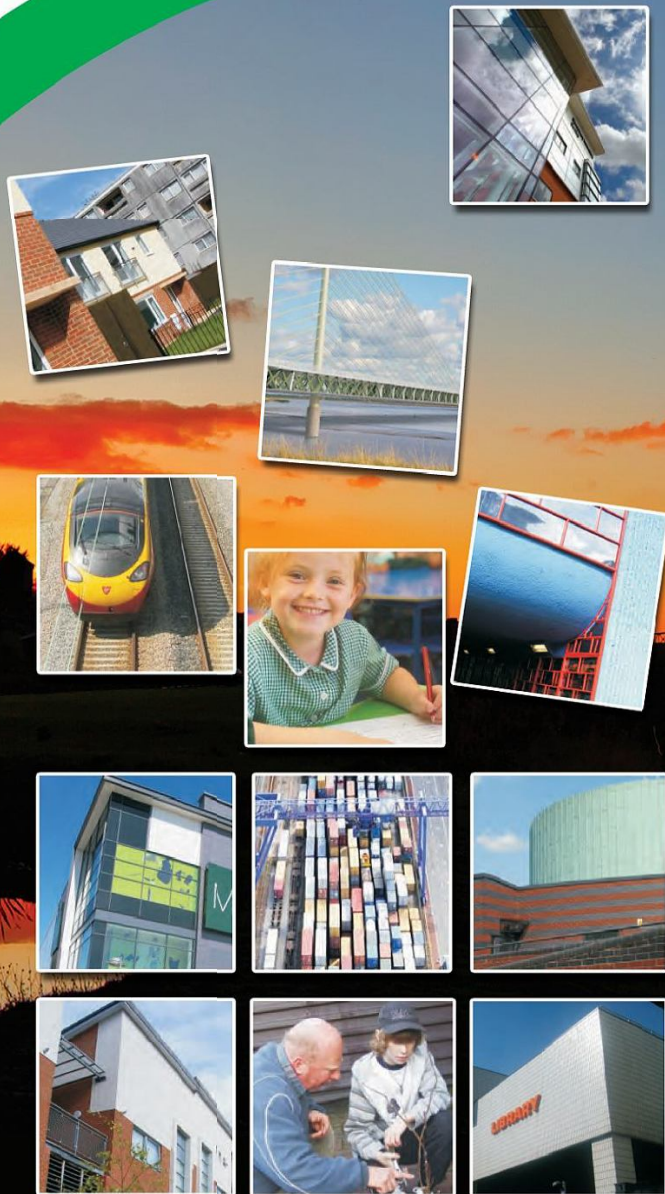


Core Strategy

April 2013



Halton Borough Council

Halton Core Strategy

April 2013

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Foreword

Welcome to Halton Borough Council's Core Strategy Local Plan which will play a crucial role in shaping the spatial development of Halton to 2028 and beyond.

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 2028 and beyond. The Core Strategy then introduces a vision for the Borough, imagining the place we would like Halton to be by 2028 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.



*Foreword by Councillor Ron Hignett
Executive Board Member: Physical Environment*

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I Introduction

What is the Core Strategy?

- 1.1 The Halton Core Strategy Local Plan is the central document within the Council's planning policy framework 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 coming years, to 2028 and beyond.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy provides the overarching strategy for the future development of the Borough, 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 2028. 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.
- 1.3 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?

- 1.4 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 27th July to 7th September 2006 representing the first stage of community involvement in the Core Strategy and the spatial planning approach that should be taken.
- 1.5 The Issues Paper began by introducing the 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 previous Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Halton for 2006-2011. 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.
- 1.6 From the Issues and Options stage, work was progressed on the Preferred Options for the spatial development of the Borough. From 24th September to 5th November 2009, the Core Strategy Preferred Options document underwent a six 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.
- 1.7 Subsequent to the Preferred Options stage, full consideration was given to the comments received, and further work was 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 represented the penultimate formal stage of consultation for the Core Strategy.

- 1.8 The Proposed Submission Document was published for an eight week period of public consultation between 29th November 2010 and 24th January 2011 for representations to be made. A number of significant representations were received, such that it was considered prudent to address a number of key issues raised. As such, a further consultation period of six weeks was programmed to consult on changes in the Revised Proposed Submission Document. This further consultation took place between 13th May and 24th June 2011. After the public consultation had closed and the representations were analysed, the Halton Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State to commence the examination into the soundness of the document on 22nd September 2011. The examination hearing sessions were held in November and December 2011. Further consultation on the modifications arising from the hearing sessions took place in summer 2012.

What is the Policy Context for the Core Strategy?

- 1.9 In producing the Core Strategy, consideration has been given to the background provided by existing policy context from the national to the local level: this is illustrated in Figure 1.

National Context

- 1.10 National planning policies are set out in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ and the accompanying technical guidance². The NPPF establishes high-level planning principles for England and requirements for the planning system, covering the full range of land use topics from sustainable development, to the historic environment, to flood risk. The only exceptions to this being national planning policy for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople which has its own standalone advice³, national planning policy for waste⁴ and selected Minerals Planning Guidance. The NPPF provides the policy basis for local Councils to produce their own local plans which respond to the specific needs of their communities. National policy statements on topics relating to strategic infrastructure such as energy, transport and water also form part of the overall framework and are a material consideration in determining planning applications. 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.
- 1.11 The Government also publishes legislation, regulations and circulars which set the legal framework for the planning process.

¹ CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115939.pdf>

² CLG (2012) Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2115548.pdf>

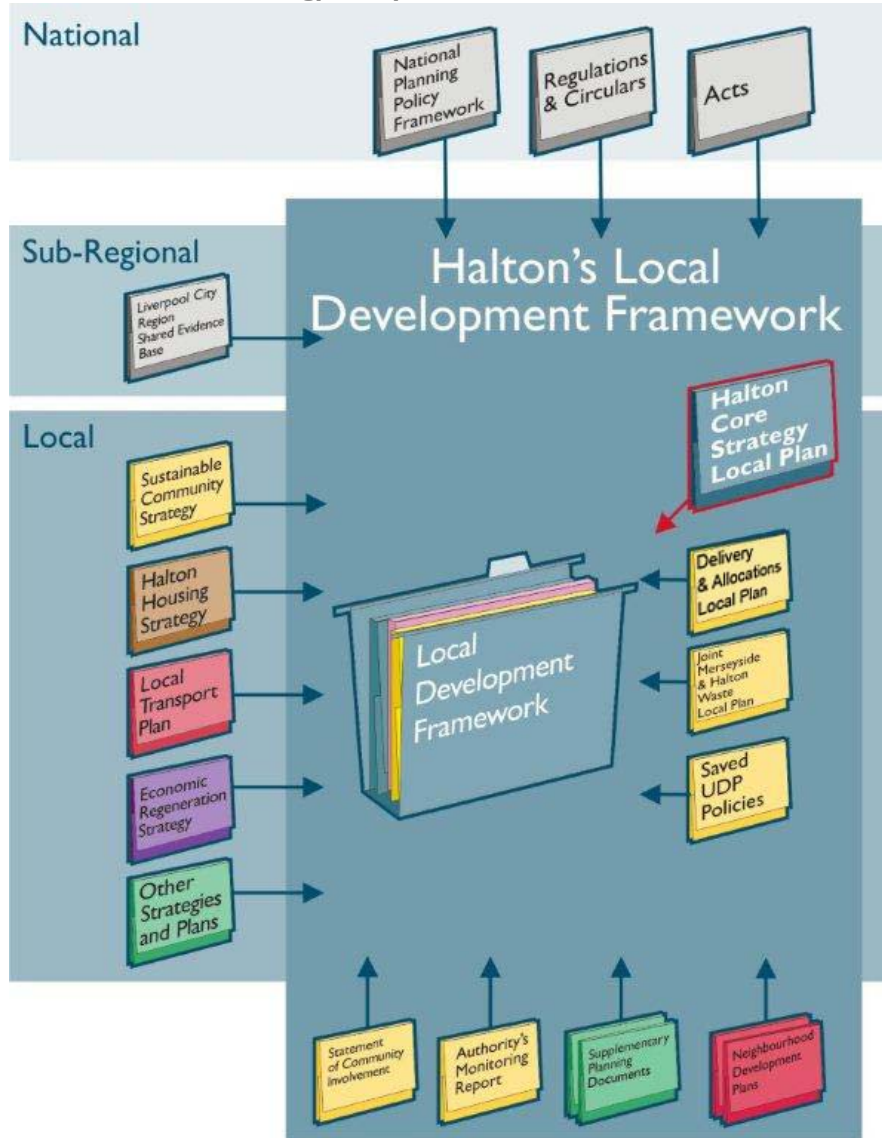
³ CLG (2012) Planning policy for traveller sites:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2113371.pdf>

⁴ CLG (2011) Planning Policy Statement 10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1876202.pdf>

Figure 1: Indicative Core Strategy Policy Context



Regional Context

- 1.12 The regional context has evolved during the development of Halton’s Core Strategy. It is the Government’s intention to abolish Regional Strategies⁵ including the North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (RSS). Once RSS is abolished, the Core Strategy will no longer have a statutory obligation to conform to previous regional targets and policy. As such, policy content in the Core Strategy which relies on policies within the RSS may be subject to review after the Regional Strategies are formally revoked.
- 1.13 In order to provide a strategic outlook for the region, the ‘Future North West: Our Shared Priorities document’⁶ was produced prior to the decision to abolish the regional tier of planning policy. The Future North West document sets out four overarching themes which are supported throughout Halton’s Core Strategy:

⁵ CLG (2010) Letter to Chief Planning Officers: Abolition of Regional Strategies 10 November 2010 (available at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/letterabolitionregional)

⁶ NWDA and 4NW (2010) Future North West: Our Shared Priorities

- **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.

1.16 Additionally, the Atlantic Gateway⁷ also informs the regional context. The Atlantic Gateway is a framework for collaboration between the Manchester and Liverpool City Regions which will help to unlock their full sustainable economic growth potential.

Sub-Regional Context

1.17 Halton forms part of the core Liverpool City Region along with the local authority areas of Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens, Wirral and 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 have been formalised through the creation of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) which is intended to provide strategic leadership for the sub-region and create the right environment for business success and economic growth. Strong working relationships exist between the authorities in the Liverpool City Region and the Mid Mersey housing market area. A shared evidence base on a variety of subjects has been produced to support local plans.

Local Context

1.18 At the local level, Halton's planning policy framework consists of Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) in addition to a number of process documents, including the Statement of Community Involvement and the Authority's Monitoring Report. The remaining Saved Policies of the Halton UDP will also eventually be replaced by policies in other Local Plans.

1.19 The Core Strategy and the wider planning policy framework 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 2011-2026⁸ 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

1.20 Flowing from these strategic themes, the Halton Strategic Partnership has prioritised three areas of focus: promoting social responsibility; reducing alcohol related harm; and, ensuring a stronger local labour force. The strategic themes of the SCS provide a framework for the Core Strategy Vision, Strategic Objectives

⁷ NWDA (2010) Atlantic Gateway: Accelerating Growth across the Manchester and Liverpool City Regions – Framework for a Global Growth Opportunity

⁸ HBC (2010) Halton Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026

and Spatial Strategy, thus helping to inform the overall approach of the Core Strategy and the future development of Halton.

- 1.21 The Core Strategy also has close ties with the Halton Local Transport Plan (LTP)⁹ 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?

- 1.22 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										
A) Infrastructure Plan	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 a 'live' document and will be updated and amended throughout the life of the Core Strategy.										
B) Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	<p>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 production of the Core Strategy. The policy amendments suggested through the SA process have been incorporated into this Core Strategy where appropriate.</p> <p>The SA objectives and a summary of the SA findings for the Core Strategy policies are shown in the Policy Framework boxes. These correspond to the following key:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="764 1371 1333 1476"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="5" data-bbox="764 1371 1333 1409">KEY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="764 1409 878 1476">Very Positive</td> <td data-bbox="878 1409 992 1476">Positive</td> <td data-bbox="992 1409 1073 1476">No Effect</td> <td data-bbox="1073 1409 1187 1476">Negative</td> <td data-bbox="1187 1409 1333 1476">Very Negative</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	KEY					Very Positive	Positive	No Effect	Negative	Very Negative
KEY											
Very Positive	Positive	No Effect	Negative	Very Negative							
C) Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Assesses the potential effects of the plan on sites designated for the habitats and species they support 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 the latter two stages, termed Appropriate Assessment, completed as part of all subsequent stages. The Appropriate Assessment examines the likely effects of the plan on the integrity of designated European wildlife sites										

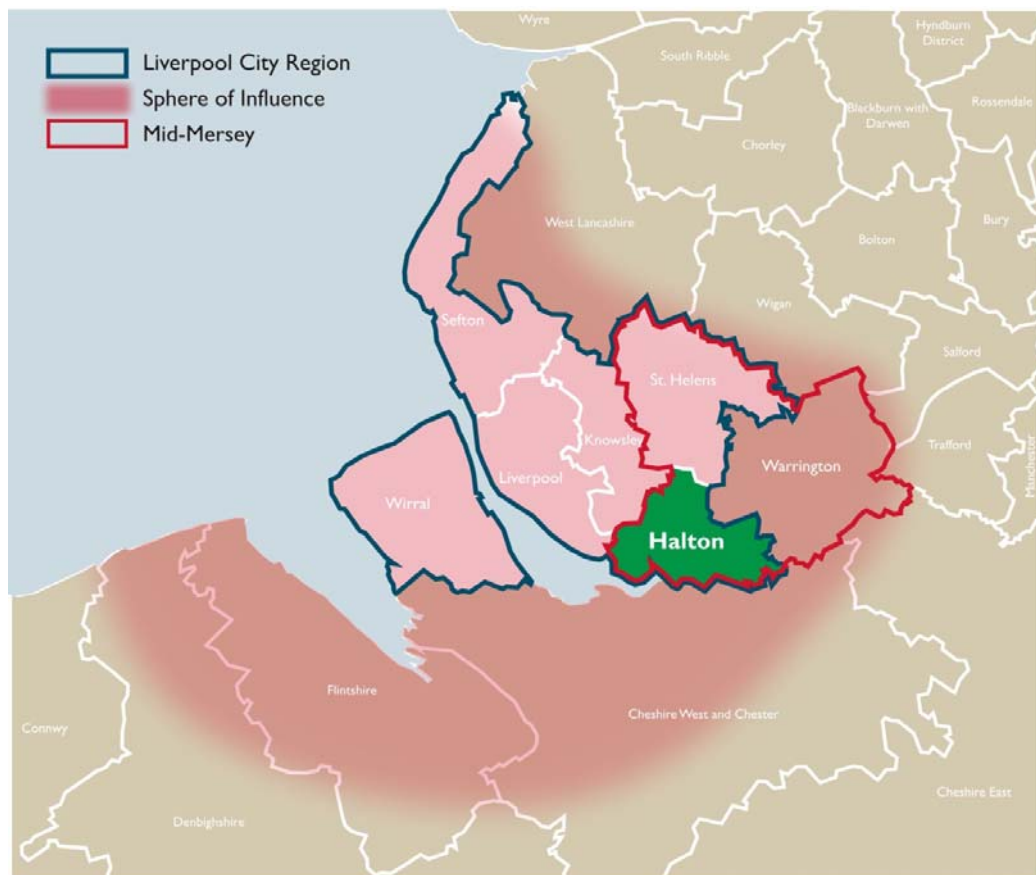
⁹ HBC (2011) Halton Local Transport Plan 3

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT	RELATIONSHIP TO THE CORE STRATEGY
	<p>and the identification of mitigation measures or alternative solutions, where appropriate.</p> <p>The Appropriate Assessment reports have been subject to consultation with the Statutory Consultees including Natural England and the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). The policy amendments required through this process have been included within the Core Strategy.</p>
D) Statement of Consultation	Summarises consultation undertaken throughout the production of the plan and highlights how this has been taken into account in the development of the Core Strategy.
E) Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	Assesses the impacts of the Core Strategy policies on the important issue of health in Halton.
F) Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	Assesses the Core Strategy for potential disproportionate impacts on Halton's diverse communities.
G) Planning Policy Evidence Base	Sets out a comprehensive list of all the pieces of research and publications which underpin Halton's Core Strategy and other local plans/SPDs.

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 119,600¹⁰ 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 2).

Figure 2: Liverpool City Region

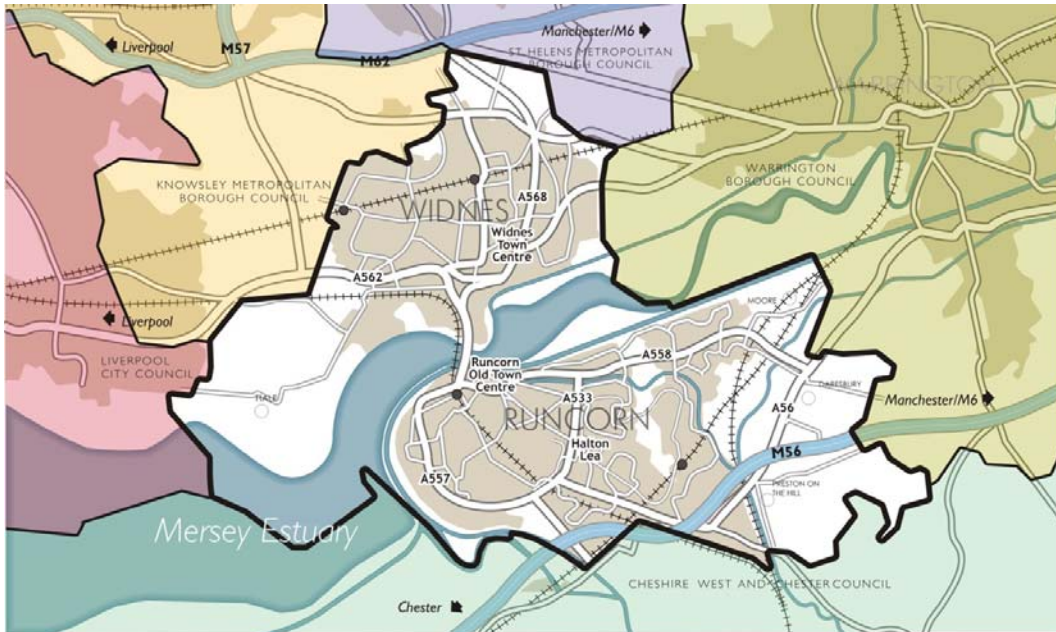


- 2.3 Green Belt covers approximately one third of the land area of the Borough and contains the smaller settlements of Moore, Daresbury and Preston-on-the-Hill, with Hale Village inset within the Green Belt.
- 2.4 One of the defining characteristics of the Borough of Halton is the Mersey Estuary. Designated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

¹⁰ ONS (2010) Mid-Year Population Estimates

divides and unites the principal towns of Runcorn and Widnes presenting both problems and opportunities for the development of the Borough.

Figure 3: Halton Borough



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 2028 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 by 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 19th century. This was due to its locational advantages on the Mersey Estuary providing access to a ready supply of water and a central location between areas of salt production in Cheshire and coal production in Lancashire, all being necessary raw materials for the emerging 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 simply tipped or buried on land adjacent to the factories that produced them, contaminating the land and leaving a legacy affecting the 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 Ditton and Hough Green preceded the latest developments around Upton, to the north and north-west of Widnes, rounding 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 separated 'fly-over' from Ditton Roundabout (A533 Queensway) providing direct access to the Silver Jubilee Bridge from the west, the eastern by-pass (A568 Watkinson Way) improving access to the north and the M62 (junction 7), and Fiddlers Ferry Road (A562) improving access to Warrington in the east.
- 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 19th 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 Weaver Navigation and Manchester Ship Canal, supporting the development of significant port facilities at Runcorn and Weston Docks.

- 2.14 In 1964 Runcorn was designated as a New Town, whose purpose was primarily to cater for population overspill from Liverpool and to re-house residents from Liverpool and north Merseyside’s unfit dwellings. The Master Plan¹¹ (including Amendments^{12,13}) for the New Town (Figure 4) 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.

Figure 4: Runcorn New Town Indicative Master Plan including amendments (1967, 1971 and 1975)



- 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 was intended to form 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 a General Hospital.
- 2.16 Existing and new employment areas were located around the outskirts of the New Town linked to the residential neighbourhoods by the segregated busway. The new employment estates at Astmoor and Whitehouse

¹¹ Runcorn Development Corporation (1967) Runcorn New Town Master Plan

¹² Runcorn Development Corporation (1971) Runcorn New Town Master Plan: Amendment No.1

¹³ Runcorn Development Corporation (1975) Runcorn New Town Master Plan: Amendment No.2

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.

- 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 Master Plan 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.
- 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 Widnes and Runcorn. Despite being converted to four lanes in the 1970s, the Silver Jubilee Bridge is now operating beyond its design capacity of 60,000 vehicles per day, with over 80,000 vehicles making the crossing every weekday. As a result the 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.

The Transporter Bridge



- 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.

Artists Impression showing the Ethelfreda Railway Bridge (foreground) the Silver Jubilee Bridge (arched span) and the future Mersey Gateway Bridge (background)



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 2028 and beyond it is important to understand the Borough's current characteristics including its 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 anticipated. The population of the Borough, estimated to be 119,600¹⁴ in 2010, is projected to increase by around 9,600, to 129,200 by the end of the plan period (2028)¹⁵.

¹⁴ ONS (2012) 2010-based Subnational Population Projections

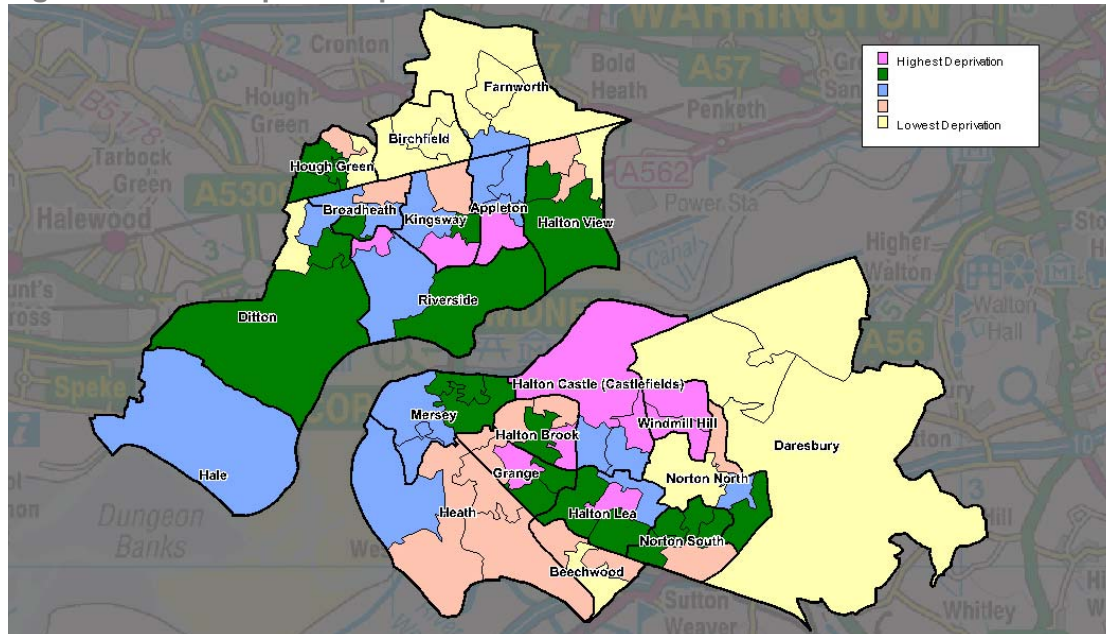
¹⁵ ONS(2012) 2010-based Subnational Population Projections

- 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 to increase by some 59%, growing by some 10,200 from 17,300 in 2010 to 27,500 in 2028¹⁶. 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)¹⁷ can be used to identify groups and areas in Halton suffering from deprivation. Halton is ranked as the 27th most deprived Borough nationally (at 2010) and 3rd in the Liverpool City Region, behind Knowsley and Liverpool. 26% of the Borough’s population live in the top 10% most deprived areas in England. Halton’s ranking has worsened since the previous IMD in 2007 which ranked the Borough as the 30th most deprived Borough nationally signalling that Halton is performing poorly in terms of overall deprivation. Halton has ten areas within the top 3% most deprived in England. These are identified in pink in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Halton’s Spatial Deprivation



¹⁶ ONS (2012) 2010-based Subnational Population Projections

¹⁷ CLG (2010) The English Indices of Deprivation

Health

- 2.29 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 (2007-2009)¹⁸ is 75.0 years for males and 79.2 years for females. This is significantly lower than both the North West (76.6 male, 80.8 female) and England figures (78.3 male, 82.3 female). Pioneering research in 2003 by the University of Lancaster commissioned by the Halton Health Partnership¹⁹ 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

- 2.30 At 2010 there were a total of 53,200 dwellings within the Borough. 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 housing²⁰.
- 2.31 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)²¹ 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 households are increasingly not being met with an estimated 68% of new households unable to access market housing, due to barriers such as decreasing loan to value ratios applied by lenders. Estimates of annual unmet demand for affordable housing have increased over the last ten years from negligible (mostly a function of worklessness) to 118 per annum in 2005 and nearly 900 per annum in 2010²².
- 2.32 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.
- 2.33 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

¹⁸ ONS (2007-2009) Life Expectancy at Birth

¹⁹ Lancaster University (2003) Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton

²⁰ GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting (2011) Halton and Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment

²¹ HBC (2011) State of the Borough in Halton

²² GL Hearn and Justin Gardener Consulting (2011) Halton and Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment

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 (as at 2010) there are 40 permanent pitches and 10 transit pitches across Halton.

Employment, Learning & Skills

- 2.34 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 Region²³. Distribution, information and communication sectors are also large employment sectors in the Borough.
- 2.35 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 (74.4%) is below both the North West (74.7%) and Great Britain (76.3%)²⁴. The Job Seekers Allowance claimant rate in Halton in 2011 was 5.5%; this was greater than the North West rate (4.2%) and the national rate (3.7%)²⁵, and is likely to increase in the current economic climate.
- 2.36 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 at 2010, people who worked in Halton had a weekly pay of £422.20 compared to £357.70 for the residents of Halton²⁶.
- 2.37 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 development and regeneration area, 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.
- 2.38 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 in the Borough. Redevelopment of ICI's former headquarters at the Heath Business Park and the public sector investment at

²³ ONS (2008) Annual Business Survey

²⁴ ONS (2011) Nomis – Official Labour Market Statistics

²⁵ ONS (2011) Jobseeker's Allowance Claimants

²⁶ ONS (2010) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

Sci-Tech Daresbury (formerly known as the Science and Innovation Campus or SIC) has ensured Halton has strong foundations in, and is now becoming home to, science, technology and research sectors.

Environment

- 2.39 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.
- 2.40 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 standard²⁷. There are also areas of distinct landscape character within the Borough which have been identified through the Halton Landscape Character Assessment²⁸.
- 2.41 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.
- 2.42 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.
- 2.43 **Climate Change and Sustainability**
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

²⁷ For more information please refer to the State of the Borough for Halton: A Sustainability Appraisal for Halton. Available at: www.halton.gov.uk

²⁸ TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

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.

- 2.44 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.
- 2.45 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

- 2.46 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.
- 2.47 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.
- 2.48 Liverpool John Lennon Airport is located adjacent to Halton Borough Council's western boundary within Liverpool City Council's administrative area. The Airport provides national and international connectivity for the Borough whilst also bringing economic benefits including job creation.
- 2.49 Travel patterns show that a total of 13.8% of commuting flows to Halton are by residents from local authorities in the Liverpool City Region, however, the largest individual flow by local authority area is residents from Warrington (9.7%)²⁹. Overall, 70% of journeys to work within Halton are made by car³⁰.
- 2.50 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' concept³¹ which aims to ensure that these

²⁹ HBC (2011) State of the Borough in Halton

³⁰ ONS (2001) Census 2001

³¹ TMP (2008) Liverpool SuperPort

assets along with other freight infrastructure across the sub-region become a key driver in the local economy.

Retail and Leisure

- 2.51 Halton has three main retail centres with Widnes being the largest centre followed by Halton Lea and then Runcorn Old Town.
- 2.52 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 ‘The Hive’ leisure development at Widnes Waterfront comprising of a cinema, ice rink and restaurants complements the Town Centre’s retail offer and boosts leisure opportunities within the Borough.
- 2.53 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

- 2.54 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

2.55 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 Borough's 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 Borough's 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;
- protect, enhance and, where appropriate, expand the Borough's green infrastructure network
- 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.

2.56 These challenges must be addressed in order to ensure Halton fulfils its future vision to 2028.

3 Vision and Strategic Objectives

A VISION FOR HALTON IN 2028

- 3.1 The overarching vision is taken from the Halton Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026:
- 3.2 *“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.”*
- 3.3 Flowing from this, the spatial vision underpinning Halton’s Core Strategy is as follows:
- 3.4 “In 2028, 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.
- 3.5 Thriving and diverse residential communities are growing at Sandymoor, Daresbury Strategic Site 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.
- 3.6 The Borough’s economy has been strengthened by the expansion of key employment areas at Daresbury Strategic Site, 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.
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.

- 3.9 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, keeping important spaces between settlements.
- 3.10 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.
- 3.11 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

- 3.12 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, with a particular emphasis on 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, district 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 designated sites and species and 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 Borough Council

Halton Core Strategy

Spatial Policies

4 CSI: HALTON'S SPATIAL STRATEGY

- 4.1 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 it will be delivered.

Policy CSI: Halton's Spatial Strategy

To achieve the Vision for Halton to 2028, new development should deliver:

- 9,930 net additional dwellings
- Approximately 313 ha (gross) of land for employment purposes
- About 35,000 sqm of town centre convenience /comparison goods retailing
- About 22,000 sqm of retail warehousing

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) **3MG, (Ditton) in Widnes,**
- b) **South Widnes,**
- c) **West Runcorn,**

Involving the regeneration of previously developed (brownfield) land within the existing urban area as Key Areas of Change.

- d) **East Runcorn**

Delivering greenfield expansion including the completion of the proposals for Runcorn New Town and further extension to the east of Runcorn. This specific Key Area of Change includes the allocation 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 CS8-CS11.

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 detrimental 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 and green infrastructure of the Borough's villages and Green Belt will predominantly be maintained. The housing land supply position indicates that a partial

review of Green Belt boundaries to serve the development needs of Widnes and Hale will be required in the early part of the plan period. Additionally, an area of search for a possible minor amendment of the Green Belt boundary is proposed in the west of the Borough to facilitate the planned runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

More detail regarding Halton's Green Belt is set out in CS6.

Specific proposals relating to Liverpool John Lennon Airport are set out in CS17.

Justification

- 4.2 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 should focus 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.
- 4.3 Despite the priority to renew and improve the Borough's urban landscape through new development, it is apparent 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, reducing the amount of brownfield land which can realistically be brought back into beneficial use. At 2010, there were 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. In addition to the limitations on the re-use of brownfield land, development opportunities in the Borough are constrained (particularly in Widnes) by tightly defined Green Belt boundaries, limited scope for infilling, coupled with the Mersey Estuary dissecting the Borough. It follows that 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.
- 4.4 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 Strategic Objectives for the Borough. However, the Examination into this Plan concluded that the land supply position was such

that the preferred approach be modified to include the provision for further greenfield extension(s) to meet the needs of Widnes / Hale through an early partial Green Belt review as part of the subsequent Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

- 4.5 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 Assessment³² (SHLAA) (2010) and the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study³³ (JELPS) (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. Similarly, the housing land supply evidenced in the SHLAA 2010 (as summarised in Table I below) details that just over a quarter of the Borough’s potential supply lies in Widnes/Hale. This supply is to be bolstered by the identification and release of additional land for development currently within the adopted Green Belt. The scale and location of this release will be determined in a partial Green Belt review as part of the subsequent Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

Table I: Distribution of Identified Development Potential as at April 2010

	Greenfield / Brownfield land	Potential Housing Supply (SHLAA 2010)			Identified Employment Land Supply 2010		
		Dwellings	Halton %	Area %	Ha.	Halton %	Area %
3MG	Green	0		0%	24.8		26%
	Brown	0		0%	70.0		74%
		0	0%		94.8	48%	
South Widnes	Green	0		0%	15.8		61%
	Brown	741		100%	9.9		39%
		741	7%		25.7	13%	
Widnes / Hale (ALL)	Green	1,466		50%	40.6		32%
	Brown	1,460		50%	86.8		68%
		2,926	27%		127.4	64%	
East Runcorn	Green	3,024		100%	49.2		100%
	Brown	0		0%	0		0%
		3,024	28%		49.2	25%	
West Runcorn	Green	75		4%	0		0%
	Brown	2,013		96%	0.3		100%
		2,088	19%		0.3	0%	
Runcorn (ALL)	Green	5,276		67%	7.0		10%
	Brown	2,653		33%	63.4		90%
		7,929	73%		70.4	36%	
HALTON (ALL)	Green	6,742		62%	47.6		24%
	Brown	4,113		38%	150.2		76%
		10,855	100%		197.8	100%	

- 4.6 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 amendments³⁴,

³² HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010

³³ BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study

³⁴ Runcorn Development Corporation (1967) Runcorn New Town Master Plan

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 lay 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 2005 UDP, after sites within the urban area were brought forward first. 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 significant development, particularly residential development.

- 4.7 Table 1 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 lies south of the river, with previously identified land accounting for only 38% of the potential total. 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, much of which is expected to be developed within the first five years of the plan period.
- 4.8 The Council commissioned a number of research studies to quantify the demand and need for different classes of development across the Borough. These demonstrate that the provision of new housing can have wider benefits than simply providing accommodation and that over the plan period new supply should favour Runcorn which should account for about 57% of the total, with Widnes and Hale accommodating the remaining 43%.
- 4.9 A total of 3,602 dwellings have been constructed over the initial Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) policy period from 2003 to 2010, with 1,040 demolitions / losses leaving a net gain of 2,562 units against the RSS requirement of 3,500. To be compliant with RSS the shortfall in delivery needs to be made up over the remaining Core Strategy period, with 5,660 units to be provided in Runcorn and 4,270 in Widnes / Hale. The requirement for new housing in Widnes / Hale is higher than the identified potential supply as shown in Table 1, requiring the identification of additional development land through a review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale.
- 4.10 For retail, the studies indicate greater expenditure headroom to support new floorspace arising in Widnes.
- 4.11 The strategy identifies four **Key Areas of Change** that will be the initial focus for new development and where the biggest transformation of the Borough's landscape at 2010 is expected to 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 already exists, through priority projects or support from the development industry. Table 2 below illustrates the anticipated quantum and distribution of development / development land across Halton to 2028.

Table 2: Anticipated Distribution of Development / Development Land 2010 to 2028

	WIDNES / HALE				RUNCORN				TOTAL
	Key Area of Change		Other *	TOTAL	Key Area of Change		Other *	TOTAL	
	3MG	South Widnes			West Runcorn	East Runcorn			
Housing (net dwelling gain)	--	400	3,870	4,270 (43%)	1,500	2,800	1,360	5,660 (57%)	9,930
Employment (Ha)	103	54	32	189 (61%)	26	66	32	124 (39%)	313
'Town Centre' Retail (sqm)	--	25,300	--	25,300	5,200	--	5,400	10,600	35,900
Retail Warehousing (sqm)	--	19,000	--	19,000	--	--	3,000	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?

- 4.12 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

- 4.13 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.

- 4.14 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 and its importance and continued expansion is supported by the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership who secured Regional Growth Fund monies in 2011 to further enhance its connectivity and capacity.

South Widnes

- 4.15 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. Evidence from Halton’s Retail and Leisure Study³⁵ suggests that there is potential to expand the retail warehousing (DIY and gardening products, furniture, carpets, electrical goods, office supplies and toys) retail offer in the town centre, hence the requirement for the identified level of additional floorspace.
- 4.16 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 deliver a renewed employment offer.
- 4.17 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**
- 4.18 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, 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, as a District Centre centred on 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.
- 4.19 Lying to the west of Runcorn Old Town centre, adjacent to 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.
- 4.20 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. Realisation of this site’s potential will further strengthen and expand the Borough’s growing specialism in the logistics and distribution sector.
- East Runcorn**
- 4.21 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**, now rebranded **Sci-Tech Daresbury**. The delivery of an extension to Runcorn’s urban area represents an opportunity to integrate the existing

³⁵ GVA (2009) Halton Retail and Leisure Study, para 11.42, page 132

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.

- 4.22 Within the East Runcorn Key Area of Change, part of the 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 Strategic Site, which will not only 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 developed³⁶. This comprehensive development 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

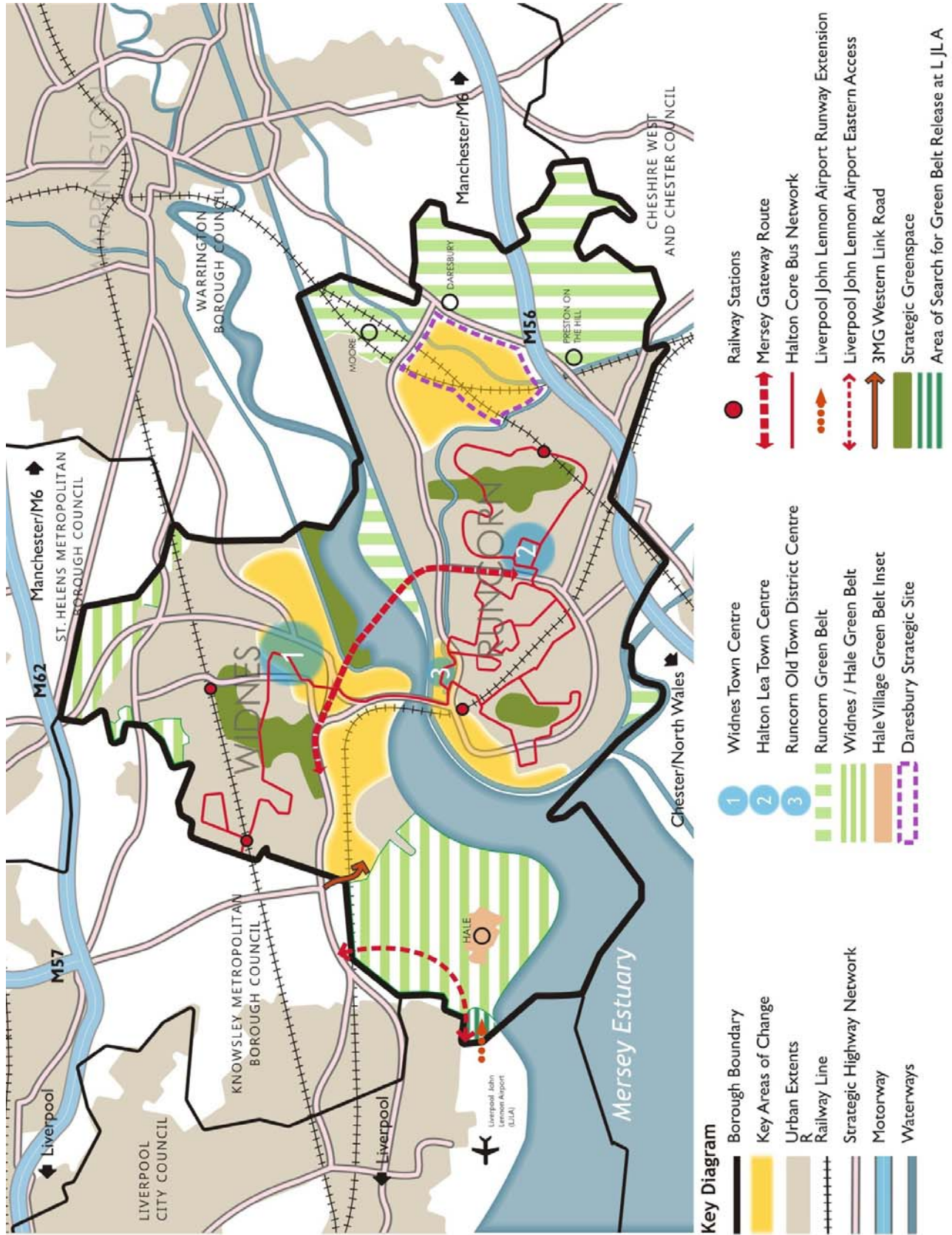
- 4.23 Outside of the identified Key Areas of Change, the evidence base underpinning the Core Strategy indicates that there is scope to make more efficient use of already developed areas of the Borough, bringing benefits to the Borough's existing communities. In line with the spatial priorities enshrined in national planning policy, the reuse of previously used land and buildings across 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.
- 4.24 Halton's network of green infrastructure will remain and be expanded, where appropriate, to serve the leisure and recreation needs of the population and support the Borough's biodiversity.
- 4.25 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 largely protected in accordance with national planning policy to prevent uncoordinated expansion of urban areas which result in the loss of strategic gaps between settlements. The existing housing land supply within the Borough indicates that a partial review of the extent of the Green Belt will be required during the plan period, to ensure adequate land to meet development needs of the communities of Widnes and Hale. It is proposed that such a review will be undertaken in the early part of the Core Strategy plan period as part of the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan. Further detail on the future role of Halton's Green Belt is detailed in policy CS6. In addition, minor changes to the Green Belt boundary at the western extent of the Borough will be considered to facilitate the proposed runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, and this issue will be addressed in a later Local Plan. Greater detail on the development of the airport is provided in policy CS17.
- 4.26 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 will play a pivotal role in maintaining the setting of the Borough's rural assets and

³⁶ HBC (2009) Sandymoor Supplementary Planning Document

providing a distinct 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.

POLICY CONTEXT:							
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 14, 15, 17,18, 23, 28, 29, 42, 47, 50, 79, 151, 154 and 156)						
Local Evidence	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010 (HBC, 2010), Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010), Halton Retail and Leisure Study (GVA, 2009), Runcorn New Town Masterplan and Amendments (Runcorn Development Corporation, 1976, 1971 and 1975)						
Strategic Objectives	ALL						
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton						
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>10 - Housing</td> <td>14 – Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 – Accessibility</td> <td>16 – Town Centres</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13 – Education</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	10 - Housing	14 – Economy	11 – Accessibility	16 – Town Centres	13 – Education	
10 - Housing	14 – Economy						
11 – Accessibility	16 – Town Centres						
13 – Education							
SA Outcome	Overall, the SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms. Although the level of development set out within some of the policies could have significant negative impacts on some environmental factors, these are sufficiently mitigated by other policy content.						

Figure 6: Key Diagram



5 CS2: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 The overall Spatial Strategy as set out in CS1 establishes the spatial distribution of future growth and development in the Borough. The presumption in favour of sustainable development exists alongside the Spatial Strategy in order to ensure that a positive approach is taken to development proposals, delivering growth and development that is sustainable and will meet the needs of Halton's present communities, whilst considering the needs of future communities over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. All development in the Borough is required to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)³⁷ in order to ensure a sustainable Halton, now and in the future.

Policy CS2: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan³⁸ (and, where relevant, with policies in Halton's other Local Plans and neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Justification

- 5.2 '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"³⁹. The NPPF emphasises the three dimensions to sustainable development, these being:
- Economic – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;
 - Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and,
 - Environmental – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

³⁷ CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework

³⁸ The Halton Core Strategy is a Local Plan under the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Planning Regulations 2012. For the purposes of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Plans are prescribed as Development Plan Documents.

³⁹ HM Government (2005) Securing the Future – UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy

- 5.3 The NPPF introduced the presumption in favour of sustainable development which emphasises the Government’s positive attitude to development that is sustainable, impressing on Local Planning Authorities the importance of expediting planning applications which are in conformity. The whole of the NPPF sets out the Government’s view of what sustainable development means in practical terms for the planning process. The Core Strategy (as part of Halton’s development plan) is the first reference point for those involved in the determination of planning applications. The NPPF makes it clear that local planning documents should reflect the presumption and hence the above policy fulfils this requirement. In accordance with other policies in the NPPF, it should be noted that the presumption does not apply to development where Appropriate Assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directive is required or for development proposals on land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, Local Green Space, designated heritage assets or locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.
- 5.4 The aims of the NPPF will be delivered through Halton’s Sustainable Development Principals. These principals are that development in Halton 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, responding to Halton’s needs and building upon Halton’s strengths;
 - be located to minimise the need to travel, increasing accessibility and supporting 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;
 - minimise energy and water use and making efficient use of natural resources including through sustainable waste management and maximising the re-use of recycled products; and,
 - ensure that the infrastructure needs of the Borough are met.
- 5.5 In order to achieve sustainable development in Halton over the plan period, all development proposals will be assessed against the above policy and against the principles in the NPPF. The other policies in the Core Strategy set out how the NPPF will be applied locally.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 6-16) Securing the Future (HM Gov, 2005)
Local Evidence	State of the Borough in Halton (HBC, 2011)
Strategic Objectives	ALL
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton; Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	1 – Cultural Heritage
	2 – Biodiversity
	3 – Water Quality
	4 – Climate Change
	5 – Flood Risk
	6 – Energy Efficiency
	7 – Land Quality
	8 – Air Quality
	9 – Waste
	10 – Housing
11 – Accessibility	
12 – Health	
13 – Education	
14 – Economy	
15 – Leisure and Tourism	
16 – Town Centres	
17 – Transport	
SA Outcome	The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms as it has positive benefits for all of the SA objectives. However, the NPPF has removed the national brownfield target for housing development, which could pose a threat to soil and land resources in the longer term. However, this is partly mitigated by the Core Strategy emphasis on the use of previously developed land to meet housing and employment needs.

6 CS3: HOUSING SUPPLY AND LOCATIONAL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 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 and is projected to experience modest growth to 2028, changing age structures, housing needs and average household size decreasing has meant even faster growth in the number of households, placing pressure on Halton’s current housing stock.
- 6.2 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 expansion with large scale regeneration schemes often involving the replacement of unsuitable New Town estates. Whilst this pattern of development will continue to a certain extent, housing renewal projects are likely to play less of a role in the future and the Borough will be more dependent on delivering housing on remaining greenfield sites at the periphery of the urban area. In Runcorn this will be achieved by the delivery of an extension to the east of Runcorn on greenfield land within the existing settlement boundary. In Widnes and Hale the existing Green Belt boundaries are tight to the built-up area and any further outward expansion will necessitate a review of the Green Belt to identify additional deliverable and developable land, whilst not undermining the continued priority to regenerate the Borough’s urban areas.

Policy CS3: Housing Supply and Locational Priorities

Housing Requirement

- A minimum of 9,930 net additional homes should be provided between 2010 and 2028 at an average rate of 552 dwellings per annum, with the following overall distribution:
 - Runcorn = about 5,660 dwellings
 - Widnes and Hale = about 4,270 dwellings
 - Beyond 2028, development should continue at a minimum rate of 500 units per annum (net gain) unless this is superseded by a change to policy.

Potential Housing Supply

- 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 1st April 2010
 - Sites under construction for housing development
 - Sites with planning permission for housing
 - Sites allocated in an adopted Plan⁴⁰
 - 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 Local Plans
 - Appropriate windfall development

⁴⁰ Including undeveloped sites allocated for housing in policy H1 of the Halton Unitary Development Plan. The phasing element of this policy no longer applies.

- A partial Green Belt Review will be necessary during the early part of the plan period to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of deliverable development land to meet the housing requirements of the Borough's separate communities as set out in CSI and CS6

In order to deliver sites that are identified as having the potential to contribute to housing supply, specific sites will be identified in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

Maintaining a 5 year supply

- The Council will seek to maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land across the Borough in accordance with Government guidance.

Brownfield land

- An average of at least 40% of new residential development should be delivered on previously developed (brownfield) land over the plan period.

Density

- To ensure the efficient use of land, a minimum density on individual sites 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

Housing Requirement

6.3 The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West set a housing policy target for Halton of 500 units (net dwelling gain) per annum over the period 2003 to 2021 and for any period thereafter until such time as the policy is reviewed. The Government has indicated its intention to abolish Regional Strategies, however, until such time as RSS for the North West is legally revoked, it remains part of the Development Plan and the Halton Core Strategy must be in general conformity with its provisions. In the initial RSS period to 2010, Halton had delivered a total of 2,562 units (net gain) representing a shortfall of approximately 930 dwellings against the RSS requirement of 3,500 (500 x 7 years). In order to comply with the RSS, Halton will need to deliver 9,000 dwellings (500 x 18 years) plus the pre-existing shortfall, equating to an annual average of 552 (9,930 / 18 years) dwellings (net gain).

6.4 After the abolition of RSS, the role of determining an appropriate number of homes to be built within each district will fall to the local authority through the Core Strategy or Local Plan. This policy, together with CSI may therefore be subject to an early review dependent on the date and circumstances at the time the powers to revoke RSS are enacted.

6.5 The RSS housing policy is at a level which will meet forecast 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 129,200 persons by 2028, a rise of approximately 9,600 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.⁴¹

⁴¹ 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)

- 6.6 The proposed housing figure is 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. Whilst sufficient land to accommodate the bulk of this growth exists in Runcorn, the Examination into this Plan concluded that an early review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale is required to meet the needs of these populations.

Potential housing supply

- 6.7 Table 1 in the preceding section summarises the predicted potential housing supply at 2010 across the Borough. The 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) indicated that there is identified capacity to deliver 10,855 dwellings (gross). Whilst this is in excess of the (net) policy requirement to 2028, it allows little flexibility to accommodate changes in demolition rates or identified sites not coming forward as forecast. Whilst the SHLAA process seeks to provide a robust 'snap-shot' estimate of potential housing supply, it must be accepted that not all of the identified sites will be delivered for housing or come forward in the timeframes indicated. Indeed, it may be desirable for certain sites to be developed for uses other than housing. The identified supply is heavily skewed towards Runcorn, particularly due to the Key Area of Change at East Runcorn which includes Sandymoor and Daresbury.

- 6.8 In addition to identified sites, windfall sites (not previously identified in the SHLAA as having the potential to deliver housing and therefore not factored into the potential housing supply figure) continue to come forward and generate units. Whilst no specific allowance is made for windfall supply in Table 1, 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 identified within the SHLAA.

Maintaining a five year supply

- 6.9 NPPF requires local authorities to ensure that a rolling five year supply (+5%) of deliverable housing sites can be demonstrated. This is increased to 5 years +20% where there is evidence of a consistent under delivery⁴². Halton's five year supply of housing land is detailed within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment which is updated regularly and performance is also reported through Authority Monitoring Reports.

Brownfield land

- 6.10 To support urban renewal within Halton, maximise the sustainable use of existing infrastructure and minimise the need to release Green Belt land, priority will be given to the development of previously developed land in accordance with the target and principles set out in Policy CS1. Halton has long worked in partnership with others, including the Homes and Communities Agency (and its predecessors) to pioneer new and innovative ways of tackling the Borough's particular brownfield legacy.⁴³⁴⁴

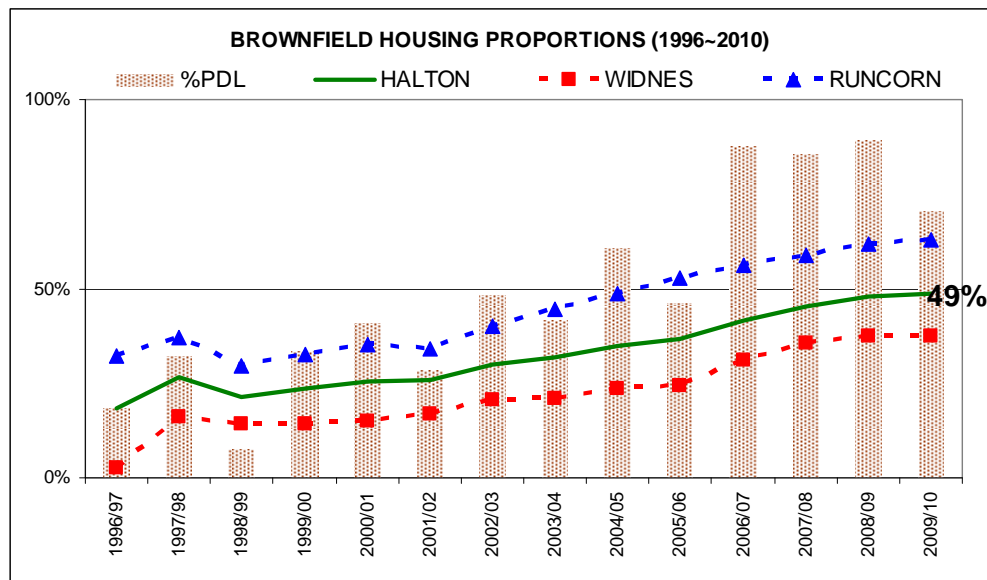
⁴² CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework (para. 47)

⁴³ HCA (2010) Halton Local Brownfield Strategy

⁴⁴ Arup (2010) Greenfield: Brownfield Exchange Concept

- 6.11 Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS) set a shared target of 65% of residential development for Halton and St Helens to be built on previously developed land. The Coalition Government has stated its intentions to revoke RSS and to remove the national target for the amount of housing development that should take place on previously developed land⁴⁵. Figure 7 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 1998/99, averaging 49% over the 15 years. Delivery of housing on brownfield land has varied over this period reflecting the focus of delivery year to year, with greenfield sites in locations such as Upton Rocks, Widnes being balanced with urban regeneration schemes such as Castlefields, Runcorn.
- 6.12 As discussed in the Spatial Strategy, due to the phased approach in which the Runcorn 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 Figure 7 below, and in the identified stock of ongoing supply as set out in Table I and Appendix I.

Figure 7: Historical Previously Developed Land (Brownfield) Performance



- 6.13 The target of 40% of housing development to be delivered on previously developed (brownfield) land is below both the previous national minimum target and the proportion achieved in Halton over the longer term. It is evident that Halton has achieved higher rates of brownfield delivery in 5 of the 6 years to 2010. Of the housing expected to come forward during the plan period or being promoted through the Core Strategy, a high proportion is on greenfield sites. Evidence base documents⁴⁶ and Appendix I contain an assessment of the proportion of ongoing supply forecast to arise on previously developed land. This shows that of the

⁴⁵ CLG (2011) Letter to Chief Planning Officers: Planning for Growth 31 March 2011 (available at: www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1878047.pdf)

⁴⁶ HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010

identified supply (before any allowance for additional greenfield supply through Green Belt release), only 38% is on previously developed land. As such setting a higher target for brownfield development would not be realistic or achievable. Net dwelling change and the performance in delivering on previous developed land will continue to be monitored annually and will influence the allocation of sites in later Local Plans.

POLICY CONTEXT:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 79 and 159)	
Local Evidence	Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (HBC, 2008); Halton Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010 (HBC, 2010); Halton Housing Baseline Report (HBC, Annually) Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn / JGC, 2011)	
Strategic Objectives	1 and 2	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	4 – Climate Change	10 - Housing
	5 – Flood Risk	12 – Health
	7 – Land Quality	17 – Transport
SA Outcome	The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms. Although development is likely to have significant impacts on some environmental factors these can be managed / mitigated.	

7 CS4: EMPLOYMENT LAND SUPPLY AND LOCATIONAL PRIORITIES

- 7.1 Employment land will be provided over the lifetime of the Core Strategy to strengthen Halton’s economy and to offer business and industry a choice of sites so that differing 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 economic downturn 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 by providing a range and choice of sites, ensuring a minimum of a 5 year supply of land is available at any given time;
- 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-region

Approximately 313 hectares of land will be made available over the period 2010-2028 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 allocated⁴⁷
- Sites which have the potential to contribute to employment land supply:
 - Regeneration and remodelling opportunities within existing employment areas
 - New site allocations

Maintaining existing employment areas

In order to secure Halton’s economic future, sites in existing employment use at Halton’s Local Employment Areas and Regional Employment Sites 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

⁴⁷ Outstanding employment land allocations only includes Halton UDP allocations which have been reassessed and found to still be suitable for employment uses through the JELPS (2010).

- the proposed alternative use;
- the location of the site and its relationship to other uses; and
- the need for the proposed use.

Justification

- 7.2 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 planning policy framework. The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS) (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 study period to 2026.
- 7.3 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 JELPS 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 available over the Core Strategy plan period.
- 7.4 The JELPS considered employment land requirements for the Borough to 2026, however given that the study advocated the use of long term average take-up rates to predict future requirements, it therefore followed that the same method be applied to generate the additional employment land requirement for the Core Strategy plan period to 2028. Estimations at 2011 suggest that the period of economic downturn in the UK being experienced at the start of the plan period will continue until 2015, before the economy will experience significant growth as prior to 2008.⁴⁸ The use of long term average take up rates dating back to 1992 are felt to make adequate provision for periods of both economic downturn and growth that are likely to be experienced over the length of the plan period.
- 7.5 Table 3 below sets out the calculations which determine the overall requirement for employment land provision to be made over the Core Strategy plan period.

Table 3: Summary of Employment Land Requirement Calculations

	Hectares
Requirement over Core Strategy plan period	
Long term average take up rate (1992-2008)	14.47
Requirement over 18 year period (2010-2028)	260.46
Total land requirement including 20% flexibility factor to maintain a range and choice of sites throughout the plan period	312.55
LESS	

⁴⁸ REFP (2011) State of the Northwest Economy – A Long-term Forecast for the North West 2010-2030 (<http://www.nwriu.co.uk/pdf/REFP%20Long-term%20Report%20Jan%202011.pdf>) splits long term forecasts into two periods 2009-2015 to reflect recovery from the recession and 2015-2030 to reflect a return to longer term growth trends.

Outstanding employment land allocations at April 2010 ¹	163.33
Sites with planning permission for employment uses at April 2010	28.31
Additional land allocated for employment purposes at East Runcorn (through Policy CS11)	17.62
Total available employment land at April 2010	209.26
Total perceived employment land undersupply	103.29
Additional supply with the potential to come forward over the plan period	
Land proposed to be regenerated for employment purposes at West Runcorn	14.00
Opportunities for remodelling and regeneration of sites within existing employment areas	130.55
Total potential surplus*	41.26

* This would require all 130.55ha of remodelling and regeneration opportunities across existing employment areas to be taken forward.

7.6 The current supply situation in table 3 indicates an apparent undersupply of approximately 103 hectares of land for employment purposes. However, as well as quantifying the employment land requirement for Halton over the plan period, the JELPS also identified potential additions to Halton’s employment land supply, including opportunities for making more efficient use of the existing employment areas in the Borough. Analysis of previous completions of employment uses demonstrates that over the past 5 years, approximately 40% of completions within the B use classes have been delivered within the Borough’s primarily employment areas.⁴⁹ Therefore as 130 hectares of opportunities have been identified where land could be used more efficiently on existing employment sites, if all of these remodelling and regeneration opportunities are taken forward, there could be a potential oversupply of employment land in the Borough. Another evidence base study, the Liverpool City Region Overview Study⁵⁰, also indicated that over the longer term to 2031, the Borough could potentially experience a shortfall in employment land supply. However, this assessment did not take account of the aforementioned remodelling and regeneration opportunities. When these sites were taken into account, the Overview Study concluded that there was a much more balanced position of employment land supply and future land requirements.

7.7 In order to ensure that an adequate supply of employment land is available for development at any one time, a minimum of a 5 year supply of sites should be maintained. This equates to 72.35 hectares of suitable and available land (using the long term average take-up rate). Annual surveys of employment land⁵¹ and planning applications will allow the supply of employment land to be assessed. A full review of the deliverability and suitability of the remaining Halton UDP employment allocations and the identified regeneration and remodelling opportunities will be undertaken as part of the first Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and will be kept under review thereafter. Should a shortfall in employment land supply be identified over the plan period, sites will be allocated through subsequent Local Plans in order to increase the overall supply of land available for employment development.

⁴⁹ Halton’s Primarily Employment Areas as defined in the Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005) Saved Policy E3

⁵⁰ GVA (2011) Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study for Liverpool City Region Partners

⁵¹ HBC – Annual Employment Baseline Reports

Existing employment areas

7.8 There are a variety of existing employment areas across the Borough which cater for the differing needs of Halton’s businesses and industries. The employment areas are spread around the Borough and are accessible to the people they employ and to the customers they supply. The Borough currently has two employment areas of regional significance at 3MG and at the combined area of Daresbury Park and Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus (now branded Sci-Tech Daresbury). These areas were identified by the NWDA as Strategic Regional Sites in both the 2003 and 2006 North West Regional Economic Strategies and more recently through a reassessment of employment sites in the region⁵². Despite the changes in governance at regional level, it is felt that Halton’s sites are sufficiently developed and have established themselves as key economic development locations in the region to justify retaining their titles of regional employment sites.

7.9 Halton’s local and regional existing employment areas are:

Local Employment Areas

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 Waterfront and Mersey Gateway Port (Port of Weston)

Regional Employment Sites

- 3MG, Ditton
- Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus (now branded Sci-Tech Daresbury) and Daresbury Park

7.10 The JELPS assessed all of the Borough’s existing employment areas to consider their suitability for employment uses and identify if the areas could be used more efficiently. In all cases, the study recommended that Halton’s existing employment areas be retained. The study went on to identify the importance of keeping these areas for employment uses because of their scope to continue providing local employment opportunities through, and beyond, the period of the Core Strategy. The boundaries and extent of the above local and regional employment areas and of land to be prioritised for future employment use will be set out in the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan, but in the intervening period, the Primarily Employment Areas notation on the Halton UDP proposals map will continue to be used. For the existing employment areas which fall within the Key Areas of Change, more detailed policy on future uses and the broad location of the employment areas is shown on diagrams within each of the relevant policies. As with the other existing employment areas, the precise extent of these

⁵² NWDA (2009) Strategic Regional Sites (www.nwda.co.uk/news--events/press-releases/200901/strategic-regional-sites.aspx)

areas will be defined in the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan. For Sci-Tech Daresbury and Daresbury Park, policy CS11 should be referred to for the boundaries of the areas allocated for employment use at the Strategic Site.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 20, 21, 22, 161, 182)
Local Evidence	Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010), Economic and Tourism Development Strategy for Halton (HBC, 2005); Halton Economic Review (BE Group, 2008); Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (GVA, 2011)
Strategic Objectives	3 and 4
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	7 – Land Quality 14 - Economy
SA Outcome	The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms. Although development is likely to have negative impacts on some environmental factors these can be managed / mitigated.

8 CS5: A NETWORK OF CENTRES

8.1 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 including Warrington, St Helens and Chester. Runcorn Old Town, the historic town centre of Runcorn, provides a complementary role to Halton Lea and a network of local centres of varying style and size provide for day to day needs. It is important to define and protect the retail hierarchy to ensure new development is secured and focused in appropriate locations to enhance and strengthen the Borough’s retail offer for the benefit of all.

Policy CS5: A Network of Centres

The following hierarchy of centres will be maintained and enhanced for retail and other main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF⁵³) 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	Widnes Town Centre Halton Lea	
District Centre	A focus for convenience, local and niche comparison and service retail and leisure uses	Runcorn Old Town	
Local Centres	Focus for local convenience and service retail and complementary community facilities.	<u>Runcorn</u> Ascot Avenue Beechwood Brook Vale Castlefields Greenway Road Halton Brook Halton Lodge Halton Road Halton Village Langdale Road Murdishaw Centre Palacefields Picton Avenue Preston Brook Russell Road Grangeway Windmill Hill	<u>Widnes</u> Alexander Drive Bechers Cronton Lane Ditchfield Road Farnworth Hale Bank Hale Road Halton View Road Liverpool Road Moorfield Road Queens Avenue Warrington Road West Bank <u>Hale</u> Ivy Farm Court

The Boundaries for Widnes Town Centre, Halton Lea and Runcorn Old Town are as defined in Appendix 2: Town and District Centre Boundaries.

The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will set out the following:

⁵³ CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework: Annex 2 Glossary

- 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

New retail or other town centre uses should be located within or on the edge of a defined Primary Shopping Area or Local Centre, appropriate to the scale of the proposal.

Retail and leisure proposals in excess of 2,000 sqm (gross) floorspace not located within a defined Primary Shopping Area, or allocated in a Local Plan will be subject to sequential and impact assessments. Retail and leisure proposals in excess of 200 sqm (gross) not within or adjacent to a defined centre, or allocated in a Local Plan will be subject to sequential assessment. Additional or replacement convenience retail units (up to 280 sqm net⁵⁴) 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 CS11 East Runcorn)
- Daresbury (see CS11 East Runcorn)
- Runcorn Waterfront (see CS10 West Runcorn)
- West Bank (see CS9 South Widnes)

The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will identify areas for future retail development in line with the capacity identified in the Retail and Leisure Study 2009⁵⁵ or as updated.

	Convenience Goods	Comparison Goods	Retail Warehousing (Bulky Goods) ⁵⁶
Widnes Town Centre	up to about 1,300 sqm (gross)	up to about 24,000 sqm (gross)	up to about 19,000 sqm (gross)*
Halton Lea Town Centre	up to about 1,000 sqm (gross) (after 2016)	up to about 4,400 sqm (gross)	up to about 3,000 sqm (gross) (after 2016)
Runcorn Old Town District Centre	up to about 3,000 sqm (gross)	up to about 2,200sqm (gross)	--

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

Justification

- 8.2 The Halton Retail and Leisure Study (2009) looks ahead only to 2026, which was considered the limit for robust projections and forecasts. The precise level of floorspace that can be supported is dependent upon a number of factors, including household incomes, market share and the type and mix of retail developments delivered. As such, the policy acknowledges the degree of uncertainty by providing approximate targets and acknowledging that the Retail Study will need to be revisited and updated during the life of the Core Strategy.

⁵⁴ Consistent with provisions of the Sunday Trading Act 1994

⁵⁵ GVA (2009) Halton Retail and Leisure Study

⁵⁶ For the purposes capacity calculations for Retail Warehouses, “Bulky Goods” are taken to be furniture, floor coverings and household textiles; DIY & decorating goods; major household appliances (washing machines, fridges & cookers); large electrical goods (TV, hi-fi, radio, photographic & computer equipment); garden products and pet & related products.

Widnes Town Centre

- 8.3 Widnes Town Centre comprises the Green Oaks Centre, Albert Square and Widnes Shopping Park arranged off the pedestrianised core of Albert Road / Widnes Road. To the south lies Asda (Simms Cross) and the Tesco Extra superstore which opened in 2012. The Council's main administrative headquarters are located to the south west, adjacent to Riverside College (Kingsway Campus, Widnes) 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.
- 8.4 Widnes has 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 foodstores. However, the number of convenience units is below the regional average highlighting a limited presence of (non-market) independent 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 with the number of comparison goods units being significantly above the regional average. This points 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 in 2010 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, but has created another centre of activity away from the pedestrianised core shopping precinct.
- 8.5 The Halton Retail and Leisure 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.
- 8.6 Retail warehousing (bulky goods) provision was previously focused on the Ashley Way Retail Park, but this site lost its main anchor (B&Q) to a site on Widnes Waterfront and was redeveloped providing a landmark Tesco Extra superstore. This saw the displacement of 6,000 sqm of existing floorspace, which together with projected capacity suggests the Core Strategy and subsequent Local Plans will need to make provision for up to 19,000 sqm of new bulky goods provision. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan and Widnes Town Centre SPD will help guide future development of the centre.

Halton Lea

- 8.7 Halton Lea was designed as part of Runcorn New Town to be a self-contained town centre for Runcorn. The main centre was one of the earliest covered shopping malls in the UK, arranged around a central square with malls leading to four peripheral multi-storey car parks, each with 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 originally designed for leisure and service uses all but vacated. The centre is flanked to the north and east by office developments and the police station and magistrate's courts.

8.8 Additional retail developments have been added at Trident Retail Park (late 1990s), 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 centre's 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%).

8.9 The Halton Retail and Leisure Study identifies only modest capacity to 2026 of around 5,000 sqm for additional floorspace, however advises against allocating sites for additional provision in the short-term before addressing existing vacancies in the retail core. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will help guide future development of the centre.

Runcorn Old Town

8.10 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.

8.11 Separated from its natural catchment areas by canals, rail and road infrastructure, the Old Town struggled to maintain market share with residents choosing to shop at Halton Lea, Widnes Town Centre or further afield. Recent works have sought to resolve problems within the centre by removing the busway, developing modern retail units including a supermarket and improved parking in the central core. The Brindley Arts Centre established a base for an enhanced leisure function. Despite this, the retail provision remains scattered and a degree of consolidation and concentration may be required.

8.12 The Halton Retail and Leisure Study identifies capacity for up to 5,000 sqm of mixed convenience / comparison floorspace to 2026, with the main need being to provide a stronger convenience goods offer to attract additional footfall. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan and Runcorn Old Town SPD will help guide future development of the centre.

Local Centres

8.13 There is a network of local centres across the Borough that provide valuable local shopping and service provision. Shopping patterns have changed significantly over the years with people often now driving 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. 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 many offer a poor shopping environment. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan 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 including community services and facilities. This may present opportunities for the co-location of services and facilities within existing centres to ensure more effective joint use of facilities.

Offices and other town centre uses

- 8.14 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 transport⁵⁷. Halton has limited commercial leisure facilities, largely located within or on the edge of the three main centres, and proposals for new facilities will be directed to sequentially preferable sites within or adjacent to the town or district centres.
- 8.15 Halton does not have a strong town centre office market, with little private sector provision in Widnes and only minimal clustering of office uses around Halton Lea, which were predominately occupied by public sector agencies.
- 8.16 The Widnes Waterfront development is seeking to establish an office market to the southeast of Widnes Town Centre and this is supported as the most sequentially preferable location in policy CS9: South Widnes.
- 8.17 In Runcorn however, the New Town land use model of peripheral employment areas, significant extant office permissions at East Runcorn with the opportunity to capitalise on existing research facilities to create a knowledge based science cluster, combined with the limited available land around the principal centres means that peripheral office expansion is likely to be directed to Daresbury in accordance with CSI 1: East Runcorn.

POLICY CONTEXT:					
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 154, 160 and 161)				
Local Evidence	Halton Retail and Leisure Study (GVA, 2009); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010)				
Strategic Objectives	5				
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton				
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>11 – Accessibility</td> <td>14 - Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15 – Leisure and Tourism</td> <td>16 – Town Centres</td> </tr> </table>	11 – Accessibility	14 - Economy	15 – Leisure and Tourism	16 – Town Centres
11 – Accessibility	14 - Economy				
15 – Leisure and Tourism	16 – Town Centres				
SA Outcome	This policy has positive benefits for both social and economic criteria.				

⁵⁷ Except small scale rural offices of other small scale rural development (NPPF Para 25)

9 CS6: GREEN BELT

- 9.1 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, and maintains 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. Land within the Green Belt will come under pressure to be released for development over the plan period and it is for the Core Strategy to ensure any release happens in a co-ordinated and sustainable manner.

Policy CS6: Green Belt

A partial Green Belt review will be necessary during the early part of the plan period to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of deliverable development land to meet the requirements of the Borough’s separate communities as set out in CS1, CS3 and CS4. This review will be limited to meeting the identified needs of Widnes / Hale with the release of land for development strictly phased in accordance with the prioritisation of urban regeneration as set out in CS1. In addition, an Area of Search is identified to the east of Liverpool John Lennon Airport within which minor alterations will be considered in accordance with policy CS17. Green Belt boundary changes will be defined in the subsequent Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

The general extent of the Green Belt surrounding Runcorn, broadly following the line of the built up area as indicated on the Key Diagram, and as defined on the Halton UDP Proposals Map⁵⁸, will remain unchanged over the plan period.

Small scale development amounting to minor infilling within the ‘washed over’ Green Belt settlements of Daresbury, Moore and Preston on the Hill may be permitted where it can be shown to be necessary to meet specific local needs.

Justification

Green Belt History and Purpose

- 9.2 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. 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.
- 9.3 Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (Policy RDF4) specified that there was no need for any exceptional substantial strategic change to Green Belt within Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Lancashire or Merseyside before 2011, but that planning policy documents may provide for detailed changes in Green Belt boundaries to accommodate the expansion of Manchester and Liverpool John Lennon Airports.

⁵⁸ For the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012, at the date of adoption of this Core Strategy the ‘Halton UDP Proposals Map’ was the ‘Adopted Polices Map’

- 9.4 National planning policy for Green Belts details their importance and how they can contribute to achieving sustainable development. It identifies five purposes for including land in the Green Belt;
- 1) to check unrestricted sprawl of built-up areas,
 - 2) to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another,
 - 3) to assist in safeguarding countryside from encroachment,
 - 4) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and
 - 5) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

It further states that once the general extent of the Green Belt has been approved, it should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The proposed Green Belt Review will have full regard to these principles.

- 9.5 The Halton Landscape Character Assessment⁵⁹ included within its assessment of the Borough's landscape, Green Belt land surrounding the urban area. The 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 (*unless doing so conflicts with other key objectives of the Core Strategy*). 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

Need for Green Belt Review

- 9.6 The housing policy figure for Halton as set out in CS1 and CS3 conforms with Policy L4 of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West which required that Halton plan to provide a minimum of 500 units (net dwelling gain) over the period from 2003 to 2021 and for any period after until such time as the policy is reviewed. As highlighted in policy CS3, the Government has indicated its intention to abolish Regional Strategies, however, until such time as RSS for the North West is legally revoked, it remains part of the Development Plan and the Halton Core Strategy must be in general conformity with its provisions.
- 9.7 Analysis of the identified supply of deliverable and developable land for residential development (at 2010)⁶⁰ suggests that the total, whilst sufficient to meet the RSS housing requirement 'rolled forward' seven years to cover the Core Strategy plan period to 2028, has little margin or flexibility to cope with increased demolitions or projected supply not coming forward as anticipated.
- 9.8 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 regeneration / redevelopment opportunities within existing protected employment areas expected to bolster long term supply. As such the previous Green Belt boundaries are reconfirmed.
- 9.9 Housing supply is constrained in Widnes / Hale, with the likelihood that the identified supply (at 2010) will not be sufficient to meet the defined policy requirement throughout the full plan period. The Examination into this Plan concluded that this constituted the exceptional circumstances, as required to be

⁵⁹ TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

⁶⁰ HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010

demonstrated by the National Planning Policy Framework, to warrant an early partial review of the Halton Green Belt around these settlements.

Potential Scale of Green Belt Review

- 9.10 National planning policy states that Green Belt boundaries should have a degree of permanence and should endure beyond the timeframe of normal development plans. As such, the planned review of Green Belt boundaries around Widnes / Hale during the early part of this Core Strategy plan period will need to look beyond 2028, addressing not only any known shortfall in development land to 2028 but also taking into account foreseeable development requirements beyond this period and ensuring that the boundaries will last and not come under undue pressure.
- 9.11 It is intended that the review will be conducted in partnership with neighbouring authorities, particularly St Helens, Warrington, Liverpool and Knowsley to ensure that as far as can be achieved, a co-ordinated and strategic approach is taken.

Development within Inset and Washed Over Villages

- 9.12 National 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.
- 9.13 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.

POLICY CONTEXT:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 17, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 90, 92, 111, 112 and 151)	
Local Evidence	Halton Landscape Character Assessment (HBC, 2009); Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting, 2011); Halton Housing Needs Study (DCA, 2006); Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HBC, 2010); Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study for Liverpool City Region Partners (GVA, 2011); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010)	
Strategic Objectives	2 and 10	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	1 – Cultural Heritage	10 – Housing
	2 – Biodiversity	14 – Economy
	7 – Land Quality	
SA Outcome	Overall, this policy highlights the importance of protecting Green Belt land over the plan period. However, policies CS1, CS3 and CS6 (Green Belt) all set out that there will be a requirement to undertake an early partial review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale. This indicates that there will potentially be a need for new development on Green Belt land over the plan period within Halton. This could potentially have a significant negative impact on SA objectives related to protecting environmental assets.	

10 CS7: INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION

- 10.1 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 and to minimise the need for new provision.

Where new development creates or exacerbates deficiencies in infrastructure it will be required to ensure those deficiencies or losses are compensated for, adequately mitigated or substituted before development is begun or occupied. On larger developments that will be completed in phases or over a number of years, an agreed delivery schedule of infrastructure works may be appropriate. Where infrastructure provision is not made directly by the developer, contributions may be secured by an agreement under Section 106 of the Act⁶¹ including where appropriate via a phased payment schedule.

The Council will continue to work with infrastructure / service providers to update the Infrastructure Plan, which may form the basis of a charging schedule to support wider infrastructure requirements across the Borough. Such a charging regime would necessitate the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy for Halton where contributions will be sought from all applicable development to support infrastructure provision across the Borough. The details of such an approach will be set out in appropriate local development documents.

Justification

- 10.2 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 access.
- 10.3 To ensure that the Borough's infrastructure needs are met, all new development should be located in the most sustainable locations, which are served by existing infrastructure therefore contributing to the achievement of the objectives of sustainable development. However, new development will make demands on existing infrastructure. This will especially be the case in the Borough's Key Areas of Change where the level of growth anticipated will create the need for additional infrastructure.

⁶¹ Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

- 10.4 To assist the delivery of infrastructure across the Borough and to ensure that the development is acceptable in planning terms, developers will be expected to provide on or off site infrastructure, or if this is not possible, contributions towards any necessary improvements. The cumulative effects of a number of developments should also be taken into account, so far as joint contributions to off-site infrastructure may be required.⁶² In such circumstances, developer contributions or a tariff based approach will be used to secure funds or works for essential elements of schemes where on or off site provision in kind is not forthcoming. On larger development sites where there are multiple land ownerships such as the Borough's Key Areas of Change, the Council may seek phased payments from landowners to contribute towards infrastructure which will serve the whole of the area. The Infrastructure Plan⁶³ accompanying the Core Strategy outlines required infrastructure in the Borough's Key Areas of Change and sets out where contributions from a variety of parties may be required. The ability of an individual development to deliver the required level of contributions or direct provision of infrastructure will be determined by the effect this may have on the economic viability of the development concerned. Where the scale of infrastructure or contributions required is deemed to have a negative impact on the overall viability of a development, the Council will require evidence to be submitted to demonstrate this. In such instances, the contribution towards infrastructure provision may be re-examined.
- 10.5 It is recognised that parts of the highway network in Halton are susceptible to congestion and the M56 junctions in particular are known to be under stress. Therefore it is particularly crucial that the performance of the Strategic Road Network is safeguarded in order that it can continue to provide for the strategic movement of people and goods and support the economic aspirations of the region. Whilst the strategy aims to reduce congestion and increase sustainable accessibility and access to the motorway, the full extent of proposed development on congestion levels and in particular the impact this could have on the operation of the Strategic Road Network (M56 and M62) is still to be determined. Discussions are taking place with the Highways Agency to ensure that the Borough's proposals and in particular development proposed in the Key Areas of Change will not have a detrimental impact on the operation and safety of the network or can be appropriately mitigated. It has therefore been agreed with the Highways Agency that the impact on the transport network (and particularly the M56 and M62) of the development sites being promoted through Halton's development plan will be assessed, both individually and cumulatively, during the development of any site allocations local plan. Sustainable transport measures and infrastructure improvements, which are required to enable the sustainable delivery of the allocations, will also be identified and appraised in terms of the level of mitigation afforded and will be supported by evidence to demonstrate the deliverability of each measure.
- 10.6 Alongside the infrastructure requirements for the Key Areas of Change, the Infrastructure Plan details the infrastructure needed to support general growth across the Borough. 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 be a 'live' document which will be updated as required over the lifetime of the Core Strategy as new local plan documents emerge, infrastructure schemes are completed and in accordance with discussions with

⁶² The pooling of joint contributions is limited to planning obligations from no more than five developments in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (Amendment) 2011

⁶³ HBC (2011) Infrastructure Plan

infrastructure / service providers to further review the need for infrastructure within the Borough. The Council will continue to work with its partners and developers to identify the key infrastructure schemes required to facilitate development and secure the delivery of the Core Strategy over the plan period and as circumstances change, projects progress and more detailed information is made available.

- 10.7 The Infrastructure Plan may be used to provide a basis to calculate an appropriate strategic infrastructure tariff. At a national level, the Government has introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)⁶⁴ which allows local authorities to apply a standard charge which will contribute to the costs of infrastructure arising from new development. The levy is intended to provide infrastructure to support the development of an area, which differs to the role of planning obligations which are used to ensure that individual developments are acceptable in planning terms. The levy covers a wide definition of infrastructure from flood defences to hospitals and greenspaces, although it is still intended that affordable housing will be secured through planning obligations. Local authorities as ‘charging authorities’ can set the levy amount they charge. Halton Borough Council’s approach to such arrangements will be set out in greater detail through appropriate local development documents which could include the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or Developer Contributions SPD. Should the Council wish to introduce a CIL, a CIL Charging Schedule will need to be produced allowing full consultation and independent examination on any proposed levy and on the infrastructure schemes it will be used to fund.

POLICY CONTEXT:							
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 34, 157 and 162), Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (Amendment) 2011 (CLG, 2011)						
Local Evidence	Halton Core Strategy Revised Proposed Submission Document Infrastructure Plan (HBC, 2011)						
Strategic Objectives	6						
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton, Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton, A Safer Halton, Children and Young People in Halton, Environment and Regeneration in Halton						
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>5 – Flood Risk</td> <td>12 – Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 – Housing</td> <td>14 – Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 – Accessibility</td> <td>17 – Transport</td> </tr> </table>	5 – Flood Risk	12 – Health	10 – Housing	14 – Economy	11 – Accessibility	17 – Transport
5 – Flood Risk	12 – Health						
10 – Housing	14 – Economy						
11 – Accessibility	17 – Transport						
SA Outcome	This policy is generally positive in its effects. The policy highlights how new development will be directed towards areas that have existing infrastructure in place. It also highlights the importance of considering the need to deliver development in sustainable locations.						

⁶⁴ CLG (2011) Community Infrastructure Levy – An overview (May 2011)
www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/1897278.pdf

Halton Borough Council

Halton Core Strategy

Key Areas of Change

11 CS8: 3MG

- 11.1 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 policy for its future development.

Key Area of Change CS8: 3MG

Key elements of the future of 3MG will be:

- The availability of approximately 103 ha. 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 (HBC) Field site at the western end of the site for over 18ha of B8, rail served warehousing uses.

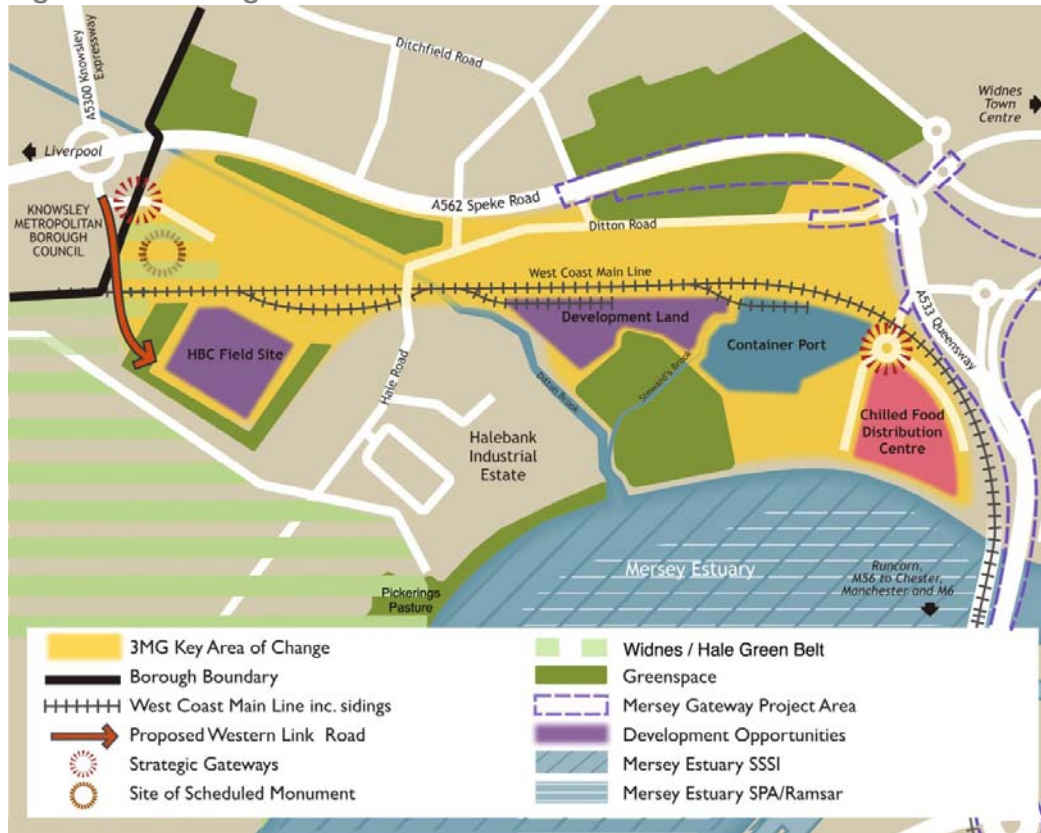
Principles of development

Development across 3MG will be expected to:

- Protect the amenity of residents in the adjoining areas of Ditton and Halebank.
- Conserve local features of visual, environmental and historic importance, notably Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument, the surrounding Green Belt and avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar site thereby ensuring that there will be no net loss in supporting habitat for SPA/Ramsar waterfowl.

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 8: 3MG Diagram



Justification

- 11.2 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 has been recognised as a Regional Site for employment purposes since the Regional Economic Strategy in 2003. In a more recent review of Regional Sites, conducted by the NWDA in 2009⁶⁵, 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 5,000 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 averages⁶⁶.
- 11.3 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 areas divide the site into two separate parts, with the Halton Borough Council (HBC) Field site comprising the majority of the western portion. Up to 2012, 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 development to date, delivering a major container handling and storage facility,

⁶⁵ [NWDA \(2009\) Strategic Regional Sites \(www.nwda.co.uk/news--events/press-releases/200901/strategic-regional-sites.aspx\)](http://www.nwda.co.uk/news--events/press-releases/200901/strategic-regional-sites.aspx)

⁶⁶ HBC (2011) State of the Borough in Halton

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.

- 11.4 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's 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.
- 11.5 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, such as the Mersey Gateway Port (Weston Docks) and there 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.
- 11.6 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 the potential 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 a 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. These factors will be considered in detail within the forthcoming Green Belt review, as part of the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan. Also in close proximity to the site is Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument. Development of the 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.
- 11.7 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 six to sixteen, 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 permission⁶⁷ from both

⁶⁷ Planning Application reference 08/00031/HBCFUL – Proposed new link road and landscaping

Halton and Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Councils, will provide direct access to the HBC 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.

POLICY CONTEXT	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35)
Local Evidence	Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010); Draft 3MG Masterplan (Atkins, 2004); 3MG SPD (HBC, 2009)
Strategic Objectives	3, 4, 6 and 10
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning and Skills; Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	8 – Air Quality 14 - Economy 17 –Transport
SA Outcome	This policy has strong benefits for social and economic factors. There may be some minor negative impacts on water quality. However, the policy builds in appropriate environmental mitigation. Overall the policy is considered positive in sustainability terms.

12 CS9: SOUTH WIDNES

- 12.1 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 54 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 about 25,300 sqm (gross) of convenience / comparison retail provision to Widnes Town Centre in accordance with Policy CS5.
- c) Directing up to about 19,000 sqm (gross) of retail warehousing provision to Widnes Town Centre in accordance with Policy CS5.
- d) Focusing new leisure facilities to Widnes Town Centre in accordance with Policy CS5, with an emphasis on the enhancement of the evening economy in the Victoria Square area, and complementary leisure uses in Widnes Waterfront.
- e) The delivery of 400 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 local 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.
- Avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and/or Ramsar site.

- 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 9: South Widnes Diagram



Justification

12.2 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.

- 12.3 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.
- 12.4 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)⁶⁸ 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 policy⁶⁹ 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.
- 12.5 Widnes is the largest town centre within the Borough and has the greatest retail offer in terms of range and floorspace. Widnes Town Centre's retail role will be maintained and enhanced, in accordance with CS5: A Network of Centres . This will include the potential to enhance or redevelop the Albert Square Shopping Centre. Leisure facilities will also be focused on Widnes Town Centre in accordance with CS5: A Network of Centres, with Victoria Square remaining as the focus for evening entertainment given the attractive public realm and heritage assets in the locality. The Venture Fields site on the Widnes Waterfront will provide complementary leisure facilities for the South Widnes area.
- 12.6 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 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.
- 12.7 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

⁶⁸ BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS)

⁶⁹ CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework

release land and create the potential for new employment and residential development sites. In accordance with CS5: A Network of Centres the potential for a new mixed use local 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.

- 12.8 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 area’s physical linkages should be taken where appropriate 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 Canal. This Local Gateway would have the potential to support and connect recreational, leisure and employment opportunities across the Key Area of Change. A Local Gateway should also be forged at the link between Queensway and Waterloo Road to improve connectivity and accessibility across West Bank. Other Local Gateways may include the links and connections between the Town Centre and the surrounding residential areas.
- 12.9 In addition to improving sustainable links in the Gateway locations, expanding sustainable transport provision across South Widnes is an integral component of increasing 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 Park and Widnes Warth, will also be supported, particularly from Widnes Town Centre, increasing the area’s informal leisure offer. Development opportunities to connect to the National Cycle Network (route 62) and the Trans Pennine Trail will be important in the achievement of this.
- 12.10 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 has been identified as having potential for the delivery of district heating⁷⁰ and may present an opportunity to develop an additional Energy Priority Zone in accordance with CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

⁷⁰ Arup (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study

- 12.11 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 Local Development Document 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.

- 12.12 The future development of Widnes Waterfront is currently guided by the Widnes Waterfront SPD based on the 2004 Widnes Waterfront Masterplan⁷¹. Building on the successful delivery of the Masterplan, the Widnes Waterfront Phase 2 Masterplan and Delivery Strategy⁷² 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.

- 12.13 The future development and regeneration of the West Bank area will be supported by an SPD for the area. This will draw heavily on the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy⁷³ 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.

POLICY CONTEXT:									
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 20, 23, 32, 56, 57, 109, 111 and 156)								
Local Evidence	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HBC, 2010); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010); Halton 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).								
Strategic Objectives	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9								
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton								
SA Objectives	<table border="0" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;">6 – Energy Efficiency</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">14 - Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;">7 – Land Quality</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">15 – Leisure and Tourism</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;">10 – Housing</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">16 – Town Centres</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #92d050;">11 – Accessibility</td> <td style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">17 – Transport</td> </tr> </table>	6 – Energy Efficiency	14 - Economy	7 – Land Quality	15 – Leisure and Tourism	10 – Housing	16 – Town Centres	11 – Accessibility	17 – Transport
6 – Energy Efficiency	14 - Economy								
7 – Land Quality	15 – Leisure and Tourism								
10 – Housing	16 – Town Centres								
11 – Accessibility	17 – Transport								
SA Outcome	Overall, this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some negative environmental effects, however these can be managed / mitigated.								

⁷¹ HBC and BDP (2004) Widnes Waterfront Masterplan and Delivery Strategy

⁷² HBC, Taylor Young, *et al* (2009) Widnes Waterfront Phase 2 Masterplan and Delivery Strategy

⁷³ HBC and GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

13 CS10: WEST RUNCORN

- 13.1 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 area's 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 CS10: West Runcorn

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

- a) Focusing up to about 5,200 sqm (gross) of convenience / comparison goods retailing to Runcorn Old Town District Centre in accordance with Policy CS5, improving the retail offer and supporting its role as a cultural and leisure destination.
- b) The delivery of 1,500 dwellings across West Runcorn with a particular emphasis on the Runcorn Waterfront site to accommodate 1,360 dwellings, with the potential for additional residential development, subject to appropriate access.
- c) The delivery of 26 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 incorporating the delivery of a new Local Centre 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.

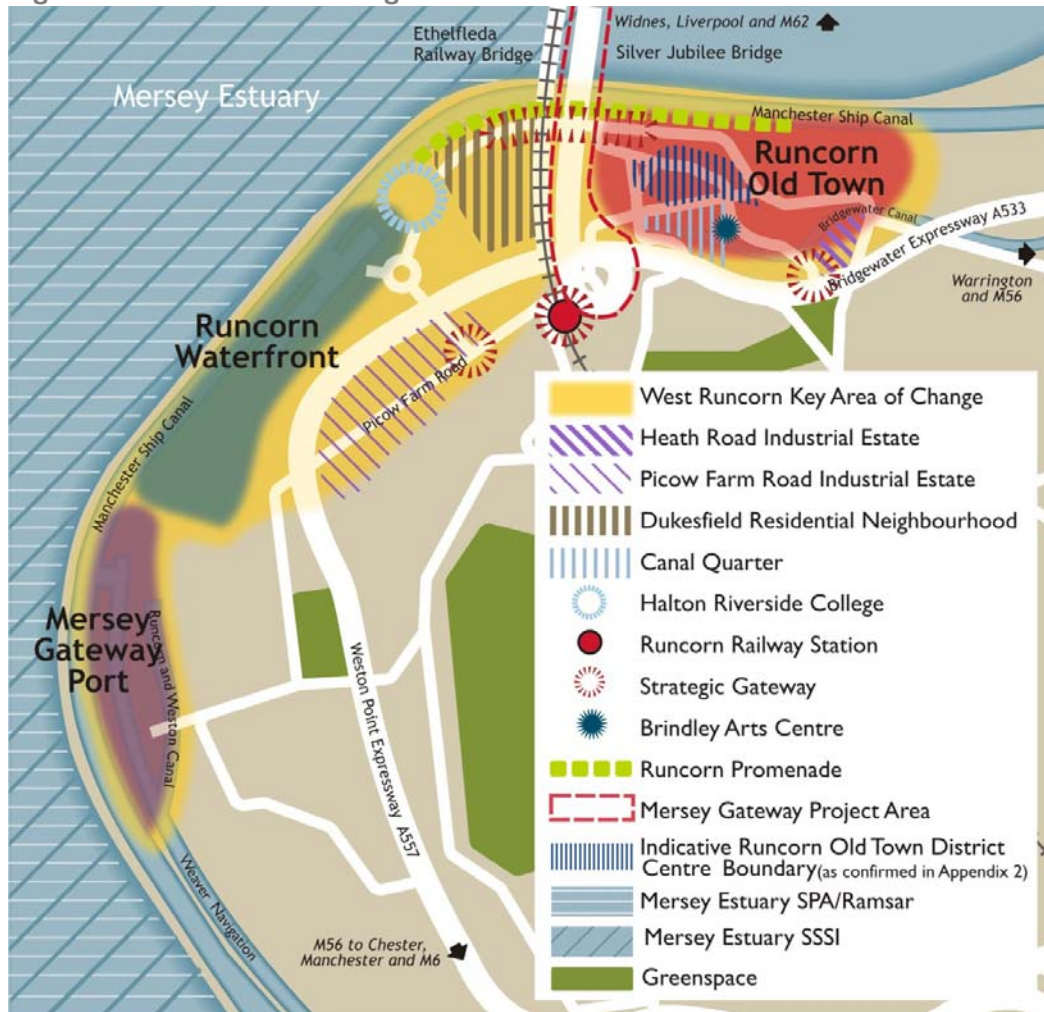
Principles of Development

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.

- Avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of European sites such as the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and/or Ramsar site including the avoidance of potential significant effects caused by the development of the Mersey Gateway Port including associated channel construction or dredging activity.
- 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 waterways where commercially appropriate.
- Achieve high standards of sustainable design and construction including a reduction in carbon emissions through renewable and low carbon technology particularly in accordance with the identification of a potential Energy Priority Zone at Runcorn Waterfront.

Figure 10: West Runcorn Diagram



Justification

- 13.2 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.
- 13.3 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.
- 13.4 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 Runcorn Promenade, the Manchester Ship Canal, the Bridgewater Canal, views across the Mersey Estuary, and the sub-regional and national links afforded by West Runcorn's proximity to the strategic highway network and Runcorn Railway Station.
- 13.5 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) 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 CS5: A Network of Centres. Future retail provision will be allocated within the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.
- 13.6 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.
- 13.7 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan and the development of a Runcorn Waterfront SPD. As such the 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment⁷⁴ only includes a yield of 1,360 units in the period to 2028. The future redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront will also support retail and community facilities, open space, and an employment area forming a buffer to the industrial area to the south. It is envisaged that the redevelopment of Runcorn Waterfront will be delivered over a 20-30 year time span.

- 13.8 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.
- 13.9 Environmental assessments will be required for the future development of the Mersey Gateway Port and any associated channel construction or dredging activity to avoid potentially significant effects on the Mersey Estuary SPA and/or Ramsar site, and other European sites. These assessments should identify the scale of any dredging activities and any associated impact of mobilisation of contaminants in the sediment.
- 13.10 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 Study⁷⁵ as having a limited office market due to land constraints and as such new office development activity in Runcorn is largely directed to the Daresbury Strategic Site in East Runcorn (CS11).
- 13.11 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. This may result in the unlocking of 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 Borough⁷⁶. 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 hub⁷⁷ 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

⁷⁴ HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2010/11

⁷⁵ BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (JELPS)

⁷⁶ HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy

⁷⁷ HBC & GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

- 13.12 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 Old Town, 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 West Runcorn's waterfronts with walking and cycling networks, with a particular emphasis on Runcorn Promenade and the Bridgewater Canal.
- 13.13 Advantage should also be taken of opportunities to increase the leisure and recreational potential of the waterways. However, consideration should be given to the commercial uses and operational issues of the Manchester Ship Canal. As such, recreational navigation of the Manchester Ship Canal may only be practical on a limited and controlled basis.
- 13.14 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 and Mersey Estuary, creating a unique sense of place and a vibrant asset for the Borough. Development proposals should have regard to appropriate waterfront strategies and initiatives, including the Bridgewater Way initiative which aims to promote the recreational, leisure and sustainable travel potential of the Bridgewater Canal.
- 13.15 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 Zone⁷⁸ and opportunities to develop a District Heating scheme will be particularly encouraged in the future redevelopment of this area especially where this is compatible with neighbouring industrial uses. In the achievement of sustainable design and construction, proposals will additionally need to ensure the protection of water quality of the area's waterways in accordance with CS23: Managing Pollution and Risk.
- 13.16 The Council will work proactively with the landowner of Runcorn Waterfront and other potential delivery partners to guide the development of the site. This will be translated into the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan and the 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 Strategy⁷⁹ including those 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.

⁷⁸ Arup (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study

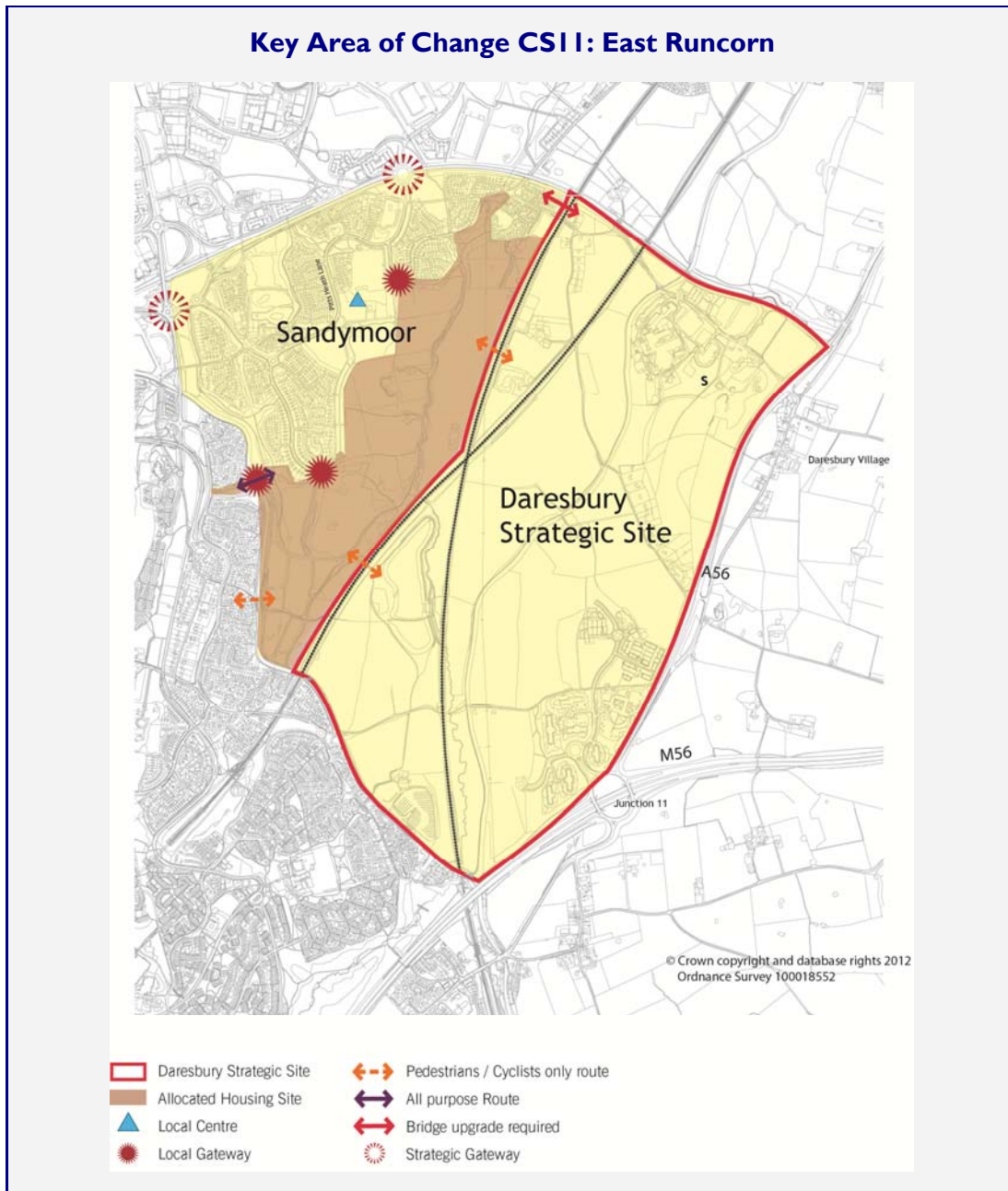
⁷⁹ HBC & GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 20, 23, 32, 56, 57, 109, 111 and 156)
Local Evidence	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (HBC, 2010); Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (BE Group, 2010); Halton 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).
Strategic Objectives	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9
SCS Priorities	Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	3 – Water Quality
	6 – Energy Efficiency
	7 – Land Quality
	10 – Housing
	11 – Accessibility
	14 – Economy
	16 – Town Centres
SA Outcome	The focus of this policy is bringing large areas of previously developed land back into beneficial use. Development will be designed with sustainability in mind. This policy will contribute positively to sustainability principles.

14 CSI I: EAST RUNCORN

- 14.1 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 portion is allocated as a Strategic Site. Areas within the Strategic Site as indicated on Figure 11 below are allocated for specific land uses as shown on Figure 12. As a Strategic Site, the area will deliver many of the required outcomes intrinsic to the success and future prosperity of Halton.

Figure 11: East Runcorn Key Area of Change and Daresbury Strategic Site Boundary



Daresbury Strategic Site

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

- a) 26ha of land will be made available to aid the expansion of BI science, high tech and research development at the existing Sci-Tech Daresbury campus and at land between the Bridgewater Canal and the Chester-Manchester railway line;
- 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 1,400 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 – 500 dwellings on the land known as Delph Lane West, 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 area known as the Central Housing Area between 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 local centre including a marina providing moorings for inland waterways craft sited alongside the Bridgewater Canal around the existing George Gleave's bridge. Any such provision of a local centre should avoid unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres and the planned local centre at Sandymoor. Individual retail units should not exceed 280 sqm net in size.

Principles of Development

Development across Daresbury Strategic Site will be expected to:

1. A network of open spaces for nature conservation and recreation totalling over 40 hectares, including the conservation of Daresbury Firs, enhancements to Keckwick Brook corridor, the creation of a linear country park along the Bridgewater canal corridor, formal green space to serve the residential areas and smaller green spaces integral to individual developments.
2. The timely provision of physical and social infrastructure to support the development at the site and so as to not overly burden facilities in surrounding areas. On and off site provision and developer contributions, including the pooling of contributions across sites to deliver large items of infrastructure will be needed to meet the infrastructure requirements of the development area.
3. The whole of the development should be served by public transport, to connect the employment, housing and retail/leisure areas. The public transport network at the site should include the provision of transport facilities sited to serve the entirety of the site.
4. 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 cyclist links to Sandymoor and improvements to the Bridgewater Canal corridor in line with the principles in CS15: Sustainable Transport.
5. The design, layout and style of individual plots should be guided by a design framework and

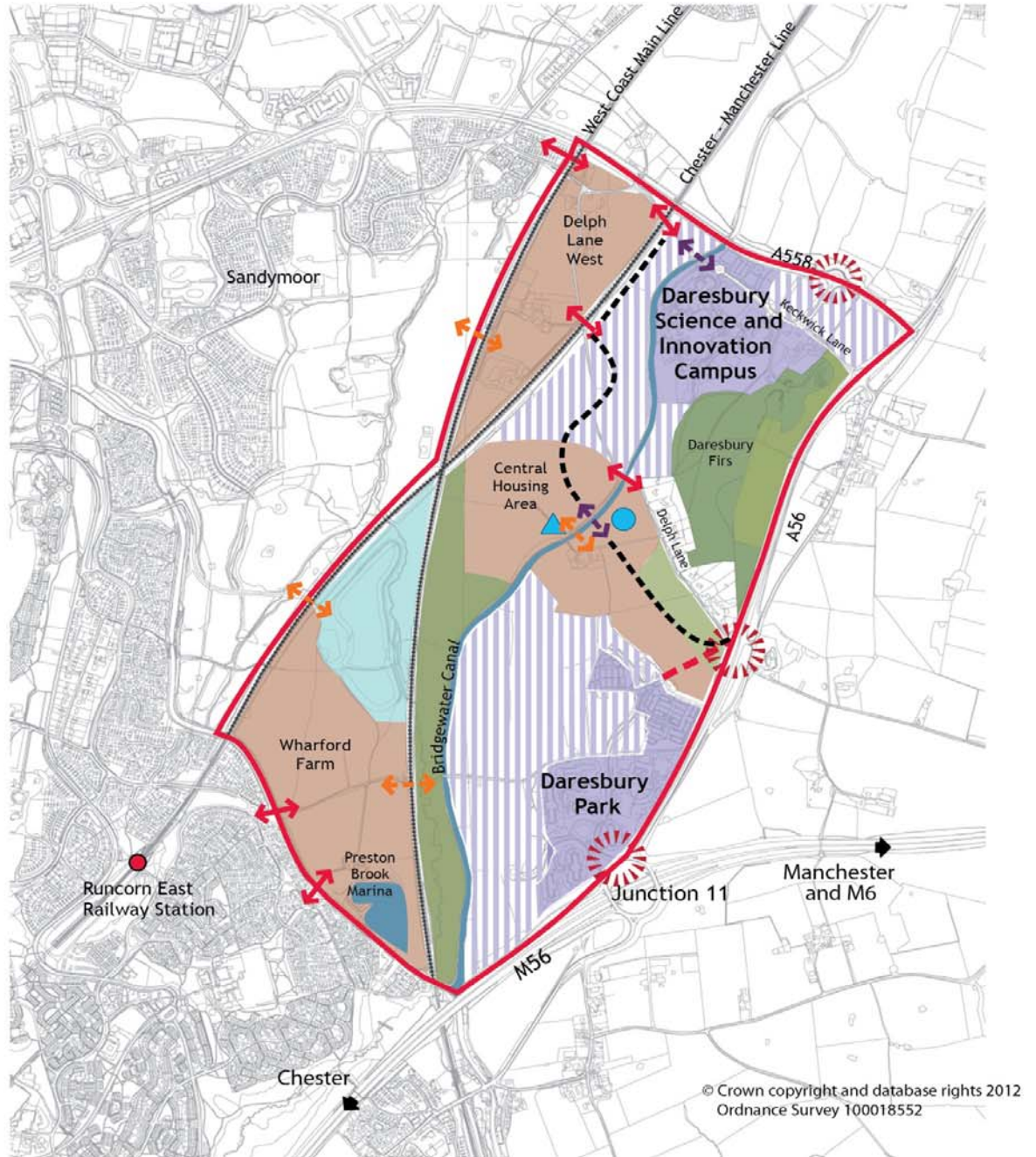
should be influenced by the existing locational assets of the area and its surroundings. Opportunities to integrate renewable energy technologies should also be sought in accordance with the identified Energy Priority Zone at Daresbury.

6. Development of the Daresbury Strategic Site should integrate with the adjacent residential community at Sandymoor, particularly through sustainable transport links.

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 local centre, primary school (if required) and public transport connections. The delivery of further development at Sandymoor should have regard to the adopted planning framework.

Figure 12: Daresbury Strategic Site Allocations within the East Runcorn Key Area of Change



- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Daresbury Strategic Site | New Vehicular Bridge | Railway |
| Allocated Housing Site | Pedestrians / Cyclists only route | Marina |
| Greenspace | All purpose Route | Local centre |
| Daresbury Firs Local Nature Reserve | Bridge upgrade required | Balancing Lake |
| Regional Employment Site | Bus only link | |
| Allocated Employment Site | Indicative main Vehicular route | |
| | Strategic Gateway | |
| | Local Gateway | |

Justification

East Runcorn Key Area of Change

- 14.2 The Key Area of Change lies to the east of Runcorn and is currently a mixture of developed land interspersed by agricultural land. The undeveloped remainder of the Sandymoor area, along with land to the west of Daresbury village, represents some of the remaining major greenfield sites in Halton outside of the Green Belt. 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 offer the potential for long distance sustainable travel options. The Key Area of Change has a varied topography which gives prominence to the 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.

Sandymoor

- 14.3 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.2⁸⁰ 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 1,000 dwellings, plus infrastructure, green spaces and a community centre had been built at Sandymoor since Phase I of the development commenced in the late 1980s⁸¹. Outstanding planning consents indicate that the area has the remaining potential to deliver an additional 1,400 dwellings, along with reserved sites for a local centre and primary school which are likely to be delivered once the community has grown sufficiently to make these facilities sustainable and viable. As part of the outline consents at Sandymoor, an extensive schedule of infrastructure requirements was produced which formed the basis of a Section 106 agreement for the Sandymoor area. The outstanding infrastructure requirements have been translated into the Infrastructure Plan accompanying the Core Strategy, along with an indication of the bodies responsible for delivery and likely development costs.

Daresbury Strategic Site

- 14.4 Daresbury Strategic Site is currently dominated by the regionally significant employment areas of Daresbury Park and Daresbury SIC (now branded Sci-Tech Daresbury). 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 2004-2014⁸² was drawn up to guide future investment in national science facilities including the Sci-Tech Daresbury campus. 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

⁸⁰ Runcorn Development Corporation (1971) Runcorn New Town Master Plan Amendment No.2

⁸¹ GVA Grimley for HBC (2009) Sandymoor Supplementary Planning Document

⁸² HM Treasury (2006) Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014: Next Steps

aspirations for the science and research facilities to expand to double the size of the facility at 2012. In recent years, a number of facilities have been built on prominent gateway sites such as the Daresbury Innovation Centre, the Cockcroft Institute (the National Centre for Accelerator Science) and Vanguard House.

- 14.5 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 through a partnership approach to visioning the future for the area. Stakeholders, landowners and potential developers in the area worked collaboratively to produce a strategic vision and comprehensive Master Plan known as the Daresbury Framework for the Daresbury area, 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 and demand.
- 14.6 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 4 below.

Table 4: Indicative Development Phasing at East Runcorn

HOUSING			EMPLOYMENT		
	Daresbury Strategic Site - number of dwellings	Sandymoor – number of dwellings		Daresbury Park (sqm)	Sci-Tech Daresbury (sqm)
Phase 1 (2010/11-2020/21)	500	366	Phase 1 (2010/11-2014/15)	22,919	25,000
Phase 2 (2015/16-2025/26)	600	788	Phase 2 (2015/16-2027/28)	22,919	47,383
Phase 3 (2020/21-2027/28)	300	310			
Beyond Core Strategy period (2028+)	-	-	Beyond Core Strategy period (2028+)	26,081	24,500
Totals	1,400	1,464	Totals	71,919	96,883
	2,864			168,802	

- 14.7 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 has worked to identify the critical infrastructure needed to serve the site and the locations of the important transport infrastructure are shown on Figure 12 above. The development aspirations have also been aligned with the existing planning consents and the Council’s knowledge of the intentions of developers made known through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process to produce a more realistic development profile for the plan period.
- 14.8 In order to achieve the desired aims for the Daresbury Strategic Site, partnership working will need to continue over the lifetime of the plan and beyond. To assist with this, public sector partner organisations have come together with the private

sector to form a Joint Venture for Daresbury SIC⁸³. It is estimated that around £600m will be invested in the area during the realisation of the plans for the area 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 the Liverpool City Region, ERDF, JESSICA and Regional Growth Fund 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 full potential. In August 2011, Sci-Tech Daresbury campus was announced as an Enterprise Zone⁸⁴ to boost local growth and increase jobs. New business in the Zone will benefit from a 100% discount on business rates, and Tax Incremental Financing powers will be a further method available to secure the infrastructure required to develop the site. Additionally, it is intended that the Enterprise Zone will benefit from reduced planning control through the introduction of a Local Development Order to be developed by the Council for the Zone. Government funding has already been earmarked for specific projects at the SIC, including the Hartree Centre for Computational Science and Engineering and the Science and Technology Facilities Council are committed to assisting the delivery of major public sector science programmes at the campus. 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.

- 14.9 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. In accordance with the NPPF, office development should ordinarily be directed towards designated town centres. In the case of Daresbury Park, the entirety of the area proposed for office development already benefits from outline planning consent for over 165,000m² of BI(a) floorspace (at April 2010) as indicated below in Table 5. The already consented floorspace, coupled with information taken from a survey of businesses indicates that there is little demand from within the office sector to locate in the Borough's town centre locations, particularly in Runcorn Old Town⁸⁵. 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 headquarter 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.
- 14.10 Although a large amount of employment floorspace has consent to be developed at Daresbury Park, monitoring of the density of completed office development at Daresbury Park and dialogue with the landowner reveals that a lower amount of office development is likely to actually be built, and this has been translated into the phasing of employment development included in Table 4 above in order to provide the most realistic picture of future development.

⁸³Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (19 November 2010)
<http://nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=416640&NewsAreaID=2>

⁸⁴ CLG (2011) The Government announces 11 new Enterprise Zones to accelerate local growth, as part of the Plan for Growth (www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1967595)

⁸⁵ BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study - Table 68, page 162 and Para 7.40, page 174

Table 5: Development at East Runcorn Benefitting from Existing Planning Consents (April 2010)

	Number of Dwellings	Amount of Employment floorspace (sqm)
Sandymoor (Full or Outline Planning Permission or Section 7.1 approval under the New Towns Act)	1,464	-
Daresbury SIC – (Full or Outline Planning Permission)	-	28,004
Daresbury Park – (Full or Outline Planning Permission)	-	165,564
Totals	1,464	193,568

Infrastructure

14.11 The extent of the development proposed at East Runcorn necessarily means 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 area⁸⁶ has been undertaken 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 both reduce reliance on the private car and increase the capacity of surrounding roads and junctions where the impact of a shift to more sustainable modes will not eradicate the issue. The study revealed that under a “Do Nothing” scenario (where no uncommitted development takes place), the M56 Junction 11 in 2015 is predicted to operate at capacity in both the AM and PM peak periods. The Highways Agency are fully aware of the issues at this junction and the Council will continue to work with them and the developers involved in bringing forward the Strategic Site to consider the alternative funding options necessary to prioritise necessary improvements at this junction. A number of other key junctions are also anticipated to be placed under significant stress. Highways infrastructure will be needed to provide sufficient access within the site, including a new main vehicular road to join the Daresbury Park and Daresbury SIC sites. Given that further work will be needed to determine the exact alignment of a new vehicular route through the site, the current route has only been shown as indicative on Figure 12. However, this route broadly illustrates the preferred alignment of the main vehicular road, indicating that it will be the key internal route at the Daresbury Strategic Site, and will be required to link the A56, the Central Housing Area, Daresbury SIC and connect to the A558. It will entail at least one additional canal crossing suitable for vehicles. The proposed land uses immediately adjacent to the indicative line of the main vehicular route as depicted on Figure 12 are therefore also subject to minor changes once the exact alignment is determined. The quantum and role of the area of greenspace south of the existing homes on Delph Lane close to the junction with the A56 should however remain. In addition to the main vehicular road, further works include improvements to existing/provision of new canal and railway bridges for vehicles, junction improvements with the A56, road linkages to the Sandymoor area and associated footpaths and cycleways.

14.12 Detail of the specific infrastructure projects, dominated by transport schemes because of the nature of the area is contained within Tables 6, 7 and 8 below and also given in the Infrastructure Plan which accompanies the Core Strategy. Less strategic infrastructure such as small scale greenspaces and internal roads will be provided as individual parcels of development land come forward. Utilities provision will also be essential to serve the new areas of development at East Runcorn but these are mainly provided as each site comes forward. Discussions

⁸⁶ Mott MacDonald (2011) East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study

with Scottish Power state that new primary substations may be required at both Daresbury SIC,/, Daresbury Park and Sandymoor, but this will be dependent on the demand for electricity of the new occupiers, particularly within the employment areas where the nature of the use will determine the demand for energy. Renewable energy infrastructure requirements cannot be quantified at this stage but the identification of Daresbury as an Energy Priority Zone⁸⁷ in CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change suggests that the potential for decentralised renewable and low carbon technologies should be pursued to boost the long term sustainability of the site. In accordance with CS19, new development at East Runcorn should be designed to have regard to the predicted effects of climate change.

- 14.13 The East Runcorn area has a rich natural environment which new development will need to respect. Of particular note in the area are the Red Brow Cutting Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Daresbury Firs Local Nature Reserve which will be conserved to retain their geological and biodiversity importance, respectively. Contributions will be sought to create and maintain existing and new areas of open space. Keckwick Brook runs through the area, and flood risk arising from this watercourse was one of the focuses of the Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment⁸⁸. Wharford Farm balancing lake was constructed to balance run-off flows from surrounding areas of housing, and will continue to be a vital resource in managing flood risk for the East Runcorn area. Regard should be had to policy CS23: Managing Pollution and Risk and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment when bringing forward development sites in the area. Alongside flood risk, it is imperative that water quality in the Borough's watercourses is not allowed to deteriorate, in accordance with the principles of CS23. With regard to improvements to the Bridgewater Canal, given the likely rise in usage of the towpath and the waterway itself, the Bridgewater Way Initiative operates as the key delivery vehicle through which to channel such improvements and contributions to this initiative will be appropriate in certain cases.⁸⁹
- 14.14 The provision of public transport facilities within the Strategic Site will improve the area's connectivity via sustainable transport. This will provide bus facilities to serve the employment and residential areas, with bus services serving the local centre to ensure its viability. Bus provision should improve connections to the Strategic Site from surrounding residential areas and key transport nodes including Runcorn Old Town, Runcorn East station and Warrington town centre.
- 14.15 The provision of a local centre is included in the policy to support the surrounding housing and employment areas. Retail and community facilities will be necessary to meet the day-to-day local needs of the residents and employees at East Runcorn. As the local centre falls within the Central Housing Area, it is expected that the developer of this wider area will deliver the units within the mixed use local centre, for occupation by service providers.
- 14.16 An adopted SPD exists for the Sandymoor area of the site to the west of the railway lines.

⁸⁷ Arup (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study

⁸⁸ JBA Consulting (2011) Halton Borough Council Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

⁸⁹ The Bridgewater Way Initiative is led by the Bridgewater Canal Trust who wish to maximise the potential of the Bridgewater Canal as an integrated shared strategic cycle and pedestrian network, through the implementation of the Bridgewater Way Initiative which seeks to implement improvements to existing routes and public transport facilities in the vicinity of the Bridgewater Canal.

Table 6: Daresbury Strategic Site – Transport Infrastructure Requirements Needed to Serve Residential Areas

	Residential Development Area	No. of Dwellings	Infrastructure Requirements	Delivery Mechanism
Phase 1 (2010/11-2020/21)	Delph Lane West	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keckwick Lane Vehicular bridge over Bridgewater canal • Improvements to Keckwick Lane bridge over the Chester-Manchester railway line to accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists • Improvements to Delph Lane bridge under the Chester-Manchester railway line to accommodate two-way vehicular traffic • Signalisation of Keckwick Lane at West Coast Main Line railway under bridge to allow two way vehicular traffic • Pedestrian/cyclist link to Sandymoor at Poplar Farm underpass 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developer of Delph Lane West in partnership with DSIC Joint Venture to deliver new canal bridge • Developer of Delph Lane West to deliver other bridge improvements and transport improvement works
	Land adjacent to Preston Brook Marina	150	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to/replacement of Cawley’s Bridge to allow safe vehicular and pedestrian access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private developer bringing forward land surrounding existing marina
Phase 2 (2015/16-2025/26)	Central Housing Area	600	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements at A56/Delph Lane junction • Improvements to existing Delph Lane canal bridge • Delivery of main vehicular road to link the A56 at Delph Lane with Keckwick Lane, including bridge over Bridgewater Canal and potential bus link to Daresbury Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development costs for spine road to be split between residential developer and DSIC Joint Venture
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to George Gleave’s bridge for pedestrians and cyclists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private developer bringing forward the Central Housing Area
Phase 3 (2020/21-2025/26)	Wharford Farm	300	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to/replacement of Borrow’s Bridge • Pedestrian/cyclist and emergency vehicular access to southern Sandymoor at Bogwood Railway bridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private developer bringing site forward
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to link between Wharford Farm and Daresbury Park via Red Brow Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Daresbury Park landowner has responsibility for delivering the Red Brow Lane link in accordance with the original Section 106 agreement in relation to outline permission at the site
Total number of residential units		1,400		

Table 7: Daresbury Strategic Site – Infrastructure Requirements Needed to Serve Employment Areas

Phase	Daresbury Park				Daresbury SIC			
	Employment Development Area	Floor space (sqm)	Infrastructure Requirements	Delivery Mechanism	Employment Development Area	Floor space (sqm)	Infrastructure Requirements	Delivery Mechanism
Phase 1 (2010/11-2014/15)	Completion of 40% of remaining plots at Daresbury Park	22,919	First stage of outstanding improvements to J11 of M56	Daresbury Park developer through Section 106 agreement on outline planning applications	Gateway sites alongside A558 / Innovation way	25,000	None	
			Layout areas of greenspace including at Keckwick Brook to create informal low grade forestry footpaths		Sites to the west of the Bridgewater Canal		Delivery of main vehicular road to link the A56 at Delph Lane with Keckwick Lane, including bridge over canal	
Phase 2 (2015/16-2025/26)	Completion of 35% of remaining plots at Daresbury Park	22,919	Improvements to Junction 11 of the M56	Triggered when 76,560 sqm gross floor area completed as per Daresbury Park Section 106	Site to the south of existing DSIC campus	47,383	Improvements to existing Delph Lane canal bridge	DSIC Joint Venture in partnership with developer of central residential area
			Bus link to connect Daresbury Park with new main vehicular road and to rest of the site	Daresbury Park developer through Section 106 agreement on outline planning applications			Improvements at A56/Delph Lane junction	
Beyond Core Strategy Period (2026+)	Completion of 25% of remaining plots at Daresbury Park	26,081			Site to the west of the Bridgewater Canal	24,500		
Total Development		71,919				96,883		

Table 8: Daresbury Strategic Site - Other Infrastructure Required to support the Entire Site

	Proposed location	Timescale	Contributing development	Delivery mechanism
Public Transport facilities	Within the Strategic Site, capable of serving the entire area	Over the plan period	DSIC and Central Housing Area	Private residential developer and DSIC Joint Venture
Marina	Adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal, south of Delph Lane	2020/21-2025/26 alongside delivery of central housing area	DSIC and Central Housing Area	Unknown, although it is envisaged that it would be delivered as part of the local centre
Daresbury Local centre	Within Central Housing area, situated alongside the Bridgewater Canal around the existing George Gleave's bridge	2020/21-2025/26 alongside delivery of central housing area	DSIC and Central Housing Area	Unknown commercial development delivery partner and occupiers
Further improvements to Junction 11 of M56 in accordance with the ERSTS ⁹⁰	Junction 11 of M56	Over the plan period	All sites will create pressure on junction 11 of the M56	Pooled developer contributions from all development sites with potential for funding from the Highways Agency
Improvements to the principal road network surrounding the development site in accordance with the ERSTS ¹²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A558/ A56 Junction • DSIC/A558 Junction • A558 Pitts Heath Roundabout • Widening of remainder of A558 	Over the plan period	All sites will create pressure on the principal road network used to access the site	Pooled developer contributions from all development sites

POLICY CONTEXT:									
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 20, 21, 23, 34, 35, 37, 38, 47, 50, 52, 57, 73, 75, 97, 157, 161, 162, and 173); National Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014								
Local Evidence	Halton Economic and Tourism Development Strategy 2005-2008; Halton Science Report; Sandymoor SPD (2009); East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study (2011); Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2011)								
Strategic Objectives	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 10								
SCS Priorities	Employment Learning and Skills in Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton								
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>2 – Biodiversity</td> <td>11 – Accessibility</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 – Water Quality</td> <td>14 - Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 – Energy Efficiency</td> <td>16 – Town Centres</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10 – Housing</td> <td>17 – Transport</td> </tr> </table>	2 – Biodiversity	11 – Accessibility	3 – Water Quality	14 - Economy	6 – Energy Efficiency	16 – Town Centres	10 – Housing	17 – Transport
2 – Biodiversity	11 – Accessibility								
3 – Water Quality	14 - Economy								
6 – Energy Efficiency	16 – Town Centres								
10 – Housing	17 – Transport								
SA Outcome	Overall this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some negative environmental effects.								

⁹⁰ East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study (2011)

Halton Borough Council

Halton Core Strategy

Core Policies

15 CS12: HOUSING MIX

- 15.1 The number of new homes to be provided is set out in CS1: Halton's Spatial Strategy and accompanying policy CS3: 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 CS13: Affordable Housing, but it is equally important to ensure that the mix of new private housing contributes towards meeting identified needs. As such, housing developers should have regard to locally arising needs for dwellings of differing size and type.

Policy CS12: Housing Mix

On sites of 10 or more dwellings, the mix of new property types delivered should contribute to addressing identified needs as quantified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment, unless precluded by site specific constraints, economic viability or prevailing neighbourhood characteristics.

Proposals for new specialist housing for the elderly, including extra-care⁹¹ and supported accommodation, will be encouraged in suitable locations (and sites allocated in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan, as appropriate), particularly those providing easy access to local services and community facilities.

There will be a presumption against further Residential Care Accommodation resulting in or exacerbating an oversupply.

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

- 15.2 Evidence from the Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2010⁹² (SHMA) demonstrates 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 higher proportions of medium/large terraced houses and bungalows than elsewhere in the country⁹³. Consequently, there is under provision of other dwelling types, namely small terraced and detached homes and also to a certain extent, flatted homes. Surveys demonstrate that the variety of bed spaces provided in homes across the Borough is comparable to other areas in the country, but that residents' aspirations are mostly for two and three bedroomed terraced and semi-detached properties⁹⁴.

⁹¹ Extra-care housing is defined in Halton's Housing Needs and Market Assessment Survey 2006 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.

⁹² GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting (2011) Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment

⁹³ HBC and CPC (2009) Private Sector House Condition Survey (para 2.3)

⁹⁴ DCA (2006) Halton Housing Needs and Market Assessment Survey

- 15.3 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 2011 (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 site 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 their planning application of how these factors have influenced the proposed housing mix. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will set out requirements and guidance on these matters for housing allocations in the Borough.
- 15.4 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 West⁹⁵. 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 care⁹⁶. 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.
- 15.5 Selecting appropriate locations for extra care and supported housing is important to ensure that residents are able to integrate with the surrounding community and retain maximum 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 Local Plans. 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.
- 15.6 Whilst there is an identified need for additional extra care accommodation, there is currently a significant oversupply of residential care home⁹⁷ places, with resultant high levels of vacancies evident within the existing stock⁹⁸. National policy is to help people stay in their own home as long as they wish and are able, by the provision of personalised care packages within the community. Surplus capacity in residential care represents an inefficient use of scarce resources, placing an undue regulatory burden on the Council and has the potential to impact on conditions for residents. As such, the Council will seek to resist further residential care facilities where the level of bedspace vacancies is likely to be worsened. Bedspace vacancy monitoring is updated by the Council on a weekly basis and this information will be

⁹⁵ HBC and Tribal Consulting (2008) Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care (Table 5)

⁹⁶ HBC (2008) Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011

⁹⁷ Residential Care Homes / Care Homes are facilities where a number of people live, often in single rooms and have access to on-site care facilities.

⁹⁸ HBC Bed Vacancy Monitoring / HBC Residential & Nursing Care Home Commissioning Strategy (2009)

used to inform any decision on the need for further residential care facilities or the expansion of existing facilities.

- 15.7 The concept of Lifetime Homes⁹⁹ 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 Homes¹⁰⁰ to comply with Lifetime Homes criteria. Therefore from 2016, all 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.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 47, 50, 56, 57 and 159) Code for Sustainable Homes – Technical Guide (CLG, 2009); Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods (CLG, 2008); Lifetime Homes Criteria (Habinteg, 2010)
Local Evidence	Halton Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn / JGC, 2011); Halton Housing Strategy (HBC, 2008); Commissioning Strategy for Extra Care (HBC and Tribal Consulting, 2008); Private Sector House Condition Survey (HBC and CPC, 2009); Residential & Nursing Care Home Commissioning Strategy (HBC, 2009)
Strategic Objectives	1 and 2
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	10 – Housing 11 – Accessibility
SA Outcome	This policy has strong social benefits and negligible environmental impacts.

⁹⁹ Lifetime Homes - www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/

¹⁰⁰ CLG (2009) Code for Sustainable Homes - Technical guide May 2009 - Version 2

16 CSI3: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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

Policy CSI3: Affordable Housing

Affordable housing units will be provided, in perpetuity, on schemes including 10 or more dwellings (net gain) or 0.33 hectares or greater for residential purposes.

Affordable housing provision will be sought at 25% of the total residential units proposed. The Council will seek to secure 50% of new provision as social and affordable rented tenures and 50% intermediate housing tenures across the Borough.

The provision of affordable housing must:

- address the identified local housing needs as quantified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment; 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 affordable housing contribution may only be reduced where robust and credible evidence is provided to 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

- 16.2 Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rent 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 providers of social housing, for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers to households eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable). 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.

- 16.3 The need for affordable housing must be assessed in the context of a market which is increasingly beyond the reach of lower earning households, particularly newly forming households within Halton¹⁰¹. In 2010 it is estimated that over 68% of newly arising households cannot access market housing without some form of assistance. This is up from 61% in 2005. Of existing households requiring a move from unsuitable accommodation approximately 35% do not have the financial resources to do so. This is a drop from the corresponding figure in 2005 suggesting that overall affordability should be getting better, but that barriers to new entrants to the market have worsened.
- 16.4 The assessment of unmet housing need, including existing backlog and newly arising need, suggests that there is a requirement to provide for an additional 891 affordable units per annum, which represents a marked increase over the last ten years from negligible need (affordability mostly being a function of worklessness) ten years ago and an unmet requirement of 118 per annum just 6 years ago (in 2006).
- 16.5 Unmet need for affordable housing is far in excess of the proposed housing delivery targets as set out in policy CS3: Housing Supply and Locational Priorities and above the level of total completions achieved in any year since before 1994. It is therefore essential to seek to maximise the contribution to new affordable units from new housing developments. The Economic Viability Assessment¹⁰² has considered the realistic contribution that can be secured from new housing development across different housing areas of the Borough north and south of the river and under different market conditions. This shows that under the Mid Market Position, 25% affordable housing is deliverable at a 50% social rented and 50% intermediate housing tenure split. Although a higher percentage of affordable housing could be delivered in the Improved Market Position (40% with a 34% social rented and 64% intermediate tenure split) it is acknowledged through the assessment that it is difficult to predict whether the improved market scenario will ever be met. It is however, considered likely, based on previous cycles of the property market, that the mid market position will be reached during the Core Strategy Plan period.
- 16.6 Taking into account the viability of residential development, the policy target for affordable housing contribution has been set at 25% of the total residential units, which will be applied to all qualifying residential developments, being those on sites capable of providing a net gain of 10 or more units or on 0.33 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 prevailing market conditions, abnormal physical on-site constraints resulting in extraordinary costs, or higher competing use value would render the development unviable when the affordable housing contribution is taken into account. The Affordable Housing SPD has been prepared to detail the requirements of any viability appraisal and contains a suggested legal agreement for use where affordable units are to be delivered.
- 16.7 The Council will seek to achieve delivery of an appropriate tenure split between social rent, affordable rent and intermediate housing across the Borough as informed by the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

¹⁰¹ GL Hearn and Justin Gardener Consulting (2011) Halton and Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment

¹⁰² DTZ (2010) Economic Viability Assessment

and Economic Viability Assessment (or replacements). The target will be to secure 50% of new provision across the Borough as social and affordable rented tenures and 50% intermediate housing tenures. The size and type of affordable supply sought on individual sites will be dependent on the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment, taking into consideration the site location, local housing mix and identified priorities to meet local needs within the sub-area. Affordable housing provision as infill development within ‘washed over’ Green Belt villages may be appropriate in certain circumstances, subject to local need, character and Green Belt considerations.

- 16.8 Off-site provision will only be considered appropriate in exceptional circumstances and is dependent 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan, Developer Contributions SPD or equivalent.
- 16.9 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.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally para.s 47, 50 and 159)
Local Evidence	Halton and Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting, 2011); Halton Economic Viability Assessment (DTZ, 2010); Halton Housing Strategy 2008-2011 (HBC, 2008).
Strategic Objectives	1 and 2
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	10 – Housing
SA Outcome	This policy has strong social benefits and negligible environmental impacts.

17 CS14: MEETING THE NEEDS OF GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE

- 17.1 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 CS14: Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

The Council will work with its partners to ensure appropriate provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople's accommodation needs. In allocating sites and for the purposes of considering planning applications, the following criteria will need to be satisfied:

- The site is not affected by pollution, contamination, flooding or other environmental factors that would result in unacceptable living conditions
- The site is well designed and landscaped to give privacy between pitches/plots and, where appropriate, between the site and adjacent uses
- The site is well located in relation to the highway network with adequate vehicular and pedestrian access, and provision for parking and circulation
- The site is accessible to local services and facilities by walking and/or public transport
- The site can be supplied with essential services such as water, sewerage, drainage, and waste disposal
- With particular regard to sites for Travelling Showpeople, the development includes appropriate provision for the storage, maintenance and testing of equipment, where required, without creating unacceptable nuisance, or present a risk to the health and safety of those living on or near the site
- The proposal is not unacceptably detrimental to the amenity or character of the surrounding area
- The site would not lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the Mersey Estuary SPA and/or Ramsar site

There will be a presumption against the loss of existing permanently consented Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople sites leading to or exacerbating an identified shortfall unless suitable replacement provision of equal or enhanced value are provided.

Justification

- 17.2 Halton currently has two private Gypsy and Traveller sites located in Runcorn, two local authority sites, a longstanding site in Widnes and a new site opened in 2009 in Runcorn, providing a total of 40 permanent and 10 transit pitches across the Borough. There are currently no plots for Travelling Showpeople.

Table 9: Gypsy and Traveller Pitches and Travelling Showpeople Plots (2011)

	Permanent		Transit	Travelling Showpeople	Total
	Private	Council			
Widnes	--	23	--	--	23
Runcorn	13	4	10	--	27
Total	13	27	10	0	50

- 17.3 The Council is pro-active in addressing the welfare needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople community and has worked with neighbouring authorities in Cheshire, Warrington and St Helens to quantify the need for permanent and transit sites within the sub-region, commissioning the Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)¹⁰³ which reported in 2007. This study concluded an additional need in Halton for up to 28-32 additional pitches for Gypsies and Travellers with no requirement for Travelling Showpeople plots, in the period to 2016. Since this study the Council has provided a new site in Runcorn (comprising 14 pitches, 10 transit and 4 permanent). The Runcorn transit site provided more than 25% of the identified need for transit provision in the Cheshire Partnership Area.
- 17.4 The Council will continue to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities to review and update the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots to ensure that local need is properly quantified and managed over the Core Strategy plan period. This evidence base will inform Halton’s locally set target and the allocation of sufficient deliverable sites in the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan. The criteria set out in the policy will be used to allocate appropriate sites and to determine applicable planning applications, ensuring that proposed sites are suitable and capable of providing an adequate living environment for future communities whilst protecting the amenity and character of the surrounding area.

POLICY CONTEXT:					
National Policy	Planning policy for traveller sites (CLG, 2012)				
Local Evidence	Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and The University of Salford, 2007)				
Strategic Objectives	2				
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton				
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>10 – Housing</td> <td>12 – Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11 – Accessibility</td> <td>13 - Education</td> </tr> </table>	10 – Housing	12 – Health	11 – Accessibility	13 - Education
10 – Housing	12 – Health				
11 – Accessibility	13 - Education				
SA Outcome	This policy should contribute directly to the well-being of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities.				

¹⁰³ Salford Housing and Urban Studies Unit and The University of Salford (2007) Cheshire Partnership Area Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

18 CS15: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

- 18.1 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, 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 CS15: Sustainable Transport

a) 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.

b) 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
- 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan:

- 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

- 18.2 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.
- 18.3 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 walking and cycling routes
 - 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
- 18.4 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 Halton Local Transport Plan (LTP)¹⁰⁴ which is fundamental in the delivery of sustainable transport in Halton.
- 18.5 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 Merseytravel.
- 18.6 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 and where the need for new road infrastructure is attributable to the effects of development, developer contributions will be sought in accordance with CS7: Infrastructure Provision.

¹⁰⁴ HBC (2011) Halton Local Transport Plan 3

- 18.7 Further detail regarding the need to encourage travel by sustainable modes will be set out in the Transport and Accessibility 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan in accordance with Halton's LTP.

POLICY FRAMEWORK:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 41, 157 and 162); Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) (DfT, 2007).	
Local Evidence	LTP2 (HBC, 2006); LTP3 (HBC, 2011); Halton Curve Rail Improvements: Demand Study (Steer Davies Gleave, 2009); Mid-Mersey Local Authorities Cross Boundary Public Transport Accessibility Report (Atkins, 2010)	
Strategic Objectives	7	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	4 – Climate Change	12 – Health
	8 – Air Quality	17 – Transport
	11 – Accessibility	
SA Outcome	This policy will have positive benefits on all areas of sustainability (social, economic, environmental).	

19 CSI6: THE MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT

- 19.1 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 Project 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 and the M56 with a focus on its 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 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.

With respect to internationally important sites (Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar site) such measures will need to be sufficiently extensive to enable a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity unless it can be demonstrated that there are both no alternatives and Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest.

Figure 13: Mersey Gateway Project Diagram



Justification

- 19.2 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.
- 19.3 To relieve the increasing problems of congestion, a new bridge across the River Mersey is to be delivered situated c. 1.8km upstream from the Silver Jubilee Bridge. This 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.
- 19.4 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 Project¹⁰⁵ and final planning approval was received in December 2010 from the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government following the final Inspectors Report¹⁰⁶. It is anticipated that construction work will start within two years from the date of planning approval and will take around three years to complete.
- 19.5 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 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 hours¹⁰⁷.
- 19.6 In accordance with the Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy¹⁰⁸ 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 Strategy¹⁰⁹ 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

¹⁰⁵ DfT (2010) Investment in local Major Transport Schemes

¹⁰⁶ The Planning Inspectorate (2011) Report to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government: Halton Borough Council – The Mersey Gateway Project

¹⁰⁷ HBC (2008) The Mersey Gateway Project Environmental Statement (Chapter 16: Transportation)

¹⁰⁸ HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Sustainable Transport Strategy

¹⁰⁹ HBC and GVA (2008) Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy

Runcorn Old Town within the West Runcorn Key Area of Change (CS10), due to potential opportunities presented by the re-designation of the Silver Jubilee Bridge. Further information is detailed within the appropriate Key Area of Change policies. Regeneration opportunities will also be supported at Astmoor Industrial Estate.

- 19.7 Although the design of the Mersey Gateway Bridge has been influenced by environmental considerations, the Mersey Gateway Project's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process¹¹⁰ 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, particularly during the construction phase of the project. Environmental enhancements will include: a new 28 hectare saltmarsh nature reserve; additional nature management to Wigg Island; and, the Mersey Gateway Project to act as a catalyst for wider environmental improvements to the Upper Mersey Estuary. 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 beneficial permanent long term effects once the Bridge is operational.
- 19.8 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 Concessionaire¹¹¹, on matters of transportation, regeneration and environmental mitigation.
- 19.9 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.
- 19.10 As part of the Mersey Gateway Project, traffic modelling was undertaken within Halton and the surrounding areas based on several scenarios. The forecasts¹¹² 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.
- 19.11 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.

¹¹⁰ HBC (2008) The Mersey Gateway Project Environmental Statement

¹¹¹ 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.

¹¹² Mott MacDonald and HBC (2009) Mersey Gateway Highway Model Traffic Forecasting Report

- 19.12 It follows that the ‘do-minimum’ 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 delivery of the overall Spatial Strategy for the development of Halton to 2028 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.
- 19.13 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.

POLICY CONTEXT		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 31, 41 and 162); Investment in Local Major Transport Schemes (DfT, 2010)	
Local Evidence	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); Report to the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government: Halton Borough Council – The Mersey Gateway Project (PINS, 2011)	
Strategic Objectives	7	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	8 – Air Quality 11 – Accessibility 14 – Economy	16 – Town Centres 17 – Transport
SA Outcome	This policy has strong benefits for social and economic factors. The policy builds in environmental mitigation. Overall, the policy is considered positive in sustainability terms.	

20 CS17: LIVERPOOL JOHN LENNON AIRPORT

- 20.1 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"¹¹³, a Master Plan for LJLA¹¹⁴ was prepared in 2007 establishing the long term framework to 2030.

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).

This will be subject to future development and expansion of LJLA demonstrating that it is in accordance with Halton's Sustainable Development Principles (CS2) 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:

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

With respect to internationally important sites (particularly the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area and Ramsar site) such measures will need to be sufficiently extensive to enable a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity unless it can be demonstrated that there are both no alternatives and Imperative Reasons of Over-riding Public Interest.

a) Runway Extension

A runway extension to the east of the existing airport boundary, as set out in the Airport Master Plan, 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 14. The precise extent of this change, and the detailed criteria to be met in the implementation of the runway extension, will be considered in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or equivalent.

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

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 is proposed to be delivered through the development of the EATC.

¹¹³ DfT (2003) The Future of Air Transport

¹¹⁴ Liverpool John Lennon Airport (2007) Airport Master Plan to 2030

The route of the proposed EATC, through Halton’s Green Belt, will be determined through the standard approvals process and will not require an amendment to Halton’s Green Belt.

Figure 14: Liverpool John Lennon Airport Diagram



Justification

20.2 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 UK¹¹⁵.

20.3 Recent statistics¹¹⁶ 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

¹¹⁵ AOA (2009) Cleared for Take Off: Airports Providing Lift to an Economy in Recovery

¹¹⁶ Department for Transport (DfT) (2009) UK Air Passenger Demand and CO₂ Forecasts

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

- 20.4 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.
- 20.5 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.
- 20.6 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 Master Plan 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 on Figure 14.
- 20.7 The runway extension, as set out in the Master Plan, would require a change to Halton Borough Council's Green Belt boundary. This will be addressed through the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan 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 Figure 14; however, the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or equivalent will determine the precise extent of the Green Belt boundary change, as an adjunct to the wider review of Green Belt boundaries around Widnes and Hale. Any 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 safety requirements. Land outside of the Area of Search will not be considered for Green Belt release for airport purposes. Public consultation will be undertaken during the stages of production for the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or equivalent document.
- 20.8 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 Strategy¹¹⁷, 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

¹¹⁷ The Airport Surface Access Strategy is subject to ongoing review and update.

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 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 approval processes.

- 20.9 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"¹¹⁸.
- 20.10 It is essential to ensure that LJLA's future growth is sustainable and that there is a commitment to Halton's Sustainable Development Principles (CS2). 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. This will include undertaking appropriate environmental assessments and, in accordance with CS22: Health and Well-Being, Health Impact Assessments. Specific consideration should be given to the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the coastal location of the airport, the proximity to Hale Village and the Sustainable Transport Network including the Trans Pennine Trail. The landscape value of the area should also be appropriately considered and opportunities taken to preserve this value, including the proposed Coastal Reserve extension detailed in the LJLA Master Plan (2007).
- 20.11 Matters relating to development within LJLA's Public Safety Zone (PSZ) (shown on Figure 14) will be dealt with in accordance with national and local policy and guidance including the Government Circular: Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones¹¹⁹ and the Planning for Risk SPD¹²⁰. 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or equivalent.
- 20.12 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.

¹¹⁸ 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.

¹¹⁹ Department for Transport (DfT) (2010) Circular 01/2010: Control of Development in Airport Public Safety Zones

¹²⁰ HBC (2009) Planning for Risk Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 18, 19, 20, 32, 33, 157 and 162); The Future of Air Transport (DfT, 2003); Cleared for Take Off: Airports Providing Lift to an Economy in Recovery (AOA, 2009)
Local Evidence	Airport Master Plan to 2030 (Liverpool John Lennon Airport, 2007); Liverpool SuperPort (TMP, 2008)
Strategic Objectives	4 and 7
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	2 – Biodiversity
	7 – Land Quality
	11 – Accessibility
SA Objectives	14 – Economy
	17 – Transport
SA Outcome	This policy has strong economic benefits and will have positive benefits on a number of SA topics. Although the extension of the runway will lead to the growth of the airport and a change to the Borough’s Green Belt boundary, there are sufficient mitigation measures incorporated in the policy that, if implemented effectively, will help to mitigate negative impacts.

21 CSI8: HIGH QUALITY DESIGN

- 21.1 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, economic and health 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

- 21.2 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, including that set out within Halton's Landscape Character Assessment¹²¹.

- 21.3 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 Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and English Heritage, alongside national standards for instance the 'Lifetime Homes' criteria, 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.
- 21.4 The high quality design principles for the Borough expressed in this policy will also be supported by a range of policies within Halton's Local Development Documents including the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and appropriate SPDs. Area specific policies within Local Plans and SPDs will also provide design guidance to ensure that positive elements of an area's character are enhanced and reinforced.

POLICY CONTEXT:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 73, 74, 75, 109, 123, 124, 125, 126, 128, 134, 135, 137, 138 and 170)	
Local Evidence	Design of Residential Development SPD (HBC, 2012); Design of New Industrial and Commercial Development SPD (HBC, 2005); Halton Landscape Character Assessment (TEP, 2009)	
Strategic Objectives	8	
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton; A Safer Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	1 – Cultural Heritage	12 – Health
	2 – Biodiversity	17 - Transport
	11 – Accessibility	
SA Outcome	This policy will have strong positive benefits for environmental, social and economic sustainability factors.	

¹²¹ TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

22 CS19: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- 22.1 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 2050¹²². There are also UK targets to generate 15% of electricity from renewable sources by 2020¹²³ and an objective to deliver zero carbon and sustainable developments that are adaptable to changing climatic conditions.

Policy CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change

All development should be sustainable and be designed to have regard to the predicted effects of climate change including reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) 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 encouraged as a minimum standard for new residential development, rising to Level 4 in 2013 and to Level 6 in 2016.
- The BREEAM 'Very Good' standard will be encouraged as a minimum standard for new non-residential development, rising to 'Excellent' standard in 2013.
- Development should incorporate appropriate climate change resilience and carbon management measures, including passive design features, water efficiency and conservation measures, and the management of surface water run-off.
- Reductions in CO₂ 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 contemporary Building Regulations¹²⁴, however, development will be expected to seek to improve CO₂ 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 for decentralised renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be supported provided that they do not result in unacceptable harm to the local environment which cannot be successfully mitigated.
- Proposals in appropriate locations for large scale grid-connected renewable energy infrastructure and equipment, including, but not limited to wind, solar photovoltaics, and Combined Heating and Power schemes will be supported.

¹²² HM Gov (2008) Climate Change Act

¹²³ HM Gov (2009) UK Renewable Energy Strategy

¹²⁴ CLG (2010) Circular 06/2010: New Approved Documents for F, J and L Guidance Documents

Justification

- 22.2 New development will be encouraged to incorporate current best practice in sustainable design and construction. In achieving this, development proposals must offer an integrated approach to sustainable development incorporating climate change resilience and carbon management measures.
- 22.3 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 buildings¹²⁵. 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 is encouraged to meet the appropriate CSH and BREEAM standards where it is viable and feasible to do so.
- 22.4 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 2016¹²⁶ and non-residential development by 2019¹²⁷. Changes to the Building Regulations are expected to bring in these challenging carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions targets, with the energy requirements of the CSH and BREEAM aligned accordingly. For instance, based on the standards for 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.
- 22.5 To support the new Building Regulations and to ensure the planning system contributes to reducing carbon emissions, development is expected to show how improvements to CO₂ emission savings can be made over the contemporary Building Regulations (Part L) baseline¹²⁸ 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 should provide evidence that all options have been investigated and that further CO₂ emissions savings are not feasible and / or viable.
- 22.6 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)¹²⁹. As a result it is anticipated that as CO₂ emission reductions are integrated into Building Regulations in line with national targets, achieving higher levels of the CSH and BREEAM will become more viable.

¹²⁵ 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.

¹²⁶ HM Treasury (2011) The Plan for Growth

¹²⁷ In a Ministerial Statement 'Zero Carbon Buildings' (20th December 2010) the Government confirmed its policy to progressively raise the national regulatory requirements for non-domestic buildings, enabling them to be zero carbon from 2019.

¹²⁸ Including and future revisions to Part L: CLG (2010) Circular 06/2010: New Approved Documents for F, J and L and Guidance Documents

¹²⁹ CLG (2011) Cost of Building to the Code for Sustainable Homes: Updated Cost Review

- 22.7 Building a comprehensive spatial understanding of the opportunities for renewable and low carbon 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 Study¹³⁰ (Renewable Energy Study) was commissioned by the Liverpool City Region authorities (including West Lancashire and Warrington). Indicative renewable and low carbon energy generation targets have been derived through the Renewable Energy Study. These indicate the contributions that might be made by the technologies under principal consideration in the study, which are biomass Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and on-shore wind. The targets were produced as a result of analysis based on constraints mapping, resource availability and in the case of biomass CHP, taking into account the likely energy requirements of the Borough in line with the projected housing and employment land targets. The energy generation targets show the potential of the Borough in delivering biomass CHP.
- 22.8 As part of the Renewable Energy 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 (utilising biomass CHP) 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. These Energy Priority Zones will be important in the achievement of the energy generation indicative targets for Halton¹³¹. 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.
- 22.9 Although the Renewable Energy Study did not identify significant scope for other large scale renewable energy developments in Halton, future potential may exist, particularly for onshore wind and for utilising building integrated technologies, as technology advances and economies of scale deliver cost reductions. Such developments will be supported in appropriate locations subject to environmental mitigation. Sub-regional developments which contribute to the production of renewable energy will also be supported by the Council, subject to the management and mitigation of any identified environmental impacts.

POLICY CONTEXT:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98 and 99) 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)	
Local Evidence	Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (ARUP, 2010); Halton Economic Viability Assessment (DTZ, 2010)	
Strategic Objectives	9	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton	
SA Objectives	3 – Water Quality 4 – Climate Change	5 – Flood Risk 6 – Energy Efficiency
SA Outcome	This policy will have strong positive benefits for environmental and economic sustainability criteria.	

¹³⁰ ARUP (2010) Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study

¹³¹ As detailed in the Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Capacity Study (Arup, 2010)

23 CS20: NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 23.1 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 the protection, nature conservation and enhancement 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

- 23.2 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

- 23.3 The Mersey Estuary is an internationally important resource for over-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. Development schemes will not be supported that will lead to adverse effects on such internationally important wildlife sites, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.
- 23.4 Halton has three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (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 Wildlife Sites and ten Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) which support a range of habitats and species, three Local Geological Sites, 154ha of woodland and numerous priority habitats and species identified within the Halton Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)¹³².
- 23.5 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 Borough's green infrastructure network (Policy CS21).
- 23.6 Heritage assets are defined as those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest¹³³. It is important to conserve and enhance these assets as they contribute to Halton's sense of identity.
- 23.7 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 the Undercroft of West Range (Norton Priory) and Halton Castle, both Scheduled Monuments, are considered to be 'at risk'¹³⁴ 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.
- 23.8 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.
- 23.9 One of the overarching aims 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

¹³² HBC (2003) Halton Biodiversity Action Plan

¹³³ CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework

¹³⁴ English Heritage (2010) Buildings at Risk Register

Assessment¹³⁵. 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 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 including future updates to the Borough’s Landscape Character Assessment.

POLICY CONTEXT:					
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 109, 110, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140 and 141)				
Local Evidence	TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment; Halton Biodiversity Action Plan (HBC, 2003); State of the Borough in Halton (HBC, 2011)				
Strategic Objectives	10				
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton				
SA Objectives	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1 – Cultural Heritage</td> <td>3 – Water Quality</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 - Biodiversity</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 – Cultural Heritage	3 – Water Quality	2 - Biodiversity	
1 – Cultural Heritage	3 – Water Quality				
2 - Biodiversity					
SA Outcome	This policy will have strong positive benefits for environmental and economic sustainability criteria.				

¹³⁵ TEP (2009) Halton Landscape Character Assessment

24 CS21: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 24.1 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 greenspaces 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 Local Plan 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

- 24.2 For the purposes of Halton's Local Plan, green infrastructure is defined as:
- Parks and Gardens – including parks and regional parks
 - Amenity Green Space – including informal recreation spaces, greenspaces 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 agricultural land, allotments, community gardens, cemeteries and churchyards
- 24.3 Green infrastructure, as defined, is present across Halton from the strategic urban greenspace areas of Town Park and Victoria Park, the waterways and canals including the Sankey and Bridgewater 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 of benefits¹³⁶. 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.
- 24.4 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.
- 24.5 Clear priorities for the protection, enhancement and, where appropriate, the expansion of green infrastructure will be set out in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan and through masterplanning for strategic sites. This could include the potential designation of land by communities as 'Local Green Space' in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework where a green area can be demonstrated to be special to a local community. Future studies, including a strategy for green infrastructure, 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 Framework¹³⁷. Such studies will be particularly important within the Key Areas of Change and where it can be used to minimise and mitigate the negative impacts of development.

¹³⁶ Natural England (2009) Green Infrastructure Guidance

¹³⁷ MEAS (2011) Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework

- 24.6 A review of open space, sport and recreation facilities was undertaken for the Borough in accordance with the advice previously set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG): 17. Halton’s Open Space Study¹³⁸ considered the quantity, quality, accessibility and adaptability of provision 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 10) which should be taken into consideration by future development. These standards will be updated through a strategy for green infrastructure 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan or another appropriate Local Plan document.

Table 10: Halton Borough Council Standards of Provision for Greenspace/ Green Infrastructure¹³⁹

Category	Standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Allotments and Community Gardens	0.09
Amenity Open Space	1.00
Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space	2.75
Outdoor Sports Facilities	2.75
Parks and Gardens	1.25
Provision for Children and Young People	0.20

- 24.7 Although the recreational potential of the Borough’s and the wider sub-region’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 Assessment¹⁴⁰ this is particularly relevant for European sites, specifically the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. 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. Impacts on neighbouring authorities’ European sites, including the Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Sefton section of the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar Site, will also be managed through the Council working in partnership with neighbouring authorities on appropriate Management Plans.
- 24.8 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.

¹³⁸ HBC and PMP (2004 and as updated 2006) Halton Borough Council Open Space Study

¹³⁹ HBC and PMP (2004 and as updated 2006) Halton Borough Council Open Space Study

¹⁴⁰ Scott Wilson (2011) Halton Core Strategy Habitats Regulation Assessment – Appropriate Assessment

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 58, 59, 61, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 80, 83, 99, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 125, 165, 166, 167, 168 and 171)
Local Evidence	Halton Borough Council Open Space Study (HBC and PMP, 2004 and as updated 2006); Liverpool City Region Ecological Framework (MEAS, 2011)
Strategic Objectives	10
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton; Children and Young People in Halton; Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	1 – Cultural Heritage
	2 – Biodiversity
	3 – Water Quality
	4 – Climate Change
	5 – Flood Risk
	7 – Land Quality
	17 – Transport
SA Outcome	This policy will have strong positive benefits upon environmental and social sustainability criteria.

25 CS22: HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- 25.1 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 Take-Away outlets (Use Class A5) is managed; and,
- opportunities to widen the Borough's cultural, sport, recreation and leisure offer are supported.

Justification

- 25.2 When compared with other areas in England, Halton is within the worst 10% of areas for life expectancy¹⁴¹ and ranks 11th out of 326 Local Authorities (1 = most deprived) in terms of health deprivation¹⁴². As referred to in Halton's Story of Place, the Lancaster University Health Study¹⁴³ 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.
- 25.3 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 Assessment¹⁴⁴, and the "Our Ambition for Health" Commissioning Strategic Plan¹⁴⁵, 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.

¹⁴¹ ONS (2007-2009) Life Expectancy at Birth

¹⁴² CLG (2010) The English Indices of Deprivation

¹⁴³ Lancaster University (2003) Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton

¹⁴⁴ Halton and St Helens NHS (2008 and refresh 2009) Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

¹⁴⁵ NHS Halton and St Helens (2009) "Our Ambition for Health" Commissioning Strategic Plan

However, in order to address the significant problem of health and well-being in Halton, it is necessary to support further measures which will help to facilitate healthy lifestyles and environments, and alleviate health problems.

- 25.4 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.
- 25.5 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 developments¹⁴⁶ will be required.
- 25.6 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 Borough’s town, district and local centres (CS5: A Network of Centres). The prevalence of uses such as these can influence eating habits and has been linked to the risk of obesity¹⁴⁷. In Halton, -36.3% of Year 6 pupils were classed as overweight or obese in /-2009/10, this is higher than both the North West (-34.1%) and England (33.3%)¹⁴⁸. A Hot Food Takeaway SPD-has been developed to set out specific criteria for the assessment of proposals for new hot food takeaways (Use Class A5) to ensure that possible adverse effects caused by an over-abundance of hot food takeaways are minimised.
- 25.7 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.

¹⁴⁶ Large Scale Major Developments: Residential - 200 dwellings / 4ha or more

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

¹⁴⁷ Government Office for Science (2010) Tackling Obesities: Future Choices – Project Report 2nd Edition

¹⁴⁸ HBC (2011) State of the Borough in Halton (National Child Measurement Programme)

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 29, 30, 34, 37, 61, 69, 70 and 171),
Local Evidence	Understanding Factors Affecting Health in Halton (Lancaster University, 2003); Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (Halton and St Helens NHS, 2008 and refresh 2009); “Our Ambition for Health” Commissioning Strategic Plan (NHS Halton and St Helens, 2009); State of the Borough in Halton (HBC, 2011); Hot Food Takeaway SPD (HBC, 2012)
Strategic Objectives	11
SCS Priorities	A Healthy Halton
SA Objectives	11 – Accessibility 12 – Health
SA Outcome	This policy is expected to have significant positive benefits for health.

26 CS23: MANAGING POLLUTION AND RISK

- 26.1 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.
- 26.2 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 or activities 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

a) 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 (AQMAs) 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.

b) 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.

c) 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 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 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

- 26.3 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.
- 26.4 In 2009, air pollutants were found to be in exceedance of acceptable levels in two separate locations in Widnes Town Centre. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels at the junctions of Milton Road/Gerrard Street and Deacon Road/Albert Road in the Town Centre were found to be above objective levels¹⁴⁹, 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 NO₂ to within appropriate levels, and on 23rd February 2011, AQMAs were designated for the above locations in Widnes Town Centre¹⁵⁰. In order to address the issues in the AQMA's, 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 Development Plan document.
- 26.5 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 19th Century. In 2008 it was estimated that there are approximately 400 hectares of contaminated land in the Borough¹⁵¹. In 2010, a Local Brownfield Strategy¹⁵² was produced for Halton, in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency. This strategy assessed the current deliverability of 26 known priority brownfield sites in the Borough to new beneficial uses, and identifies opportunities for the public sector to accelerate this process. The findings echo local knowledge and the Contaminated Land Strategy that there are significant challenges to bringing previously used land back into use in the Borough. 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, West Runcorn 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.

¹⁴⁹ Objective levels are the level of concentrations of major air pollutants which should not be exceeded, due to the likely impact on human health (DEFRA).

¹⁵⁰ HBC (2011) Air Quality Management Areas Orders 1 and 2

<http://www3.halton.gov.uk/environmentandplanning/pollution/pollutioncontrolairquality/>

¹⁵¹ HBC (2008) Contaminated Land Strategy 2008-2013

¹⁵² Drivers Jonas Deloitte for HCA (2010) Local Brownfield Strategy for Halton

- 26.6 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'¹⁵³ 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 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.
- 26.7 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 Health and Safety Executive 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.
- 26.8 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 SPD¹⁵⁴.
- 26.9 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 by the Civil Aviation Authority 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 may be extended accordingly to reflect the larger area of risk associated with the airport, in accordance with detail to be included in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan.
- 26.10 The Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 was endorsed by the Environment Agency and finalised in 2007¹⁵⁵. 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 2011¹⁵⁶ and provides a key source of information to ensure that future development does not take place

¹⁵³ The Coal Authority (2010) Halton Coal Mining Referral Area
www.coal.decc.gov.uk/assets/coal/whatwedo/halton_referral.pdf

¹⁵⁴ HBC (2009) Planning for Risk Supplementary Planning Document

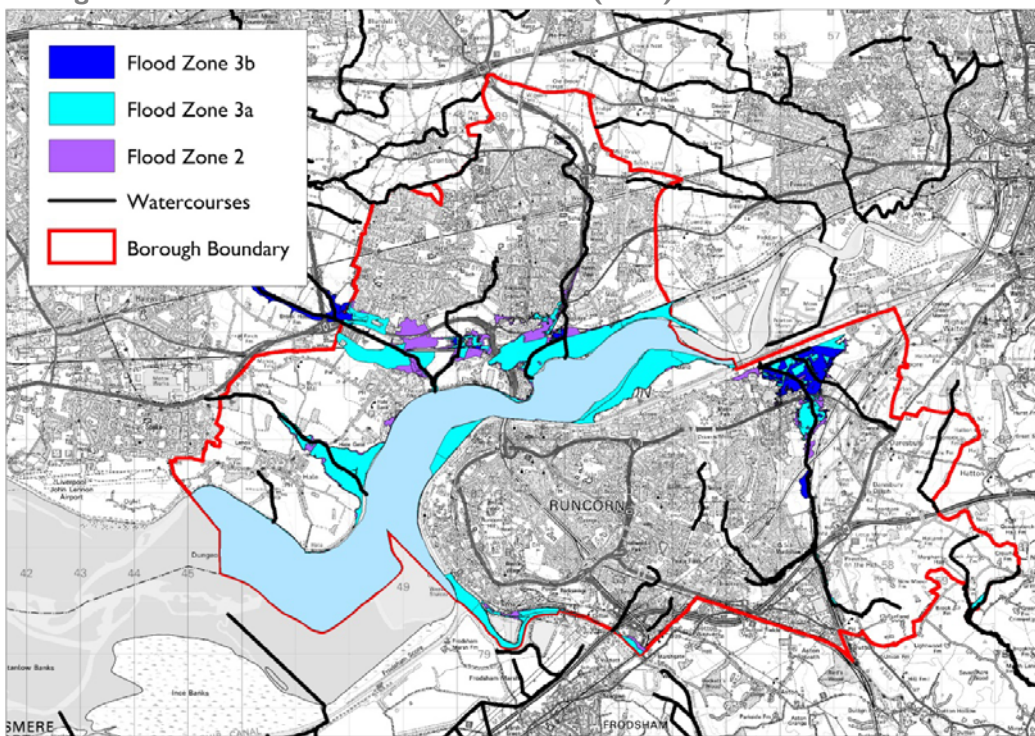
¹⁵⁵ HBC (2007) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 1

¹⁵⁶ JBA Consulting (2011) Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 2

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.

- 26.11 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 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. The Environment Agency have approved the assessment and as such, Flood risk mapping from Halton’s SFRA Level 2 is included below to illustrate the areas at risk from flooding in the Borough.

Figure 15: SFRA Level 2 Flood Risk Areas (2011)



POLICY CONTEXT:		
National Policy	NPPF (Principally paras 94, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 120, 121, 122, 123 and 172) Circular 01/2010 (DfT, 2010)	
Local Evidence	Halton Air Quality Management Areas Orders 1 and 2 (2011), Halton Contaminated Land Strategy (2008-2013), Planning for Risk SPD, Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 (2007), Halton Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 (JBA, 2011)	
Strategic Objectives	11 and 12	
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton; A Safer Halton	
SA Objectives	3 – Water Quality	8 – Air Quality
	4 – Climate Change	12 – Health
	5 – Flood Risk	
SA Outcome	This policy will have strong positive benefits for environmental, social and economic sustainability factors.	

27 CS24: WASTE

- 27.1 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 landfill¹⁵⁷. 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 the Liverpool City Region (Merseyside and Halton). The allocation of sites and detailed development management policies will be provided in the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan;
- ensure that the Borough can meet the identified waste management needs as determined through the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan or equivalent;
- 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 specific waste management plans; and,
- ensure that waste management facilities are developed whilst minimising the impacts on the environment and communities of the Borough.

Justification

- 27.2 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, the Liverpool City Region (Merseyside and Halton) needs to reduce its reliance on landfill by providing alternative facilities for recycling, reprocessing, treatment and disposal. It will be necessary therefore to promote all forms of waste reduction ensuring that Halton's residents are aware of their responsibility for minimising waste.
- 27.3 The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan (Joint Waste Local Plan) provides policy guidance for waste and allocates sites to deliver waste capacity requirements. The Spatial Strategy for waste in the sub-region is a resource recovery-led strategy which aims to maximise the ability to achieve self-sufficiency

¹⁵⁷ HBC (2011) State of the Borough in Halton

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.

- 27.4 This approach is in accordance with Halton’s Municipal Waste Management Strategy¹⁵⁸ and recognises the importance of the sub-regional apportionment of waste and through the Joint Waste Local Plan will provide alternative facilities for recycling, reprocessing, treatment and disposal of Halton’s waste.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management (CLG, 2005)
Local Evidence	Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton (HBC, 2008); State of the Borough in Halton (HBC, 2011); Emerging Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan.
Strategic Objectives	13
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	4 – Climate Change
	7 – Land Quality
SA Outcome	9 – Waste
	12 – Health
Sustainable waste disposal methods should provide positive benefits for social and economic factors. Diversion of waste from landfill should lead to positive environmental factors.	

¹⁵⁸ HBC (2008) Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Halton

28 CS25: MINERALS

- 28.1 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, Minerals Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Areas of Search for sand and gravel resources will be identified and protected to prevent their sterilisation. The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan will allocate areas of minerals resources and set out the criteria for their potential extraction.

Justification

- 28.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Minerals Planning Authorities to plan for minerals within their administrative boundaries. A requirement of the NPPF is to define Minerals Safeguarding Areas and also to develop policies for locations where minerals resources of national or local importance are known to exist so that these resources are not sterilised by other forms of development.
- 28.3 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 Borough¹⁵⁹. The Urban Vision Study on Mineral Planning in Merseyside¹⁶⁰ 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 Delivery and Allocations Local Plan 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.
- 28.4 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 minimising the need for minerals

¹⁵⁹ The Coal Authority (2011) Surface Mining Coal Resource Areas
[www.coal.decc.gov.uk/assets/coal/whatwedo/Halton\(B\)_CoalResources_A1_150dpi.pdf](http://www.coal.decc.gov.uk/assets/coal/whatwedo/Halton(B)_CoalResources_A1_150dpi.pdf)

¹⁶⁰ Urban Vision (2008) Mineral Planning in Merseyside

extraction and should be pursued in accordance with CS19: Sustainable Development and Climate Change.

- 28.5 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 provision¹⁶¹, 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 effects are identified, these are effectively managed and mitigated.

POLICY CONTEXT:	
National Policy	Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework: Minerals Policy (CLG, 2012) National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2005-2020 (CLG, 2009)
Local Evidence	Minerals Planning in Merseyside (Urban Vision, 2008).
Strategic Objectives	13
SCS Priorities	Environment and Regeneration in Halton
SA Objectives	1 – Cultural Heritage 7 – Land Quality
SA Outcome	Mineral extraction may impact on the cultural heritage and landscape if sites are not restored once extraction has taken place. However, this impact is mitigated to a certain extent by a further measure in the policy, which encourages the use of recycled and secondary aggregates across the Borough to minimise the need for minerals extraction.

¹⁶¹ CLG (2009) The National and Regional Guidelines for Aggregates Provision in England 2005-2020

Halton Borough Council

Halton Core Strategy

Appendices

APPENDIX I HOUSING TRAJECTORIES

Housing trajectories track housing completions, as included in the annual Halton Housing Land Availability (HLA) reports and forecast potential completions as included in the annual Halton Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (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. Figures are drawn from the 2010 SHLAA which contains single year estimates to 2028.

The Trajectories include data on two main measures:

1. The **Monitor Line** (Figure A1) shows how many dwellings above or below the planned rate of housing supply the identified potential supply is at any one time, i.e. over or underperformance against target.
2. The **Manage Line** (Figures A2 and A3) 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 has been created showing the cumulative proportion of actual and projected supply delivered on Previously Developed Land (PDL) Figure A4.

Figure A1: MONITOR LINES (Halton; Runcorn; Widnes and Hale)

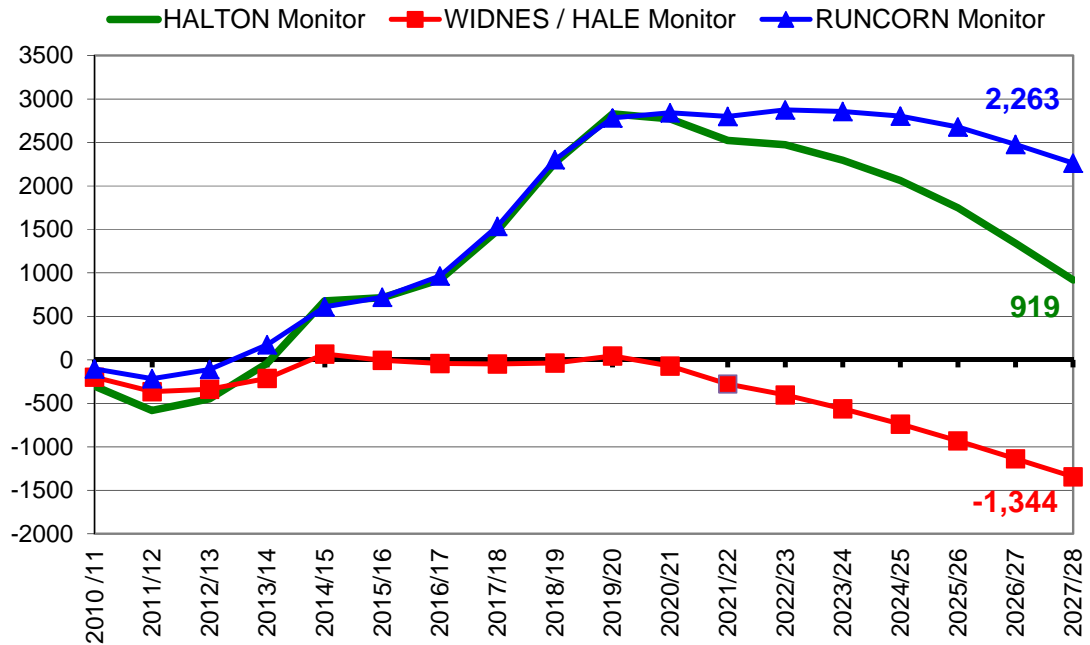


Figure A1: Monitor Lines

Figure A2: Housing Trajectory (HALTON)

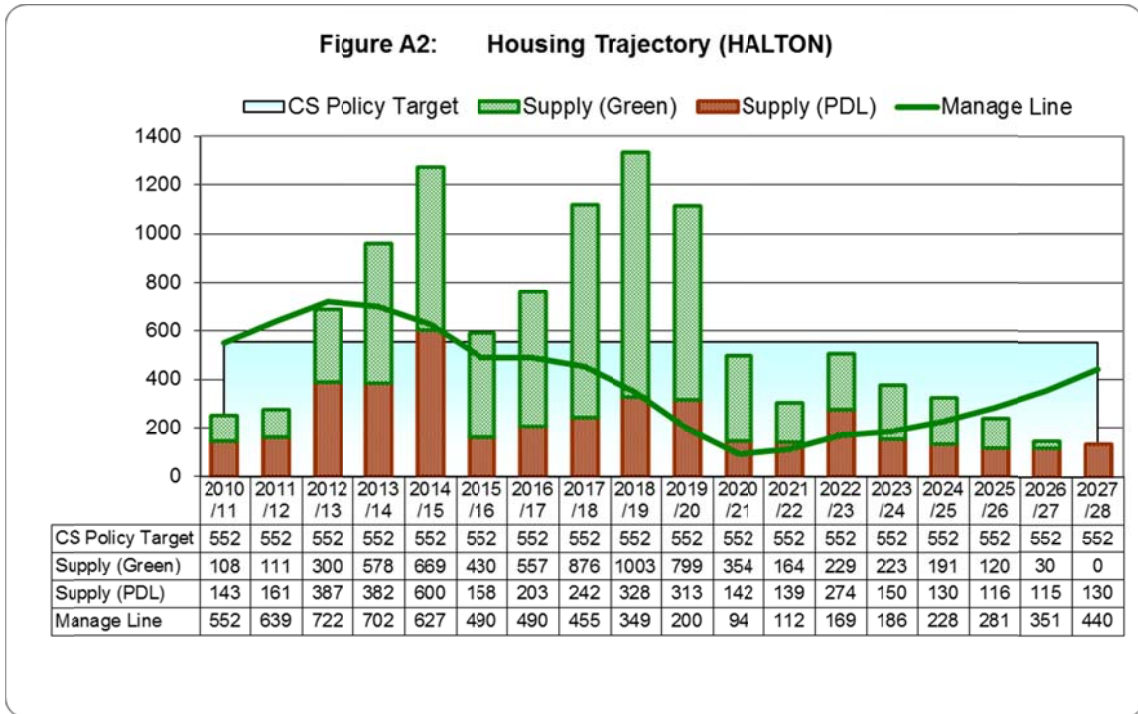


Figure A2: Halton Housing Trajectory

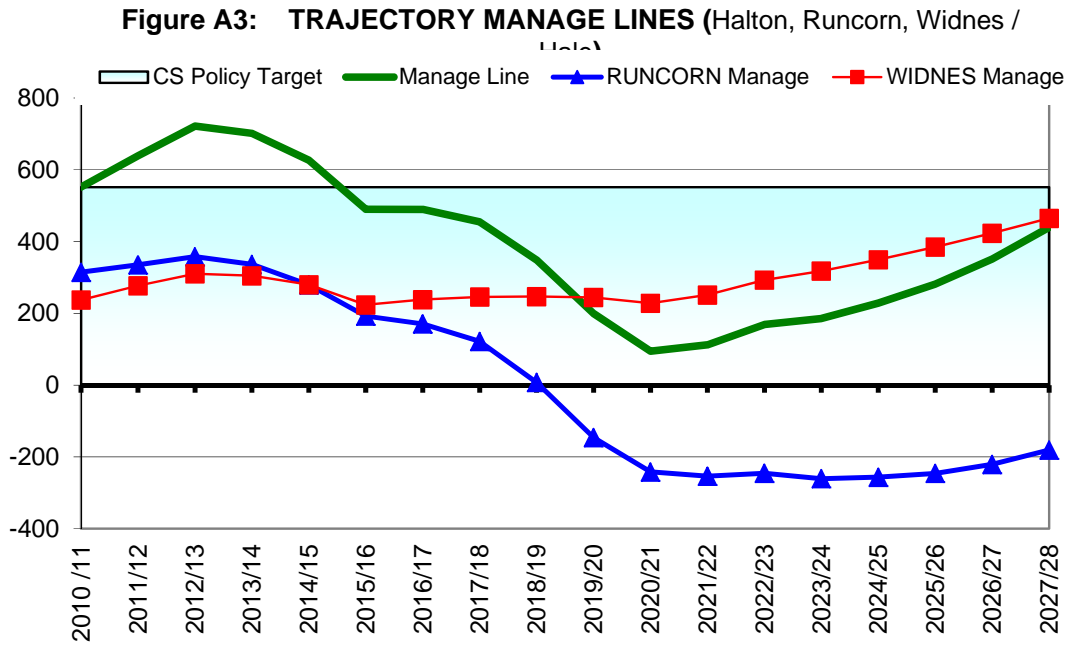


Figure A3: Trajectory Manage Lines

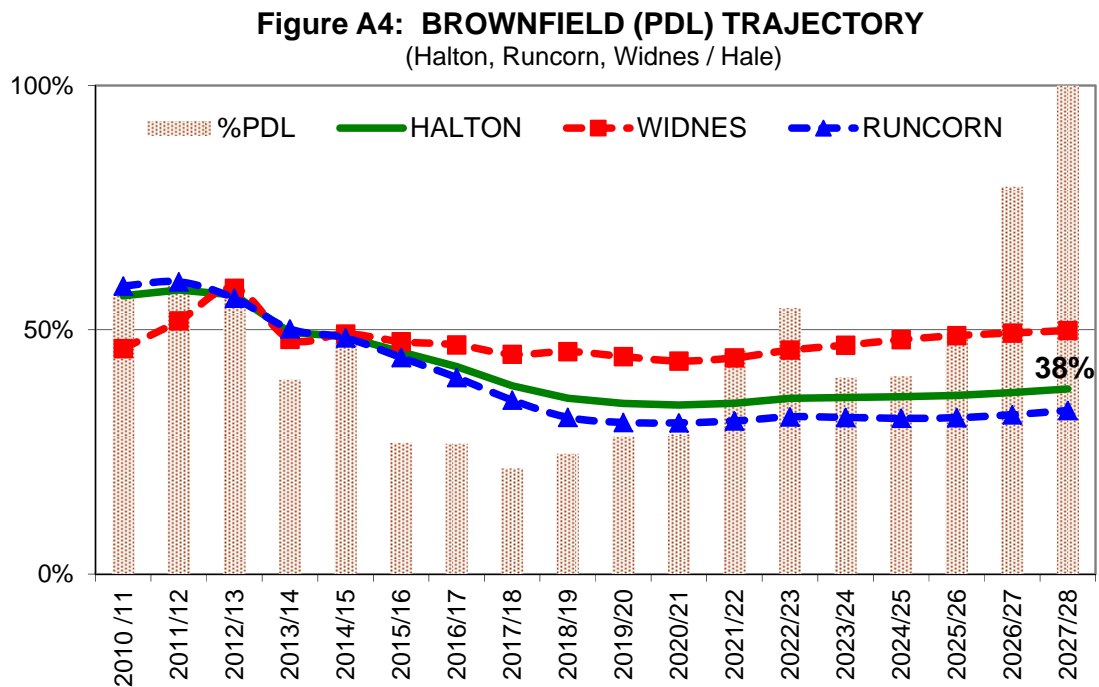
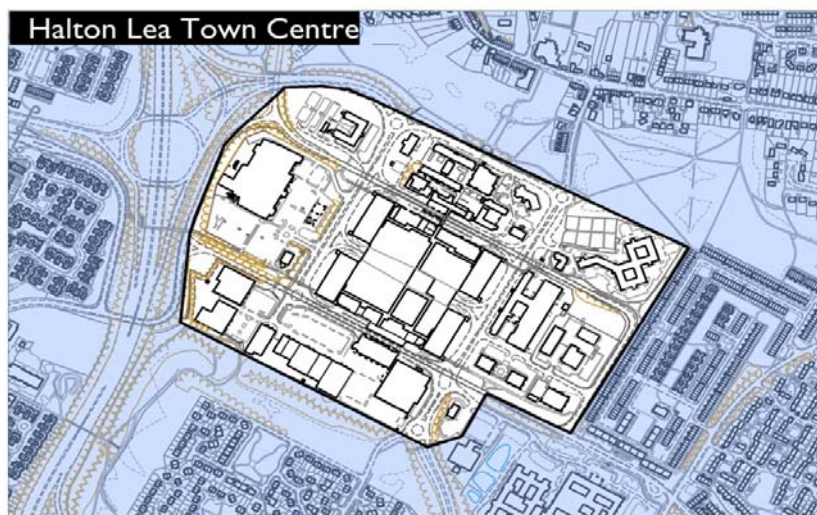
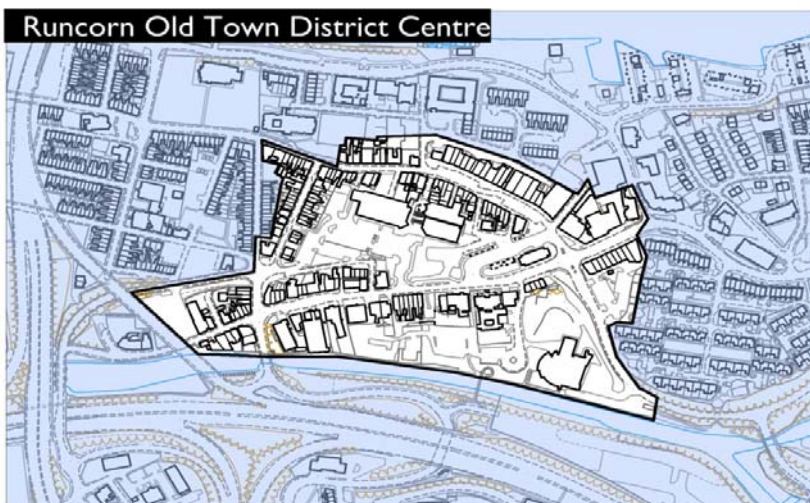
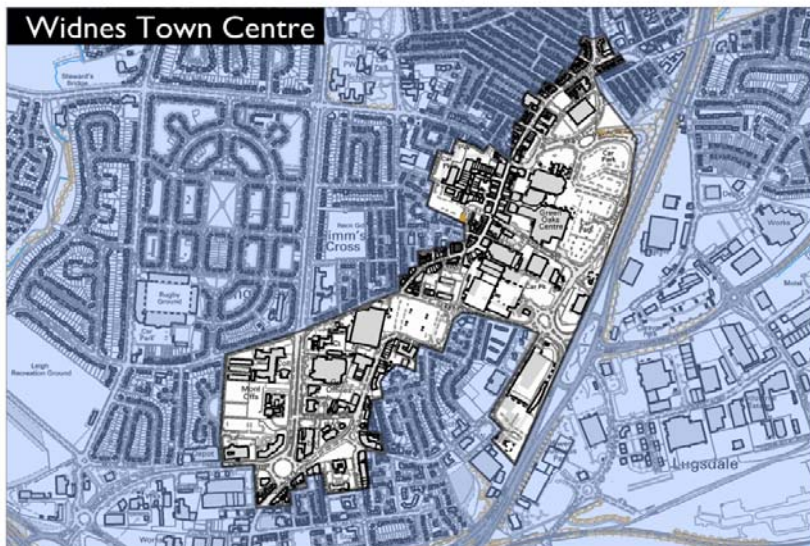


Figure A4: Brownfield (PDL) Trajectory

APPENDIX 2 TOWN AND DISTRICT CENTRE BOUNDARIES



APPENDIX 3 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 Authority Monitoring Report to specifically chart the progress of Local Plan documents and the success of their planning policies. Where policies are not achieving the desired outcome, the monitoring report will act as a prompt to consider whether further guidance is needed in a Supplementary Planning Document on the matter or if the policy approach needs to be reviewed and updated in another Local Plan. Prior to the production of the Core Strategy, the Authority Monitoring Report charted the implementation of policies from the Unitary Development Plan. As Halton's Local Plan grows, the Authority Monitoring Report will expand to monitor progress towards the delivery of the Vision and Strategic Objectives as set out in this Core Strategy and the implementation of policies within all of Halton's Local Plans.
2. With regards to implementation and delivery of the Core Strategy policies, the Council will proactively manage planning applications through a development management approach and allocate land through an appropriate Local Plan for Halton. The Council will seek to work with partners and land owners to pursue delivery against the Vision and Strategic Objectives of the plan, including on the Daresbury Strategic Site and West Runcorn. Where specific Local Plan documents are required to deliver the objectives of a policy, this is stated below in the implementation and delivery section, alongside the likely adoption date of the document.

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
CSI Halton's Spatial Strategy	Net number of homes delivered	9,930 homes at an average annual rate of 552 net new homes until 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 • Development management approach
	Employment Land delivered	Target of 313ha of land available for employment development over the plan period to 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 • Development management approach
	Retail Floorspace delivered	57,000sqm of retail development across the three centres <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35,000 sqm Convenience/Comparison • 22,000 sqm Retail Warehousing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 • Development management approach
	Delivery of development within the Key Areas of Change	Planning applications coming forward within Key Areas of Change in accordance with strategy for the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of SPDs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runcorn Waterfront • West Bank • Production of Development Briefs as necessary • Development management approach.
	Controlling development within the Green Belt	Restrict general development within the Green Belt, with exceptions : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for the purpose of a runway extension at LJLA (subject to Delivery and Allocations Local Plan) • following a review of Green Belt boundaries around Widnes/Hale and the subsequent release of land in the Delivery & Allocations Local Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Belt Review around Widnes/Hale as part of the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 • Development management approach

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor infilling within the Green Belt settlements of Daresbury, Moore and Preston-on-the-Hill 	
CS2 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development	Percentage of planning applications approved	All applications which accord with the Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining an up to date Local Plan Development management approach
	Percentage of planning applications decided within allotted timeframe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Major applications – 60% determined in 13 weeks Minor applications – 65% determined in 8 weeks Other applications – 80% determined in 8 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach
CS3 Housing Supply and Locational Priorities	Homes in Runcorn and Widnes	5,660 homes to be delivered in Runcorn 4,270 homes to be delivered in Widnes to 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 to ensure adequate sites exist to maintain housing land supply Annual updates of SHLAA to monitor housing land supply Development management approach
	Partial Green Belt review	Complete Green Belt review of Widnes / Hale within the early part of the plan period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of Green Belt land to inform the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014
	Supply of available housing land	<p>Maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land, plus additional 5% buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 5 year supply equates to 2,760 dwellings <p>Additional 20% buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) where there has been persistent under delivery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular updates to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014
	Percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land	Average of 40% of dwellings to be built on previously developed land over the plan period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 to ensure adequate brownfield sites exist to maintain housing land supply Annual production of housing monitoring reports to track brownfield performance Regular updates of Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) to monitor brownfield housing land supply
	Percentage of new dwellings completed at less than 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) between 30-50dph and above 50dph	Minimum density of 30dph, rising to a minimum density of 40dph in proximity to Town and Local Centres or Transport Interchanges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to deliver required densities Annual production of housing monitoring reports to record densities on completed residential schemes
CS4 Employment	Available supply of employment land	Maintain 5 year supply of sites available for employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
Land Supply and Locational Priorities		development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 5 year supply equates to 72.35 ha of employment land Bring forward employment land opportunities for regeneration and remodelling as identified in the JELPS ¹⁶²	which will allocate sites for employment development as they are required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual production of Employment Land Availability reports and monitoring of planning applications Development management approach to employment development planning applications
	Amount of completed employment floorspace by type and land type	Total hectareage of Use Class B1a), b), c), B2 and B8 development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80% of employment development to be delivered on brownfield land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to employment development planning applications and prioritisation of brownfield land for development
	Minimise loss of land within existing employment areas for non-employment uses	No loss of land for non-employment uses within Local Employment Areas or Regional Employment Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm boundaries of Local Employment Areas and Regional Employment Sites in Delivery and Allocations Local Plan Development management approach to employment development planning applications to ensure they are located within designated employment areas
CS5 A Network of Centres	Amount of completed retail development in town centres	Total completions of retail (Convenience Goods, Comparison Goods and Retail Warehousing) floorspace in line with required floorspace as set out in policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 which will allocate sites for retail development where they are required Development management approach to planning applications for retail development to steer proposals to Town Centre locations
	Completions of main town centre uses within designated centres, by type	100% of Use Class A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and D2 completions within the Borough's Town Centres, the District Centre and Local Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Runcorn Old Town SPD by 2013 Production and adoption of Widnes Town Centre SPD by 2014
	Percentage of retail development in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations	Minimise development outside of designated Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 which will allocate sites for retail development within the designated Town Centres Development management approach to planning applications for retail development to steer proposals to Town Centre locations
	Number of vacant units within Town Centre locations	Decrease vacancy levels year on year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to planning applications for retail development to steer proposals to Town Centre locations Continue to work in partnership with the Council's Town Centre management officers to monitor and manage vacancy levels
	New local centres	Creation of new local centres at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upton Rocks Sandymoor Daresbury Strategic Site Runcorn Waterfront West Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of relevant SPDs for areas concerned to guide the design and location of the neighbourhood centres Development management approach to relevant planning applications to establish neighbourhood centres and for

¹⁶² BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study – Appendix 11

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
			uses therein
CS6 Green Belt	Controlling development within the Green Belt	Restrict general development within the Green Belt, except: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> for the purpose of a runway extension at LJLA (should land be removed from the Green Belt through the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan) following a review of Green Belt boundaries around Widnes/Hale and the subsequent release of land in the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan minor infilling within the Green Belt settlements of Daresbury, Moore and Preston-on-the-Hill 	Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 including consideration through a Green Belt Review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> removal of land from the Green Belt to facilitate expansion of runway at LJLA removal of land from the Green Belt around Widnes/Hale in accordance with CS1, CS3 and CS4.
CS7 Infrastructure Provision	Introduction of a regime for Section 106 charges and / or a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for Halton	Adoption of relevant Local Plan document (CIL Charging Schedule and / or Planning Obligations SPD) by 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of further guidance on securing planning gain through Halton's Local Plan
	Amount of planning gain secured	Planning gain sought on all applicable developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of further guidance on securing planning gain through Halton's Local Plan Development management approach
	Delivery of projects detailed within associated Infrastructure Plan	In line with timescales in Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of further guidance on securing planning gain through Halton's Local Plan Development management approach to securing direct provision of infrastructure and / or contributions Working in partnership with other Council departments and the development industry to seek funding for necessary infrastructure
CS8 3MG	Delivery of employment development at the site	Total employment opportunities of 103 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with the Strategic Development Partner to deliver the HBC Field site and associated road and rail infrastructure
	Jobs generated by the site and percentage filled by Halton's residents	5,000 new jobs generated across whole Key Area of Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% to be filled by Halton's residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A key delivery agency will be Halton People Into Jobs Development management approach to ensure agreements are in place to require local residents to be considered first for employment opportunities
	Delivery of Western Link Road	Provision of infrastructure – in line with timescales in the Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to any further planning applications necessary prior to the construction of the road
	Delivery of new rail sidings	Provision of infrastructure – in line with timescales in the Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to securing direct provision of infrastructure
	Development of HBC Field Site	Approximately 93,000 sqm of rail linked B8 (warehousing) development on the 18 ha HBC Field Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Condition and setting of the Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument	Improvement to the setting of Lovel's Hall Scheduled Monument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to relevant planning applications Continuation of partnership working

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
			with other Council departments including those directly responsible for development at 3MG
CS9 South Widnes	Delivery of employment development across Key Area of Change	Total employment opportunities total 54 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of revised Widnes Waterfront SPD by 2014 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Delivery of retail floorspace in Widnes Town Centre	Delivery of up to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25,300sqm of convenience/comparison goods retail floorspace and 19,000 sqm of retail warehousing floorspace in line with policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Widnes Town Centre SPD by 2014 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Delivery of a new local centre at West Bank	Provision of local centre by private sector guided by detail within West Bank SPD (once adopted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of West Bank SPD by 2014 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Delivery of residential development across South Widnes Key Area of Change	Completion of 400 new dwellings across the area within the plan period, in accordance with the broad timings set out in the Core Strategy at CS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of West Bank SPD by 2014 Production and adoption of revised Widnes Waterfront SPD by 2014 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Improvement in Air Quality in Widnes Town Centre	Reduction in air pollutants to within acceptable levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with other Council departments (namely Highways and Environmental Health) to improve air quality in Widnes Town Centre, particularly through the production of an Air Quality Action Plan Development management approach to relevant planning applications
CS10 West Runcorn	Delivery of employment land across the Key Area of Change	Total employment opportunities total 26 ha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Runcorn Old Town SPD by 2012 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Delivery of retail floorspace	Delivery of 5,200 sqm of retail floorspace in Runcorn Old Town in line with policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Runcorn Waterfront SPD by 2013 Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Delivery of residential development	Completion of 1,500 new dwellings across the area within the plan period, in accordance with the broad timings set out in the Core Strategy at CS1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of 1,360 residential units at Runcorn Waterfront Higher number of housing units possible at Runcorn Waterfront dependent on the developer securing a secondary access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Runcorn Waterfront SPD by 2013 Development management approach to relevant planning applications Provision of adequate road access to Runcorn Waterfront site.
	Redevelopment of Mersey Gateway Port (Weston Docks)	Delivery of civil waterway port with associated road and rail infrastructure within the plan period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to relevant planning applications Continue to work in partnership with other Council departments responsible for bringing forward development at this location
CS11 East Runcorn	Expansion of Sci-Tech Daresbury (previously referred to as Daresbury)	26 ha / approx. 72,000 sqm of employment development at Daresbury SIC in accordance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to planning applications for science related development

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
	SIC)	with the broad timings set out in the Core Strategy at CS11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of simplified planning mechanisms/Local Development Order to accord with Enterprise Zone status
	Expansion of Daresbury Park	40ha / approx. 46,000 sqm of employment development at Daresbury Park in accordance with the broad timings set out in the Core Strategy at CS11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to planning applications for business development
	Delivery of residential development	Completion of 2,800 new dwellings across the area within the plan period, in accordance with the broad timings set out in the Core Strategy at CS11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,400 dwellings at Daresbury Strategic Site 1,400 dwellings at Sandymoor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to planning applications for housing Implementation of principles within adopted Sandymoor SPD for housing in this location
	Delivery of local centres at Daresbury Strategic Site and Sandymoor, primary school at Sandymoor, improvements to public transport in the area	In line with timescales in accompanying Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach with private sector delivery agencies Continue to work in partnership with the Council's School Place Planning and Provision team to establish need for a new school at East Runcorn
	Infrastructure requirements in line with Infrastructure Plan	In line with timescales in accompanying Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to development where the direct or indirect provision of infrastructure will be required Continue to work in partnership with other Council Departments and the private sector to seek funding for large scale infrastructure schemes
	Conservation of Daresbury Firs and establishment of a green infrastructure network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Daresbury Strategic Site Delivery of at least 40ha of open space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with relevant Council departments (namely Open Space Services) to produce a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the Daresbury Strategic Site Development management approach to any planning application likely to impinge on Daresbury Firs
CS12 Housing Mix	Provision of a range of house sizes (varying number of bedrooms) and types provided across sites	Address identified imbalances from Halton SHMA (2011) on sites of 10 or more dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery agency is Homebuilders, RSLs Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 which will provide further guidance on the mix of house types and sizes to be provided on specific sites
	Percentage of homes achieving Lifetime Homes	85% of applicable dwellings (Excludes dwellings which come	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
	Standards	forward on sites of less than 10 dwellings)	
	Provision of specialist housing for the elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocating sites for specialist or extra-care housing to contribute to the delivery of 214 extra care units by 2017 22 extra care units for adults with learning difficulties by 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 to assist in identifying and allocating sites which may be appropriate for extra care and supported housing Continue to work with Council departments responsible for commissioning extra-care accommodation to ensure that the Borough's needs are met Development management approach to ensure that appropriate facilities are located in the most suitable locations
	Limiting an oversupply in Residential Care Accommodation	Maintain percentage of vacant bedspaces within Residential Care Accommodation at an acceptable level of below 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Council departments responsible for commissioning extra-care accommodation Development management approach to ensure that proposals for Residential Care Accommodation are made aware of their potential to exacerbate an oversupply in provision
CS13 Affordable Housing	Total affordable housing completions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through planning agreements on private developments By RSLs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% residential units to be provided as affordable housing across sites of 10 or more dwellings or 0.33 ha or greater in size Maximise provision of affordable housing by RSLs (determined by availability of public subsidy) <p>Halton SHMA (2011) indicates a requirement for 891 affordable units per annum, which is unachievable given related housing delivery targets in CS1 and CS3. Therefore target is to maximise affordable housing delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery agencies are Homebuilders and RSLs. Housing Strategy department to assist in pairing up HBC preferred RSL partners with private developers. Development management approach including early negotiations Continue to work with RSLs and the Homes and Communities Agency to secure funding for the provision of affordable housing by social landlords Implementation of guidance in Affordable Housing SPD
	Percentage of affordable homes delivered on applicable schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% residential units to be provided as affordable housing on sites of 10 or more dwellings or 0.33ha or greater in size 100% of affordable homes to be delivered on the development site which is the subject of the affordable housing requirement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach including early negotiations Implementation of guidance in Affordable Housing SPD
	Social and affordable rented units as a percentage of all affordable housing units secured from market housing developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% social and affordable rented 50% intermediate housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach Continue to work in partnership with the Council's Housing Strategy department to deliver the desired mix of tenure types by the most appropriate RSL partners Implementation of guidance in Affordable Housing SPD
CS14 Meeting the Needs of	Net additional pitches – Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople	Allocation of sites/extension to existing sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delivery agencies are the Gypsy and Traveller communities and HBC (for sites to be Council owned/run)

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople		Showpeople	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan which will allocate sites for Gypsy and Traveller pitches as required Development management approach to any planning applications for Gypsy and Traveller pitches or sites
	Total number of permanent and transit pitches	Increase in the current number of permanent pitches (40) and transit pitches (10) where there is an identified need for additional provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an up to date assessment of needs through Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with neighbouring authorities as appropriate. Allocate sites for additional pitches/sites
CS15 Sustainable Transport	Reduction in the number of unsustainable trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase modal share of sustainable modes (bus, rail, cycling and walking) Number of cycle trips (157 trips annualised index, LTP Indicators 2007/08) Increase total length of cycle ways in the Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in partnership with relevant departments from across the Council including Highways, including to assist with funding applications necessary to deliver transport improvements Work with external partners responsible for the provision of bus services in the Borough to increase patronage, service coverage and frequency Production and adoption of Transport and Accessibility SPD by 2013 which will set standards for incorporating sustainable transport measures into development Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan which will safeguard new and existing routes and facilities in the Sustainable Transport Network
	Number of Travel Plans associated with development applications for large trip generating uses	100% for all relevant large trip generating planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in partnership with Council Highways Department who assist external partners with the production of Travel Plans Development management approach ensuring that early discussions highlight the need for a Travel Plan on relevant applications
	Reinstatement of Halton Curve rail route	Increased usage of Halton Curve rail route for passenger travel within plan period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work in partnership with Merseytravel to seek a funding to re-open this rail line.
CS16 The Mersey Gateway Project	Delivery of the Mersey Gateway Bridge	In accordance with timings as set out in Infrastructure Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to any further planning applications required for the Bridge and related infrastructure
	Sustainable transport use of the Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB)	Increased usage of the SJB for sustainable transport, following the construction of the Mersey Gateway bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with Council Highways department In accordance with strategies set out within Halton Local Transport Plan 3
	Capitalising on regeneration opportunities presented by the Mersey Gateway Project	Relevant planning applications falling within the Mersey Gateway Project area and immediate surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of West Bank and Runcorn Old Town SPDs Developing the opportunities identified in the Mersey Gateway Regeneration Strategy Development management approach to relevant planning applications
	Minimisation and mitigation of potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of saltmarsh nature reserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued management of existing habitats and habitat creation in

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
	negative environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional nature management at Wigg Island Wider enhancements to the Upper Mersey Estuary No change in area of Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar 	partnership with other Council departments and Natural England/Cheshire Wildlife Trust
CS17 Liverpool John Lennon Airport	Consideration of amendment to Halton's Green Belt boundaries to facilitate the runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport (LJLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendment to Green Belt boundaries at LJLA to facilitate runway extension Adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan
	Managing negative environmental and social impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise noise pollution Control risks to public safety, including through extension to Public Safety Zone (PSZ) as necessary Preserve landscape value, including through delivery of extension to Coastal Reserve No change in area of Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued monitoring by LJLA and HBC Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan to designate potential extension to PSZ Implementation of Planning for Risk SPD
CS18 High Quality Design	Resident satisfaction with local area	Maintain and increase current level of resident satisfaction (70.4% of people satisfied with their local area in 2009) ¹⁶³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership approach with other Council services including implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011-2026)
	Percentage of residents feeling safe in their area after dark	Reduce level (24.4% of people think that anti-social behaviour is a problem in their local area) ⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership approach with other Council services including implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011-2026)
	Homes/commercial areas built to Building for Life / Secured by Design standards.	Increase number of developments which have regard to these standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of standards through Development management approach
CS19 Sustainable Development and Climate Change	Reduction in Halton's contribution to CO ₂ production and climate change	Reduction in CO ₂ emissions per capita by 4% per annum (Baseline of 9.4 tonnes per capita in 2008) ¹⁶⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership approach with other Council services including implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011-2026)
	Percentage of new residential development achieving Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3	Increase residential development achieving recognised Code levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code Level 3 from 2011 Code Level 4 from 2013 Code Level 6 from 2016 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to any further planning applications.
	Percentage of new commercial development achieving BREEAM Very Good standards	Increase commercial development achieving recognised BREEAM standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BREEAM Very Good from 2011 BREEAM Excellent from 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach to any further planning applications
	Renewable energy capacity installed by type	Increase the capacity and number of renewable energy installations in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 to provide more detailed policy for

¹⁶³ HBC (2008) Place Survey - www3.halton.gov.uk/ignl/pages/86821/132699/PlaceSurveyExecSumm.pdf

¹⁶⁴ CO₂ levels per capita by local authority are available at www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/indicators/ni186/ni186.aspx

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
			renewable energy facilities and / or allocation of sites for renewable energy production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking opportunities within the identified Energy Priority Zones
CS20 Natural and Historic Environment	Condition of SSSIs - Percentage favourable	No decline in condition of SSSIs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mersey Estuary -99.18% favourable or unfavourable but recovering at May 2012^[165], Red Brow Cutting - 100% favourable at May 2012^[166], Flood Brook Clough - 100% favourable at May 2012^[167]¹⁶⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued management of SSSIs in partnership with other Council departments and Natural England Development management approach to avoid any potential detrimental impact on SSSIs
	Maintaining Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings	Maintain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total area designated as Conservation Areas – 93ha Number of Listed Buildings - 126 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade I - 2 Grade II* - 17 Grade II – 107 Number of Scheduled Monuments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Reduce percentage of Listed Buildings at risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.6% (2 Buildings – Daresbury Hall and Church of the Holy Trinity, Runcorn) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production of Conservation Area Appraisals as required
	Maintaining Landscape Character Areas (as defined by the Landscape Character Assessment) and their condition	No net loss of the Borough's landscape character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach and awareness of the Borough's Landscape Character
	Change in priority habitats and change in species (by type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of Reedbed habitats Preservation of Saltmarsh habitats Increase in BAP species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued management of priority habitats and species in partnership with other Council departments and Natural England
	Change in areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value including sites of international, national, regional, sub regional or local significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No change in area of Mersey Estuary SPA/ Ramsar, or three SSSIs in Halton No net loss of 47 Local Wildlife Sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014 to further protect existing sites and to designate newly identified Local Wildlife Sites
	CS21 Green Infrastructure	Extent of Green Infrastructure network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additions to the extent and quality of the Green Infrastructure network (2009 baseline of 1,484.064 ha) Avoidance of loss of Green

¹⁶⁵ Mersey Estuary SSSI Condition Summary - www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/Special/sssi/reportAction.cfm?report=sdrt18&category=S&reference=1001398

¹⁶⁶ Red Brow Cutting SSSI Condition Summary - www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/reportAction.cfm?report=sdrt18&category=S&reference=1005790

¹⁶⁷ Flood Brook Clough SSSI Condition Summary - www.sssi.naturalengland.org.uk/special/sssi/reportAction.cfm?report=sdrt18&category=S&reference=1002557

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
		Infrastructure	Council departments
	Amount of developer contributions sought for improvements to the Green Infrastructure network	Maximise on relevant applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach and negotiations Production of further guidance on securing planning gain through the Local Plan
	Number of greenspaces awarded the Green Flag standard	Maintain and increase the number of Green Flag award greenspaces (Baseline of 12 Green Flag awards in 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued management of the Borough's open spaces by the Open Space Services department
CS22 Health and Well-Being	Improvement in life expectancy	Improvement on baseline (2008-2010) life expectancy at birth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Male – 75.5 years Female – 79.6 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requiring HIA on relevant applications Integration with the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011-2026)
	Improvement in overall deprivation score as an indication of Quality of Life	An improvement in Halton's rank of 27 th most deprived local authority in the country (IMD, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration with the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011-2026)
	Percentage / number of A5 (Hot-Food Take-away) units within town, district and local centres	Number of designated frontages/centres complying with SPD policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Hot Food Takeaway SPD
	Number of applications requiring a Health Impact Assessment (HIA)	100% of large scale major development applications to undertake HIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach and identification of relevant applications requiring HIA at an early stage
CS23 Managing Pollution and Risk	Development within flood zones	No highly vulnerable or more vulnerable development within Flood Zone 3 and a reduction in other uses gaining planning permission in this zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan to steer development away from flood zones Development management approach
	Number of planning applications in flood zones which are permitted, contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency ¹⁶⁸	None	
	Number of planning applications which are permitted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on water quality grounds	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development management approach
	Development not in accordance with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) endorsed approach for managing risk ¹⁶⁹	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of partnership working with the HSE Use of Planning for Risk SPD Development management approach
	Number of potentially contaminated sites which have been subject to site investigations work/remediation	Increase in line with Brownfield Strategy for Halton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for funding from DEFRA for remediation works
	Improvements in air quality within designated Air Quality Management Areas in the Borough	Reduction of air pollutants to within Objective levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuation of air quality monitoring
	CS24	Safeguarding of sites for	Provision of sites for waste

¹⁶⁸ Major Planning Applications where the Environment Agency has an outstanding objection on flood risk grounds - www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33698.aspx

¹⁶⁹ Cases where local Planning Authorities were minded to grant planning permission against HSE's advice - www.hse.gov.uk/landuseplanning/cases.htm

Policy	Indicators	Targets <i>(All indicators will be monitored annually, unless otherwise stated)</i>	Implementation and Delivery
Waste	the purpose of waste management	management purposes through DPD	Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan by 2013
	Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority	Increasing recovery capacity of waste facilities in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan by 2013 • Development management approach to applications for waste management facilities
	Total municipal waste ¹⁷⁰	Decrease waste going to landfill each year (45,006 tonnes, 2009/10) and decrease in total municipal waste (68,203 tonnes, 2009/10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan by 2013 • Partnership approach with the Council's Waste and Recycling Service
CS25 Minerals	Total land won aggregates to contribute to North West regional requirement	Contribution to Merseyside/Greater Manchester/Warrington/Halton apportionment of 4.1 million tonnes of sand and gravel and 26 million tonnes of crushed rock ¹⁷¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014
	Total secondary won aggregates	20% of aggregates used in construction to be from secondary or recycled sources, rising to 25% by 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM standards to encourage use of recycled materials • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014
	Designation of sites as minerals safeguarding areas or Minerals Areas of Search	Safeguarding of sites where there may be minerals resources, as identified through evidence base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and adoption of Delivery and Allocations Local Plan by 2014

¹⁷⁰ DEFRA Municipal Waste Statistics 2009/10 - <http://www.defra.gov.uk/statistics/environment/waste/wrfg23-wrmsannual/>

¹⁷¹ North West Regional Aggregates Working Party - Sub-regional Apportionment of Aggregates in the North West 2001-2016

APPENDIX 4 SCHEDULE OF HALTON UDP POLICIES TO BE REPLACED

1. The following saved policies from the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) were deleted upon adoption of the Halton Core Strategy.

Halton Core Strategy	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	
CS10	West Runcorn	
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, MW5

APPENDIX 5 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, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided at below market rates to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. A full definition is included in Annex 2 to the National Planning Policy Framework.

AA Appropriate Assessment Comprising the latter two stages of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), 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.

AMR Authority’s Monitoring Report The AMR assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents (LDDs) 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 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)

CHP Combined Heat and Power CHP is a highly fuel efficient technology which produces electricity and usable heat from a single generation facility.

CIL Community Infrastructure Levy CIL is a new type of charge which local authorities can apply to new development in their area. The money collected through this levy can be used to support development across the local authority area by funding infrastructure.

CLG (Department for) Communities and Local Government

CSH Code for Sustainable Homes The 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 a restriction of permitted development rights.

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

DEFRA Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

DALP Delivery and Allocations Local Plan A key Local Plan document which will follow the Core Strategy. The document will allocate sites for development and designate sites for protection/safeguarding for future uses.

DfT Department for Transport

Development Plan Development plan is the term used to refer to a local authority's statutory adopted planning policies and proposals. The development plan can consist of a series of documents (such as the UDP, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans). Applications for planning permissions must be determined in accordance with the adopted development plan for the area.

DH District Heating DH is a system for distributing heat generated in a centralised location for residential and commercial heating requirements.

ERSTS East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study The East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study (ERSTS) is a key piece of evidence supporting the East Runcorn policy in the Core Strategy. The study examined the likely impact of the development proposed at East Runcorn on the surrounding road network and suggested improvements to transport infrastructure to offset any negative impacts.

EATC Eastern Access Transport Corridor The EATC is a proposed new road which would support access to Liverpool John Lennon Airport, as set out in the Airport's Masterplan. The proposed route passes through Halton's Green Belt.

EPZ Energy Priority Zones EPZs are general locations across the Liverpool City Region identified for their potential to deliver renewable and low carbon energy. This includes areas suitable for District Heating Biomass CHP and areas of search for wind energy.

Enterprise Zone An Enterprise Zone is a specific area that has been designated to encourage the creation of new businesses and jobs. They are subject to a number of incentives such as Business Rates discounts and simplified planning requirements.

EqIA Equality Impact Assessment EqIA 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 EqIA has been carried out on the Core Strategy.

GI Green Infrastructure GI is the network of multifunctional greenspace and other environmental features. It includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.

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.

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 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 HIA is a method for 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 HIA has been undertaken on the Core Strategy.

HRA Habitats Regulations 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. HRA has been carried out on the Core Strategy.

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 Super Output Area level, the IMD allows areas to be ranked across a number of domains relative to one another.

JELPS Joint Employment Land and Premises Study This is a research study commissioned by Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire Council's 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.

LCA Landscape Character Assessment The LCA identifies, describes and maps areas according to various landscape character types. The assessment also provides guidelines for positive change to ensure the preservation of local landscape distinctiveness is

conserved, maintained and enhanced.

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).

LCR Liverpool City Region

LJLA Liverpool John Lennon Airport

LDD Local Development Document LDDs are another name for Local Plan documents which deal with matters such as the development and use of land, the allocation of sites, any environmental, social, design or economic objectives or includes policies which are intended to guide the determination of applications for planning permission.

LDO Local Development Order A LDO automatically grants planning permission for all types of development detailed in the order, and as such removes the need for a planning application to be made. LDOs themselves are subject to public consultation and must be adopted by the Local Planning Authority (subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State).

LDS Local Development Scheme The LDS sets the timetable for the production of Local Plans and their constituent documents. It also provides detail on their likely content.

LEP Local Enterprise Partnership A LEP is a partnership between local authorities and businesses to help deliver economic growth and job creation. Halton Borough Council is a member of the Liverpool City Region LEP.

LNR Local Natural Reserve LNRs 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.

Local Plan A Local Plan is the statutory planning policy document for a local authority area, which is produced to guide the location of development and provide local policies for determining planning applications. This Core Strategy is a Local Plan, and other documents produced for Halton such as for site allocations will also be Local Plans. Supplementary Planning Documents and other procedural planning policy documents are not Local Plans.

LPA Local Planning Authority

LTP Local Transport Plan An LTP sets out the Council's objectives, strategies and policies for transport, outlining the schemes and initiatives that may be delivered during the course of the plan, together with the performance indicators and targets used to monitor progress.

Local Wildlife Sites A 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.

NPPF National Planning Policy Framework The NPPF is the single statement of the Government’s national planning policy for England. It establishes high-level planning principles for England and requirements for the production of Local Plans, covering the full range of land use topics from sustainable development, to the historic environment, to flood risk.

Neighbourhood Plan / Neighbourhood Development Plan Neighbourhood Plans are planning policy documents produced by local communities to allow them to shape their local area. They form part of the development plan for the area and therefore planning applications must be determined in accordance with their content.

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 (HSE) used to give advice on proposed developments near hazardous installations.

PDL Previously Developed Land PDL is that which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.

PINs Planning Inspectorate PINs is the Government Agency with responsibility for processing planning and enforcement appeals and holding examinations into Local Plans.

PSZ Public Safety Zone Area where new development will be restricted to control the population exposed to increased risk from a specified hazard.

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.

RP Registered Provider Previously known as Registered Social Landlords, Including Housing Associations and Councils, RPs 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.

RSL Registered Social Landlord See Registered Provider

SA Sustainability Appraisal This process appraises the social, environmental and economic effects of the policies contained within Local Development Documents (LDDs), including all Local Plans and where appropriate, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SA incorporating SEA has been carried out on the Core Strategy.

SAC Special Area of Conservation A SAC 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.

- SCI Statement of Community Involvement** The SCI sets out the role that the community and other stakeholders will play in the production of all Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents, as well as their role concerning planning applications.
- SCS Sustainable Community Strategy** The SCS provides an overarching framework through which the corporate, strategic and operational plans of the partners within a Local Strategic Partnership can contribute.
- 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** SFRA 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 SHLAA is a systematic annual assessment of the deliverable and developable land for housing within an area. The assessment includes a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise where the public can promote sites as being suitable for housing development and appraisal of deliverability by a panel of developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) active in the local market.
- SHMA Strategic Housing Market Assessment** A SHMA is a study across an identified largely ‘self contained’ housing market to provide an understanding of 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** SPDs provide supplementary information in respect of the policies contained in Local Plans, 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 SSSI 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 (SACs).

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.

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.

UDP Unitary Development Plan A UDP is a development plan prepared under the pre-2004 planning system by a Local Planning Authority. Halton's UDP consists of two parts: Part 1 (Strategic Policies and Proposals) and Part 2 which gives detailed proposals for the use and development of land. There is also a Proposals Map, which illustrates the land allocations in relation to policies and proposals. Local Plans (including the Halton Core Strategy) are intended to replace the UDP. However, it is necessary to continue to save many of the policies within the UDP for a number of years, whilst Local Plans are being prepared. The Council made a request to, and has received confirmation from, the Secretary of State for the vast majority of adopted UDP policies to be saved beyond the automatic three years from the adoption of the UDP on 7th April 2005.

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'. Planning permission for change of use from one use class to another is generally required.



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