



**HALTON CORE STRATEGY  
PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

**05<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

HALTON LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK  
It's all happening IN HALTON  
A Spatial Strategy for Halton 2026

## Foreword

*Foreword by Cllr Polhill / Cllr McInerney*

Welcome to Halton Borough Council's Core Strategy which will play a crucial role in shaping the spatial development of Halton up to 2026.

The Core Strategy sets out in 'Halton's Story of Place' how the Borough has developed over time and introduces the Borough's characteristics, including the issues and challenges that the Borough now faces and those likely to have an impact and drive further change during the period to 2026. The Core Strategy then introduces a vision for the Borough, imagining the place we would like Halton to be by 2026 and identifies a series of 13 Strategic Objectives that will help us to deliver that vision. From this a Spatial Strategy has been prepared, showing how development will be distributed throughout the Borough, and indicating which areas will be subject to the most substantial change. This is followed by a series of core policies relating to key themes of development including transport, urban design, conservation and health.

The Core Strategy, once implemented, will significantly contribute to the delivery of a prosperous, well connected and attractive Borough, supporting healthy communities, performing a key role within the Liverpool City Region and well positioned to respond to future economic and social changes and challenges.

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## Guide to the Proposed Submission Stage

This document is the Council's Core Strategy Proposed Submission document. This means that this is the document that the Council proposes to submit to the Secretary of State for an independent examination. The strategy and policies contained within this document have taken into account comments from previous rounds of public and stakeholder consultation and a comprehensive evidence base.

From **X** to **X** representations can be made on the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document. However, unlike the previous two formal stages of public consultation during the preparation of the Core Strategy, representations at this stage should only relate to the 'soundness' of the Strategy. To be sound the Strategy should be:

- **Justified** – founded on a robust and credible evidence base and is the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives
- **Effective** – meaning deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored
- Consistent with **National Policy**

The representations submitted relating to the above tests of soundness will be considered when the Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State for the independent examination along with other requirements of legal compliance. Halton Borough Council considers the Core Strategy document to be sound and in compliance with the legal requirements.

The public examination will include a thorough assessment of the content of the document and the way that it has been produced and will establish whether the Core Strategy can be formally adopted by the Council.

### How can you make representations on the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document?

Representations can be made in any of the following ways:

**Online at:** [www.halton.gov.uk/spatialplanning](http://www.halton.gov.uk/spatialplanning) where you can complete an online representations form.

**By email:** [forward.planning@halton.gov.uk](mailto:forward.planning@halton.gov.uk)

**In writing to:**

Halton Core Strategy FREEPOST **X X X X**  
Places, Economy and Transport,  
Halton Borough Council,  
Rutland House,  
Halton Lea,  
Runcorn,  
WA7 2GW

**By phoning:** 0151 906 4884

Visit our **Facebook** page: Halton2026

**Further Information:** If you would like to discuss any matters relating to the Core Strategy in more detail, please call the Core Strategy team on 0151 906 4884.

# I Introduction

## What is the Core Strategy?

- I.1 The Halton Core Strategy is the central document within the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) which will eventually replace Halton's current plan the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and be used to guide development and determine planning applications over the next 15 years, to 2026. Figure X illustrates the component documents of Halton's LDF.

Insert Figure showing the LDF

- I.2 The Core Strategy provides the overarching strategy for the LDF, setting out why change is needed; what the scale of change is; and where, when and how it will be delivered. It does this through identifying the current issues and opportunities in the Borough, how we want to achieve change and stating the future vision for Halton to 2026. To deliver this vision the Core Strategy sets out a spatial strategy stating the extent of change needed and the core policies for delivering this future change.
- I.3 The Core Strategy will help to shape the future of Halton, including its natural and built environments, its communities and ultimately peoples quality of life. The Core Strategy therefore joins up a range of different issues such as housing, employment, retail, transport and health. This is known as 'spatial planning'.

## How has the Core Strategy been Produced?

- I.4 Work on the Core Strategy commenced in January 2006 with the production of the Core Strategy Issues and Options Papers. Public consultation took place from the 27<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> September 2006 representing the first stage of community involvement on the Core Strategy and the spatial planning approach that should be taken.
- I.5 The Issues Paper began by introducing the new plan making system and what the meaning and purpose of 'spatial planning' was. It then set out the broad issues that planning policy within the Borough will need to help address, including those issues identified by the SCS. The Options Paper began to establish the role of planning policy in addressing the issues and introduced some of the broad policy options that the Core Strategy could adopt. This included three alternative spatial development scenarios for the Borough and seven spatial themes dealing with specific policy areas relevant to Halton.
- I.6 From the Issues and Options stage, work was progressed on the Preferred Options for Spatial Development of the Borough. On 24<sup>th</sup> September to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009 the Core Strategy Preferred Options document underwent a 6 week period of public consultation. The main purpose of this stage was to provide an opportunity for Halton's communities, stakeholders and other interested parties to tell us their views on the preferred policy options for Halton's future to 2026.
- I.7 Subsequent to the Preferred Options stage full consideration has been taken of the comments received, and further work has been undertaken with key stakeholders, neighbouring authorities and delivery partners regarding key sites and supporting infrastructure. The preferred policy approaches were developed to form the Proposed Submission document which represents the final formal stage of

consultation for the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination before the Council can formally adopt the plan.

### **What is the Policy Context for the Core Strategy?**

- 1.8 In producing the Core Strategy, consideration has been given to the context provided by existing policy frameworks at the national, regional, sub-regional and local level.

#### **National Context**

- 1.9 National planning policies are currently set out in the form of Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Guidance (PPGs). These PPSs and PPGs establish high-level planning principles and requirements for the LDF, covering a range of topics from sustainable development to the historic environment to flood risk. The Core Strategy must conform with, but not repeat national planning policy, unless it is essential in order to provide a coherent set of policies.
- 1.10 Although the overall direction and approach to national planning policy is unlikely to change, it is anticipated, following the plans of the new Coalition Government, that there will be moves to streamline current national planning policy into a wider, less detailed, National Planning Framework. This will be taken into consideration when preparing future LDF documents and policies.
- 1.11 The Government also publishes legislation, regulations and circulars which set the legal framework for the planning process.

#### **Regional Context**

- 1.12 Following the revocation and subsequent abolition of the North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS) the regional context has evolved during the development of Halton's Core Strategy. As a result the Core Strategy no longer has a statutory obligation to conform to previous regional targets and policy.
- 1.13 In order to provide a strategic outlook for the region, the North West Development Agency (NWDA) has developed the Future North West: Our Shared Priorities<sup>1</sup> document. The document sets out four overarching themes which are supported throughout Halton's Core Strategy:
- **Theme 1:** Capitalise on the opportunities of moving to a low carbon economy and society, and address climate change and resource efficiency.
  - **Theme 2:** Build on our sources of international competitive advantage and distinctiveness.
  - **Theme 3:** Release the potential of our people and tackle poverty.
  - **Theme 4:** Ensure the right housing and infrastructure for sustainable growth.

#### **Sub-Regional Context**

- 1.14 Halton forms part of the core Liverpool City Region along with the local authority areas of Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral and the City of Liverpool. The Liverpool City Region is committed to the achievement of a step change in the city region's economic performance based upon its established strengths including ports and logistics, the low carbon economy and the knowledge economy. These aims are to be formalised through the creation of a Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise

<sup>1</sup> NWDA (2010) Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

Partnership (LEP) which is intended to provide strategic leadership for the sub-region and create the right environment for business success and economic growth.

- 1.15 The City Region has also agreed a series of spatial priorities<sup>2</sup> covering five thematic areas: economy; employment and skills; housing; transport; and, environment and waste. These spatial priorities recognise a number of Halton specific projects, schemes and assets that will substantially contribute to the aims of the Liverpool City Region.

#### Local Context

- 1.16 The Core Strategy and the wider LDF has a close relationship to Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which outlines the long-term vision to achieve sustainable improvement in Halton. Halton's SCS for 2011-2026<sup>3</sup> brings together the main social, economic and environmental issues facing the Borough and identifies priorities for action across five strategic themes:

- A Healthy Halton
- Employment Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Safer Halton
- Children and Young People in Halton
- Environment and Regeneration in Halton

- 1.17 The five strategic themes of the SCS provide a framework for the Core Strategy Vision, Strategic Objectives and Spatial Strategy, thus helping to inform the overall approach of the Core Strategy and the future development of Halton to 2026.

- 1.18 The Core Strategy also has close ties with the Halton Local Transport Plan (LTP) which aims to provide a good quality transport system, the Borough's Economic Regeneration Strategies which support the economic performance of the Borough and Halton's Housing Strategy ensuring that Halton offers a broad range of good quality housing which meets the needs of existing and future communities.

#### What is the Core Strategy's Relationship to the Supporting Documents?

- 1.19 The Core Strategy is accompanied by a number of important supporting documents which perform a variety of roles. These documents are listed below with a brief summary of their relationship to the Core Strategy.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT	RELATIONSHIP TO THE CORE STRATEGY
<b>Infrastructure Plan</b>	Sets out the major infrastructure projects which are planned by the Council, its partners and third party agencies, detailing delivery mechanisms, timescales and funding for these projects. The Infrastructure Plan is to be a 'live' document and will be updated and amended throughout the life of the Core Strategy.
<b>LDF Evidence Base</b>	Lists the entire evidence base documents used and referred to in the preparation of the Core Strategy Proposed Submission document. Also included is a list of the available monitoring documents used to inform the Core Strategy production.

<sup>2</sup> Merseyside Policy Unit (MPU) (2010) Draft Liverpool City Region Spatial Priorities Plan 2010

<sup>3</sup> HBC (2010) Draft Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026



<b>Sustainability Appraisal (SA)</b>	Assesses the social, economic and environmental impact of the Core Strategy policies and informs how these impacts can be positively addressed to ensure the most sustainable outcome. The SA also ensures that the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive have been complied with during the Core Strategies production.
<b>Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</b>	<p>Assesses the potential effects of the plan on sites designated as important at the European Level. The process is split into three distinct phases with the first screening stage completed as part of the Core Strategy Preferred Options and latter two stages, termed Appropriate Assessment, completed as part of the Proposed Submission document. The Appropriate Assessment assesses the likely effects of the plan on the integrity of designated European wildlife sites and the identification of mitigation measures or alternative solutions, where appropriate.</p> <p>The draft Appropriate Assessment report is published alongside the Core Strategy Proposed Submission document and will be subject to consultation with the Statutory Consultee (Natural England). The amendments required through this process will be included within the Submission version of the Core Strategy.</p>
<b>Health Impact Assessment (HIA)</b>	Assesses the impacts of the Core Strategy policies on the important issue of health in Halton.
<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>	Assesses the Core Strategy for potential disproportionate impacts on Halton's diverse communities.
<b>Statement of Consultation</b>	Summarises consultation undertaken so far and highlights how this has been taken into account in the development of the Core Strategy.

## 2 Halton's Story of Place

- 2.1 Covering the towns of Widnes and Runcorn, Halton is a unitary authority located in the North West of England which straddles the upper estuary of the River Mersey. It is located to the east of Liverpool City with the Borough of St.Helens to the north, Warrington to the east and rural north Cheshire lying to the south.
- 2.2 Home to 118,700<sup>1</sup> people Halton lies within the core of the Liverpool City Region and together with St.Helens and Warrington form Liverpool's Eastern or 'Mid-Mersey' housing market area.

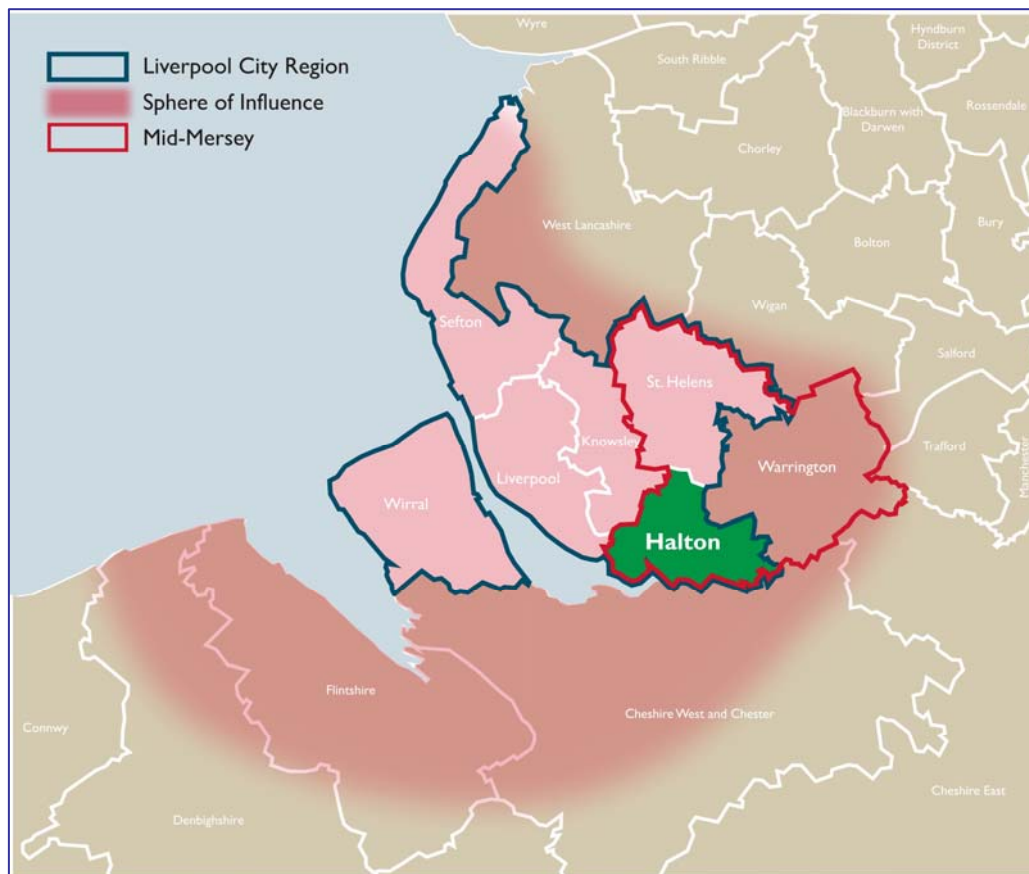


Figure XX: Liverpool City Region

- 2.3 Green Belt covers approximately one third of the land area of the Borough and contains the smaller settlements of Moore, Daresbury and Preston-on-the-Hill, with Hale Village inset within the Green Belt.
- 2.4 One of the defining characteristics of the Borough of Halton is the Mersey Estuary. Designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), an internationally important wetland (Ramsar convention) site and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the estuary provides a unique waterfront environment that both divides and unites the principal towns of Runcorn and Widnes presenting both problems and opportunities for the development of the Borough.

<sup>1</sup> ONS (2009) Mid-Year Population Estimates

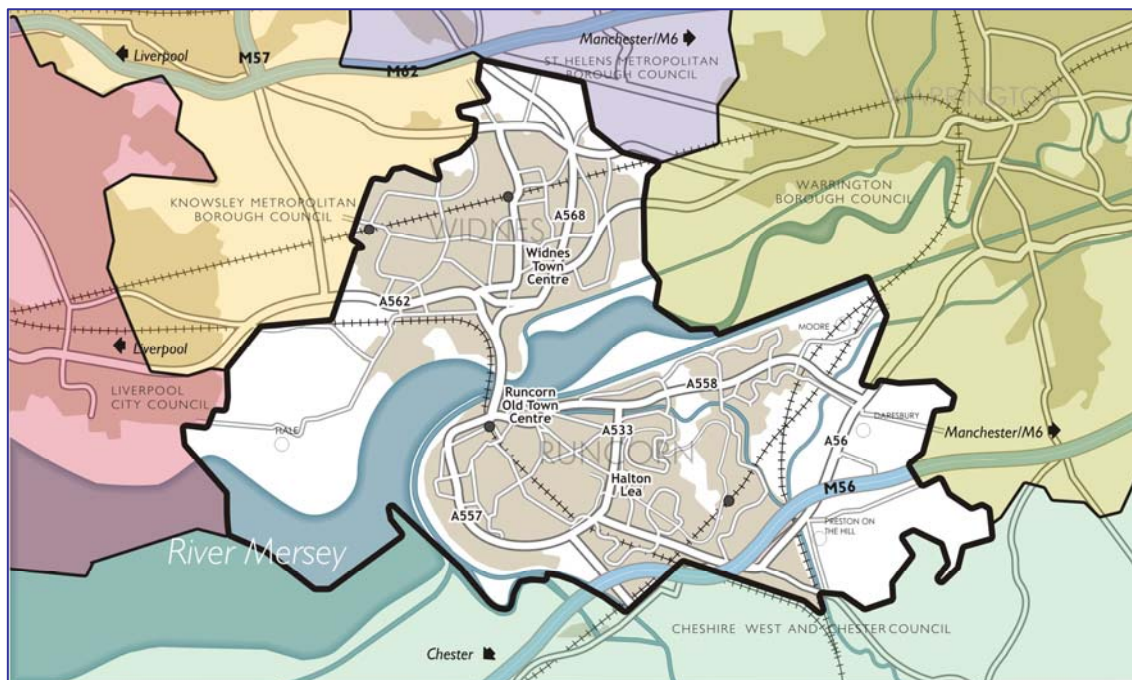


Figure XX: Liverpool City Region

- 2.5 The following sections map out the story of Halton as a place, concentrating on the two towns and their relationship to each other from opposite sides of the Mersey Estuary, and the key drivers of change that will affect and shape the Borough to 2026 and beyond. From this the key challenges for Halton to be dealt with in the Core Strategy are summarised.

## A Tale of Two Towns

- 2.6 Widnes and Runcorn grew up independently and have only been administered by a single local authority since local government reorganisation in 1974 and as a unitary authority since 1998. Previously Widnes was part of Lancashire and Runcorn part of Cheshire, with the Mersey Estuary separating the two Counties. Consequently, the two towns have very different histories. These are considered separately so that the combined future of the towns can be fully understood.

### Widnes

- 2.7 Widnes originally developed as a significant urban centre with the growth of the chemical industry in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This was due to its locational advantages along the Mersey Estuary providing a ready supply of water and a central location between areas of salt production in Cheshire and coal production in Lancashire, providing necessary raw materials for the chemical processes. Infrastructure grew to support the chemical industry with the building of the St Helens (Sankey) Canal, the railways and the development of Widnes Docks, around modern day Spike Island.
- 2.8 Chemical plants developed along the waterfront from Ditton to Moss Bank, and northwards alongside the numerous railways that now criss-crossed the area. By the 1860s Widnes had developed into an international centre for alkali production.

Commerce, housing and civic institutions grew to support the expanding chemical enterprises.

- 2.9 Products manufactured by the chemical plants included alkali, soap, borax, soda ash, salt cake and bleaching powder. Unfortunately, manufacturing these products produced various toxic liquid and solid waste by-products that were often tipped or buried on land adjacent to the factories that produced them, thus contaminating the land and leaving a legacy affecting development of the area to this day.
- 2.10 Widnes Town Centre originally developed to the north of the waterfront around Victoria Road / Victoria Square before migrating northwards to its current focus on Albert Road (on reclaimed chemical works). Victorian and interwar housing expanded north of the Town Centre, enveloping the previous hamlets of Appleton and Farnworth. 1970's social housing estates in addition to more recent developments around Upton, to the north and north-west of Widnes, rounded out the urban form.
- 2.11 Since the 1970's Widnes has seen significant changes with many old polluting industries closing down and concerted efforts made to decontaminate and reclaim large swathes of despoiled land. Road infrastructure has been transformed with a grade separation from Ditton Roundabout (A533 Queensway) providing direct access to the Silver Jubilee Bridge, the eastern by-pass (A557 Watkinson Way) between the M62 (junction 7) and the Bridge, and Fiddlers Ferry Road (A562) improving access to Warrington.
- 2.12 Industrial and former industrial land continues to dominate the waterfront areas, with new employment opportunities within the logistics and distribution sector being created at 3MG (Mersey Multimodal Gateway) and on Widnes Waterfront which is seeking to establish a modern office market and address the town's lack of modern business accommodation.
- Runcorn**
- 2.13 Runcorn is the older of the two settlements. After a brief spell as a Spa resort, Runcorn's modern growth can be traced to the opening of the Bridgewater canal in 1761 which provided the stimulus for commercial and industrial growth. This was furthered by the development of the mainline railway and the Manchester Ship Canal in the 1800s. Although to a lesser extent than compared with Widnes, throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century Runcorn increasingly became industrialised with the growth of the chemical and associated industries, which (as with Widnes) sprawled along the banks of the Mersey. Runcorn Locks connected the Bridgewater Canal with the Manchester Ship Canal and Weaver Navigation supporting the development of significant port facilities at Runcorn and Weston Docks.
- 2.14 In 1964 Runcorn was designated as a New Town. Its purpose was primarily to provide sites for Liverpool's population overspill and to re-house residents from Liverpool and north Merseyside's unfit dwellings. The Masterplan for the New Town was prepared to provide homes and jobs for 45,000 people growing to a population of 70,000 by the 1980s and with the possibility of expanding further up to 100,000 in later years.
- 2.15 The principles of a strong community and accessibility underlie the overall structure of Runcorn New Town. As a result the New Town comprises a number of distinct neighbourhoods, each with an individual identity emphasised in individual architectural forms linked by a busway system on a segregated carriageway and the



all purpose Expressway which forms a unique 'figure of eight' around the town. At the intersection of this 'eight' is located the town centre originally called 'Shopping City' and now rebranded 'Halton Lea' with supporting office development and the General Hospital.

- 2.16 Existing and new employment areas were located around the outside of the new town linked to the residential neighbourhoods by the segregated busway. The new estates at Astmoor and Whitehouse grouped largely single storey commercial units of various sizes around shared courts, often with communal parking areas, generous landscaping with good connections to the new expressway network.



Figure XX: Runcorn New Town Masterplan

- 2.17 With its unique urban form and uncompromising architectural styles, the New Town has left a mixed legacy. This includes residential neighbourhoods where there has been the need for comprehensive redevelopment, for example Southgate, or focused regeneration as seen at Castlefields. Similarly, the early employment estates of Astmoor and to a lesser extent Whitehouse also suffer from a design legacy that is not suited to modern standards.
- 2.18 The full extent of the New Town Masterplan was never fully realised and as a result a number of unimplemented New Town planning consents remain. This is particularly apparent in East Runcorn, where extant planning permissions were

granted under the New Towns Act 1981 for the development of a residential neighbourhood at Sandymoor.

## Bridging the Gap

- 2.19 The two towns of Widnes and Runcorn lie either side of a natural narrowing of the Mersey Estuary known as the Runcorn Gap. The Runcorn Gap is a long standing strategic crossing of the Mersey since Roman times when crossing by boat and on foot (in low tides) would have been undertaken.
- 2.20 The first physical link between Widnes and Runcorn was established with the opening of the Ethelfreda Railway Bridge in 1868 which still remains in use today as the Liverpool branch of the West Coast Main Line railway. In the past the railway bridge also catered for pedestrians with road vehicles unable to make the crossing until 1905 when the Transporter Bridge opened.



The Transporter Bridge

- 2.21 With the post war growth in road traffic the Transporter Bridge proved inadequate and was replaced by the iconic Silver Jubilee Bridge which opened in 1961. The Silver Jubilee Bridge currently acts as a strategic link in the regional transport network as well as presenting the only current vehicular and pedestrian link between the towns of Runcorn and Widnes. Despite being converted to four lanes in the 1970s, the Silver Jubilee Bridge is now operating beyond its original operational capacity of 60,000 vehicles per day, with over 80,000 vehicles making the crossing every weekday. As a result the Silver Jubilee Bridge suffers from severe peak time congestion creating a pinch point on the road network, a situation further exacerbated by the increasing maintenance requirements on the 50 year old structure.
- 2.22 To relieve current cross river congestion and aid connectivity between Widnes and Runcorn, a new road crossing across the Mersey Estuary upstream of the Silver Jubilee Bridge is to be delivered. The Mersey Gateway Bridge is seen as more than just a bridge, but the 'catalyst' that will connect communities and lead to regeneration and investment throughout Halton, the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and the North West.

- 2.23 Halton's bridges, past, present and future, provide Widnes and Runcorn with a deep rooted connection, decreasing the traditional divide, leading to a more unified and prosperous Borough.



Picture showing the Ethelfreda Railway Bridge the Silver Jubilee Bridge and the future Mersey Gateway Bridge

## Drivers of Change

- 2.24 Halton Borough Council is a high achieving and aspirational council with a proactive approach towards encouraging and enabling development in the Borough. To guide Halton's future development to 2026 and beyond it is important to understand the Borough's current characteristics including the assets, issues and opportunities. Together these form Halton's drivers of change.

### Demographics

- 2.25 Halton's resident population has, after a significant period of population decline, started to experience a reverse in the trend with modest growth projection. The population of the Borough, currently 118,900, is now projected to increase to by around 4,700 to 123,600 by the end of the plan period (2026)<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.26 The population structure in the Borough is comparatively young, partly as a legacy of young families moving into Runcorn during the 1970s and 80s New Town era. However, these first generation New Town residents are getting older, currently swelling the 45-59 age band, and will reach retirement age during the plan period. As such the population structure is ageing with the numbers aged over 65+ projected

<sup>2</sup> ONS (2008) Subnational Population Projections

to increase by some 50%, growing by some 8,600 from 16,900 in 2008 to 25,500 in 2026. This ageing population will create additional demand for care services and for adapted or specialist housing.

- 2.27 Net outward migration which drove past population decline is expected to reduce, but will remain an issue for the Borough, particularly amongst young working age adults leaving to pursue education and employment opportunities elsewhere.

### Deprivation

- 2.28 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)<sup>3</sup> can be used to identify groups and areas in Halton suffering from deprivation. Halton is ranked as the 30<sup>th</sup> most deprived borough nationally (at 2007) and 3<sup>rd</sup> on Merseyside, behind Knowsley and Liverpool. 47% of the Borough's population live in the top 20% most deprived areas in England. Although Halton's ranking has improved since the previous IMD in 2004 the Borough is still performing poorly in terms of overall deprivation.
- 2.29 Halton has eight areas within the top 3% most deprived in England. These are identified in dark red in figure X. The most deprived neighbourhood in Halton is ranked 306<sup>th</sup> out of 32,482 and is situated in Central Runcorn.

### Figure XX: Halton's Spatial Deprivation

### Health

- 2.30 A principal concern for Halton is the health of its residents. The Borough has for many years had some of the poorest health outcomes and shortest life expectancies of any area in England. Life expectancy at birth in Halton (2006-2008)<sup>4</sup> is 74.8 years for males and 78.8 years for females. This is significantly lower than both the North West (76.3 male, 80.1 female) and England figures (77.9 male, 82 female). Pioneering research in 2003 by the University of Lancaster commissioned by the Halton Health Partnership<sup>5</sup> showed that local health issues were not, as then suspected, the result of the Borough's industrial past and heavily contaminated local environment, but are more strongly related to poor lifestyles and economic deprivation.

### Housing

- 2.31 Within the Borough there are a total of 53,759 dwellings. The property profile is fairly varied and as such meets the needs of a wide range of population groups, however, there is currently an over representation of terraced properties (New Town in Runcorn / Victorian in Widnes) and a need for more family and aspirational housing<sup>6</sup>.
- 2.32 Halton has a lower proportion of owner occupied and private rented dwelling stock than the regional and national averages; the Borough also has a significantly higher proportion of the population who rent housing from a Registered Social Landlord (RSL)<sup>7</sup> due to the high proportion of social housing provided by the New Town. House prices across the Borough are still below regional and national averages but have risen significantly over recent years. Although the current economic climate has shown a decrease in house prices, the needs of lower income and new forming

<sup>3</sup> CLG (2007) The English Indices of Deprivation

<sup>4</sup> ONS (2008) Life Expectancy at Birth

<sup>5</sup> Lancaster University (2003) Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton

<sup>6</sup> GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting (2010) Halton and Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment

<sup>7</sup> HBC (2010) State of the Borough Report



households are increasingly not being met due to other barriers such as decreasing loan to value ratios applied by major lenders.

- 2.33 The recent provision of larger more aspirational housing developments at Upton Rocks (Widnes) and Sandymoor (East Runcorn), the latter representing a remaining consent from the New Town period, has begun to address an identified deficiency in the local stock for larger family houses, and may have contributed to the recent stabilisation in population numbers, however, there is still an identified need for these house types across the Borough.
- 2.34 As part of providing access to housing for all sectors of the community, Halton must also consider the specific needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The Council currently owns and manages two permanent sites for Gypsies and Travellers, one in Widnes and the other in Runcorn. Additionally there are two private sites located in Runcorn. In total there are 40 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches across Halton.

### **Employment, Learning & Skills**

- 2.35 Halton's local economy has been subject to major restructuring with the decline of the traditional chemical manufacturing industries that once dominated both Widnes and Runcorn. However, Halton still has a larger proportion of workers employed in manufacturing as compared to the Liverpool City Region<sup>8</sup>. Distribution, information and communication sectors are also large employment sectors in the Borough.
- 2.36 In terms of economic activity, Halton displays issues of worklessness and unemployment. The economic activity rate, which shows the percentage of economically active people of working age, for Halton (76.2%) is below both the North West (76.8%) and England (78.6%)<sup>9</sup>. The current Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant rate in Halton is 5.9%; this is greater than the North West rate (4.5%) and the national rate (4.1%)<sup>10</sup> and is likely to increase in the current recessionary period.
- 2.37 Despite recent successes in education and more specifically school exam results in the Borough, low levels of education and skills are apparent within the local workforce. This has led to a mismatch between workforce skills and jobs available. Consequently, Halton's residents have been unable to access the full spectrum of jobs in the Borough. The median weekly pay data shows that people who work in Halton have a weekly pay of £402.50 compared to £370.60 for the residents of Halton<sup>11</sup>.
- 2.38 Whilst there is general satisfaction with Halton as a place to do business, there are problems with the range of commercial sites and premises on offer. Widnes suffers from an excess of poor quality, despoiled former industrial land and has a limited modern office market. Runcorn has early New Town industrial estates, most notably Astmoor, where layouts and unit specifications do not meet modern business requirements and high vacancy rates are prevalent. The Widnes Waterfront Masterplan and Delivery Strategy, the multimodal logistics and distribution development at 3MG and the Business Improvement Districts at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates are among the measures already being used to address these deficiencies.

<sup>8</sup> ONS (2008) Annual Business Inquiry

<sup>9</sup> ONS (2007) Annual Population Survey

<sup>10</sup> ONS (2009) Jobseeker's Allowance Claimants

<sup>11</sup> ONS (2009) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

- 2.39 Despite the contraction of the chemical industry due to globalisation, high value-added, specialist chemical manufacturing, and scientific and research based employers remain a key component of the local economy with the remaining firms such as Ineos Chlor amongst the largest individual private sector employers. Redevelopment of ICI's headquarters at the Heath Business Park and the public sector investment at Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus (SIC) has ensured Halton has strong foundations in, and is now becoming home to, science, technology and research sectors.

### **Environment**

- 2.40 Halton has a historic legacy of obsolete and poor quality land, housing, commercial buildings, physical infrastructure and contaminated land. Although the physical appearance of the Borough has improved considerably over recent years, through a number of regeneration schemes, challenges still remain.
- 2.41 Despite Halton's legacy, the Borough has a large number of environmental assets and designations. Perhaps the greatest of these being the Mersey Estuary with its surrounding saltmarsh and terrestrial open space. The Borough also has a tightly drawn Green Belt boundary, with the total area of Green Belt land standing at 2,500ha, and substantial green infrastructure including parks, recreation grounds and public open spaces. In Runcorn the abundance of parkland and open space can be considered as one of the New Town's great successes, but also a challenge for the Council to maintain. The Borough's green infrastructure supports a wide network of biodiversity, serves as a recreation resource for the benefit of the health and well-being of residents and as a means of mitigation against the effects of climate change. The Borough boasts one Ramsar Site, one Special Protection Area (SPA), three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), ten Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), 47 Local Wildlife Sites and 12 Open Spaces of Green Flag award standard.
- 2.42 In terms of the Borough's historic environment there are a range of heritage assets which serve as a positive link to, and reminder of, Halton's past, including ten conservation areas, seven scheduled monuments and 126 Listed Buildings.
- 2.43 Additionally, a substantial part of Halton's character and 'sense of place' is formed by the Borough's waterside environments along the Mersey Estuary, the Manchester Ship Canal, the Bridgewater Canal, St Helens Canal and the Weaver Navigation. Halton's waterways provide an attractive setting for waterside development, a recreational resource and help improve the image of the Borough.

### **Climate Change and Sustainability**

- 2.44 Climate change is recognised as one of the most serious challenges facing the UK. Evidence shows that over the last century there has been an unprecedented rate of increase in global temperatures leading to climatic changes. Scientific consensus attributes this global warming to emissions of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide from combustion of fossil fuels for energy generation or transport. The impacts of climate change may be felt within the Borough through warmer summers and wetter winters and an increased frequency of severe weather events. These climatic shifts will have a pronounced effect on Halton's natural and built environments.
- 2.45 Extreme weather events may also increase the risk of coastal and estuarine flooding. Halton's estuarine location and the number of brooks which run into the Mersey

Estuary present a number of areas in the Borough that have been identified at risk from flooding.

- 2.46 The sustainable management of waste is also a major concern for Halton. European and national legislation is driving a change in the way we handle waste. Disposing the majority of our waste to landfill is no longer a viable long term option.

### **Transport Links**

- 2.47 The Borough enjoys excellent links being at the heart of the region's transport network. The M56 motorway runs through the south of the Borough and the M62 is located just to the north, both a short drive from the M6, whilst A-class routes converge on the Silver Jubilee Bridge river crossing.
- 2.48 The Liverpool branch of the West Coast Main Line railway offers regular services from Runcorn Train Station delivering passengers to London in less than 2 hours and to Liverpool in around 20 minutes. Local and Trans-Pennine services call at Widnes, Hough Green and Runcorn East stations before connecting with Manchester and other destinations across the north of England.
- 2.49 Liverpool John Lennon Airport is located adjacent to Halton Borough Council's western boundary within Liverpool City Council. The Airport provides national and international connectivity for the Borough whilst also bringing economic benefits including job creation.
- 2.50 Travel patterns show that 13.8% of commuting flows to Halton are by residents within the Liverpool City Region, however, the largest flow is by residents of Warrington (9.7%)<sup>12</sup>. Overall, 70% of journeys to work within Halton are made by car<sup>13</sup>.
- 2.51 Although, as explained previously, there are a range of issues associated with congestion and the unpredictability of journey times for cross river traffic, Halton exhibits a number of locational advantages presented by the Borough's existing rail links, waterways, ports, Liverpool John Lennon Airport and the proposed Mersey Gateway Project. These present a unique opportunity to ensure that Halton fulfils its potential as a major hub for distribution and logistics. This opportunity is also taken forward in the Liverpool City Region 'SuperPort' concept<sup>14</sup> which aims to ensure that these assets along with other freight infrastructure across the sub-region become a key driver in the local economy.

### **Retail and Leisure**

- 2.52 Halton has three main retail centres with Widnes being the largest centre followed by Halton Lea and then Runcorn Old Town.
- 2.53 Widnes Town Centre has a strong convenience and comparison retail offer. In terms of the town's market share of comparison retail, this has been substantially improved with the opening of Widnes Shopping Park in early 2010. Victoria Square to the south of the Town Centre provides an opportunity to extend the evening economy and a new leisure development at Widnes Waterfront comprising of a cinema, ice rink and restaurants will complement the Town Centre's retail offer and boost leisure opportunities within the Borough.

<sup>12</sup> HBC (2010) State of the Borough in Halton

<sup>13</sup> ONS (2001) Census 2001

<sup>14</sup> TMP (2008) Liverpool SuperPort

2.54 In Runcorn, during the New Town era, the location of the new town centre, Halton Lea, can be seen as a contributing factor to the subsequent decline of Runcorn Old Town which struggled to maintain its position as a key retail centre in the Borough. As a result Runcorn Old Town centre has been subject to several regeneration projects. In recent years Runcorn Old Town has acquired assets such as the Brindley Arts Centre, consolidating its role as an independent and specialist destination. Although Halton Lea has suffered from a number of issues including weak pedestrian access, high vacancy rates and the lack of an evening economy, its complimentary leisure facilities at Trident Retail Park have improved its offer substantially.

### **Risk**

2.55 Halton is affected by a number of installations which have the potential to create a significant risk for Halton's communities in the event of a major incident. These include industries that store quantities of potentially dangerous chemicals such as chlorine at Ineos Chlor in Runcorn, pipelines that carry explosive gases or liquids and the approach to the runway of Liverpool John Lennon Airport. Flooding events, land contamination and pollution also present a major potential risk to Halton's communities.

## **Halton's Challenges**

2.56 Through the description of Halton's characteristics including the Borough's assets, issues and opportunities a number of challenges have become clear.

Halton's challenges are to:

- respond to the changing population structure including the Borough's ageing population;
- tackle issues of deprivation and health for the Boroughs residents;
- deliver and secure a balanced housing offer which is appropriate to local markets and ultimately supports the Borough's economic growth;
- continue to create an environment where employers want to invest and create jobs;
- attract skilled workers into the Borough and increase the proportion of Halton's working age population with appropriate qualifications;
- support the Boroughs economic growth sectors including science and technology, and logistics and distribution;
- ensure all development is of a high quality of design and that areas of contaminated land are successfully remediated;
- maintain and enhance Halton's natural and heritage assets including its sites of local, national and international importance, waterside environments and distinctive character;
- put in place mitigation and adaptation measures to deal with the threat of climate change;
- utilise resources sustainably;
- reduce congestion and support travel by sustainable modes;
- maintain and enhance the retail and leisure offer of Widnes Town Centre, Halton Lea and Runcorn Old Town; and,
- minimise and respond to the potential risk of major accidents, flooding, contamination and pollution.

2.57 These challenges must be addressed in order to ensure Halton fulfils its future vision to 2026.

## A VISION FOR HALTON IN 2026

The overarching vision taken from the [draft Halton Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026](#):

*“Halton will be a thriving and vibrant Borough where people can learn and develop their skills, enjoy a good quality life with good health; a high quality, modern urban environment; the opportunity for all to fulfil their potential; greater wealth and equality; sustained by a thriving business community; and within safer, stronger and more attractive neighbourhoods.”*

Flowing from this, the spatial vision underpinning Halton’s Core Strategy is as follows:

“In 2026, Halton is well equipped to meet its own needs with housing for all sections of society, a range of employment opportunities, plus retail and leisure facilities for everyone. Halton continues to contribute positively to achieving the economic, environmental and social potential of the Liverpool City Region and the North West.

Thriving and diverse residential communities are emerging at Sandymoor, Daresbury and Runcorn Waterfront while additional high quality housing in other locations across Runcorn and Widnes are reinforcing and diversifying the Borough’s residential offer, responding to the needs of the Borough’s communities. There has been a renewed emphasis on the delivery of affordable housing providing accommodation for those who were previously unable to access the type of home they required.

The Borough’s economy has been strengthened by the expansion of key employment areas at Daresbury, 3MG, Mersey Gateway Port and Widnes Waterfront, and Halton has developed an important role in the sub-region for sustainable distribution and logistics and in high-tech science and research. Halton’s residents are well equipped with the skills needed to compete for jobs in all sectors and locations throughout the Borough, where existing employment areas have been retained and improved through appropriate regeneration to meet the needs of modern employers. The Borough’s traditional industries, centred on the chemicals sector, continue to play a key role in both Runcorn and Widnes.

Retail and leisure centres in the Borough maintain their function as key areas for the provision of shops, services and community facilities. The town centres at Widnes and Halton Lea offer vibrant and busy destinations for people to do their shopping, access services and meet one another. Runcorn Old Town has developed into a unique location for shopping and leisure, with a niche role compared to the two main town centres in the Borough.

Development across the Borough is highly sustainable and contributes to the health and well-being of Halton’s communities, has made the best use of previously developed land and has utilised infrastructure and resources efficiently. Climatic risks continue to be managed and mitigated and development has contributed to minimising Halton’s carbon footprint. Additionally, Halton benefits from high quality infrastructure serving new and existing development.

The rural character and setting of the Borough’s villages of Moore, Daresbury and Preston on the Hill within the Green Belt has been retained through restrictions on new development. The character of Hale Village (inset within the Green Belt), has also been protected, and any negative impacts associated with the expansion at Liverpool John Lennon Airport are minimised. The Borough’s Green Belt continues to provide a vital resource for current and future residents and keeping important spaces between settlements.

The historic and natural environments across Halton have been conserved and enhanced for future generations and the Borough's multifunctional Green Infrastructure network fulfils the recreational needs of residents, contributes to general well-being and provides important linked diverse habitats. Additionally, Halton's legacy of contaminated land continues to be remediated and regenerated, and development responds to the potential risks of major accidents and flooding.

Transport routes both through the Borough and to surrounding areas are intrinsic to how the Borough functions on its own and as part of the sub-region, for the movement of goods and people. A second river crossing between the Borough's towns of Runcorn and Widnes, in the form of the Mersey Gateway Project, has been secured, improving connections and acting as a major sub-regional catalyst for development and regeneration".

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The spatial vision will be achieved through the delivery of the strategic objectives:

1. Create and support attractive, accessible and adaptable residential neighbourhoods where people want to live
2. Provide good quality, affordable accommodation and a wide mix of housing types to create balanced communities
3. Create and sustain a competitive and diverse business environment offering a variety of quality sites and premises, through the revitalisation of existing vacant and underused employment areas
4. Further develop Halton's economy around the logistics and distribution sector, and expand the science, creative and knowledge based business clusters
5. Maintain and enhance Halton's town and local centres to create high quality retail and leisure areas that meet the needs of the local community, and positively contribute to the image of the Borough
6. Ensure all development is supported by the timely provision of adequate infrastructure, with sufficient capacity to accommodate additional future growth
7. Provide accessible travel options for people and freight, particularly through the realisation of the Mersey Gateway Project, ensuring a better connected, less congested and more sustainable Halton
8. Ensure that all development achieves high standards of design and sustainability and provides a positive contribution to its locality
9. Minimise Halton's contribution to climate change through reducing carbon emissions and ensure the Borough is resilient to the adverse effects of climate change
10. Support the conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment including the Borough's Green Infrastructure in order to maximise social, economic and environmental benefits
11. Improve the health and well-being of Halton's residents throughout each of their life stages, through supporting the achievement of healthy lifestyles and healthy environments for all
12. Prevent harm and nuisance to people and biodiversity from potential sources of pollution and foreseeable risks
13. Support sustainable and effective waste and minerals management, reducing the amount of waste generated and contributing to the maintenance of appropriate mineral reserves.



# **HALTON CORE STRATEGY PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

## **SPATIAL POLICIES**

# Halton's Spatial Strategy

- 1.1 The Spatial Strategy flows from the Vision for Halton It expresses how we will achieve what we want to deliver over the plan period, taking into consideration the existing physical and social environment of the Borough, and how we intend to meet the Strategic Objectives. The Spatial Strategy sets out how Halton will change over the coming years; where change will happen, when it will happen and how this is to be delivered.

## Policy CS1: Halton's Spatial Strategy

To achieve the Vision for Halton to 2026, new development should deliver:

- 8000 additional new homes
- 260 ha (gross) of land for employment purposes
- Up to 35,000 SqM of town centre convenience /comparison goods retailing
- Up to 22,000 SqM of bulky goods retailing

*Specific principles to guide the location, timing and delivery of the above development are set out in policies CS3-CS5.*

### 1. Urban Regeneration and Key Areas of Change

The Spatial Strategy for Halton is focused around a balanced mix of prioritised urban regeneration supported by appropriate levels of greenfield expansion. The strategy will largely be realised by the delivery of four “key areas of change” across the Borough where the majority of new development will be located. The four areas are:

#### (a) Regeneration of previously developed (brownfield) land within the existing urban area as Key Areas of Change at:

- 3MG, (Ditton) in Widnes,
- South Widnes,
- West Runcorn; and

#### (b) Greenfield expansion involving the completion of Runcorn New Town and limited further urban extension to Runcorn as a Key Area of Change at:

- East Runcorn

This specific Key Area of Change includes the designation of a Strategic Site encompassing Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus and Daresbury Park.

*Specific proposals for these areas and the type and amount of development they will accommodate are set out in policies CS7-CS10.*

### 2.. Brownfield Focus (beneficial and efficient use of existing sites)

Outside of the Key Areas of Change, the re-use of previously developed land will be prioritised, notably where regenerating or bringing sites back into use will bring wider benefits to the Borough. Important Green Infrastructure within the urban area will be protected from adverse development to ensure its value, both individually and as part of a network is retained.

### 3 Halton's rural areas and Green Belt

The rural character of the Borough's villages and Green Belt will be predominantly maintained. Minor amendment of the Green Belt is proposed to the west of the

Borough to facilitate the planned runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport. In addition, the land supply position may warrant a general review of Green Belt boundaries to serve development needs arising north of the river prior to 2026.

*Specific proposals relating to Liverpool John Lennon Airport are set out in CS16.*

## Justification

- 1.1 Informed by Halton's existing characteristics, issues and opportunities as detailed in Halton's Story of Place, the Spatial Strategy has been developed to focus future development on areas where there is an impetus or a need for change. A number of areas of the Borough such as industrial parts of Widnes and New Town areas in Runcorn have not benefitted from sufficient investment for a number of years and are now in need of renewal. Development over the plan period will predominantly be focused on renewing Halton's urban landscape through the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land, including derelict sites and those with a history of contamination particularly at South Widnes and West Runcorn. Specific policies deal with when this change will happen. By seeking wherever possible to concentrate development in brownfield regeneration areas, the roles of Runcorn and Widnes as important towns in the sub-region will be maintained and secured for the future. This will ensure that the Borough is able to meet the day-to-day needs of its current and future population by providing ample employment opportunities, a range of high quality services and facilities and a choice of homes.
- 1.1 Despite the priority to renew and improve the Borough's urban landscape through new development, it is apparent through the evidence base that not all future development can be delivered on brownfield land. Despite the Borough's strong record for bringing brownfield land back into use, much of the remaining previously developed land is highly constrained through contamination or other factors which affect development viability, therefore reducing the realistic amount of brownfield land which can be brought back into beneficial use. In addition to the limitations on the re-use of brownfield land, development opportunities in the Borough are constrained (particularly north of the river) by tightly defined Green Belt boundaries, limited scope for infilling, coupled with the Mersey Estuary dissecting the Borough, there are not a wide variety of strategic options available to accommodate future growth requirements. However, Halton must plan for the level of development needed to secure the future prosperity of the Borough and to ensure that the services, facilities and opportunities on offer serve Halton's population over the lifetime of the plan. During the earlier stages of the Core Strategy's production, three different options to deliver the required level of growth were consulted on; **Sustainable Urban Extensions, Brownfield Only Focus** and a **Mix of Brownfield and Urban Extension**. Following public consultation, the development of the evidence base and refinement of the options, the option of combining a brownfield approach, coupled with an extension of the Borough's existing built up area to the east of Runcorn emerged as the preferred option, and the most balanced approach to both deliver the amount of new development needed whilst contributing towards the achievement of the Vision and Objectives for the Borough.
- 1.1 The land proposed to be developed at East Runcorn is predominantly greenfield land beyond Runcorn's current built up urban area. Evidence from both the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010) and the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (2010) indicate that without the inclusion of this area of the Borough,

there would be insufficient land for new residential and employment development needed over the plan period.

- 1.1 The strategy for development in Halton over the Core Strategy period should be viewed as the next phase in the development of the Borough, and a continuation of previous strategies as implemented in the 2005 Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the 1996 Halton Local Plan. For instance, the impetus to develop land at East Runcorn dates back to the New Town Master Plan and its amendment, where the proposals were extended to incorporate land beyond the areas of Windmill Hill and Murdishaw primarily to accommodate a greater number and range of dwellings. This area began to be developed in the late 1980s to form the residential area of Sandymoor. In Widnes, pockets of greenfield land lie between the existing urban area and the Green Belt surrounding the north of the Borough, and these areas were released for development in the later phases of the UDP, where sites within the urban area were brought forward first. Currently there are no further housing renewal programmes, such as that nearing completion at Castlefields (Runcorn), which are planned to take place within the lifetime of the Core Strategy. Aside from the urban Key Areas of Change which present opportunities for brownfield development, there is not an abundance of sites within the urban area with the ability to deliver development, particularly residential development.
- 1.1 The following table sets out the land supply position for residential and employment purposes at April 2010. This demonstrates that almost three quarters of the potential housing supply identified in the SHLAA lies south of the river, with previously identified land accounting for only 38% of the potential supply. For employment land there is marginally more land available in Widnes, however this supply is concentrated in a limited number of large sites forming the 3MG development.

**Table 1: Distribution of identified development potential (April 2010)**

		Potential Housing Supply (SHLAA 2010)		Identified Employment Land Supply 2010 (Ha.)	
3MG	Green	--	--	24.8	26%
	Brown	--	--	70.0	74%
		<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>94.8</b>	<b>48%</b>
South Widnes	Green	--	0%	15.8	61%
	Brown	876	100%	9.9	39%
		<b>876</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>25.7</b>	<b>13%</b>
Widnes (ALL)	Green	1,486	48%	40.6	32%
	Brown	1,595	52%	86.8	68%
		<b>3,081</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>127.4</b>	<b>64%</b>
East Runcorn	Green	3,410	100%	49.2	100%
	Brown	--	0%	--	0%
		<b>3,410</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>25%</b>
West Runcorn	Green	75	4%	--	0%
	Brown	2,058	96%	0.3	100%
		<b>2,133</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0%</b>
Runcorn (ALL)	Green	5,802	67%	7.0	10%
	Brown	2,798	33%	63.4	90%
		<b>8,600</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>70.4</b>	<b>36%</b>
HALTON	Green	7,288	62%	47.6	24%
	Brown	4,393	38%	150.2	76%

(ALL)	11,681	100%	197.8	100%
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- 1.1 The strategy identifies four **Key Areas of Change** where the biggest transformation of the current landscape is expected will occur. These key areas are seen as fundamental to the longer term development of the Borough and in most cases represent existing areas where impetus for change exists, through priority projects or support from the development industry. Table 2 below illustrates the likely quantum and distribution of development / development land across Halton to 2026..

**Table 2: Projected distribution of development / development land to 2026.**

	WIDNES			RUNCORN			Totals
	Key Area of Change		Other *	Key Area of Change		Other *	
	3MG	South Widnes		West Runcorn	East Runcorn		
Housing (dwellings)		350	3,250	2,000	3,400	1,000	8,000
Employment (Ha)	98.9	29.2	10.7	26.9	62.3	32.0	260.0
'Town Centre' Retail (SqM)		25,000		5,000		5,000	35,000
Bulky Goods Retail (SqM)		19,000				3,000	22,000

\* Other may include currently unidentified 'windfall' sites that may arise within Key Areas of Change.

### Where are the Key Areas of Change and why have they been chosen?

- 1.1 The Key Areas of Change in Halton have been identified as:
- **3MG** (the Mersey Multimodal Gateway) at Ditton in Widnes.
  - **South Widnes** – including Widnes Town Centre, Widnes Waterfront and the regeneration area of West Bank.
  - **West Runcorn** – including Runcorn Old Town, Runcorn Waterfront and the Mersey Gateway Port (Weston Docks).
  - **East Runcorn** – covering Daresbury Park, Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus and Sandymoor.

#### 3MG, Widnes

- 1.1 The existing strategic rail freight interchange in Ditton, Widnes known as **3MG** (Mersey Multimodal Gateway) has been operational since 2006, and is well located in relation to the strategic road network, West Coast Main Line (WCML) rail access, the Port of Liverpool, and the expanding cargo facility at Liverpool John Lennon Airport. The site is a key location for logistics and distribution in the North West and when fully developed, offers the potential to deliver up to 5,000 jobs in this expanding sector. Whilst part of the site is already well established as an operational freight facility, there remains significant development potential to the west of the existing rail freight facility where there is scope for similar employment uses.
- 1.1 Support for the development and expansion of intermodal freight facilities such as 3MG reflects national and regional priorities to facilitate a shift in the movement of freight from road based transportation to sustainable modes. The 3MG site is currently connected via the WCML to the markets of the South East of England and to the European continent. There are also plans to further connect rail freight

services between 3MG and southern Spain to allow the transport of fresh fruit and vegetables from Europe for distribution within the UK.

### South Widnes

- I.1 The South Widnes Key Area Change is made up of three component parts which abut each other along the southern edge of Widnes, adjacent to the key route of the A568. **Widnes Town Centre** is the largest Town Centre in the Borough and home to a substantial retail offer, including the recently completed Widnes Shopping Park to the east of the existing shopping precinct. Evidence from Halton's Retail and Leisure Study<sup>1</sup> suggests that there is potential to expand the bulky goods (DIY and gardening products, furniture, carpets, electrical goods, office supplies and toys) retail offer in the town centre, hence the requirement for identified level of additional floorspace.
- I.1 The area known as **Widnes Waterfront** adjoins the Town Centre and covers the area south of Fiddlers Ferry Road and east of Ashley Way. Predominantly an employment area, the site's prominence in the Borough will be boosted in the future given the area's proximity to the new river crossing after the implementation of the Mersey Gateway Project. The area has been the focus of regeneration efforts in recent years, mainly towards the west however there is potential for the remainder of the area to offer a renewed employment offer.
- I.1 The **West Bank** area is situated to the west of Widnes Waterfront and currently comprises a variety of different land uses, with industrial and commercial to the north and a residential neighbourhood to the south. There is the scope for substantial reconfiguration of this area following the implementation of the Mersey Gateway Project.

### West Runcorn

- I.1 The West Runcorn Key Area of Change includes the retail and leisure area of **Runcorn Old Town**. Although Runcorn Old Town centre is an important convenience centre in its local catchment, the centre was adversely affected by the development of its larger New Town neighbour, Halton Lea (previously known as Shopping City), and at present lacks a defined role. There is definite scope and impetus to build a complementary relationship for Runcorn Old Town with Halton Lea, centred around the evening economy and cultural uses in the centre. Longer term redevelopment opportunities for Runcorn Old Town centre are related to the Mersey Gateway Project which will create better linkages and connectivity between the waterfront area and Runcorn Train Station on the WCML.
- I.1 Lying to the west of Runcorn Old Town centre, adjacent to the Riverside College Campus and recent waterside housing developments, lies **Runcorn Waterfront** a key development site anticipated to come forward for a mix of residential and commercial uses during the plan period.
- I.1 Towards the south of the West Runcorn Key Area of Change, the **Mersey Gateway Port** (previously known as Weston Docks) offers the opportunity to create a civil waterway port offering improved road, rail, inland waterway and sea freight logistics. The realisation of this site's potential will further strengthen and expand the Borough's specialism in the logistics and distribution sector.

### East Runcorn

<sup>1</sup> GVA Grimley (2009) Halton Retail and Leisure Study, para 11.42, page 132

- 1.1 The East Runcorn area can be split into two distinct sections – the predominantly residential area at **Sandymoor** and the area of employment focus at Daresbury, divided between the business community at **Daresbury Park** and the nationally significant science and research centre at **Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus**. The delivery of an extension to Runcorn’s urban area represents an opportunity to integrate the existing employment area with the rest of the Borough, whilst additionally making a significant contribution towards achieving the Borough’s aims in terms of securing future economic prosperity and offering opportunities to diversify the skills base.
- 1.1 Within the East Runcorn Key Area of Change, the Daresbury area is being allocated as a Strategic Site as it is a key component in Halton’s future development and will see substantial change over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. Alongside the expansion of the employment offer, a new residential community is also being promoted at Daresbury, which will not only meet help to meet the housing needs of the Borough’s residents, but will also connect the two existing employment areas through shared amenities and new transport routes. The residential area at Sandymoor, to the west of Daresbury, comprises approximately 147 hectares of land, of which 46 hectares have already been developed<sup>2</sup>. This comprehensive redevelopment of the Sandymoor area will continue, creating a mixed and sustainable community supported by the facilities and services needed by local residents.

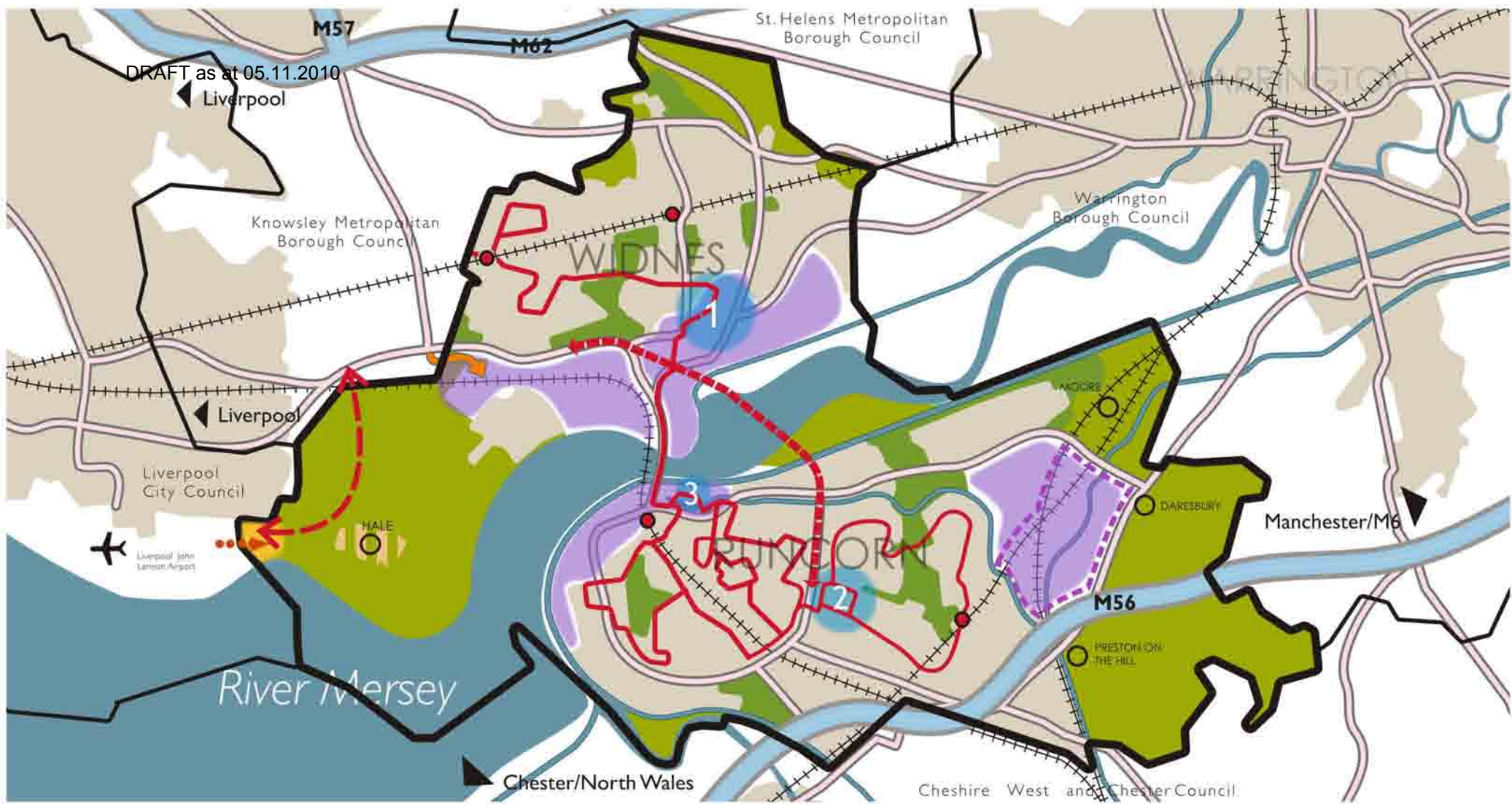
### Outside of the Key Areas of Change

- 1.1 Outside of the identified Key Areas of Change, the evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy indicates that there is scope to make more efficient use of already developed areas of the Borough, bringing benefits to the Borough’s existing communities. In line with the spatial priorities enshrined in national planning policy, previously used land and buildings in the rest of Halton are high priorities for accommodating new development. Bringing underused and redundant sites back into beneficial use will have positive effects on existing surrounding communities.
- 1.1 Halton’s existing network of Green Infrastructure will continue to serve the leisure and recreation needs of the population and support the Borough’s biodiversity.
- 1.1 The rural character and setting of the Borough’s villages and areas of open countryside will be maintained with limits on new development. In order to achieve this, the Green Belt will continue to be protected in accordance with national planning policy to prevent uncoordinated expansion of urban areas which result in the loss of strategic gaps between settlements. Minor changes to the Green Belt boundary at the western extent of the Borough will be required to allow the runway at Liverpool John Lennon Airport to be extended, and this will be addressed in a later Development Plan Document. In addition, should the land supply within the Borough warrant it, a partial review of the extent of the Green Belt may be required during the plan period, particularly to ensure adequate land to meet development needs north of the river. Any such review will be undertaken as part of a subsequent Allocations DPD.
- 1.1 The character of Hale Village which is inset within the Green Belt, will need to be carefully managed like the other villages, with particular respect to its close proximity to Liverpool John Lennon Airport. As the towns of Runcorn and Widnes will be the focus of development for the Core Strategy, the Green Belt area will play a pivotal role in maintaining the setting of the Borough’s rural assets and providing a distinct

<sup>2</sup> HBC (2009) Sandymoor Supplementary Planning Document

boundary to the built up area. The character and setting of the rural villages of Moore, Daresbury and Preston on the Hill, will be protected with the careful management of development.





**A Spatial Strategy for Halton 2026 and beyond Key Diagram**

- |                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Borough Boundary          |  Halton Lea Town Centre           |  Mersey Gateway Route                           |
|  Urban Extents             |  Runcorn Old Town District Centre |  Halton Core Bus Network                        |
|  Railway Line              |  Green Belt                       |  Liverpool John Lennon Airport Runway Extension |
|  Strategic Highway Network |  Hale Village Green Belt Inset    |  Liverpool John Lennon Airport Eastern Access   |
|  Motorway                  |  Key Areas of Change              |  3MG Western Link Road                          |
|  Waterways                 |  Daresbury Strategic Site         |  Green Space                                    |
|  Widnes Town Centre        |  Rail Stations                    |  Area of search for Green Belt release at L JLA |

## CS2: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 The overall Spatial Strategy as set out in CS1 establishes the spatial distribution of future growth and development in the Borough. The Sustainable Development Principles exist alongside the Spatial Strategy in order to ensure that growth and development is sustainable, meeting the needs of Halton's present communities, and planning for the needs of future communities over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. All development in the Borough is required to contribute towards these principles in order to ensure a sustainable Halton, now and in the future.

### Policy CS2: Sustainable Development Principles

Over the lifetime of the Halton Core Strategy, development in the Borough should:

- contribute towards the delivery of mixed and balanced communities;
- increase the quality of life for the Borough's communities, contributing to long term improvements in health and well-being, educational attainment and skill development;
- contribute towards a strong, stable and more competitive economy, responsive to Halton's needs and building upon Halton's strengths;
- be located to minimise the need to travel, increase accessibility and support sustainable transport options;
- regenerate and remediate Halton, bringing noticeable improvements to the Borough's urban areas and green spaces;
- conserve and enhance the character and quality of Halton's natural and historic environment and Green Infrastructure Network;
- minimise factors which contribute to climate change and plan for the potential effects of a changing climate on the Borough's communities and environments; and,
- make efficient use of resources and ensure infrastructure needs are met.

### Justification

- 1.2 'Sustainable development' is defined as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"<sup>1</sup>. National guidance in the form of PPS 1: 'Delivering Sustainable Development'<sup>2</sup> states that sustainable development should be delivered through achieving:
- social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
  - protection and enhancement of the environment;
  - prudent use of natural resources; and,
  - sustainable economic development.
- 1.3 To achieve sustainable development across Halton a number of principles have been agreed. These sustainable development principles are informed by the Borough's drivers of change and respond to Halton's challenges as set out in Halton's Story of Place. As a result the sustainable development principles reflect the current social,

<sup>1</sup> HM Government (2005) Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy

<sup>2</sup> CLG (2005) Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

economic and environmental needs of the Borough whilst building upon the aims of sustainable development at the national level.

- I.4 In order to achieve sustainable development in Halton over the plan period, all development, where appropriate, will be assessed against these principles. The Sustainable Development Principles are therefore integral to the delivery of the Core Strategy and are amplified throughout the plan.

## CS3: HOUSING SUPPLY AND LOCATIONAL PRIORITIES

- 1.1 New homes must be provided to ensure an adequate supply of suitable housing for the Borough's existing communities and to accommodate projected growth in the Borough's population. Whilst the resident population has stabilised over recent years it is projected to experience modest growth rates to 2026, however changing demographics and needs of residents has meant even faster growth in the number of households placing pressure on Halton's current housing stock.
- 1.2 As indicated in both Halton's Story of Place and the Spatial Strategy, over the Borough's history development has taken place in distinct waves of urban regeneration often involving the replacement of unsuitable New Town estates, coupled with growth of the Borough onto expansion land at the edges of the urban area. Whilst this pattern of development will continue to a certain extent, housing renewal projects will play less of a role in the future and the Borough will be more dependent on delivering housing on Halton's remaining greenfield sites at the periphery of the urban area.

### Policy CS3: Housing Supply and Locational Priorities

#### Housing Requirement

- 8,000 new homes (net of demolitions) should be provided between 2010 and 2026 at a minimum rate of:
  - 400 units per annum for the period 2010-2015
  - 600 units per annum for the period 2016-2020
  - 500 units per annum for the period 2021-2026
  - Beyond 2026, development should continue at a minimum rate of 500 units per annum (net gain) unless this is superseded by a change to policy at national level.
- New homes will be delivered from a variety of sources, including:
  - Sites which are currently available for housing development:
    - Housing sites which have been completed since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010
    - Sites under construction for housing development
    - Sites with planning permission for housing
    - Sites which are currently allocated
  - Sites which have the potential to contribute to housing land supply:
    - Identified housing opportunities within the Key Areas of Change
    - New housing or mixed-use allocations in subsequent DPDs
    - Appropriate windfall development
    - Areas of Search within the Green Belt

In order to deliver sites that are identified as having the potential to contribute to housing supply, are available and will realistically deliver housing development, specific sites be identified in the Site Allocations DPD or location specific Area Action Plans.

#### Maintaining a 5 year supply

- In accordance with the relevant annual target for housing delivery, the Council will maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land
- If the Council is unable to identify a 5 year supply of sites for housing development, a review of housing land supply through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment will be undertaken, and if necessary, will seek to allocate additional land in a



DPD to make up any shortfall.

#### **Brownfield land**

- An average of at least 40% of new residential development delivered on brownfield land will be sought over the plan period.

#### **Density**

- To ensure the efficient use of land, a minimum density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) will be sought. In more accessible locations such as those close to town / local centres or transport interchanges the presumption will be for developments achieving densities of 40 dph or greater.

### **Justification**

#### **Setting a housing target**

- 1.3 Prior to its revocation in the summer of 2010 the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West formed part of the statutory development plan for Halton and set housing policy target of 500 net dwelling gain per annum for the period 2003 to 2021. It now falls to the Core Strategy to set a replacement figure. Local housing targets are necessary to help deliver the required level of house building to meet local needs whilst giving certainty for both residents and the development industry in terms of how much residential development a local area is going to accommodate in future years.
- 1.4 The housing target of 8,000 new homes at an average rate of 500 homes per year in Halton over the Core Strategy plan period to 2026 has been determined by considering data and research from a variety of sources, including predicted population, household and economic growth. The process for reaching this target is set out in the supporting document “Determining a Housing Requirement for Halton”.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.5 The housing targets which have been set represent a level which will meet forecasted locally arising household growth over the plan period, whilst also allowing for a degree of further growth across the Borough. Halton’s population is anticipated to rise to 123,600 persons by 2026, a rise of approximately 5,000 persons over the plan period, whilst 2006 based household projections predicted growth of 8,920 households between 2006-2030, an average of 372 households per annum.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.6 The proposed housing figure is marginally above the projected growth in households however this level has been set to promote modest growth in Halton and to enable a range of housing types to be provided. This will allow a continuation of recent trends which will see diversification in the housing offer, which it is hoped will assist in reducing or stemming net out migration that has been prevalent over recent years, particularly with young adults moving away to pursue educational opportunities but many of whom do not return to the Borough after their studies.

<sup>1</sup> HBC (2010) Determining a Housing Requirement for Halton

<sup>2</sup> 4NW (2010) Technical Background Paper - Initial Technical work on Housing Provision and Job Growth Figures for the North West

[www.4nw.org.uk/downloads/documents/jul\\_10/4nw\\_1279264181\\_RS2010\\_Part\\_2\\_Housing\\_provisio.pdf](http://www.4nw.org.uk/downloads/documents/jul_10/4nw_1279264181_RS2010_Part_2_Housing_provisio.pdf)

- 1.7 Housing delivery and demand is strongly correlated with the state of the economy. Economic forecasts and predictions vary in their predictions for when the economy will recover from the effects of the recent 'credit crunch' and resultant recession, and for when capacity within the house building industry will return to pre-recession levels. In setting the above housing targets, the effects of the recession have been acknowledged with a lower target is set for the initial 5 years (in line with the approach for employment land as set out in CS4), before increasing in the following period to deliver the overall quantum required to 2026.

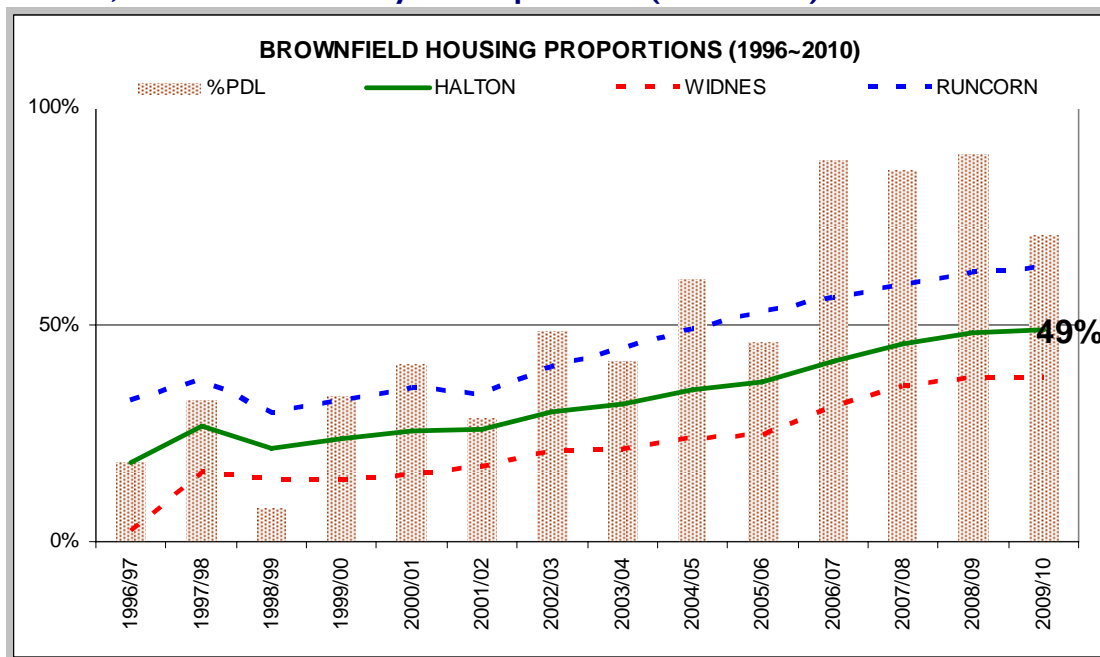
#### **Potential housing supply**

- 1.8 Table 1 in the preceding section summarises the predicted potential housing supply at 2010 across the Borough. The SHLAA indicates there is identified land in the Borough with the capacity to deliver 11,681 dwellings. This appears sufficient to meet the Borough's housing requirement to 2026 and potentially for a number of years beyond, however the distribution is heavily skewed to south of the river and it must be noted that not all of the sites in the SHLAA will be delivered for housing or come forward in the timeframes indicated. Indeed, it may not be desirable for certain sites to be developed for housing rather than other uses.
- 1.9 Windfall sites are those which have not been previously identified in the SHLAA as having the potential to deliver housing development, and therefore the potential yield of the site has not been factored into potential housing supply. Whilst no allowance is made for windfall supply in Table 1 above, it is likely that sites will come forward which have not been included within the SHLAA, because of unforeseen circumstances such as the redevelopment of commercial buildings or the release of Council owned land. Urban windfall sites also have the potential to boost the delivery of residential development on brownfield land, supplementing those brownfield sites included within the SHLAA.

#### **Brownfield land**

- 1.10 A national minimum standard for development on brownfield land of 60% is included within PPS3: Housing. Chart 1 below illustrates past rates of delivery of new homes on previously developed land in Halton. Delivery over the previous 15 years has varied significantly, with a high of almost 90% of new dwellings built on brownfield land in 2008/09, compared to a low of only 8% delivered in 1997/98, averaging 49% over the 15 years. Brownfield land delivery has varied over this period reflecting the focus of delivery year to year, with greenfield sites in locations such as Upton Rocks being balanced with urban regeneration schemes such as Castlefields. As discussed in the Spatial Strategy, due to the phased approach in which the New Town has been constructed, development on greenfield sites has formed a key part of Halton's housing delivery over many years. The approach taken in previous local plans has been to phase the release of greenfield sites, to prioritise development within the built up areas in the first instance. These long term patterns of development are reflected in the split between greenfield and brownfield delivery in the chart below, and in the remaining stock of ongoing supply as set out in table 1 and Appendix 1.

**Chart I, Historical Previously Developed Land (Brownfield) Performance**



1.11 Whilst a target of 40% delivery of housing development to come forward on brownfield sites is below the desired national minimum level of delivery, over the longer term, it is evident that Halton has achieved higher rates of brownfield delivery. Of those sites expected to come forward during the plan period or being promoted through the Core Strategy, a high proportion are on greenfield sites, dictating that to set a higher target for brownfield development would not be realistic or achievable. Annual levels of delivery of net additional dwellings and delivery on brownfield land will continue to be monitored by the Council and will influence the allocation of sites in later DPDs.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS1, PPS3
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011, Halton Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010, Halton Housing Baseline Reports
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	1 and 2
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS4: EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY AND LOCATIONAL PRIORITIES

- 1.1 Employment land will be provided over the lifetime of the Core Strategy to strengthen Halton's economy and to offer business and industry a range and choice of sites so that differing site requirements and locational needs can be met. The supply of available employment land in Halton has become increasingly constrained over recent years with competing pressures to redevelop existing employment areas for housing. It is therefore important to identify both how provision for new employment land will be met, and to safeguard land for future use by business and industry. Over the plan period it is likely that levels of economic growth will vary due to periods of recession and recovery, however it is the role of the Core Strategy to plan positively for the longer term.

### Policy CS4: Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities

Employment land will be provided over the lifetime of the Core Strategy to ensure that an adequate supply and range of sites are available to:

- Meet the needs of both new and existing businesses;
- Develop and strengthen Halton's economy with an emphasis on logistics and distribution, science and high-tech industries; and
- Contribute towards the priorities of the employment offer in the sub-regional

260 hectares of land will be made available over the period 2010-2026 to facilitate the sustainable growth of Halton's economy. Employment land supply will be made up from a variety of sources, including:

- Sites which are currently available for employment use:
  - Sites which benefit from planning permission or are under construction for employment use
  - Sites which are currently allocated
- Sites which have the potential to contribute to employment land supply:
  - Regeneration and remodelling opportunities within existing employment areas
  - New allocations

### Maintaining existing employment areas

In order to secure Halton's economic future, sites in existing employment use will be retained as such, unless an alternative use can be proven to be of greater benefit to the Borough than retaining the land for employment purposes.

Any proposals for non-employment uses within existing employment areas should be accompanied by an examination of the wider employment land situation in the Borough, including a consideration of:

- the overall supply of employment land in the Borough (including amount, type, quality, availability and size of premises), in accordance with this policy;
- the relative suitability and sustainability of the site for the employment uses and for the proposed alternative use;
- the location of the site and its relationship to other uses; and
- the need for the proposed use.



## Justification

- 1.2 It is important to both protect existing employment sites and to make further provision for employment uses to secure and expand the Borough's economy in future years. The requirement for future employment land has been informed by a key piece of the evidence base underpinning Halton's LDF. The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (2010) was undertaken jointly with Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire Councils, and analyses the existing employment land situation in the study area and the need for further land to be made available in order to meet the needs of the economy and deliver economic growth over the plan period.
- 1.3 The study used long term average take-up rates (past trends of employment land completions) to project forward the likely future requirement for employment land need in the Borough to 2026. A 20% flexibility factor was also included to allow for a choice of sites for potential investors. The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study suggested Halton plan for an additional 147.62ha of employment land for the period 2008-2026 to meet predicted needs to 2026. This was in addition to the then identified 'realistic' supply of 178.94ha (as at 2008) recommending therefore a total of 326.56ha of land for employment purposes which the evidence base suggests needed to be made available over the Core Strategy plan period.
- 1.4 Given that the Joint Employment Land Study was produced using a base date of April 2008, before the effects of the current economic recession were felt, it has been necessary to amend the proposed employment land requirement to taken account of reduced take-up rates over the recessionary period. Current estimations suggest that the current period of economic recession in the UK will continue until 2015, before the economy will experience significant growth as prior to 2008.
- 1.5 Table 3 below sets out the revised calculation of an annual requirement for employment land, assuming demand at 80% of the long term average take-up rate, for the period from 2010-2015, therefore giving a slightly lower requirement for employment land than included within the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study.

**Table 3: Summary Employment Land Requirements Calculation**

	Hectares
Long term average take-up rate (1998-2008)	14.47
<b><u>Requirement during period of economic slowdown 2010-2015</u></b>	
Reduced rate of take-up to take account of recession period (@ 80%)	11.576
Requirement over 5 year period	57.88
<b><u>Requirement during period of economic recovery 2015-2026</u></b>	
Rate of take-up over post-recession period	14.47
Requirement over 11 year period	159.17
Sub-total of land required over 2010-2026	217.05
Total land requirement to 20% flexibility factor to maintain a range and choice of sites throughout the plan period	<b>260.46</b>
	<b>LESS</b>
Outstanding employment land allocations at April 2010	163.33
Sites with planning permission for employment uses at April 2010	28.31
<b>Total available employment land at April 2010</b>	<b>191.64</b>

Total potential employment land undersupply	68.82
Additional land to be allocated for employment purposes (East Runcorn)	17.62
Land to be regenerated for West Runcorn	14.00
Opportunities for remodelling and regeneration of sites within existing employment areas	130.55

### Existing employment areas (at 2010)

#### Widnes

- Derby Road/Moorfield Road
- Everite Road
- St Michael's Industrial Estate, Oldgate
- Moor Lane, Widnes
- West Bank
- Halebank Industrial Estate
- Widnes Waterfront

#### Runcorn

- Astmoor Industrial Estate
- Manor Park
- Heath Road North
- ~~Halton Road~~
- Halton Lea
- Picow Farm Road
- The Heath
- Ashville Industrial Estate
- Whitehouse Industrial Estate and Preston Brook
- Rocksavage (INEOS Chlor)
- Runcorn Docks and Mersey Gateway (Port of Weston)

#### Regional Employment Sites

- 3MG, Ditton, Widnes
- Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus and Daresbury Park, Runcorn

- 1.6 The exact location and boundaries of the above existing employment areas and of land to be prioritised for future employment use will be set out in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, but in the intervening period, the Primarily Employment Areas notation on the UDP proposals map will continue to be used.

POLICY FRAMEWORK:	
National Policy	PPSI, PPS4
Local Evidence	Economic and Tourism Development Strategy, Halton Economic Review
Strategic Objectives	
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	
SA Outcome	

## CS5: A NETWORK OF CENTRES

- 1.1 Halton has two main town centres serving the needs of the populations either side of the river; Widnes Town Centre and Halton Lea. These are third tier centres within the regional hierarchy behind the regional centres of Manchester and Liverpool and surrounding sub-regional centres such as Warrington, St.Helens and Chester.

### Policy CS5: A Network of Centres

The following hierarchy of centres will be maintained and enhanced for retail and other town centre uses (as defined in PPS4) in order to provide access to a wide range of shops, employment and associated services for all sections of the community.

Designation	Role and Function	Location	
Town Centres	Principal focus for new and enhanced retail and other town centre activity within Halton	<b>Widnes Town Centre</b> <b>Halton Lea</b>	
District Centre	A focus for convenience, small scale or niche comparison and service retail and leisure uses	<b>Runcorn Old Town</b>	
Local Centres*	Focus for local convenience and service retail and complementary community facilities.	<b>Runcorn</b> Ascot Avenue, Beechwood, Brook Vale, <del>Castle Rise,</del> Castlefields, Greenway Road Halton Brook, Halton Lodge, Halton Road, Halton View Road, Halton Village, Murdishaw Centre, Palacefields Picton Avenue, Preston Brook, Russell Road, The Grange, Windmill Hill, <del>Weston Point</del>	<b>Widnes</b> Alexander Drive, <del>Bancroft Road,</del> Beechers, Cronton Lane, Ditchfield Road, Farnworth, Hale Bank, Hale Road, Langdale Road, Liverpool Road, Moorfield Road, Queens Avenue, Warrington Road, West Bank  <b>Hale</b> Hale Parade, Hale

\*The list of centres will be reviewed and updated in the Allocations and Development Management DPD

New retail or other town centre uses should be located within or on the edge of a defined centre above, appropriate to the scale of the proposal.

Any proposals in excess of 2,000SqM retail floorspace not located within a defined Town Centre, or allocated in the LFD will be subject to sequential and impact assessments. Additional or replacement convenience retail units (up to 280SqM) within or immediately adjacent to a defined local centre will be supported.

The development of new centres will be expected to consolidate and enhance the network and hierarchy of centres and not harm the vitality and viability of existing centres. New retail development of an appropriate scale to meet local need will be required in the following locations to serve the new residential and business populations at:

- Upton Rocks;
- Sandymoor (see CS10 East Runcorn)
- Daresbury (see CS10 East Runcorn)
- Runcorn Waterfront (see CS9 West Runcorn).
- West Bank (see CS8 South Widnes)

The Allocations and Development Management DPD will set out the following;

- Primary and secondary retail frontages for the town and district centres
- Primary Shopping Areas (PSAs) for the town and district centres
- Detailed re-appraisal of, and boundaries for the Local Centres

The Allocations and Development Management DPD will identify sites for future retail development in line with the capacity identified in the Retail Study.

Location	Convenience / Comparison Goods	Bulky Goods (Retail Warehousing)
Widnes Town Centre	up to 25,000 SqM	up to 19,000 SqM *
Halton Lea Town Centre	up to 5,000 SqM (after 2016)	around 3,000SqM (after 2016)
Runcorn Old Town District Centre	Up to 5,000 SqM	--

\* includes replacement provision (6,000 SqM) for Ashley Way Retail Park

The Hot Food Take Away SPD will set out specific criteria for the assessment of proposals for new Hot Food Take Aways (Use Class A5) and Restaurants (Use Class A3) that will have a substantial take-away component.

## Justification

### Widnes Town Centre

- 1.2 Widnes town centre comprises the Green Oaks Centre, Albert Square and the newly opened Widnes Shopping Park (phase 1) arranged off the pedestrianised core of Albert Road / Widnes Road with peripheral car parking associated with the main developments. To the south lies Asda (Simms Cross) and the largely vacant Ashley Way Retail Park which is the subject of redevelopment proposals. The Council's main administrative headquarters are located to the south west adjacent to Riverside FE College and other civic and leisure functions. Tightly constrained by surrounding residential uses to the north and west, and predominately single or two storeys, the centre contains very little in the way of office or commercial leisure space.
- 1.3 Widnes has a over twice the regional average proportion of floorspace given over to convenience goods (29.4%) which reflects its role primarily catering for weekly or day-to-day needs and is largely due to the presence of large Asda and Morrison's foodstores. However, the number of convenience units is below the regional average highlighting a limited presence of independent, non-market, traders (butchers, grocers etc.) in comparison to other town centres in the North West. Conversely, the centre has a slight under-representation of comparison retail floorspace (27.9% to 29.4%) with the number of comparison goods units being significantly above the regional

average pointing to existing comparison retail provision within Widnes being predominantly accommodated within small retail units that will not be attractive to national multiple traders. This is particularly prevalent along the main Widnes Road / Albert Road spine. The redevelopment of the Windmill Centre as Widnes Shopping Park has helped remedy the quantitative and qualitative deficiency in comparison goods floorspace provision by providing larger retail floorplates in the town centre for national multiple retailers such as M&S.

- 1.4 The Halton Retail Study identifies capacity to 2026 for between 5,000 and 11,000 SqM of additional town centre retail floorspace, assuming a constant market share. As Widnes currently retains only 50% of locally arising comparison goods expenditure a modest improvement in market share could support up to 25,000 SqM of additional town centre floorspace by 2026.
- 1.5 Bulky goods (retail warehouse) provision has been focused on the Ashley Way Retail Park but this site has lost its main anchor (B&Q) to a site on Widnes Waterfront and is now the subject of proposals for comprehensive redevelopment for a 12,000SqM foodstore. This will see the displacement of 6,000SqM of existing floorspace, which together with projected capacity suggests the Core Strategy and subsequent DPDs will need to make provision for up to 19,000SqM of new provision.

#### **Halton Lea**

- 1.6 Halton Lea was designed and built by the former New Town to be a self contained town centre for Runcorn. Planned around the principles of fully segregating pedestrian, public transport, car borne and service traffic, the main centre is an example of 1960's 'mega-structure' architecture and is one of the earliest covered shopping malls in the UK. The main shopping provision is located on the second floor, above segregated service areas with leisure and service uses to be located on the top (third) floor. The shopping level is arranged around a central square with covered malls leading to four peripheral multi-storey car parks, each of which has a link bridge providing pedestrian access to the residential areas beyond. Originally designed to serve a population of up to 100,000, and with an inflexible built form, the centre has never reached its potential and currently suffers from a high level of vacancies with the top floor all but vacated.
- 1.7 The centre is flanked to the north and east by office developments and the police station and magistrate's courts with residential beyond.
- 1.8 Additional retail developments have been added at Trident Retail Park, providing large floorplate accommodation for retail and leisure uses directly linked to the main mall and a stand-alone Asda superstore. As with Widnes, convenience goods floorspace is over represented in Halton Lea reflecting the centres purely localised role. The centre performs adequately on convenience goods due to the presence of a modern superstore, but currently retains only 28% of locally arising comparison goods expenditure with particularly poor performance in the core goods of clothing (12%), recreational goods (20%) and personal goods (17%). The centre has been the subject of proposals to extend the shopping deck across East Lane to provide a accommodation for a large space user involving the demolition of the vacant East Lane House.
- 1.9 The Retail Study identifies only modest capacity to 2026 of around 5,000 SqM for additional floorspace, however advises against adding allocating sites for additional provision in the short-term before addressing existing vacancies in the retail core.

### **Runcorn Old Town**

- I.10 Runcorn has a second 'town centre' at Runcorn Old Town. Previously the main commercial centre for the town prior to designation as a New Town in 1964 and the subsequent creation of Halton Lea, Runcorn Old Town now finds itself largely fulfilling the role of a large District Centre, but with an enhanced 'complementary' role to Halton Lea as a centre for service and leisure uses not catered for in its larger neighbour.
- I.11 The centre is separated from its natural catchment areas by canals, rail and road infrastructure and with the new town's busway unsympathetically driven through the heart of the centre. As such the centre struggled to maintain significant market share with residents choosing to shop at Halton Lea, in Widnes or even further afield. Recent works have sought to resolve many of the problems affecting the centre by removing the busway, developing modern retail provision including a supermarket with associated parking in the central core and the Brindley Arts Centre, establishing a basis for an enhanced leisure function. Despite this, the retail provision remains scattered and a degree of consolidation and concentration may be required.
- I.12 New residential communities have been created in the surrounding hinterland with the Runcorn Waterfront development having the potential to substantially boost the local catchment population. The Mersey Gateway Project will allow the removal and reconfiguration of highway infrastructure to create new development opportunities and improve connections to the residential areas to the south.
- I.13 The Retail Study identifies scope for up to 5,000SqM of additional floorspace to 2026, with the main need being to provide a stronger convenience goods offer to attract additional footfall. The Allocations and Development Management DPD and Runcorn Old Town SPD will help guide future development of the centre.

### **Local Centres**

- I.14 There is a network of local centres across the Borough that provide valuable local shopping and service provision. Local shopping patterns have changed significantly over the years and where banks and independent butchers, bakers and newsagents were once the norm, they are now a rarity. People often now drive to local stores, sometimes as part of a linked trip, instead of walking. As such, centres not located on main roads or offering adequate parking are often put at a disadvantage.
- I.15 Many of the Borough's centres, particularly in the new town neighbourhoods, are located in the heart of residential areas, and whilst having excellent pedestrian links suffer from poor road access and now offer a poor shopping environment. The Allocations and Development Management DPD will review the provision of local centres and set out policies to protect and enhance the strongest or most valuable centres, having regard not just to retail, but to other uses. For example, the way public services are provided is changing and there may be opportunities for co-location of services within existing centres and more effective joint use of facilities.

### **Offices and other town centre uses**

- I.16 National guidance advises that offices and commercial leisure developments should be considered town centre uses and directed to town centre or edge-of-centre locations where they can be served by a range of forms of transport. In Halton, there has never been a strong central office market, with little office provision in Widnes and peripheral employment areas (following the New Town model) in Runcorn.



- I.17 The Widnes Waterfront development is seeking to establish an office market to the east of Widnes town centre and this is to be supported as the most sequentially preferable location.
- I.18 In Runcorn however, the new town land use model, significant extant office permissions at Runcorn East with the opportunity to capitalise on existing research facilities to create an knowledge based science cluster, combined with the limited available land around the principal centres means that in Runcorn, peripheral office expansion is likely to be the norm.

### Maps of Town Centre Boundaries

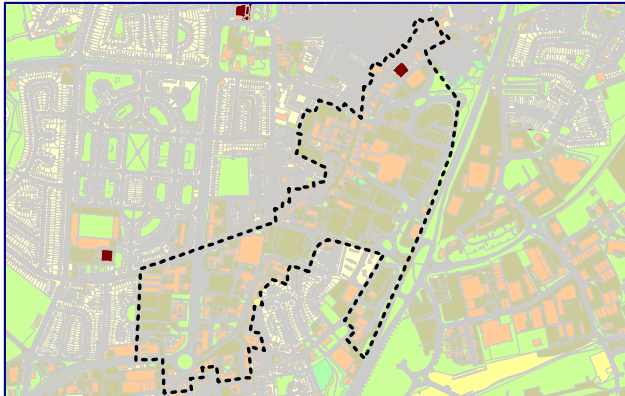


Figure XX: Widnes Town Centre

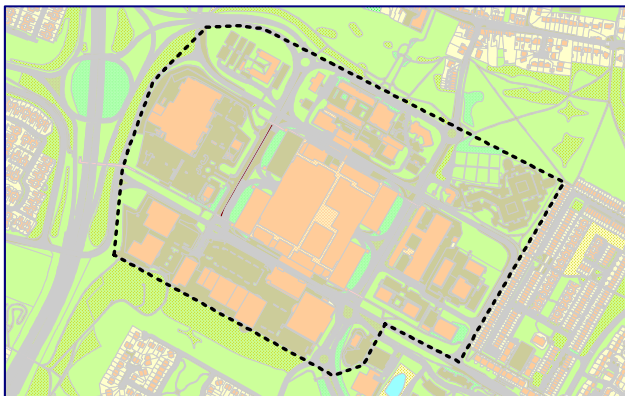


Figure XX: Halton Lea



Figure XX: Runcorn Old Town



<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS4
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2005-2008
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	5
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS6: GREEN BELT

- 1.1 Green Belt land covers approximately one-third of the Borough, and provides important gaps between surrounding urban areas including St Helens to the north, Liverpool to the west and Warrington to the east, to maintain distinct towns and villages with their own identities. In addition to the strategic function that areas of Green Belt play, it also has a role in Halton's Green Infrastructure network providing informal recreational opportunities for the Borough's residents and representing a significant biodiversity resource.

### Policy CS6: Green Belt

The general extent of the Green Belt surrounding Halton, broadly following the line of the built up area as indicated on the Key Diagram, will remain largely unchanged over the initial plan period. This is with the exception of the area to the east of Liverpool John Lennon Airport where minor alterations are supported, in accordance with CS17.

A partial Green Belt review may be necessary during the plan period to ensure a sufficient supply of deliverable development land to meet the requirements of the Borough's separate communities as set out in CS1, CS3 and CS4. Any review is likely to focus on the Green Belt north of the River Mersey and will be undertaken as part of a subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.

Small scale development amounting to minor infilling within the 'washed over'<sup>1</sup> Green Belt settlements of Daresbury, Moore and Preston on the Hill may be permitted where it can be shown to be necessary to meet identified local needs.

### Justification

- 1.2 The main purpose of Halton's Green Belt designation is to keep land open and generally free from development, maintaining strategic gaps between Runcorn and Widnes and surrounding settlements. In accordance with CS2: Sustainable Development Principles, it protects against unwanted urban sprawl, and directs development to built up areas where it can assist in urban regeneration and be of benefit to existing communities.
- 1.3 Given that Widnes previously fell within the county of Lancashire, (with later changes designating surrounding authorities as the county of Merseyside) and Runcorn within Cheshire, Green Belt boundaries were first established through separate processes in different County Structure Plans. The current area of Green Belt north of Widnes was set out in the Merseyside Structure Plan from 1979 and since then the Merseyside Green Belt Subject Plan (1983). In Cheshire, broad areas of Green Belt land were first designated as part of the 1979 Structure Plan. The extent of the Green Belt land surrounding Runcorn was then embedded in the Halton Local Plan in 1996 and reconfirmed in the Unitary Development Plan of 2005.
- 1.4 The Halton Landscape Character Assessment<sup>2</sup> focused its assessment of the Borough's landscape on Green Belt land surrounding the urban area. The assessment

<sup>1</sup> CLG(2001) Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts

<sup>2</sup> TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

categorised the three main areas of Green Belt in the Borough as having distinctive landscape characteristics and made recommendations in terms of how these areas should be managed, which will be taken forward in accordance with the approach set out in CS20: Natural and Historic Environment. The landscape characteristics of the three main areas of Green Belt are:

- Hale Shore and Farmland
- North Widnes Farmland
- Daresbury Sandstone Escarpment / Preston on the Hill Undulating Enclosed Farmland

- I.5 National Policy for Green Belts is set out in Planning Policy Guidance 2 which details the importance of Green Belts and how they can contribute to achieving sustainable development. It underlines the importance of the openness of Green Belt land and the role that Green Belt can play in determining patterns of development at a sub-regional and regional scale. The main aim of specific Green Belt policy is to preserve the countryside surrounding towns and cities from development which would be better accommodated within urban areas.
- I.6 Hale Village is inset within the Green Belt, meaning that unlike the other villages in the Borough, Green Belt policy does not apply within the settlement boundary. Infill development within the village will be viewed as appropriate where it would enhance the character of the village.
- I.7 National planning policy allows for limited development within villages which are 'washed over' by a Green Belt designation. In certain instances, small scale development may be necessary to maintain or enhance the sustainability of rural communities, such as for the provision of village services or for affordable housing. Any proposals for such development within Halton's Green Belt villages would need to demonstrate specific local need, such as a requirement for affordable housing.
- I.8 In 2010, a study was undertaken across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) in respect of cross-boundary employment and housing land development issues.<sup>3</sup> The aim of the study was to determine whether there were land supply issues in individual authorities, and whether the development needs of one area could reasonably be met in other authorities within the sub-region, avoiding the need for a strategic review of the Green Belt. This concludes that at present, there is no need for a strategic review of Green Belt in the LCR Eastern Housing Market Area (consisting of Halton, St Helens and Warrington), though a number of our neighbours in the Northern Housing Market Area are embarking on reviews. The study considered land supply within local authorities as a whole and did not look at the adequacy of supply to meet future needs in specific communities within an authority.
- I.9 Current land supply as detailed in CSI: Halton's Spatial Strategy and in the evidence base accompanying the Core Strategy indicates that overall Halton has an adequate supply of land to meet anticipated development needs over the plan period, however, this assessment of the whole Borough masks a mismatch in supply north and south of the river.
- I.10 Runcorn has sufficient identified land to meet its anticipated housing needs with the supply of land for employment purposes sufficient in the short term with redevelopment opportunities within existing protected employment areas likely to

<sup>3</sup> GVA Grimley (2010) Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study for Liverpool City Region Partners

bolster supply. Widnes / Hale currently have sufficient identified land to meet their anticipated housing development needs<sup>4</sup> for around 8 years<sup>5</sup>, with land for employment purposes sufficient in terms of overall supply for the plan period but limited in terms of range and quality.

- 1.11 The land supply and demand situation across Halton's communities will be kept under review through annual monitoring. If the situation arises where the availability of deliverable land for development falls below acceptable levels, a Green Belt review may be triggered to ensure the future prosperity of the Borough and the wider sub-region. Any review of Green Belt land will be undertaken as part of a subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management DPD and conducted in consultation with neighbouring authorities (particularly St Helens and Warrington) to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach is taken.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPG2
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Landscape Character Assessment 2009, Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Halton Housing Needs Study 2006, Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010/11, Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study for Liverpool City Region Partners 2010
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	2 and 10
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>4</sup> DCA (2006) Halton Housing Needs and Market Assessment Survey

<sup>5</sup> HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010/11

## CS7: INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

- 1.1 To support the Borough's planned growth over the plan period and to ensure that Halton's infrastructure is both appropriate and of a high quality, it is essential to deliver necessary improvements to the Borough's existing infrastructure and to provide new infrastructure able to accommodate the needs of Halton's communities.

### Policy CS7: Infrastructure Provision

Development should be located to maximise the benefit of existing infrastructure capacity to minimise the need for new provision, and will be required to provide for its own infrastructure requirements at the appropriate time.

On major development sites the Council may seek to negotiate on an individual basis for on or off-site physical and social infrastructure improvements, adopting either an agreed phased delivery schedule of works or a 'tariff' based approach.

The Council will continue to work with infrastructure / service providers to develop the Infrastructure Plan and may use this as the basis of a charging regime to support necessary infrastructure across the Borough. Any such proposals will be set out in detail in an appropriate DPD.

### Justification

- 1.2 An integral part of the Core Strategy is to ensure that development proposals are supported by the timely provision of an appropriate level of infrastructure including:
- transport infrastructure such as roads, railways, public transport, and cycling and walking routes;
  - physical and environmental infrastructure such as water supply and treatment, and energy supply;
  - Green Infrastructure such as public greenspaces;
  - social infrastructure including community services and facilities; and,
  - digital infrastructure such as internet supply.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Borough's infrastructure needs are achieved, all new development should be located in the most sustainable locations, already well served by existing infrastructure achieving the objectives of sustainable development in accordance with CS2: Sustainable Development Principles. However, all new development makes demands on existing infrastructure. This will be especially applicable in the Borough's Key Areas of Change where the level of growth anticipated will create the need for additional infrastructure.
- 1.4 To assist the delivery of infrastructure needs across the Borough, developers, where applicable, will be expected to contribute towards any necessary improvements or new provision to serve the needs arising from their development, taking account the cumulative impact of schemes. In such circumstances Planning Obligations or a tariff based approach will be used to secure funds or works for essential elements of schemes.

- 1.5** The Council will work with its partners and developers to identify the key infrastructure schemes required to facilitate development and secure the delivery of the Core Strategy with a particular focus on the Key Areas of Change. A current list of schemes is set out within the Core Strategy Infrastructure Plan which provides details of the projects that will support the delivery of the Core Strategy and the identified infrastructure needs of the Borough. Further details regarding infrastructure requirements in the Key Areas of Change will also be detailed in appropriate SPDs, Masterplans and other related studies.
- 1.6** Infrastructure needs will evolve over the plan period and as such it will be necessary to undertake further reviews of the Infrastructure Plan. The Infrastructure Plan will become a 'live' document which will be updated over the lifetime of the Core Strategy in accordance with infrastructure / service providers to further review the need for infrastructure within the Borough over the Core Strategy period. The Infrastructure Plan may be used to provide a basis to calculate an appropriate strategic infrastructure tariff. The Council's approach to such arrangements will be set out in greater detail through an appropriate document within the LDF, unless this approach is superseded.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	
<b>Local Evidence</b>	
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	6
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	A Healthy Halton, Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, A Safer Halton, Children and Young People in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

# **HALTON CORE STRATEGY PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

## **KEY AREAS OF CHANGE**



## CS8: 3MG

- 1.1 The existing Mersey Multimodal Gateway (3MG) at Ditton makes a huge contribution to the economy of Halton and the wider region, and the site is a key employment generator. Looking to the future, the site has further potential to deliver a large quantum of employment development, and over time a significant increase in the number employed at the site. There is a need to guide the future development of 3MG and maintain its status as a leading multimodal freight facility in the region by setting out a framework for its future development.

### Key Area of Change CS8: 3MG

Key elements of the future of 3MG will be:

- The availability of approximately 90ha of land for B8 employment development within the 3MG site to deliver regionally important logistics and distribution development and the provision of jobs for the people of Halton.
- Improving the ability to move freight by sustainable modes, most notably rail including the provision of sustainable connections to other freight facilities in the sub-region
- The provision of a western link road to connect the site with the regional and national road network, also discouraging the movement of freight across the site on the local road network
- The development of the Halton Borough Council Field site at the western end of the site for over 18ha of B8, rail served warehousing uses

Principles of development

- Protecting the amenity of residents in the adjoining areas of Ditton and Halebank
- Conserving local features of visual, environmental and historic importance, notably Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument, Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar site and the surrounding Green Belt.

Development opportunities in the employment areas immediately surrounding 3MG at Ditton and Halebank should seek to complement but not duplicate the employment offer of the site, whilst also protecting the amenity of existing and future residents.

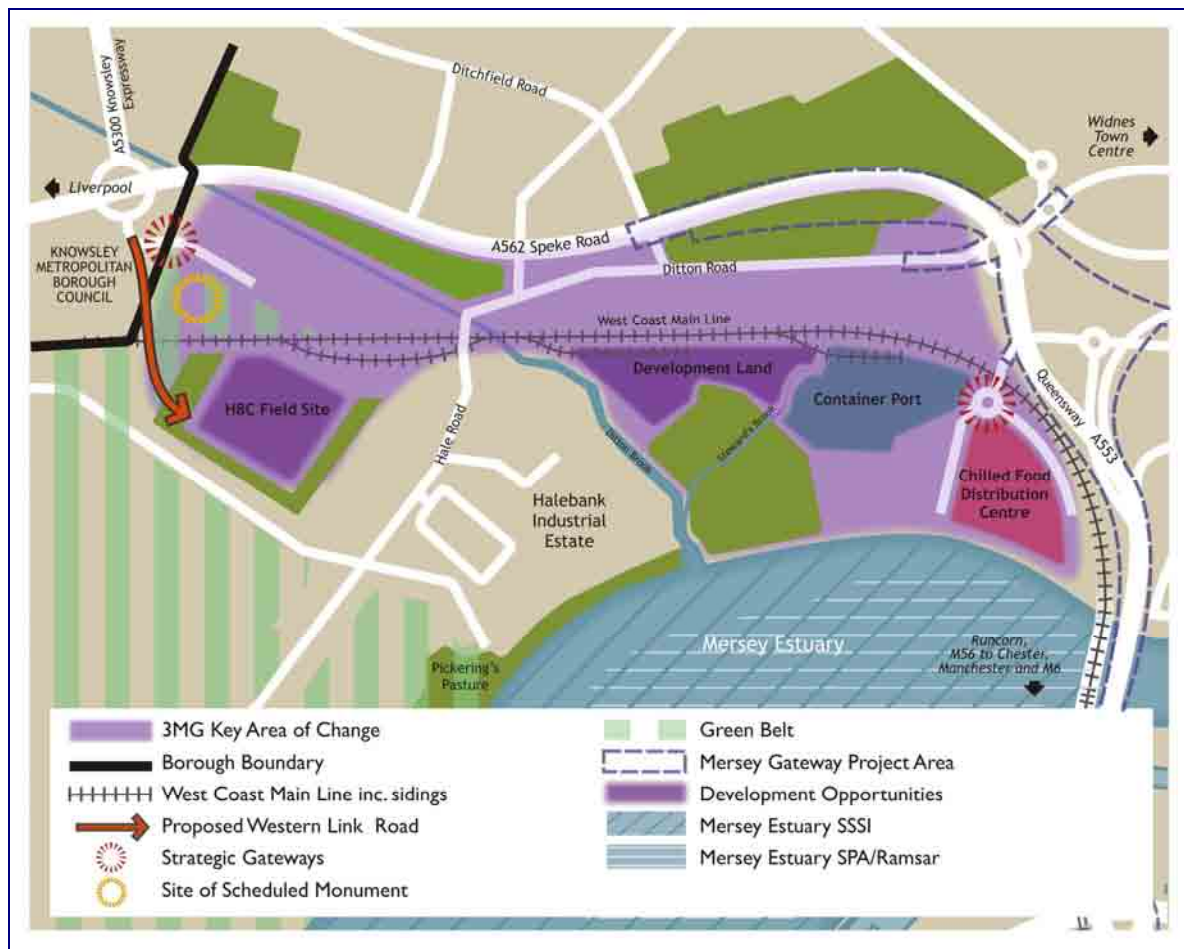


Figure XX: 3MG Diagram

### Justification

- 1.2 Over recent years, substantial amounts of development at 3MG (previously known as Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park) have been permitted and the site has established itself as a key employment area in the region. The site was recognised as a Regional Site for employment purposes since the Regional Economic Strategy in 2006. In a more recent review of Regional Sites, conducted by the NWDA in 2009, the site maintained its status as it is seen as pivotal in encouraging sustainable freight distribution. Estimates suggest that the site can deliver in the region of 5000 jobs if the site is developed out fully and is therefore vital to support and enhance Halton's economy. Employment development of this scale, delivering jobs for local residents is vitally important in this area of the Borough, where deprivation levels are high compared to national and regional averages<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.3 The Key Area of Change lies to the south of the A562 (Speke Road) and north of the Mersey Estuary in Widnes. Hale Road and the Halebank residential and industrial area divides the site into two separate parts, with the HBC Field site comprising the majority of the western portion. Up to this time, development has been concentrated around the eastern portion of the site close to the A533/Queensway. The Stobart Group have been at the forefront of the

<sup>1</sup>HBC (2007) Index of Multiple Deprivation. Table 5 – Deprivation within Wards in Halton

development to date, delivering a major container handling and storage facility, and more recently a large chilled food distribution facility. The more westerly areas of 3MG which currently lie undeveloped are in close proximity to the residential community of Halebank and future development must be carefully managed to avoid any negative effects. Considerable landscaping work has already taken place in this vicinity in preparation for development on the site, and as development proposals come forward, it will be important to ensure that all aspects of the development are considered for their potential impact on local people.

- 1.4 Designating the 3MG area as a Key Area of Change reflects the importance of the site to Halton's economy and also its wider influence as a location for inter-modal freight transfer within Merseyside and the Northwest. The logistics and distribution sectors are core elements of Halton's economy and much of this is centred on the multimodal freight transfer facility at 3MG. Given Halton and specifically Ditton's locational advantages, with the Liverpool Branch of the West Coast Main Line passing through the site, the M57 and M62 in very close proximity, the site lends itself to further freight and more specifically rail served freight development.
- 1.5 Within and outside of the Borough there are proposals to increase the amount of freight being handled by non-road based freight facilities, both in relation to air freight through Liverpool John Lennon Airport and water-borne freight along the Manchester Ship Canal. As such, one of the criteria of the policy is to improve connections to nearby freight facilities, namely the Mersey Gateway Port (Weston Docks) and the are also potential future synergies with Liverpool John Lennon Airport. The reliability of freight movements on the local road network will also be improved through the realisation of the Mersey Gateway Project, improving journey times and accessibility for freight movements across and through the Borough. Within the neighbouring authority of St Helens, a site is being promoted for an intermodal freight terminal on the former colliery site at Parkside, Newton-le-Willows. There is therefore potential for the Mid-Mersey area around Widnes and St Helens to become a distinct hub for rail served freight and logistics uses.
- 1.6 The site lies on the edge of the built up area in Widnes, and its western extents are adjacent to the Green Belt which separates Halton from the adjoining authorities of Liverpool and Knowsley. Aside from this specific alteration of the Green Belt which would be required to facilitate the expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport as included in Policy CS17, it is important that the strategic gap between development at 3MG / Halebank and the nearest built up areas of Halewood and Speke in neighbouring authorities is maintained and that the amenity of the Green Belt designation is upheld. Also in close proximity to the site is Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument. Development of the Halton Borough Council (HBC) Field site to the west of the existing development at 3MG should conserve both the monument and its setting, including the provision of landscape buffers and enhancements where necessary.
- 1.7 Specific infrastructure is required to enable the full development of the site. Further rail sidings are also required to increase the number of trains able to serve the site each day from 6 to 16, thus taking freight off the region's roads. A new siding should be delivered as part of the development of the western portion of the site to connect the HBC Field site with the eastern portion of 3MG. The proposed Western Link Road, benefitting from planning permission<sup>2</sup> from both Halton and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Councils, will provide direct access to the HBC

<sup>2</sup> Planning Application reference 08/00031/HBCFUL – Proposed new link road and landscaping

Field site and better connect the site with the M57 and M62. It will also limit the number of traffic movements on local roads across the two sides of the site, thereby avoiding unnecessary disruption for local residents and businesses. The potential to reopen the redundant passenger station at Ditton, located off Hale Road should be retained as a long term possibility.

- I.8 An adopted Supplementary Planning Document exists for the 3MG site, based on the policy within Halton's Unitary Development Plan. This SPD will need to be updated to reflect the revised policy framework given through C87.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPG2, PPS4
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Joint Employment Land and Premises Study, 3MG Masterplan, 3MG SPD
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	3, 4, 6, 10
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Employment Learning and Skills, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS9: SOUTH WIDNES

- 1.1 The South Widnes Key Area of Change consisting of Widnes Town Centre, Widnes Waterfront and West Bank presents the opportunity to deliver a high quality mixed use environment furthering the economic revitalisation of the area, creating sustainable communities and ultimately the achievement of a valued waterfront environment and gateway location.

### Key Area of Change CS9: South Widnes

A mix of uses including a combination of employment, retail, leisure and residential development will be achieved across South Widnes over the Core Strategy period through:

- a) Making available 29 hectares of employment land and redeveloping and regenerating existing employment areas across South Widnes with an emphasis on mixed employment uses in Widnes Waterfront and West Bank.
- b) Directing up to 25,000 sqm of convenience / comparison retail provision to Widnes Town Centre with small scale provision across the wider area.
- c) Directing up to 19,000 sqm of bulky goods retailing across South Widnes with a particular focus on Widnes Town Centre.
- d) Focusing new leisure facilities in Widnes Town Centre, with a particular emphasis on the enhancement of the evening economy in the Victoria Square area, and complementary leisure uses in Widnes Waterfront through the realisation of the Venture Fields site leisure development.
- e) The delivery of 350 residential dwellings across South Widnes diversifying the current housing offer.
- f) Capitalising on the development and regeneration opportunities presented by the Mersey Gateway Project particularly associated with the restructuring of West Bank to provide for new employment and residential uses and the delivery of a new neighbourhood centre appropriate to the needs of the local community.
- g) Developing Strategic and Local Gateways at key locations to promote linkages across South Widnes and surrounding areas.

### Principles of Development

Development across South Widnes will be expected to:

- Improve connectivity and accessibility across South Widnes and the wider area and take advantage of opportunities to improve sustainable transport provision.
- Facilitate public access to the waterfront and prioritise opportunities for informal leisure associated with the waterfront destination.
- Ensure strong urban design in order to reflect the prominent waterside environment, gateway locations and the positive characteristics of South Widnes.

- Achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction including a reduction in carbon emissions through renewable and low carbon technology with a particular emphasis on Widnes Waterfront and its potential as an Energy Priority Zone.



Figure XX: South Widnes Diagram



## Justification

- 1.2 South Widnes includes the distinct sub-areas of Widnes Town Centre, Widnes Waterfront and West Bank. Each of the sub-areas provides a different but complementary role for Widnes and the wider Borough: Widnes Town Centre is the main retail core for the Borough providing a range of retail and leisure opportunities; Widnes Waterfront has historically and continues to provide a core employment area for the town and the wider sub-region; and, West Bank consists of a residential community to the south with employment and industrial uses to the north.
- 1.3 The area exhibits a number of issues within each sub-area and across the entire Key Area of Change, key amongst these are a physical and functional severance between different land uses, lack of connectivity between the different sub-areas, and, contamination issues, particularly along the waterfront, due to past chemical and industrial uses. The Key Area of Change, however, benefits from a prominent waterfront location, excellent regional and sub-regional transport links and a range of existing employment, retail and environmental assets. There is now a need to integrate and unify South Widnes, concentrating on linkages and connections and complementary uses in order to provide for a sustainable mixed use area for the benefit of Halton's residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.4 South Widnes, and in particular Widnes Waterfront, will be promoted as a driver for economic regeneration increasing employment opportunities through business growth and inward investment. The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS)<sup>1</sup> highlights the importance of Widnes Waterfront in delivering both the Borough and sub-region's employment land requirements and in particular much needed BI office development in Widnes. Although national planning policy<sup>2</sup> directs office uses to town centres, the JELPS recognises the severe lack of office supply in Widnes and constrained land supply in the Town Centre and as a result Widnes Waterfront is a more preferable location. Complementary employment provision will also be focused in West Bank to maintain and enhance local employment uses, and where appropriate in Widnes Town Centre to support a diversity of uses and to maintain the existing civic quarter around Kingsway.
- 1.5 Widnes is the largest town centre within the Borough and has the greatest retail offer in terms of range and floorspace. The Town Centre's retail role will be maintained and enhanced, in accordance with CS5: a Network of Centres for Halton, through the delivery of new retail opportunities and improvements including the potential to redevelop the Albert Square shopping centre. Leisure facilities will be focused on the Town Centre with Victoria Square remaining as the focus for evening entertainment given the attractive public realm and heritage assets in the locality. The realisation of the Hive development on the Widnes Waterfront Venture Fields site will ensure the delivery of complementary leisure facilities for the South Widnes area.
- 1.6 Although there are limited opportunities for residential development within South Widnes, other than those presented by the Mersey Gateway Project through the restructuring of West Bank, a priority for this Key Area of Change is to reinforce the existing residential neighbourhoods, and in particular the West Bank residential neighbourhood, through the addition of high quality housing development offering a

<sup>1</sup> BE Group, HBC, *et al* (2009) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS)

<sup>2</sup> CLG (2009) Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth



mix of tenures. It will also be necessary to ensure that the residential neighbourhoods, including those north of the Town Centre have connections to employment, leisure and retail opportunities across South Widnes in order to create thriving and sustainable communities.

- I.7 The Mersey Gateway Project will bring considerable physical changes to the area at West Bank coupled with wider regeneration and development opportunities across Widnes Waterfront and Widnes Town Centre. The removal of redundant infrastructure through the subsequent downgrading of the Silver Jubilee Bridge will release land and create the potential for new employment and residential development sites. In accordance with CS5 (a Network of Centres for Halton) the potential for a new mixed use neighbourhood centre in West Bank has been identified to provide for the needs of the local population. The realisation of the Mersey Gateway Project will increase cross river connectivity, reduce journey times and relieve congestion, which will be essential for future employment growth and to expand the sub-regional retail catchment for Widnes Town Centre. The project will also act as a catalyst for regeneration across the South Widnes area.
- I.8 To deliver a mixed use area there is a need to ensure that key links across the area become a focus for improved movement and high quality design. Particular attention should be given to the gateway links between West Bank and Victoria Road and at the Watkinson Way / Fiddlers Ferry junction between Widnes Waterfront and the Town Centre. These 'Strategic Gateway' locations are intended to deliver upgrades to pedestrian and cycle networks, support strong building frontages of an appropriate scale and massing, and assist in strengthening the identity of South Widnes through quality streetscapes. Other opportunities to improve the areas physical linkages should be taken where necessary and in accordance with existing Masterplans and SPDs through the development of 'Local Gateways'. Local Gateways will play a significant role in ensuring localised legibility and to aid connectivity of the outlying areas. One such opportunity to forge a Local Gateway is the link between West Bank and Widnes Waterfront adjacent to the St Helens (Sankey) Canal. This Local Gateway would have the potential to support and connect recreational, leisure and employment opportunities across the Key Area of Change.
- I.9 In addition to improving sustainable links in the Gateway locations, improving sustainable transport provision across South Widnes is an integral component of improving connectivity and accessibility and as such will be supported across the Key Area of Change. Improving pedestrian and cycle access to the Mersey waterfront, St Helens Canal, the Widnes Waterfront Moss Bank Linear Park and Widnes Warth, will also be supported, particularly from Widnes Town Centre, increasing the areas informal leisure offer. Opportunities to connect to the National Cycle Network (route 62) and the Trans Pennine Trail will be important in the achievement of this.
- I.10 High quality and sustainable design is imperative for the South Widnes Key Area of Change. The waterfront location adjacent to the Mersey Estuary and St Helens Canal should inform the design of new development in the area, ensuring strategic views are not compromised and are utilised by new development where possible. Future development and regeneration should maximise the area's location as an important gateway to Widnes and ensure high quality frontages along key routes with a particular emphasis on the Strategic and Local Gateways. Renewable and low carbon energy development will also be supported across South Widnes. Widnes Waterfront in particular has been identified as having potential for the delivery of

district heating<sup>3</sup> and may present an opportunity to develop an additional Energy Priority Zone in accordance with CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

- 1.11 Contamination as a result of the chemical and heavy industry that in the past dominated Widnes Waterfront and West Bank presents issues for future development. Potential risk as a result of flooding and pollution also exists in certain locations across the area. CS23: Managing Pollution and Risk and other LDF policies containing guidance associated with contamination, flooding and pollution are therefore particularly applicable to this Key Area of Change and should be fully considered by future development proposals.
- 1.12 The future development of Widnes Waterfront is currently guided by the Widnes Waterfront SPD based on the 2004 Widnes Waterfront Masterplan<sup>4</sup>. Building on the successful delivery of the Masterplan, the Widnes Waterfront Phase 2 Masterplan and Delivery Strategy<sup>5</sup> has been developed to provide a framework to attract investment and guide physical development across the area until 2013 and beyond. Opportunities to update the current Widnes Waterfront SPD in accordance with the Phase 2 Masterplan will be pursued.
- 1.13 The future development and regeneration of the West Bank area will be supported by an SPD for the area. This draws heavily on the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy<sup>6</sup> which is integral to the delivery of the Mersey Gateway Project. The potential for a future SPD for Widnes Town Centre to aid future growth will also be pursued along with more specific studies responding to localised issues and opportunities.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3: Housing; PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; PPG13: Transport
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HBC, 2010); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2009); Retail and Leisure Study (GVA, 2009); Widnes Waterfront Phase 2 Masterplan and Delivery Strategy (HBC, 2009); Draft West Bank SPD (HBC, 2009); Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy (HBC and GVA, 2008); Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (ARUP, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>3</sup> Arup (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study

<sup>4</sup> HBC and BDP (2004) Widnes Waterfront Masterplan and Delivery Strategy

<sup>5</sup> HBC, Taylor Young, *et al* (2009) Widnes Waterfront Phase 2 Masterplan and Delivery Strategy

<sup>6</sup> HBC and GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

## CSI0: WEST RUNCORN

- 1.1 West Runcorn comprising Runcorn Old Town, Runcorn Waterfront and the Mersey Gateway Port (Weston Docks) presents a range of development and regeneration opportunities which will deliver high quality and accessible environments utilising the areas waterfront assets, re-establish Runcorn Old Town as a vibrant centre, offer a new residential community and further exploit the Borough's freight and distribution potential.

### Key Area of Change CSI0: West Runcorn

The development and regeneration of West Runcorn over the Core Strategy period will be achieved through:

- a) Improving Runcorn Old Town's retail offer, focusing up to 5,000sqm of convenience / comparison goods retailing and supporting its role as a District Centre and a cultural and leisure destination.
- b) The delivery of 2000 dwellings across West Runcorn with a particular emphasis on the Runcorn Waterfront site to accommodate 1400 dwellings, with the potential for additional residential development, subject to appropriate access.
- c) The delivery of 27 hectares of employment land and the redevelopment and regeneration of existing employment areas across West Runcorn with a focus on the Mersey Gateway Port and the development of an employment area in the southern part of Runcorn Waterfront.
- d) Supporting the comprehensive redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront to be a residential led, mixed use regeneration initiative with detailed guidance, land allocations, access arrangements and capacity to be determined.
- e) Redeveloping the Mersey Gateway Port into a new civil waterway port, utilising the direct links to the Manchester Ship Canal, road and rail infrastructure, further strengthening Halton's role as a centre for logistics and distribution.
- f) Capitalising on the development and regeneration opportunities presented by the Mersey Gateway Project particularly associated with the removal of redundant infrastructure associated with the Silver Jubilee Bridge.
- g) Developing Strategic and Local Gateways at key locations to ensure linkages across West Runcorn and surrounding areas.

### Principles of Development

Development across West Runcorn will be expected to:

- Improve accessibility and connectivity and support improvements to the sustainable transport network.
- Ensure high quality urban design reflecting West Runcorn's waterfront environments, creating a vibrant destination and boasting a highly attractive public realm.

- Facilitate public access to the waterfront locations, particularly Runcorn Promenade and the Bridgewater Canal, and, where appropriate, take advantage of opportunities to increase the leisure and recreational potential of the waterfronts where commercially appropriate.
- Achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction including a reduction in carbon emissions through renewable and low carbon technology.

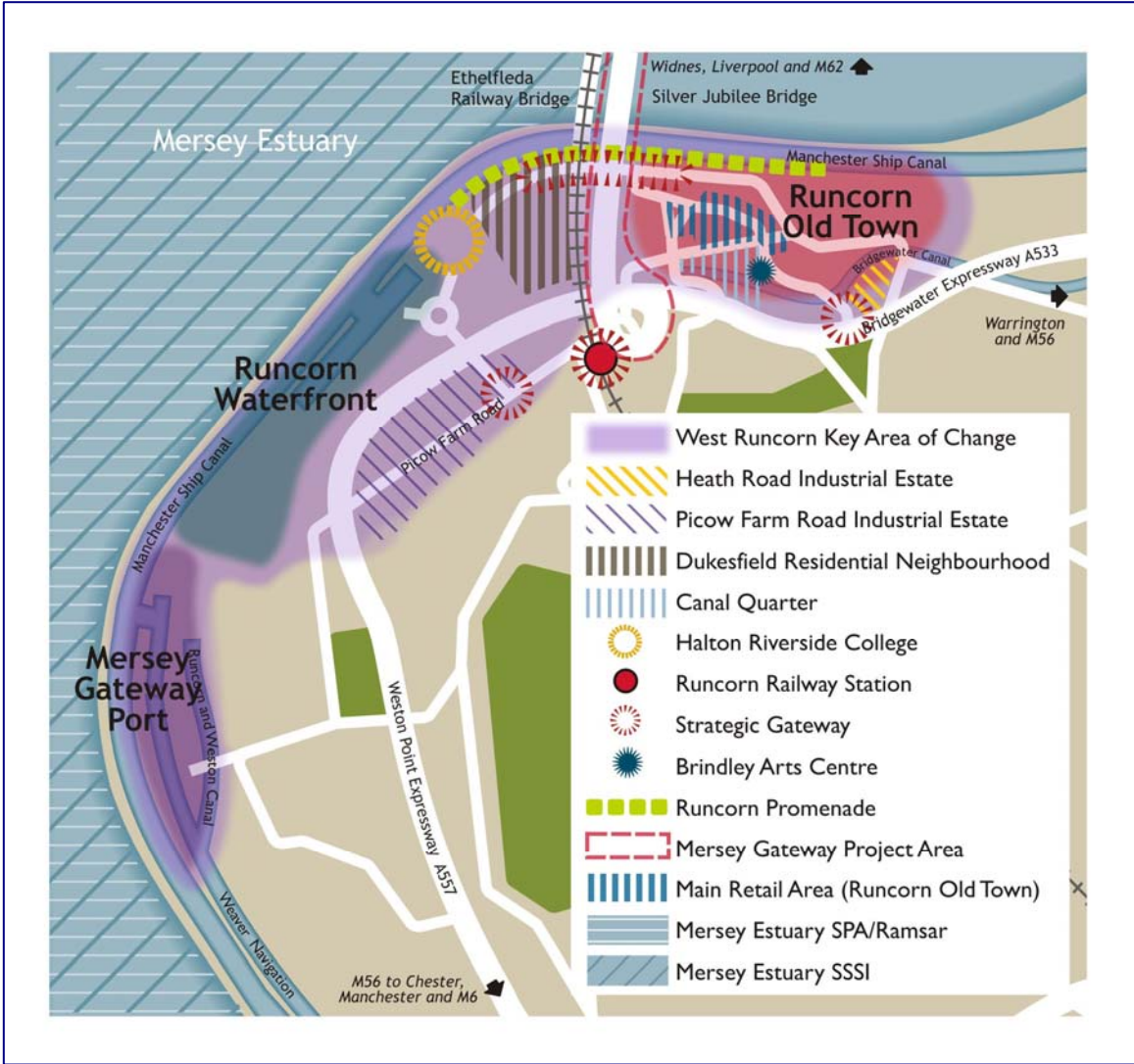


Figure XX: West Runcorn Diagram

**Justification**

1.2 Runcorn Old Town is the historic core of Runcorn. Following the Borough’s commercial and industrial growth, the Old Town was at one time the main shopping centre in Runcorn. However, with Runcorn’s designation as a New Town in 1964, and subsequent construction of Shopping City (Halton Lea), Runcorn Old Town has suffered a steady decline. The Expressway road network, rail infrastructure and past redevelopment in the centre has contributed to a poorly defined and disjointed environment and there is a lack of clear and direct pedestrian and vehicular routes

and connections between Runcorn Old Town, Runcorn Railway Station, Dukesfield and Runcorn Riverside College and Runcorn Waterfront.

- I.3 Following the Manchester Ship Canal west of Runcorn Old Town is Runcorn Docks and Weston Docks. This is currently an area of predominantly employment uses and includes commercial docks, general industry, storage and distribution uses, along with a large amount of derelict and underused land.
- I.4 Although the Key Area of Change displays a range of issues there are a number of development and regeneration opportunities across West Runcorn which will help to re-establish the area as a vibrant waterside location offering retail, leisure and employment opportunities and delivering high quality residential development. Development is encouraged to respond positively to these opportunities and take advantage of West Runcorn's assets including views across the Mersey Estuary, Runcorn Promenade, the Manchester Ship Canal, the Bridgewater Canal and the sub-regional and national links afforded by West Runcorn's proximity to the strategic highway network and Runcorn Railway Station.
- I.5 The focus for Runcorn Old Town over the Core Strategy plan period will be on re-establishing the centre and enabling it to provide for the day to day shopping needs of its immediate catchment whilst offering a wider complementary function to Halton Lea. The Old Town's designation as a District Centre (as detailed in CS5: A Network of Centres for Halton) will refocus the centre for local independent shops, niche retailers and service providers and as a centre for cultural and leisure activity reinforcing and diversifying the evening economy for Runcorn. The Old Town's role within its localised catchment will be protected and enhanced wherever possible and opportunities for additional convenience and comparison provision should be identified and promoted, where appropriate, in accordance with the Retail and Leisure Study<sup>1</sup> and national policy. Future retail provision will be allocated within the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.
- I.6 The Canal Quarter offers a significant opportunity to support the Old Town's re-defined role. Through taking advantage of the waterfront setting alongside the Bridgewater Canal and building upon the success of the Brindley Arts Centre, the Canal Quarter offers the potential to become the catalyst for the wider regeneration of the Old Town, delivering a mix of leisure and retail uses in addition to a significant residential element.
- I.7 West Runcorn has the capacity to contribute to diversifying the housing offer across the Borough reinforcing existing neighbourhoods through the addition of some higher quality residential development. Runcorn Waterfront (located at Runcorn Docks) in particular provides the opportunity to deliver a new high quality waterfront residential community with the potential to accommodate up to 4,000 units overall. The full delivery of the residential redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront, however, will be dependent upon securing adequate site access and will be established through masterplanning, the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD and the development of a Runcorn Waterfront SPD. As such the current Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment<sup>2</sup> only includes a yield of 1400 units in the period to 2026. The future redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront will also support retail and community facilities, open space, and an employment area forming a buffer to the

<sup>1</sup> GVA (2009) Retail and Leisure Study

<sup>2</sup> HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)



industrial area to the south. It is envisaged that the redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront will be delivered over a 20-30 year time span.

- 1.8 Weston Docks, to the south of the Key Area of Change, has been re-branded as the Mersey Gateway Port. This will be redeveloped into a new civil waterway port for multimodal logistics and distribution providing employment opportunities for the local area and building upon the freight and distribution strengths of the 3MG facility at Ditton (Policy CS8). The Port is linked directly to the Manchester Ship Canal and connects to the Mersey Estuary and Weaver Navigation. Road access to the Port is via Picow Farm Road and then westwards across the Runcorn and Weston Canal. In the longer term, the aspiration is to connect the Port to rail infrastructure to expand freight transport.
- 1.9 Employment opportunities also exist within the Picow Farm Road and Heath Road North Industrial Estates. These estates already perform an important local employment role which should be enhanced. Runcorn Old Town has been identified within the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>3</sup> as having a limited office market due to land constraints and as such new office development activity in Runcorn is largely directed to Daresbury in East Runcorn (CS11).
- 1.10 Additional employment opportunities may emerge in the longer-term as part of the Mersey Gateway Project and the subsequent 'de-linking' of the Silver Jubilee Bridge which will see the removal of redundant highway infrastructure, 'unlocking' development land through remodelling the Runcorn 'Loops'. The 'de-linking' arrangements are aimed at reducing the potential for the Silver Jubilee Bridge to be used as a strategic link for long distance traffic movement, whilst increasing its function as a local connection for residents and businesses in the Borough<sup>4</sup>. This will maximise the development and commercial opportunities of the land adjoining Runcorn Railway Station, whilst facilitating the provision of a key sub-regional interchange and transport hub<sup>5</sup> and will help to tackle the issues of severance across the area. The removal of road infrastructure may also present opportunities to reinstate the former alignment of the Bridgewater Canal between Runcorn Old Town and Runcorn Waterfront to the Manchester Ship Canal. This has the potential to create a second Cheshire Canal Ring further encouraging and supporting the leisure and recreational potential of the Bridgewater Canal. The route of the alignment will be protected through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.
- 1.11 Key points of vehicular and pedestrian access across West Runcorn have been prioritised as 'Strategic Gateways' to aid movement and connectivity throughout this Key Area of Change. This includes the links between Runcorn Town Centre, the station and Runcorn Waterfront and the strategic road link to the Mersey Gateway Port via Picow Farm Road. Attractive gateway features such as landscaping and artwork will be supported in these locations. Other locally important gateways will also be encouraged to support localised access and connectivity and improve the legibility of the local environment. These 'Local Gateways' should be used to better integrate the Bridgewater Canal with walking and cycling networks and the Manchester Ship Canal where compatible with continuing commercial use of the waterway.

<sup>3</sup> BE Group (2009) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS)

<sup>4</sup> HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy

<sup>5</sup> HBC & GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

- 1.12 High quality design throughout West Runcorn will be used to create attractive environments, responding positively to the character of the area and integrating the area with the waterfronts of the Bridgewater Canal, Manchester Ship Canal / Mersey Estuary, creating a unique sense of place and a vibrant asset for the Borough.
- 1.13 Sustainable design and construction and the development of renewable and low carbon energy will also be supported across West Runcorn. Runcorn Waterfront has been identified as an Energy Priority Zone<sup>6</sup> and opportunities to develop a District Heating scheme will be particularly encouraged in the future redevelopment of this area particularly where this is compatible with neighbouring industrial uses.
- 1.14 The Council will work proactively with the landowner of Runcorn Waterfront and other potential delivery partners to develop a Masterplan to guide the development of the site. This will be translated into the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD and will form the basis of a Runcorn Waterfront SPD. Proposals for Runcorn Old Town, including those associated with the Canal Quarter will be supported by a SPD. This SPD will also aim to build upon the measures proposed in the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy including those to remove redundant sections of infrastructure associated with the Silver Jubilee Bridge. More detailed policies and the allocation of sites for the delivery of this Key Area of Change (including the Mersey Gateway Port) will be included within the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.

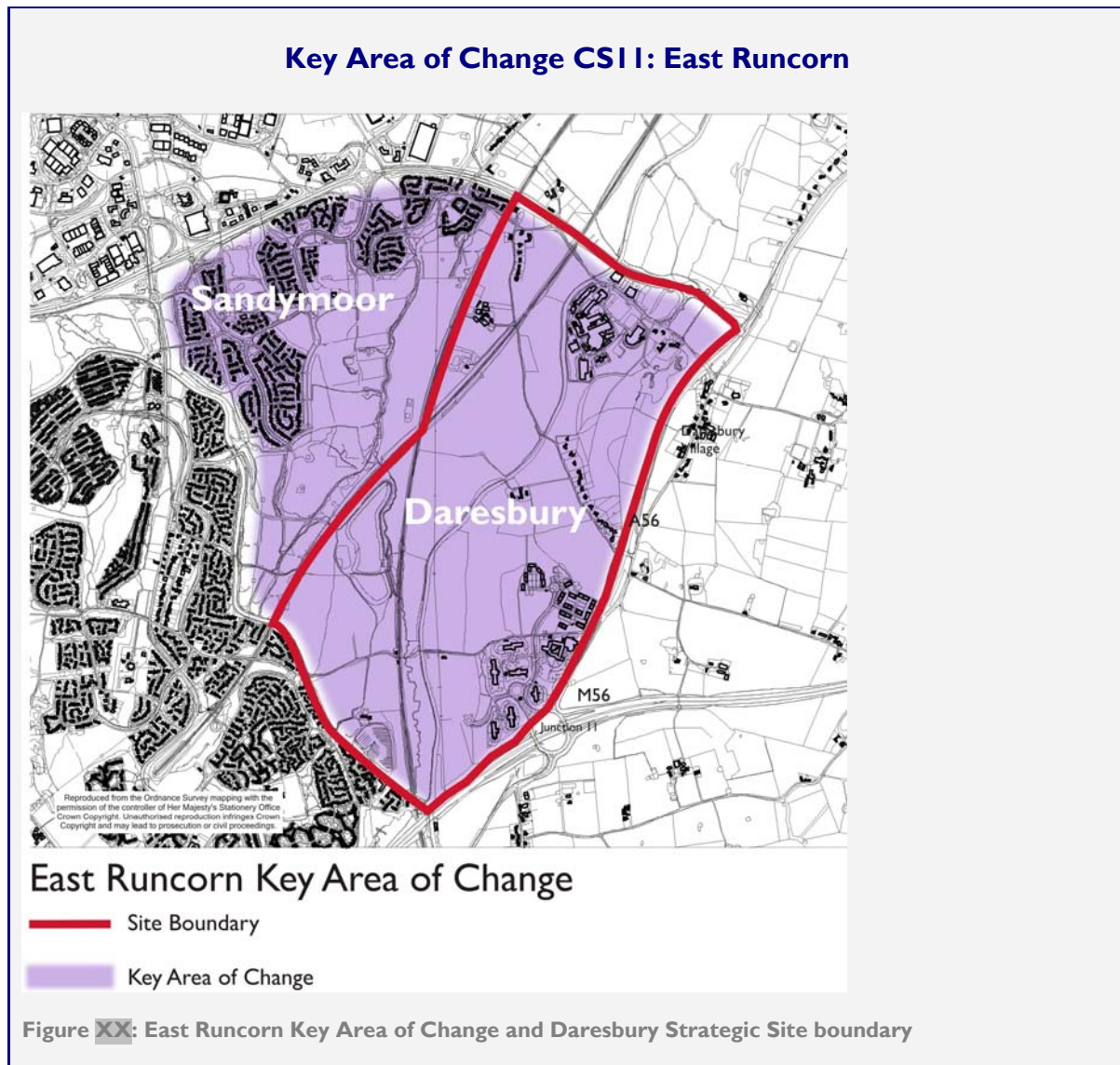
<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3: Housing; PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; PPG13: Transport
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HBC, 2010); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2009); Retail and Leisure Study (GVA, 2009); Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy (HBC and GVA, 2008); Mersey Gateway Transport Strategy (HBC, 2009); Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (ARUP, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>6</sup> Arup (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study



## CS I I: EAST RUNCORN

- 1.1 At East Runcorn, the opportunity exists to create a new community for Halton which will encompass a diverse mix of uses and continue the development of Runcorn in line with the long term vision for the Borough. Whilst the whole of the East Runcorn area constitutes a Key Area of Change within the Core Strategy, the Daresbury is allocated as a Strategic Site. Under the provisions of PPS12, areas within the Strategic Site are therefore allocated for specific land uses as indicated in Figure XX below. As a Strategic Site, the area will deliver many of the required outcomes intrinsic to the success and future prosperity of Halton.



### Daresbury

The Strategic Site as defined above, will deliver the following development:

- a) 19ha of land will be made available to aid the expansion of the BI science, high tech and research development at the existing Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus (SIC) at land between the Bridgewater Canal and the Chester-Manchester railway line; and

- b) The office and knowledge based facilities at Daresbury Business Park will be increased through the delivery of a further 40ha of BI (a) and (b) development.
- c) Phased delivery of approximately 1,550 dwellings, to provide a wide range of housing by size, type and tenure, including affordable housing in accordance with the provisions of CS13: Affordable Housing. New housing should be brought forward in the following broad phases:
- Phase 1 – 650 dwellings in the land between the West Coast Main Line and the Chester-Manchester Line to the north of the site, and on the land immediately surrounding Preston Brook Marina
  - Phase 2 – 600 dwellings in the central area between the Daresbury SIC and Daresbury Park
  - Phase 3 – 300 dwellings at the area known as Wharford Farm, between the West Coast Main Line and the Chester-Manchester line to the south of the site
- d) A mixed use neighbourhood centre including a marina providing moorings for inland waterways craft sited alongside the Bridgewater Canal around the existing George Gleave's bridge. The neighbourhood centre will be served by public transport and will meet the needs of the nearby residential and business communities. Any such provision of a neighbourhood centre should avoid unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres and the planned neighbourhood centre at Sandymoor. Individual retail units should not exceed 500sqm in size.
- e) Infrastructure requirements to achieve the above development will include:
- A new road bridge over the Bridgewater Canal on Keckwick Lane
  - A signalised junction on to the A56 at Delph Lane
  - A vehicular and public transport route through the site connecting Daresbury Park to Daresbury SIC, including a bridge over the canal, south of Delph Lane incorporating a bus-only connection to Daresbury Park
  - A public transport interchange located to the east of the intersection of the West Coast Main Line and the Chester-Manchester railway line, including the safeguarding of land to maintain the long term aim of accommodating a new railway station
  - Adding an additional lane to the A558 between the Pitts Heath Lane roundabout and the Daresbury SIC roundabout to create a dual carriageway
  - Improvements to Junction 11 of the M56

Further infrastructure requirements at Daresbury Strategic Site are set out in the Infrastructure Plan

### **General principles of development**

1. A network of open spaces for nature conservation and recreation should be provided, including the retention of Daresbury Firs, the creation of a linear country park along the Bridgewater canal corridor, formal green space to serve the residential area, new parkland south of Delph Lane, and smaller green spaces integral to individual developments.
2. Design, layout and style of individual plots will be guided by a framework in the Daresbury Supplementary Planning Document which recognises the locational assets of the area and its surroundings.
3. The promotion of walking and cycling routes and expansion of the Greenway network to provide clear and safe links to surrounding communities, including new pedestrian and vehicular links to Sandymoor and improvements to the canal corridor.

4. Development of the Daresbury Strategic Site should integrate with the adjacent residential community at Sandymoor.

### **Sandymoor**

Completion of the Sandymoor residential area will be achieved through the delivery of approximately 1,400 additional units to the south and west of the existing Sandymoor community, in line with outstanding consents including a new neighbourhood centre, primary school and public transport connections. The delivery of further development at Sandymoor should have regard to the existing planning framework provided through the Sandymoor SPD.

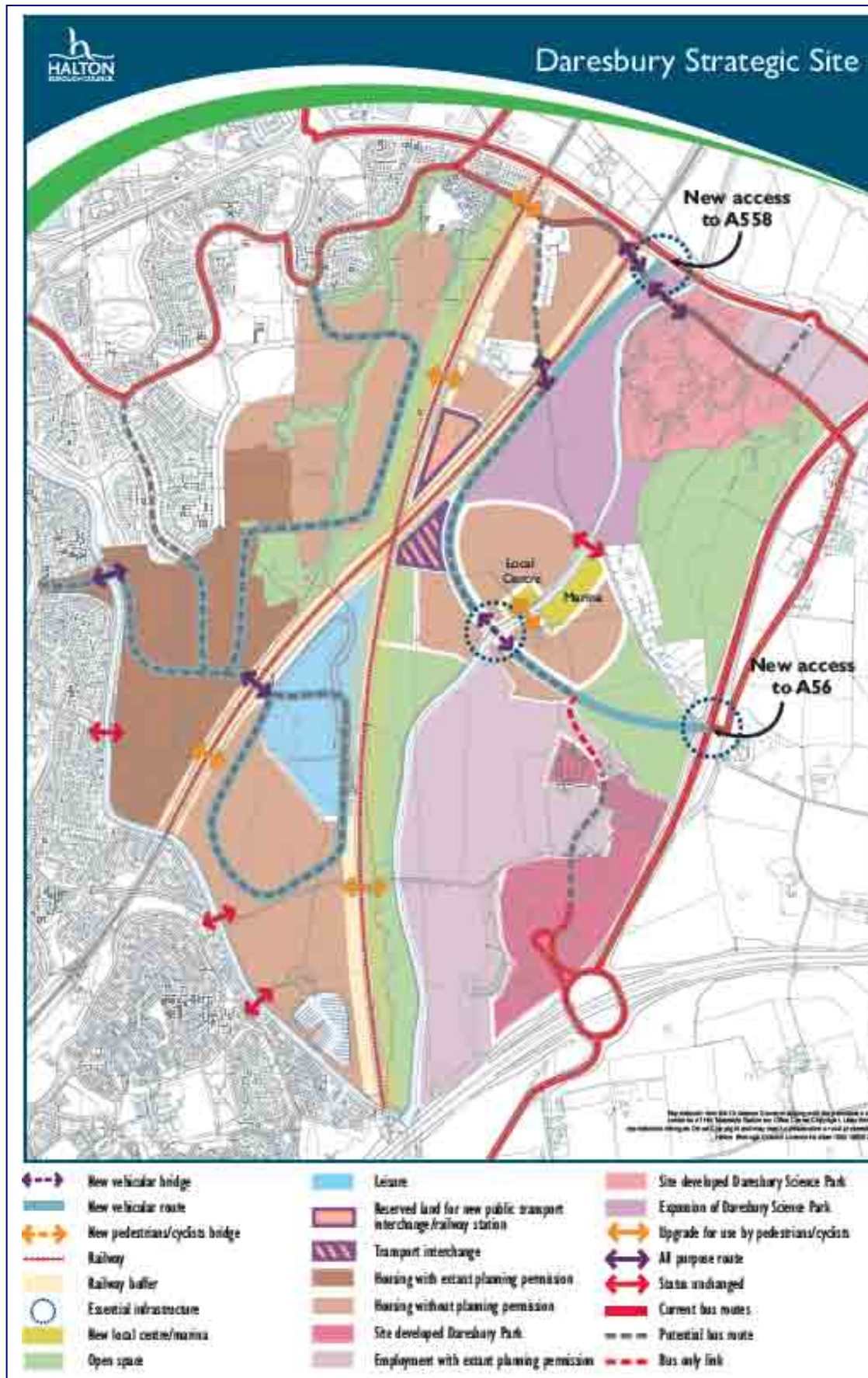


Figure XX: East Runcorn Key Area of Change and Daresbury Strategic Site Indicative Masterplan



## Justification

- 2.1 The Key Area of Change lies to the east of Runcorn and is currently a mixture of developed land, interspersed by agricultural land. The area is dissected by the Bridgewater Canal which splits into two arms at the south of the area and also two railway lines; the West Coast Main Line and the Chester-Manchester line. The various transport links present both barriers to movement and development, countered by opportunities to improve amenity and sustainable transport respectively. The canals offer an attractive landscape for the area, with opportunities for tourism and recreation, whilst the presence of the railway lines through the site offers the potential for long distance sustainable travel options in the longer term. The Key Area of Change has a varied topography which gives prominence to east and south of the site including the wooded area of Daresbury Firs, which adds a strong visual identity to this part of the site and as a backdrop to Daresbury SIC. The undeveloped remainder of the Sandymoor area to the west of the main arm of the Bridgewater Canal, along with land to the west of Daresbury village, represents some of the remaining greenfield sites in Halton.
- 3.1 Proposals to develop the Sandymoor area were included in the Runcorn New Town plans of the 1960s and 1970s, and specifically arose from Master Plan Amendment No.2<sup>1</sup> in 1971. Under Section 7.1 of the New Towns Act 1981, development of the Sandymoor area for residential development has conditional approval for development. At April 2010, just over 1000 dwellings, plus infrastructure, green spaces and a community centre had been built at Sandymoor since Phase I of the development commenced in the late 1980s<sup>2</sup>. Outstanding planning consents indicate that the area has the remaining potential to deliver an additional 1400 dwellings, along with reserved sites for a local centre and school which are likely to be delivered once the community has grown sufficiently to make these facilities sustainable and viable.
- 4.1 Nationally the expansion of scientific research and science related business development has been prioritised over recent years to grow the sector. In 2006, a Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014<sup>3</sup> was drawn up to guide future investment in national science facilities including the Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus<sup>0</sup>. This framework specifically promoted the creation of two Science and Innovation Campuses, one at Harwell in Oxfordshire and the other at Daresbury. The relationship between the two campuses, known as the 'dipole', enables any organisation engaging with one Campus to have access to the facilities and expertise of both. At Daresbury, the existing Daresbury Laboratories and associated facilities form the basis of the Science and Innovation Campus, with aspirations for the science and research facilities to expand to double the current size of the facility. In recent years, a number of facilities have been built on prominent gateway sites such as the Daresbury Innovation Centre and the Cockcroft Institute (the National Centre for Accelerator Science). Vanguard House (under construction in 2010) will deliver high quality office, laboratory, and workshop space.
- 5.1 Following on from the recognition of Daresbury as a nationally important campus, a renewed impetus to realise the development potential of the Daresbury area arose which emerged through the 'Daresbury Framework'<sup>4</sup> during 2007-2008. Stakeholders, landowners and potential developers in the area worked collaboratively to produce a strategic vision and comprehensive Master Plan for the Daresbury area,

<sup>1</sup> Runcorn Development Corporation (1971) Runcorn New Town Master Plan Amendment No.2

<sup>2</sup> GVA Grimley for HBC (2009) Sandymoor Supplementary Planning Document

<sup>3</sup> HM Treasury (2006) Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014: Next Steps

<sup>4</sup> Taylor Young et al (2009) The Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus Framework

based around the notion of connecting the separate knowledge nuclei of the business and science facilities. By broadening the appeal of the Daresbury site the intention is to protect Daresbury SIC's role as a primary national site for world-class science and create an environment which encourages knowledge transfer. The Master Plan forecast a 30-40 year delivery period for the realisation of the proposed development, driven by the pace of expansion at Daresbury SIC which is predominantly determined by the availability of funding.

- 6.1 Taking the scale of the proposals into account, it is anticipated that the build out of the proposed development will take a number of decades, and is likely to extend beyond the Core Strategy plan period. Likely phasing of the residential and employment development is indicated in Table XX below.

	DARESBUARY STRATEGIC SITE			Sandymoor Number of dwellings
	Number of dwellings	Amount of employment floorspace (sqm)		
		Daresbury Park	Daresbury SIC	
Phase 1 (2010/11-2020/21)	650	22,919	49,623	366
Phase 2 (2015/16-2025/26)	600	22,919	79,532	788
Phase 3 (2020/21-2025/26)	300			310
Beyond Core Strategy period (2026+)	-	26,081	46,450	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1550</b>	71,919	175,605	<b>1464</b>
		<b>247,524</b>		

Table XX: Development phasing at East Runcorn

- 7.1 It has been necessary to translate the aspirational Daresbury Framework into a realistic and deliverable planning framework for the Core Strategy, and to assist this process, the Council commissioned a Viability Assessment<sup>5</sup> for this site. The viability assessment also factors the likely cost of infrastructure requirements at Daresbury into account. The viability report finds that public sector funding will be necessary to achieve the proposed level of development and underlines the long term nature of the proposals.
- 8.1 In order to achieve the desired aims for the Daresbury area, partnership working will need to continue over the lifetime of the plan and beyond. To assist with this, partner organisations have come together to form both a Joint Venture company for Daresbury SIC. It is estimated that £600m will be invested in the area during the realisation of the Master Plan and partnership working will be essential in channelling investment into the most appropriate proposals to deliver maximum benefits. The newly formed Local Enterprise Partnership for Merseyside, JESSICA funding and the emerging Technology and Innovation Centre network are all possible funding opportunities which will need to be investigated to allow Daresbury SIC to reach its potential. Government funding has been earmarked for specific projects at the SIC, including the Hartree Centre for Computational Science and Engineering. Investment of this type will be necessary to maintain and improve the site's profile as a focus for business, science and advanced engineering into the future and create the optimum environment for further inward investment.
- 9.1 In accordance with PPS4, office development should ordinarily be directed towards a local authority's designated town centres. In the case of Daresbury Park, the entirety

<sup>5</sup> DTZ (2010) Halton Key Sites Viability Assessment

of the area proposed for office development already benefits from outline planning consent for over 165,000m<sup>2</sup> of B1(a) floorspace (at April 2010) as indicated below in Table XX. Although a large amount of employment floorspace has consent to be developed, monitoring of the density of office completions at Daresbury Park indicates that a lower amount of office development is likely to actually be built, and this has been translated in the phasing of employment development included in Table XX above. The already consented floorspace, coupled with information taken from a survey of businesses which indicates that there is little demand from within the office sector to locate in the Borough's town centre locations, particularly in Runcorn Old Town<sup>6</sup>. The JELPS study recognises that Daresbury Park, is an established office location, which has capitalised on its accessibility and location on the M56 corridor to create a critical mass of out of town office space. Notwithstanding the guidance set out in national planning policy, the specific requirements of businesses, such as the size of site required, site quality, access and proximity to markets, should be recognised. To date, Daresbury Park has proved to be a popular location for office development given the high quality environment within which it is set, the bespoke buildings offered with large floorplates, able to accommodate Head Quarter type buildings. At Daresbury SIC office development is proposed to supplement the specialist science offer and to provide support services for the laboratory and research space.

	Number of Dwellings	Amount of Employment floorspace (sqm)
Sandymoor (Full or Outline Planning Permission or Section 7.1 approval under the New Towns Act)	1464	-
Daresbury SIC – (Full or Outline Planning Permission)	-	16,205
Daresbury Park – (Full or Outline Planning Permission)	-	165,564
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1464</b>	<b>181,769</b>

Table XX: Development at East Runcorn benefitting from existing planning consents

- 10.1 The extent of the changes proposed at East Runcorn necessarily mean that new infrastructure will be required to support development, particularly in relation to highways and sustainable transport. As part of developing the approach for the Key Area of Change, a transport study of the East Runcorn development area<sup>7</sup> has been commissioned to assess the likely impact of the proposed level of development on the existing road network. The study concluded that substantial investment in the highways network and in sustainable transport initiatives will be necessary to increase both reduce reliance on the private car and increase the capacity of surrounding roads where the impact of a shift to more sustainable modes will not eradicate the issue. Highways infrastructure will be needed to provide sufficient access to the site, including a new spine link road to join the Daresbury Park and SIC sites including improvements to existing and the provision of new canal bridges, a new primary link route to the A56, road linkages to the Sandymoor area and associated footpaths and cycleways. Further detail of specific transport projects is given in the Infrastructure Plan which accompanies the Core Strategy. Some of this new infrastructure is included specifically within the policy as it will be necessary for this infrastructure to be in place to access certain development sites and the onus will be the developer of the associated site to provide this infrastructure. Other less strategic infrastructure such as small scale greenspaces and internal roads will be provided as individual parcels of development land come forward.

<sup>6</sup> BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study - Table 68, page 162 and Para 7.40, page 174

<sup>7</sup> Mott MacDonald (2010) East Runcorn Sustainable Development Study



- 11.1 The above policy for East Runcorn includes the provision of a public transport interchange at the intersection of the two railway lines which run through the site. It is envisaged that this will initially provide bus interchange facilities to serve the employment and residential areas with the aspiration of delivering a railway station to serve either one or both of the railway lines in the longer term. The precise location of a public transport interchange has not yet been determined but will be largely dependent on the outcome of the current Guide to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) Study, which is being progressed by Network Rail on behalf of Halton Borough Council. Should this study find that the practicality and feasibility of a railway station at Daresbury is limited, a wider choice of sites will be available for a bus-based interchange.
- 12.1 Two SPDs will support the delivery of development at East Runcorn. An adopted SPD exists for the Sandymoor area of the site to the west of the railway lines. An SPD will also be produced for the area covering the Daresbury Strategic Site including the intervening areas. This will focus on the implementation of the Core Strategy policy, particularly detail in terms of design, layout, phasing and access.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3, PPS4, PPS12, National Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2005-2008, Halton Science Report, Sandymoor SPD
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	<b>Employment Learning and Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton</b>
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

# **HALTON CORE STRATEGY PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

## **CORE POLICIES**

## CSI2: HOUSING MIX

- 1.1 The number of new homes to be provided has been set out in the Spatial Strategy and accompanying policy on Housing Supply and Locational Priorities. Alongside delivering the right quantity of new homes, it is equally important that the right type of housing is provided to meet the needs of Halton's existing population, address imbalances in the existing housing stock and ensure the homes provided can adapt to changing demographics, particularly an ageing population. The type of affordable housing required on each site is set out in CSI3: Affordable Housing, but it is equally important to influence the mix of private housing on development sites. As such, housing developers should have regard to locally arising needs for dwellings of differing size and type.

### Policy CSI2: Housing Mix

On sites of 10 or more dwellings, the type of new housing delivered should relate to the characteristics of existing neighbourhoods and future demographic trends, as indicated in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Should there be issues of viability, an alternative mix of housing could be negotiated.

Proposals for new specialist housing for the elderly, including extra-care<sup>1</sup> and supported accommodation, will be encouraged in suitable locations (and sites allocated in the Site Allocations DPD, as appropriate), particularly those providing easy access to local services and community facilities.

To reduce reliance on specialist housing in the future and to allow residents to live within their own homes for as long as they are able, the Council will encourage the delivery of homes which meet Lifetime Homes standards.

### Justification

- 1.2 Evidence from the emerging Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010<sup>2</sup> (SHMA) suggests that there is a need for a greater diversity of housing types and sizes across market housing as well as in affordable accommodation. The housing type profile in Halton currently differs from the national pattern with much higher proportions of medium/large terraced houses and bungalows than elsewhere in the country<sup>3</sup>. Consequently, there is under provision of other dwelling types, namely small terraced and detached homes and also to a certain extent, flatted homes. The Housing Needs Survey demonstrates that the variety of bed spaces provided in homes across the Borough is comparable to other areas in the country, but survey data reveals that residents' aspirations are mostly for two and three bedroomed terraced and semi-detached properties<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Extra-care housing is defined in Halton's Housing Needs Survey as housing which supports independent living and increases choice by providing older people with their own homes together with care and support that meets their individual needs.

<sup>2</sup> GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting (2010) Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment

<sup>3</sup> HBC and CPC (2009) Private Sector House Condition Survey (para 2.3)

<sup>4</sup> David Couttie Associates (2006) Halton Housing Needs Survey (Table 5-34: Type by Size of Market Housing Accommodation Needed New Forming Households Seeking Market Housing)

- I.3 In order to rebalance the type and size of housing across the Borough and to ensure that the most appropriate form of housing is provided to meet the requirements of current and future residents, housing developers should consult the SHMA 2010 (or replacement) which indicates the most needed housing type and size within a particular sub-area in the Borough to inform the mix of dwellings on larger sites. In exceptional cases where particular constraints exist on a site (e.g. design issues or size) or where there are viability issues which prohibit the desired mix of housing from being achieved, developers should provide a clear explanation through information supporting the planning application of how these factors have influenced the proposed housing mix. The Site Allocations and Development Management Document will set out requirements and guidance on these matters for housing allocations in the Borough.
- I.4 The need for extra care or supported housing in Halton is particularly pronounced because of low levels of existing provision. This level of need is anticipated to grow over the plan period given the Borough's ageing population. In 2008 there were 550 units provided across 18 sheltered housing schemes in the Borough and one extra care scheme in Runcorn consisting of 40 units. This level of provision was found to be below average when compared to other local authorities in the North West<sup>5</sup>. The Halton Housing Strategy indicates that there is a need to develop a wider range of housing options, including extra care and retirement housing across all tenures, to prevent over reliance on residential care<sup>6</sup>. Based on the current level of provision referred to above, evidence indicates that by 2017 there will be a need for 214 extra care units across the Borough, with an additional need by 2015 for 22 extra care units specifically for older people with learning difficulties.
- I.5 Selecting an appropriate location for extra care and supported housing is very important to ensure that residents are able to integrate with the surrounding community and where feasible, retain some independence. Specific preferred locational criteria are set out within Halton's Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care and these factors will influence the allocation of sites for extra care housing in later Development Plan Documents. Provision of extra care housing is hindered by the lack of developable or publicly owned land and the high costs associated with land purchase, remediation and conversion or demolition of an existing building. Where the Council has the opportunity to influence the type of housing provision on sites which meet a number of the criteria for extra care housing, the need for this specialist type of accommodation will be emphasised.
- I.6 The concept of Lifetime Homes<sup>7</sup> was introduced in the early 1990s with the overall aim of making homes suitable for people at all stages of their lives. The Lifetime Homes Standard consists of 16 design criteria which place emphasis on accessibility and design features that make homes flexible enough to meet the needs of individual households for as long as they wish to remain in their own homes. As outlined above, the Borough's ageing population will increase the need for specialist accommodation which has been adapted to meet the needs of older people. Making new private housing more flexible to changing needs not only reduces the burden on such facilities but also offers older people independence in their own homes. It is a mandatory requirement of Level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes<sup>8</sup> (which is equivalent to zero carbon) to comply with Lifetime Homes criteria. Therefore from 2016, all

<sup>5</sup> HBC and Tribal Consulting (2008) Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care (Table 5)

<sup>6</sup> HBC (2008) Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011

<sup>7</sup> Lifetime Homes - [www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/](http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/)

<sup>8</sup> CLG (2009) Code for Sustainable Homes - Technical guide May 2009 - Version 2

homes will be expected to be built to Lifetime Homes Standards in accordance with the national agenda to reach zero carbon status for residential development and policy CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change of this plan.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3 (CLG, 2010); Code for Sustainable Homes – Technical Guide (CLG, 2009); Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods (CLG, 2008); Lifetime Homes Criteria (Habinteg, 2010)
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2010); Halton Housing Strategy (HBC, 2008); Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care (HBC and Tribal Consulting, 2008); Private Sector House Condition Survey (HBC and CPC, 2009)
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	I and 2
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CSI3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- 1.1 The delivery of affordable housing to meet current and future housing needs is an essential component of creating sustainable communities. Buying or renting private housing has become increasingly difficult for many Halton residents and as such there is a need to ensure the supply of affordable housing units in the Borough.

### Policy CSI3: Affordable Housing

Affordable housing units will be provided on schemes which generate 15 dwellings or more and on development sites which are 0.5 hectares or more.

Affordable housing provision will be sought within a target range of 20-25% of the total number of units delivered. The Council will seek to ensure a 50:50 split between social rented and intermediate affordable housing tenures across the Borough.

The provision of affordable housing must:

- be of a similar size and type to the overall mix on site, unless it is agreed with the Council to target a specific identified category of greatest housing need in the locality; and
- be fully integrated in the development site so as to avoid the over concentration of affordable housing in any particular location within the development site and in order to achieve seamless design

The minimum affordable housing contribution may only be reduced where robust justification is provided. This must demonstrate that the affordable housing target would make the development unviable.

There will be a presumption that any affordable supply will be provided on site. Off-site provision or a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision may only be made in exceptional circumstances where on-site provision is proven to be unachievable or localised need does not necessitate affordable housing provision.

Planning permission will be refused on development sites which are sub-divided into separate development parcels below the affordable housing threshold, unless the affordable housing provision is proportionate to that which would have been required on the site as a whole.

### Justification

- 1.2 Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are unable to be met by private market housing. Social rented housing is rented housing owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Intermediate affordable housing is housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents, and which meet the criteria set out above, including shared equity products, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.
- 1.3 The need for affordable housing must be assessed in the context of a market which is increasingly beyond the reach of low income existing and new forming households

within Halton<sup>1</sup>. Will need to provide an update of the key findings from the SHMA (once complete)...and the identified annual deficit in the provision of affordable housing

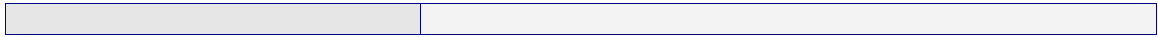
- 1.4** The Economic Viability Assessment<sup>2</sup> has considered the realistic level at which affordable housing in the Borough can be achieved. ...
- 1.5** In response to the SHMA and Economic Viability Assessment the overall target range for new affordable housing in Halton during the plan period has been set at 20-25%. This target will be applied to all residential developments on sites capable of providing 15 units or more and on development sites of 0.5 hectares or more. Affordable housing provision at a rate lower than the target range will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated through a financial appraisal that existing physical constraints on the site will result in extraordinary costs, or competing uses of a higher value would render the development unviable when the affordable housing contribution is taken into account.
- 1.6** Across all sites in the Borough, the Council will seek to achieve a tenure split of 50% social rented and 50% intermediate housing. However, the actual size, type and tenure of affordable supply sought will be informed by the most up to date evidence of housing need evidenced through the SHMA (or replacement) and will depend on the site location, the local housing mix and identified priorities to meet local needs.
- 1.7** Only in exceptional circumstances will off-site provision be considered appropriate and this is dependant on the suitability and availability of alternative sites. The off-site provision of affordable housing will only be acceptable if it can be proven that on-site provision would not be feasible or the identified localised need does not require the provision of affordable housing. Financial contributions instead of on-site provision may also be sought in exceptional circumstances and in accordance with the Development Contributions DPD or equivalent.
- 1.8** This policy and the evidence base that supports it will be subject to regular review to ensure it reflects changes in the Borough's housing need and local circumstances.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3: Housing
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting, 2010); Halton Economic Viability Assessment (DTZ, 2010); Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (HBC, 2008).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	1 and 2
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	A Healthy Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>1</sup> David Couttie Associates (2006) Halton Housing Needs Survey

<sup>2</sup> DTZ (2010) Economic Viability Assessment





## **CSI4: MEETING THE NEEDS OF GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE**

- I.1 Halton Borough Council is committed to ensuring that members of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities have access to decent and appropriate accommodation sufficient to meet their needs.

### **Policy CSI4 : Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

Appropriate provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be made by testing the suitability of sites against the following criteria:

- a) The proposal is not unacceptably detrimental to the amenity or character of the surrounding area
- b) The site is not affected by pollution, contamination, flooding or other environmental factors that would result in unacceptable living conditions
- c) The site is well designed and landscaped to give privacy between pitches/plots and, where appropriate, between the site and adjacent users
- d) The site is well located on the highway network with adequate vehicular and pedestrian access, and provision for parking and circulation
- e) The site is accessible to local services and facilities and by public transport
- f) The site has appropriate storage areas, where required, so long as their use would not create unacceptable air or noise pollution or other nuisance, or present a risk to the health and safety of those living on or near the site
- g) The site can be supplied with essential services such as water, sewerage, drainage, and waste disposal.

Existing Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites previously approved by the Council will be safeguarded unless suitable replacement sites are provided.

### **Justification**

- I.2 Halton currently has two private Gypsy and Traveller sites located in Runcorn providing 13 pitches in total. A further 27 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches are provided through two local authority residential sites, one in Widnes (23 permanent pitches) and the other in Runcorn (4 permanent and 10 transit pitches) which opened in 2009. Therefore, in total there are currently 40 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches currently provided in Halton. There are no current plots for Travelling Showpeople.
- I.3 The need for additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and plots for Travelling Showpeople in Halton has been identified in the Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and

Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)<sup>1</sup>. The Cheshire GTAA study concluded that there is a need for additional pitch provision in Halton between 2006 and 2016 (demand for Travelling Showpeople plots was not identified). It is envisaged that the GTAA will be reviewed to ensure that need is addressed across the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

- I.4 The criteria in the policy will be used to identify suitable sites and to determine applicable planning applications. Particular attention should be paid to the amenity and character of the surrounding area and the potential of the site to accommodate the necessary infrastructure associated with the development.
- I.5 In accordance with identified need and where there is a necessary requirement for the provision of sites in the Borough, this will be allocated in an appropriate DPD.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS3: Housing
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and The University of Salford, 2007).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	2
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and The University of Salford (2007) Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

## CSI5: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 1.1 Increasing the proportion of passenger journeys made by sustainable modes including walking, cycling and public transport is an important priority for Halton. Advantages of using sustainable transport are many and varied, from reducing the number of private vehicles on the road and hence reducing congestion and exhaust emissions, and improving air quality, to encouraging healthy lifestyles through walking and cycling routes, to facilitating access to key services and facilities. It is therefore of high importance that every effort is taken to encourage travel by sustainable modes through the mechanisms available in the Core Strategy.

### Policy CSI5: Sustainable Transport

#### i. Encouraging Sustainable Transport

In order to encourage journeys to be made by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport, the Council and its partners will support a reduction in the need to travel, encourage a choice of sustainable transport modes and ensure new developments are highly accessible.

This will be achieved through:

- directing significant development, which generates a large number of trips, into the most sustainable location available in accordance with Halton's Spatial Strategy;
- ensuring all development is well connected and achieves high levels of accessibility including satisfactory access by bus, rail, walking and cycling;
- requiring the production of Travel Plans and Transport Assessments, for development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of trips; and,
- setting maximum parking standards to deter use of the private car.

#### ii. Halton's Sustainable Transport Network

To support sustainable transport across the Borough, Halton's existing Sustainable Transport Network will be protected, and improvements to the existing network and the introduction of new sustainable routes and facilities will be encouraged including:

- A cross-river sustainable transport route prioritising public transport, walking and cycling on the Silver Jubilee Bridge in association with the Mersey Gateway Project
- Pedestrian and cycling routes and facilities especially in association with the Key Areas of Change
- Increased use of the Halton Curve rail route (southwest Runcorn)
- Reinstated or new railway stations where appropriate
- An improved rail station in central Widnes
- Park and ride facilities in appropriate locations
- Capacity for innovative transport technology, including the use of alternative fuels and sources of power

Identified for their potential future use within the Halton Sustainable Transport Network the following routes and facilities will be safeguarded through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD:

- Disused or underused facilities including the Halton Curve rail route
- Sites which have been identified for reinstated or new railway stations, bus interchanges or park and ride facilities

- Potential routes to extend the Borough's pedestrian and cycling network

### Justification

- I.2 The outcome of the combined measures to encourage sustainable transport will be that there is a reduction in the number of unsustainable trips and a greater proportion of journeys made by sustainable modes including public transport, walking and cycling within and through Halton. This will contribute to a cleaner and low carbon transport system, healthier lifestyles and more sustainable patterns of development where people can connect easily to employment, services and social activities.
- I.3 To encourage and enable this shift to more sustainable modes of travel it is necessary to ensure that a successful sustainable transport network is in place. Halton's existing Sustainable Transport Network includes:
- Halton Greenway Network
  - Silver Jubilee Bridge public transport and walking routes
  - The Bridgewater Way, Mersey Way, Mersey Timberland Trail and the Trans Pennine Trail
  - Other walking and cycling routes including the Public Rights of Way, the Cycle Network and other access networks
  - Halton Core Bus Network including the Runcorn Busway and Bus Priority Routes
  - Railway routes and stations
  - Bus interchanges and bus stops
  - Waterways, including towpaths
- I.4 Although making the best use of the existing sustainable transport network and infrastructure will be the main priority in Halton, patterns of growth for the Borough and in particular the Key Areas of Change may require improvements to the existing sustainable transport network and the introduction of new sustainable routes and facilities. The existing Sustainable Transport Network will therefore be protected, and opportunities to improve the existing or provide new facilities and services where appropriate will be supported. This complements the goals set out within the Local Transport Plan (LTP) which is fundamental in the delivery of sustainable transport in Halton.
- I.5 It is also imperative that the cross-boundary nature of travel is recognised and where appropriate, opportunities are taken to ensure that public transport, walking and cycling routes are integrated across boundaries. Working with neighbouring authorities will be supported in order to achieve sustainable cross boundary accessibility particularly in conjunction with the Liverpool City Region and Mersey Travel.
- I.6 Even with the move to more sustainable modes of travel, growth will inevitably bring pressures on the highway network. As a result improvements to critical sections of the local network and the introduction of new road infrastructure will be necessary and as such the network will be managed, maintained and improved in conjunction with the Council's Highways division. New road infrastructure will be provided where the need for new road infrastructure is attributable to the effects of development and/or developer contributions will be sought in accordance with CS7: Infrastructure Provision.

- 1.7 Further detail regarding the need to encourage travel by sustainable modes will be set out in the Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This SPD will provide guidance on accessibility; outline the requirements for Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and, set car and cycle parking standards for different types of development. Routes and facilities to be safeguarded for their potential future use within the Borough's Sustainable Transport Network will be set out in the Site Allocations and Development Management Development Plan Document in accordance with Halton's LTP.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPG13: Transport (CLG, 2001); Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) (DfT, 2007).
<b>Local Evidence</b>	LTP2 (HBC, 2006); Draft LTP3 (HBC, 2010); Halton Curve Rail Improvements: Demand Study (Steer Davies Gleave, 2009); Mid-Mersey Local Authorities Cross Boundary Public Transport Accessibility Report (Atkins, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	7
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CSI6: THE MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT

- 1.1 The Mersey Gateway Project is 'more than just a new bridge', but the 'catalyst' that will connect communities and lead to regeneration and investment throughout Halton, the Liverpool City Region, Cheshire and the North West.

### Policy CSI6: The Mersey Gateway Project

#### a) Delivering the Mersey Gateway Project

The land and infrastructure necessary for the successful implementation of the Mersey Gateway Bridge will be safeguarded. Any proposals that would impact negatively or prevent the successful implementation of the Mersey Gateway Project and associated infrastructure will not be permitted.

As part of the Mersey Gateway Project, associated works will be supported and safeguarded including those related to the road network, road junctions, main toll plazas and the M56 with a focus on it's junctions in Halton.

#### b) Sustainable Transport Opportunities

Following the construction of the Mersey Gateway Bridge, opportunities to secure improved cross-river sustainable transport options will be capitalised upon, including sustainable transport opportunities associated with the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

#### c) Regeneration and Development Opportunities

Development proposals should seek to take advantage of the regeneration and development opportunities attributable to the Mersey Gateway Project, especially where this can assist in raising the quality of design in an area and the in the creation of gateway features. This will be particularly encouraged in the South Widnes (CS9) and West Runcorn (CS10) Key Areas of Change.

#### d) Environmental Impacts

Negative environmental impacts caused by the construction of the Mersey Gateway will be mitigated where appropriate, and opportunities to enhance the natural environment sought. This is particularly applicable to the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site, and Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI) and other areas of significant environmental value.



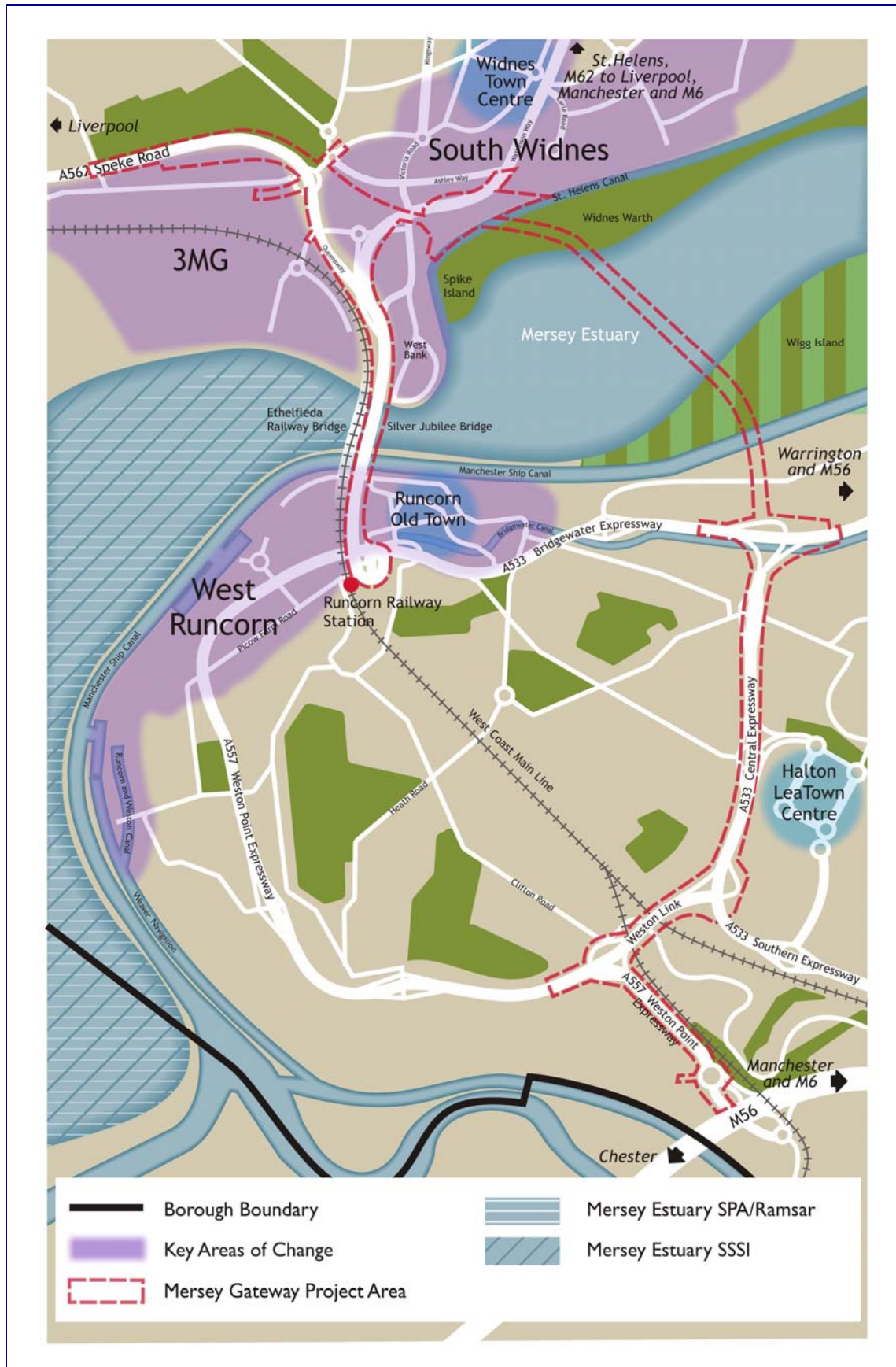


Figure XX: Mersey Gateway Project Diagram

## Justification

- 1.2 The Silver Jubilee Bridge is a key regional asset providing an important road connection across the Mersey between Runcorn and Widnes and a strategic link between the M56 and M62. It is also one of four locations where the River Mersey can be crossed, at or, to the west of the M6, with other locations being Liverpool via the Kingsway and Queensway tunnels, the A49/A50 in Warrington and the Thelwall Viaduct (M6). The Silver Jubilee Bridge however, currently suffers from congestion, particularly at peak times, which contributes to disruption and unreliable journey times, and creates a pinch point on the road network.
- 1.3 To relieve the increasing problems of congestion, Halton Borough Council is promoting the delivery of a new bridge across the River Mersey situated c. 1.8km upstream from the Silver Jubilee Bridge. The Mersey Gateway Bridge and the wider project is intended to improve cross river accessibility, connectivity and sustainable travel options and restore effective network resilience for transport across the River Mersey. As a result the Mersey Gateway Project will improve connectivity between Runcorn and Widnes and the wider sub-region and region, present opportunities for local regeneration, maximise local economic growth opportunities and ultimately become an iconic gateway for the area.
- 1.4 The plans for the Mersey Gateway Project were submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2008, and a Public Inquiry held in 2009. In October 2010 the Government confirmed its commitment to the Mersey Gateway Project<sup>1</sup>. It is anticipated that construction work will start within two years of government granting planning approval, and that the new bridge will take around three years to complete.
- 1.5 The route of the Mersey Gateway Bridge and associated infrastructure is protected through the policy to ensure the successful implementation of the project. This incorporates works associated with the wider Mersey Gateway Project including the construction of the main toll plazas and associated structures, junction improvements to link the road network, and structures and bridges to carry the main carriageway over the Freight Line and St Helens Canal and across Astmoor Industrial Estate. Works to the M56 and its junctions in Runcorn will also be supported to ensure effective network resilience and to provide increased capacity due to current congestion issues during peak hours<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.6 In accordance with the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy<sup>3</sup> the advancement of sustainable travel options in the Borough will be supported including the re-designation of the Silver Jubilee Bridge as a reliable, local link between Runcorn and Widnes. Additionally, development should have regard to the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy<sup>4</sup> and aim to ensure that opportunities for regeneration and development attributable to the Mersey Gateway Project are capitalised on. Such opportunities will be particularly supported in the West Bank area within the South Widnes Key Area of Change (CS9) as a result of the area's proximity to the Mersey Gateway Bridge and associated infrastructure, and in Runcorn Old Town within the West Runcorn Key Area of Change (CS10), due to potential opportunities presented

<sup>1</sup> DfT (2010) Investment in local Major Transport Schemes

<sup>2</sup> HBC (2008) The Mersey Gateway Project Environmental Statement (Chapter 16: Transportation)

<sup>3</sup> HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy

<sup>4</sup> HBC and GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

by the re-designation of the Silver Jubilee Bridge. Further information is detailed within the appropriate Key Area of Change policies.

- I.7 Although the design of the Mersey Gateway Bridge has been influenced by environmental considerations, the Mersey Gateway Project's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process<sup>5</sup> has identified localised negative environmental impacts particularly associated with the construction phase of the Mersey Gateway. Measures to satisfactorily mitigate negative environmental impacts and to enhance environmental quality should be managed during the construction phase of the project. It should be acknowledged that the EIA process concluded that the cumulative effects of the operational phase of the Mersey Gateway Project are mainly positive and include a range of permanent long term effects once the Bridge is operational.
- I.8 As the lead organisation for the Mersey Gateway Project, Halton Borough Council will continue to have a role in its delivery. However, the successful delivery of the Project, and hence the successful application of this policy, will rely on partnership working with the Council's public and private sector partners, including notably the Mersey Gateway Concessionaire<sup>6</sup>, on matters of transportation, regeneration and environmental mitigation.
- I.9 Although the Council is wholly supportive and dedicated to the delivery of the Mersey Gateway Project, the Core Strategy must be flexible enough to account for the circumstances in which the Project is severely delayed or potentially not delivered during the plan period and to identify how the Core Strategy would respond. This is considered in the following paragraphs:
- I.10 As part of the Mersey Gateway Project, traffic modelling was undertaken within Halton and the surrounding areas based on several scenarios. The forecasts<sup>7</sup> looked at traffic numbers in 2015 and 2030 and included comparisons against the 2006 baseline which looked at the do-minimum (no scheme) and do-something (Mersey Gateway in place) scenarios.
- I.11 From the analysis it was concluded that peak hour capacity on the Silver Jubilee has been reached. Peak hour traffic growth, over the period 2006 to 2015, across the Mersey, however, is predicted to increase by 10%. This means that in the absence of the project, traffic conditions currently experienced at the Silver Jubilee Bridge during peak hours will extend across the working day. Journey times will increase, irrespective of trip purpose, and congestion will become an inefficient way of managing demand and supply. Future growth will force trips to be made on alternative routes i.e. the Thelwall Viaduct and the Mersey tunnels. This will impact on journey times and reliability as well as the overall network resilience and performance of Halton and the wider area.
- I.12 It follows that the 'do nothing' option would have an impact upon accessibility and economic and social regeneration within and throughout Halton. In these circumstances opportunities to improve sustainable transport and deliver development and regeneration across Halton would still be pursued over the Core Strategy plan period, in accordance with applicable policies. Hence, the successful

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<sup>5</sup> HBC (2008) The Mersey Gateway Project Environmental Statement

<sup>6</sup> The Mersey Gateway Project involves the letting of a Concession Contract to a private entity for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Project. The 'Mersey Gateway Concessionaire' refers to this private entity.

<sup>7</sup> Mott MacDonald and HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Highway Model Traffic Forecasting Report

delivery of the overall Spatial Strategy for the development of Halton to 2026 would not be placed at risk should the new bridge not be completed during the plan period. However, localised impacts will need to be fully considered by future growth especially where this impacts upon the strategic highway network.

- I.13 Should the Mersey Gateway Bridge not be delivered during the Core Strategy plan period, Halton Borough Council will continue to sustain its support for a new bridge in order to deliver benefits for Halton, the Liverpool City Region and the wider north west region.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	Investment in Local Major Transport Schemes (DfT, 2010)
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy (HBC, 2009); Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy (HBC and GVA, 2008); The Mersey Gateway Project Environmental Statement (HBC, 2008); Mersey Gateway Highway Model Traffic Forecasting Report (Mott MacDonald and HBC, 2009).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	7
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS17: LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT

- 1.1 Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA) is located on the southern boundary of the local authority of Liverpool City Council adjacent to Halton Borough Council's western boundary. To ensure the airport's continued growth and investment, and as required by the 2003 White Paper "The Future of Air Transport"<sup>1</sup>, a Master Plan for LJLA<sup>2</sup> was prepared in 2007 establishing the long term framework to 2030. This Master Plan has been endorsed by the Department for Transport (DfT).

### Policy CS17: Liverpool John Lennon Airport

The operation and expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA) in line with its 2007 Master Plan will in principle be supported, including proposals for a runway extension and the new Eastern Access Transport Corridor (EATC).

#### a) Runway Extension

A runway extension to the east of the existing airport boundary will require a local change to Halton's Green Belt boundary. An area of search for the Green Belt boundary change for the runway extension is shown in figure X. The precise extent of this change, and the detailed criteria to be met in the implementation of the runway extension, will be set out in a Site Allocations and Development Management DPD or equivalent.

Any land re-designated as part of the Green Belt boundary change will only be permitted for the purpose of a runway extension and associated airport uses.

#### b) Surface Access

The provision of sustainable surface access to the airport in accordance with the Airport Surface Access Strategy will be supported to maintain existing network capacity. Additional network capacity will be met through the development of the EATC.

The route of the proposed EATC, through Halton's Green Belt, will be determined through a Development Management approach and will not require an amendment to Halton's Green Belt.

#### c) Environmental and Social Impacts

Future development and expansion of LJLA should demonstrate that it is in accordance with Halton's Sustainable Development Principles and that positive impacts are enhanced where appropriate. Negative environmental and social impacts associated with the operation and expansion of LJLA will be appropriately addressed including measures to reduce or alleviate the impacts on:

- the natural and built environment, including areas of international, national or local conservation, ecological and landscape value;
- the setting and local character of Hale Village;
- the risks associated with climatic change;
- residents and other users, of any increases in noise, road traffic, air pollution or public safety risk; and,
- the local and regional transport network

<sup>1</sup> DfT (2003) The Future of Air Transport



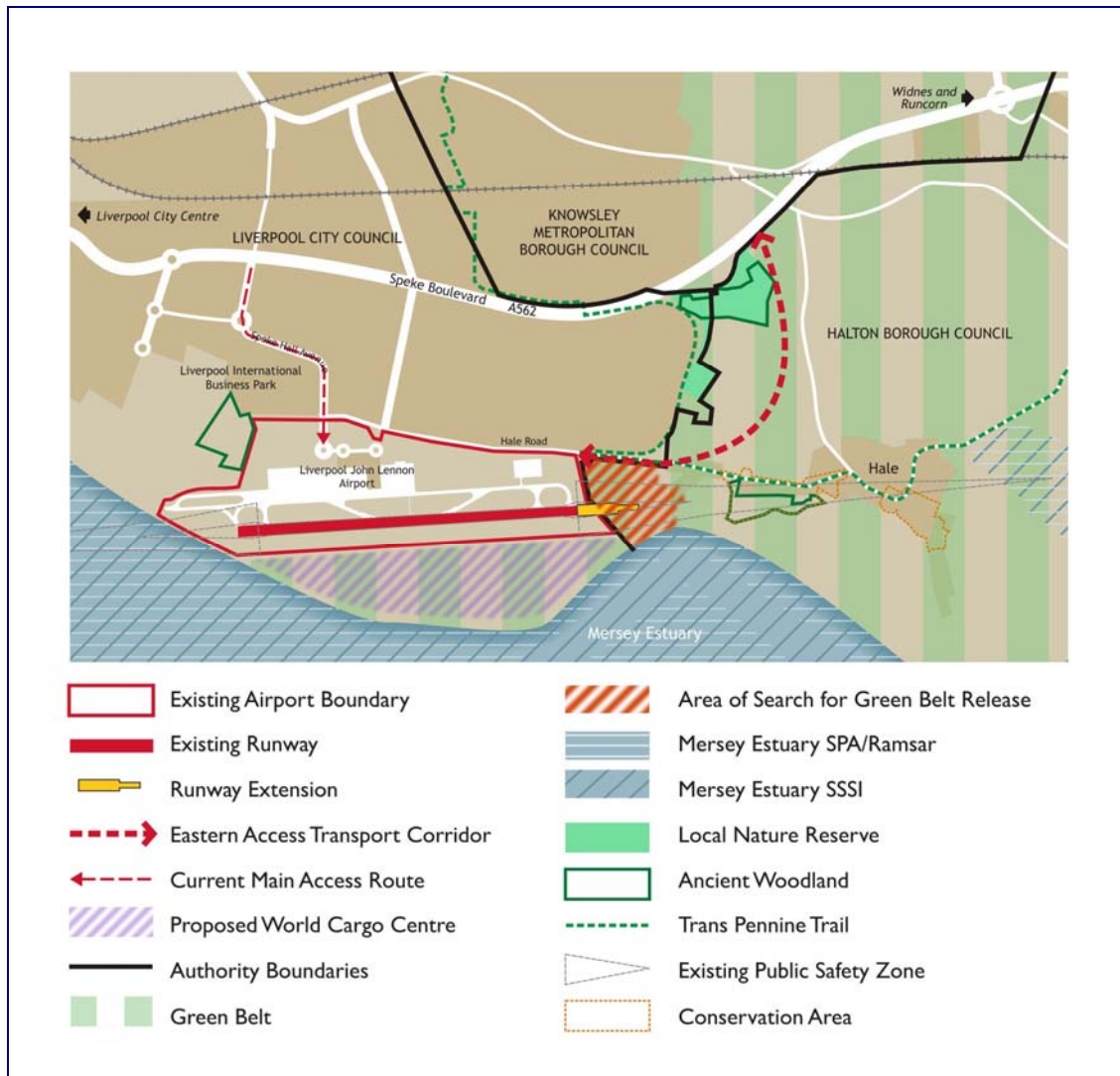


Figure XX: Liverpool John Lennon Airport Diagram

**Justification**

- 1.2 The Future of Air Transport White Paper acknowledged the importance of the future growth of air travel for national and regional economic prosperity and to deliver economic and social benefits throughout the UK. Further studies have also recognised the significance of aviation’s role in the UK economy and stimulating the development of businesses in new and existing sectors throughout the UK<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.3 Recent statistics<sup>4</sup> show that there has been a substantial growth over the past 30 years in the number of passengers travelling through UK airports, from under 60 million in 1981 to more than 241 million in 2007. By 2030 the DfT forecast that, in the absence of capacity constraints, passenger numbers at UK airports will rise to around 465 million per annum. LJLA anticipate through their 2007 Master Plan that passenger

<sup>2</sup> Liverpool John Lennon Airport (2007) Airport Master Plan to 2030

<sup>3</sup> AOA (2009) Cleared for Take Off: Airports Providing Lift to an Economy in Recovery

<sup>4</sup> Department for Transport (DfT) (2009) UK Air Passenger Demand and CO<sub>2</sub> Forecasts

numbers will increase to from 3.4 million per annum in 2004 to 12.3 million per annum by 2030.

- I.4 Along with strong predicted growth in future years for the passenger sector, freight has been identified as one of the main growth sectors for LJLA and the wider Liverpool City Region. The Airport Master Plan anticipates that expansion of the freight facilities at the airport will see it handling 220,000 tonnes of freight per annum by 2030.
- I.5 The Master Plan recognises that if the airport is to grow its passenger services and freight facility in the long term, it needs to invest in the infrastructure to take larger, longer range aircraft. In particular, the runway needs to be lengthened and strengthened to take long haul wide-bodied aircraft with the tonnage and fuel loads necessary to reach long haul destinations and the major intercontinental freight hubs. The airport would also require additional defined areas for the stationing of freight aircraft separate from passenger areas and the land resource for the large distribution and handling warehouses.
- I.6 Although the Airport has assessed how much of the required development could be achieved on the existing site, this is not seen to be a long term solution. The Airport, therefore, will need to expand beyond its existing boundary to accommodate future desired growth. This will include an extended runway to the east of the airport (due to land constraints to the west) and an Eastern Access Transport Corridor (EATC) to serve the freight facilities and passenger growth. Both the proposed runway extension and EATC fall within areas of Halton's Green Belt. To serve the expansion of freight facilities at LJLA the Masterplan proposes a new 'World Cargo Centre' which would require an extension to the south of the airport boundary into Liverpool City Council's Green Belt. The proposed runway extension, EATC and World Cargo Centre are indicated in figure X.
- I.7 The runway extension will require a change to Halton Borough Council's Green Belt boundary which will be addressed through Halton's Site Allocations and Development Management DPD or equivalent document. This document will consider the detailed requirements for LJLA's future growth and subsequent runway extension. An area of search for the Green Belt Boundary change is shown on the Key Diagram; however, the Site Allocations DPD or equivalent will determine the precise boundary of the Green Belt boundary change. Any future release of Green Belt land shown within the area of search will only be permitted for the purposes of the Airport's runway extension and associated airport uses that cannot be accommodated elsewhere. Land outside of the Area of Search will not be considered for Green Belt release. Public consultation will be undertaken during the stages of production for the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD or equivalent document.
- I.8 In order to secure LJLA's future growth it is necessary to maintain safe, convenient and sustainable access to the airport. LJLA has developed an Airport Surface Access Strategy<sup>5</sup>, which reflects the Airport's aspirations to encourage travel to and from the Airport by sustainable transport modes. However, there is also recognition that the majority of journeys will continue to be made by car and that sufficient highway capacity to serve the airport must be maintained. Although the Airport will continue to optimise capacity along the Speke Boulevard Corridor (A561) there is potential to provide additional capacity in the form of the EATC in order to accommodate future growth. The EATC would follow a route of about 2km from Speke Boulevard through

<sup>5</sup> The Airport Surface Access Strategy is subject to ongoing review and update.



Halton's Green Belt towards the Airport's boundary. The EATC will not require an amendment to the Green Belt boundary and as such will be subject to standard planning processes.

- I.9 The operation and planned expansion of LJLA will have important impacts on the Borough of Halton. This includes increased national and international connectivity, expansion of freight transportation sectors, economic benefits including job creation, and various environmental impacts and opportunities. Additionally, the development of 3MG, and in the longer term Mersey Gateway Port, can substantially increase the offer of the Liverpool City Region as an international freight gateway or "SuperPort"<sup>6</sup>.
- I.10 It is essential to ensure that LJLA's future growth is sustainable and that there is a commitment to Halton's sustainable development principles, as such negative environmental and social impacts associated with the expansion and operation of the Airport should be assessed and any negative effects should demonstrate that they can be effectively mitigated or compensated. Specific consideration should be given to the Mersey Estuary SPA, Ramsar Site and SSSI, the coastal location of the airport, the proximity to Hale Village and the sustainable transport network including the Trans Pennine Trail.
- I.11 Matters relating to development within LJLA's Public Safety Zone (PSZ) (shown in figure X) will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance<sup>7</sup> and the Planning for Risk SPD<sup>8</sup>. The basic policy objective for the PSZ is that there should be no increase in the number of people living, working or congregating in the zone. Any extension of the PSZ in accordance with LJLA's proposed runway extension will be shown in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD.
- I.12 Opportunities to work jointly on proposals associated with LJLA's expansion and its associated implications for Halton, including with Airport authorities, Liverpool City Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, and other partners will be sought to ensure a joined-up approach to the future growth of LJLA.

<sup>6</sup> TMP (2008) Liverpool SuperPort - The Liverpool City Region "SuperPort" concept encompasses the Port of Liverpool, the Manchester Ship Canal, Liverpool John Lennon Airport, 3MG, Mersey Gateway Port, other localised freight infrastructure and the wider logistics network. It aims to ensure that these assets become a key driver of the Liverpool City Region's economy creating the most effective and cost efficient environment for freight logistics and passenger transit in the UK.

<sup>7</sup> Department for Transport (DfT) (2002) Circular 01/2002: Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones

<sup>8</sup> HBC (2009) Planning for Risk Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPG2: Green Belts; The Future of Air Transport (DfT, 2003); Cleared for Take Off: Airports Providing Lift to an Economy in Recovery (AOA, 2009).
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Airport Master Plan to 2030 (Liverpool John Lennon Airport, 2007); Liverpool SuperPort (TMP, 2008)
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	4 and 7
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CSI8: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

- I.1 The design of places and spaces can have a profound effect on the way that we live, how we understand an area, the way that we treat an area and the way that we move through it. It is crucial for development design in Halton to be of a high quality, build upon an area's character, be adaptable to changing situations, and provide safe, healthy and accessible environments for all members of society.

### Policy CSI8: High Quality Design

Achieving and raising the quality of design is a priority for all development in Halton. All development design should be consistent with the following design principles and in particular respond positively to the context and identity of Halton, including waterfront areas, the historic and natural environment and the identified Key Areas of Change.

Development proposals, where applicable, will be expected to:

- provide attractive and well designed residential, commercial and industrial developments appropriate to their setting;
- enhance and reinforce positive elements of an area's character contributing to a 'sense of place', including the incorporation of public art where appropriate;
- respect and respond positively to their setting, including important views and vistas, landmark buildings, features and focal points that have been identified in a proper context appraisal;
- be flexible and adaptable to respond to future social, technological and economic needs of the Borough;
- promote safe and secure environments through the inclusion of measures to address crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour;
- create public spaces which are attractive, promote active lifestyles and work effectively for all members of society;
- incorporate appropriate landscape schemes into development designs, integrating local habitats and biodiversity;
- provide safe, secure and accessible routes for all members of society, with particular emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport;
- be well integrated and connected with existing development; and,
- be designed sustainably with future management and maintenance in mind.

### Justification

- I.2 All development in Halton is required to demonstrate high quality design with the aim of creating high quality environments where people want to live, work, play and visit.

In order to achieve high quality design in the Borough it will be necessary for all development proposals to not only have a thorough understanding of a site's design characteristics but also to have a wider understanding of Halton's individual character and context.

- 1.3 To meet these design principles, development proposals will be expected to implement current design guidance and principles. This will include publications and documents from the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and English Heritage, alongside national standards for instance the 'Building for Life' standard, to ensure that housing designs are adaptable and accessible, and the use of the 'Secured by Design' principles which focuses on crime prevention through development design for homes and commercial premises.
- 1.4 The high quality design principles for the Borough expressed in this policy will also be supported by a range of policies within the LDF including the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD and appropriate SPDs. Area specific policies within DPDs and SPDs will also provide design guidance to ensure that positive elements of an area's character are enhanced and reinforced.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPSI: Delivering Sustainable Development.
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Draft Design of New Residential Development SPD (HBC, 2009); Design of New Industrial and Commercial Development SPD (HBC, 2005).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	8
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	A Healthy Halton, A Safer Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CSI9: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 1.1 The deployment of renewable and low-carbon energy and the design and construction of future development has a central role in delivering sustainable growth, contributing to the mitigation and adaptation of climate change and ensuring energy security. The UK Government has set a legally binding target of 34% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050<sup>1</sup>. There are also UK targets to generate 20% of electricity from renewable sources by 2020<sup>2</sup> and an objective to deliver zero carbon and sustainable developments that are adaptable to changing climatic conditions.

### Policy CSI9: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

All new development should be sustainable and be designed to have regard to the predicted effects of climate change including reducing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions and adapting to climatic conditions. The following principles will be used to guide future development:

- The Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 will be required as a minimum standard for residential development, rising to Level 4 in 2013 and to Level 6 in 2016.
- The BREEAM 'Very Good' standard will be required as a minimum standard for non-residential development, rising to 'Excellent' standard in 2013.
- Development should incorporate appropriate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including passive design features, water efficiency and conservation measures, and the management of surface water run-off.
- Reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be sought through the incorporation of energy efficient building design solutions as a first priority, and secondly through energy supply from decentralised renewable and low carbon sources.
- Minimum carbon reduction targets will remain in line with the successful implementation of the revisions to Part L of the Building Regulations<sup>3</sup>, however, development will be expected to seek to improve CO<sub>2</sub> emissions savings above the Building Regulations baseline.
- Development proposals should maximise, where appropriate, the use of available local opportunities for district heating, particularly in association with the Key Areas of Change and Energy Priority Zones.
- Proposals in appropriate locations for large scale grid-connected renewable and low carbon energy and equipment, including, but not limited to wind, solar photovoltaics, and Combined Heating and Power schemes will be supported.
- Proposals for renewable, low carbon or decentralised energy schemes will be supported provided that they do not result in unacceptable harm to the local environment which cannot be successfully mitigated.

<sup>1</sup> HM Gov (2008) Climate Change Act

<sup>2</sup> HM Gov (2009) UK Renewable Energy Strategy

<sup>3</sup> CLG (2010) Circular 06/2010: New Approved Documents for F, J and L and Guidance Documents

## Justification

- 1.2 New development will be required to incorporate current best practice in sustainable design and construction. In achieving this, development proposals must offer an integrated approach to sustainable development incorporating mitigation and adaptation measures against the future impacts of climate changes.
- 1.3 The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and the Building Research Establishment Environment Assessment Method (BREEAM) are the most widely accepted rating systems for assessing the environmental performance and sustainability of homes and buildings<sup>4</sup>. These standards set individual 'sustainability ratings' covering performance across a number of sustainable design and construction principles. Although there are variations across the standards, categories include energy, water, materials, pollution, ecology, health and well-being and management. To ensure Halton achieves high standards of sustainability, development should meet the appropriate CSH and BREEAM standards unless it is proven that this would cause the development to become unviable.
- 1.4 An integral component of the sustainability standards includes reducing carbon emissions through reducing energy demand and utilising sustainable sources of energy. In line with national targets and commitments, new residential development is intended to be zero carbon by 2016<sup>5</sup> and non-residential development by 2019<sup>6</sup>. Changes to the Building Regulations are expected to bring in these challenging CO<sub>2</sub> emissions targets, with the energy requirements of the CSH and BREEAM aligned accordingly. For instance based on the standards in the energy requirement in the CSH, the step by step tightening of Building Regulations is intended to be equivalent to CSH Level 3 in 2010, Level 4 in 2013 and Level 6 in 2016.
- 1.5 To support the new Building Regulations and to ensure the planning system contributes to reducing carbon emissions, development is required to show how improvements to CO<sub>2</sub> emission savings can be made over the Building Regulations (Part L) baseline<sup>7</sup> with a focus on reducing the demand for energy as a first priority and then utilising renewable and low carbon energy. Where minimum standards cannot be exceeded, developers are required to provide evidence that all options have been investigated and to provide evidence that further CO<sub>2</sub> emissions savings are not feasible and / or viable.
- 1.6 The changes to Building Regulations are anticipated to reduce the extra-over costs associated with meeting the sustainability ratings for CSH and BREEAM. For CSH, evidence shows that this is due to a greater part of the construction cost becoming the cost of building a Building Regulations compliant dwelling (and not part of the cost of achieving the Code rating)<sup>8</sup>. As a result it is anticipated that as CO<sub>2</sub> emission reductions are integrated into Building Regulations in line with national targets, achieving higher levels of the CSH and BREEAM will become more viable.

<sup>4</sup> If the CSH or BREEAM are superseded by other national standards over the plan period then developments should comply with the most up to date national guidance.

<sup>5</sup> CLG (2010) Ministerial Statement 'Zero Carbon Homes'

<sup>6</sup> In the 2008 Budget, the Labour Government announced an ambition for all new non-domestic buildings to be zero carbon from 2019, with consultation on the timeline and its feasibility. Since the change of Government no further announcements have been made.

<sup>7</sup> Including and future revisions to Part L: CLG (2010) Circular 06/2010: New Approved Documents for F, J and L and Guidance Documents

<sup>8</sup> CLG (2010) Code for Sustainable Homes: A Cost Review

- 1.7 Building a comprehensive spatial understanding of the opportunities for decentralised, low carbon and renewable energy is fundamental to delivering carbon reduction targets and increasing the proportion of decentralised energy. To provide the evidence base for such an approach the Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study<sup>9</sup> was commissioned by the Liverpool City Region authorities (including West Lancashire and Warrington). As part of the study Energy Priority Zones across the Sub-Region were identified for the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. For Halton this indicated prospective areas for District Heating networks based on the available data, the critical mass of heat demand and development growth. This primarily identified Daresbury and Runcorn Waterfront as Energy Priority Zones but also considered Widnes Waterfront and 3MG as having potential for District Heating Networks. As a result the Council will support the development of Energy Priority Zones for District Heating particularly within the Borough's Key Areas of Change and encourage future proposals to connect to such networks.
- 1.8 Large scale grid connected renewable energy developments also have an important role to play in contributing to national and local targets for reducing carbon emissions and producing energy from renewable sources. Although the Renewable Energy Capacity Study did not identify significant scope for large scale renewable energy developments in Halton, future potential may exist as renewable technology advances and economies of scale become more widely realistic. Sub-regional developments that contribute to the production of renewable energy will be supported including the Power from the Mersey project subject to the management and mitigation of any identified environmental impacts.
- 1.9 ... Potential to insert indicative renewable energy generation taken from the Renewable Energy Study ...
- 1.10 The Council intends to produce an SPD to supplement this policy and to provide advice and guidance to aid developers and householders on how sustainable design and construction techniques, and carbon reduction can be incorporated into new development.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	Climate Change Act (HM Gov, 2008); UK Renewable Energy Strategy (HM Gov, 2009); Circular 06/2010: New Approved Documents for F, J and L and Guidance Documents (CLG, 2010).
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (ARUP, 2010); Halton Economic Viability Assessment (DTZ, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	9
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>9</sup> ARUP (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study



## CS20: NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 1.1 Halton's natural and historic environments provide the Borough with a range of biological, geological and heritage assets which are not only of environmental value but provide a social and economic resource and ultimately contribute to the character of the Borough's landscapes. These assets should therefore be conserved and where possible enhanced for current and future generations and to ensure a strong sense of place and improve local distinctiveness.

### Policy CS20: Natural and Historic Environment

Halton's natural and heritage assets, and landscape character will contribute to the Borough's sense of place and local distinctiveness in accordance with the following:

- A hierarchical approach will be given to nature conservation and the protection of biodiversity and geodiversity including:
  1. Sites of international importance including the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and 'Ramsar' site;
  2. Sites of national importance including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) namely; The Mersey Estuary, Flood Brook Clough and Red Brow Cutting; and,
  3. Sites of local importance including Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Local Geological Sites, Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodland, and habitats and species identified in Halton's Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).
- Opportunities to enhance the value of Halton's natural assets should be taken including restoring or adding to natural habitats and other landscape features, and the creation of habitats where appropriate.
- The Borough's heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Areas of Archaeological interest, Scheduled Monuments and other buildings and structures of local architectural or historical interest will be conserved and enhanced and special regard will be had to their setting.
- The strength of landscape character and condition as informed through the Halton Landscape Character Assessment will be conserved and enhanced.
- The management of natural and heritage assets, and landscape character through the development and implementation of Management Plans, Action Plans and area appraisals will be encouraged, particularly in association with local communities.
- Replacement or compensatory measures will be employed where appropriate to ensure that there is no net loss of natural or heritage assets or landscape character as a result of development.

### Justification

- 1.2 Halton contains a wealth of natural assets which are protected as international, national and locally important sites. Statutory protected sites are afforded the highest level of protection with a high priority also given to those that are locally significant

and which provide an important source of environmental, social and economic benefit for the Borough

- I.3 The Mersey Estuary is an important resource for internationally important wintering birds and as such is afforded the highest levels of protection through its designation as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the European Convention Wild Birds Directive and a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. Halton has three Sites of Significant Scientific Importance (SSSI): Flood Brook Clough SSSI, Mersey Estuary SSSI and Red Brow Cutting SSSI. All of which are recognised as of national importance due to their biodiversity and geodiversity features. Locally significant sites include 47 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) which support a range of habitats and species, three Local Geological Sites (Halton Castle, Quarry Ct Widnes and Keckwick Hill), 154ha of woodland and numerous priority habitats and species identified within the Halton Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)<sup>1</sup>.
- I.4 In addition to the conservation of biodiversity, it is also important to explore opportunities for enhancement, including restoring or adding to networks of natural habitats and other landscape features. This is essential for the mitigation, dispersal and genetic exchange of species, contributing to the Boroughs Green Infrastructure Network (Policy CS21)
- I.5 Heritage assets are defined as those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest<sup>2</sup>. It is important to conserve and enhance these assets as they contribute to Halton's sense of identity.
- I.6 Halton has 126 Listed Buildings, 2 of which are Grade I listed, 17 are Grade II\* and the remaining 107 are Grade II listed. There are also seven scheduled monuments including Duck Decoy, Halton Castle and Lovel's Hall. Of these designations, Daresbury Hall, a Grade II\* Listed Building, and Undercroft of West Range (Norton Priory) and Halton Castle, both Scheduled Monuments, are considered to be 'at risk'<sup>3</sup> and require necessary maintenance. Conservation Areas, of which there are ten in Halton, are areas of special architectural or historic interest designated by the Council. Within a Conservation Area there is a statutory duty to pay 'special attention' to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.
- I.7 Not all locally important features of local historic or architectural interest are listed or part of a Conservation Area. However, they can still provide a valuable contribution to the local historic environment and can make an important contribution to creating a sense of place and local identity. This could include buildings and other structures and features, archaeological remains, historic open spaces and the wider historic landscape or townscape. Building and structures of local importance will be identified in a Local List SPD.
- I.8 The overarching aim of the policy is to conserve and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of Halton. To achieve this areas of significant landscape character have been identified by Halton's Landscape Character Assessment<sup>4</sup> (2009). The study identifies distinctive special features and characteristics of the Borough's landscape and has divided the Borough into broad landscape character types and more detailed

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<sup>1</sup> HBC (2003) Halton Biodiversity Action Plan

<sup>2</sup> CLG (2010) Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

<sup>3</sup> English Heritage (2010) Buildings at Risk Register

<sup>4</sup> TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

landscape character areas. The Landscape Character Assessment provides guidance on the strength and condition of the landscape within each of the nine distinct landscape character areas and makes recommendations on the conservation, enhancement, restoration or creation of landscape character through a series of landscape strategies and guidelines which are based upon the landscape's capacity to accommodate change. New developments will be expected to have particular regard to these landscape character strategies and guidelines.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; Consultation Paper on PPS9: Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment.
<b>Local Evidence</b>	TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment; Halton Biodiversity Action Plan (HBC, 2003); State of the Borough Report (HBC, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	10
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS21: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 1.1 Green infrastructure is the network of multifunctional green space and other environmental features, both new and existing, both rural and urban. Amongst its many benefits, green infrastructure can improve sustainability, health and well-being, support and enhance biodiversity, contribute to climate change adaptation, improve environmental quality and provide recreational and sporting opportunities.

### Policy CS21: Green Infrastructure

Halton's green infrastructure network will be protected, enhanced and expanded, where appropriate. Halton Borough Council working alongside other partners and agencies responsible for the delivery and maintenance of green infrastructure will achieve this through:

- Ensuring that new development maximises opportunities to make provision for high quality and multifunctional green infrastructure taking account of deficiencies and the standards for green space provision.
- Resisting the loss of green infrastructure where there are identified deficiencies in provision.
- Protecting, enhancing and where possible creating linkages and connections between natural habitats and other landscape features which contribute towards a network of green spaces and corridors of value for biodiversity, recreation and the amenity needs of the community.
- Improving accessibility, where appropriate, to the green infrastructure network particularly where this encourages walking and cycling.
- Maximising the contribution of Halton's green infrastructure to broader sustainability objectives including health, climate change adaptation, and maintaining and improving biodiversity.
- Identifying the Borough's multifunctional green infrastructure network and preparing detailed policies within the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD for its protection.
- Sustaining the protection afforded to internationally important sites for biodiversity by managing recreational impacts and encouraging the use of the wider green infrastructure network which is less sensitive to recreational pressure.
- Using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to the quality, connectivity and multifunctionality of the Borough's green infrastructure network.
- Supporting the delivery of programmes and strategies to protect, enhance and expand green infrastructure across the Borough including local and sub-regional strategies and Regional Park initiatives.

## Justification

- 1.2 For the purposes of Halton's LDF, green infrastructure is defined as:
- Parks and Gardens – including parks and regional parks
  - Amenity Green Space – including informal recreation spaces, green spaces in and around housing
  - Outdoor Sports Facilities – including formal playing fields, golf courses and other outdoor sports areas
  - Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces – including woodlands, scrub, grassland, heath or moor, wetlands, open and running water and bare rock habitats
  - Green Corridors – including rivers and canal banks, road and rail corridors, cycling routes, pedestrian paths, and rights of way
  - Other – including allotments, community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards
- 1.3 Green infrastructure, as defined, is present across Halton from the urban green space areas of Town Park and Victoria Park, the waterways and canals including the Sankey and Bridgewater Way Canals, to areas of nature conservation interest, play areas, parks and golf courses. However, it is their 'multifunctionality' which is central to the green infrastructure concept and approach. This is the potential for green infrastructure to have a range of functions and to deliver a broad range benefits<sup>1</sup>. Multifunctionality can apply to individual sites and routes, but it is when the sites and links are taken together that a fully multifunctional green infrastructure network is achieved.
- 1.4 The Borough's green infrastructure network contributes significantly to the quality of life for Halton's residents, workers and visitors, through providing opportunities for sport and recreation and contributing to healthy living and well-being. Green infrastructure creates a sense of place allowing for greater appreciation of valuable landscapes and biodiversity and heritage assets. It also plays an important role in sustainable design, makes a positive impact to adapting to the potential risks of climate change including flood risk, and provides opportunities for sustainable transport. In addition, green infrastructure contributes significantly to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, by creating an ecological network allowing for the movement of wildlife along corridors and facilitating the colonisation of new areas.
- 1.5 Clear priorities for the protection, enhancement and, where appropriate, the expansion of green infrastructure will be set out in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD and through masterplanning for strategic sites. Future studies, including a Green Infrastructure Strategy, will assist in this approach identifying the current network, areas of deficiency and surplus, and opportunities for enhancement and, where possible, expansion. This may include progressing opportunities for connecting green infrastructure assets as identified by the Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework<sup>2</sup>. Such studies will be particularly important within the Key Areas of Change and where it can be used to mitigate the negative impacts of development.
- 1.6 A review of open space, sport and recreation facilities has been undertaken for the Borough in accordance with the advice in Planning Policy Guidance 17. Halton's Open Space Study<sup>3</sup> considered the quantity, quality, accessibility and adaptability of provision

<sup>1</sup> Natural England (2009) Green Infrastructure Guidance

<sup>2</sup> MEAS (2010) Draft Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework

<sup>3</sup> HBC and PMP (2004 and as updated 2006) Halton Borough Council Open Space Study

and the local needs of the population. The study concludes that Halton has predominantly good quality and accessible open spaces although there are specific areas of priority. The study report sets out local standards of provision (table X) which should be taken into consideration by future development. These standards will be updated through the Green Infrastructure Strategy following the changing approach from open space to the wider green infrastructure network and as such will necessitate an update to the evidence base. Future amendments to the standards will be detailed within the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD or another appropriate document within the LDF.

Category	Standard (ha per 1000 population)
Allotments and Community Gardens	0.09
Amenity Open Space	1
Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space	2.75
Outdoor Sports Facilities	2.75
Parks and Gardens	1.25
Provision for Children and Young People	0.2

Table X: Halton Borough Council Standards of Provision for Green Space / Green Infrastructure

- 1.7 Although the recreational potential of the Borough's green infrastructure network is an important aspect of its multifunctionality it is also necessary to balance this against potential detrimental effects on sensitive sites. As identified in the Habitats Regulations Assessment<sup>4</sup> this is particularly relevant for European sites, specifically the Mersey Estuary Ramsar Site and Special Protection Area (SPA). Recreational impacts should be managed for these sites through access and habitat management and through prioritising other assets within the Borough's green infrastructure network for their recreational potential.
- 1.8 It is recognised that Halton's Green Infrastructure network cannot be delivered in isolation from other partners and agencies and neighbouring Local Authorities. As such the evolution of localised and cross boundary frameworks and studies over the Core Strategy period are supported where these contribute to the aims of protecting, enhancing and expanding the Borough's green infrastructure network. This includes site specific masterplans and studies, and sub-regional green infrastructure and ecological frameworks. Programmes of delivery and initiatives concerning Regional Parks and assets that are relevant to the Borough will also be supported.

POLICY FRAMEWORK:	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; Consultation Paper on PPS9: Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment; PPS12: Local Spatial Planning.
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Borough Council Open Space Study (HBC and PMP, 2004 and as updated 2006); Draft Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework (MEAS, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	10
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	A Healthy Halton, Children and Young People in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton

<sup>4</sup> Scott Wilson (2010) Halton Core Strategy Habitats Regulation Assessment – Appropriate Assessment

<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	



## CS22: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- 1.1 Ensuring the Borough's communities have good health and well-being is a major priority for Halton. Statistics show that health standards in Halton are amongst the worst in the country and highlight that this is an aspect of life in the Borough in need of urgent improvement. It is essential that policies are put in place that tackle the underlying causes of health problems in the Borough, and facilitate the provision of healthy lifestyles and healthy environments for all.

### Policy CS22: Health and Well-Being

Healthy environments will be supported and healthy lifestyles encouraged across the Borough by ensuring:

- proposals for new and relocated health and community services and facilities are located in accessible locations with adequate access by walking, cycling and public transport;
- applications for large scale major developments are supported by a Health Impact Assessment to enhance potential positive impacts of development and mitigate against any negative impacts
- the proliferation of Hot Food Takeaway outlets (Use Class A5) is managed; and,
- opportunities to widen the Borough's cultural, sport, recreation and leisure offer are supported.

### Justification

- 1.2 When compared with other areas in England, Halton is within the worst 20% of areas for life expectancy<sup>1</sup> and ranks 371 out of 408 Local Authorities in terms of health deprivation<sup>2</sup>. As referred to in Halton's Story of Place, the Lancaster University Health Study<sup>3</sup> showed that the Borough's health issues are connected to poor lifestyles and levels of deprivation. Some particularly prevalent health problems include obesity and diabetes, respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, cancers, alcohol abuse, depression and mental illness, and smoking related diseases.
- 1.3 Current studies have shown that improving health and well-being is a cross-cutting issue and cannot be achieved in isolation. In accordance with the Borough's partners and applicable strategies, including the Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment<sup>4</sup>, and the Ambition for Health Strategy and Commissioning Strategic Plan<sup>5</sup>, many of the policies in the Core Strategy promote healthy environments and lifestyles by, for example, promoting travel by walking and cycling, protecting the Borough's open spaces and improving air quality through reducing congestion. However, in order to address the significant problem of health and well-being in Halton, it is necessary to

<sup>1</sup> ONS (2008) Life Expectancy at Birth

<sup>2</sup> CLG (2007) The English Indices of Deprivation

<sup>3</sup> Lancaster University (2003) Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton

<sup>4</sup> Halton and St Helens NHS (2009) Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

<sup>5</sup> HBC and St Helens NHS and PCT (2009) Ambition for Health Strategy and Commissioning Strategic Plan

support further measures which will help to facilitate healthy lifestyles and environments, and alleviate health problems.

- 1.4 It is imperative to ensure that there is sufficient access for Halton's communities to a whole range of health and community services and facilities, especially when considering that the Borough's population is ageing, potentially putting even greater demands on these services and facilities. Such services and facilities can contribute to community cohesion and identity, and can present opportunities for residents to pursue healthy and fulfilling lifestyles. As such proposals for new and the relocation of health and community services and facilities should ensure that they are sited in the most accessible locations and support access by a range of sustainable transport modes.
- 1.5 It is considered that some development, particularly large schemes, may have negative impacts on health. To ensure that development will not create or exacerbate health problems and equally to take advantage of opportunities to improve health and well-being in the Borough, the production of Health Impact Assessments to identify and address potential health impacts for large scale major developments<sup>6</sup> will be required.
- 1.6 In addition to these interventions there is a need to manage the concentration and clustering of hot food takeaway shops across the Borough which can have potential adverse impacts on community health and on the viability of the Boroughs town, district and local centres (CS5: A Network of Centres for Halton). Current data suggests that the number of A5 Hot Food Takeaway uses in the Borough is increasing with a high clustering of these uses in Widnes Town Centre and Runcorn Old Town. The prevalence of uses such as these can influence eating habits and has been linked to the risk of obesity<sup>7</sup>. In Halton, 37% of Year 6 pupils were classed as overweight or obese in 2008/09, this is higher than both the North West (23.1%) and England (32.6%)<sup>8</sup>. A Hot Food Takeaway SPD will be developed to set out a range of requirements and recommendations for such uses to ensure that possible adverse effects caused by an over-abundance of hot food takeaways are minimised.
- 1.7 Culture, sport, recreation and leisure can also significantly contribute to health and well-being and as such should be supported. The Borough has many positive attributes including a multifunctional Green Infrastructure network, extensive pedestrian and cycle routes, facilities for culture and the arts, including the Brindley Arts Centre, and a number of waterfront environments afforded by the Mersey Estuary and the Borough's waterways which present opportunities for leisure and recreation. In accordance with other policies in the Core Strategy and to sustain positive lifestyle choices, opportunities to improve and extend this offer should be taken.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS: Delivering Sustainable Development
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton (Lancaster University, 2003); Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Halton and St Helens NHS, 2009); Ambition for Health Strategy

<sup>6</sup> Large Scale Major Developments: Residential - 200 dwellings / 4ha or more

All other uses – 10,000sq.m or more / 2ha or more

<sup>7</sup> Government office for Science (2010) Tackling Obesity: Future Choices – Project Report 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

<sup>8</sup> HBC (2010) State of the Borough Report (National Child Measurement Programme)

	and Commissioning Strategic Plan (HBC and St Helens NHS and PCT, 2009); State of the Borough Report (HBC, 2010).
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	11
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	A Healthy Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

## CS23: MANAGING POLLUTION AND RISK

- 1.1 Halton is affected by risk to its population, environment and buildings from a variety of sources from both within and outside of the Borough. The domination of Halton's past and current economy by industry has left a legacy of pollution, particularly ground contamination which presents a physical and financial barrier for development to overcome. Today, industrial processes in the Borough are carefully controlled through environmental legislation and permits to ensure that pollution is managed. In addition to these statutory processes it is important that the mechanisms available through planning processes are also used to minimise the effects of pollution on health and the environment.
- 1.2 In addition to the effects of pollution, there are parts of the Borough affected by high levels of risk from hazardous installations because of the nature of the industrial processes taking place. The Borough is also subject to risks associated with both tidal and fluvial flooding from the Mersey Estuary and the rivers, brooks and waterways which run through the Borough.

### Policy CS23: Managing Pollution and Risk

#### Pollution

To control development which may give rise to pollution:

- Development proposals should not exacerbate and where possible should minimise all forms of emissions and odour, water, noise and light pollution
- Proposals for development within or close to identified Air Quality Management Areas in the Borough should have specific regard to how the exceedance in air pollutants can be addressed and how the impact on receptors can be reduced
- Prior to development on potentially contaminated land or unstable land, sites should be investigated to ascertain the extent of any contamination and possible risks to future uses. Development will only be permitted where the land has or will be, made suitable for the proposed use. Where it is not possible to achieve the full remediation of a site, the Council may seek soft-end or green uses

#### Reducing Risk from Hazards

To prevent and minimise the risk from potential accidents at hazardous installations and facilities, the following principles will apply:

- Minimisation of risk to public safety and property wherever practicable
- Controlling inappropriate development within identified areas of risk surrounding existing hazardous installations or facilities, to ensure that the maximum level of acceptable individual risk does not exceed 10 chances per million and that the population exposed to risk is not increased
- Ensuring that any proposals for new or expanded hazardous installations are carefully considered in terms of environmental, social and economic factors

#### Managing Flood Risk

Development should not exacerbate existing levels of flood risk nor place residents or property at risk from inundation from flood waters. This will be achieved by:

- Directing development to areas where the use is compatible with the predicted level of flood risk, both at present and taking into consideration the likely effects of climate change
- Using Halton's SFRA to inform the application of the sequential approach/test and exception test in accordance with national planning policy

- Requiring site-specific Flood Risk Assessments for proposals in areas at risk from flooding as identified in the Halton SFRA
- Supporting proposals for sustainable flood risk management (e.g. defence / alleviation work) so long as they do not have a detrimental impact on the landscape of the Borough

### Justification

- 1.3 New development should minimise all forms of pollution, manage actual or potential conflicts between sources of risk and surrounding land uses, with the safety of wider communities and the protection of the environment of paramount importance throughout.
- 1.4 In 2009, air pollutants were found to be in exceedance of acceptable levels in two separate locations in Widnes town centre. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels at the junctions of Milton Road/Gerrard Street and Deacon Road/Albert Road in the town centre were found to be above objective levels, with the source of the exceedance found to be emissions from road traffic. In accordance with legislation, DEFRA requires that Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are designated at such locations in order to lower the level of NO<sub>2</sub> to within appropriate levels. In order to address the issues in the AQMA, an Air Quality Action Plan will be drawn up which will propose a range of measures which can contribute to reducing levels of pollution. Any specific measures arising from the Air Quality Action Plan which require an input from planning will be addressed in a relevant LDF document.
- 1.5 While the Borough has had some major successes in recent years with remediation and re-use of contaminated land, there remain some parts of the Borough which have proven to be too contaminated to develop and too costly to remediate. In these instances, green or soft-end uses will be sought to ensure that land can be used beneficially and does not cause issues of blight to surrounding land uses. Adjacent to the Mersey Estuary, particularly in Widnes there is a clustering of areas of contamination given the concentration of heavy industry in this area in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In 2008 it was estimated that there are approximately 400 hectares of contaminated land in the Borough<sup>1</sup>. Given the predominance of contaminated land close to the Mersey, it will be particularly necessary for developments within the Key Areas of Change at 3MG and South Widnes to address contamination issues. The Mersey Gateway Project will also have a key role to play in bringing contaminated sites back into beneficial use.

Insert map indicating broad location of contaminated sites

- 1.6 Much of Widnes is underlain by coalfields which have the potential to create ground stability issues to new and existing development. The Coal Authority has designated a 'Coal Mining Development Referral Area'<sup>2</sup> which covers most of Widnes, where potential land stability and other safety risks associated with former coal mining activities are likely to be greatest. They include, for example, recorded mine entries and areas of former surface mining. For all development proposals which fall within

<sup>1</sup> HBC (2008) Contaminated Land Strategy 2008-2013

<sup>2</sup> The Coal Authority (2010) Halton Coal Mining Referral Area  
[www.coal.gov.uk/media/viewer/?mid=8101DCED-9DC1-65C0-02B4F431790CAF97](http://www.coal.gov.uk/media/viewer/?mid=8101DCED-9DC1-65C0-02B4F431790CAF97)

Halton's Coal Mining Referral Area, the Council will apply the Coal Authority's standing advice and refer relevant applications to them in accordance with their risk based approach to development management.

- 1.7 Given the nature of the historic and current industrial sector in Halton, the Borough is home to a number of hazardous installations identified under the 'Control of Major Accident Hazards' (Planning) Regulations 1999 (and its amendments) (known as COMAH). Advice on the nature and severity of the risk presented by operations at specific sites is provided by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Council is required to consult the HSE on any application for a hazardous installation or within the designated consultation zone surrounding COMAH sites. Ultimately, it is for the Council to make decisions on planning applications, taking into account the advice of the HSE along with any wider social and economic benefits which may outweigh any adverse impacts. In addition to the COMAH sites, the Borough contains a number of major pipelines carrying hazardous chemicals through the Borough.
- 1.8 The Council proposes to continue to use a risk-based approach to managing the risk arising from hazardous installations in the Borough. A risk based approach looks at the **likelihood** of an event actually happening which is in contrast to a hazard based approach which looks at the **consequences** of an accident event happening. The level of acceptable risk should not exceed 10 chances in a million (cpm) individual risk of death and this level is used to assess whether the effect of a development proposal is significant in affecting individual accidental risk. This uses the same approach to assessing the risk arising from hazardous installations as for airports and is a methodology that Halton Borough Council has developed in partnership with the HSE over many years. Further background to Halton's approach to risk and guidance on the approach to development applications relating to hazardous installations is provided through the Planning for Risk SPD<sup>3</sup>.

Insert map showing location of COMAH sites

- 1.9 As discussed in policy CS17: Liverpool John Lennon Airport, the operation of the airport presents a risk to Halton and a Public Safety Zone (PSZ) has been established which reflects the area most affected by the movements of aircraft. Currently this extends over a small area of the Borough, but in accordance with the runway extension proposals the PSZ will be extended accordingly to reflect the larger area of risk associated with the airport.
- 1.10 The Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 was endorsed by the Environment Agency and finalised in 2007<sup>4</sup>. This indicates where there are flood risk issues in the Borough and provides a detailed and robust assessment of its extent and nature. A Level 2 SFRA has been produced in 2010<sup>5</sup> and provides a key source of information to ensure that future development does take place in areas known to be at risk of flooding, or increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Any development application in an area at risk from flooding will need to be supported by a site level Flood Risk Assessment which should build upon information in the SFRA.
- 1.11 The SFRA Level 2 concentrates on the key locations at a medium or high risk of flood risk as identified in the SFRA Level 1. These areas are Ditton Brook (Widnes), Bowers Brook (Widnes) and Keckwick Brook (Runcorn). The Study also covers the risk of a

<sup>3</sup> HBC (2009) Planning for Risk Supplementary Planning Document

<sup>4</sup> HBC (2007) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 1

<sup>5</sup> JBA Consulting (2010) Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 2

breach of the Manchester Ship Canal and of tidal flooding from the Mersey Estuary which includes modelling of the likely effects of sea level rise on the incidence and ferocity of a flood event. Need to add in conclusions from SFRA when they are known.

Insert map showing SFRA flood risk areas

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPSI, PPG14, PPS23, PPG24, PPS25, DfT Circular 01/2010
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Halton Air Quality Management Areas, Halton Contaminated Land Strategy 2008-2013, Planning for Risk SPD
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	11 and 12
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton, A Safer Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	



## CS24: WASTE

- 1.1 The Council's aim for sustainable waste management is that an adequate range of waste management facilities will be provided to ensure that waste generated in Halton is treated and disposed of in a sustainable and environmentally acceptable way, balancing the economic, social and environmental needs of the Borough. A large proportion of Halton's current waste goes to landfill<sup>1</sup>. The move away from landfill disposal towards more sustainable means of dealing with waste, through promotion of waste management and recycling, brings a requirement to develop the range of facilities required to meet the Borough's needs.

### Policy CS24: Waste

The Council will promote sustainable waste management in accordance with the waste hierarchy, to:

- identify and safeguard (where appropriate) waste management sites in appropriate locations suitable for new and enhanced waste management facilities for the identified waste management needs of Merseyside & Halton. The allocation of sites and detailed development management policies will be provided in the Joint Merseyside Waste Development Plan Document.
- ensure that the Borough can meet the identified waste management needs;
- encourage good design in new development in order to minimise waste, promote the use of recycled materials and, to facilitate the collection and recycling of waste;
- encourage the sustainable transport of waste and promote use of site waste management plans; and
- ensure that waste management facilities are developed whilst minimising the impacts on the environment and communities of the Borough.

### Justification

- 1.2 European legislation, government targets, increased waste generation, the need for improved environmental protection, and rising public expectations all drive the need for rapid changes in our approach to managing waste. In particular, Merseyside (including Halton) needs to reduce its reliance on landfill by providing alternative facilities for recycling, reprocessing, treatment and disposal. It will be necessary to promote all forms of waste reduction ensuring that Halton's residents are aware of their responsibility for minimising waste.
- 1.3 The Merseyside Joint Waste Development Plan Document (Joint Waste DPD) will provide policy guidance standards for waste and allocate sites for waste purposes. A Spatial Strategy and Sites Report, Issues and Options Report and a Preferred Options Report have been prepared for the Joint Waste DPD outlining the various strategies and options available and recommending a Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy. The Spatial Strategy is a resource recovery-led strategy which aims to maximise the ability to

<sup>1</sup> HBC (2010) State of the Borough Report

achieve self-sufficiency in waste management. Halton's approach to implementing the principles of sustainable waste management for all waste streams takes into account all of the sustainable waste management principles and will ensure that all facilities are developed in line with the principles of the waste hierarchy (Figure X).

**Insert diagram of the Waste Hierarchy**

- 1.4 This approach is in accordance with Halton's Municipal Waste Management Strategy<sup>2</sup> and recognises the importance of the sub-regional apportionment of waste and through the Joint Waste DPD and will provide alternative facilities for recycling, reprocessing, treatment and disposal of Halton's waste.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton (HBC, 2008); State of the Borough Report (HBC, 2010); Emerging Joint Merseyside Waste DPD
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	13
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>2</sup> HBC (2008) Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton

## CS25: MINERALS

- 1.1 Minerals such as crushed rock aggregates, sand, gravel and clay are the essential raw materials that underpin development of the built environment. Halton Borough Council as a Minerals Planning Authority has the responsibility to plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregate minerals to ensure primary resources are maintained for future generations, minimise potential environmental impacts of such developments and to support economic growth.

### Policy CS25: Minerals

To minimise the need for minerals extraction the use of recycled and secondary aggregates across the Borough will be encouraged.

Although there are limited mineral resources in the Borough<sup>1</sup>, Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Areas of Search for sand and gravel resources will be identified and protected to prevent their sterilisation. The Site Allocations and Development Management DPD will allocate areas of minerals resources and set out the criteria for their potential extraction.

### Justification

- 1.2 Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and Minerals (MPS1) requires Minerals Planning Authorities to plan for minerals within their administrative boundaries. A requirement of MPS1 is to identify areas of search, preferred areas, and site specific allocations for future minerals development as well as safeguarding areas where minerals exist.
- 1.3 Minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they exist. This means that possible extraction sites are limited. There are currently no operational mineral sites in the Borough and there is limited evidence of previous activity. Information held by the Coal Authority additionally indicates that there are no surface coal reserves in the Borough<sup>2</sup>. The Urban Vision Study on Mineral Planning in Merseyside has shown that Halton does not contain a significant amount of high quality minerals. However, the study does identify four potential sites of sand and gravel mineral resources which should be protected to prevent their sterilisation. The Site Allocations and Development Management DPD will identify Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Areas of Search in accordance with the Urban Vision study and other appropriate studies, and set out the detailed criteria to be met by proposals for minerals extraction.
- 1.4 For the reasons stated above, Halton and the wider Liverpool City Region are highly reliant on imports of high quality aggregate for use in the construction industry. It is therefore vital to reduce reliance on land-won minerals extraction by encouraging an increase in the amount of recycled and secondary aggregates used in new construction. The incorporation of resource efficient design and construction techniques will also be vital in minimised the need for minerals extraction and should be pursued in accordance with CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

<sup>1</sup> Urban Vision (2008) Mineral Planning in Merseyside

<sup>2</sup> The Coal Authority (2010) Surface Mining Coal Resource Areas  
[www.coal.gov.uk/media/viewer/?mid=81BD1CC7-EDD1-8D6B-57E1466510C3C7D9](http://www.coal.gov.uk/media/viewer/?mid=81BD1CC7-EDD1-8D6B-57E1466510C3C7D9)

- 1.5 Should the supply of aggregate minerals from the Borough become of economic importance and become necessary to contribute towards meeting the regional apportionment of aggregates provision<sup>3</sup>, mineral extraction may become necessary. Proposals for minerals extraction will be required to ensure that environmental, social and economic issues and impacts are fully considered and where adverse affects are identified, they are effectively managed and mitigated.

<b>POLICY FRAMEWORK:</b>	
<b>National Policy</b>	PPSI; MPSI; MPS2; CLG (2009) National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2005-2020.
<b>Local Evidence</b>	Urban Vision (2008) Minerals Planning in Merseyside.
<b>Strategic Objectives</b>	13
<b>SCS Priorities</b>	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
<b>SA Objectives</b>	
<b>SA Outcome</b>	

<sup>3</sup> CLG (2009) The National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2005-2020

# **HALTON CORE STRATEGY PROPOSED SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I HOUSING TRAJECTORIES

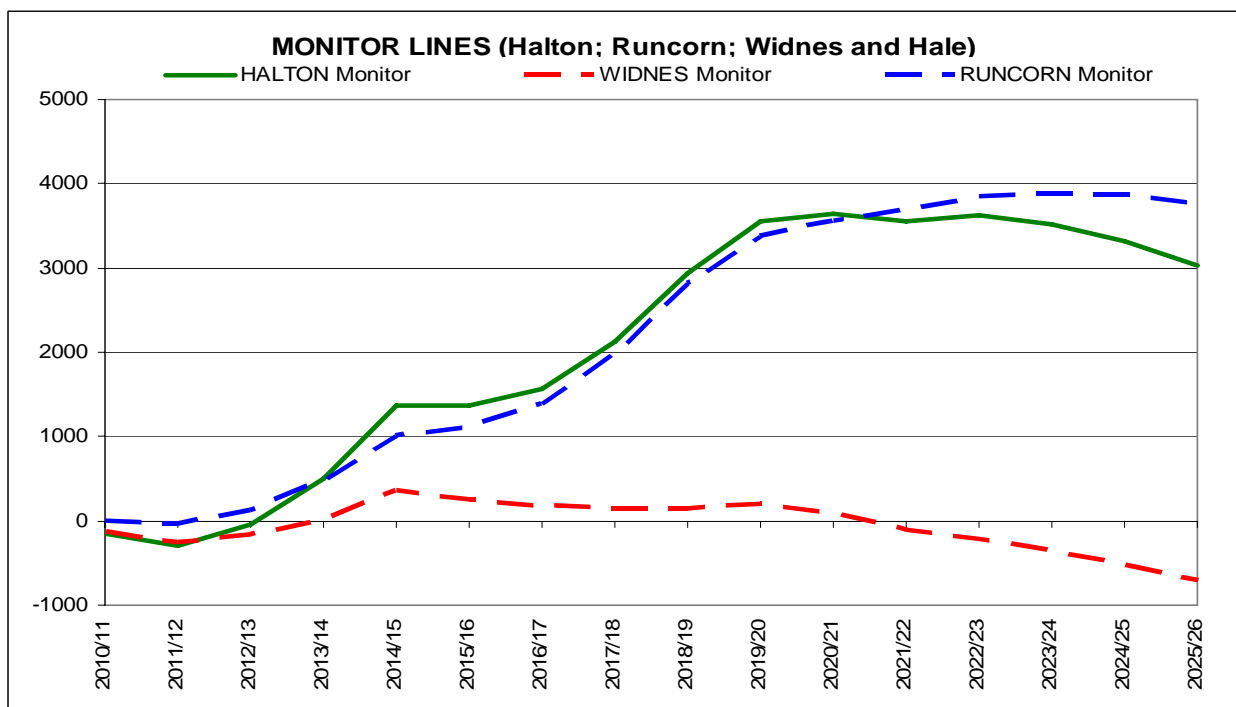
Housing trajectories track housing completions (Housing Baseline report) and forecast potential completions (SHLAA) against the housing development targets as set out in Policy CS3. This demonstrates the robustness and soundness of the overall housing strategy in the Core Strategy and provides a powerful tool to monitor performance against requirements.

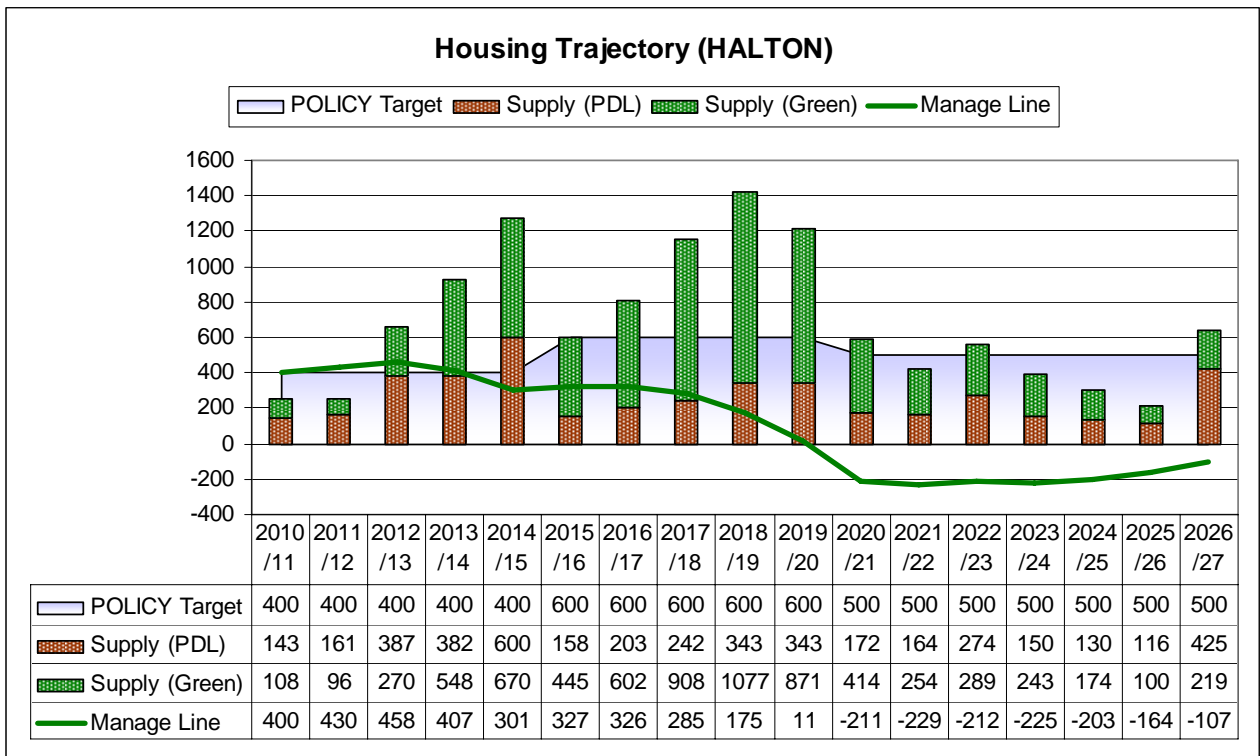
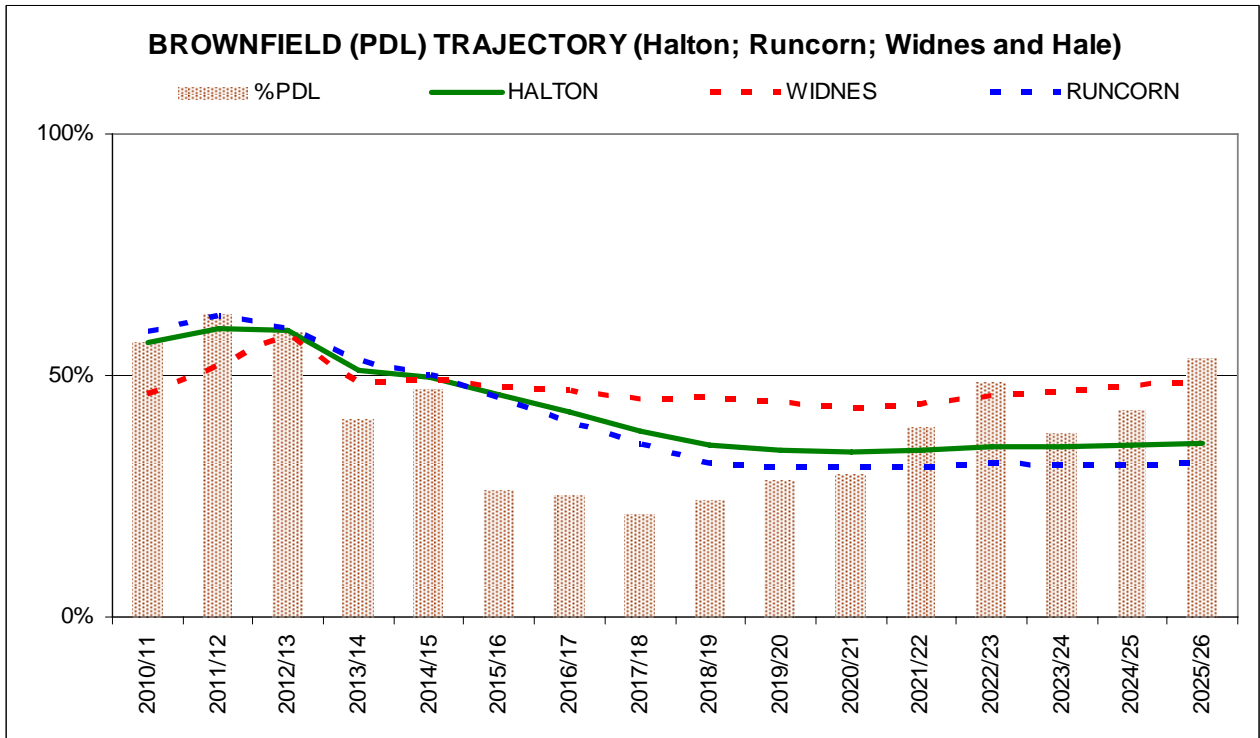
Figures from the SHLAA present potential developable and deliverable number of dwellings by year on individual sites. Updated annually, the SHLAA is subject to independent scrutiny being produced in consultation with the development community, and whilst the figures represent the potential number of units that could be provided on individual sites, it is not intended to be a forecast of actual completions across the Borough as a whole.

The Trajectories include data on two main measures:

1. The **Monitor Line** shows how many dwellings above or below the planned rate of housing supply at any one time.
2. The **Manage Line** indicates the number of completions required in each year to address any projected shortfall or surplus in supply. This is calculated by subtracting actual and projected potential completions from the cumulative policy target for each year, dividing the answer by 5 (the number of years allowed to address any variance) and adding to the policy target for that year. Hence a Manage line above the policy target indicates a shortfall in forecast supply and a Manage line below indicates a surplus in supply.

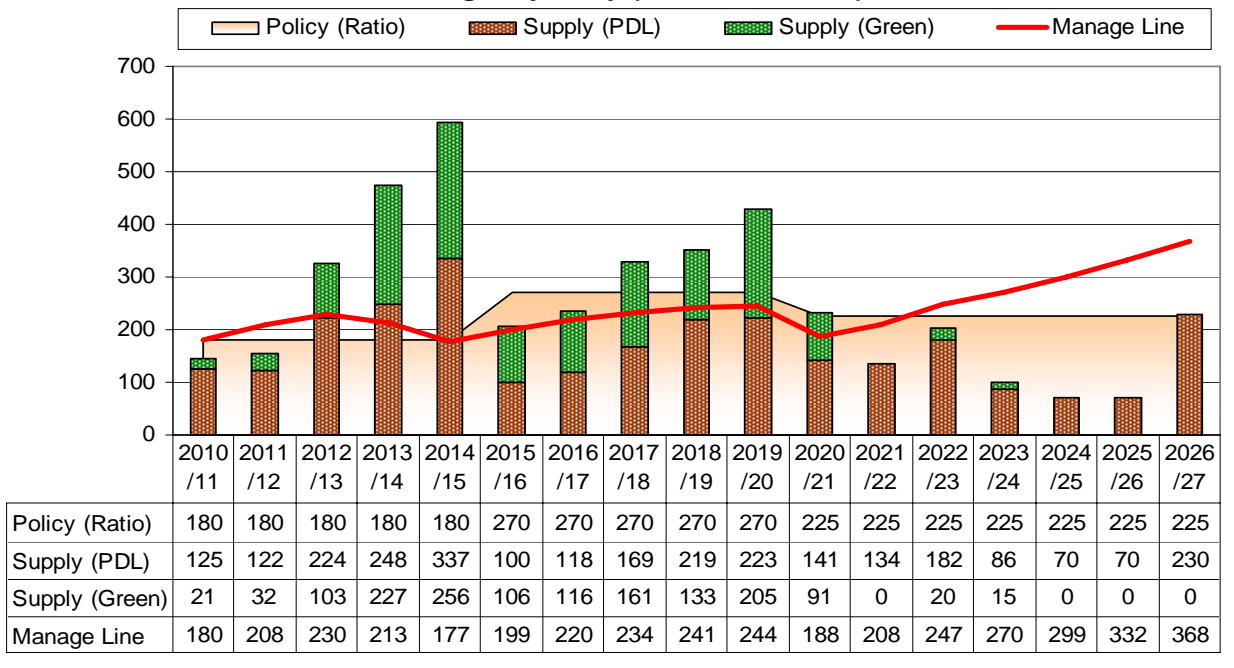
In addition, a trajectory can be created showing the cumulative proportion of actual and projected supply delivered on Previously Developed Land (PDL).



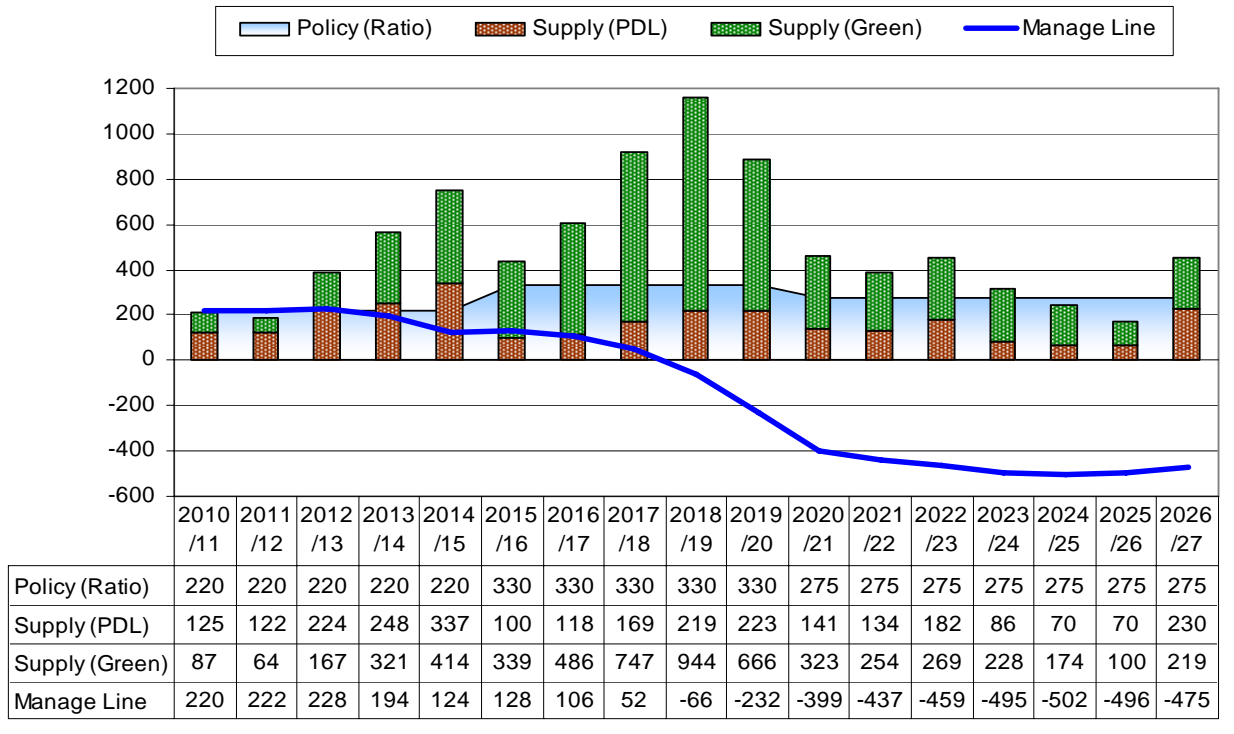




### Housing Trajectory (WIDNES / HALE)



### Housing Trajectory (RUNCORN)



## APPENDIX 2 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

1. The Monitoring Framework sets out how we will measure how successfully the policies within the Core Strategy are being implemented. Each year the Council produces an Annual Monitoring Report to specifically chart the progress of the LDF and the success of its planning policies. Prior to the production of the Core Strategy, the Annual Monitoring Report charted the implementation of policies from the Unitary Development Plan. As Halton's LDF grows, the Annual Monitoring Report will expand to monitor the implementation of policies within all of Halton's Development Plan Documents.

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
CSI	Halton's Spatial Strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Net number of new homes delivered</li> <li>2. Amount of employment land available for development</li> <li>3. Amount of retail development delivered</li> <li>4. Delivery of Key Areas of Change</li> <li>5. Percentage of new development coming forward on brownfield land</li> <li>6. Development within the Green Belt</li> <li>7. Maintain a balance in completions between Runcorn and Widnes</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 400/600/500 net new homes per annum (in accordance with current policy period), contributing to 8000 homes over the plan period to 2026</li> <li>• Target of 260ha of land available for employment development over the plan period</li> <li>• 57,000sqm of retail development across the 3 centres</li> <li>• Number of planning applications coming forward within Key Areas of Change in accordance with strategy for the area</li> <li>• Minimum of 50% of housing development and minimum of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
			80% of employment development on brownfield land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restrict general development within the Green Belt, with the exception of Liverpool John Lennon Airport</li> <li>• Average of 60:40 Runcorn: Widnes split for new housing and employment development</li> </ul>	
CS2	Sustainable Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improvement in Overall deprivation score as an indication of Quality of Life</li> <li>2. Sustained economic growth</li> <li>3. Percentage of new development coming forward on brownfield land</li> <li>4. Total amount of land remediated</li> <li>5. Reduction in carbon emissions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An improvement in Halton's rank of 30<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in the country (IMD, 2007)</li> <li>2. Improvement in the Economic Activity rate in Halton (76.2% in 2007)</li> <li>3. Minimum of 50% of housing development and minimum of 80% of employment development on brownfield land</li> <li>4. XXXXX</li> <li>5. Reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per capita by 4% per annum</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
			(Baseline of 9.4 tonnes per capita in 2008 <sup>1</sup> )	
CS3	Housing Supply and Locational Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Net number of new homes delivered per annum</li> <li>2. 5 year supply of deliverable housing land</li> <li>3. Percentage of new housing development coming forward on brownfield land</li> <li>4. Average densities delivered on new housing sites</li> <li>5. Delivery of Site Allocations DPD</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Minimum of 400/500/600 homes per annum in accordance with relevant policy period</li> <li>2. Housing land available with the potential to deliver 2000/2500/3000 units at any given time, in accordance with relevant policy period</li> <li>3. Average of 50% over the plan period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Not below 40% in any given year?</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Minimum density of 30dph, rising to a minimum density of 40dph in proximity to community facilities</li> <li>5. Adoption of Site Allocations DPD by 2014</li> </ol>	•
CS4	Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Available supply of employment land</li> <li>2. Minimise loss of land within existing employment areas for non-employment uses</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain 5 year supply of sites available for employment development</li> <li>2. No loss of land within existing employment areas</li> </ol>	•
CS5	A Network of	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allocation of sites to deliver</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adoption of Site Allocations</li> </ol>	•

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/indicators/ni186/ni186.aspx>

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
	Centres for Halton	<p>required floorspace expansion in each of the centre</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Floorspace completions in each of the centres</li> <li>3. Percentage of retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations</li> <li>4. Percentage / number of vacant units within each of the centres</li> <li>5. Percentage / number of A3/A5 units within centres</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DPD by 2014</li> <li>2. Completions of floorspace in line with required floorspace as set out in policy</li> <li>3. Minimise</li> <li>4. Minimise/Reduce over time</li> <li>5. Adoption of Hot Food Takeaways SPD by 2012</li> </ol>	
CS6	Green Belt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extent of Green Belt</li> <li>2. Controlling development within the Green Belt</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain the level of Green Belt at <b>XXXXX</b>ha</li> <li>2. Restrict general development within the Green Belt, with the exception of Liverpool John Lennon Airport or following a review of Green Belt boundaries should land need to be released in accordance with CS I</li> </ol>	•
CS7	Infrastructure Provision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amount of planning gain secured</li> <li>2. Delivery of projects within associated Infrastructure Plan</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Total planning gain</li> <li>2. As per timescales in Infrastructure Plan</li> </ol>	•
CS8	3MG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quantity of employment development at the site</li> <li>2. Jobs generated by the site <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Percentage of total jobs created filled by Halton's</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Total land area is 60ha</li> <li>2. Number of jobs generated <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 60% filled by Halton residents</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Provision of infrastructure –</li> </ol>	•

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
		residents 3. Delivery of Western Link Road 4. Delivery of new rail sidings 5. Development of HBC Field Site 6. Improvement to/no decline in the condition and setting of the Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument	in line with timescales in the Infrastructure Plan 4. Provision of infrastructure – in line with timescales in the Infrastructure Plan 5. HBC Field Site – 18ha 6. Improvement to the setting of Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument	
CS9	South Widnes	1. Quantity of employment development in Key Area of Change 2. Delivery of retail floorspace 3. Delivery of West Bank SPD 4. Air Quality in Widnes Town Centre	1. Total employment opportunities total 29ha 2. Delivery of up to 25,000SqM of convenience/comparison goods retail floorspace and 19,000SqM of Bulky Goods floorspace in line with policy 3. Adoption of West Bank SPD by 2012 4. Reduction in air pollutants to within acceptable levels	•
CS10	West Runcorn	1. Delivery of employment land across the Key Area of Change 2. Delivery of retail floorspace 3. Improvements to Runcorn Old Town Centre 4. Realise the potential of Runcorn Waterfront	1. Total employment opportunities total 27ha 2. Delivery of 5000SqM of retail floorspace in line with policy 3. Adoption of Runcorn Old Town SPD by 2012 4. Adoption of Runcorn Waterfront SPD by 2013	•
CS11	East Runcorn	1. Expansion of SIC	1. 19ha/1,000,00Sqft of	•

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
		2. Expansion of Daresbury Park 3. Delivery of housing 4. Delivery of neighbourhood centres, primary school 5. Infrastructure requirements in line with Infrastructure Plan 6. Retention of Daresbury Firs and establishment of a green infrastructure network 7. Establishing a detailed framework for the delivery of the Daresbury Strategic Site	employment at Daresbury SIC 2. Business development at Daresbury Park – 40ha 3. 1500 dwellings at Daresbury, 1400 dwellings at Sandymoor 4. In line with timescales in Infrastructure Plan 5. In line with timescales in Infrastructure Plan 6. Delivery of a green infrastructure strategy for Daresbury 7. Adoption of Daresbury SPD by	
CS12	Housing Mix	1. Provision of a range of house sizes and types provided across sites 2. Percentage of homes achieving Lifetime Homes Standards 3. Provision of specialist housing for the elderly	1. Address identified imbalances from SHMA 2. 85% (excluding dwellings which come forward on sites of less than 10 dwellings) 3. Allocating sites for specialist or extra-care housing to contribute to the delivery of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 214 extra care units</li> <li>• 22 extra care units for adults with learning difficulties</li> </ul>	•
CS13	Affordable Housing	1. Number of affordable homes delivered	<b>1. Target from SHMA:</b> a. 20-25% across sites of	•



Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Through planning agreements on private developments</li> <li>b. By RSLs</li> <li>2. Percentage of affordable homes delivered on applicable schemes</li> <li>3. Split between social rented and intermediate homes</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. greater than 15 dwellings</li> <li>b. Dependent on public subsidy</li> <li>2. 20-25% affordable housing</li> <li>3. 50:50 Social rented: Intermediate homes</li> </ol>	
CSI4	Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meeting the need for pitch provision for G, T and TS</li> <li>2. Total number of permanent and transit pitches</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allocation of sites/extension to existing sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople</li> <li>2. Increase in the current number of permanent pitches (40) and transit pitches (10) where there is an identified need for additional provision</li> </ol>	•
CSI5	Sustainable Transport	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduction in the number of unsustainable trips</li> <li>2. Number of Travel Plans associated with large trip generating uses</li> <li>3. Implementation of maximum parking standards</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Modal split data – increase in number of cyclists</li> <li>b. Increase in bus patronage</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Safeguarding of routes and facilities through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD</li> <li>3. No exceedance of maximum standards</li> </ol>	•
CSI6	The Mersey Gateway	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Delivery of the Mersey Gateway</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In accordance with timings as</li> </ol>	•

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
	Project	Bridge 2. Increase in sustainable transport use of the Silver Jubilee Bridge 3. Capitalising on regeneration opportunities presented by the Mersey Gateway Project	set out in Infrastructure Plan 2. Modal split data from the SJB 3. Adoption of West Bank and Runcorn Old Town SPDs identifying development sites	
CS17	Liverpool John Lennon Airport	1. Removal of land from the Green Belt 2. Delivery of a runway extension 3. Provision of Eastern Access Transport Corridor 4. Managing negative environmental impacts	1. Adoption of Site Allocations DPD by 2014 2. In accordance with Infrastructure Plan 3. In accordance with Infrastructure Plan 4. Minimise	•
CS18	High Quality Design	1. Resident satisfaction with area 2. Homes/commercial areas built to Building for Life / Secured by Design standards.	1. Maintain and increase current level of resident satisfaction <b>(need Baseline)</b> 2. Promotion of standards through Development Management approach	•
CS19	Sustainable Development and Climate Change	1. Reduction in Halton's contribution to climate change 2. Percentage of new residential development achieving Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 3. Percentage of new commercial development achieving BREEAM Very Good standards 4. Implementation of large scale renewable energy schemes inc.	1. 10.1 tonnes per capita (2005) 2. 100% Code Level 3 from 2011, rising to 100% Code Level 4 from 2013, and 100% Code Level 6 from 2016 3. 100% BREEAM Very Good from 2011 and 100% BREEAM Excellent from 2013	•

Policy	Policy Title	Indicators	Targets (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	Implementation and Delivery
		District Heating		
CS20	Natural and Historic Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Condition of Mersey Estuary SSSI - % favourable</li> <li>2. Area protected for local importance (LNRs/LWS/LGS)</li> <li>3. Restoration of habitats</li> <li>4. Maintaining Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings</li> <li>5. Maintaining Landscape Character Areas and their condition</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No decline in current position of SSSIs (use Natural England data)</li> <li>2. Maintain area</li> <li>3. Maintain number</li> <li>4. Landscape enhancements through relevant planning applications</li> </ol>	•
CS21	Green Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extent of Green Infrastructure network</li> <li>2. Identification of Green Infrastructure network through Site Allocations document</li> <li>3. Amount of developer contributions sought for improvements to the Green Infrastructure network</li> <li>4. Number of greenspaces awarded the Green Flag standard</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Additions to the extent and quality of the Green Infrastructure network (2009 Baseline of 1484.064ha)</li> <li>2. Adoption of Site Allocations DPD by 2014</li> <li>3. Maximise</li> <li>4. Maintain and increase the number of Green Flag award greenspaces (Baseline of 12 Green Flag awards in 2010)</li> </ol>	•
CS22	Health and Well-Being	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Percentage / number of A3/A5 units within centres</li> <li>2. Number of applications requiring a Health Impact Assessment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adoption of Hot Food Takeaways SPD by 2012</li> <li>2. All relevant applications to undertake HIA</li> </ol>	•
CS23	Managing Pollution and Risk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Development within flood zones</li> <li>2. Number of planning applications in flood zones which are permitted, contrary to the</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No highly vulnerable development</li> <li>2. None</li> <li>3. None</li> </ol>	•

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Policy Title</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b> (All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)	<b>Implementation and Delivery</b>
		advice of the Environment Agency 3. Development not in accordance with HSE endorsed approach 4. Amount of contaminated land remediated	4. <del>XXXXX</del>	
CS24	Waste	1. Safeguarding of sites for the purpose of waste management	1. Adoption of the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD by 2013	•
CS25	Minerals	1. Land won aggregates 2. Designation of sites as minerals safeguarding areas or Minerals Areas of Search	1. Contribution to the North West regional requirement 2. Adoption of Site Allocations and Development Management DPD by 2014	•

### APPENDIX 3

## SCHEDULE OF UDP POLICIES TO BE REPLACED

**(To be finalised)**

- 1.1 This appendix seeks to provide a comprehensive list of the saved policies from the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) which will be deleted upon adoption of the Halton Core Strategy.

Halton Core Strategy: Proposed Submission Document	UDP Policies to be Replaced
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SPATIAL POLICIES		
CS1	Halton's Spatial Strategy	S1, S24
CS2	Sustainable Development	
CS3	Housing Supply and Locational Priorities	S18, H2
CS4	Employment Land Supply and Locational Priorities	S19
CS5	A Network of Centres for Halton	S16, S17
CS6	Green Belt	S21
CS7	Infrastructure Provision	S25

KEY AREAS OF CHANGE		
CS8	3MG	S20, E7
CS9	South Widnes	R1, R2, R3
CS10	West Runcorn	R4
CS11	East Runcorn	S20, E6

CORE POLICIES		
CS12	Housing Mix	
CS13	Affordable Housing	
CS14	Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People	H5
CS15	Sustainable Transport	S13
CS16	The Mersey Gateway Project	S14
CS17	Liverpool John Lennon Airport	TP20
CS18	High Quality Design	
CS19	Sustainable Development and Climate Change	S10, S11
CS20	Natural and Historic Environment	
CS21	Green Infrastructure	S3
CS22	Health and Well-Being	
CS23	Managing Pollution and Risk	S4, S5, S6
CS24	Waste	S7, S8
CS25	Minerals	S7, MW4

## APPENDIX 4

### GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND LIST OF ACRONYMS

- 3MG Mersey Multimodal Gateway** The Mersey Multimodal Gateway, commonly referred to as 3MG is the regionally significant inter-modal (rail–road) freight terminal located on the West Coast Main Line at Ditton (Widnes).
- Affordable Housing** Affordable housing includes social rented and intermediate housing, provided at below market rates to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market and includes social rented and intermediate housing. A full definition is included in Annex B to PPS3.
- AA Appropriate Assessment** Comprising the latter two stages of Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA), Appropriate Assessment (AA) is the assessment of likely effects of a development plan or proposal on the integrity of designated European wildlife sites, and the identification of mitigation measures or alternative solutions, where appropriate.
- AAP Area Action Plan** An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a Development Plan Document (DPD) within the Local Development Framework (LDF), which provides the planning framework for a specific geographic area.
- AMR Annual Monitoring Report** The AMR is part of the local development framework and assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being successfully implemented.
- AQMA Air Quality Management Area** AQMAs are declared by Local Authorities in areas where there is poor air quality and national air quality objectives are not being met. AQMAs can range in size from a couple of streets to much bigger areas. Once declared, the Local Authority must compile a plan to improve the air quality in this area.
- BAP Biodiversity Action Plan** A Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) provides an overarching framework for habitat and species conservation, and works on the basis of partnership to identify local priorities and targets.
- BREEAM Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method** BREEAM is a family of assessment methods and tools used to assess the environmental performance of any type of building (new and existing).
- Brownfield Land** See Previously Developed Land (PDL)
- CFS Code for Sustainable Homes**
- CHP Combined Heat and Power**
- CLG (Department for) Communities and Local Government**
- CSH Code for Sustainable Homes** The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) is an environmental assessment method for new homes and contains mandatory performance levels in 7 key areas.
- Conservation Area** A Conservation Area is any area of “special architectural or historic interest” whose character or appearance is worth protecting or enhancing. This

“specialness” is judged against local and regional criteria, rather than national importance, and designation leads to restriction of permitted development. There are 10 Conservation Areas in Halton.

**COMAH Control of Major Accident Hazards** (Regulations, 1999) COMAH regulations apply mainly to the chemical industry, but also to some storage activities, explosives and nuclear sites, and other industries where threshold quantities of dangerous substances identified in the Regulations are kept or used and aim to ensure all necessary measures to prevent major accidents and limit the consequences to people and the environment of any major accidents which do occur. This includes controlling land uses and developments within prescribed distances of regulated sites.

**CS Core Strategy**

**DfT Department for Transport**

**DPD Development Plan Document** Part of the LDF, Development Plan Documents include Core Strategies, Site Allocations DPD, Detailed Development Management DPD and Area Action Plan DPDs and form part of the statutory development plan for their area.

**DH District Heating ...**

**Energy Priority Zones**

**EqIA Equality Impact Assessment** Equality Impact Assessment is a method of assessing whether a plan, policy or project will have a foreseeable and disproportionate impact on specific sectors of society. It can help to ensure that policies and projects reflect the needs of different groups that it will affect. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Core Strategy.

**GI Green Infrastructure** Green Infrastructure (GI) is a new concept in the recognition of the environmental, social and economic, often multi-functional value of the network of natural environmental components and green and blue spaces that lies within and between towns and villages. In the same way that the transport infrastructure is made up of a network of roads, railways, airports etc. green infrastructure has its own physical components, including parks, rivers, street trees and moorland.

**Green Belt** “Green Belt” is a planning designation with the aim of keeping land permanently open for the purpose of (1) checking unrestricted urban sprawl (2) preventing neighbouring towns from merging (3) safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (4) preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and (5) assisting urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

**Growth Point** Growth Points is a central Government initiative designed to provide support to communities who wish to pursue large scale and sustainable growth, including a particular focus on housing provision. A Growth Point is a partnership between Central Government and local partners to help deliver this growth. Halton is within the mid-Mersey Growth Point area along with St. Helens and Warrington councils.



**Gypsies and Travellers** Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such.

**HSTN Halton Sustainable Transport Network** The Halton Sustainable Transport Network (HSTN) is the connected network of sustainable transport facilities in Halton, encompassing the Core Bus Network, the rail network, the Greenway Network, and other walking and cycling routes. It also includes links to transport interchanges, as well as links to sub-regional sustainable transport routes.

**HBC Halton Borough Council**

**HCA Homes and Communities Agency**

**HIA Health Impact Assessment** A method of assessing the potential health impacts, positive or negative, of a policy, programme or project. Outcomes are in the form of recommendations to minimise possible negative health impacts and enhance predicted positive ones. A rapid Health Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the Core Strategy.

**HRA Habitats Regulation Assessment** HRA is an assessment of the potential effects of a policy contained within a plan or programme on one or more sites designated as important at the European Level, namely Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Ramsar sites and candidate areas are also often assessed alongside these sites. The process of assessing development plans is split into three discrete phases: 1) Screening, or identifying whether a plan is likely to have significant effects on a European site; 2) Ascertaining the effects on site integrity; and 3) Identification of mitigation measures and alternative solutions.

**HSE Health and Safety Executive** Governmental Executive Agency responsible for promoting and enforcing workplace health and safety.

**IMD Index of Multiple Deprivation** IMD is a national indicator set combining statistics across a range of economic, social and housing issues into single deprivation scores. Published at SOA level, the IMD allows areas to be ranked across a number of domains relative to one another.

**JELPS Joint Employment Land and Premises Study** Research study commission by Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire districts to look at the supply and demand for land and premises for business purposes.

**Key Diagram** The Key Diagram is a diagrammatic interpretation of a spatial strategy contained within a spatial planning policy document such as a Core Strategy or a Regional Spatial Strategy.

**LAA Local Area Agreement** LAA is a three year agreement, based on the local Sustainable Community Strategy, that sets out the priorities for a local area agreed between Central Government and a local authority plus other key partners such as the LSP.

**LCA Landscape Character Assessment**

**LCR Liverpool City Region**

**LDD Local Development Document** LDDs are documents within the Local Development Framework (LDF).

**LDF Local Development Framework** The LDF is the portfolio of Local Development Documents (LDDs) including Development Plan Documents (DPDs), Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and process documents, including the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The LDF also includes the Saved Policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which will eventually be replaced by policies in LDDs.

**LDS Local Development Scheme** The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets the timetable for the production of the Local Development Framework and its constituent documents, and provides details of all of the Local Development Documents (LDDs) to be produced.

**Listed Building** A listed building is a building or other structure officially designated as being of special architectural, historic or cultural significance. There are three types of listed status, in descending order of importance: Grade I, Grade II\* and Grade II. Works or alterations, including certain maintenance require specific Listed Building Consent (which is separate and in addition to planning consent)

**LJLA Liverpool John Lennon Airport**

**LNR Local Natural Reserve** Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. In addition to supporting bio- and geodiversity, LNRs also offer opportunities for people to learn about and enjoy the natural environment.

**LPA Local Planning Authority**

**LTP Local Transport Plan** The Local Transport Plan (LTP) sets out the Council's objectives, strategies and policies for transport, detailing the schemes and initiatives that will be delivered, together with the performance indicators and targets used to monitor progress.

**Local Wildlife Sites** Local Wildlife Site is a designation used to protect areas of importance for wildlife at a local scale. Previously known as Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).

**Natura 2000** Natura 2000 is the European ecological network of sites established under the Habitats Directive. Its main purpose is the protection of habitat types and plant and animal species of community interest in the European Union.

**NI National Indicator** NIs are Government defined indicators used to monitor the performance of local authorities and local partnerships. Updated in 2007, there are 198 NIs, covering diverse topics including education, health, environment, crime and transport.

**NWDA North West Development Agency**

**PADHI Planning Advice for Development near Hazardous Installations** PADHI is the methodology and software decision support tool developed and used by the Health

and Safety Executive used to give advice on proposed developments near hazardous installations.

- PDL Previously Developed Land** Previously-developed land is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. The definition includes defence buildings, but excludes:
- Land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings.
  - Land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures.
  - Land in built-up areas such as parks, recreation grounds and allotments, which, although it may feature paths, pavilions and other buildings, has not been previously developed.
- Land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time (to the extent that it can reasonably be considered as part of the natural surroundings).
- PINs Planning Inspectorate** The Planning Inspectorate is the Government-Agency with responsibility for processing planning and enforcement appeals and holding examinations into Regional Spatial Strategies and Development Plan Documents.
- PPG Planning Policy Guidance** Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) are Central Government statements of national planning policy and guidance. They are being superseded by Planning Policy Statements (PPSs)
- PPS Planning Policy Statement** Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) are prepared by Central Government as statements of national planning policy and provide guidance to local planning authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system.
- PSZ Public Safety Zone** Area where new development will be restricted to control the population exposed to increased risk from a specified hazard. In Halton a PSZ extends from Liverpool John Lennon Airport runway affected by increased risk from aircraft arriving or departing the airfield.
- Ramsar Site** Wetland sites covered by the Convention on Wetlands, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971, is an intergovernmental treaty which provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.
- RSL Registered Social Landlord** Including Housing Associations and Councils, Registered Social Landlord's (RSLs) are independent not-for-profit organisations providing low cost "social housing" for those in housing need and are the UK's major provider of homes for rent, as well as providing opportunities for shared ownership.
- SA Sustainability Appraisal** This process appraises the social, environmental and economic effects of the policies contained within Local Development Documents (LDDs), including all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and where appropriate, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).
- SAC Special Area of Conservation** A Special Area of Conservation is a designation under the European Union Habitats Directive, providing increased protection to a variety of wild animals, plants and habitats and are a vital part of global efforts to

conserve the world's biodiversity.

**Scheduled Monument** A Scheduled Monument is a nationally important historic building or structure or archaeological site, given protection against detrimental and unauthorised change. When designated, Scheduled Monuments are added to the schedule (which has been kept since 1882) of monuments whose preservation is given priority over other land uses. Scheduled Monuments are also sometimes referred to as "Scheduled Ancient Monuments".

**SCI Statement of Community Involvement** The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the role that the community and other stakeholders will play in the production of all documents within the Local Development Framework (LDF), as well as their role concerning planning applications.

**SCS Sustainable Community Strategy** The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), also known as the Community Strategy, provides an overarching framework through which the corporate, strategic and operational plans of the partners within a Local Strategic Partnership can contribute. An SCS must contain a vision for the area and an action plan, as well as evidence of a shared commitment to implementation and arrangements for monitoring, review and reports of progress.

**SEA Strategic Environmental Assessment** European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. To meet the requirements of the directive, a body must prepare an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan, are identified, described and evaluated.

**SFRA Strategic Flood Risk Assessment** Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) are primarily produced by local planning authorities, in consultation with the Environment Agency, and are intended to form the basis for preparing appropriate policies for flood risk management at the local level.

**SHLAA Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment** A systematic assessment of the land developable and deliverable for housing within an area. The assessment includes a 'Call for Sites' where the public can promote sites as being suitable for housing development and appraisal of deliverability by a panel of developers and RSLs active in the local market.

**SHMA Strategic Housing Market Assessment** SHMA is a study across an identified largely 'self contained' housing market to provide understanding how the market operates and is likely to operate in the future. A SHMA provides an assessment of past, current and future trends in housing type and tenure, household size, and housing need, including an assessment of the needs of groups with particular housing requirements. In the preparation of the document, a consistent sub-regional approach is important, as is the involvement of key stakeholders in the local housing market.

**SIC Science and Innovation Campus**

**SJB Silver Jubilee Bridge**

**SINC Site of Importance for Nature Conservation**

## **SO Strategic Objective**

**SPA Special Protection Area** SPAs are designations under the European Union directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds. Together with Special Areas of Conservation, the SPAs form a network of protected sites across the European Union, called Natura 2000.

**SPD Supplementary Planning Document** Part of the LDF, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide supplementary information in respect of the policies contained in DPDs, and tend to focus on particular issues or on particular places. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to an independent examination.

**SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest** A Site of Special Scientific Interest is a national conservation designation denoting a protected area. SSSIs are the basis of other site-based nature and geological conservation, including National Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation.

**Strategic Site** A Strategic Site is an area which is considered central to the achievement of an authority's Core Strategy. National planning policy allows Core Strategies to specifically identify and allocate such sites for development.

**SuDS Sustainable Drainage System** Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) provide an alternative to the traditional methods of dealing with water drainage, aiming to mimic the natural movement of water from a development, slowing run-off, reducing flood risk, improving water quality and potentially providing attractive features.

**Travelling Showpeople** Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such), but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 1/2006.

**UDP Unitary Development Plan** A Unitary Development Plan (UDP) development plan prepared under the pre-2004 system by a Metropolitan district or Unitary Local Authority, which contains policies equivalent to those in both a structure plan and local plan, forming the part of the authority's statutory development plan. Policies from which are saved for an initial 3 year, or indeterminate period by consent of the Secretary of State and form part of the Development Plan for an area until superseded or otherwise deleted by a Development Plan Document.

**Use Classes Order** The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and subsequent amendments, group a number of land uses into categories or 'Use Classes'. Changes of use within the same Use Class or between certain different Use Classes as set out in the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) are deemed to have consent and do not require specific planning permission.