if confirmation can be provided that the Inspectors have received a copy of this letter and if there are any questions in the meantime, please do get in contact.

Yours sincerely,



ALBAN P CASSIDY  
For and on behalf of  
CASSIDY + ASHTON  
ARCHITECTS, TOWN PLANNERS AND BUILDING SURVEYORS

enc

[www.cassidyashton.co.uk](http://www.cassidyashton.co.uk)

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## APPENDIX CAV9 – NETWORK RAIL DOCUMENT

# How to accommodate forecast growth on the Cheshire Line Committee (CLC) corridor?

## Railway investment choices

October 2019



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# Part A Executive Summary

We are pleased to present an assessment of some possible investment choices for the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) corridor between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington Central. These choices are presented to understand which interventions may be required to meet future growth forecasts on the CLC corridor by 2026, 2033 and 2043. This work has been completed as part of the Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) approach adopted under the Long-Term Planning Process (LTPP). Industry partners have participated in the study. This collaborative approach has helped to identify some possible investment choices to accommodate forecast growth.

The CLC corridor supports several functions, including commuting flows into and out of Liverpool and Manchester city centres and Warrington. It also provides connectivity beyond the North West to South Yorkshire, the East Midlands and beyond. Over the last seven years, there has been an increase of 55% in passenger numbers using the route throughout the day which compares with 25% growth across the UK<sup>1</sup>. Peak services east of Warrington to and from Manchester are overcrowded, whilst service reliability is poor. There are only four trains per hour (tph) east of Hunts Cross towards Manchester, but the timetable structure is very rigidly defined. This structure is determined by:

- The number of intermediate stations which stopping trains serve given the journey time differences compared with the semi-fast services;
- Long signalling headways covering specific parts of the route,
- Lack of intermediate overtaking opportunities;
- Significant scope for importing delays from and into the Castlefield corridor at Manchester, Hope Valley and elsewhere.

The rail industry faces a major challenge in the future to support the forecast demand growth, whilst the capacity constraints arising from the current timetable structure would make the introduction of extra trains challenging. Part of that challenge is to optimise

current network assets, whilst accommodating the franchise commitments using both the CLC route and elsewhere. Network Rail has worked collaboratively with rail industry colleagues to consider the investment choices that may be required to support this forecast growth between 2024 and 2043.

Since the development of the original report, the economic appraisal results have been updated to reflect some alternative assumptions on capital and operating costs. Whilst these revisions have improved the results, the updated value for money assessment is still not sufficient to demonstrate a 'good' case (with a benefit cost ratio above 2.0). This outcome demonstrates the challenges associated with developing a robust business case for train lengthening, particularly when the extra rolling stock capacity is only required for a short period each day.

In the short term, forthcoming franchise changes (when the East Midland Railway service gets transitioned to either the Northern or TransPennine Express franchises) could deliver further capacity improvements. The existing Class 158s are expected to be replaced with alternative rolling stock with higher capacities, whilst the ongoing rolling stock cascade could increase capacity for local services.

In preparing this report, feedback from stakeholders has subsequently highlighted that challenges affecting the CLC route are wider than simply developing solutions to alleviate overcrowding. Whilst additional rolling stock may deliver some modest supplementary benefits including slightly shorter dwell times at stations during the peak periods, a more comprehensive package of interventions is required.

Whilst Network Rail investigated the interventions required to cater for future growth along the CLC line, a similar report was prepared by AECOM on behalf of Merseytravel, Warrington Borough Council and Transport for Greater Manchester. This package of suggested interventions offered a stronger economic business case as a result of its broader remit. Feedback from the Industry Planning Advisory Group has recommended that the latter concept be further developed.

The proposed package of interventions from AECOM

<sup>1</sup> Passenger journeys by sector Table 12.6 2017-18, ORR, MOIRA 2018 for Northern stopping services

comprises a revised local service with separate portions from Liverpool to Birchwood and from the new station at Warrington West to Manchester Oxford Road. Splitting the local services into two portions could enable the following:

- Introduction of a more reliable semi-fast service between Liverpool and Manchester with more flexible timings;
- Better service frequencies to the intermediate stations, providing an opportunity to grow the market;
- In the medium term, the opportunities to introduce rolling stock capable of achieving faster journey times should be considered, especially for local services;
- Furthermore, the internal configuration of this rolling stock could be designed to suit the characteristics of short distance journeys.

Additional infrastructure would need to be provided in the Warrington West and Birchwood areas to support the proposed service patterns. These changes could also help to grow the passenger market in the interim, potentially strengthening the case for further investment.

Whilst the options described above provide a short to medium term opportunity for the CLC route, it is recognised that further capacity interventions are still required in the longer term. The interface with the Merseyrail network in the Hunts Cross area and approaching Liverpool Lime Street provides a more complex issue, for example. Adding in the interaction with other services east of Castlefield Junction, and the differences between the service frequencies creates a significant limit on the number of services in operation along the corridor.

There are similar issues at the Manchester end of the corridor too, since the frequencies are lower compared with the Metrolink services. Connectivity issues approaching Manchester may need to be addressed more urgently (compared with the Liverpool end of the route) given the higher current passenger usage and greater forecast growth. Any interventions will be limited by platform lengths at Manchester Oxford Road and use of the Castlefield corridor.

Determining whether there would be sufficient capacity until the introduction of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) is key, since NPR could offer the option for passengers travelling between Liverpool, Warrington and Manchester to switch onto the new services. This diversion of these longer distance passengers onto other trains could release capacity for users joining services at other CLC stations.

This study recommends therefore the progression of the report prepared by AECOM, and the pursuit of their recommended interventions required to drive connectivity along the CLC Corridor. A Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) should be developed. It is also recommended that further investigation into potential interventions that seek to address future capacity issues along the rail corridor takes place.

# Part B The Long Term Planning Process and Continuous Modular Strategic Planning

## What is the Long Term Planning Process?

The Long Term Planning Process is designed to facilitate the strategic planning of the rail network. It is a Network Rail Licence Condition to effectively plan the future of the network. This process takes into account the views of all industry stakeholders and incorporates these when identifying how rail can support the forecast growth over the next 25 years. Additionally, it enables passenger and freight operators to have the confidence they need to take their own strategic decisions in planning for their future services. The findings from the Study that answers the CMSP question also help to inform potential funders (Government, Transport for the North, and third parties), and franchising authorities of the potential choices that they may wish to make in terms of investment in the network and the services running.

## What is Continuous Modular Strategic Planning?

Continuous Modular Strategic Planning (CMSP) is a workstream initiated in response to the outputs of the Shaw report. This recommended that the industry should create route-based enhancement plans that:

- Support the needs of devolved route businesses;
- Focus explicitly on the needs of passengers and freight end-users;
- Engage operators to represent the voice of those customers.

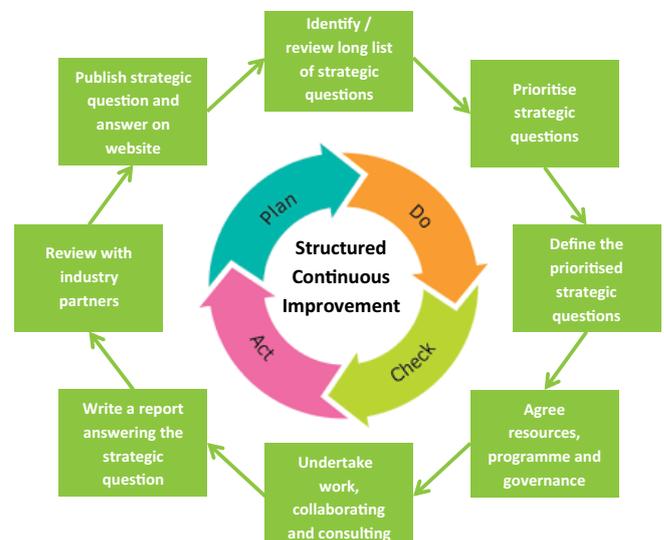
CMSP puts passenger and freight end users at the heart of the process. It also better addresses the Route's business needs, and feeds into refranchising, capacity allocation, development and delivery, and the Sale of Access rights processes. It employs a more effective and focussed means of consultation and provides more granular, targeted market insight.

Figure 1 illustrates this process.

- **Identify/Review** the list of strategic questions – The rail industry identifies the strategic questions they would like to answer within a geographical boundary;

- **Prioritise** – The governance group review and prioritise the questions to be answered using a scoring matrix which provides transparency and fairness across the industry;
- **Define** – The strategic question is defined to ensure that it captures the issues to be addressed;
- **Agree resources/programme and governance** – The strategic question lead is allocated and resource across the industry is identified to ensure fair representation opportunity at all planned working groups;
- **Undertake work** – The strategic question is answered in collaboration with all stakeholders;
- **Write report** – The strategic question lead drafts the report, following the outputs from the work;
- **Review** – All industry partners review the draft report and provide commentary or proposed amendments;
- **Publish** – The document is amended accordingly and, once approved, is published. Findings are integrated with other workstreams including other CMSP questions, plus HS2 and NPR outputs.

Figure 1: Summary of the CMSP process



## Study Aims and Objectives

### Context for the Strategic Question

In early 2017 key industry stakeholders were invited by Network Rail to attend a series of workshops to generate a list of strategic questions to be considered as part of the North of England Route Study (NoERS). The four rail corridors around Greater Manchester identified in tranche 1 of the strategic question prioritisation were Bolton, Stockport, Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC) and Hadfield / Glossop.

The strategic questions to be answered were:

- **SQ-GMC-C-003:** What interventions are required to meet future growth on the Bolton corridor by 2026, 2033 and 2043?
- **SQ-GMC-C-006:** What interventions are required to meet future growth on the Stockport corridor by 2026, 2033 and 2043?
- **SQ-GMC-C-004:** What interventions are required to meet future growth on the CLC corridor by 2026, 2033 and 2043?
- **SQ-GMC-C-005:** What interventions are required to meet future growth on the Hadfield / Glossop corridor by 2026, 2033 and 2043?

These four key corridors into Manchester have been selected for the following reasons:

- Interventions will be required to meet passenger and freight growth by 2026, 2033 and 2043;
- Some of the corridors are being considered as part of NPR/HS2 and this provides integration with existing work streams;
- Existing reports/evidence have already been undertaken and show that some interventions may be required by the end of the franchise periods;
- They have been identified as priorities by potential funders and have a key interest from stakeholders;
- Outputs from this corridor analysis is needed to inform wider transport strategies and plans for the North of England.

It should be noted that the Study question was modified at the beginning of the CMSP process in order to better reflect current franchise lifecycles. The question being answered instead became: “What interventions are required to meet future growth on the CLC corridor by 2024, 2033 and 2043?”

## Study Governance

Figure 2 illustrates the governance arrangements that provides oversight to the technical staff responsible for completing the work. In addition to Network Rail, there is also representation on this governance group from:

- Transport authorities: Department for Transport and Transport for the North, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, Transport for Greater Manchester and Warrington Borough Council;
- Operators: East Midlands Trains, Northern Railway;

The purpose of this group is to offer oversight and direction to the project team undertaking the technical work.

**Figure 2: Governance arrangements for CMSP**



# Part C Today's Railway

## Rail in the North West

The extensive rail network serving the North West of England supports passenger journeys between the main economic centres. Manchester and Liverpool are two of the largest and most influential cities in the North West, and the movement of passengers into and out of these hubs is crucial to the economic performance of area. There are over 200,000 passenger journeys to / from Manchester city centre every day<sup>1</sup>. This has grown dramatically in the last 20 years, with the number of passengers more than doubling between 2001 and 2011, and continuing to grow since. Of those passengers travelling into the centre on a typical weekday in 2016, about one third were travelling in the peak period between 07.00 and 09.59, this highlights the strain that the network is put under for a relatively short period each day.

Crowding issues in peak periods continue to be a major issue across rail corridors into Manchester. For journeys into Manchester city centre in 2017, 4.3% of train passengers were required to stand for more than 20 minutes with a 2.2% affected during the PM peak. This was the third highest percentage of any city in the country (after London, 5.4%, and Cambridge, 4.8%). In total, 15% of passengers were required to stand, which represents a 4% increase versus 2010. Since 2010, AM peak overcrowding issues affecting Manchester have deteriorated as the number of extra passengers using the network vastly outstrips the additional supply of seats available (10,400 passengers vs 6,700 seats)<sup>2</sup>.

Manchester Piccadilly, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Victoria are the main Manchester city centre stations (note though that Manchester Victoria can't be accessed from the CLC line). Manchester Piccadilly represents an all-important hub for the North, with passengers travelling to, from and through Manchester from cities that include Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield. CLC services to / from Liverpool start and terminate at the high level platforms at Lime Street. About 55% of journeys between the North West and other regions start / end in Greater Manchester.

In Liverpool, there were 124,000 trips per day into the city centre in 2016. This total includes Merseyrail as well as the high level platforms at Lime Street. Of this, 20,000 trips were made in the AM peak plus a further 22,000 journeys during the PM peak. According to the Department for Transport measure PiXC, there were no crowding issues affecting services in 2016. This is explained by the introduction of a greater number of seats versus the change in passenger numbers using rail to Liverpool during the AM peak.

## Geographical boundaries for the CLC study

The geographic boundaries defined for the CLC corridor are shown in Figure 3. The boundaries agreed for the purposes of the capacity modelling analysis were Edge Hill East Junction in Liverpool to Trafford Park West Junction in Manchester. The following feeder corridors were identified to inform the analysis (note that a "feeder corridor" can be identified as being a heavy rail line that has direct connections with the main route under investigation and whose performance will therefore directly impact that of the main corridor):

- Liverpool Lime St to Edge Hill;
- Manchester Oxford Road to Trafford Park;
- Southport to Hunts Cross.

Merseyrail services between Southport and Hunts Cross are represented as a feeder corridor. Several other operators operate via the feeder routes including Virgin Trains, TransPennine Express, London North Western, Transport for Wales and Cross Country. Examples of other services using these routes include trains from Sheffield or Manchester Airport via the CLC, Transport for Wales (TfW) from Chester, Llandudno or South Wales, Cross Country (the southern approach to Manchester Piccadilly), London North Western (Birmingham trains on the approach to Liverpool Lime Street), Virgin Trains (approaches to Liverpool and Manchester) and TransPennine Express (trains from Manchester Airport via the Ordsall Chord).

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/633285/rail-passenger-crowding-2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633285/rail-passenger-crowding-2016.pdf)

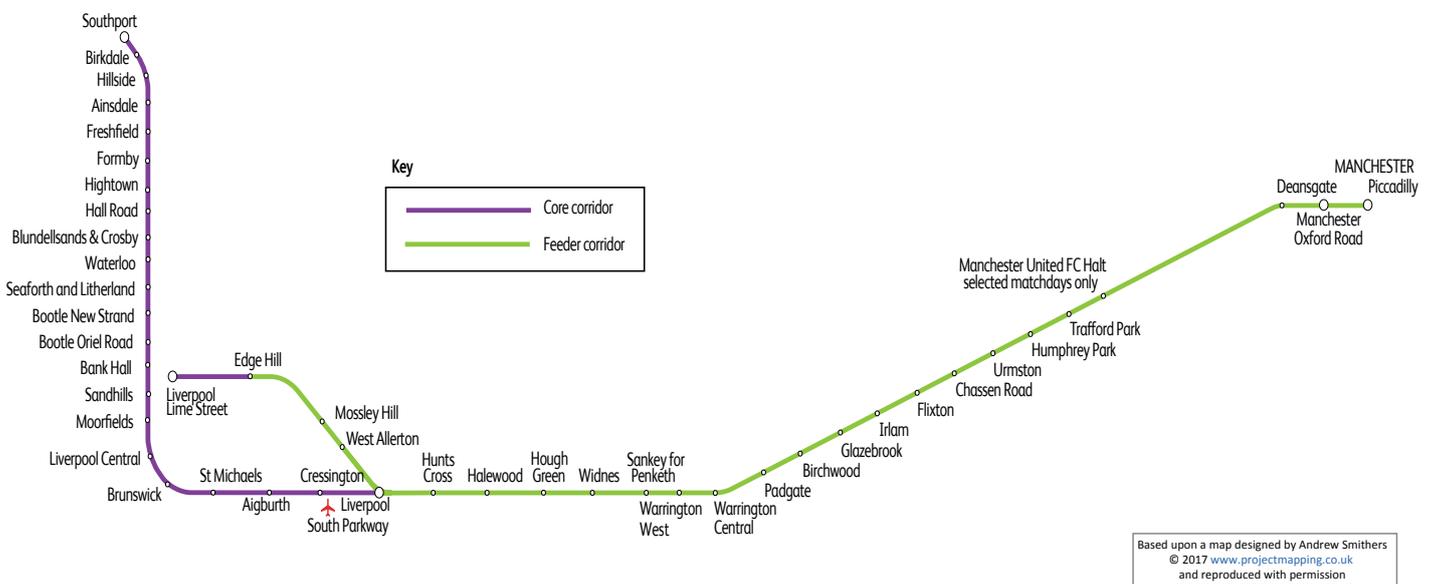
<sup>2</sup> Rail passenger numbers and crowding on weekdays in major cities in England and Wales 2017, Department for Transport, July 2018

The boundaries described above took account of the interface with several workstreams comprising current studies, reports covering the network at Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Oxford Road, Manchester Piccadilly, plus analysis of the Castlefield corridor by other stakeholders such as Transport for the North, HS2 Ltd and Network Rail. Liverpool Lime Street station is excluded from this analysis since it already forms part of the scope of work being completed as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

### Station usage

There are 21 intermediate stations shown in Figure 3 between Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Oxford Road. The busiest five stations are Liverpool South Parkway (2,247,382 annual passengers), Warrington Central (1,764,022), Birchwood (687,758), Widnes (493,902) and Urmston (375,410). The five least busy stations are Humphrey Park (34,886), Glazebrook (45,432), Chassen Road (49,210), Trafford Park (54,870) and West Allerton (101,296). Liverpool Lime Street, Manchester Oxford Road and Manchester Piccadilly stations are outside the core corridor, but are used by 16.0m, 8.56m and 27.7m passengers per year respectively.

Figure 3: CLC corridor



Based upon a map designed by Andrew Smithers © 2017 www.projectmapping.co.uk and reproduced with permission

Station	Usage	Station	Annual Usage
Edge Hill	195,726	Padgate	155,582
Mossley Hill	262,736	Birchwood	687,758
West Allerton	101,296	Glazebrook	45,432
Liverpool South Parkway	2,247,382	Irlam	243,886
Hunt's Cross	1,446,142	Flixton	132,528
Halewood	135,832	Chassen Road	49,210
Hough Green	297,406	Urmston	375,140
Widnes	493,902	Humphrey Park	34,866
Sankey	171,648	Trafford Park	54,870
Warrington Central	1,764,022	Source: Office of Rail and Road (2018)	

### Demand during the high peak

The Study investigates demand during the high peak hour (between 08.00 and 08.59), because the worst overcrowding issues generally occur within this period. At other times of the day, for example, shoulder peak periods (07.00-07.59 or 09.00-09.59) or the PM peak (16.00-16.59), passenger numbers are typically lower. During the AM peak hour, nearly 3,500 passengers arrived at Manchester Oxford Road, although there were less than 650 arrivals at Liverpool Lime Street in the opposite direction in the same period. Analysis of journey patterns to Manchester for other time periods indicates that the number of arrivals between 07.00 and 08.00 is about 40% lower versus the total for 08.00-09.00, whilst the total between 09.00 and 10.00 was 50% lower than the high peak hour<sup>3</sup>.

### CLC service patterns

There are currently two passenger operators who run on the core CLC corridor during the high peak hour. These are as follows:

- Northern: 3tph comprising one semi-fast and two stopping trains;
- East Midlands: one semi-fast train per hour.

The service pattern for these services, including stops at intermediate stations, is shown in Figure 4. The Northern semi-fast train isn't extended to Manchester Airport in the high peak hour, as the extra peak TfW service means there is insufficient capacity. Instead of Manchester Oxford Road, the stopping trains were expected to be extended to Manchester Piccadilly and beyond as part of the Northern franchise agreement, but capacity constraints elsewhere have prevented this outcome. Outside the high peak hour, Trafford Park, Humphrey Park and Glazebrook are only served by trains every two hours, whilst Sankey, Padgate, Halewood and Hunts Cross only get an hourly service.

Freight also operates over parts of the corridor, particularly at the eastern end of the route from the Trafford Park area eastwards. Most of these freight trains then extend towards Crewe and to the south.

### Wider connectivity

The central Manchester stations perform several roles, they connect commuters to employment and allow passengers to interchange and travel between key cities in the North and across the UK for business and leisure. Liverpool Lime Street station and Liverpool South Parkway offer access to the Merseyrail network, with interchange onto the Wirral and Northern Lines.

3 Passenger station counts for 2016, Department for Transport

Figure 4: Summary of existing CLC service patterns – high peak hour



### Northern and TransPennine Express franchise changes

In May 2018, as part of the franchise commitments affecting TransPennine Express and Northern, a number of services were changed. The hourly TPE service was transferred from the CLC route onto the Chat Moss Line between Liverpool and Manchester Victoria. A new hourly Northern train between Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Airport via Manchester Piccadilly then replaced the TPE service.

The service changes affecting the CLC route described above mean the number of journeys using this route between 2011 and 2018 are not directly comparable (the 2018 timetable changes resulted in no trains travelling east of Manchester). However, the number of passengers using the mix of semi-fast and stopping trains west of Manchester increased by 30% according to the Department for Transport's Annual Rail Statistics.

### Rolling stock

Northern currently operates Class 150 or 156 units on the CLC route, whilst some Class 14X units are deployed on stopping services. However, the latter are due to be replaced by the end of 2019 or early 2020. East Midlands Trains operates Class 158s.

The rolling stock formations, along with the seated and standing capacities are shown in Table 2. This information has been used to inform the crowding analysis for each station, in conjunction with the demand analysis for individual services discussed above.

For the purposes of the Study, a 4-car Class 195 is assumed for the Liverpool to Manchester Airport service. This rolling stock is expected to be operating prior to the December 2019 timetable change and these services will be branded as 'Northern Connect'. The capacity offered by these units still represents a reduction of 50 seats compared with the 6-car Class 185s operated by TransPennine Express prior to May 2018.

**Table 2: Baseline services to central Manchester (08.00-08.59)**

Origin	Destination	Rolling stock	Seats	Standing	Total
Liverpool Lime Street <sup>1</sup>	Manchester Oxford Road (semi-fast)	4-car Class 195	248	194	442
Liverpool Lime Street	Norwich (semi-fast)	4-car Class 158	314	142	456
Warrington Central	Manchester Oxford Road	4-car Class 150	248	160	408
Liverpool Lime Street	Manchester Oxford Road	4-car Class 150	248	160	408

**Source:** Office of Rail and Road (2018), Estimated passenger journeys 2017/18. [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk), observed / proposed rolling stock formations

<sup>4</sup> Currently, the Liverpool to Manchester Airport service is operated by a Class 156 unit

## Infrastructure Capability

The CLC route is an important two track railway, but there are a number of factors which contribute to the inflexible current timetable structure:

- Numerous intermediate stations which leads to journey time differences between the stopping and semi-fast services rather than consistent journey times between stations for all trains;
- Lengthy signalling headways, particularly the absolute block section between Warrington and Glazebrook;
- Lack of intermediate passing opportunities. Trains terminate at Warrington Central and Hunts Cross but the only passing loop is in the westbound direction at Glazebrook. This is infrequently used since the signalling capability means the train being passed would need to spend 10 minutes in the loop;
- Interface with the currently capacity constrained Castlefield corridor which limits the number of terminating and through trains from the CLC route. In contrast with many other routes serving Manchester, there are no alternative routes that could be used to divert the CLC services;
- Scope for importing delays from the Hope Valley and beyond;
- Relatively short turnrounds, for example, the East Midlands Trains service has a turnround time at Liverpool Lime Street of just 21 minutes, despite a journey time of over five hours.

This infrastructure capability leads to a requirement for one stopping service to depart Liverpool or Manchester immediately behind a semi-fast train. This allows the former train to reach its terminus before the next semi-fast train (which departed about 30 minutes later) catches up. These constraints prevent some of the smaller stations being better served.

Analysis by Network Rail shows that the Warrington to Manchester and Warrington to Liverpool sections are responsible for some of the largest delays affecting routes in northern England. The section between Warrington and Manchester was the second most delayed route overall, with average delays of 4.2 minutes per service. The Warrington to Liverpool section incurs delays of nearly 3 minutes per service, significantly above other regional routes across the North of England. Westbound trains are more affected by these delays, largely owing to the potential for delays on the inbound journey to Liverpool from the East Midlands or East Anglia.

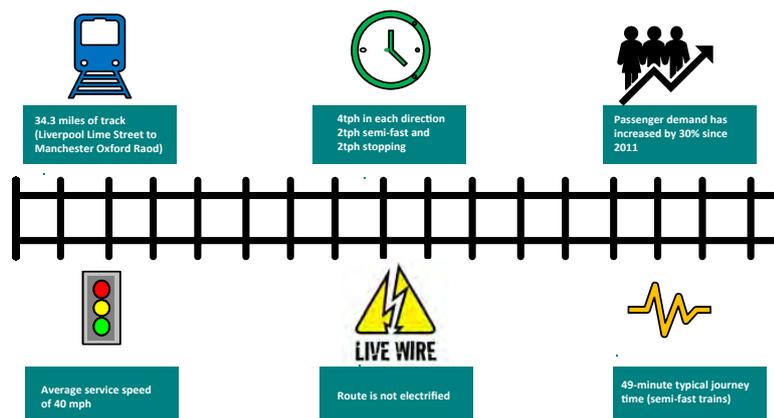
The core section of the CLC route is not electrified and currently relies on diesel trains. Only the feeder sections between Trafford Park and Manchester Oxford Road, Liverpool Lime Street and Liverpool South Parkway are electrified (both 25kV AC overhead), whilst the Merseyrail corridor to Hunts Cross is electrified to 750V DC third rail.

Many stations on this route remain in their original form as first constructed, and analysis by AECOM indicates that the facilities at several intermediate stations are 'poor' or 'very poor'<sup>5</sup>. Stations listed in this category include West Allerton, Widnes, Sankey, Padgate, Chassen Road, Humphrey Park and Trafford Park.

Infrastructure renewals have been completed in the Liverpool South Parkway area, whilst Trafford Park re-signalling is scheduled to be completed by 2024 (the end of Control Period 6). Further information regarding the infrastructure characteristics and capabilities can be found in Network Rail's LNW Route Specification document. Figure 5 illustrates some of the main characteristics of the existing CLC route.

<sup>5</sup> Developing a strategic plan for the CLC Route, June 2017, A report by AECOM on behalf of Merseytravel, Transport for Greater Manchester and Warrington Borough Council

**Figure 5: Summary of the key infrastructure characteristics – CLC route**



**Load factor analysis**

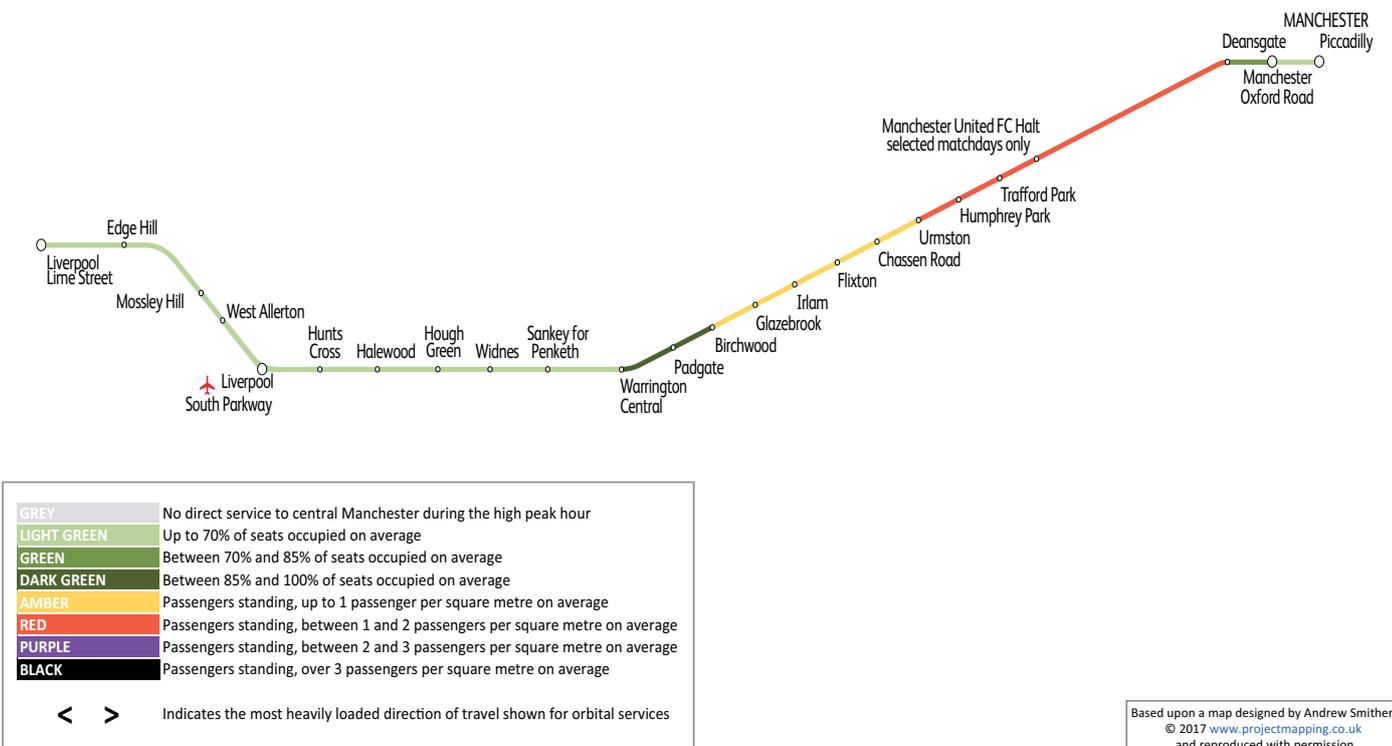
Critical load and city count data collected in autumn 2016 on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT) was examined for the high peak period 08.00-08.59). This dataset was calibrated against MOIRA<sup>6</sup> demand profiles for trips crossing a cordon into Manchester city centre. Initial data analysis confirmed that the arrivals into, or departures from, Manchester were significantly higher than the totals to / from the next biggest cities, Liverpool or Warrington Central. The remainder of this analysis therefore focuses on the load factor analysis to Manchester, since this forms the busiest part of the journey.

These passenger counts were compared to current capacity on each station arc given current rolling stock on a service-by-service basis, in order to show the quantum of seated and standing passengers on each corridor into central Manchester (and therefore how “busy” the corridor is at each station along it). Passenger capacity is aggregated and averaged over all services on the corridor, therefore the relative load factors of individual services is not represented. This information is presented in an aggregate format to maintain the commercial confidentiality of the data.

The route sections in Figure 6 with lines shown as light green to dark green have sufficient seating capacity for the actual number of passengers, whilst the route sections shown as amber, red, purple or black have standing passengers. Route sections shown in black have more than three standing passengers per square metre. The Department for Transport (DfT) peak crowding standards specify that passengers travelling more than 20 minutes should have an expectation of a seat and standing densities should not routinely exceed more than 2.2 passengers per square metre, or 4 passengers per square metre when the train interior is specifically configured for short distance ‘Metro’ commuting . Figure 6 illustrates that there is up to one passenger / m<sup>2</sup> standing on average from Birchwood towards Manchester, which increases to 1-2 passengers / m<sup>2</sup> east of Urmston in the high peak.

Figure 6 indicates that increased passenger capacity is needed into central Manchester during the high peak hour. This accounts for the varying service types in operation along the line (semi-fast and stopping). Any passengers boarding at Birchwood in the high peak hour is likely to fall outside the 20-minute standing journey time threshold.

**Figure 6: Load factor analysis to Manchester (08.00-08.59, 2016)**



<sup>6</sup> MOIRA is a forecasting tool used by the Department for Transport, train operators and others to assess the impact of service changes on journeys and revenue. The software includes an estimate of the arrival profile for each station to enable revenue to be allocated to different operators. Recent versions of the software (MOIRA 2) incorporate a number of updates, including the capability to model crowding

## Part D Factors influencing change

There are clear stakeholder ambitions across the study area to accelerate forecast economic growth through targeted investment in transformational transport projects. These stakeholders include Local Transport Authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and sub-national transport bodies.

### Warrington West New Station

Bespoke analysis has been completed for the CLC corridor which includes the generative impacts on demand of the new Warrington West station, plus abstraction from adjacent stations. Data provided by AECOM as shown in Table 3 based on all three Northern services per hour calling at the station was used to adjust the forecasts. Since then, timetable planning work for a December 2019 timetable change has indicated that only 2tph could be served, and that total demand (in this analysis) would be reduced by 23%.

Sankey is located to the west of the proposed Warrington West station and it is envisaged that service levels to the former station would be reduced to a very small number of trains per day to accommodate the services stopping at the new station.

The inclusion of the above demand forecasts would supplement the current usage of the CLC route, with exogenous growth overlaid to represent the additional traffic expected to be generated by the new station. Forecasts have also been revised to reflect the abstraction of some passengers from the CLC to the Chat Moss route in response to service improvements on the latter corridor.

Table 3: Passenger forecasts for Warrington West

Year	Warrington West Station Demand ('000s)				Other impacts ('000's)		Net total ('000's)
	Local catchment	P&R	Inbound	Total	Reduction at existing stations	Journey time impact	
2024	247	397	146	791	-319	-45	426
2030	286	419	162	866	-343	-49	474

Source: AECOM

### East Midlands Trains Franchise Replacement

In April 2019, the Department for Transport announced the decision to split the Liverpool to Norwich services at Nottingham from December 2021. The services covering the western part of the route between Liverpool and Nottingham will be subject to a separate tendering competition, possibly involving the current operators of Northern and TransPennine Express. Details of the revised service proposals, including rolling stock assumptions, are yet to be confirmed. The new franchise proposals could alter the rolling stock capacities assumed in the "Do Minimum" scenario of this Study, possibly introducing some rolling stock with higher seating capacities which would help to address the overcrowding issues.

### Freight

The main freight traffic generator served by this corridor is the container terminal at Trafford Park. There is a significant increase in rail-freight traffic forecast on the routes to and from Trafford Park, rising from 13tpd to 26tpd by 2043. It is assumed that hourly path would be sufficient to accommodate the future level of demand, with the balance of any paths operating overnight.

Transport for the North (TfN) has yet to publish their aspirational strategy for freight. This strategy may lead to an increased level of traffic to / from Trafford Park. Capacity on the CLC route and the adjacent Castlefield corridor therefore needs to be reviewed to determine future infrastructure scope.

### Economic drivers

The economy generated by the Greater Manchester City Region is amongst the largest in England, accounting for £59.5 billion of gross value added (GVA) in 2015<sup>1</sup>. This accounts for nearly 40% of GVA in the North West. The GVA for Liverpool City Region for the same year was £29.5bn<sup>2</sup>, whilst the total for the Cheshire and Warrington area accounted for a further £28bn. Between 2005 and 2015, GVA increased by about 30%, with the total for Cheshire and Warrington increasing by nearly 40% over the same period. Such periods of economic growth have significant impacts on the demand for the railway.

<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics, GVA release 2016

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics, GVA release 2016

Northern Powerhouse Independent Economic Review (NPIER)<sup>3</sup> data has also been examined to illustrate the forecast change in population, employment and GVA per capita for Liverpool, Manchester and Warrington Districts for the ‘business as usual’ (BAU) and ‘transformational’ growth scenarios. Data for Warrington has been included as it represents a possible Other Significant Economic Centre (OSEC).

A 25% increase is forecast for Warrington and Manchester in the NPIER business as usual (BAU) scenario, along with a 35% change in the ‘transformational’ scenario between 2015 and 2050. It should be noted though that there is insufficient detail within these forecasts to determine whether an express, semi-fast or local service pattern would be better supported by these forecasts.

The percentage change for Liverpool is smaller when compared with Warrington and Manchester, particularly for the BAU scenario. Liverpool has the most ambitious employment forecasts to 2050 specified in the NPIER, with a 35% increase in the transformational scenario versus 2015. The percentage of jobs located in both Manchester and Warrington is forecast to rise by 29% over the same period in the most ambitious scenario. These forecasts demonstrate the potential for huge economic growth that it’s believed the North could achieve during the next 10 to 20 years.

The Study will account for these economic drivers by revising employment forecasts that form a part of the input assumptions used in the Economic Analysis. This will be especially relevant in the more transformational economic scenarios and will help to define the potential intervention options proposed.

### High Speed 2 (HS2)

In 2009 the government commenced an assessment of the case for a second high speed line in the UK. A Y-shaped route from London to Birmingham with branches to Manchester and Leeds was proposed. Phase 1 will deliver a new route between London and the West Midlands, whilst Phase 2a would extend the route north to Crewe. Phase 2b is planned to continue the route from Crewe to Manchester, and also includes the construction of the eastern leg from the West Midlands to Leeds. As part of this strategic question, the impact of the proposed HS2 network has been included.

The intention of HS2 is to improve journey times and connectivity between the North and South of the country in order to support economic growth. Whilst the direct impact on the CLC corridor of HS2 may be

limited, the corridor’s role in connecting passengers between the two hubs at Liverpool Lime Street and Manchester Piccadilly is expected to grow as the scheme advances.

A public consultation commenced in June 2019 for a 12 week period to review possible modifications to Phase 2b, notably the passive provision for two future grade-separated junctions. The first junction (Figure 7) would allow the future use of the HS2 line into Manchester as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR), for services between Manchester, Warrington and Liverpool; whilst the second would also allow HS2 services between London and Liverpool to use future NPR infrastructure<sup>4</sup>.

### Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)

Major investment is proposed for the railway in the North of England. This includes the following schemes:

- Northern Hub;
- Trans-Pennine Route Upgrade programmes;
- improvements to the East and West Coast Main Lines;
- proposed new HS2 Ltd infrastructure.

This programme is part of the Northern Transport Strategy: a multi-modal strategy aimed at enabling the Northern Powerhouse vision. The Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) Programme aims to enable the transformation of rail journeys between the city centres of the six main Northern Powerhouse cities – Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull and Newcastle – and Manchester Airport, by 2043.

This transformational change is defined as significant reductions in journey time, coupled with increases in frequency and capacity for passenger services. The NPR network could also offer potential to provide much improved connectivity for Other Significant Economic Centres (OSECs), which includes Warrington. Warrington could be served by a town centre or a parkway station. NPR could also enable released capacity on the existing network for freight or other local services.

The NPR programme is currently at the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) stage. Network Rail (NR) is working in partnership with Transport for the North and the Department for Transport to develop the costs and test operational feasibility which builds on previous work to provide input to the SOBC. As part of this work, concepts and options are being developed and tested for the route between Liverpool and Manchester (including Manchester Airport), with a number of options potentially involving service changes affecting the CLC corridor. This could include extensions to the

<sup>3</sup> Revised NPIER District and Regional Analysis \_ NPR, Cambridge Econometrics

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hs2-phase-2b-design-refinement-consultation>

Merseyrail network. Furthermore, a new NPR / HS2 station serving Liverpool or Merseyrail could also be introduced. The emerging vision for the NPR network is shown in Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Emerging vision for the NPR network**



The introduction of a high-speed rail link in 2033 and the ambitions for Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) will be transformational for passengers and the economy. HS2 is estimated to create 40,000 new jobs, 13,000 new homes and commercial developments in the Greater Manchester area<sup>5</sup>. Similarly, NPR will reshape travel across the North and act as a catalyst for change in towns and cities across the regions. This presents an opportunity to consider options for delivering future capacity and connectivity across the area, in a way that maximises the benefits of this major investment on the classic rail network.

From a Liverpool City Region perspective, HS2 is expected to generate a further £15bn in economic growth, support the construction of 11,000 new homes and the creation of 24,000 new jobs. In addition, up to 3.6m new visitors could be attracted to the city region<sup>6</sup>.

The potential impacts of High Speed 2 (HS2) and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) have not been considered in detail in this study at this stage. As both schemes are developed, further work would need to be considered to assess the impact on future demand and the use of the corridor. It's possible that the introduction of NPR services between Liverpool and Manchester, via a potential Other Significant Economic Centre (OSEC) at

<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.contentful.com/nv7y93idf4jq/DJHDISLIzec4a8AQoCqws/206c82c74734877dff7c0493c5ee9ab0/17-1687\\_HS2\\_Growth\\_Strategy\\_Summary.pdf](https://assets.contentful.com/nv7y93idf4jq/DJHDISLIzec4a8AQoCqws/206c82c74734877dff7c0493c5ee9ab0/17-1687_HS2_Growth_Strategy_Summary.pdf) pg6

<sup>6</sup> Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, June 2019, Combined Authority Transport Plan – Facilitating inclusive economy

Warrington (either with a town centre or a parkway station) could abstract further trips from the CLC as a result of the faster journey times on offer.

### Digital Railway

The Digital Railway Programme is a benefits-driven, cross-industry change programme enabled by technology which will facilitate the delivery of systems, technology, business and people change in an integrated way. The rail industry is developing business cases across the network to see what benefits Digital Railway can bring. The industry has not built a business case for Digital Railway on the CLC corridor and the options that have been developed are future proofed for Digital Rail but do not provide the answer for future growth up to 2043.



*Example of evolving technology*

Further details are available at:

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/our-railway-upgrade-plan/digital-railway/digital-railway-strategy/>

# Part E Impact of future year growth

## Forecasts

In order to assess the need for potential future interventions on the railway, forecast growth scenarios have been produced for 2024, 2033 and 2043. These used inputs from the Passenger Demand Forecasting Handbook (PDFH) v6.0 assumptions for all specified future years in accordance with agreed Network Rail and DfT guidance.

Two sensitivity tests were applied to capture the more localised forecasted growth:

- Inclusion of an overlay onto the Network Rail/ DfT methodology which reflects more ambitious employment assumptions;
- Growth forecasts prepared by Transport for Greater Manchester.

Growth rates used to calculate future year demand are shown below.

The differences in the growth forecasts are driven by a difference in employment and population forecasts used by the 3 Specifiers.

As previously noted, only services via Manchester Oxford Road are included in the load factor and crowding analysis, as this was identified as the principal constraint along the CLC corridor. Trains into Liverpool Lime Street or the Merseyrail network are not analysed. However, the interaction with the Merseyrail services between Hunts Cross and Liverpool South Parkway, plus other trains using the high level platforms at Liverpool Lime Street and Liverpool South Parkway are considered as part of the supplementary capacity analysis.

Please note that a journey time of 20 minutes is currently assumed by the Department of Transport as being the acceptable duration for standing passengers.

## 2024 forecasts

Figure 8 below illustrates the impacts to demand along the CLC corridor of applying the forecast growth for 2024 to the base year of 2016. Note that there is expected to be some passenger abstraction to the Chat Moss route from the CLC. This abstraction would result from introducing a third fast hourly service on the Chat Moss route, assuming suitable train paths can be identified to support an hourly service from the Calder Valley Line to Liverpool.

The crowding issues are forecast to worsen by 2024 when compared to 2016. Even in the lowest growth scenario (DfT WebTAG), there continues to be a passenger capacity issue which will need to be addressed. In this scenario, three of the four services arriving in Manchester would be affected by this forecast overcrowding, with the number of passengers exceeding the theoretical total capacity of each unit. Typically, passengers would stand from stations as far west as Warrington Central towards Manchester in the high peak hour. The forecasted overcrowding is exaggerated further in the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) growth scenario.

## 2033 and 2043 forecasts

There are no committed timetable changes between 2024 and 2043, but exogenous growth still occurs, and no additional rolling stock is assumed. Consequently, the level of crowding deteriorates further by 2033 and 2043, as shown in Figures 9 and 10 below.

By 2033, there are over two passengers standing per metre square from Irlam, with 1-2 passengers standing per square metre upon arrival at Irlam. The diagrams show insufficient seats for all passengers boarding east of Warrington Central. The likely journey times from Warrington Central (even on the semi-fast trains) would fall outside of the 20-minute journey time boundary and therefore exceeds the

Table 4: Current passenger demand forecasts (April 2019, base year 2016).

Specifier	2024	2033	2043
DfT WebTAG	12%	26%	43%
System Operator (NR)	25%	42%	63%
TfGM - CLC	31%	65%	

current Department for Transport standard. With 2-3 passengers per square metre standing by 2033, this level of crowding may prevent some passengers being able to board their preferred service. These issues could be further exacerbated in the event of service disruption.

The forecast crowding issues deteriorate further by 2043 as shown in Figure 10. East of Humphrey Park, more than three passengers per square metre are expected to be standing, with crowding level of 2-3 passengers per metre square extending beyond Irlam to Birchwood by 2043. There would be insufficient seats for passengers boarding at stations east of Sankey towards Manchester.

### Summary of demand forecasting

The CLC corridor is already affected by overcrowding, with passengers on some high peak trains having to stand for more than 20 minutes when travelling to central Manchester. The forecast exogenous growth is expected to exacerbate the crowding, even if the most cautious growth scenario is assumed. By 2043 if the System Operator (Network Rail) growth rate is achieved, some passengers would be standing from Sankey. With journey times taking over 40 minutes to Manchester, this would contravene crowding guidance.

Figure 8: Forecast high peak arrivals to Manchester (2024), SO growth

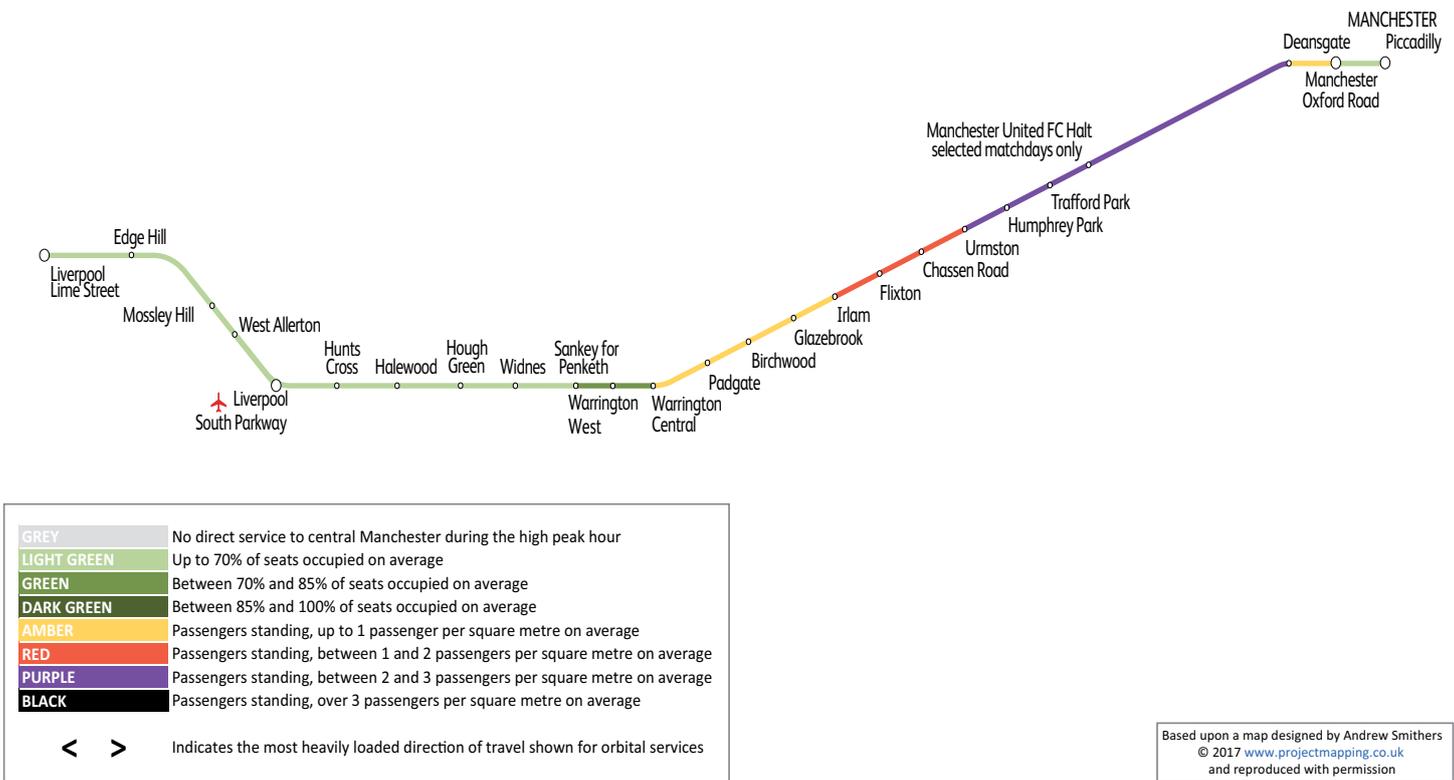


Figure 9: Forecast high peak arrivals to Manchester (2033), SO growth

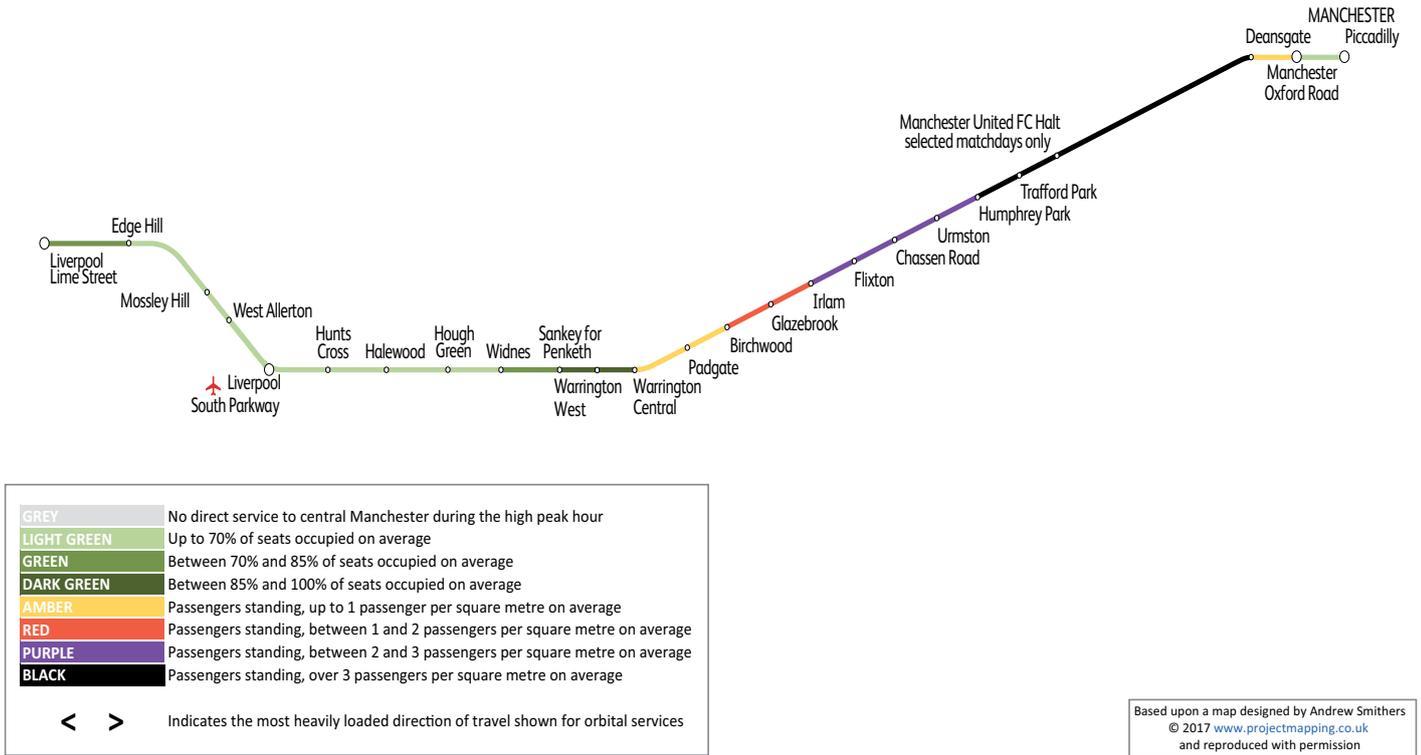
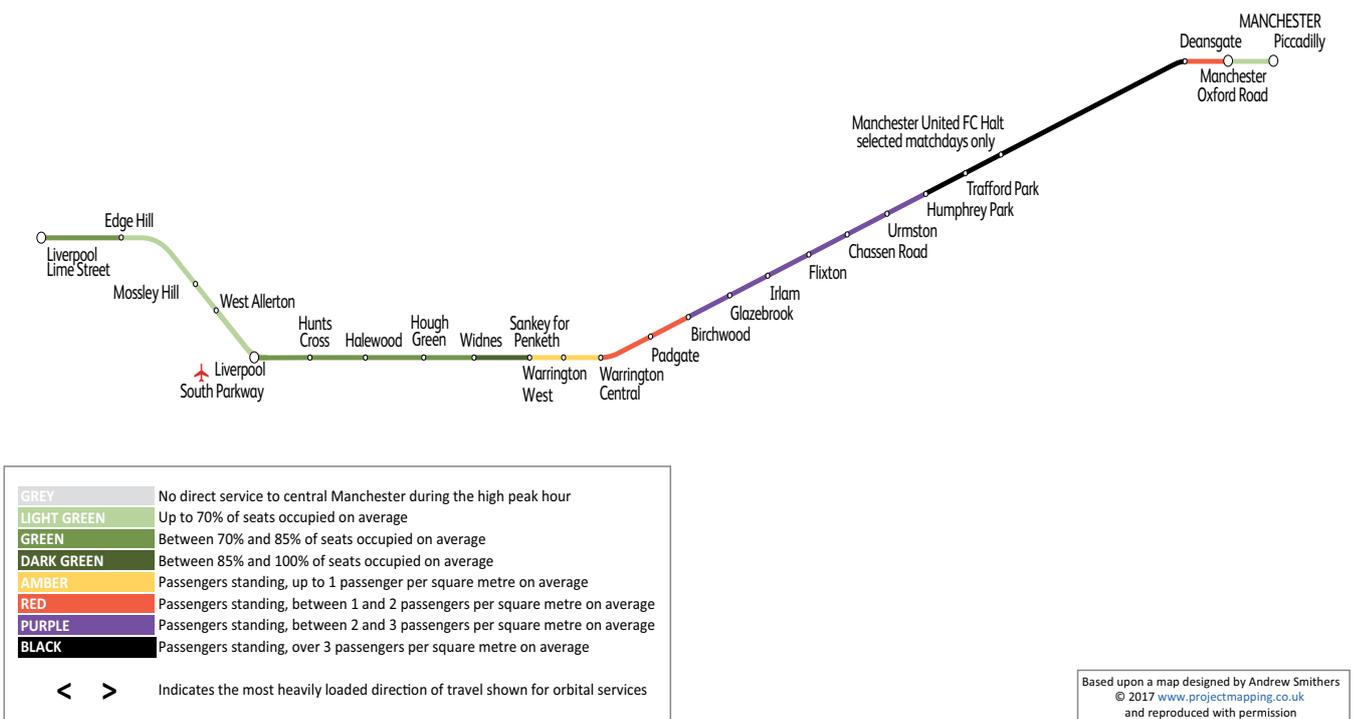


Figure 10: Forecast high peak arrivals to Manchester (2043), SO growth



# Part F Approach to option development

## Identifying Interventions

The analysis presented in Figures 8-10 indicates interventions will be required to address the worsening overcrowding between 2024 and 2043. A 'Do Nothing' scenario was discounted, since it would not tackle the problem.

The Study has confined its proposed potential interventions exclusively to those that address the CMSP question posed, that is, the accommodation of forecast growth along the corridor. Interventions that deliver faster journey times and / or more resilient performance are achieved as a secondary impact only.

Three themes have been proposed to tackle the forecast overcrowding:

- train lengthening to extend some or all of the 4-car formations to 6-car sets;
- introduction of new services, for example, peak shuttles between Warrington and Manchester. However, the analysis does not consider the wider network capacity implications arising from this proposals, since the number of trains via the Castlefield corridor is subject to review as part of a separate study;
- introduction of units that have alternative seating layouts to increase total capacity even though the number of carriages is unchanged.

## An Alternative Study

In addition to these Network Rail developed options, the outputs from a separate consultancy (AECOM) study that was completed on behalf of Merseytravel, Transport for Greater Manchester and Warrington Borough Council, have also been reviewed. This study also produced a detailed understanding of the rail market to inform the development of a rail strategy through to 2026. Several options were developed and then sifted to identify the optimal option.

The preferred option emerging from the AECOM report assumed the stopping services would be split into two, with trains from Liverpool terminating at Birchwood. Similarly, the Manchester portions would terminate at Warrington West. The existing semi-fast trains in this specification would be unchanged. The characteristics of this option were then modelled by Network Rail.

## Assumptions

For the proposals that demonstrate the strongest economic appraisal, detailed timetabling and performance modelling was then required to further verify the emerging conclusions. For strategic interventions to be developed as part of this study, a number of assumptions and risks were identified and recorded in the Risk and Assumptions log.



# Part G Options and advice for funders

## Service options and initial appraisal results

The Study used the growth forecasts detailed previously, and for each scenario a high level value for money assessment was produced for a series of potential interventions proposed. The results of these assessments were Benefit/Cost Ratios (BCR) that enable comparisons to be drawn between the proposed interventions.

The BCR places a value against the expected benefits and costs being delivered by a proposed intervention. Note that all benefits and costs are discounted to a 2010 price base. Incremental revenue and standard transport benefits were calculated, with journey time savings arising from the improved frequencies and / or crowding relief. The change in operating costs and the indicative capital costs with the appropriate level of optimism bias were also included. A suggested delivery timeframe for these interventions was also considered.

It should be noted that these assessments are based on System Operator (Network Rail) demand forecasts which are generally higher than DfT's WebTAG forecasts that form the basis of the central case in any DfT investment decision.

The following section will detail the various potential intervention options explored by the Study and their relative BCRs.

Option 2 assumed that all trains along the corridor are lengthened to 6-cars. This will require platform lengthening at selected intermediate stations. With the agreement of the relevant train operators, trains calling at stations with a low footfall would adopt selective door opening (SDO)<sup>1</sup>, instead of assuming platform lengthening is required at all stations. Table 5 summarises the underlying assumptions for Option 2, whilst Table 6 presents the results of the value for money assessment.

<sup>1</sup> Selective Door Opening (or SDO) is a mechanism employed primarily on trains that allows the driver or conductor/guard to open the doors of a train separately and is usually utilised where the platform is shorter than the train.

**Table 5: Option 2 interventions**

Theme	Description
Summary of interventions	Platform extension to 6-car at the following stations: West Allerton, Flixton, Padgate, Edge Hill, Hough Green, Irlam, Urmston, Widnes, Birchwood, Hunts Cross, Warrington Central, Liverpool South Parkway
Output assessment	Provides platform lengths which would support train lengthening to 6-car services
Indicative capital costs	£20m – £50m
Operating costs	Included
Prioritisation assessment	Should be considered for delivery by 2024 to meet forecast demand
<b>Note:</b> Warrington West station is assumed to be constructed with platforms to accommodate 6-car trains	

**Table 6: Initial appraisal: Option 2a – Train Lengthening**

Option	Option description	BCR	VfM Category
2a	All high peak services on CLC lengthened to 6-car, one way	0.75	Poor
2a S1	All high peak services on CLC lengthened to 6-car, return (except EMT service to Norwich)	0.73	Poor
2a S2	All high peak services on CLC lengthened to 6-car, one way Reduced CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope	0.93	Poor
2a S3	All high peak services on CLC lengthened to 6-car, one way Reduced CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope OPEX leasing costs reduced by 25%	1.21	Low
2a S4	3-hour peak services lengthened (return) (except EMT service to Norwich)	1.63	Medium
2a S5	3-hour peak services lengthened (return). Reduced CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening	2.06	Good

The incremental operating costs have been calculated using relatively conservative assumptions. It is anticipated that train operators affected by these changes would work closely with the DfT and funders during the next re-franchising process to understand and identify the operational requirement, and costs of lengthening services to accommodate demand. It is possible that a more efficient use of rolling stock would be in place as part of the franchise plans. It has been assumed that services that operate between 07.00 and 09.00 will already be operating as 4 or 6-car formations in the baseline.

The primary aim of Option 2 is to increase passenger capacity to address overcrowding, but this will be sensitive to the incremental operating costs. It is unusual for these types of scheme to achieve a high value for money benefit cost ratio, particularly at this stage of development. The capacity benefit from these extra units would only be needed for a limited number of services each day, whilst the levels of optimism bias<sup>2</sup> applied to operating costs at this early stage development increase total costs.

The value for money of the scheme ranges from 'poor' to 'good'. A number of economic appraisals were completed to assess the impact of different assumptions regarding platform lengthening, plus the calculation of benefits. The latter was calculated for an one hour or three hour period, with the revenue and benefits considering trips towards Manchester or journeys in both directions. This variance indicates there are opportunities to strengthen the business case above 'poor', but this only achieved by adopting the most favourable set of assumptions.

### Initial appraisal results: Option 3 – Additional peak service from Warrington to Manchester Oxford Road

An additional four-car service between Warrington Central and Manchester Oxford Road has also been tested as an alternative to train lengthening on this corridor. The additional service would provide more seats for passengers travelling to central Manchester, whilst the extra journey opportunities will reduce Generalised Journey Times from stations east of Warrington Central.

As network utilisation is high on this corridor however, this extra service would require some supplementary infrastructure in order to run including reduced signalling headways between Hunt's Cross and Hough Green, plus Birchwood to Glazebrook, whilst a new turnback at Warrington Central would be required, as shown in Table 7. Possible interventions beyond Castlefield corridor have not been considered.

Whilst this intervention may be more effective than Option 2 at targeting the busiest route section on the CLC between Warrington and Manchester, the value for money case for the sub-options considered within option 3 is weaker, generating either 'poor' or 'low' value for money assessments.

**Table 7: Option 3 interventions**

Theme	Description
Summary of interventions	Block sections converted to 4 min headways (Hunts Cross-Hough Green & Glazebrook-Birchwood); turnback at Warrington Central
Output assessment	Allows for an additional 1tph between Warrington Central and (note that interventions at Manchester Oxford Road are outside the scope of this study and require further testing)
Indicative capital costs	£20m – £50m
Operating costs	Included
Prioritisation assessment	Considered for delivery by 2024 to meet forecast demand, but 2033 is more realistic due to nature of interventions required

**Note:** Warrington West station is assumed to be constructed with platforms to accommodate 6-car trains

**Table 8: Initial appraisal: Option 3 – Extra services**

Option	Option description	BCR	VfM Category
3	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning 3 hour peak only, return	0.25	Poor
3 S1	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning & evening peak, return	0.61	Poor
3 S4	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, return all day services	0.83	Poor
3 S5	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, return all day services, OPEX leasing costs reduced by 25%	1.00	Low
3 S6	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, return all day services, OPEX leasing costs reduced by 25%, CAPEX reduced by 25%	1.18	Low

<sup>2</sup> Adjustments applied to a project's costs to reflect the risk of over-optimism in appraisals.

### Initial appraisal results: Option 4a – Option 2 + Option 3

Options 2 or 3 in isolation would not provide sufficient capacity to cater for the forecast demand post 2033. Option 4 combines both of these options and has therefore been tested as a possible longer-term strategy.

Table 9 describes the interventions required. The scheme costs are higher compared to Options 2 and 3, which reflects the more comprehensive scope of interventions required.

With the exception of Option 4a S6 which generates a 'medium' value for money case, the appraisal results for the other options is either 'poor' or 'low'. This result has been driven by the higher capital costs assumed.

### Assessment of strategic alternatives

To supplement options 2-4 which tested the impact of train lengthening and/or the introduction of a new hourly shuttle between Warrington Central and Manchester Oxford Road, a strategic alternative has been considered.

**Table 9: Option 4 interventions**

Theme	Description
Summary of interventions	Platform extension to 6-car at: West Allerton, Flixton, Padgate, Edge Hill, Hough Green, Irlam, Urmston, Widnes, Birchwood, Hunts Cross, Warrington Central, Liverpool South Parkway. Block sections converted to 4 minute headways (Hunts Cross-Hough Green & Glazebrook -Birchwood). Turnback at Warrington Central
Output assessment	Provides platform lengths which would support train lengthening to 6-car services and allows for an additional 1tph between Warrington Central. Interventions at Manchester Oxford Road are outside the scope of this study and require further testing in the future
Indicative capital costs	£50m – £100m
Operating costs	Included
Prioritisation assessment	Considered for delivery by 2033 to meet forecast demand, but some interventions will be required by 2024
<b>Note:</b> Warrington West station is assumed to be constructed with platforms to accommodate 6-car trains	

**Table 10: Initial appraisal: Option 4a – Train Lengthening and Extra Services**

Option	Option description	BCR	VfM Category
4a 2+3	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning 3 hour peak only, return. All high peak services lengthened, one way	0.54	Poor
4a S1 (2a+3S1)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning & evening peak, return. All high peak services lengthened, one way	0.75	Poor
Option 4a S4 (2aS4+3S4)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak trains lengthened, return	1.32	Low
Option 4a S5 (2aS5+3S4)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak services lengthened, return. Lower CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope	1.43	Low
Option 4a S6 (2aS5+3S5)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak services lengthened, return, lower CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope, 25% reduction in OPEX leasing costs	1.65	Medium

Option 5 looks at the case for improving connectivity for passengers along the CLC corridor by splitting the Liverpool Lime Street to Manchester Oxford Road services in the baseline into separate services. This proposal would be consistent with stakeholder aspirations, with the stopping trains split into two portions comprising Warrington West to Manchester Oxford Road and Birchwood to Liverpool Lime Street.

There is a service overlap between Birchwood and Warrington West which would provide higher frequencies for passengers between these stations. However, this option does not provide any additional capacity into central Manchester stations.

The incremental operating costs have been included in the appraisal resulting from the increased rolling stock mileage, but the initial analysis completed indicates the revised train service pattern could be operated without requiring extra units.

**Table 11: Option 5 interventions**

Theme	Description
Summary of interventions	Block sections converted to 4 min headways (Hunts Cross-Hough Green & Glazebrook -Birchwood). New crossover at Warrington West. Additional loop and turnback at Warrington West. New crossover at Birchwood
Output assessment	Improved reliability from increased timetable flexibility. Higher frequencies for passengers between Warrington West and Birchwood
Indicative capital costs	£50m – £100m
Operating costs	Included
Prioritisation assessment	2033

**Note:** Warrington West station is assumed to be constructed with platforms to accommodate 6-car trains

**Table 10: Initial appraisal: Option 4a – Train Lengthening and Extra Services**

Option	Option description	BCR	VfM Category
4a 2+3	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning 3 hour peak only, return. All high peak services lengthened, one way	0.54	Poor
4a S1 (2a+3S1)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO via the CLC, morning & evening peak, return. All high peak services lengthened, one way	0.75	Poor
Option 4a S4 (2aS4+3S4)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak trains lengthened, return	1.32	Low
Option 4a S5 (2aS5+3S4)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak services lengthened, return. Lower CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope	1.43	Low
Option 4a S6 (2aS5+3S5)	Additional 1 tph WAC-MCO, all day, all 3-hour peak services lengthened, return, lower CAPEX due to reduction in platform lengthening scope, 25% reduction in OPEX leasing costs	1.65	Medium

The AECOM report commissioned by Merseytravel, Warrington BC and TfGM has produced a business case<sup>3</sup>. The business case demonstrates that the alternative proposition described could generate a benefit cost ratio above 2.0. However, to do so, this assumes the following:

- a new station at Warrington West;
- faster journey times achieved by different types of rolling stock;
- alternative growth forecasting scenarios;
- calculation of benefits across the day, rather than just a peak hour or peak period.

The initial analysis produced by the consultants demonstrated that the economic appraisal could generate significantly better results compared with the majority of the scenarios tested by Network Rail.

<sup>3</sup> “Developing a Medium Term Strategic Plan for Cheshire Lines Committee ‘CLC’ Rail Line (Liverpool-Warrington-Manchester), Option 4b Further Assessment” (November 2018),

# Part H Emerging Strategic Advice

## Summary and conclusions

The Study has demonstrated that there is a strategic case for addressing the current overcrowding issues affecting the CLC corridor given the buoyant economic characteristics of the catchments served between Liverpool and Manchester via Warrington. In addition to the current loadings during the peak periods, substantial growth is also forecast which will further exacerbate these issues.

It should be noted that the scope of the CMSP question, confirmed with stakeholders for this corridor, was confined to addressing the overcrowding issues, rather than addressing a more holistic set of pre-existing constraints which include (but are not limited to) connectivity gaps and unreliable performance.

In response to these overcrowding issues, a number of options were developed, comprising a mixture of train lengthening and the introduction of additional shuttles between Warrington and Manchester which would address the busiest sections of the CLC corridor. However, in spite of applying optimistic growth scenarios and reducing the scope of platform lengthening works needed to support the longer trains, the economic appraisal results produced for these service proposals was weak.

Analysis indicated that the weak economic performance was primarily driven by the relatively short daily requirement for extra capacity, more specifically for the high peak hour trains towards Manchester in the morning and the return direction in the evening.

This analysis took account of the current baseline services operated by Northern and East Midlands Railway and their relative rolling stock capacities. However, there may be scope to deliver some further capacity improvements in the short terms when the semi-fast trains towards Nottingham transition from EMR to either the Northern or TransPennine Express franchise in 2021. Furthermore, the replacement of Class 14X units with other diesel trains could also boost capacity but further improvements will still be required to fully accommodate forecast growth.

## An alternative outcome

The proposal drawn up by AECOM on behalf of Merseytravel, Warrington Borough Council and Transport for Greater Manchester, that was developed in parallel with this CMSP work, has

suggested that in order to accommodate growth along the line and simultaneously improve connectivity, the following interventions could be introduced: the local trains could be split into two portions, one from Liverpool to Birchwood and the other from Warrington West to Manchester Oxford Road. It also suggests that the retention of the existing semi-fast trains could generate a stronger economic case with better value for money.

This proposal could potentially deliver a number of benefits:

- Facilitate the operation of more reliable services by introducing a service pattern which offers greater flexibility;
- Improve connectivity to and from all intermediate stations which would avoid the operation of skip/stop services;
- Introduce alternative rolling stock with the capability of delivering faster journey times, with the incremental revenue and economic benefits making a substantial contribution to the stronger economic appraisal.

## Next steps

Consultation with the North West Industry Planning Advisory Group led to a recommendation to consider this alternative option in more detail. Further feasibility work will enable these proposals to be refined and the potential benefits assessed in more detail.

This more detailed analysis will also need to be informed by considering the following:

- capacity issues at Liverpool Lime Street and the overlap with the Merseyrail services in the Hunts Cross area;
- possible service changes affecting the Castlefield corridor that will affect the approach to Manchester Oxford Road.

Whilst this Merseytravel / Warrington / TfGM study could deliver a package of short to medium term interventions that would help alleviate some current issues along the line, other interventions will still be required to support longer term forecast growth and address connectivity shortfalls. The alternative proposal wouldn't deliver any additional capacity into Liverpool or Manchester, and continued passenger growth will reinforce the requirement for additional interventions, even if rolling stock is introduced with

higher capacities. Furthermore, the frequency at each end of the CLC corridor falls below the frequencies on the Merseyrail or Manchester Metrolink networks.

In response to these shortfalls, the feasibility of other interventions should be considered. For example, the longer term interventions could comprise extensions of the Merseyrail network beyond Hunts Cross towards Warrington at the western end, or the introduction of Metrolink style services at the eastern end approaching Manchester. Further work is required to assess the technical feasibility of these proposals, and to determine the affordability and value for money case of the proposals.

### **Final commentary**

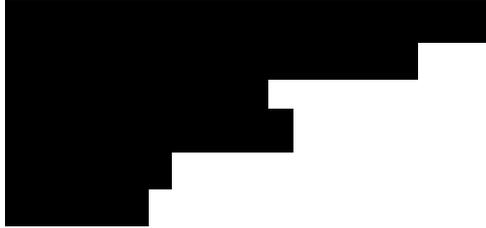
In short, this Study recommends therefore the progression of the report prepared by AECOM, and the pursuit of their recommended interventions required to drive connectivity along the CLC Corridor, by producing a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) . There is also a recommendation to include further investigation into potential interventions that seek to address future capacity issues along the rail corridor



## APPENDIX CAV10 – HIGHWAYS ENGLAND LETTER

Ben Laverick

Local Plan,



Tel: 

12<sup>th</sup> June 2019

Dear Sir / Madam,

### **Warrington Draft Local Plan & Local Transport Plan 4 Consultation**

As a statutory consultee in the planning system, Highways England has a regulatory duty to cooperate. Consequently, Highways England are obliged to give consideration to all proposals received and to provide appropriate, timely and substantive responses. Highways England's desire to be a proactive planning partner goes beyond this statutory role but follows the spirit of the Licence which states that Highways England should: "*support local and national economic growth and regeneration*".

Highways England is charged with operating, managing capacity, maintaining and improving England's motorways and major A roads, which form the Strategic Road Network (SRN). It is an ambition to ensure that major roads are more dependable, durable, and most importantly – safe. Therefore, this review considers the proposals within the Warrington Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 and associated transport evidence base in terms of the legal compliance and soundness of the documents. The review of the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) consultation documents, particularly focuses on the potential of the proposals to impact upon the safety and operation of the SRN within the Warrington district.

The SRN in Warrington comprises sections of the M6, M62 and M56, with the M6 running to the east of the main urban area, the M62 running to the north of the main urban area, and the M56 running to the south of the area. Junctions 20, 21, 21A and 22 of the M6 all fall within Warrington. It is noted that the Lymm interchange (M6 junction 20/M56 junction 9) is located immediately adjacent to the borough boundary within Cheshire East, whilst the dumb-bell roundabout which feeds the north facing slips is located within Warrington. In addition, whilst the junction 22 roundabout sits within Warrington, the north-facing slip roads fall within St Helens. Junctions 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the M62 all sit within Warrington, as do junctions 9 and 10 of the M56.

## Key Findings

Following the review of the Warrington Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 and the LTP4 consultation documents, we would draw your attention to the following key findings:

- LTP4 recognises Transport for the North's (TfN's) view that a focus on the SRN alone will not allow the North to achieve its aspiration for improved connectivity and economic growth.
- Through LTP4 Warrington's aspiration is to reduce Journey to Work mode share for drivers of cars and vans from 74% to 60% by 2041, and to increase public transport mode share to 15%, cycling to 7% and walking to 9.5%.
- Following adoption of the LTP4, more detailed studies will be undertaken to identify options for a mass transit solution to serve the strategic allocations in the emerging Local Plan.
- Warrington Borough Council (WBC) will investigate the implementation of a Workplace Parking Levy in Warrington as a way of managing demand for private car use, and of funding sustainable transport improvements.
- Opportunities for increasing the movement of goods by rail and water will also be investigated, including the potential of Port Warrington.
- The Local Plan covers the period 2017 to 2037;
- The total capacity figure for the main urban area is 13,726 new homes. This figure includes 1,200 homes at the Peel Hall site. A specific allocation for the site is included in the Draft Local Plan given its potential to impact upon both the local and strategic road network.
- It has been assumed that around 1,100 homes will be provided through Green Belt release in outlying settlements meaning that land adjacent to the main urban area needs to be found for approximately 6,000 new homes. Garden Suburb to the south east of Warrington and urban extension to the south west is the chosen option.
- Land to the east of the A50 will remain within the Green Belt, except for the parcel of land proposed for 116 ha of employment development adjacent to the M56 and M6. It is considered that more work is required to identify mitigation measures / strategic infrastructure to support this development and Highways England has signed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) with WBC to ensure that this site and others come forward sustainably.
- The ambitions for the Garden Suburb are to deliver between 5,000 and 7,500 new homes and an extension to the existing Appleton Thorn/Barleycastle Industrial Estate at the strategic intersection of junction 20 of the M6 and junction 9 of the M56, to provide 10,000 new jobs.
- The proposed phasing schedule for the Garden Suburb includes delivering 930 housing units and 116 ha of employment land close to junction 9 of the M56 in phase

1. Phase 2 would deliver the largest proportion of housing (2,797 units), phase 3 takes development through to the end of the Plan period (1,485 units) and phase 4: identifies development beyond the defined plan period (2,208 units).

- There is a requirement of approximately 213 ha of employment land to be provided through Green Belt release. WBC is proposing to allocate the following three additional employment areas: Port Warrington (74.36 ha); Warrington Business Hub (25.47 ha); and Garden Suburb Employment Area (116 ha).
- The northern extension of Omega has been removed from the emerging Local Plan primarily due to concerns around access and the ability of junction 8 of the M62 to accommodate further development, particularly given the proposed western extension of Omega to the south of the M62 in St Helens.
- The infrastructure schedule identifies the requirement for several SRN improvements including short-term committed Smart Motorway schemes at M62 junctions 10 to 12 and M6 junctions 21a to 26, which are fully committed schemes with completion expected during the next 5 years. Work on the M62 junction 10 to 12 Smart motorway is currently on site, with the M6 21a to 26 scheme due to follow after this.
- Further capacity and junction improvements are identified for the M62, and capacity improvements for the M6 in the short to medium term (2017-2028), although there is no information provided on the scale and type of works, indicative cost or funding source and there has been an assumption that Highways England will lead on these improvements.
- Improvements to junction 10 of the M56 in the medium term (2023-28) with an indicative cost of £10m, and improvements at junction 20 of the M6 in long term (2028-38) with an indicative cost of £50m are identified with a reference to them being subject to a Highways England study, but no further information is provided about the scale or type of works required.
- The traffic modelling evidence supplied for the consultation is limited in its detail and it is not possible to provide comments on the suitability of the background traffic growth, development trip generation or development trip distribution based upon the information supplied.
- The modelling evidence does not include any analysis of the Local Plan at an early phase, so it is not possible to judge whether the level of mitigation proposed is suitable or deliverable.
- The traffic modelling evidence completed to support the Local Plan provides little analysis of the impact on the SRN. The evidence supplied does not appear to provide a suitable baseline assessment for comparison of the Local Plan growth.
- We do not consider that the transport evidence provided at this stage is sufficient to support the proposed growth set out within the Draft Local Plan.

## Review of Evidence Informing the LTP4

### *LTP4 Evidence Base Review*

The evidence review is an important part in the LTP4 development process, as it provides an opportunity to understand the existing travel patterns and reasons why people travel in Warrington. It also enables the identification of existing and future problems with Warrington's transport system. The findings of the review have helped to inform the development of LTP4 policies and enabled evidence based objective setting.

The LTP4 evidence base document provides a review of the socio-economic trends and activity, such as population, the economy, health and leisure. Travel patterns, behaviour and use within Warrington. Future growth forecasts, regeneration and development proposals, and environmental issues and considerations and the natural environment.

Pertinent to the SRN, are the key findings for transport and travel including travel patterns and trip behaviour, journey times and congestion, travel to work, car ownership, and highways accessibility and freight activity. Car travel dominates in Warrington with approximately 81% of residents having access to a car. Most commuting journeys are made by car, including to the town centre. Serious congestion issues are observed in Warrington during peak periods along Birchwood Way accessing the M6, along the A50 accessing the M6 and where the A49 joins the M62. It is noted that less than 25% of residents can access key employment sites outside the town centre (including Gemini, Omega, Daresbury, Lingley Mere and Birchwood Park) within 30 minutes using public transport. In addition, the greatest road freight flows are observed on the SRN along the M6, followed by the M62 and then the M56.

The key findings in terms of air quality and noise pollution are also pertinent to the SRN. National standards for NOx are being exceeded on the motorway network surrounding Warrington, the town centre and roads that lead into the centre. A 43% and 41% reduction is required within the motorway and town centre AQMA, respectively. Also, the first priority locations for noise action planning include junction 9 and 11 of the M62, roads on the approach to junction 9 of the M62 and the A56. Noise important areas include M62 junction 10 / junction 21A.

The key findings and implications for future growth suggest that pinch point improvements and congestion relief alone will not be enough to support the planned growth in Warrington. The Waterfront area will require new access arrangements and the Garden Suburb and South West Urban Extension will require new transport infrastructure to support the level of development proposed in these locations. A more sustainable transport strategy is also required to ensure sustainable growth at existing employment sites in the Atlantic Gateway and Cheshire Science Corridor. The Transport for the North (TfN) road study plans to upgrade and improve journey times, east-west connectivity, and safety and user experience on the M6, M62 and M56. It also notes that there is likely to be a greater number of people travelling to and from motorway access points in north, south and east Warrington.

*Highways England recognises the vital role that the SRN plays in Warrington and is aware of the significant challenges associated with not only bringing forward the targeted level of growth, but also in catering for growth associated with neighbouring authority areas and the general increase in background traffic levels on the SRN. There is likely to be a material impact on the operation of the SRN around Warrington associated with future increases in traffic. Therefore, it will be critical to identify appropriate and available strategies to cater for the targeted growth, by way of improving the accessibility and sustainability of allocation sites, and through implementation of appropriate highway infrastructure improvements.*

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Warrington Draft LTP4**

This environmental report documents the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process that has been undertaken to support the preparation of the Warrington LTP4. The LTP4 sets out the vision and strategy for the long-term development of transport solutions in Warrington. It will provide the framework for how transport will support the economic, social and environmental development of Warrington over the Plan period and will replace the existing LTP3.

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects.

Scoping is the process of gathering information about the area and factors likely to be affected by the Plan. This helps to identify what the key issues are and which of these should be the focus of the SEA process. A Scoping Report was prepared and consulted upon in July and August 2018. It provided an outline of the Plan, the current and projected baseline, a contextual review of national, regional and local policies, plans and programmes, and established the key issues to form part of the SEA framework of objectives.

The appraisals identify and evaluate 'likely significant effects' on the baseline / likely future baseline associated with the draft Plan (and any reasonable alternatives), drawing on the sustainability topics and objectives as a methodological framework. We note that the following assumptions have been considered when undertaking the appraisals:

- In the absence of LTP4 there is still national and local policy, programmes and schemes, so the effects of LTP4 are predicted in the context of how it is likely to lead to more positive or negative effects when compared to a less proactive approach.
- Significant effects will only be identified if there is likely to be a tangible change to the projected baseline.

- The appraisal is focused on strategic matters, as detailed effects would be dealt with at the planning stage through appropriate assessment (e.g. Environmental Impact Assessment).
- Where routine mitigation measures could be implemented to reduce potential negative effects, this will be considered in the appraisals.

A key part of the appraisal process is to consider whether there are different ways in which the vision and objectives of the Plan can be achieved. Many policies have been developed to help deliver the vision and objectives which are not mutually exclusive strategic approaches so there are no reasonable alternatives to test. For example, policies that seek to improve safety do not have any strategic alternatives. However, there are strategic decisions to make about what transport measures to focus efforts and funding towards. Three reasonable options are identified as follows:

1. Focus on a mix of sustainable travel (walking, cycling and improvement of existing public transport networks) and traffic management measures.
2. A new mass transit system to be implemented alongside traffic management measures and sustainable travel. This would require substantial investment and may result in less investment in traffic management and sustainable travel.
3. Sole focus on sustainable modes of travel. This would involve greater investment in walking and cycling infrastructure and supporting measures.

It was found that Option 2 generated the most significant positive effects overall, as it best supports economic growth and housing development, which are critical to the emerging Local Plan. Therefore, the preferred approach is broadly reflective of Option 2, including a broad range of policy measures to deliver the vision and objectives of the Plan.

The appraisal findings of the following themes are most relevant to Highways England: Economy and Regeneration (objectives 1 and 2), Health and Well-being (objectives 3, 4 and 5), Accessibility (objective 6), Housing (objective 7) and Natural Resources (objective 9).

Overall significant positive effects are predicted for objective 1 as improvements to the transport network are critical to support a modern economy, and for objective 2 due largely to the passenger transport policies that could help improve access for disadvantaged groups. Also, a significant positive effect is predicted for objective 3 largely related to the active travel and road safety policies. A minor positive effect is predicted for objective 4 as there is no explicit goal to improve access to green infrastructure, and for objective 5 as even though there are no specific measures relating to access to health facilities, the Plan will lead to a general improvement in accessibility. A significant positive effect is predicted for objective 6 which is likely to lead to key benefits including improved access to services, support for active modes of travel, developments being well served by a range of transport modes, a modal shift to the movement of freight from roads to rail and water, and a reduction in carbon emissions. The Plan is also predicted to have significant positive effects upon housing by securing sustainable patterns of growth and movement, which are important to the delivery of new homes. **The overall effect with**

regards to air quality is a significant positive effect relating to the strong drive to achieve modal shift to active modes and support the encouragement for the use of public transport and the management of road networks to reduce congestion, along with cleaner / low emission vehicles.

The recommendations that have been made to improve the Plan policies include strengthening the active travel policies by identifying what types of active travel infrastructure will be encouraged. That the options exploration process for a mass rapid transit system includes an assessment of the environmental impacts to help guide the preferred approach. Freight movements on waterways are promoted as a key principle to encourage modal shift and that the passenger transport policies seek to support an increase in bus use.

*Highways England considers that an appropriate level of assessment has been carried out to support the current stage in the development process of the LTP4.*

## **Review of Warrington Fourth Local Transport Plan: Consultation Draft**

The draft LTP4 has been published for consultation alongside the Draft Local Plan. To date it has been informed by feedback from a series of transport summits that were attended by interested organisations, by comments received during the PDO consultation in Summer 2017, and by a thorough review of the transport evidence base.

WBC, as a transport authority, has a statutory duty under the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008, to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) and keep it under review. The LTP will help to address current and future local transport issues by providing a framework for decisions on future investment. It sets objectives for transport to support wider goals and ambitions, establishes policies to help achieve the objectives, and plans for implementing the policies. The vision, policies and actions identified in the Plan cover the period from its adoption to 2040.

The LTP4 has been influenced by several local and regional policies including TfN's Strategic Transport Plan which sets out the case for strategic transport infrastructure investment through to 2050. Highways England's Strategic Road Network covers just 2% of the road network in the North, but it accounts for a significant amount of traffic flow and economic value. TfN's view is that a focus on the SRN alone will not allow the North to achieve its aspiration for improved connectivity and economic growth.

A Major Road Network (MRN) for the North has been identified that connects both current economic centres and futures economic growth locations, as well as major transport hubs to enable multi-modal journeys. With local connections alongside strategic roads, it accounts for about 7% of the roads in the North. The MRN in Warrington include sections of the A49, A57, A56, A50 and A574.

Alongside the Strategic Transport Plan, TfN has published an Investment Programme which comprises TfN's advice to government on the long-term, multi-modal priorities for enhanced pan-Northern connectivity. The schemes and packages of interventions relevant to Warrington, which impact on the SRN are:

- Road Investment Strategy (RIS) 1, including M6 J22-25 & M62 J10-13 Smart Motorways;
- Warrington Western Link;
- M56 junctions 11 to 15 capacity improvement;
- M6 improvements including junctions 19 to 21A; and
- M62 junctions 5 to 10.

Within the Warrington Air Quality Action Plan, it states that actions to improve air quality by the Council within the Motorway AQMA are limited. A formal working group is to be set up between transport officers from the Council, Highways England and TfN to assess potential actions. The working group is likely to deliver this work as an agenda item within existing transport meetings.

The key challenges that need addressing through LTP4 are:

- Addressing car dependency and congestion.
- Growing bus patronage.
- Continuing the upward trend in rail use.
- Improving the walking and cycling offer.
- Improving air quality and reducing transport noise.
- Addressing transport inequalities.
- Making Warrington a more disabled friendly place.
- Supporting growth.
- Reflecting public and stakeholder views.

The vision for LTP4 is: *Warrington will be a thriving, attractive and well-connected place with popular, high quality walking, cycling, and public transport networks.* This is supported by a series of objectives as follows:

- Provide people with a choice about how they travel for each journey.
- Encourage a culture change that reduces the need for people to travel by car.
- Improve access to the town centre for all sustainable modes.
- Develop a resilient and efficient transport network that supports the town's growth.
- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Reduce emissions from transport.
- Maintain and improve all transport infrastructure.
- Encourage healthier lifestyles by increasing day-to-day activity.

- Improve safety for all highway users.
- Make Warrington a more disabled friendly place.

The following policies and actions for delivering the vision and objectives are of interest to Highways England:

- **Active Travel: how we will increase walking and cycling in Warrington.**
- **Smarter Travel Choice: helping people choose how they travel.**
- **Passenger Transport: how we will improve bus, rail and taxi journeys in Warrington.**
- **Safer Travel: making travelling through Warrington safer.**
- **Freight Management: How we will support and manage freight movements.**

Through LTP4 Warrington will become a place that is not dominated by car movements. The aspiration is to reduce Journey to Work mode share for drivers of cars and vans from 74% to 60% by 2041. To achieve this there is a need to facilitate significant increases in cycling to 7% mode share (approximately 2.5 times the current level), bus and local public transport use to 15% (3 times the current level) and walking to 9.5%. This aim to increase the use of sustainable modes of travel is ambitious and needs to be supported by an equally ambitious vision for transforming the transport network. The approach to delivering this change falls within four themes:

- Creating an attractive, high standard, user-friendly environment for walking and cycling trips.
- Transforming public transport by ensuring that there are attractive, frequent services that connect the places that people live and large attractors.
- Managing demand for private car use.
- **Creating sufficient transport capacity on the network through major priority infrastructure projects.**

Warrington are developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) in line with government guidance. The LCWIP sets out an aspirational core network for walking and cycling routes that includes primary routes, neighbourhood routes, and greenways. The key outputs of the LCWIP will be a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones and a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment. This will help to provide the right infrastructure to enable and support an increase in cycling in Warrington.

Smarter Travel Choices describes a range of approaches designed to help people to become less car dependent. The ambition is to reduce the number of car trips by providing greater awareness of sustainable travel choices. The scope includes travel plans, information and marketing, alternatives to travel (e.g. agile working), sustainable choices, training and enabling, active travel, cycling and walking, and smart and integrated ticketing.

To achieve the ambitious target to increase mode share for bus and mass transit use for journeys to work to 15%, the public transport offer in Warrington needs to be transformed.

Public transport currently available in Warrington includes express coach, local bus, rail and taxi/private hire vehicles. Future modes could include light rapid transit services such as tram/light rail or express/guided bus.

A study has been commissioned to look at options for two possible modes for a mass transit solution for Warrington: Light Rail/Tram and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). This is in the very early stages and other modes may be considered in the process of identifying a mass transit network for Warrington. Indicatively the proposed network includes three cross-town centre routes: Lingley Mere/Omega to the proposed Garden Suburb; Daresbury to Winwick; and Birchwood to Fiddler's Ferry. It also includes two orbital routes: Birchwood to the proposed Garden Suburb; and Lingley Mere/Omega to Birchwood. The core of the proposed network would provide linkages to key transport hubs including Warrington Central, Bank Quay and the Bus Interchange. WBC proposes to carry out the optioneering, feasibility and design work in the first 5 years of the LTP4.

We welcome WBC's commitment to plan for improvements to the active travel network and to the promotion of smarter travel choices. We also support the proposal to consider options for a mass transit solution that will serve the strategic allocations for housing and employment development in the emerging Local Plan. These areas need to be well-served by sustainable modes of transport, which should be in place at the right time to serve the new residential communities and employment opportunities. Evidence has shown that trying to change people's travel behaviour once it has been established is extremely difficult. Therefore, it is necessary to plan for growth in sustainable locations that are accessible by all modes of transport.

In addition, High Speed 2 (HS2) and Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) offer a unique opportunity to enhance the area surrounding Bank Quay. In addition, with the newly electrified Chat Moss route, which skirts the borough to the north now providing the quickest end to end journey time between Liverpool and Manchester, **there is an opportunity to review services on the Cheshire Lines Committee (CLC). WBC have been working in partnership with TfGM and Merseytravel to identify options for enhanced service patterns on the line. Some minor rail infrastructure at Birchwood station and to the west of Sankey for Penketh station could deliver benefits including the retention of 2 semi-fast services per hour along the corridor, potential to connect the Liverpool-Birchwood service to the Merseyrail network at Liverpool South Parkway and the establishment of a Warrington Metro with six trains per hour on the core section of route between Warrington West and Birchwood.**

A Workplace Parking Levy is a charge on employers who provide parking to their employees. After the adoption of the LTP4, WBC will investigate the implementation of a Workplace Parking Levy in Warrington as a way of managing demand for private car use, and as a way of funding sustainable transport improvements. An outline feasibility study has estimated that it could contribute £4.8m per year for investment in sustainable transport improvements in Warrington.

To maintain and improve Warrington's networks for all modes and to incentivise the increased use of sustainable travel, a range of physical improvements will be required. Minor improvements will include pedestrian and cycling accessibility improvements, road safety and traffic management schemes, junction upgrades, bus stop improvements and priority measures, and highway maintenance programmes. Typically, these schemes will be under £2m and funded by the annual Department for Transport (DfT) Integrated Transport and Maintenance Blocks.

Major improvements will typically be large scheme infrastructure projects over £2m and will be funded from specific bids to external agencies such as DfT, Homes England, Highways England, Network Rail and Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership. Significant match funding is also likely to be required from WBC's capital programme and developer contributions. Schemes confirmed as funded up to 2021 include:

- M62 junction 8 improvements; and
- Warrington East Phase 3 – Dualling of A574 between M62 J11 and Moss Gate.

Under the Road Traffic Act 1988, WBC is required to prepare and carry out a programme of measures to promote road safety. Including this within the LTP helps to embed safety into broader transport schemes and encourages efficient use of resources. Safety and security for all users and all parts of the network needs to be considered including elements such as personal safety whilst waiting at bus stops or whilst cycling or walking along off-road routes.

Warrington will establish road safety as a cultural priority and work effectively with partners and stakeholders at a local and regional level to promote the Safe Systems approach. This includes increasing the safety quality of the SRN and main road network to the highest iRAP (International Road Assessment Programme) rating. The establishment of the national road safety performance framework will provide the focus for delivery and will also set interim quantitative targets to 2030 for road safety improvement. However, it is not clear at this stage when the national performance framework will be established.

Freight plays a vital role in the economic well-being of Warrington and the wider UK economy. It is essential that Warrington continues to be an attractive place for business investment, including from the freight and logistics sector. The heaviest flows of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) can be seen on the SRN and the number of Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) on the highways network is also increasing. Nearly 80 miles of smart motorway will be built in the North West over the next five years as part of a £1.5bn investment plan by Highways England. This will provide more reliable journey times for freight operators using the SRN to access Warrington. It should be noted that other modes such as rail and water freight also play a vital role to the functioning of the regional and national economy.

Rail's modal share of Trans-Pennine freight is low and yet the M62 carries a large number of HGVs. An increase in freight paths could enable rail freight operators to operate more

freight which could remove some road movements and have a net benefit of improving journeys times. In addition, Port Warrington is a proposed tri-modal (water, rail and road) freight interchange on the Manchester Ship Canal, with a direct link to the West Coast Main Line (WCML). This facility will provide opportunities for freight to be moved by water within the North West.

*Highways England supports the Plan's vision and objectives to reduce the dominance of the car in Warrington and to promote more sustainable movements by walking, cycling and public transport. We welcome well-founded sustainable transport options for travel and encourage development in sustainable locations accessible by all modes of transport. Furthermore, we agree that the SRN alone cannot support the level of growth planned in the North and that sustainable movements of goods should be promoted. We are committed to ensuring that major roads are more dependable, durable, and most importantly – safe.*

## **Review of Evidence Informing the Local Plan**

### ***Development Options and Site Assessment Technical Report***

Given the number and nature of representations made to the PDO consultation, WBC has carried out a fundamental review of the technical evidence base and options assessments that underpin the emerging Local Plan. This report covers the options assessed for the spatial strategy for the distribution of new homes, the methodology for site specific allocations for housing and employment land, the housing trajectory and the approach to development needs beyond the Plan period.

Three options for assessing the housing requirements have been defined as follows:

- Option A – minimum requirement under the Government's standard housing methodology (909 homes per annum (pa));
- Option B – housing requirements to match economic growth (945 homes pa);
- Option C – minimum requirement under the Government's standard methodology (using 2016 based household projections- 735 homes pa).

The land calculations for the three growth scenarios are set out overleaf:

	Option A Standard Methodology	Option B Economic Growth	Option C Standard Methodology (2016 base)
Annual requirement	909	945	735
2017 to 2037	18,180	18,900	14,700
Flexibility at 10%	1,818	1,890	1,470
Total requirement	19,998	20,790	16,170
Urban capacity	13,726	13,726	13,726
Green Belt requirement	6,272	7,064	2,444

To meet the requirement of paragraph 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for strategic policies to look ahead over a minimum of 15 years from the date of adoption, the Plan period covers 2017 to 2037. This assumes that the Plan will be adopted in late 2020. A benchmark of 10% has been applied to provide sufficient flexibility in the context of the proposed housing land supply, which is based on the precedent set in other Local Plan examinations.

In response to representations received to the Regulation 18 consultations density assumptions used in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and masterplanning work have been reviewed. This has been done to reflect recent planning permissions in the town centre for higher density residential development and WBC's commitment to optimise the use of previously developed land. A new density of 257 dwelling per hectare has been applied to sites in and around the town centre. Through this process a total capacity figure for the main urban area of 13,726 new homes has been derived. This figure includes 1,200 homes at the Peel Hall site. This site has the potential to impact upon both the local and strategic road network given the scale of development proposed and it also requires additional on-site infrastructure. As such, there is a specific allocation for the site contained within the Draft Local Plan.

*Highways England supports this approach as it will ensure sustainable development and that the required supporting infrastructure is identified and delivered in a timely manner to specifically mitigate the impact on the SRN.*

Three options for the spatial distribution of housing growth have been assessed in preparing the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan, which relate to the distribution of housing from Green Belt release as follows:

- Option 1 – all Green Belt release accommodated adjacent to main urban area;

- Option 2 – majority of Green Belt release accommodated adjacent to main urban area with ‘incremental growth’ in outlying settlements; and
- Option 3 – Green Belt release adjacent to main urban area complemented by a sustainable extension to one or more outlying settlements and incremental growth to remaining settlements.

The spatial options for the three growth scenarios have been assessed quantitatively through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/SEA process. In addition, they have been assessed qualitatively against the Local Plan objectives and detailed evidence base including outputs from the Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model (MMTM) and the Air Quality Assessment, to provide greater transparency in how the preferred growth scenario and spatial strategy has been derived. WBC considers this process to be consistent with paragraph 35 of the NPPF to provide an appropriate strategy that has considered reasonable alternatives and that is based on proportionate evidence.

Growth Scenario C is not considered to provide the basis of an appropriate strategy as it does not meet Warrington’s full development needs in accordance with paragraph 11 of the NPPF. For Growth Scenarios A and B, it is considered that Option 2 performs best against the Local Plan objectives. Following the assessment, WBC considers that Growth Scenario B provides the best strategy for the Local Plan to ensure the sustainable development of Warrington over the long term. Scenario B only represents a relatively small increase in development over Scenario A and it is considered that any additional environmental impacts can be appropriately mitigated.

Six options have been assessed to identify the most appropriate locations for development adjacent to the main urban area, as follows:

- Option 1 – Garden Suburb to the south east of Warrington of around 4,200 homes and urban extension to the south west of around 1,600 homes;
- Option 2 – Garden Suburb of around 4,200 homes and an urban extension to the west of Warrington of around 1,600 homes;
- Option 3 – Garden Suburb of around 4,200 homes and an urban extension to the north of around 1,600 homes;
- Option 4 – Garden Suburb of around 4,200 homes and dispersed Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area;
- Option 5 – Garden Suburb of around 2,400 homes, urban extension to the south west of around 1,600 homes and dispersed Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area; and
- Option 6 – A more dispersed pattern of Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area.

The options are based on the revised Green Belt requirement and assumption that around 1,100 homes will be provided through Green Belt release in outlying settlements. This means that sufficient land adjacent to the main urban area needs to be found for approximately 6,000 homes.

Based on the assessment, Option 1 has been identified for inclusion in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan. This option performs strongly across most Local Plan objectives and is capable of meeting development needs, delivering the supporting infrastructure, and of contributing to the wider sustainable development of Warrington as a whole. Green Belt release can be facilitated without compromising the strategic importance of Warrington's Green Belt as a whole, with revised boundaries considered likely to be robust and durable beyond the Plan period. However, WBC recognise that housing delivery from these sites is unlikely within the early years of the Local Plan, given the lead in times for required infrastructure to support the two urban extensions.

A Development Framework has been prepared for the Garden Suburb. Having reviewed options for how the level of growth can best be accommodated through the preparation of the Framework and through SA/SEA, the allocation has been reduced from that proposed within the PDO with the A50 now forming the eastern extent of the site allocation. The reduced allocation can accommodate the required level of development within the Plan period and has capacity for around 2,000 homes beyond 2037.

Land to the east of the A50 will therefore remain within the Green Belt. The one exception is at the south east of the allocation where the proposed employment area includes a parcel of land to the east of the A50. This parcel has been included due to its proximity to junction 20 of the M6. It is stated that WBC has engaged with Highways England to ensure that appropriate improvements can be made to the strategic road network to support the development.

*We consider that more work is required to identify mitigation measures / strategic infrastructure to support this development and have agreed to work with WBC to ensure that the site comes forward sustainably.*

A stepped housing trajectory is proposed, which means that for the first 5 years of the Plan housing completions will be at an annual average of 847 homes per annum. This is to reflect the lead in time required to deliver essential infrastructure to support the sustainable development of the Waterfront, Garden Suburb and South West Garden Village meaning there will be relatively low levels of housing delivered in the early years. The annual average housing requirement over the remaining 15 years will therefore need to be increased to 978 homes per annum to ensure the minimum of 945 homes per annum is delivered over the Plan period.

In determining the amount of employment land needed for the Plan period, the 2019 Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) update concluded that the preferred forecasting method for establishing need is a projection forward of past take-up rates that considers both strategic and local needs, resulting in a need of 362 hectares of employment land to 2037. This is proposed to be met as follows:

<b>Total Requirement</b>	<b>361.71 ha</b>
Existing supply	83.91 ha
Masterplan additional	31.46 ha
St Helens Omega Extension	31.20 ha
Green Belt requirement	215.14 ha

WBC can demonstrate a realistic supply of 83.91 hectares in the urban area, with masterplanning work supporting the potential for a further 31.46 hectares of employment primarily within and close to the town centre. Through Duty to Cooperate discussions it has been agreed that a 30-hectare extension to the west of the established Omega employment development in St Helens will count towards Warrington's employment land needs. This leaves a requirement of approximately 213 hectares to be provided through Green Belt release.

As part of the EDNA update (2019) all potential employment sites were categorised according to their feasibility, viability and deliverability as strategic and/or local employment sites. The highest performing sites for strategic and local need were categorised as 'A' and 'B' respectively, category 'C' sites were considered as reasonable, whilst category 'D' and 'E' sites were considered to be progressively constrained and to perform poorly, respectively. Each site has been assessed against SA/SEA criteria, means of access, Green Belt performance, and how they relate to the emerging Local Plan objectives and spatial strategy, including planned infrastructure.

There are enough grade 'A' sites to meet the full requirement for employment land. Following consideration of the wider site assessment criteria, WBC is proposing to allocate the following three additional employment areas:

- Port Warrington (74.36 ha) – the principle of expansion of the Port was established in the previous Plan due to the location of the site, the increase in freight on the Manchester Ship Canal and the ability to connect the ship canal to the road and rail network, The Port will form part of the wider Waterfront allocation and will be accessed by road from the Western Link.
- Warrington Business Hub (25.47 ha) – a modern business park located within the wider Waterfront allocation, benefiting from being close to Port Warrington, but also Bank Quay station and the town centre.
- Garden Suburb Employment Area (116 ha) – this is located at the junction of the M6 and M56 and will meet a large proportion of Warrington's identified B8 requirement. It will benefit from being close to the Garden Suburb and planned improvements to road infrastructure.

These sites provide a total of 215.83 ha marginally above the required need. They are broadly the same employment locations that were identified in the PDO and will require significant infrastructure improvements to the local and strategic road network. The only

grade 'A' site which has not been allocated is a northern extension to the existing Omega North site. This is primarily due to concerns around access and the ability of junction 8 of the M62 to accommodate further development, particularly given the proposed western extension of Omega to the south of the M62 in St Helens.

### ***Warrington Transport Model: Model Validation Report***

The Warrington MMTM is a 2016 based highway and public transport model, developed by AECOM on behalf of WBC. The model has been developed to assist WBC in preparing its spatial strategy for the Warrington Local Plan and for appraising a variety of transport proposals. The model has been developed using the industry standard SATURN software for the highway side and EMME software for public transport and demand modelling. The model covers the local and strategic road network within the borough of Warrington in two levels of detail. The finer detail of model covers much of the urban form of Warrington and covers the following sections of the SRN:

- M62 between, and including, junction 8 and junction 11;
- M6 between, and including, junction 22 and junction 20; and
- Junction 10 of the M56.

The second, lower, level of modelling, the extended simulation area, also covers the following parts of the SRN:

- Junction 7 of the M62;
- Junction 23 of the M6; and
- Junctions 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 of the M56.

The model has been developed using a significant amount of traffic data, including slip road surveys at all the modelled SRN junctions and use of WebTris data for the SRN mainlines. Upon review of the presented flow calibration the model is demonstrated to calibrate well to observed traffic data, including most count sites on the SRN. It is noted that the model has a number of calibration count sites on the SRN which fall outside acceptable criteria. These include the slip roads at M62 junction 9 in the evening peak and the M6 mainline between junctions 21 and 22. The model has been validated to independent traffic counts, those not used in the matrix development process. The SRN is shown to validate reasonably well to the validation counts, noting that not all movements are subject to a validation count site, with the following notable exceptions:

- In the morning period:
  - Two approaches to M62 junctions 8;
  - The eastbound on-slip at M62 junction 9;
  - The M6 mainline between Croft and junction 22; and
  - The southbound on-slip at junction 21 of the M6.
- In the interpeak period:
  - Four sites in proximity to M62 junction 8;

- The A49 to the north of M62 junction 9;
- The M6 between Croft and junction 22;
- The southbound on-slip at junction 21 of the M6; and
- The southbound on-slip at junction 20.
- In the evening period:
  - Three sites in proximity to M62 junction 8;
  - Four sites in proximity to M62 junction 9;
  - The M62 mainline between junctions 9 and 10;
  - The northbound off-slip at M6 junction 21; and
  - One site at the Lymm Interchange.

Further to the flow validation the model has been validated to Trafficmaster journey time data for a range of routes on the local road network and the SRN. The routes on the SRN cover the M6, M62 and M56 mainlines. The local road routes include the local roads which intersect with the SRN at all modelled SRN junctions.

Highways England note that no journey time routes have been included on any of the slip roads. The model does not meet validation criteria for journey times on the SRN routes assessed. The model is not able to replicate the observed journey times on the M6 northbound and M62 westbound in the morning peak; the M6 in both directions in the inter peak period; and the M6 northbound in the evening peak.

*Of concern to Highways England is the M6 northbound validation which is three minutes too slow in the morning model and six and a half minutes too fast in the evening peak.*

*The level of flow calibration and validation across the model is of a reasonable standard, however the miscalibrations on the SRN which have been identified above should be borne in mind when the modelled forecasts are used in these areas. Likewise, reference to the mis-validation of the SRN journey times should be made in any analysis of the impact of the SRN by the Local Plan proposals. Nevertheless, the model is of an appropriate standard to be able to understand the strategic flow impacts of development proposals and is considered suitable for assessment purposes for input to localised assessment methods.*

### ***Preferred Development Option: Transport Model Testing of Alternative Scenarios***

During the preparation of the PDO evidence base the Warrington MMTM was not available to test the highway impacts of the PDO. A retrospective assessment of the PDO highway impacts, using the Warrington MMTM, and the impacts of alternative land use distributions has been completed. Six alternative distribution scenarios have been tested, over the PDO scenario, summarised for residential household numbers in the table (overleaf) taken from the report.

	<b>PDO</b>	<b>S2</b>	<b>S3</b>	<b>S4</b>	<b>S5</b>	<b>S6</b>	<b>S7</b>
<b>Garden City Suburb</b>	6,324	7,324	3,198	8,000	6,324	4,000	2,293
<b>South West Warrington</b>	1,831	1,831	902	0	0	1,831	647
<b>Outlying Settlements</b>	1,190	0	4,900	1,190	1,190	1,190	1,190
<b>West Warrington</b>	0	0	0	0	2,243	2,243	1,850
<b>Urban Extension</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,210
<b>Remainder</b>	15,429	15,429	15,429	15,429	15,429	15,429	15,429
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,774</b>	<b>24,584</b>	<b>24,429</b>	<b>24,619</b>	<b>25,186</b>	<b>24,693</b>	<b>24,619</b>

The overall household numbers between the scenarios differ little, with the geographic spread varying considerably. The employment allocations have remained constant between all scenarios.

The information on the forecasting assessment of the PDO in the Warrington MMTM is presented in a referenced report “Warrington Transport Model: Forecasting Report (MFR), February 2018”, this report does not form the evidence package of reports submitted for consultation and it is therefore not possible to comment upon.

Minimal detail on the adopted development trip rates have been provided in the report. It would be expected that the trip rates used be presented for review and comparison made with other developments. It would also be expected that the increase in trips in the model be presented in absolute values.

Minimal information of the distributions has been provided in the report, it would be expected that the zone to zone distribution for each development site be presented in some form, preferably in geographical illustrations.

Results from the assessments have been provided in the form of a range of network wide statistics, with no SRN specific related metrics. The network statistics on the whole predict very little difference between the assessed scenarios, suggesting that the placement of residential developments across the borough of Warrington would have similar highway impacts.

***Warrington Local Plan Testing: Transport Model Testing of the WBC Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan and Highways Schemes in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan***

The Warrington Local Plan modelling assessment, using the Warrington MMTM, is presented in the PSVLP\_Transport\_Model\_Testing report prepared by AECOM. The report provides details on the modelling methodology to assess the Local Plan proposals

and provides modelled results from three forecast scenarios, detailed below, and one base year scenario.

The report provides the same level of detail on the modelled trip rates and distributions as presented in the PDO alternative testing assessment report.

*Further evidence on the development of trip rates and distributions is required for agreement to be reached on their appropriateness. The information supplied does not provide confidence that the modelling includes sufficient levels of traffic growth associated with the Local Plan developments and therefore creates reservations over all of the modelled results presented.*

The modelling report does not provide any information of the inclusion of background traffic growth.

*Highways England would expect the model includes any committed developments, and any completed development following the 2016 data collection exercise. Furthermore, it would be expected that the model would include development consideration outside the borough of Warrington, including strategic traffic growth on the SRN. It is important for Highways England to plan for the cumulative impact of traffic growth on the SRN.*

Forecasts on committed highway infrastructure have been included in the model. Committed highway infrastructure has been identified as being that which has been built since 2016, is currently under construction, or has a funding commitment. Eighteen such schemes have been identified as replicated from Table 8 in the report below:

- Mersey Gateway Bridge;
- Great Sankey Hub junction;
- Mersey Street junction;
- Skyline Drive;
- Warrington East Phase 1;
- M62 junction 8 improvements;
- Omega Local Highway Schemes Phase 2a;
- Omega Local Highway Schemes Phase 2b;
- Centre Park Link;
- Warrington West Rail Station;
- Warrington East Phase 2;
- Local Highway Schemes Phase 1;
- Local Highway Schemes Phase 3;

- Warrington East Phase 3;
- Highway England Route Investment Programme – M62 junctions 10-12 SMP;
- Highway England Route Investment Programme – M6 junctions 21a-26 SMP;
- Highway England Route Investment Programme – M56 junctions 11a; and
- Highway England Route Investment Programme – M6 junctions 16-19 SMP.

Additional highway infrastructure measures have been identified as Development Enablers, that being that the Local Plan development is dependent on these measures. There are seven development enablers, as follows, to be delivered by 2026:

- Warrington Western Link;
- Warrington South Strategic Infrastructure – Cat and Lion Bypass;
- Warrington South Strategic Infrastructure – Wrights Green Link;
- Warrington South Strategic Infrastructure – Howshoots Link;
- Warrington South Strategic Infrastructure – Wrights Green to A50 Link;
- Parkside Link A; and
- Parkside Link B.

The report states that there may be a requirement for other potential highway mitigations as a result of the Local Plan developments and/or existing network conditions, and these are included in the IDP. It is not clear how these measures have been developed, nor how they relate to being required to delivering the Local Plan.

*Highways England would expect the transport infrastructure included within the IDP to be based upon accompanying transport evidence.*

The model has been used to test two policy interventions: a mass transit package; and a Go Dutch cycling strategy. The modelling of both measures has been completed with a large number of assumptions due to the lack of any detail on how the two measures are to be introduced. The listed assumptions into the impact of the measures on the highway network, and the influence on mode choice have been presented. Both measures are thought to be sensible approaches to reducing the reliance on the car for travelling into and around Warrington.

*Due to many unknowns over the deliverability of the schemes, and the assumptions included to model them, the results have only been considered to provide a range of possible benefits.*

Based upon the above discussed forecasting process four modelled scenarios have been presented:

- 2016 Base model;
- 2036 Scenario 1 – 2016 base with committed schemes and Local Plan Growth;
- 2036 Scenario 2 – Scenario 1 with development enabling infrastructure;
- 2036 Scenario 3 – Scenario 2 with policy interventions.

The presentation of the four scenarios does not allow for a direct comparison of the highway impacts of the Local Plan development due to a lack of a do minimum model.

*It would be expected that a base model with committed infrastructure would be included, it is therefore, not possible to form a judgement on the highway impacts of the Local Plan, ignoring our other technical concerns. Furthermore, an interim assessment has not been presented, it would be expected that an interim year assessment would be included to demonstrate the phased impact of the Local Plan and allow for the development of interventions which are required to be delivered early in the Plan period. Without this evidence it is not possible to determine if the proposed infrastructure in the IDP support the first phases of the Local Plan, nor is it possible to determine if that infrastructure is feasible or deliverable.*

The results of the modelling assessments presented in the report have been compared against the 2016 base model. This approach means that the “with Local Plan” scenarios included the impacts of the committed infrastructure. If the scheme assessment was compared against a base model with committed infrastructure it is anticipated that this would worsen the comparison of the Local Plan results.

*The results presented have little information of the Local Plans impact on the SRN, further results and analysis are required for Highways England to form a view on the predicted operation of junctions, merges, diverges and links of the SRN. This evidence should include refined methods of impact assessment, such as junction models and TD22/06 merging and diverging analysis, based upon the changes in flows predicted in the Warrington MMTM. Any completed analysis will need to be done so with recognition of the deficiencies in the base model and attempt to reflect observed flows and conditions at each assessment location.*

### **Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Air Quality Modelling**

Air quality modelling has been completed to ascertain the impact of the Local Plan proposals. The modelling has been completed based upon traffic data from the Warrington MMTM and therefore the results of the air quality modelling are subject to the concerns highlighted over the development of the Warrington MMTM forecast scenarios. It is not clear which traffic flow scenarios have been used from the Warrington MMTM for the air quality model. Due to the lack of clarity over the policy interventions it would be

preferable if the air quality modelling used traffic data from Scenario 2. The motorway AQMA has been included in the coarse air quality assessment but excluded from the detailed modelling due to the lack of receptors close to the AQMA.

*Highways England requests that the impact of the Local Plan on the motorway AQMA is provided and that any necessary mitigation measures are identified.*

The overall results from the air quality modelling completed on the urban area of the borough, illustrate that air quality is expected to improve over the Plan period due to improvements in vehicle technology, and increase fleet penetration of electric vehicles.

### **Warrington Garden Suburb Development Framework**

The Development Framework has been prepared as a record of the evidence base, engagement process and design studies that underpin the proposals within Warrington Garden Suburb (WGS), that are included within the emerging Local Plan. The document sets out the policy position and provides an overview of the spatial analysis of the area including relevant transport, planning, environmental and utilities considerations as background context for developing and testing a comprehensive framework for the WGS.

WGS forms part of the wider south Warrington area located approximately 5km to the south of Warrington town centre and it covers an area of 1,500 hectares. Its boundary is defined by Appleton and Dudlow's Green to the west, the M56 and M6 to the south and east, and Grappenhall, the A56 and the Bridgewater Canal to the north. It is largely Green Belt consisting of agricultural land with some residential neighbourhoods and employment dispersed throughout the area.

The aim and primary objectives of the framework are to:

- Define the scale and type of development to come forward within the area;
- Define the social, physical and transport infrastructure required to support development;
- Provide a vehicle for consensus building and implementation;
- Support and integrate it with the review of the Local Plan;
- Demonstrate deliverability of the scheme; and
- Understand the existing character and minimise impact.

The ambitions for the WGS are to deliver a major new urban extension of between 5,000 and 7,500 new homes within three neighbourhoods surrounding a new neighbourhood centre with retail, health and leisure facilities, and a new Country Park. A major new employment area is also proposed as an extension to the existing Appleton Thorn/Barleycastle Industrial Estate at the strategic intersection of the M6 and M56, to provide 10,000 new jobs. Walking, cycling and public transport linkages will connect the neighbourhoods to local and neighbourhood centres, the new employment area and the

town centre. In addition, an extensive green network will connect the WGS with links to the wider green infrastructure network. These ambitions are aligned with the vision for the emerging Local Plan for Warrington.

WBC received over 45 submissions to the 'call for sites' within the WGS area from both public and private sector landowners and developers. These, with sites from the Green Belt Site Selection and SHLAA Green Belt Site Proformas have been considered in developing the Framework.

It is stated that the Green Belt Assessment undertaken by Arup in 2016 has informed the design and delivery strategy for the WGS. Most of the identified sites were considered to make a moderate to low contribution to the Green Belt. As such, sites making a weak contribution have been prioritised to be delivered in the early stages, sites making a moderate contribution will be delivered in a variety of phases and those sites making a strong contribution, located mainly in the north-eastern part of the WGS, will be kept untouched as Green Belt within the Plan period.

Within the local context section, a review of the vehicular movements network is provided. This states that WGS is well connected by road being adjacent to the M56/M6 interchange junctions, and with London Road (A49) and Knutsford Road (A50) providing the north-south connections from WGS to the town centre. As the area is predominantly farmland, WGS currently has a small number of bus routes serving the local and wider area. It is stated that a fundamental upgrade of the existing vehicular movement network is required to support the scale of development proposed in the WGS, and where possible this should use the existing road infrastructure. However, new road infrastructure will be required to connect proposed developments and will be phased accordingly.

A review of the non-vehicular movements is also provided. Two existing strategic long-distance trails run along the northern extent of the WGS; the Trans Pennine Trail – which runs alongside the Manchester Ship Canal and cuts through the northern corner of the site via a disused railway, and the Mersey Valley Trail which overlaps with the Cheshire Ring Canal Walk – running along the northern boundary of the site, mainly alongside the northern side of the Bridgewater Canal. There are also several existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) within the surrounding WGS including in Dudlow Green, Grappenhall and Appleton Thorn. It is stated that these established routes should be recognised and reinforced as part of the Framework.

The Framework identifies the overarching opportunities to support the WGS as improving the existing transport network to provide better links with the town centre, incorporating sustainable modes of travel, providing better public transport and non-vehicular links, and integrating the proposed infrastructure network with the transportation and green corridors.

*Highways England acknowledges their attendance at a vision workshop in May 2018 where the general background to the WGS was discussed, along with Local Plan progress, market constraints and the technical baseline. At the session, issues relating to connectivity by public transport, walking and cycling, and air quality and physical constraints were discussed and considered. Three concept options were also presented with Option B being considered as the preferred approach. We note that following the workshop, Option B has been further refined and tested against physical constraints and trajectory requirements and has been subject to further consultation with major developers and landowners with interests in WGS.*

The Framework structure has been developed to incorporate an enhanced vehicular movement network through a series of new and upgraded routes. These improvements will be phased over time in response to the development trajectory to link new and existing communities. The overall objective is to use this network to improve the linkages to the town centre, particularly through an enhanced public transport network that aims to generate greater patronage on the routes thereby making them commercially viable for public transport operators. The primary loop is seen as the principal public transport corridor linking back to Warrington via the A49 and A50.

The proposed non-vehicular network will build on established footpaths and cycle/bridleways to ensure that these routes integrate with proposed green infrastructure to improve accessibility by walking and cycling within attractive car-free environments. Cycle routes will also sit alongside new/ upgraded vehicular routes and provide viable alternatives to connect to the town centre and public transport hubs.

The final land use that has emerged through the design, development and engagement process is shown in the table overleaf:

Land Use	Hectares (Ha)	Potential no. of dwellings	Employment footprint
Neighbourhood Centre	19		
Employment Land	116		406,000 sq m (based on 35% of land area)
Residential	351.3	7,419 (including 930 Homes England units)	
3 Village Centres	6.9		
Country Park	89		
Proposed Strategic Road	14.7		
Green Belt and Open Countryside	622.5		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1237.6</b>		

The proposed infrastructure includes a conceptual arrangement for the strategic movement corridors. These have been developed through a series of workshops with WBC's Transport Team. The Framework states that from the outset one of the primary determining factors has been to future proof a new network that can evolve as the WGS matures and grows. It was also important for the network to perform a multi-functional role and has therefore been developed as a series of 40m wide corridors that are able to accommodate a range of functions including: vehicular lanes, cycle and footpaths (separated from general traffic where possible), bus routes, green verges/ landscape buffers in addition to primary utility corridors. The 40m width also generates a built-in flexibility to the plans allowing roads and other elements to deviate within the zone in response to detailed design considerations.

There is a proposed phasing schedule set out within the framework. Phase 1 incorporates three non-Green Belt sites within Villages A and B and will deliver 930 housing units. Alongside the new homes approximately 116 ha of new employment land could be delivered close to junction 9 of the M56. Enabling infrastructure including new strategic movement and utilities corridors will also be required. Phase 2 could deliver the largest proportion of housing (2,797 units), over three of the four villages and new strategic movement and utilities corridors will create east/west linkage between the A49 and A50. By the end of phase 2 all primary infrastructure/movement corridors will have been created. Phase 3 takes development through to the end of the Plan period (1,485 units). Phase 4: identifies development beyond the defined Plan period through new areas of residential development (2,208 units) along the new east-west corridor and along the WGS northern edge, adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal.

*Highways England note that there is no reference within the placemaking principles to acknowledge the role the SRN will play within the WGS area or any mitigation measures that may be required to support its sustainable development and delivery. We consider that further work is required to understand the impact of the WGS on the SRN, particularly in relation to the trips associated with the new residential and employment areas. We consider that development within the WGS needs to be accessible by all modes of transport, which means the need for significant investment in public/active travel in the area. Proposed development cannot merely be reliant on existing capacity on the SRN.*

*Highways England has previously raised concerns with WBC about a piecemeal approach to development, which would result in the loss of investment in and/or delivery of strategic mitigation to address the likely impact of significant trips on the SRN associated with development in the WGS. Delivering development without any evidence supporting the need for a significant investment in infrastructure in this area could result in independent piecemeal mitigation being delivered. This will only address the impacts of individual developments, rather than contributing towards longer-term mitigation to offset the impact of cumulative development.*

*Transport evidence needs to demonstrate that the WGS is accessible by all modes of transport, identify what infrastructure will support the phased delivery of growth in this area and that it is sufficient to mitigate the impact of forecast demand and satisfy our concerns over future impacts on the safe and efficient operation of the SRN.*

### **Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2019**

The IDP forms part of the evidence base supporting and underpinning Warrington's Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan. It aims to aid all parties in identifying and prioritising infrastructure provision as part of an integrated approach to planning and infrastructure development. The Local Plan aims to set out Warrington's infrastructure requirements within the Borough up to 2037 and the IDP is an essential mechanism for helping to identify funding priorities and gaps. It is a 'live' document and will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure it includes the most up to date information. Any identified costs are based on the best available information at the time of publication and will be subject to change during the plan period.

The IDP schedule details the projects required to support the delivery of the emerging Local Plan. It also demonstrates the extensive list of internal and external infrastructure providers that have been consulted in relation to the delivery of proposals within the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan. A plan-wide Viability Assessment has also been undertaken and this demonstrates that the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support the levels of development proposed is viable and deliverable over the Plan period. This involved engagement with developers on infrastructure requirements and costs for sites proposed for development in the Plan.

The main development areas require extensive infrastructure to support their development. WBC has identified the strategic infrastructure requirements of these allocations – over and above standard on-site infrastructure and S106 planning obligations – and included these in the Viability Assessment as a per dwelling cost.

For the Garden Suburb, WBC is proposing to facilitate the forward funding of key infrastructure requirements. For the Viability Assessment, the strategic infrastructure cost for residential development has been set at £18,500 per dwelling in the first year of the development. This figure has been assessed using current estimates for the delivery of infrastructure in accordance with the IDP, assumed S106 contributions and the cost of advanced funding. Against this WBC has set an external public sector funding requirement.

*Highways England note that the funding to meet this requirement has not been confirmed at this stage and that the financing to support this enabling infrastructure is the subject of ongoing discussions.*

*The infrastructure schedule identifies the requirement for several SRN improvements including short-term committed Smart Motorway schemes at M62 junctions 10 to 12 and M6 junctions 21a to 26, which are fully committed schemes with completion expected during the next 5 years. Work on the M62 junctions 10 to 12 Smart motorway is currently on site, with the M6 21a to 26 scheme due to follow after this.*

*It also identifies the need for further capacity and junction improvements on the M62 and capacity improvements on the M6 in the short to medium term (2017-2028), although there is no information provided in relation to the indicative cost or funding source and there appears to be an assumption that Highways England will lead on these improvements.*

*In addition, it identifies the requirement for improvements to junction 10 of the M56 in the medium term (2023-28) at an indicative cost of £10m, of which there is currently no funding secured. There is a reference to these being the subject of a Highways England study. Also included and noted as the subject of a Highways England study is improvements at junction 20 of the M6 in long term (2028-38) with an indicative cost of £50m with no commitments to funding. Highways England commissioned studies on the SRN to identify any issues and concerns in relation to the current operation of the network. This is to help enable us to target investment for future schemes through long-term investment plans such as the RIS. It should be noted that the studies do not form a commitment by Highways England to deliver improvements at these specific locations.*

*Highways England also note that no cycling and walking infrastructure is labelled as committed or funded, despite strategic cycling corridors being required in the short term. Also, the only public transport commitment is Warrington West rail station, which is fully funded and on site with completion expected late 2019. No other public transport infrastructure is committed or funded, despite bus corridor improvements also being required in the short term.*

*Whilst we have acknowledged that WBC is in ongoing discussions for the provision of strategic infrastructure, particularly to support the strategic allocations, we consider that there should be more certainty regarding the infrastructure required to support development in the short term. This includes the indicative cost, funding sources and when it will be delivered and by whom.*

### **Sustainability Appraisal**

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process began with a Scoping Report that was prepared and published for consultation in October 2016. Following consideration of the comments received, the scope of the SA was determined and has provided the baseline position against which appraisals have been undertaken. The SA has been updated throughout the plan making process.

An appraisal of the plan policies has been undertaken against the SA Framework. Effects have been identified taking into consideration a range of characteristics including: magnitude, duration, frequency and likelihood. This has helped to determine the significance of effects and whether these are positive or negative. The findings have been present for each SA topic area, of which the air quality and accessibility topics are of most relevance to Highways England.

For air quality, the SA has identified that in combination the delivery of housing and employment space will lead to additional car trips, many of which would contribute to congestion at motorway junctions and connecting roads. However, it is considered that as the Plan also promotes active and sustainable modes of travel as well as local accessibility to services, facilities, jobs and recreation, this will help reduce the effects on air quality. The emphasis on sustainable modes of travel and green infrastructure enhancement whilst positive are not likely to have significant effects. Potential for notable benefits is thought to come from support for strategic infrastructure improvements such as the requirement to contribute to motorway junction improvements and the Western Link; which could help to divert traffic and tackle congestion. Overall only minor negative effects are predicted with more neutral effects expected in the longer term.

The SA has identified that the draft Plan is likely to have a minor effect on the baseline position for accessibility. The strategy and supporting allocations direct growth mainly to the urban areas of Warrington, which have better accessibility than smaller villages, and will help to reduce the need to travel to access services, goods and employment. The strategic allocations are located on the urban fringes that are currently poorly served by public transport and may give rise to additional traffic heading towards the main urban area. However, key infrastructure improvements are required before development can commence, such as the strategic routes through the WGS supporting new public transport links to the town centre – a potential mass transit solution is being explored through the LTP4. The Plan also seeks to achieve increased use of sustainable modes of travel by protecting and enhancing sustainable transport and active travel networks. It is considered that these measures could help to achieve significant positive effects in the

longer term, but it is acknowledged that there is a level of uncertainty. Furthermore, not all communities may benefit from improvements and there will also be short term disruption to the road networks because of infrastructure improvements so there are likely to be some negative effects experienced.

*No mitigation and enhancement measures are proposed for the air quality and accessibility topics based on the findings of the appraisal. In addition, Highways England consider the proposed monitoring measures for these two topic areas to be appropriate to understand the impact of the Local Plan. Overall, Highways England consider that an appropriately detailed SA has been carried out for this stage in the plan making process.*

## **Review of Warrington Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan**

The Draft Local Plan sets out strategic objectives for Warrington; objectives W1 and W4 continue to seek to develop strategic infrastructure, reduce congestion and promote sustainable modes of transport and active travel options. The objectives have been updated to reflect the higher level of development proposed to meet future needs and the changes to NPPF (2019).

*Highways England welcome and support these strategic objectives and guiding principles for the Plan.*

The spatial strategy's main priority is to optimise the development potential of the existing urban area. As such, several key elements from the PDO remain, including intensifying development in the town centre and inner area of Warrington and opening up the Waterfront as a new urban quarter facilitated by the Western Link. However, it is acknowledged that not all of Warrington's needs can be met within the existing urban area, which can accommodate around 13,700 new homes. This means the requirement for the remaining 7,000 homes will have to be facilitated through the release of Green Belt land.

A range of options were considered for the distribution of new homes from Green Belt release. The chosen spatial strategy is for a Garden Suburb to the south east of the main urban area that will deliver 5,000 new homes (including 4,200 through Green Belt release) to 2037 facilitated by internal roads and a strategic link, with the potential for a further 2,300 new homes from Green Belt release beyond the Plan period. An urban extension to the south west of the main urban area for around 1,600 homes facilitated by the Western Link, and incremental growth across outlying settlements of approximately 1,100 new homes.

As with housing, it is not possible to meet all the employment land need within the existing urban area, which means there is a requirement for 21.5 hectares of employment land through Green Belt release. A range of options were also considered for employment and the main employment sites have been allocated at Port Warrington, Waterfront Business Hub, Garden Suburb Employment Area and Omega Westward Extension in St Helens. Sites to the north of junction 8 and 9 of the M62 were discounted due to highway concerns and ecological impacts. No further sites have been identified for safeguarding beyond the Plan period, as the potential of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station is not included within the employment land supply at this stage but will likely contribute to meeting longer term need.

This would equate to 11% of Warrington's Green Belt area being released. Much of this will be adjacent to the M6 and M56.

*Highways England supports development in the most accessible and sustainable locations and expects transport evidence to identify potential impacts from cumulative development upon the SRN around Warrington. This is required to enable appropriate mitigation measures and strategic infrastructure to be identified and phased accordingly to support sustainable development in Warrington. Highways England has previously raised concerns regarding the impact of proposed infrastructure such as the Western Link and the fact that site allocations and mitigation were being proposed without a wider understanding of the cumulative transport impacts. Following our review of the Local Plan transport modelling evidence, our concerns remain as the evidence has not considered the impact of planned growth in Warrington on the SRN. Therefore, it is not possible to understand if the proposed mitigation will address the impacts upon the future safe and efficient operation of the SRN in Warrington.*

*The Draft Local Plan includes high level proposals for motorway junction upgrades at M56 junction 10, M6 junction 20 and M6 junction 21a, although no plans or descriptions are provided. A robust evidence base will be required to demonstrate the need for junction improvements and if required, to allow Highways England and WBC to work together to identify schemes that are feasible in terms of construction, finance and deliverability. This should not be taken as acknowledgement that Highways England will finance schemes and any scheme delivery would require our prior agreement.*

It is noted that to fully achieve the Draft Local Plan, Green Belt release and investment in strategic infrastructure is required. As set out in Policy DEV1 – Housing Delivery, WBC is proposing a stepped housing trajectory with relatively lower levels of housing (847 homes pa) delivered in the first 5 years of the Plan period to allow for key enabling infrastructure to be delivered. Housing will then be delivered at a higher rate (978 homes pa) over the next ten years of the Plan period. It will be crucial that phased delivery of identified infrastructure is optimised to allow for growth but without significantly impacting upon the SRN.

*In this respect, Highways England welcome the need for an individual site assessment of local transport impacts for major warehousing and distribution developments in Policy DEV4 – Economic Growth and Development. This is required to identify mitigation required to offset the impact of development in addition to the need for strategic infrastructure.*

*Highways England consider the absence of detailed evidence of proposed infrastructure improvements and associated impacts in relation to the future operation of the SRN should be rectified as soon as possible and have shared these thoughts with WBC through our Duty to Cooperate meetings. We are committed to working with WBC to ensure that the Plan can be delivered sustainably in relation to strategic transport requirements. We also acknowledge the removal of the employment site that would have formed an extension to Omega north of junction 8 of the M62 as a result of concerns relating to the capacity of the junction to accommodate trips associated with further development.*

Policy INF1 – Sustainable Travel and Transport aims to improve the safety and efficiency of the transport network, tackle congestion and improve air quality, promote sustainable transport options and reduce the need to travel by private car. Its general principles include building in sustainable and accessible locations, or in locations that can be made sustainable and accessible, with priority given to walking, cycling and public transport. Furthermore, this policy aims to mitigate the impact or improve the performance of the transport network, including the SRN, by delivering site specific infrastructure to support the proposed level of development. This includes improving and developing appropriate road, rail and water freight transport routes and facilities to assist in the sustainable and efficient movement of goods. It also commits to considering the impacts of development on the wider region's SRN and to work with neighbouring authorities and wider stakeholders to assess transport initiatives, where impacts have been identified and need to be mitigated.

*Highways England supports this policy to encourage modal shift to more sustainable modes of travel for local trips around Warrington and the wider urban area. We also welcome the inclusion of the recognition for schemes to mitigate impacts and to help improve the performance of the SRN. Planned growth cannot simply be reliant on the available capacity on the SRN for future access and travel needs and we support well-founded sustainable transport schemes within the Local Plan. We also welcome point 7, which requires major developments likely to generate significant movements to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan.*

*We note that provision for the safeguarding of land for transport schemes is made in Policy INF2 – Transport Safeguarding. It includes provision for the Bridgefoot Link, a new or replacement high-level crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal in Latchford, Warrington East Multi-Modal Corridor improvement and the Western Link. It states that these and*

*additional schemes will be tested using the Warrington MMTM and that if additional land requirements are identified these will be safeguarded in a future review of the Local Plan.*

Development will also be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of infrastructure needed to support it and Policy INF5 – Delivering Infrastructure sets out the principles for how this will be sought, for example through planning obligations, and when the infrastructure must be operational. This includes transport improvements such as walking and cycling facilities. It also sets out the circumstances where WBC will consider the viability of development proposals at the planning application stage.

Movement and access are key parts of the design process and for the achievement of sustainable development.

*Highways England welcome the principles for movement and accessibility set out in Policy DC8 – Quality of Place to ensure developments promote sustainable methods of transport including walking, cycling and public transport.*

Developments are expected to be designed so that they are not dominated by vehicular access and car parking. Designs should be inclusive and accessible to all and promote permeability by creating places that are connected and easy to move through.

*We support Policy ENV8 – Environmental and Amenity Protection which seeks to ensure that new development will not have an unacceptable negative impact on air quality, and that it will not further exacerbate air quality in the existing AQMAs or contribute to air pollution in areas that may result in further areas being designated as AQMAs.*

Policy MD2 – Warrington Garden Suburb sets out a comprehensive package of transport improvements that will be required to support the sustainable delivery of approximately 5,100 new homes and 116 of employment land within the Plan period. This includes improved walking and cycling routes, public transport enhancements, a new strategic link to connect the Garden Suburb with the A49 and A50, and capacity improvements at junctions 9 and 10 of the M56 and junction 20 of the M6 and other network improvements as identified by an appropriate Transport Assessment. A Development Framework will be prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the Garden Suburb and will include more detailed masterplans for each of the three Garden Villages and the Neighbourhood Centre, together with a delivery strategy and phasing plan to ensure comprehensive and coordinated delivery.

The first phase of residential development will comprise of Homes England sites at Grappenhall Hayes, Appleton Cross and Pewterspear with extant planning permission. No further residential development will be permitted until the funding and programme for

the delivery of the strategic link to connect the Garden suburb to the local and strategic road networks has been confirmed. In addition, new employment development will not be permitted until the funding and programme for the delivery of the improvements at junction 9 of the M56 and junction 20 of the M6 have been agreed with key stakeholders including Highways England and the Local Highway Authority.

Policy MD3 – South West Urban Extension is allocated approximately 112 hectares of land for the delivery of around 1,600 new homes. It states that a masterplan will need to be prepared for the urban extension together with a delivery strategy and phasing plan to ensure the comprehensive and coordinated development. The development will be expected to improve cycling and walking routes, provide public transport enhancements and make a proportionate contribution towards the delivery of the Western Link Road. Development cannot come forward until the funding and programme for the delivery of the Western Link has been confirmed. This means the first homes are anticipated to be completed by 2023/24, with the urban extension completed in full by the end of the Plan period.

Policy MD4 – Land at Peel Hall allocates 69 hectares of land for a new sustainable community of approximately 1,200 new homes. This will be supported by junction improvements and new highway connections linking the development to the local road network, and highway works to the SRN, as agreed by the Council and Highways England. It will also be expected to provide bus priority features such as bus gates to support efficient services and public transport enhancements and an internal cycling and walking network to improve accessibility by active modes and any other network improvements identified in an appropriate Transport Assessment. A detailed masterplan will be required for the development of the site, together with a delivery strategy and phasing plan to ensure the comprehensive and coordinated delivery of the site. In addition, a Transport Steering Group will be required to coordinate the efficient delivery of sustainable transport measures and to ensure the required network efficiency and safety measures on the wider network are delivered as and when appropriate.

*Highways England support the approach set out for delivering site allocations in Policies MD2, MD3 and MD4, as this will ensure that alternative sustainable transport options are made available in the right place at the right time to cater for local trips and forecast demand associated with planned development. We also welcome the requirement for development frameworks and masterplans along with delivery strategies to ensure that sites are brought forward in a comprehensive and coordinated manner and that the required strategic infrastructure is in place to support the sustainable delivery of planned growth.*

*Highways England recognise that a key element of identified assessment work was to test the proposed site allocations through the updated Warrington MMTM. This has enabled the Council to consider transport impacts arising from new development, particularly for the local highway network. However, a robust transport evidence base*

*would include an assessment of the impact of the Local Plan upon the SRN to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are proposed and delivered to support sustainable development.*

*Highways England do not consider the transport evidence at this stage is robust and we would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with the Council to ensure the plan is supported by a robust transport evidence. The transport evidence base must be sufficient, demonstrate that there are no issues that impact upon the deliverability of the plan and facilitate the growth aims as much as possible. As such, there also needs to be an emphasis on recognising the deliverability (in both engineering and funding terms) of mitigating infrastructure-based measures that are being proposed.*

## **Conclusion**

The Localism Act 2011 placed the responsibility of 'Duty to Cooperate' on local authorities, to ensure that any local or cross-boundary impacts have been fully considered and addressed appropriately in preparing the Local Plan. The local authority must demonstrate that they have discussed such matters with the relevant bodies, including Highways England.

Highways England note that the Warrington Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan is at an advanced stage and is the version of the plan the Council intends to submit for examination and then adopt.

According to NPPG an assessment of the transport implications should be undertaken at several stages in preparing the Local Plan. It should be an iterative process that becomes more refined through the process itself and ultimately shaping its development, rather than this being collected retrospectively and trying to retrofit it to the development strategy.

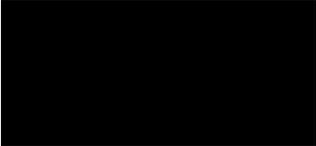
We request that we be notified of any of the following:

- The Draft Local Plan has been submitted for Independent Examination by a Planning Inspector;
- The publication of the recommendations of any person (i.e. the Planning Inspector) appointed to carry out an independent examination of the Draft Local Plan; and
- The adoption of the Local Plan.

**It is recommended that growth is planned in sustainable locations that can be accessed by non-car modes of transport. Highways England supports this view as planned growth cannot simply be reliant on the availability of capacity on the SRN for future access and travel needs, particularly for local trips.** We would welcome continued dialogue with WBC to ensure that the transport impacts of strategic areas for growth are appropriately assessed and considered in respect of the SRN. Also, to ensure that alternative sustainable transport options are made available in the right place at the right time to cater for local trips and forecast demand associated with planned development.

We welcome the inclusion of well-founded, sustainable transport schemes in the Local Plan, and would like to continue working collaboratively with Warrington Borough Council to understand the impact of both the proposed highway and public transport schemes on the future efficient and safe operation of the Strategic Road Network, and their ability to support planned growth in the area to 2037 and beyond.

Yours faithfully



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