

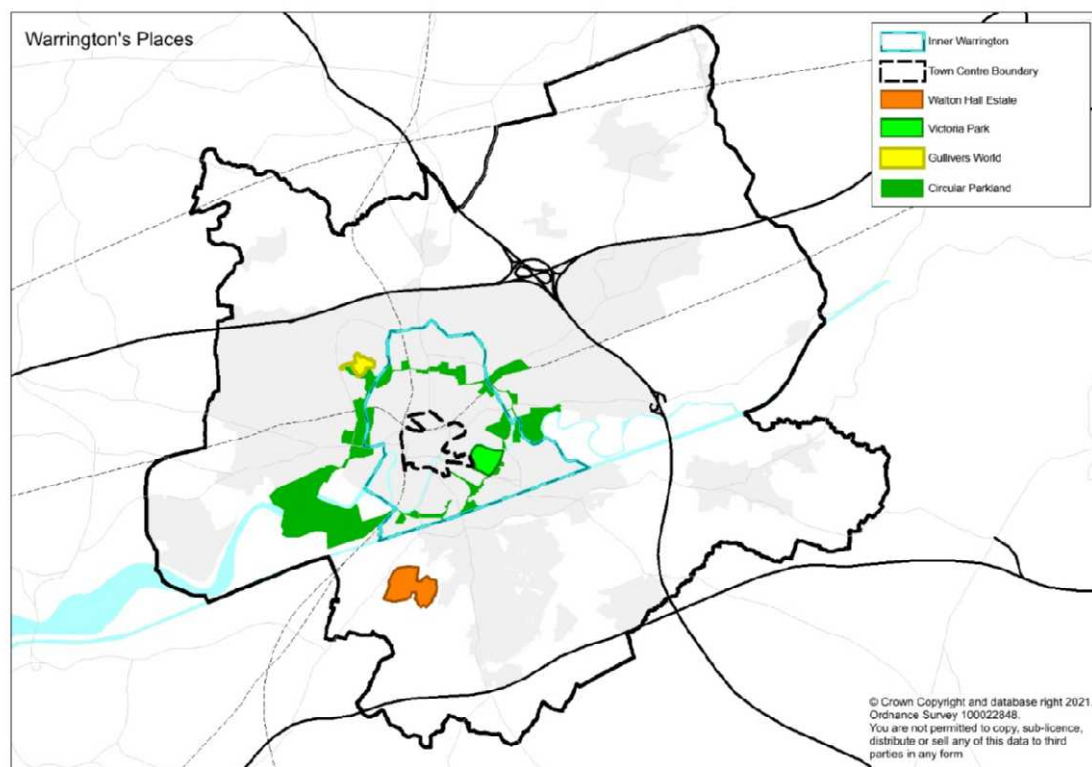
8 Policies Relating to Objective W5

Objective W5: To secure high quality design, which reinforces the character and local distinctiveness of Warrington's urban area, its countryside, its unique pattern of waterways and green spaces and its constituent settlements whilst protecting, enhancing and embracing the Borough's historic, cultural, built and natural assets.

8.1 Warrington's Places

- 8.1.1 The Borough of Warrington comprises a complex network of places, within which people exercise their choice of location for residence or business, and their destination for employment, shopping, education, health treatment, leisure, culture and entertainment.
- 8.1.2 Different areas within the Borough have different characteristics and differing needs and it is important to recognise this when considering the development priorities for Warrington up to 2038/39.
- 8.1.3 Warrington's places can be broken down into the following categories:
- Inner Warrington;
 - Suburban Warrington;
 - Countryside and settlements; and
 - Warrington's visitor attractions.

Figure 12 – Warrington's Places



- 8.1.4 This policy sets out the unique attributes of these spatial areas, details the strategy for each one over the Plan period and promotes the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans to provide more detailed local policies for these areas.

Policy DC1 - Warrington's Places

Inner Warrington

1. The Inner Warrington Area is defined by the six unparished wards of Orford, Fairfield and Howley, Poplars & Hulme, Latchford East, Latchford West and Bewsey & Whitecross.

2. Development in this area will be required to:

- a. Improve the overall environment of area through public realm improvements;
- b. Improve access to services and infrastructure;
- c. Promote sustainable transport measures;
- d. Promote access to green infrastructure;
- e. Improve the housing offer to provide a range of tenures and types of dwellings in this area;
- f. Provide sufficient amounts and types of affordable housing in accordance with Policy DEV2 to meet specific local needs;
- g. Provide new employment opportunities and training to local people;
- h. Include high quality design and materials;
- i. Not be detrimental to air quality and wider public health.

3. The Central Six Regeneration Masterplan sets out ambitions for a wide range of projects - from parks to housing and air quality to employment - for the Inner Warrington Wards, which together support residents' ambitions for the improvement of their localities. Development proposals should address the priorities set out in the Masterplan.

The Town Centre

4. Additional guidance on the design of new properties, the conversion of existing properties and amenity provision and standards are provided in the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document which covers the Town Centre area. Development proposals in this area will be expected to meet the requirements of this document.

Suburban Warrington

5. The many distinct parts of suburban Warrington will be the focus for infill and small scale development on brownfield and greenfield sites within the existing urban boundary.

6. Development in such areas will need to be in-keeping with the existing character of the area and be sustainable.

Warrington's Circular Parklands

7. The Council is committed to preserving and enhancing the Borough's Circular Parklands which surround the Inner Warrington area and are a key attribute to the town and the Town Centre. The Council and its partners will continue to promote opportunities to join up this

circular network more effectively and to make better use of it for amenity, cultural and leisure uses, as well as for sustainable transport.

Countryside and Settlements

8 Appropriate and sustainable development will be directed to the settlements on varying scales reflecting existing services and infrastructure.

9. Areas of countryside surrounding the inset settlements, including Green Belt settlements, will continue to be protected from inappropriate development in accordance with their Green Belt designation (See policy GB1).

Warrington's Visitor Attractions

Town Centre

10. The Council and its partners will continue to promote the Town Centre as a leisure and cultural destination and will ensure a range of uses are provided which cater for retail needs, the leisure (including night-time) economy, Town Centre living, visitor accommodation, commerce and enterprise, higher and further education and sporting events/facilities.(See policy TC1).

Victoria Park

11. The Council and its partners will look to preserve and enhance the unique characteristics of Victoria Park. Appropriate development ancillary to the role of the park will be supported where it:

- a. Does not result in an unsubstantiated loss of green space or adversely affect the quality and extent of sports, play and park facilities that create vibrancy and activity throughout the day;
- b. Makes the park more sustainable, viable and attractive;
- c. Supports and does not impact upon the works undertaken by the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Management Strategy;
- d. Preserves the flood management role of the park as part of the identified functional flood plain;
- e. Opens up access to and enjoyment of the River Mersey and riverside links through to the Town Centre, the Waterfront and Black Bear Park;
- f. Improves the functionality and quality of Green Infrastructure; and
- g. Preserves and enhances the historic interest of the park, and historic assets within, including their setting, in accordance with national and local policies relating to heritage assets.

12. Development in areas immediately surrounding the park should have regard to securing appropriate access and should deliver improvements to the park's environment and facilities where possible.

13. Victoria Park forms part of the functional flood plain in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, as such any new or enhanced facilities within the park should be constructed using flood resilient materials and design.

Walton Hall Estate

14. Development proposals at Walton Hall Estate will be supported where they:

- a. Preserve or enhance public access to the estate;
- b. Preserve or enhance the primary function of the estate as a sport, recreation, leisure and hospitality destination;
- c. Do not conflict with the tranquil setting of the gardens;
- d. Conserve and enhance the historic environment;
- e. Re-use existing facilities and buildings where possible and appropriate; and
- f. Improve the quality and range of amenities to diversify interest for visitors.

15. All proposals should also have regard to national and local policies relating to the Green Belt (See Policy GB1) and the historic environment (See Policy DC2).

16. Proposals for uses other than recreation, leisure and hospitality will only be supported where these are ancillary in nature and appropriate in scale and where proven critical to supporting the estate to become financially self-sustaining.

Gulliver's World

17. The Council will continue to support the operation of Gulliver's World as a successful regional attraction.

18. The maintenance and improvement of existing facilities will be supported where this will not have a detrimental impact on surrounding residential areas and the local road network.

Neighbourhood Plans

19. The Council will encourage the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans to set local policies and provide greater detail in relation to development priorities specific to particular areas and local communities.

Why we have taken this approach

- 8.1.5 This policy seeks to recognise the varying nature of the Borough in terms of existing development patterns within the urban area and outlying settlements, and also takes account of key tourist attractions. Within each of these areas there are different priorities which need to be articulated through the Local Plan.
- 8.1.6 The areas of Inner Warrington and Suburban Warrington are notably different in terms of the built environment, levels of deprivation and health and well-being. It is clear that particular focus is required in Inner Warrington to address some of the key issues here and the Central Six Regeneration Masterplan seeks to directly address these inherent problems. This is a Council approved document providing informal planning guidance. The Warrington Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document is an adopted planning document. Through its focus on liveability in the Town Centre it provides guidance on how health and well-being can be addressed through design in new development and conversion proposals including specific

guidance on the expectations of the Council around open space provision, amenity and providing good living and working conditions. The Central Six Regeneration Masterplan and the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document are therefore key in supporting the objectives of Policy DC1 for Warrington's inner areas.

- 8.1.7 Suburban Warrington varies in itself but the main thrust of the policy for these areas is to protect residential amenity and ensure new development is in keeping with its established surroundings.
- 8.1.8 Policy DC1 recognises the varying scale and characteristics of Warrington's settlements and the importance of the surrounding countryside.
- 8.1.9 The policy seeks to provide broad strategic parameters and intentions for these areas whilst allowing for more detailed local policies through the production of Neighbourhood Plans or masterplans.
- 8.1.10 For example, Lymm is the largest of the settlements and it has a distinct identity which is largely determined by its plentiful heritage assets including the village centre which is a designated Conservation Area, the Bridgewater Canal which passes through the village and a range of Grade I and Grade II Listed Buildings. Lymm Parish has been formally designated as a Neighbourhood Area and the Lymm Neighbourhood Plan Group are in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. This will set more specific development parameters for the settlement and provide design guidance for specific development sites.
- 8.1.11 The Council is committed to enhancing Warrington's offer in relation to visitor attractions, by enhancing and protecting existing attractions and creating additional visitor destinations. The Council is also committed to enhancing the Town's Circular Parklands which are a key attribute to Warrington and in particular the Town Centre. Improved access to the Circular Parklands is important for amenity, cultural and leisure purposes but also from a sustainable transport perspective and in the context of the LTP4 'Last Mile' programme.
- 8.1.12 The intention for Warrington Town Centre is for it to become a visitor destination in its own right by broadening the offer of leisure and cultural facilities which will complement its retail offer. The Town Centre is already undergoing significant change with the Times Square development bringing a cinema complex, improved and enlarged market accommodation, offices and retail/leisure units. Other parts of the Town Centre are also undergoing significant change such as the Stadium Quarter which will promote cultural events at the Halliwell Jones Stadium and will also see further investment in educational and youth facilities. Promoting more residential development in the Town Centre will further broaden its function and appeal as an important regional town. The Town Centre Masterplan has been prepared to support this overall strategy and further detail is set out in Policy TC1. Improving access to the Town Centre by sustainable transport modes will also be key to elevating its role as a destination.

- 8.1.13 Victoria Park provides an important facility for the residents of Warrington, principally through its proximity to the Town Centre, its scale and its extensive and diverse range of sports and play facilities. More recently, the use of the park has been further widened to include hosting music and other cultural and leisure events. The park has seen a significant amount of investment in recent years in relation to flood defence works and upgrading of facilities. It is important that the park is protected and its current role is maintained and enhanced wherever possible. It is also essential that any new development is not detrimental to this important asset, whilst recognising that some improvements and development may be required within the park itself.
- 8.1.14 There is recognition that ongoing improvements will be necessary at Walton Hall Estate, which comprises of Walton Hall, Walton Park and Gardens, and Walton Municipal Golf Course, in order to ensure that the full potential of the estate's assets are being realised and that ultimately the estate can become financially self-sustaining. Policy DC1 seeks to promote the opportunity that the Walton Hall Estate presents alongside putting in place a framework to guide redevelopment proposals to ensure that any commercial activities intended to generate income do not undermine public access, the estate's existing function or its setting.
- 8.1.15 Gulliver's World is a much valued attraction within the Borough, it has a wide regional catchment in terms of drawing visitors in to Warrington. The Council will continue to support this attraction and work closely with the operator in relation to future expansion plans, whilst also managing the interrelationship of this major attraction with nearby communities.
- 8.1.16 Neighbourhood planning is not a legal requirement but a right which communities in England can choose to use. Neighbourhood planning enables communities to play a much stronger role in shaping the areas in which they live and work and in supporting new development proposals. A number of communities in Warrington have expressed an interest in bringing forward Neighbourhood Plans. The Council will support neighbourhood planning groups to bring forward Neighbourhood Plans that are consistent with the Local Plan, including giving consideration to opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites suitable for housing in their area in accordance with paragraph 70 of the NPPF.

Key Evidence

- National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 and 2 (2018)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Addendum (2021)
- Local Housing Needs Assessment (2021)
- Economic Development Needs Assessment (2021)
- Retail Study Update (2021)
- Habitat Regulation Assessment: Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021)
- Sustainability Appraisal Report: Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (2021)

Other Planning Documents

- WBC Design and Construction SPD (2010)
- Warrington Town Centre SPD (2021)

Council Wide Strategies

- Cultural Framework
- Public Art Strategy
- Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) (2019)
- Central Six Regeneration Masterplan (2020)
- First and Last Mile Transport Masterplan (FLMTM) (2021)

Delivery Partners

- Private Sector
- Public Sector
- Cultural Commission
- Warrington & Co
- Central Area Neighbourhood Board
- Neighbourhood Plan Groups