

Langtree Property Partners & Liberty Properties

South East Warrington Employment Area

Statement of Common Ground

August 2022





Signatures

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared, agreed and signed by both parties.

Name	On behalf of	Signature	Date	
Andrew Rose	Langtree Property Partners		15 August 2022	
Phillip Morris	Liberty Properties		15/08/2022	
Steve Park	Warrington Borough Council		15/08/2002	



01 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Common Ground is a single document, which has been prepared, agreed and signed by Warrington Borough Council as local planning authority and Spawforths on behalf of Langtree Property Partners (Langtree) and Avison Young on behalf of Liberty Properties (Liberty).
- **1.2** This Statement of Common Ground focuses on delivery matters in relation to the South East Warrington Employment Area (Policy MD6).
- 1.3 Appended to the Statement of Common Ground is a delivery report and illustrative masterplan (Masterplan Development Framework) for the draft allocation. It is considered that this could provide the basis for the Development Framework as required in the draft allocation Policy. It should be noted that it has been provided for illustrative purposes at this stage and the Council has not formally agreed to the scope and content of the document.
- 1.4 This Statement of Common Ground sets out matters agreed by parties as summarised below.



02 Background

Site Context

- 2.1 The site is located in the North West of England, approximately 6km (3.5 miles) to the South East of the town of Warrington. The site is strategically located between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester on the Junction 20/20A/Junction 9 interchange of the M56 and M6 motorways, providing links to Lancashire, Staffordshire and Greater Manchester, Liverpool, Cheshire Birmingham and Yorkshire.
- 2.2 The site is located within the administrative boundary of Warrington Borough Council and the site is allocated for distribution and industrial uses (B8 and B2 and related ancillary uses) through Policy MD6 of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (UPSVLP) 2021 (SP1)..
- Policy MD6 states that the employment area will make a significant contribution to meeting Warrington's future employment land needs at both a local and strategic level. It will comprise large scale distribution, logistics, industrial uses and ancillary offices, benefiting from its accessibility to the motorway network.

Site Location and Description

- 2.4 The site relates to an area of land approximately 137 ha in extent. The site is bound by the B5356 Grappenhall Lane and the A50 Cliff Lane to the north and M6 motorway and slip road to the east. Appleton Thorn Trading Estate, Barleycastle Trading Estate and Stretton Green Distribution Park are located to the west and Bradley Brook runs eastwest through the site and forms part of the southern boundary along with the M56 motorway.
- 2.5 The site is predominantly farmland with a series of hedges and trees to field boundaries. Bradley Hall Farm consists of a farmhouse and a series of farm buildings as well as a further residential property. The site's context therefore is farmland surrounded by the Strategic Highway Network and adjacent industrial/logistic uses on the site boundary to the south, south west and east.



Planning History

- 2.6 The Six 56 site forms the northern portion of the South East Warrington Employment Area. A resolution to grant outline planning was approved at committee on 10th March 2022.
 - The outline application (all matters reserved except for means of access) comprises the construction of up to 287,909m² (3,099,025ft²) (gross internal) of employment floorspace (Use Class B8 and B1(a) offices), demolition of existing agricultural outbuildings and associated servicing and infrastructure including car parking and vehicle and pedestrian circulation, alteration of existing access road into site including works to the M6 J20 dumbbell roundabouts and realignment of the existing A50 junction, noise mitigation, earthworks to create development platforms and bunds, landscaping including buffers, creation of drainage features, electrical substation, pumping station, and ecological works.
- 2.7 Planning permission has been granted for the ecological mitigation measures for Six 56 (19/1685M), which is on land adjacent to the allocation in the Borough of Cheshire East.
- 2.8 The southern area of the site is controlled by Liberty Properties. Part of this land was the subject of a previous proposal for 59,010m² of logistics development (2017/31757 & 2019/34739). Although this scheme was supported by Warrington Borough Council, it was ultimately refused by the Secretary of State on 2 November 2020 following a public local inquiry held in October 2019.



03 Deliverability Information

Available

3.1 The site is principally controlled by Langtree and Liberty. There is a minor landowner to the south (Mr and Mrs Johnson) who have promoted their land for development and which is addressed in the Masterplan Development Framework. The South East Warrington Employment Area is therefore available for development within the plan period. The site can therefore be considered available for development now, in accordance with guidance.

Suitable

- 3.2 Warrington continues to be one of the UK's most successful economic engines and a driver of growth at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse. Warrington Means Business (2020) (EC7) the economic growth strategy for the Borough highlights that Omega, Gemini, Woolston and Birchwood are major successes as employment areas however, these sites are almost nearing completion and there is a realisation that Warrington will run out of suitable new sites for business development.
- 3.3 The submission draft Local Plan therefore identifies large scale sites to meet the future identified employment land needs as the need is for logistics and storage and distribution, which have specific site requirements.
- 3.4 The suitability of the site is supported by Warrington Council's evidence, in particular its Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) 2021 (EC2). This identifies the locational needs of the B8 strategic sector as being in South East Warrington, with the individual sites within the allocation assessed as 'A+/B+' the highest graded in meeting strategic and local needs respectively.
- 3.5 The EDNA is clear that any new warehouse and distribution sites should be able to accommodate large regional and national production/distribution facilities of 5-10 ha in size and equally be able to accommodate the very largest logistic operators.
- 3.6 The South East Warrington Employment Area has all the attributes and fully meets the locational requirements of B8/Logistics operators. It lies within one of the UK's most efficient locations for this sector, in close proximity to the strategic motorway network and the M56/M6 Interchange. It is also midway between Liverpool and Manchester and within 10 miles of Manchester Airport and presents an excellent opportunity to become a major Northwest logistics location.

Achievable

3.7 The attached Masterplan Development Framework summarises the technical work undertaken to date, including the planning application for Six 56.



- 3.8 The technical area summaries include: transportation & highways, ground conditions, ecology, landscape, heritage, flood risk and drainage, energy, noise and air quality and utilities.
- **3.9** Development of the site is dependent on a range of new and improved infrastructure as set out in the allocation policy.
- **3.10** It has shown that there are no known constraints, which could not be suitably mitigated and that would prevent this site coming forward within the plan period. As such, the development of the site, as shown within the indicative masterplan, is considered achievable.
- 3.11 It is considered that this could provide the basis for the Development Framework as required in the draft allocation Policy. The Council is committed to working with the developers to ensure the comprehensive development of the allocation as a whole.

Deliverable

- 3.12 The site is available, suitable and achievable and is principally controlled by two developers (Langtree and Liberty). There is strong market demand for the employment land and built accommodation. The Council's Local Plan Viability Assessment has demonstrated that the site is viable, taking into account the infrastructure and policy requirements set out in the allocation policy.
- 3.13 The site is therefore deliverable, in accordance with guidance.



04 Modifications proposed by WBC

- 4.1 The Council has proposed selected modifications to Policy MD6 which are set out within the Council's Matters Statement for Matter 6f. These relate to Compensatory Green Belt improvements; mitigation of impacts on Holcroft Moss within the Manchester Mosses SAC; and in respect of including omission site 51 within the allocation. The extent to which these are agreed is outlined below.
- **4.2** The Principal Landowners (Langtree and Liberty) have no objection in principle to the proposed modification relating to Compensatory Green Belt improvements.
- 4.3 The Principal Landowners reserve the right to comment on the proposed change to the Green Belt boundary to include Omission Site 51 within the allocation, as they have seen no details of the landowner's intentions for that land, beyond their representation seeking to include their land within the allocation. The Principal Landowners note the Council's qualifications set out in the Council's Matters Statement regarding demonstrating appropriate access arrangements and the SA/SEA process.
- 4.4 The Principal Landowners are aware of a potential change relating to Holcroft Moss and will consider it once the proposed modification wording has been provided by the Council and the Council's updated HRA has been published. The Principal Landowners reserve the right to comment on the soundness of this modification at the appropriate stage in the Examination.



05 Conclusion

5.1 Based on the stated areas of common ground, Warrington Borough Council and the Principal Landowners (Langtree and Liberty) agree that the South East Warrington Employment Area site (Policy MD6) is available, suitable and achievable and therefore deliverable, in accordance with the requirements of national policy and guidance.



Appendix 1: Masterplan Development Framework







South East Warrington Employment Area

Masterplan Development Framework

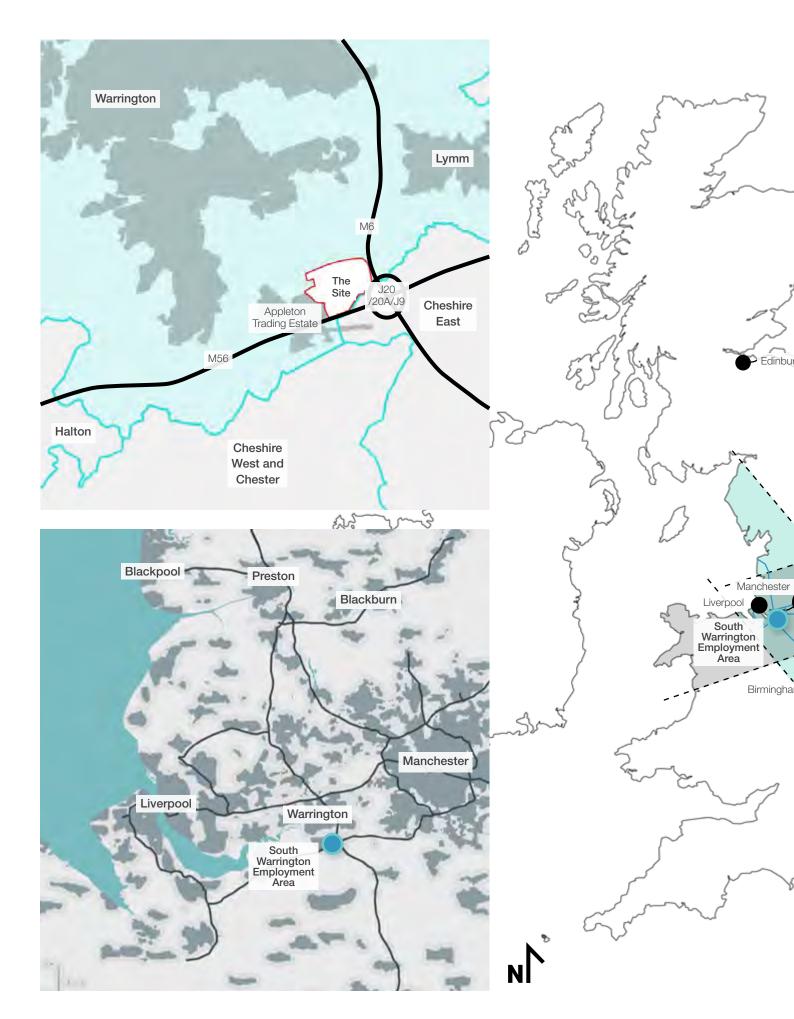
Langtree | Revision A | July 2022



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Site Location and Description

The site is located in the North West of England, approximately 6km (3.5 miles) to the South East of the town of Warrington. The site is strategically located between the cities of Liverpool and Manchester on the Junction 20/20A/Junction 9 interchange of the M56 and M6 motorways, providing links to Lancashire, Staffordshire and Greater Manchester, Liverpool, Cheshire Birmingham and Yorkshire.

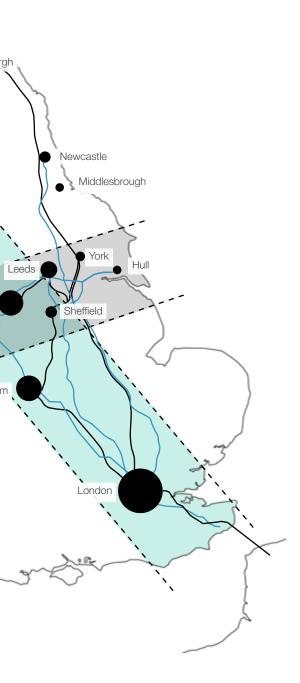
The site is being promoted by Langtree Property Partners (Langtree) and Liberty Properties (Liberty). Langtree is a successful commercial property company, active property management, development, investment and public/private property partnerships across the UK. Liberty has been active for over 30 years and is a specialist in commercial and industrial property development.

This Masterplan Development Framework shows that the comprehensive delivery the South East Warrington Employment Area can be delivered in accordance with Policy MD6 of the submission draft Local Plan. This report will analyse and summarise technical assessments undertaken on the site and explain the site's availability, suitability and achievability and therefore deliverability in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework.

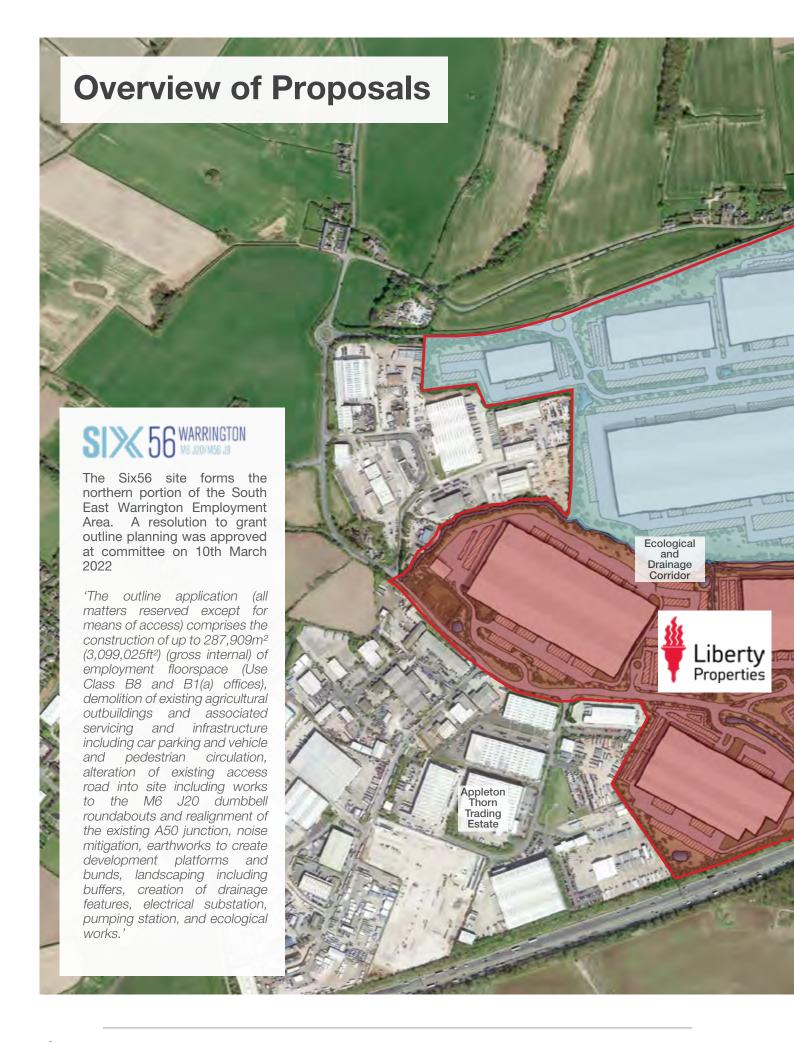
The site relates to an area of land approximately 137 ha in extent. The site is bound by the B5356 Grappenhall Lane and the A50 Cliff Lane to the north and M6 motorway and slip road to the east. Appleton Thorn Trading Estate, Barleycastle Trading Estate and Stretton Green Distribution Park are located to the west and Bradley Brook runs eastwest through the site and forms part of the southern boundary along with the M56 motorway.

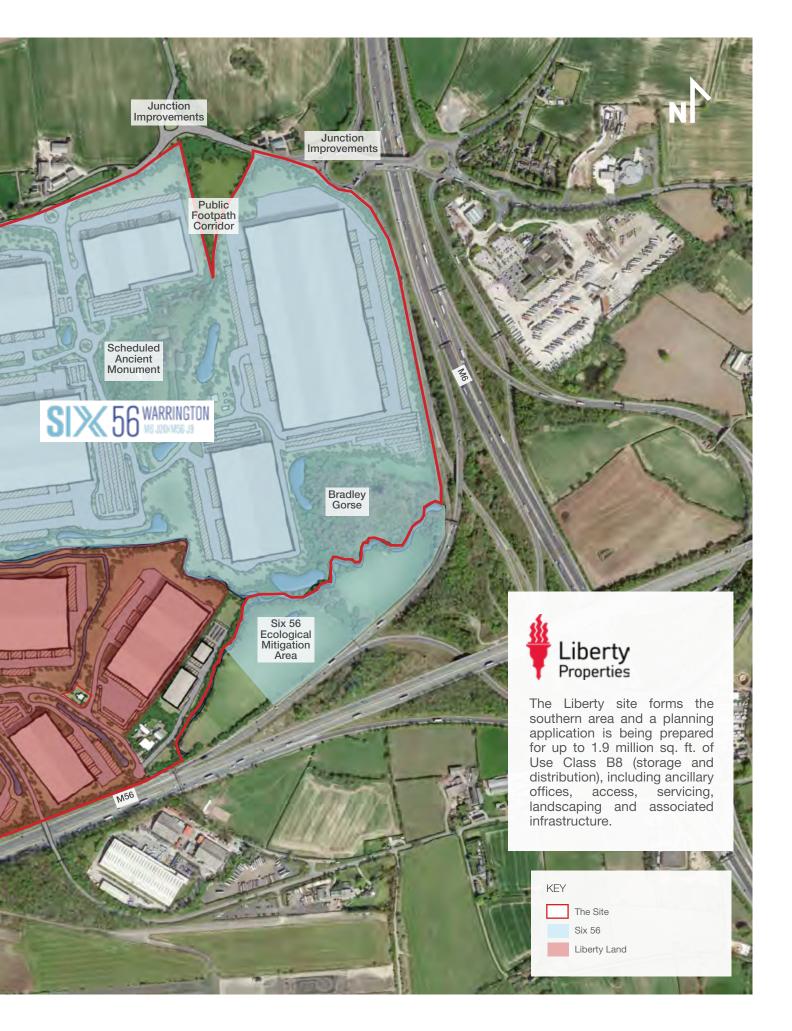
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The site's context therefore is farmland surrounded by the Strategic Highway Network and adjacent industrial/logistic uses on the site boundary to the south, south west and east.



Nationally Strategic Location





Masterplan Development

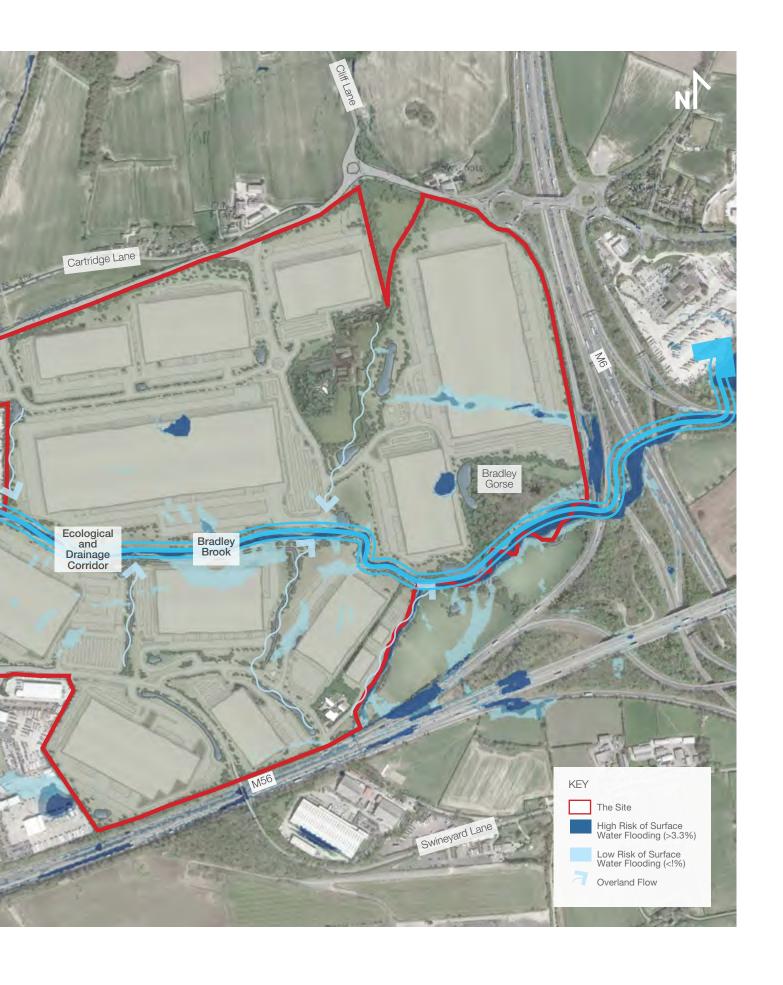
Flood Risk and Drainage

The South East Warrington Employment Area is at low risk of flooding. The site is in Flood Zone 1. The flood risk to the development land from surface water flooding is mostly very low. Although land adjacent to Bradley Brook is higher risk, this does not significantly encroach upon either Six 56 or the Liberty Land.

The surface water drainage strategy involves multiple discharge points into Bradley Brook at greenfield run-off rates. Detention basins and surface water features would also form part of the attenuation. Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) would be used to improve water quality prior to discharge by removing pollutants and solids.

In summary, the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy for the site is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and there are no flood risk or drainage constraints which would prevent the delivery of this site for employment purposes.







Ecology and Nature Conservation

Ecological investigations have identified no statutory designated sites likely to be directly or indirectly affected by the operation of the proposed development within close proximity.

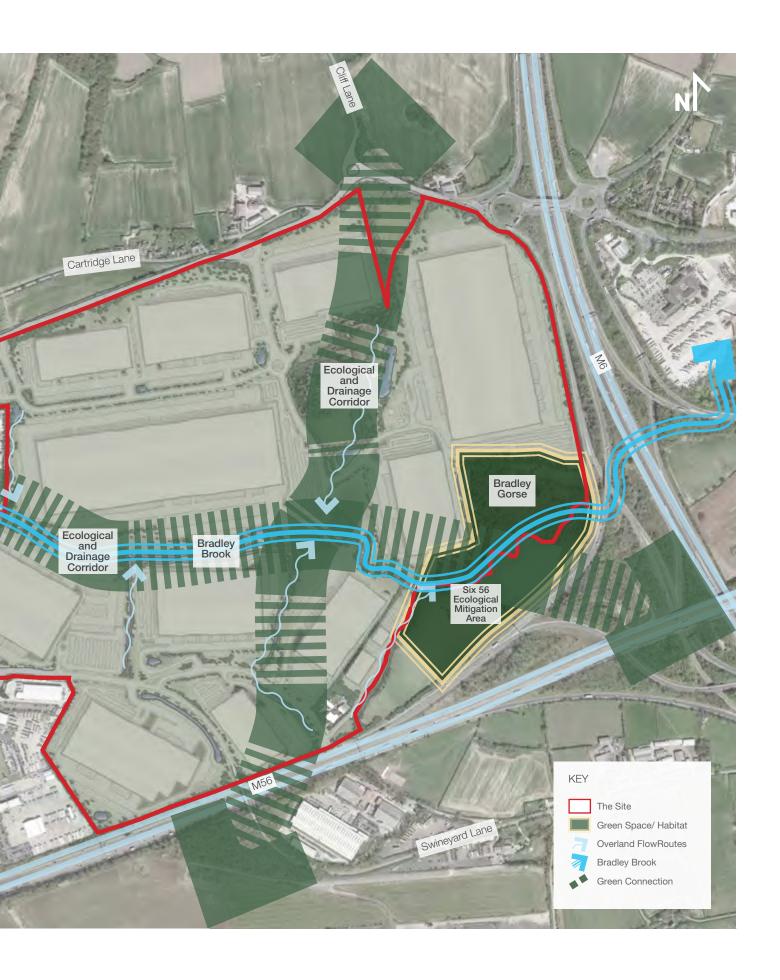
The site has a number of habitats, which are primarily arable land and improved grassland. There are a number of other habitats, including scattered trees and hedgerows, scrubland, buildings/hardstanding, ponds and a watercourse, all of which are considered to be of negligible site or local importance.

As part of the Six 56 proposals, planning permission has already been granted by Cheshire East Council for the provision of an ecological mitigation area (approximately 9 ha in size), adjacent to the Six 56 land, which will help to mitigate the loss of habitat.

The scheme will aim to achieve a Biodiversity Net Gain through on-site and off-site compensation and a Construction Ecological Mitigation Plan will be prepared for each phase of the development.

In summary, no technical constraints have been identified to the delivery of this site in relation to ecological matters, and mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities can be used to offset potential impacts on nature conservation receptors. Therefore, there are no ecological constraints that prevent the delivery of this site for employment purposes.







Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

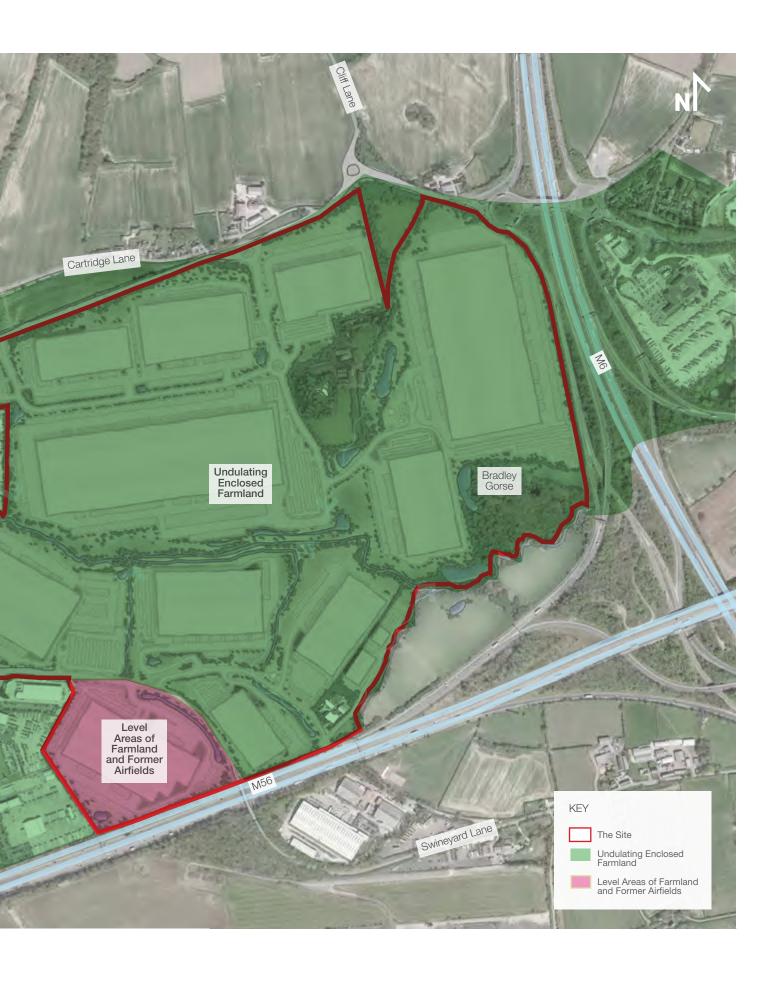
The site is not within a designated landscape and its immediate surroundings, although relatively rural, are characterised predominantly by large scale industrial development, particularly to the west and south of the site. Vegetation around the site partially screens the M6 and M56 motorways.

Although the development of the site will result in the loss of agricultural land, existing landscape features including trees, hedgerows, watercourses and field ponds would be retained within landscape corridors, wherever possible.

The landscape masterplan for the scheme will incorporate areas of tree planting around the perimeter of the proposed development where required.

In summary, there are no landscape constraints that will prevent the site from being delivered for employment purposes.







Traffic and Transport

Warrington Borough Council have undertaken a robust traffic & transport assessment to understand the South East Warrington Employment Area using the Warrington Multi Modal Transport Model. This assessment helped to inform a traffic & transport mitigation strategy for the proposed development allocation. It is considered that once mitigation measures are implemented, no unacceptable traffic & transport impacts are predicted.

The traffic & transport mitigation proposals for the South East Warrington Employment Area include:

- Relocation of the A50 Cliff Lane roundabout to enhance the storage capacity of the link between the roundabout and the motorway.
- Full signalisation of the new realigned A50 Cliff Lane roundabout with widening of all approach arms.
- Widening of the A50 link between the A50 Cliff Lane roundabout.
- Partial signalisation of the two M6 J20 dumbbell roundabouts.
- Widening of the M6 Northbound off-slip.
- Widening and improvement of the circulatory carriageway on the two M6 J20 dumbbell roundabouts.
- Improvements to Barleycastle Lane, including road widening to improve safety and visibility, and the creation of a new 3m wide shared cycle/footway.
- Improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, including a contribution towards the

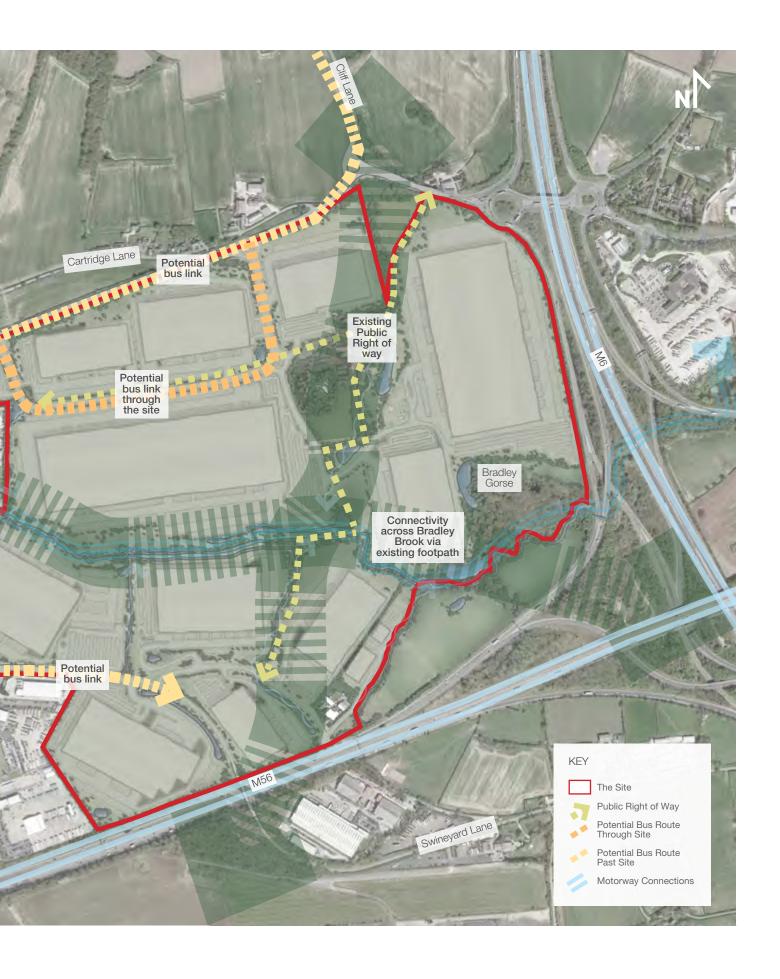
improvement of public footpaths/cycleways between Barleycastle Lane and Grappenhall Lane.

- Improvements to sustainable transport links, including new bus services linking the new employment opportunities to other parts of Warrington.
- Implementation of a signage scheme to minimise the likelihood of errant HGV drivers taking inappropriate routes on the local highway network.
- Potential integration with the town's emerging electric bus fleet, car clubs and car sharing.
- Provision of facilities for micro-EV, EV charging and bike parking.
- Preparation of Travel Plan.

All access points into the development will be designed to facilitate safe and efficient access by all modes, consistent with all applicable Standards.

In summary, with regards to transport accessibility and sustainability, the South East Warrington Employment Allocation traffic & transport proposals represent "sustainable development" consistent with national policy and guidance.







Air Quality and Dust

Air Quality across the Borough is generally considered to be good and meets all the national standards, however there are some areas of slight exceedances which coincide with areas closest to major roads and these have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

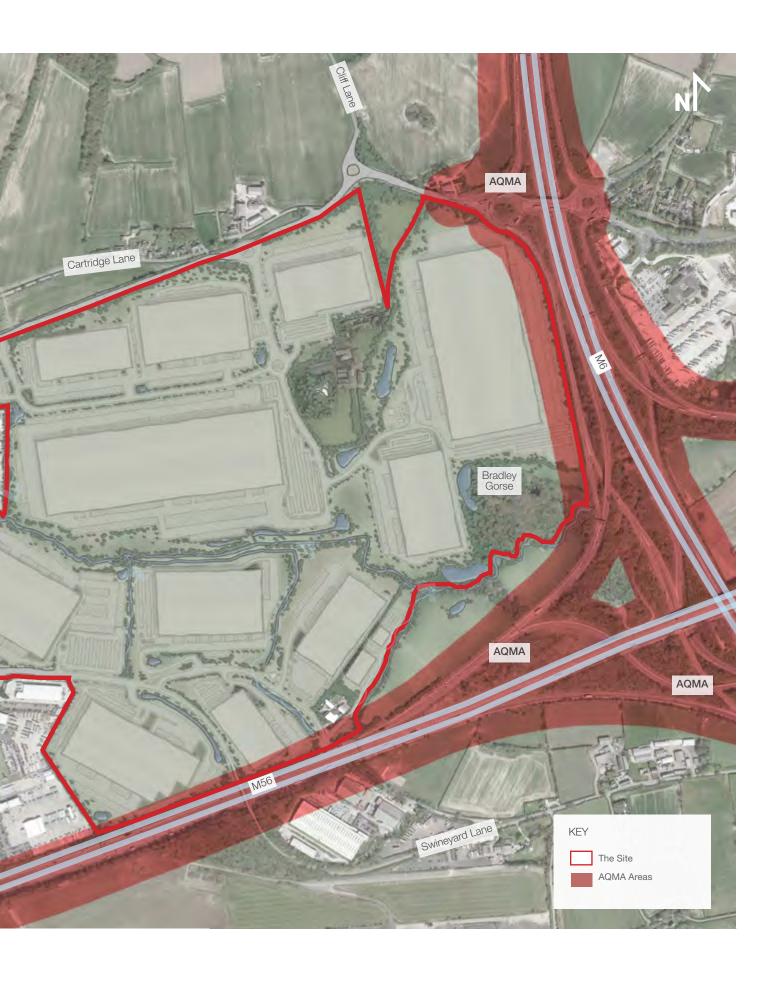
The South East Warrington Employment Area is located partly within the Motorway AQMA, which encompasses the southern and eastern edges of the site. There are a limited number of sensitive receptors in the motorway AQMA and the proportion of traffic associated with the proposal is a minor proportion of the total motorway volume.

Furthermore the transition nationally to electric vehicles and future reduction in vehicle emissions is resulting in improved air quality conditions.

The site therefore would not have significant impacts in air quality terms and air quality can be controlled by a Construction, Highways and Environmental Management Plan (CHEMP).

Therefore, there are no air quality matters that preclude the development of this site for employment uses.







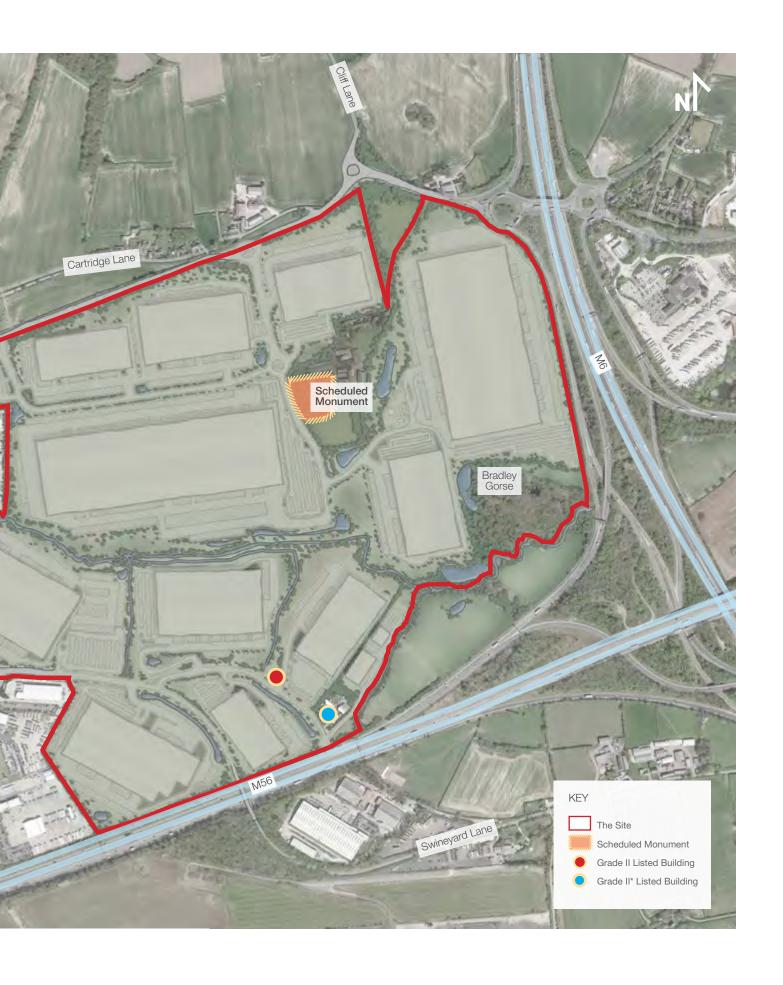
Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

Warrington Borough Council has prepared a Heritage Impact Assessment for the site. Historic England supports the proposed policy MD6 and Heritage Impact Assessment. A scheduled monument is located within the site, which is the buried earthworks of a medieval moated site for a medieval manor house. The proposed development includes a 30m buffer zone around the scheduled monument. There is also a non-designated agricultural barn, which if demolished would need to be recorded.

There are several listed buildings located close to and within the southern part of the site, including Beehive Farmhouse, Booths Farm Farmhouse/Shippon, Barleycastle Farmhouse and Tanyard Farmbuilding. Mitigation measures including landscaping will be employed at the detailed design stage to minimise the impact of the proposed development on these heritage assets.

The masterplan has been evolved to incorporate design measures and respect these heritage assets. In summary, there are no insurmountable heritage constraint to delivering the site for employment purposes.





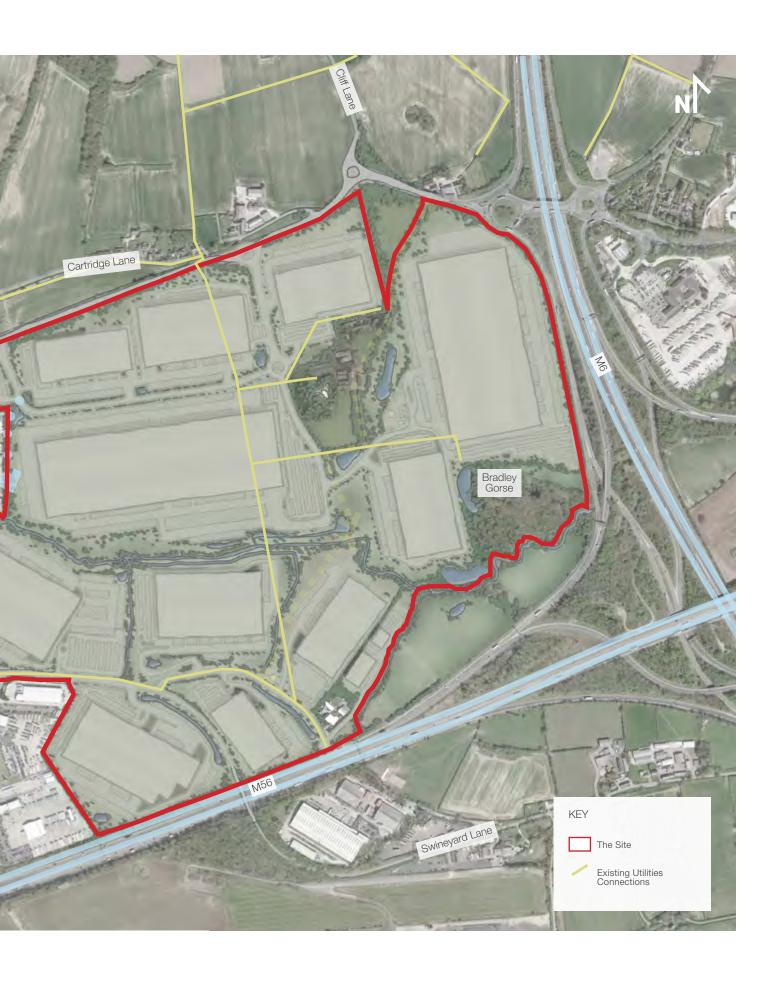
Utilities

The potential of existing infrastructure on site has been explored and relevant asset owners have been consulted. None were found to present a constraint to the development. All utility infrastructure has been accounted for in the development of the masterplan.

There are no known utilities passing through the site such as electricity cables, telecommunications cables, water mains or gas mains which could present a constraint to development or which could not be diverted as part of the masterplan. The development will require reinforcement of existing utilities but from an availability perspective the land is very well served by all necessary infrastructure, services and utilities.

Therefore, there are no utility constraints that preclude the development of the site for employment purposes.





Energy and Climate Change

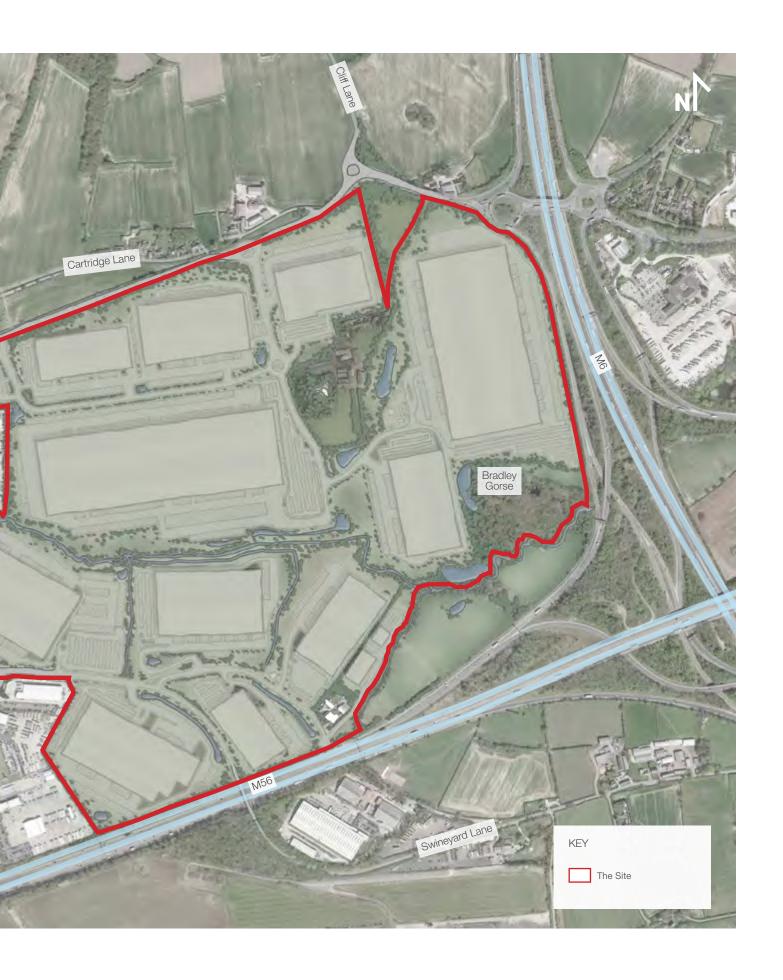
The Energy Strategy will promote low carbon design through passive design, energy efficiency measures, and design features for future installation of renewable and low carbon design. The building design will promote the potential incorporation of renewable and low carbon technology solutions to further reduce carbon emissions of the development.

A key aspect of the strategy is to consider the flexibility for future tenants and end users and to promote systems and technologies that match their energy use. The approach to energy includes anticipated energy demands and subsequent carbon emissions, the consideration of Whole Life Carbon, which includes reducing the embodied carbon in the design of buildings.

The site's location and proximity to local workforce and significant customer base within a 45 minute drive time also supports the use of electric vehicles for deliveries, and electric vehicle charging points will be delivered as part of the development. Having regard to the accessibility credentials of the site, current commuting patterns and the availability of a local labour force, the development will provides an opportunity for Warrington residents to work closer to home and a subsidised bus scheme will be provided along with enhancements to the pedestrian and cycle network.

Therefore, the proposed development is consistent with national policy and guidance with regard to energy and climate change.







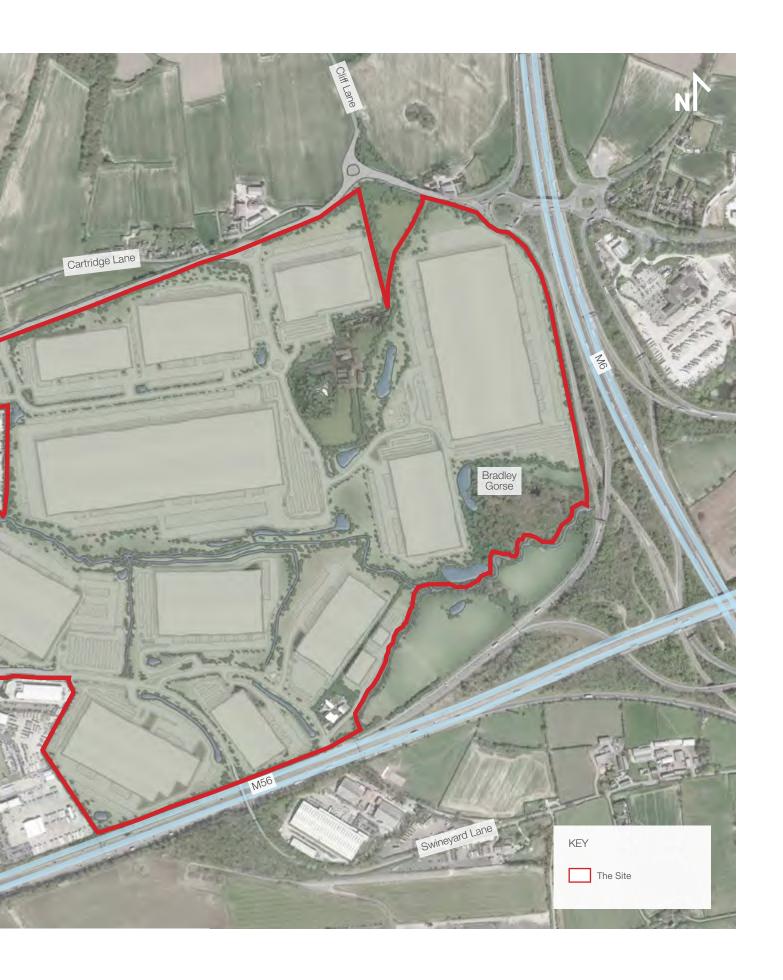
Ground and Contamination

The proposed development will not have any significant effects on geo-conservation sites, geo-hazards or mineral extraction works as none are present at, or near to the site. In view of the fact that the proposed development will not introduce contaminative land uses or activities to the land, it is not anticipated that the development will give rise to significant contamination effects on the land.

The site's geology comprises a downward sequence of topsoil overlying Glacial Till rested on weathered Bollin Mudstone Member. The key surface water features include the Bradley Brook. Neither the Glacial Till nor the Bollin Mudstone Member are considered to be sensitive receptors due to their low permeability characteristics.

Therefore, there are no ground condition matters that preclude the development of this site and the site is suitable for its proposed future use.







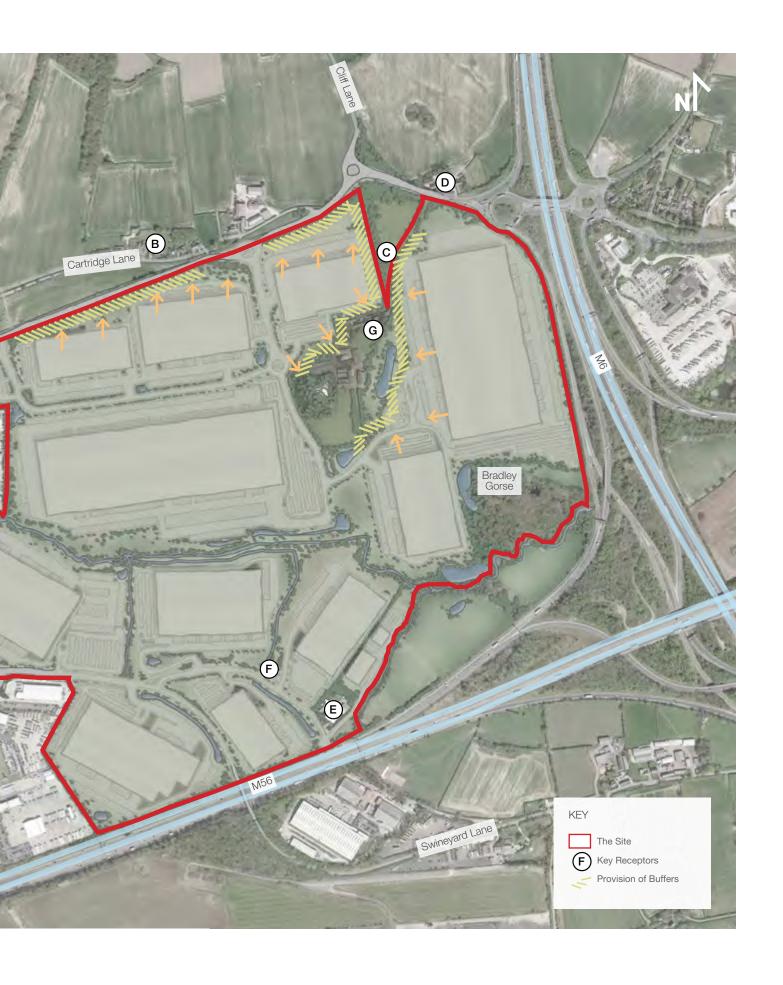
Noise

The proposed development has the potential to generate noise during site preparation, construction and operation. To understand how noise generated by the proposals may affect the surrounding environment a baseline noise survey has been undertaken at the nearest sensitive receptors to the site. The noise survey confirms that existing conditions are characterised by road traffic on the M56 and M6 motorways, as well as from frequent heavy goods vehicles on local roads and commercial premises.

Construction noise and vibration effects will be assessed using relevant standards and guidance, with the significance of any impacts identified. For the operational assessment, global noise limits will be determined for fixed plant and site operations at the nearest sensitive receptors using relevant standards and guidance. The control of construction noise and vibration will be addressed by an appropriate Construction Environment Management Plan. The masterplan includes inherent mitigation in the form of building orientation, location of serving areas and bunding.

Therefore, there are no noise and vibration matters that will prevent the site from being delivered for employment purposes.





Green Belt Compensation

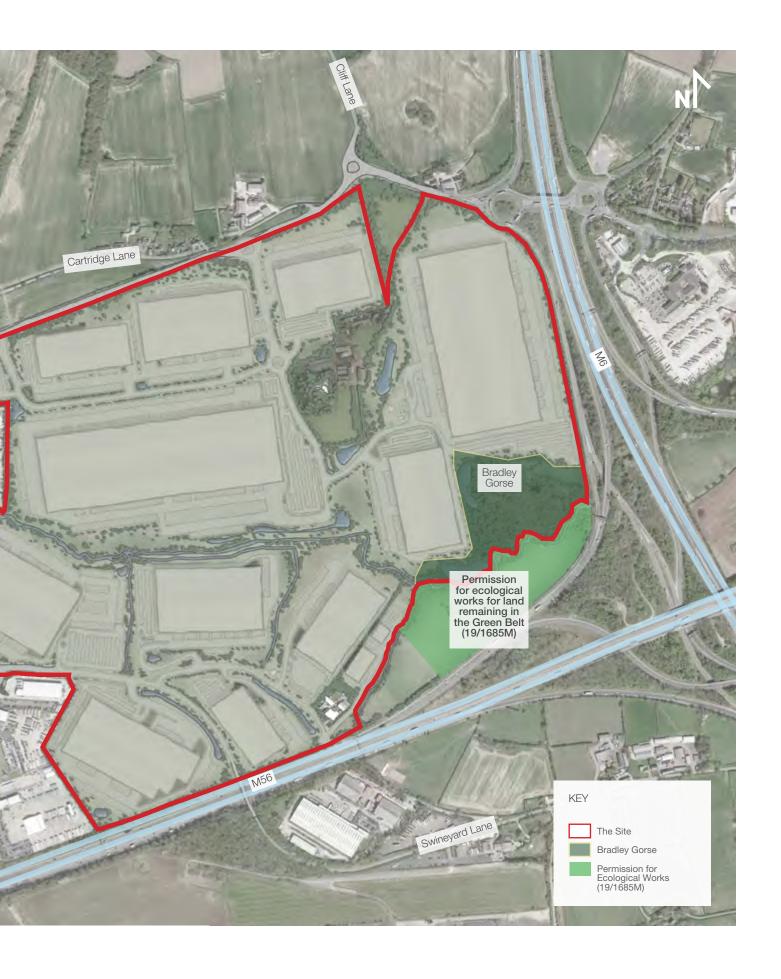
The National Planning Policy Framework states in paragraph 142 that when removing land from the Green Belt compensatory improvement measures should be set out for the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land. In accordance with this policy and guidance, Liberty and Langtree will provide Green Belt compensatory measures.

Langtree has been granted planning permission for ecological works for land remaining in the Green Belt (19/1685M). This is circa 9ha in size and will enhance the land and provide biodiversity and habitat improvements and could also include a circular walking route. This is on land adjacent to the allocation within Cheshire East and provides Green Belt compensatory improvements, in accordance with the Framework.

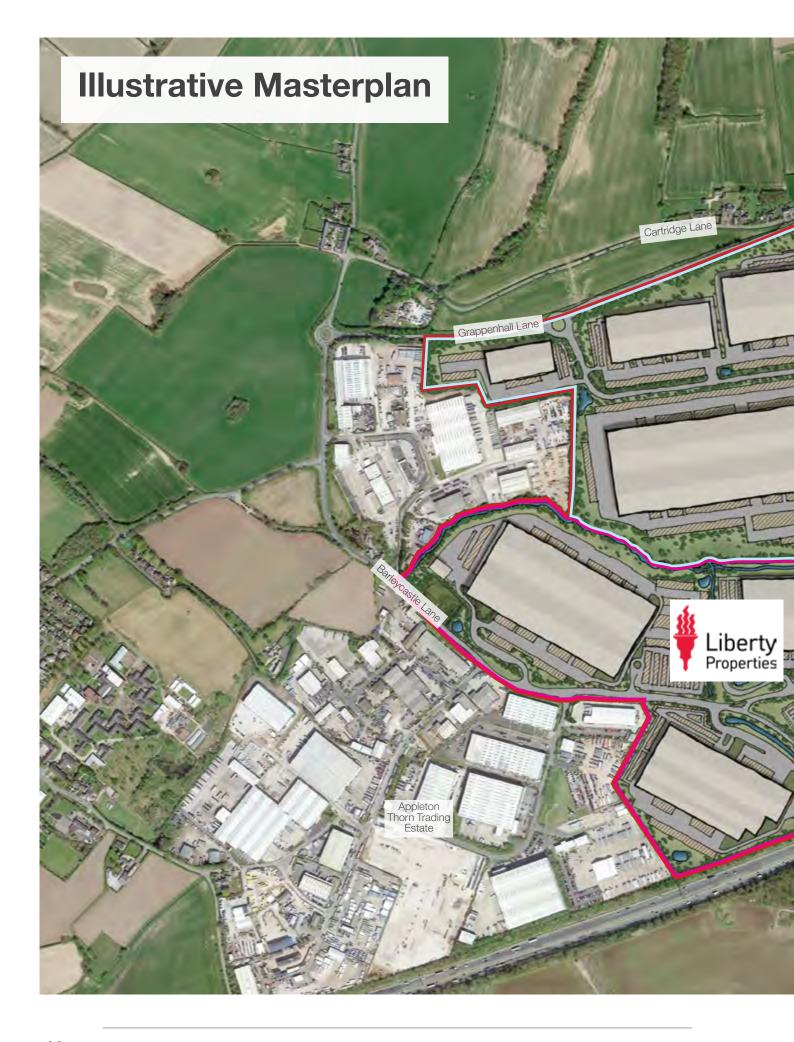
Furthermore, there will be enhanced footpath connectivity through the site, which will enhance the accessibility of the Green Belt beyond the proposed scheme. This connects with pedestrian and cycle improvements on Grappenhall Lane to the north which is in the Green Belt.

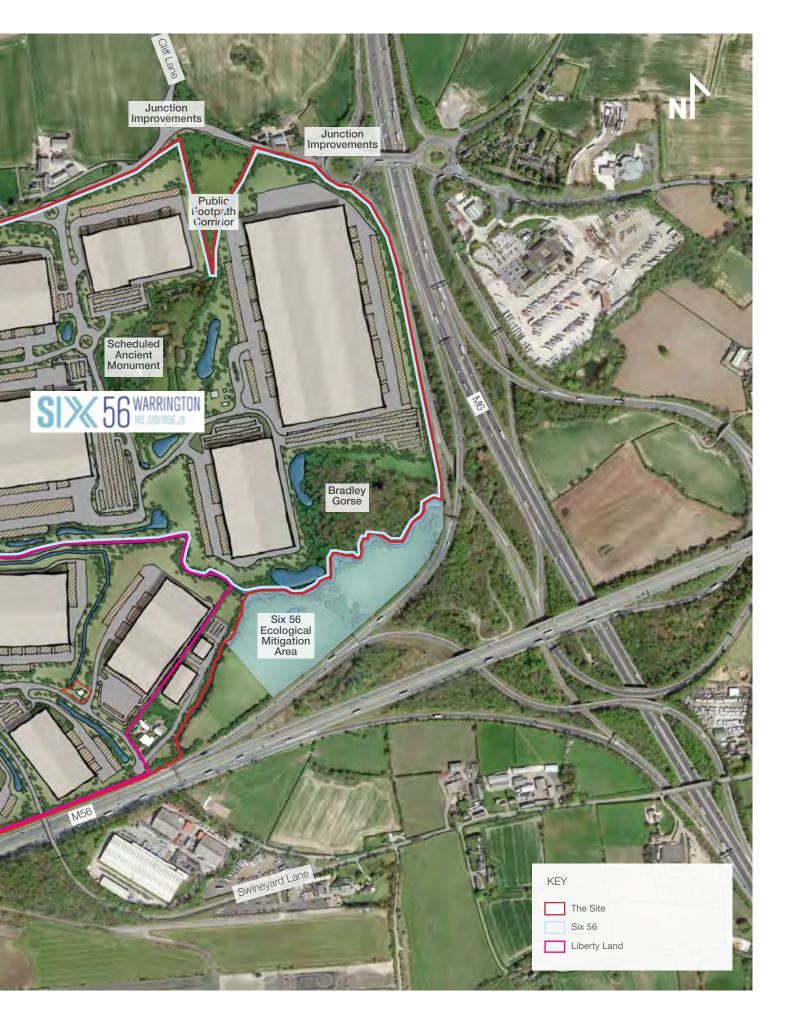
Liberty has agreed to work with the Council on Green Belt compensatory measures in line with the requirement of Policy MD6. A detailed scheme of measures to meet this target would be provided as part of any future planning application. Liberty has control and access to land in the area, which will enable appropriate Green Belt compensatory measures to be delivered either in whole or with financial contributions to deliver additional off-site improvements.

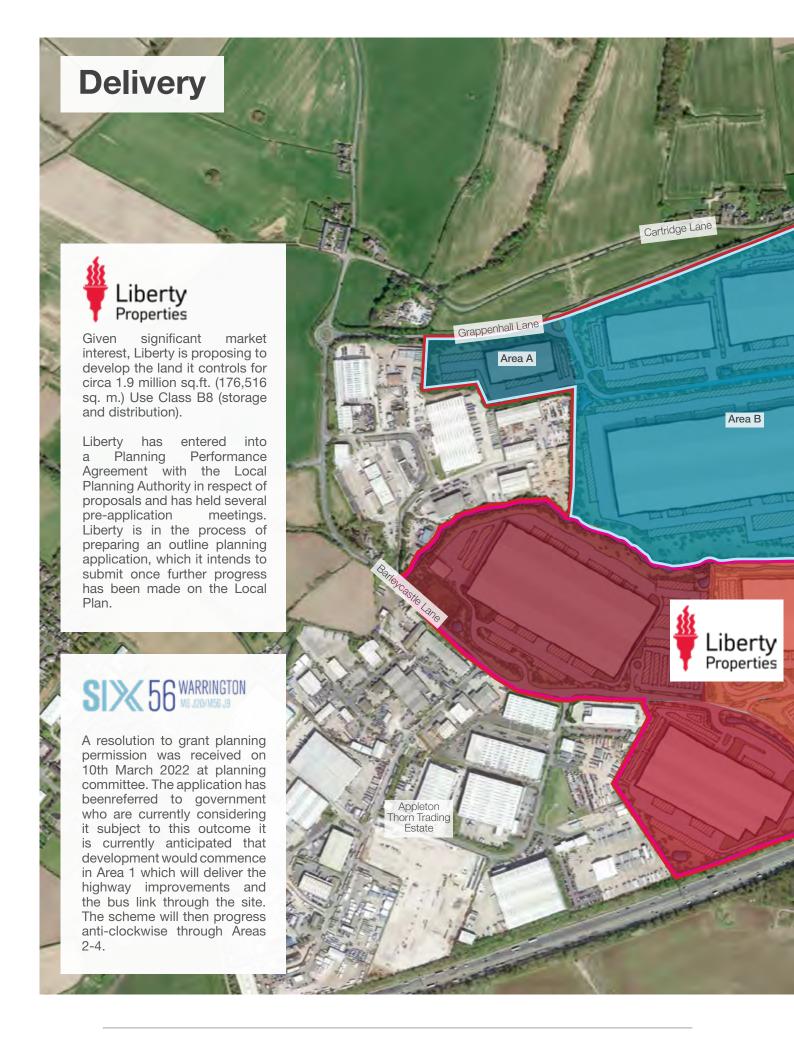


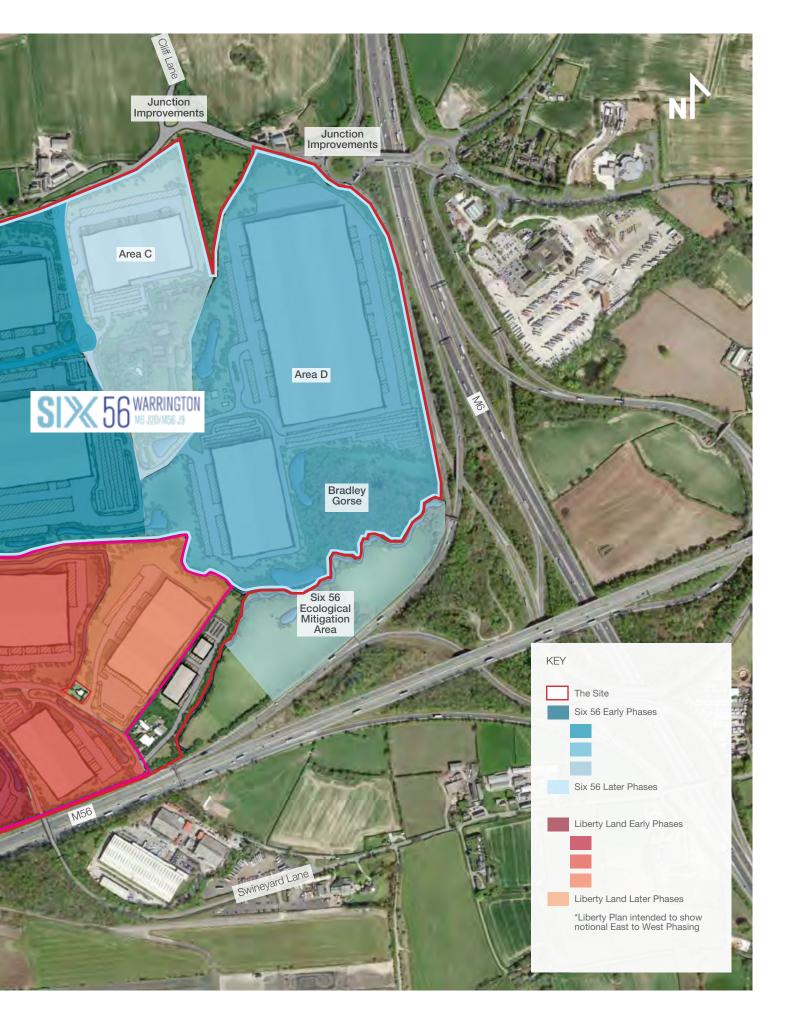






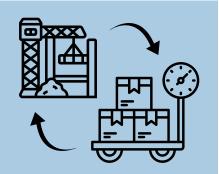












A significant number of jobs (onsite and off-site) would be created during both the construction and operational phase of the proposed development. Further multiplier effects are also likely to arise.



The economic impact of the construction phase is expected to be significant. It is envisaged during construction the allocation could provide numerous opportunities for new trainee placements as well as employment opportunities for residents living nearby in deprived communities.





Around a quarter of all jobs provided by the development can be categorised as 'high skilled' (such as managers and directors, analysts, programmers and software developers) – so the development will create both entry level and higher skilled positions.



The logistics sector is the largest contributor of GVA in Warrington. The proposed development of the allocation would further enhance the area's reputation as a major logistics hub, thus helping to unlock further investment in this area.



The logistics sector is recognised as a key driver of future growth in the local economy with initiatives such as the Atlantic Gateway aiming to invest up to £14bn along the corridor between Greater Manchester and Merseyside.



Warrington has a rapidly aging population and the additional opportunities created by the development would help to retain and attract young people, which is essential if the local economy is to continue to grow.



The allocation will offer accessible routes into work for those who are currently unemployed. The proposed development would create a significant number of entry level positions which, with the





right level of training, are positions that would be accessible to the most economically disadvantaged residents of the Borough, including young people not in education, employment or training.

Conclusion

This Masterplan Development Framework has shown that the site is available, suitable and achievable and therefore deliverable in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and PPG. The site is controlled by Langtree and Liberty each of whom can deliver their respective elements in accordance with this comprehensive masterplan framework. The South East Warrington Employment Area is therefore available for development within the plan period. The site is a logical scheme reinforcing the role of Warrington in the North West region for strategic employment opportunities.

The technical work undertaken to date in respect of highways, ground conditions, ecology, landscape, heritage, flood risk and drainage, energy, noise and air quality and utilities has influenced the indicative masterplan. It has also shown that there are no known constraints, that could not be suitably mitigated, that would prevent this site coming forward within the plan period. As such, the development of the site, as shown within the indicative masterplan, is considered achievable.

The indicative masterplan shows how an employment scheme can be accommodated within the site, alongside green infrastructure, landscaping and drainage features. It has been shown that the site can deliver a flexible and phased approach to delivering a strategic employment site for Warrington and the region.

It has also been shown that the site would be suitable development. The site for has been reviewed against the National Planning Policy Framework and the criteria for allocating sites. It has therefore been shown that the site is available, suitable and achievable and therefore it is considered that the site is deliverable, in accordance with national planning policy and guidance and can meet the submission draft Local Plan MD6 requirements. It is also attractive to the market and is deliverable within the plan period.

Langtree and Liberty are keen to deliver this significant opportunity which has substantial economic, social and environmental benefits for the local people and subregion.





