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Warrington Borough Council

Local Plan

Preferred Development Option

Regulation 18 Consultation

Standard Response Form

July 2017

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1: Contact Details (Compulsory)

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First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable): Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

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Which best describes you? (tick ✓ one option only)

Resident in Warrington

Resident from outside of Warrington

Business

Other, please specify

Homes and Communities Agency

2: Questions

Question 1

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the need for new homes and employment land in Warrington over the next 20 years?

Response:

The HCA has no specific comment to make at this stage on how WBC has calculated the need for new homes and employment land in Warrington over the next 20 years. The HCA trusts that WBC has taken a robust approach that complies with current guidance. The HCA notes that the Government are currently consulting on a draft standard methodology for calculating housing requirements, and recognises that this may have an impact on how the need is calculated.

The HCA notes that WBC has taken the decision to plan for a level of growth in accordance with the Cheshire and Warrington Local Economic Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan. To achieve the level of growth required to support the New City aspirations, the Consultation Document proposes a housing target of 1,113 dwellings per annum over the 20-year plan period.

The HCA notes that this target is higher than the 955 dwellings per annum 'economic baseline' scenario set out in the SHMA, and more than double the 500 dwellings per annum proposed in the adopted Core Strategy prior to that target being quashed as a result of a High Court challenge.

Based on the information WBC has published, there is a need to allocate a substantial amount of housing land through the new local plan to meet the borough's housing requirements, and the evidence WBC has put forward shows that not all of this land can be accommodated within the existing built up area.

Question 2

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the number of homes and amount of employment land that can be accommodated within Warrington's existing built up areas?

Response:

The HCA has no specific comments at this stage on how WBC has worked out the number of homes and amount of employment land that can be accommodated within Warrington's existing built up areas, as set out in the Urban Capacity Statement Update (UCSU) 2017.

The UCSU takes figures for urban capacity from a number of sources, including the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The UCSU sets out that the SHLAA identifies 'a total housing land supply in the urban area and on green field sites outside of the Green Belt of 9,721'.

The HCA regards their sites at Pewterspear Green, Grappenhall Heys, and Appleton as being part of this existing urban capacity, separate to the wider Garden City suburb element of the Preferred Development Option (although spatially related to it). This view is supported by the conclusions of the 2017 SHLAA, which feeds in to the UCSU and confirms the sites are suitable, available and achievable. The Site at Pewterspear Green has been granted outline planning permission for up to 180 dwellings.

The HCA notes that, in order to meet the WBC's housing target, it is vital that suitable committed and planned sites identified in the SHLAA (such as the HCA's sites at Appleton and Grappenhall Heys) are able to come forward.

Question 3

Have we appropriately worked out the amount of land to be released from the Green Belt, including the amount of land to be 'safeguarded'?

Response:

The HCA supports an approach whereby land within the existing urban area has been maximised, which in turn has driven the process of identifying the amount of land to be released from the Green Belt.

The HCA notes that, based on the proposed housing target of 1,113 dwellings per annum and after maximising the capacity of the urban area, additional land will need to be found outside of the existing urban area to deliver approximately 9,000 new homes.

The HCA notes that even if WBC decided to proceed on the basis of a lower housing target, such as the SHMA 'economic baseline' scenario of 955 dwellings per annum, it is still likely that land for around 4,000 dwellings would need to be found outside the existing urban area in the Green Belt.

Question 4

Do you agree with the new Local Plan Objectives?

Response:

The HCA has no comment on the Strategic Objectives chosen, but considers that the development of their land in south Warrington can make a significant contribution to meeting the strategic objectives.

Question 5

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different 'Spatial Options' for Warrington's future development?

Response:

The HCA trusts that WBC has used a robust approach in assessing the different spatial options, and that the selected preferred development option, focussing Green Belt release adjacent to main Warrington urban area with incremental growth in outlying settlements, is the most appropriate for meeting the plan's proposed Strategic Objectives and other requirements.

Question 6

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different options for the main development locations?

Response:

The HCA trusts WBC has used a robust approach in assessing the different options for the main development locations and have selected the most appropriate option that performs best when assessed against the strategic Plan Objectives, taking into account the results of the SA/SEA.

Question 7

Do you agree with our Preferred Development Option for meeting Warrington's future development needs?

Response:

The HCA strongly supports the preferred development option for meeting Warrington's future development needs.

The HCA trusts that WBC has selected the preferred development option on the basis that it represents the most appropriate way of accommodating the borough's development needs throughout the plan period.

The HCA agrees that the development of land in the south Warrington area, adjacent to the existing built up area of Warrington, can deliver a number of benefits provided it comes forward in a phased manner, supported by appropriate infrastructure provision.

The *HCA Proposals for Land at South Warrington* document accompanying this form demonstrates that the HCA's land within the green belt in south Warrington, is suitable, available and achievable for development and can make a significant contribution to meeting WBC's housing land requirement, enabling WBC to achieve its ambitious growth targets.

The document is informed by a range of technical studies and surveys, and demonstrates that there are no significant constraints to the development of the land which would preclude it contributing to the wider preferred development option.

It also demonstrates that the HCA are committed to working with WBC, other landowners and infrastructure providers to ensure that the development of the land is supported by the appropriate provision of infrastructure.

Question 8

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the City Centre?

Response:

The HCA has no comments to make at this stage about the Preferred Development Option for the City Centre.

Question 9

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Wider Urban Area?

Response:

The HCA has no comments at this stage about the Preferred Development Option for the Wider Urban Area.

Question 10

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for developing the Warrington Waterfront?

Response:

The HCA has no comments at this stage about the Preferred Development Option for developing the Warrington Waterfront.

Question 11

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Warrington Garden City Suburb?

Response:

The HCA strongly supports the Garden Suburb concept and notes that it is discussed both in the Consultation Document and the South Warrington Urban Extension Framework Plan Document (June 2017).

The HCA understands that at this stage all proposals around land use, infrastructure provision and phasing are indicative only and were produced to confirm that the preferred development areas were able to accommodate the level of growth needed to deliver the overall housing requirement. The HCA agrees with WBC that 'it will be necessary for the Council to work with landowners to prepare a more detailed masterplan and ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure to support individual phases of development', as set out in the Consultation Document.

It is clear that any proposed phasing of Green Belt release and delivery of transport infrastructure will need to be the subject of future detailed assessment and analysis, including the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model. Any approach to the phasing of the release of Green Belt land and development of strategic road links will need to be flexible to ensure that the development of land can support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure provision.

The HCA will work constructively with WBC and adjacent landowners to support the delivery of strategic road links, as required. The HCA will enter into discussions with WBC regarding the infrastructure required and the most appropriate way of providing this.

The HCA regards the development trajectory provided within the Consultation Document as indicative only. The final trajectory will need to be worked out in conjunction with landowners including the HCA, taking into account matters such as financing and viability.

Further comments on the Warrington Garden City Suburb, and details of how the HCA's land can support its delivery, are set out in the *HCA Proposals for Land at South Warrington* document accompanying this form.

Question 12

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the South Western Urban Extension?

Response:

The HCA has no comments at this stage about the Preferred Development Option for the South Western Urban Extension.

Question 13

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for development in the Outlying Settlements?

Response:

The HCA has no comments at this stage about the Preferred Development Option for development in the Outlying Settlements.

Question 14

Do you agree with our approach to providing new employment land?

Response:

The HCA welcomes the confirmation within the Consultation Document that WBC 'has accepted the principle of the western extension of Omega, proposed in the emerging St Helens Local Plan, as being able to contribute to meeting Warrington's employment land needs'. The Consultation Document identifies 30ha of employment land from this westward extension of Omega.

The HCA regards the site as highly suitable for employment use, building upon the strength of demand for logistics based, bespoke warehousing, with ready access through the existing Omega site to Junction 8 on the M62.

Initial due diligence has been undertaken and there are no constraints which would preclude the development coming forward.

The HCA is committed to working with St Helens Council to bring the allocation forward.

Question 15

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites?

Response:

The HCA has no comment at this stage on the suggested approach for dealing with Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites.

Question 16

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Minerals and Waste?

Response:

The HCA has no comment at this stage on the suggested approach for dealing with Minerals and Waste.

Question 17

Having read the Preferred Development Option Document, is there anything else you feel we should include within the Local Plan?

Response:

Further comments from the HCA are set out in the *HCA Proposals for Land at South Warrington* document that accompanies this form.

The document shows that the HCA's 220ha of land within the Green Belt in south Warrington can deliver a phased, sustainable, high quality extension to Warrington as a component of WBC's preferred development option. The document demonstrates that the land is suitable, available and achievable for development.

The land is a **suitable location for development** as it is sustainably located adjacent to the existing urban area and there are no significant physical, environmental or technical constraints which would prevent the development of the subject land for housing and associated transport and social infrastructure.

The land is **available for the development**; the HCA is the government's housing, land and regeneration agency, responsible for increasing the number of new homes that are built in England and for increasing the supply of public land and speeding up the rate that it can be built on. The HCA's land in south Warrington is wholly within the single ownership of the HCA, and has significant interest from housing developers.

The illustrative masterplan included within the *HCA Proposals for Land at South Warrington* document demonstrates that **development of the site is achievable** and will create a high quality, cohesive new community on the edge of the existing urban area of Warrington, in line with the indicative proposals in the Consultation Document and SWUE Development Framework.

Development of the HCA's land would make a significant contribution to delivering the new local plan's strategic objectives and support WBC's ambitious growth plans.



Homes &
Communities
Agency

ATKINS

Member of the SNC-Lavalin Group

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

Preferred Development Option

HCA Proposals for Land at South Warrington

September 2017



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Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

Local Plan Preferred Development Option

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) owns a significant amount of land within South Warrington (referred to herein as the 'subject land'), which it wishes to promote through Warrington Borough Council's (WBC) Local Plan Review process.
- 1.2 WBC undertook a 'Call for Sites' in December 2016 as part of the consultation on the scope and content of the Local Plan review and associated evidence base. The HCA submitted a response to the Call for Sites exercise by submitting information on the subject land, with a view to this being considered by WBC as part of their Local Plan review.
- 1.3 This present submission has been prepared to support the HCA's response to the current Regulation 18 Consultation on WBC's Preferred Development Option (PDO) which forms WBC's approach to meeting Warrington's need for new homes and jobs from 2017 to 2037.
- 1.4 This submission seeks to demonstrate that the HCA's land assets are suitable, achievable and available for development, and that they are therefore capable of making a significant contribution to the delivery of the PDO.
- 1.5 The submission has been informed by a number of preliminary technical and environmental appraisals undertaken in connection with the subject land. As this submission seeks to demonstrate, the subject land is deliverable over the proposed plan period and is available for development. The land is not subject to any significant physical, environmental or technical constraints which would prevent it being brought forward for development through a comprehensive, well planned masterplan and sustainable phasing strategy.



The Homes and Communities Agency

- 1.6 The HCA is the Government's national housing, regeneration and social housing regulation agency for England. Through capital investment, the HCA contributes to economic growth by assisting communities to realise their aspirations for prosperity. The HCA also provides investment to enable the delivery of new affordable housing.
- 1.7 Through its predecessor organisations (the New Town Commission, and thereafter English Partnerships) the HCA has a well-established track record of successful delivery of new homes across Warrington.



2. SUBJECT LAND DESCRIPTION

- 2.1** The HCA's land assets within South Warrington cover an area of approximately 220 hectares within the Green Belt between 3 kilometres and 7 kilometres from Warrington Town Centre to the south of the Manchester Ship Canal and the Bridgewater Canal and to the north of the M56 motorway.
- 2.2** The land broadly extends from the A56 Grappenhall Road/Stockton Lane in the north to the B5356 Stretton Road in the south and from the edge of the Dudlow's Green urban area in the west to Broad Lane in the east. The majority of the subject land is agricultural land, some of which is let on short term tenancy arrangements and the remainder is currently unused.
- 2.3** The subject land is located centrally within the national road network within this part of Warrington. The M56 motorway is located between 1km and 5km to the south, following a broadly east to west alignment whilst the M6 motorway lies approximately 2.5km to the east, following a broadly north to south alignment. The A49 London Road and the A50 Knutsford Road provide links to the centre of Warrington immediately to the west and east respectively whilst the A56 Chester Road provides links the road network in the east and west.

- 2.4** Located within the overall land holdings of the HCA within south Warrington, but excluded from the Green Belt designation, lie the HCA's three Greenfield sites of Grappenhall Heys, Appleton Cross and Pewterspear Green. WBC granted outline permission for up to 180 dwellings on the land at Pewterspear Green on 28th September 2017 (Planning application reference 2016/28807).
- 2.5** The HCA also submitted two outline planning applications in March 2017 for residential development of up to 370 and 400 dwellings at Appleton Cross (planning Application Reference 2017/29930) and Grappenhall Heys (2017/29929) respectively. These applications are expected to be determined by WBC in the near future.
- 2.6** The extent of the HCA's land holdings in south Warrington is shown on Drawing SW1 attached at Appendix 1.





3. SUBJECT LAND HISTORY

- 3.1** The subject land has been in the ownership of the HCA and its predecessors (The Commission for New Towns (CNT) and English Partnerships) since the early 1980s.
- 3.2** In 1995, the CNT produced a development strategy and masterplan for the development of new homes and community facilities in the Bridgewater East area. This masterplan covered all of the subject land being promoted through this submission along with the three Greenfield sites excluded from the Green Belt; Appleton Cross, Grappenhall Heys and Pewterspear Green.
- 3.3** The masterplan was progressed by the CNT through to partial implementation, and a number of sites within this wider area were released by CNT/EP for the development of new homes. New infrastructure, including roads, footpaths, cycleways and green infrastructure, was also constructed at that time, not only to support the emerging residential areas to the south east of Warrington, but also with a view to facilitating the future, phased development of the remainder of the land for housing within the ownership of CNT, now forming the basis of the subject land.
- 3.4** Planning Policy Statement 3 'Housing' (PPG3) subsequently came into force in March 2000, and prioritised development of 'previously developed land' (brownfield land) rather than greenfield land. As a consequence, the development of these residual sites was voluntarily halted (by the then EP) to enable housing growth to be focused on previously developed land.
- 3.5** A copy of the 1995 Bridgewater East Masterplan is attached as Appendix 2.





4. POLICY CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

4.1 This section sets out the current planning policy context for the Site, including details from relevant reports comprising the PDO's evidence base. It is expected that these will be updated as the Local Plan review progresses.

Local Plan: The Current Housing Position

4.2 The current statutory Development Plan for Warrington comprises the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS), which was adopted in 2014. Following a High Court Challenge made in relation to the adoption of various parts of the LPCS, the following parts of the Plan were quashed:

- The housing target of 10,500 new homes (equating to 500 per year) between 2006 and 2027; and
- References to 1,100 new homes at the Omega strategic proposal site.

4.3 The most up to date study which identifies Warrington's Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) is the Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (January 2016) and the associated May 2017 Update. The study was undertaken with the neighbouring Local Authorities of Halton and St. Helens and used information consisting of population projections, household formations, the need for affordable housing and the projected jobs growth across the Plan Period to reach the OAN figure. For Warrington, the January 2016 SHMA identified an OAN of 839 new homes per year up to 2037.

4.4 The May 2017 SHMA Update was commissioned to align Warrington's housing and economic growth and to inform the Local Plan Review, taking into account updated demographic evidence. It identified an OAN of 955 new homes per year up to 2037, with a higher requirement of 1,113 homes per year should WBC wish to plan for higher employment growth.

4.5 WBC has published an updated Urban Capacity Statement Update (UCSU) as part of the Local Plan consultation. Using figures from the July 2017 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), it identified a total housing land supply in the urban area and on Greenfield sites of approximately 9,721 dwellings. In addition to the SHLAA figure, as a result of updated masterplanning work it identifies the potential for a further 7,558 dwellings in Warrington town centre and Inner Warrington (including the Waterfront Strategic Development Opportunity) masterplanning areas. Including an additional small sites allowance of 435 dwellings, this gives a total urban capacity of 15,429 dwellings.

4.6 Having explored all potential sources of additional land supply, WBC has therefore concluded it is unable to accommodate all of its development needs within the existing urban area and on Greenfield sites outside the Green Belt. It is therefore noted that if Warrington is to meet its development needs, then based on the updated assessment of urban capacity, sufficient Green Belt land will need to be released to deliver approximately 4,000 homes. Should WBC pursue higher levels of economic growth, land will need to be found for approximately 7,000 homes.

The Warrington Green Belt and Green Belt Assessment Findings

4.7 The Warrington Green Belt is contiguous with the Green Belt in Merseyside, Greater Manchester and North Cheshire. The Green Belt around Warrington was first introduced formally in the 1977 Cheshire Structure Plan (adopted 1979). The designation broadly covered all land outside of the New Town designation. Later alterations of the Structure Plan (1985 and 1999) did not change the extent of the Green Belt. The Warrington Unitary Development Plan (UDP) published in 2006 became the first statutory development plan for the Borough and the first to formally define the Green Belt. The Green Belt boundary included areas of previous New Town land in South Warrington which had not been developed, but excluded the three large New Town sites of Grappenhall Heys, Appleton Cross and Pewterspear Green. Some very minor changes to the Green Belt

boundaries were identified in the UDP but were deleted by the Inspector at the Plan Examination stage. The 2014 Local Plan Core Strategy did not identify any changes to the Green Belt boundaries in line with its 'Regeneration First' strategy.

4.8 The Warrington Green Belt Assessment (WBGA) was published in October 2016. Stage One of the Assessment divided the entire Warrington Green Belt into 24 large parcels defined as 'General Areas' which were tested against the following five purposes of including land within the Green Belt:

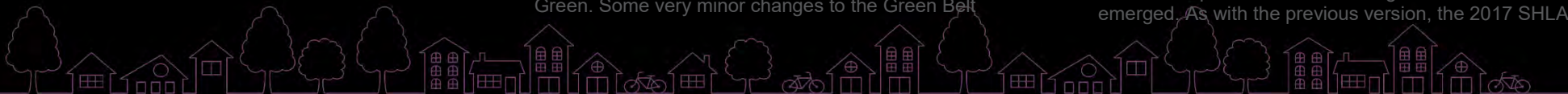
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. Preserving the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging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

4.9 The land within the ownership of the HCA falls into General Area 10 (GA10), sitting broadly between the confines of the M56 to the south, Junction 20 of the M6 and Knutsford Road to the east, the A56 and the urban area of Stockton Heath to the north and the urban area of Dudlow's Green to the west. The location and extent of GA10 is shown on Drawing SW2 attached at Appendix 3.

4.10 Of the 24 defined large parcels, General Area 10 was one of only two 'General Areas' that were considered to make a weak contribution to the Green Belt. The HCA's subject land comprises approximately one third of GA10.

WBC SHLAA 2017

4.11 The 2017 SHLAA comprehensively updates the previous 2015 assessment by reviewing the status and conclusions previously reached for sites already within the SHLAA process and assessing new sites which have emerged. As with the previous version, the 2017 SHLAA



includes the HCA's two sites at Appleton and Grappenhall Heys, both of which are currently the subject of planning applications awaiting determination. The SHLAA acknowledges the fact that planning applications have been submitted on the two sites, and the housing capacity for both sites reflect this.

4.12 For both sites the SHLAA confirms that the sites are suitable, achievable and developable within years 0-5 of the plan period.

South Warrington Urban Extension Framework Plan Document (June 2017)

4.13 This document presents an analysis and concept masterplanning approach to the potential development of the South Warrington Urban Extension area (SWUE) demonstrating how approximately 7,979 new homes could be accommodated in the area, together with 117.3 ha employment land and other uses.

4.14 The report acknowledges the fact that the HCA's site at Pewterspear Green has been granted planning permission, and that applications for up to 400 new homes at Grappenhall Heys and up to 370 new homes at Appleton Cross have been submitted. Of particular relevance, it notes that *"these sites are not within the Green Belt and are able to come forward independent of the Local Plan review."*

4.15 It confirms that the area is *"is well connected to the wider area"*, being in immediate proximity to the M65/M6 interchange junctions. It notes that at present only few bus routes serve the area due to the largely underdeveloped nature of the development concept area. There is clearly an opportunity, as part of the area's wider development, to improve public transport provision in the south Warrington area.

4.16 The report acknowledges the transport planning work carried out by the HCA in the course of their planning application submissions, and confirms that *"it is*

clear that the road network in this part of south Warrington cannot accommodate any further development traffic over and above that coming forward on non-Green Belt sites". It notes that *"any significant further development in the South Warrington area will therefore need to be accompanied by significant road infrastructure improvements."* There is clearly an opportunity, as part of the area's wider development, to deliver wider transport infrastructure improvements in south Warrington.

4.17 The 'Development Framework' put forward includes among its proposals a new, circa 84 hectare, country park directly to the south of the existing built-up area of Grappenhall, with a 'district core' to the south of this providing a new secondary school, leisure centre, sports pitches, health facilities and shops to serve the area as a whole and the wider south Warrington area.

4.18 The report sets out that the SWUE is expected to be developed in a phased approach over a 20-year period, and puts forward an indicative phasing strategy based upon the future infrastructure, housing and employment requirements of Warrington.

4.19 It sets out a series of 'conceptual approaches' and includes a plan illustrating the overall development concept. Proposed strategic road links include Howshoots and Wright's Green links, as well a link from Stretton Road to the A49, whilst an additional link from Dipping Brook road towards Stretton Road is also shown.

4.20 Delivery of these strategic links requires land currently within the Green Belt, as well as land outside of the HCA's ownership, including a parcel of land between the A49 and Spark Hall Road that appears to be outside the boundary of the SWUE.

4.21 It is noted that the plans are simply conceptual at this stage, and it is clear that any proposed phasing of Green Belt release and delivery of transport infrastructure will need to be the subject of future

detailed assessment and analysis, including the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model.

4.22 The HCA will work constructively with WBC and adjacent landowners to support the delivery of these strategic links, as required. The HCA's development proposals for their sites at Appleton and Grappenhall do not preclude the creation of these future links as part of the phased future development of the area.

4.23 The illustrative concept plan does not show the proposed location of any social infrastructure within the boundary of the HCA's land. The HCA will enter into discussions with WBC regarding the infrastructure required and the most appropriate way of providing this.

4.24 Further detail on how the HCA can contribute to the delivery of the likely social and transportation infrastructure required to deliver the overall Garden City Suburb are set out in Sections 7, 8 and 9 below.





5. LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT OPTION

5.1 The Local Plan Review: Preferred Development Option Consultation Document ('the Consultation Document') sets out the WBC's proposed approach to meeting Warrington's need for new homes and jobs from 2017-2037. As well as identifying an overall housing target and employment land requirements for the next 20 years and how these have been derived, it also identifies the infrastructure required to ensure that Warrington's growth is sustainable. It sets out the four-stage approach WBC has taken to select their PDO and, having selected the PDO, it puts forward a series of 'development concepts' to illustrate how the PDO could be delivered, which include some indications as to likely infrastructure requirements and suggested phasing.

Scope of Review

5.2 WBC has decided that the Review will result in a new Local Plan, incorporating the elements of the existing Plan that remain up to date, rather than simply altering elements of the existing Plan. It will be important for WBC to take account of any emerging changes to legislation, policy and guidance that comes into force during the course of the Review, to ensure that the Plan can be found sound.

Duty to Cooperate

5.3 WBC has held meetings with all neighbouring authorities ahead of preparing the PDO. The Consultation document states that no significant issues were raised during these discussions, although some concern was expressed that *"if the level of growth Warrington is planning for was to further increase then this could compete with the level of growth they are promoting through their own Local Plans."*

5.4 It is noted that "a further round of Duty to Cooperate discussions with neighbouring authorities and infrastructure providers will take place after the PDO consultation has ended." This will be important to ensure that the required strategic infrastructure can be provided, and the HCA will engage in discussions with WBC and other landowners, and infrastructure providers over how infrastructure, in particular strategic highways improvements, can most effectively be delivered.

Strategic Objectives

5.5 The Consultation Document sets out six strategic objectives for the new Local Plan. These are to:

- enable the transition of Warrington from a New Town to a New City through the ongoing regeneration of Inner Warrington, the delivery of strategic and local infrastructure, the strengthening of existing neighbourhoods and the creation of new sustainable neighbourhoods;
- facilitate the sensitive release of Green Belt land to meet Warrington's long term housing and employment needs, whilst ensuring the revised Green Belt boundaries maintain the permanence of Warrington's Green Belt in the long term;
- strengthen and expand the role of Warrington Town Centre as a regional employment, retail, leisure, cultural and transport hub;
- provide new infrastructure to support Warrington's growth, reduce congestion and promote sustainable transport options, whilst reducing the need to travel and encouraging active lifestyles;
- secure high quality design which reinforces the character and local distinctiveness of Warrington's urban area, its countryside, its unique pattern of green spaces and its constituent settlements whilst protecting, enhancing and embracing the Borough's built and natural assets; and
- minimise the impact of development on the environment

5.6 The development of the subject land in south Warrington will help to ensure the strategic objectives can be achieved.

Housing Requirement

5.7 WBC has taken the decision to plan for a level of growth in accordance with the Cheshire and Warrington Local Economic Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan, over and above the economic baseline scenario set out in the Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (January 2016) and the associated May 2017 Update. It is understood that this reflects WBC's growth ambitions as set out in the *Warrington Means Business* regeneration programme for Warrington to become a 'New City'.

5.8 To achieve the level of growth required to support the New City aspirations, the Consultation Document proposes a housing target of 1,113 dwellings per annum over the 20-year plan period. This target is higher than the 955 dwellings per annum 'economic baseline' scenario set out in the SHMA, and more than double the 500 dwellings per annum proposed in the adopted Core Strategy prior to that target being quashed as a result of a High Court challenge.

5.9 In order to meet this ambitious target, and taking into account the WBC's allowance for buffers and backlog, WBC indicate that the new Local Plan needs to allocate sufficient land for approximately 24,000 new homes.

5.10 WBC consider that, based on evidence contained within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2017) and the Urban Capacity Statement Update (2017), it is possible to deliver approximately 15,000 new homes in the existing urban area. This means that, based on the proposed housing target and regardless of the development option ultimately chosen, additional land will need to be found outside of the existing urban area to deliver approximately 9,000 new homes.

5.11 Should WBC decide to proceed on the basis of a lower housing target, such as the SHMA 'economic baseline' scenario, it is still likely that land for around



4,000 dwellings would need to be found outside the existing urban area.

Preferred Development Option

5.12 WBC considered three high-level options for where new housing and employment development can best come forward to deliver the Strategic Objectives of the Local Plan. These were:

- Option 1: Green Belt release only adjacent to main Warrington urban area;
- Option 2: Majority of Green Belt release adjacent to main Warrington urban area with incremental growth in outlying settlements; and
- Option 3: An extension to one or more of the outlying settlements, incremental growth in the other settlements and the remainder of growth adjacent to the main Warrington urban area.

5.13 WBC has elected to put forward Option 2 as their preferred option to accommodate the housing numbers required to meet their ambitious targets for growth to be accommodated through the following 'development locations': a Garden City Suburb of approximately 6,000 homes, an urban extension to the south west of Warrington of up to 2,000 homes, as well as homes in the City Centre and Waterfront areas.

5.14 It is noted that WBC consider that, to deliver the scale of growth proposed by the PDO, there is the need for significant infrastructure to be provided across Warrington. This includes a 'Western Link', which will connect the A56 or A5060 Chester Road to the A57 or A562 in Great Sankey to unlock the Waterfront development location and provide congestion relief throughout Warrington. The Consultation Document also refers to WBC's 'longer term aspirations for a new Ship Canal crossing to the east of the Town Centre, which may be required to deliver the full extent of the Garden City Suburb'. An indicative route for this is shown on plans within the Consultation Document

5.15 The HCA is keen to understand this aspiration further and how WBC anticipates it would impact on the delivery of the proposed Garden City Suburb.

5.16 The PDO also requires new and expanded primary and secondary schools as well as health, recreation and community facilities.

5.17 The Consultation Document sets out an indicative development trajectory to demonstrate how the development locations will deliver the required number of new homes over the plan period. The HCA regards the development trajectory provided within the Consultation Document as indicative only. The final trajectory will need to be worked out in conjunction with landowners including the HCA, taking into account matters such as financing and viability.

5.18 WBC has structured the indicative trajectory to manage the requirement for Green Belt release and infrastructure provision. According to the Consultation Document, the indicative trajectory has "a relatively lower level of housing delivery for the first 5 years of the Plan Period, given that land will remain in Green Belt until the Plan is adopted and to allow for key enabling infrastructure to be delivered". Housing is then proposed to be delivered at a higher rate over years 6-15 of the Plan before reducing towards the end of the Plan period.

5.19 Any approach to the phasing of the release of Green Belt land will need to be flexible to ensure that the development of the land can support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure. The approach to phasing will need to be developed in conjunction with relevant landowners and take into account matters such as financing and viability.

Warrington Garden City Suburb Development Concept

5.20 WBC consider that the 'Garden City Suburb' expansion to the south-east of Warrington has the potential to deliver around 7,000 new homes over the plan period.

5.21 As part of the PDO consultation, WBC has prepared initial 'development concepts' for each of the development locations, one of which is the Garden City Suburb, to confirm that the preferred development areas are able to accommodate the level of growth required

and to provide additional detail relating to infrastructure requirements, constraints and development principles.

5.22 It is understood that these are not definitive 'masterplans' for each of the development locations, rather simply evidence to demonstrate the development envisaged can be delivered in the numbers required to support the wider local plan. The HCA agrees with WBC's statement that *"it will be necessary for the Council to work with landowners to prepare a more detailed masterplan and ensure the timely delivery of infrastructure to support individual phases of development."*

5.23 For the 'Garden City Suburb' development location, which includes the HCA's land, the indicative trajectory states that a total of 950 dwellings can be provided on the HCA's land outside of the Green Belt at Pewterspear, Appleton and Grappenhall Heys within years 0-15, with 6,324 to be delivered over years 6-20 on land within the Green Belt.

5.24 WBC has based the indicative trajectory on the principle that no further residential development is acceptable in south east Warrington, other than non-green belt sites, until the first phase of new strategic road links is completed. The document states that there is *"no Green Belt Release during the first 5 years of the Plan"*.

5.25 Delivery of new parts of the strategic road network requires the release of some Green Belt land, and the publication draft of the Plan needs to take this into account.

5.26 The indicative trajectory clearly allows for the HCA's non-Green Belt sites at Appleton, Grappenhall and Pewterspear Green to commence development *prior* to the provision of the additional infrastructure that is required for the wider development of the Garden City Suburb. The HCA regards their sites at Pewterspear Green, Grappenhall Heys, and Appleton as being part of the existing urban capacity, separate to the wider Garden City suburb element of the Preferred Development Option (although spatially related to it). This view is supported by the conclusions of the 2017 SHLAA, which feeds in to the USCU and confirms the sites are suitable, available and achievable. The site at



Pewterspear Green has been granted outline planning permission for up to 180 dwellings.

5.27 As noted in section 4 above, it is clear that any proposed phasing of Green Belt release and delivery of transport infrastructure will need to be the subject of future detailed assessment and analysis, including the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model.

5.28 Furthermore, any approach to the phasing of the release of Green Belt land and development of strategic road links in the Garden City suburb area will need to be flexible to ensure that the development of the land can support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure. The approach to phasing of the release of land within the Garden City Suburb area will need to be developed in conjunction with relevant landowners (including the HCA) and infrastructure providers.

5.29 It will be important to ensure that development can be phased such that delays in the delivery of infrastructure required to unlock delivery in one development location does not cause delays in development at other locations.

5.30 The HCA notes that a number of infrastructure requirements are identified to support the development of the Garden City Suburb. As well as the network of new distributor roads, the required infrastructure includes a new secondary school, up to 4 new primary schools, a major new park, district centre, health facilities and leisure facilities.

5.31 The PDO identifies that to achieve the full development potential of the Garden City Suburb development area, a further higher level connection across the Ship Canal may be required. The HCA notes that at this stage WBC has given no further indication of how much development can be accommodated in the Garden City Suburb without the provision of an additional Ship Canal crossing, nor at what stage within the Plan it may need to be delivered. The HCA would welcome further clarification on these points.

5.32 A plan illustrating the potential development concept is included within the Consultation Document. This shows indicative land use parcels, high-level development considerations and potential key transport

links. At this stage, this should be regarded as purely illustrative to demonstrate a possible way of accommodating development within the Garden City Suburb area; as WBC recognises, it will be important for the Council to work with landowners, including the HCA, to prepare a more detailed masterplan.

5.33 Details of how the HCA's landholdings could potentially support the provision of additional infrastructure within the Garden City Suburb area are set out in Sections 7, 8 and 9 below.

Next Steps

5.34 It is understood that WBC will be carrying out further work, including more detailed site assessments relating to the main development areas as well as all of the submitted 'Call for Sites', which would include the HCA's land in south Warrington. The HCA is keen to understand the outcome of testing the proposed development allocations through the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model, in particular the infrastructure required to mitigate any local and borough-wide transport impacts.

5.35 The Consultation Document confirms that WBC will publish an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) with the next consultation on the submission version of the plan, particularly will include infrastructure costs and the mechanisms to ensure timely delivery and be supported by a viability assessment. The HCA will work with WBC over the phasing and timing of infrastructure delivery as they develop the IDP, to help to ensure that required infrastructure can be phased in the appropriate way to enable development to come forward.

5.36 The HCA notes that consultation on the Proposed Submission Version of the Plan is now anticipated to start in February 2018. As the Consultation Document makes clear, the HCA's land outside the Green Belt can be delivered independently of the need for additional strategic highways infrastructure needed for the wider PDO.



6. SUITABILITY OF SUBJECT LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

6.1 To support the previous Call for Sites submission, an initial appraisal of the subject land was undertaken to assess its suitability for the development of new homes and associated infrastructure, taking into account, locational, physical, environmental and technical factors. The information has been reviewed to ensure that the detail remains relevant.

Ownership and Availability

6.2 The subject land lies wholly within the ownership of the HCA. The majority of the land is in agricultural use either let on an annual agricultural tenancy or an annual agricultural business holdings tenancy. The subject land is therefore considered to be immediately available for development given tenancies are renewable on an annual basis.

Accessibility and Sustainability

6.3 The subject land falls within an area of primarily agricultural land bordered to the north by the southern extents of the Stockton Heath and Grappenhall urban areas and to the west by the eastern edge of the urban areas of Walton, Dudlow's Green and Stretton. The B5356 forms a physical boundary to the subject land in the south with the M56 motorway approximately 500 metres to 750 metres further south. The development of this land can therefore be seen to represent a logical, sustainable, and immediate extension to the established urban edge in South Warrington.

6.4 Furthermore, it is considered that subject to any relevant phasing of Green Belt release, the development of the subject land could also enable the creation of a new defensible Green Belt boundary within South Warrington taking into account the built development to

the north and west and both the local and strategic road network boundaries to the east and south, if required. The development of the subject land would support WBC's ambitions for growth using the key principles of 'Garden City Development' and would also provide an opportunity to complete the New Town investment begun in the 1960's.

6.5 The subject land is proximate to the strategic road network with the M56 (junction 10) and the M6 (junction 20) motorways being located approximately 0.5 kilometres to the south and 2.5 kilometres to the east of the subject land respectively. The existing local road infrastructure was constructed as part of the first phase of a planned programme of future highway routes set out under the Bridgewater East Masterplan (as previously detailed in Section 3). These roads currently connect the northern and southern parts of the subject land (and the existing Grappenhall Heys residential development) with the A49 London Road in the west and A50 Knutsford Road to the east. It is recognised that a range of infrastructure improvements would be required to facilitate the level of new development that the subject land could accommodate. This is considered further in Section 8 of this submission.

6.6 The existing urban areas to the north and west are served by existing bus services which could be extended into the subject land (with associated increases in service provision) in parallel with the implementation of a well-planned and phased masterplan. Likewise, there exists a network of public footpath and cycle routes within this part of Warrington which could be expanded and incorporated into a phased masterplan for the development of the land. This would ensure accessibility to the resultant development and the range of appropriate social infrastructure uses within it (education, health, retail, and leisure) from a wide choice of transport modes other than the private car. New development could be designed to represent an exemplar model of walking and cycling options.

6.7 The extent of the development proposed on the subject land would be of a sufficient scale and critical mass to ensure that local services and businesses would continue to be supported whilst also ensuring that crucial health and education facilities would not be

overstretched. New schools, health care facilities, leisure and recreation facilities and retail outlets could be provided at appropriate locations on site, enabling residents to access a range of social infrastructure without the need to travel and without reliance on the private car. This would ensure that undue pressure was not placed upon existing services and facilities in the surrounding areas of Stockton Heath, Walton, Dudlow's Green and Stretton but that those residents living on the peripheries of the subject land would still be well positioned to help support local businesses. Social infrastructure provision is discussed further in Section 9 of this submission.

Landscape

6.8 The subject land is not covered by any statutory or non- statutory national or local landscape designations. The landform undulates strongly across the area resulting in occasional sweeping northerly views as landform slopes generally to the north. There are numerous ponds within the existing farmland with several linear woodlands, coverts and tree clumps. Some of these semi-natural woodlands would serve to function as advanced landscaping and entrance features for future development plots. This would reflect the successful existing green infrastructure provision in neighbouring residential areas including Pewterspear.

6.9 The majority of the subject land is situated within the Appleton Cross and Grappenhall Landscape Character Area as identified in the Warrington Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (2007). The LCA does not assign a level of sensitivity to the landscape character area. The assessment takes into consideration allocation of land for housing at Appleton and Grappenhall:

"Larger tracts of land in the Appleton and Grappenhall areas are designated for housing development and much of the road and drainage infrastructure is already in place."

6.10 It is considered that the presence of existing tree rich field boundaries, undulating land and woodland belts (often created as advanced planting) has a potential to create a robust, structural landscape for future development which would help to integrate it within the



local landscape. Careful access consideration and boundary treatment as part of a future well-designed, detailed masterplan would offer the opportunity to fully protect the character of the village of Appleton Thorn to the south-east and the Grappenhall village Conservation Area to the north-east.

6.11 Overall, it is considered that when looking at the broader scale, the subject land could be developed whilst still providing a sufficient buffer of open land which would continue to protect the landscape character between Warrington and Manchester.

Ecology

6.12 The subject land is not covered by, and does not lie proximate to, any statutory ecological designations. There are no sites of non-statutory ecological designation within the subject land. There are, however, two non-statutory sites adjacent to and falling between the parcels which comprise the subject land. These are shown on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4 and are summarised below:

- Grappenhall Heys Woodland and Grappenhall Heys Woodland Shelter Belt: This covers an area of approximately 4.43ha and is split onto two parts, Part 1 (Shelter Belt) is located to the north, east and west of the existing Grappenhall Heys residential development (northern section) and Part 2 (Woodland) located to the south of the existing Grappenhall Heys residential development (southern section). The Woodland and Woodland Shelter Belt are both designated as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC), a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and a Warrington Woodland Trust Site; and
- The Dingle and Fords Rough Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Lumb Brook Valley Warrington Woodland Trust Site. This designation follows a route adjacent to the western boundary of the subject land either side of the Doods Brook watercourse. This designation also includes a number of trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders.

6.13 It is clear from the above that the ecological value of the subject area is low in terms of identified ecological sites. Whilst the current agricultural use of the land and

open countryside nature means that it is likely to provide habitat for a number of ecological species, there is no evidence to indicate any special habitat or species value which would set it apart from other agricultural/countryside within the wider Warrington area. The presence of any protected species present on the land can be fully protected through the usual planning and consenting process. The development of a future detailed masterplan for the land represents an opportunity to fully consider a site-wide ecological mitigation strategy.

Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

6.14 The subject land is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory archaeological or cultural heritage designations. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens or Historic Battlefields within the subject land. There are also no statutorily listed buildings within the subject land.

6.15 A Scheduled Ancient Monument, which comprises two small sections of Roman Road, is located to the south-eastern boundary of the subject land on the northern side of the B5356 Stretton Road. The first section is located adjacent to the subject land approximately 100 metres to the south-west of Appleton Thorne village, whilst the second section is located with Appleton Thorne village and separated from the subject land by residential properties. The location of these two areas are shown on Drawing number SW3 attached at Appendix 4.

6.16 There are 15 statutorily listed buildings within the vicinity of the subject land, all of which are Grade II Listed. These are summarised below and shown on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4:

- St Wilfrids Church and five additional, primarily associated buildings/features located within Grappenhall Village approximately 475m to the east of the subject land;
- Two residential properties, Wrights Green House and Wrights Green Cottage, located on Wrights Green Road, immediately adjacent to the central section of the subject land;

- The Church of St Cross, the war memorial and School Farm Farmhouse, all located within Appleton Thorn village to the east of the subject land plus the remains of Appleton Cross and Cross Cottage to the south west of Appleton Thorn village and to the south of the subject land;
- Green Lane Farmhouse, adjacent to the south-eastern section of the subject land; and

6.17 The Church of St Matthew at Stretton, located approximately 100 metres to the south-western extent of the subject land.

6.18 There is one locally listed building within the subject land. This is The Lodge at Witherwin Farm within the north-western part of the subject land. The location of this building is shown on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4.

6.19 The Grappenhall Village Conservation Area is located immediately to the east of the subject land. As identified on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4.

6.20 There are no other significant statutory or non-statutory heritage or archaeological assets within the wider area.

6.21 From work undertaken by the HCA in connection with their sites at Appleton, Grappenhall and Pewterspear Green, it is clear that the historic value of the subject land is low and limited to a small number of Grade II listed buildings and two small areas of Roman Road, which lie adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of the subject land. Only one locally listed building lies within the subject land. It is, therefore, not considered that the release of the subject land from the Green Belt and its future sensitive development for housing would have any significant impact on the historic environment subject to the sensitivities and locations of the identified features being taken into account at a detailed design stage.

Flood Risk

6.22 All of the subject land is located within Flood Zone 1 as set out on the Environment Agency's Flood Map. Flood Zone 1 represents a very low risk of flooding from



rivers and seas (<1:1000 years annual probability of flooding). The Doods Brook and Dipping Brook follow a broadly north to south alignment adjacent to the western extent of the subject land and fall within Flood Zone 3 which represents a high (1:100 or greater) risk of flooding. However, it is not considered that this would present a constraint to development given that the subject land could be developed for residential development utilising sufficient acceptable stand-offs to Doods Brook and Dipping Brook. The locations of Doods Brook and Dipping Brook are shown on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4.

Agricultural Land Classification

6.23 The majority of the subject land is shown on the Natural England Agricultural Land Classification map for the North-East as Grade 2 agricultural land with some smaller peripheral areas of Grade 3 agricultural land. Grade 2 represents land which is considered to be very good, whilst grade 3 represents land which is considered to be good-moderate.

Open Space and Public Rights of Way

6.24 The subject land does not contain any areas of land which are designated as public open space.

6.25 There are a number of public footpaths and bridleways which run through the subject land, connecting it with the wider area. It is not considered that the presence of these footpaths/bridleways would represent a constraint to the development of the subject land for housing. Conversely, they would provide a baseline for the creation of a network of new and improved pedestrian, equestrian and cycle links within and around the subject land, improving accessibility in this part of Warrington. The location of the existing footpaths and bridleways are shown on Drawing SW3 attached at Appendix 4.

Utilities and Services

6.26 An Essar Oil Pipeline and associated buffer crosses the subject land in a broadly south-west to north-east direction. A 'no build' buffer/easement approximately 50m each side of the pipeline is in force and has been successfully incorporated into the HCA's proposals for their land at Appleton Cross where it also crosses their land. It is not, therefore, considered that this would represent a barrier to the development of the subject land. Such land could provide for excellent open space and/or screen planting.

6.27 Utilities information has been provided to WBC as part of the Call for Sites submission on behalf of the HCA to inform utilities capacity analysis.

Contaminated Land

6.28 A review of historical information, published data and preliminary data searches indicates that the site has been primarily in use for agriculture and developed for associated farm buildings only over the past 135 years. There is also evidence of a sewage treatment works and tank within the south-western part of the subject land during this period, with evidence suggesting that this use ceased by or before 1970. Overall it is considered that there are few potential sources of contamination on the subjectland.

6.29 The majority of the subject land does not lie within a groundwater source protection zone. The only exception is a small section of land within the north-western extent of the subject land adjacent to Stockton Heath.

6.30 There are no landfill sites or other sources of contamination within 250 metres of the subject land. There are eight identified locations within 500 metres of the subject land (to the east) which appear to be infilled water features and one infilled pit.

6.31 The subject land does not lie within an area of historic mining and lies within an area of low radon

potential. There are no fuel stations within 500 metres of the subject land and no records of COMAH (Control of Major Accident Hazards) or NIHHS (Notifications of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances) sites either on or within 500 metres of the subject land.





7. HCA LAND PROPOSALS

7.1 An indicative masterplan scheme was prepared for the previous Call for Sites submission to demonstrate how the subject land could be developed for new homes and associated infrastructure. The masterplanning approach taken looked at developing an overarching development framework that could be potentially supported on the majority of the HCA land assets. The HCA's masterplan proposals support the delivery of the wider Garden City Suburb development concept.

7.2 Holistically, the design approach seeks to develop and expand the northern and western urban fringe of South Warrington and therefore sensitively broaden the urban settlement within the existing landscape setting. This expansion also looks to connect and locate the HCA's three isolated Greenfield development sites at Grappenhall Heys, Appleton Cross and Pewterspear Green within a wider vision.

7.3 The HCA's indicative masterplan seeks to demonstrate how coherency and much needed transport corridors could be introduced to strengthen the local networks and ensure that there is sufficient capacity in the road networks to accommodate the new growth which would arise. The indicative masterplan is also mindful of the Essar Oil pipe easements and constraints, ensuring that future development takes these into account.

7.4 The vision for the subject land generates and defines a new eastern edge that clarifies the extent of additional new development adjacent to a new defensible and logical Green Belt boundary. The indicative masterplan therefore seeks to contain development within the existing road networks.

7.5 The vision for the subject land demonstrates how the following could be delivered:

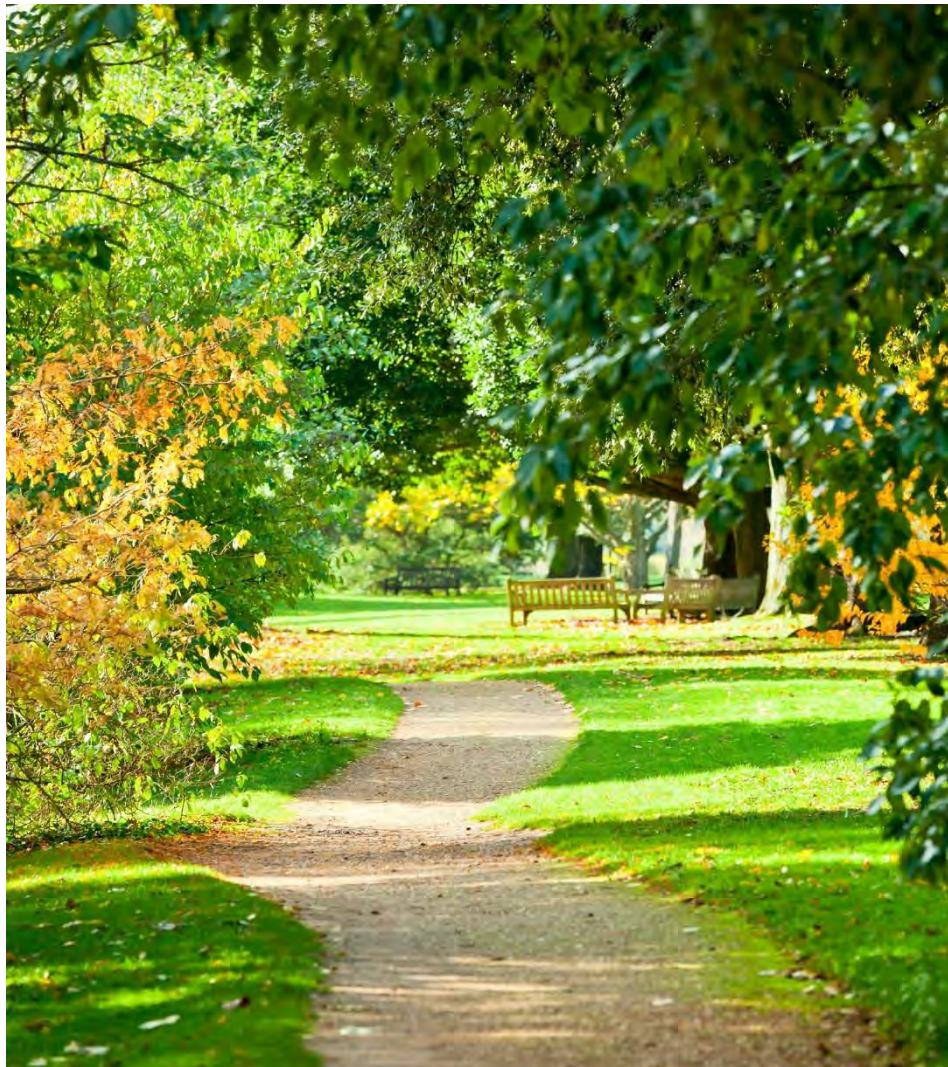
- Approximately 4,000 new homes;

- New road infrastructure;
- Two new primary schools;
- A potential new secondary school;
- One new health centre plus part use of a proposed new health centre on the HCA's adjacent Appleton Cross site;
- Open space, sports pitch and play area provision;
- One new small format supermarket/retail store, plus part use of the proposed new small retail facility proposed on the HCA's adjacent Appleton Cross site;
- Two new local centres to incorporate food/pub uses and other local services and retail provision as appropriate; and
- A potential new Community Hub to include the above listed sports and leisure facilities and health centre as appropriate.

7.6 These new facilities/provision are proposed to be located across the indicative masterplan to ensure even distribution and reach is achieved. It is not considered likely that the development of the land as proposed would include for both a secondary school and a Community Hub given their land intensive uses and proposals to locate these in the new District Core. Therefore, it is considered more likely that if one of the two facilities were to be provided on the subject land, the other would be provided on land elsewhere to the south east of Warrington, with appropriate financial contributions provided by the HCA to help support the facility.

7.7 Two indicative masterplan options are provided as Drawings SW4 and SW5 at Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 respectively. Mindful of the illustrative development framework, these indicative masterplans seek to show some alternative high level options as to how the subject land could be developed and the potential distribution of new homes, transport infrastructure and social infrastructure. These support the delivery of the PDO.





8. TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Opportunities to Deliver New Road Infrastructure

8.1 Historic development of the HCA's land assets within South Warrington has delivered a network of highway routes and Public Rights of Way to the south of the A56 and the Bridgewater Canal and to the east of the A49 London Road. The partial implementation of the Bridgewater East masterplan resulted in the creation of the first phase of a planned programme of future highway routes, connecting new residential development with the A49 to the west and the A50 to the east.

8.2 The 1994 Warrington Draft Local Plan included a specific policy relating to the development of the Bridgewater East area. The policy reflected the earlier designation in the Warrington New Town Development Plan. The 1994 Draft Local Plan also included for the construction of a new highway route, known as the Howshoots Link Road linking Witherwin Avenue and the existing Grappenhall Heys development to the A50 and the M6 Junction 20 to the east, along with a proposed South Warrington Link, connecting Grappenhall Heys with the A56 and onwards via a new bridge crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal. Masterplanning work for the Bridgewater East area undertaken at that time included proposals not only for the Howshoots Link Road and South Warrington Link, but also the 'Wrights Green District Distributor Road'. The provision of the Wrights Green District Distributor Road as part of the future development of the subject land would provide an important new north-south link between new and existing development areas and reduce use of Lumb Brook Road. The proposed location and route of these roads are shown on Drawing SW6 attached at Appendix 7.

8.3 In 1995, the Warrington Draft Local Plan was revised including included for removing of the safeguarding of land for the South Warrington Link (which has subsequently been built upon in recent years). Despite the exclusion of the Bridgewater East area from the adopted Local Plan, the HCA and its predecessor English Partnerships has

maintained ownership of the subject land and is able to deliver the previously proposed Wrights Green District Distributor Road as part of the future development of the subject land. Whilst current proposals for new residential development at the HCA's Greenfield sites of Grappenhall Heys and Appleton Cross do not require the provision of the Wrights Green Distributer Road, they do not preclude its future delivery

8.4 Additional housing development on the subject land would contribute to delivery of the original vision for highways infrastructure as set out in the original Bridgewater East Masterplan and 1994 draft Local Plan.

8.5 The Howshoots Link Road is shown on WBC's illustrative development framework for the Garden City suburb on land outside the HCA's control and would, once completed, provide an alternative route towards the A50 and M6 Lymm Interchange avoiding Appleton Thorn village, and the HCA is committed to its delivery, as appropriate as part of any future development of the subject land.

8.6 Although the HCA's landholdings do not encompass the full extents of the proposed Howshoots Link Road, the HCA is willing to enter into discussions with WBC and adjacent landowners to agree a manner by which the new road could be extended from the HCA's land to the roundabout junction with the B5356 Grappenhall Lane. WBC will need to carefully consider the phasing of the release Green Belt land to ensure that development can support the delivery of the Howshoots Link Road. The phasing will be informed by the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model.

8.7 New highway infrastructure proposed by the HCA to serve the subject land would improve the accessibility of new residential areas, and could make a contribution to greatly enhance access towards the M6, providing an alternative to existing rural routes via Appleton Thorn village. Access towards the M56 Junction 10 via the constrained Cat and Lion signalised junction may continue to be an issue even with delivery of the proposed Wrights Green District Distributor Road and Howshoots Link Road. However, should the subject land be released for future development, the HCA would engage with WBC, Highways England and adjacent local landowners regarding a solution to existing congestion issues, which could potentially comprise a new highway link between the M56 Junction 10

and the B5356 Stretton Road bypassing the Cat and Lion junction.

8.8 The HCA would also engage with WBC and Highways England as necessary to understand improvements to the wider Strategic Road Network. It is anticipated that future liaison between WBC and Highways England would inform requirements for the Roads Investment Strategy process and future Highways England Route Strategies for the M6 and M56 motorways, potential designated funding opportunities for highways infrastructure, and requirements for developer contributions.

Opportunities for Public Transport Improvements

8.9 The existing Appleton and Grappenhall areas are currently served by only limited bus service provision, with relatively infrequent services into Warrington town centre, and limited hours of operation. Discussions regarding potential enhancements to existing provision are underway with Network Warrington as part of outline planning applications for proposed residential development at the HCA's three greenfield sites of Grappenhall Heys, Appleton Cross and Pewterspear Green. Opportunities to serve development with fast and direct bus services are limited by the existing scale of development and the constraints of the existing highway network.

8.10 With additional housing development on the subject land enabling delivery of the original vision for highways infrastructure, opportunities for new and improved bus service provision would be enhanced, and the HCA would work with WBC and Network Warrington to develop a comprehensive strategy for extending high quality bus service provision to serve the subject land. The proposed Wrights Green District Distributor Road would improve access opportunities for future bus service provision, linking new and existing development, and providing a suitable route for bus service provision

Opportunities for the Public Right of Way Network

8.11 The Appleton and Grappenhall areas currently provide a network of Public Rights of Way comprising



footpaths and tarmac surfaced and unsurfaced cycle paths, along with shared use cycle paths alongside Dipping Brook Avenue and Blackcap Road. Routes are concentrated within existing developed areas and predominantly reflect the existing street pattern, but also include a number of footpaths and cycle routes crossing open fields or following safeguarded alignments through residential areas. Any future development of the subject land for new homes and supporting social infrastructure would include a comprehensive masterplan for new Public Rights of Way. Shared use facilities would not only follow new highway infrastructure alignments, but traffic-free links would also be integrated into the design of new residential communities and supporting social infrastructure.

Road Infrastructure Phasing and Delivery

8.12 As with any significant new development, an appropriate phasing strategy would need to be agreed with WBC and Highways England to ensure the timely delivery of new highways infrastructure and additional mitigation requirements. With the proposed alignment of the Wrights Green District Distributor Road within the HCA's land ownership, the new road could be delivered at an early stage subject to the removal of the land from the Green Belt designation.



9. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

9.1 As set out in Section 7 above, initial masterplanning work undertaken in support of the development of the subject land for housing has indicated that the land could accommodate up to 4,000 new dwellings. Based on an assumed average of 2.3 people per dwelling, this would equate to a new population of approximately 9,200 people.

9.2 Population growth on this scale requires the provision of an appropriate level of social infrastructure including schools and school place provision, health care services (doctors and dentistry), shops and services and recreation facilities. The extent of the subject land means that the appropriate level of provision required to meet the needs of the population which would be created could be provided within the subject land as part of a phased masterplanning approach. The HCA's social infrastructure proposals could support the delivery of WBC's wider Garden City Suburb development concept.

9.3 Each type of social infrastructure provision is considered in turn below.

Education

9.4 In accordance with the requirements of the adopted WBC Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) January 2017, the creation of approximately 4,000 new dwellings would result in a need for 1,200 new primary school places (based on a calculation of 0.30 pupils per dwelling). A two-form entry school would accommodate approximately 420 pupils whilst a 3-form entry school would accommodate approximately 630 pupils. Two new primary schools could potentially be provided on the subject land.

9.5 In terms of secondary school place provision, the development of up to 4,000 new dwellings would give rise to a need for 720 new secondary school places (based on 0.18 pupils per dwelling). Given there is a known likely shortfall of secondary school places in

South Warrington, the subject land could potentially provide a new secondary school capable of accommodating the pupils arising from the new development, plus additional pupils from elsewhere in the South Warrington area.

9.6 It is recognised that the current secondary school in the local area, Bridgewater High School at Dudlow's Green, is located proximate to the subject land. Clearly, as stated above, this school would not be capable of accommodating the number of new pupils arising from the development of the subject land. Therefore, a new secondary school would be required to serve the subject land plus any future new housing development within the South Warrington area that may emerge as a result of the Local Plan review. Mindful of the location of Bridgewater High, it may not be appropriate to locate any required secondary school on the subject land. Noting the proposal contained within the SWUE for a new secondary school to be located within the proposed District Core, the HCA would be agreeable to working with other landowners/developers within the South Warrington area whose land may be better placed geographically to accommodate a new secondary school.

Health

9.7 According to the adopted WBC Planning Obligations SPD, on average a single GP would provide care for an average of 1,800 patients. It is understood that it is the current preference of the NHS to provide health centres which accommodate a minimum of 4 GP's plus support services. Such a facility would therefore accommodate up to 7,200 patients (4 x 1,800 patients). Likewise, an average dental practice with 5 dentists would typically be capable of accommodating up to 7,200 patients. A health centre capable of accommodating this level of service provision would typically need to be a 1,000m² facility. A health centre of this size capable of accommodating a minimum of 4 GP's and 5 dentists could potentially be provided on the subject land.

9.8 It is noted that the proposed population from the development of the subject land would be up approximately 9,200 people. A health centre accommodating up to 7,200 patients would therefore

leave a shortfall of approximately 2,000 patients. However, the HCA is proposing to construct a 1,000m² health centre on its land at Appleton Cross as part of the outline planning application. It is intended that this facility would accommodate the likely population which would arise not only through the development of its three Greenfield sites (Appleton Cross, Grappenhall Heys and Pewterspear Green) which is estimated as being approximately 2,200 people, but also the existing shortfall in the local area and other future development. It is therefore considered that the inclusion of one 1,000m² health centre on the subject land would be adequate to meet the needs of the new and existing population.

Shops and Services

9.9 Approximately one new retail store and two local centres could potentially be provided on the subject land to meet the needs of the future development of the subject land. An existing retail convenience store with an area of approximately 500m² is proposed as part of the HCA's proposals for the land at Appleton Cross. It is considered that this could meet some local need arising from the development of the subject land with a further, similar size and type of retail store also provided to ensure adequate provision. Two local centres which could contain facilities such as pubs, takeaways, pharmacies etc. could also be provided on the site to meet the local level needs of the new population.

Leisure and Recreation

9.10 The development of the subject land would consequently bring with it the need for new and enhanced leisure and recreation provision. The subject land covers a sufficient area to potentially allow for this provision to be met with the development of facilities such as informal open space, formal sports pitches and children's play areas specific to the needs of the population which would arise through the development of the subject land. However, it may also present the opportunity to work with Live Wire Warrington and its partners to bring about a new Neighbourhood Hub for South Warrington along the lines of those at Great Sankey and Orford Jubilee where sports, leisure, library and health facilities are combined in one accessible



location. This could be linked to the health and secondary school provision outlined above

9.11 As with the potential secondary school provision, the HCA would be agreeable to working with other landowners/ developers within the South Warrington area, WBC, Live Wire Warrington and its' partners to identify the need for such a facility, the best location and the likely services which it could offer to ensure that any provision best meets the needs of the wider population as well as that arising from the development of the subject land.

Affordable Housing

9.12 The development of approximately 4,000 new homes would include for the provision of approximately 1,200 affordable homes which could in turn provide for 600 new affordable rented dwellings and 600 intermediate homes to meet identified need in the housing market area. This would ensure that the new homes would be accessible to all in an area of typically high house prices, ensuring that local people are not priced out of the housing market and enabling first time buyers to get onto the housing ladder in South Warrington.



10. CONCLUSIONS

10.1 Through this submission the HCA confirms that its 220ha of land (the subject land) within the Green Belt in the South Warrington Area is suitable, available and achievable for a phased, sustainable, high quality extension to Warrington as a component of WBC's Preferred Development Option.

10.2 This submission has sought to demonstrate that there are no significant physical, environmental or technical constraints which would prevent the development of the subject land for housing and associated transport and social infrastructure for up to 4,000 new dwellings which could be delivered as part of a phased masterplan for the area in line with the illustrative proposals contained within the Consultation Document and SWUE Development Framework. The illustrative masterplan included as part of this submission, demonstrates how the site could be developed and delivered to create a high quality, cohesive new community on the edge of the existing urban area.

10.3 In summary, the subject land:

- Is located within one of only two General Areas identified as performing weakly against the five purposes of the Green Belt;
- Is located adjacent to existing residential development of Warrington at its western and northern edges;
- Could create a new defensible Green Belt boundary within South Warrington taking into account the built development to the north and west and the strategic road network boundaries to the east and south;
- Is wholly available for development, in one ownership, subject to annual renewal tenancies and has significant interest from housing developers;
- Is located proximate to the strategic road network and in an area which presents opportunities to improve

pedestrian and cycle links through an exemplar phased sustainable development which reduced the reliance on the private car and encourages journeys by foot, cycle and bus;

- Could be developed through a phased masterplan in close consultation with WBC, its partners and adjoining landowners;
- With the exception of the Green Belt designation, is not subject to any planning policies which would restrict its development;
- Is not covered by any significant landscape or ecological designations which would prevent or limit its development;
- Contains no statutory features of archaeological or historical interest and lies adjacent to only a small number of listed buildings, one conservation area and two small parts of an identified Roman Road, impacts upon all of which could be mitigated against through sensitive design and the creation of appropriate buffer zones and stand-offs;
- Is located in an area at low risk from flooding and therefore compatible with residential development;
- Contains few sources of potential land contamination as a result of its primarily agricultural previous uses;
- Could be developed without any loss of public open space, sports pitches or other sports, recreation or leisure facilities;
- Could provide new road infrastructure including the Wrights Green Distributor Road to provide improved north to south connections throughout the subject land and improved connections in the wider area;
- Could accommodate all of the necessary social infrastructure required by the development and at the necessary scale, including if appropriate a new Neighbourhood Hub; and
- Could contribute to WBC achieving several of the new Local Plan's strategic objectives.

10.4 This document demonstrates that the land is suitable, available and achievable for development:

- The land is **a suitable location for development** as it is sustainably located adjacent to the existing urban area and there are no significant physical, environmental or technical constraints which would prevent the development of the subject land for housing and associated transport and social infrastructure.
- The land is **available for the development**; as the government's housing, land and regeneration agency the HCA is responsible for increasing the number of new homes that are built in England and for increasing the supply of public land and speeding up the rate that it can be built on. The HCA's land in south Warrington is wholly within the single ownership of the HCA, and has significant interest from housing developers.
- The HCA's illustrative masterplan demonstrates that **development of the site is achievable**, and that the site could be developed to create a high quality, cohesive new community on the edge of the existing urban area of Warrington as part of a phased masterplan for the area, in line with the illustrative proposals contained within the Consultation Document and SWUE Development Framework.

10.5 The HCA supports the PDO and the Garden City Suburb. It is important that WBC works with landowners to work out the phasing of the Green Belt release and the trajectory of building to support the delivery of the required infrastructure.

10.6 It is clear that there is a need for the new local plan to allocate a substantial amount of suitable land in order to meet WBC's housing need, which cannot all be accommodated within the existing built up area. The HCA's subject land can clearly make a significant contribution to WBC's housing land requirements. Development of the HCA's land would make a significant contribution to delivering the new local plan's strategic objectives and support WBC's ambitious growth plans.

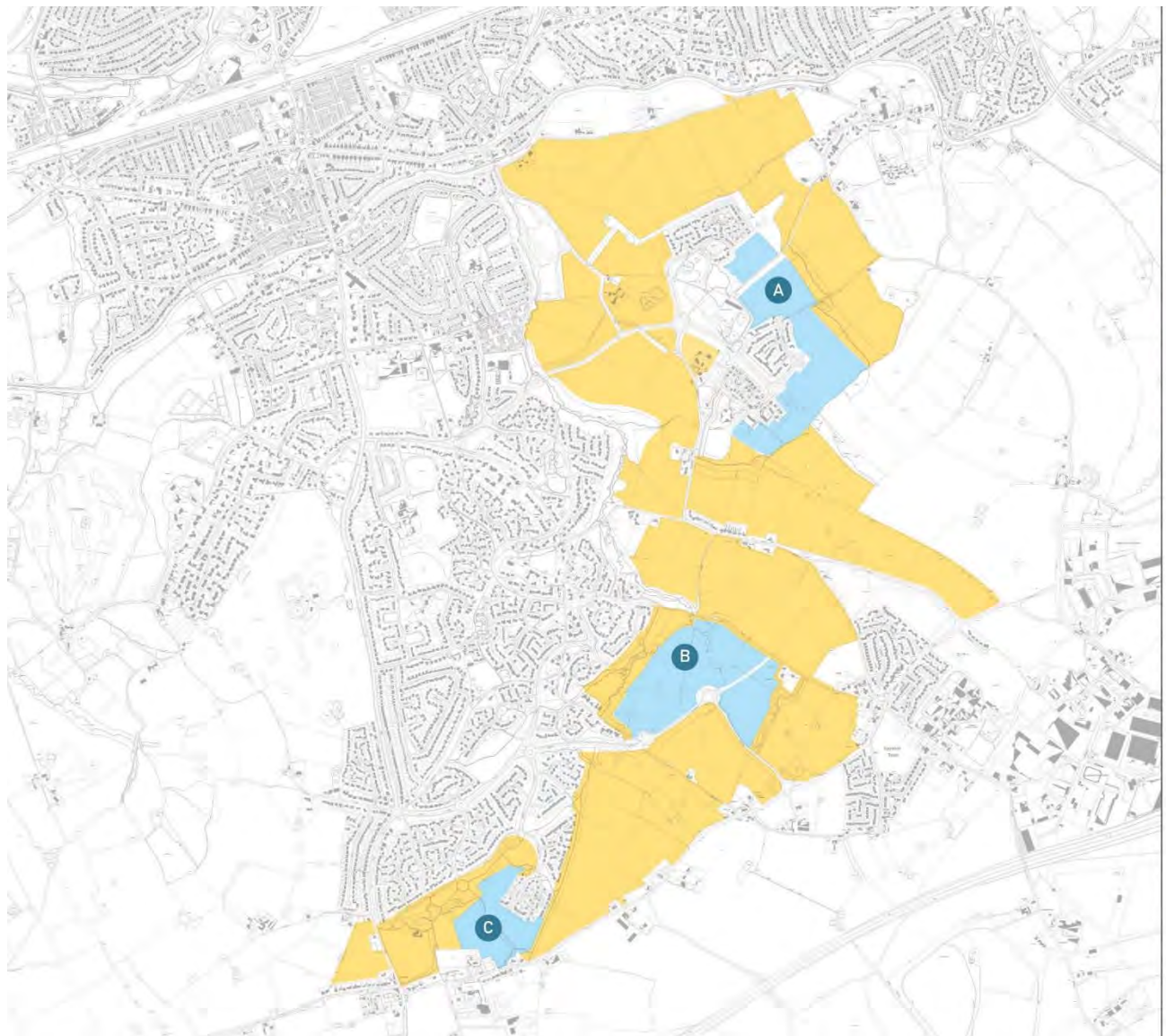




APPENDICES



Appendix 1: Drawing SW1 – Extent of Subject Land (Site Plan)



DRAWING SW1 – EXTENT OF SUBJECT LAND

KEY
HCA Land Ownership

- Strategic Locations
- A Grappenhall Heys
 - B Appleton Cross
 - C Pewterspear Green

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Appendix 3: Drawing SW2 – Green Belt General Area 10



Drawing SW2
Green Belt
General Area 10

Key

Warrington Green Belt General Areas

HCALand Ownership

Strategic Locations

Grappenhall Heys

Appleton Cross

Pewterspear Green



Appendix 4: Drawing SW3 - Planning & Environmental



Drawing SW3 Planning & Environmental Designations

KEY

- ① Grappenhall Heys Woodland (Shelter Belt)
SINC – Grappenhall Heys Part 1
LWS, WWT Site
 - ② Grappenhall Heys Woodland
SINC – Grappenhall Heys Part 2
LWS, WWT Site
 - ③ The Dingle and Fords Rough SINC,
WWT Site
 - ④ Scheduled Ancient Monument
2 x Sections of Roman Road
 - ⑤ Essar Oil Pipeline and Buffer Zone
(approximate location)
 - ⑥ Dipping Brook/Doods Brook
 - ⑦ Grappenhall Heys
Conservation Area
 - ⑧ Howshoots Link Road
(Approximate Route)
 - Public Footpaths/Bridleways
(Indicative Routes)
 - Listed Buildings
 - ▲ Locally Listed Buildings
 - HCA Land Ownership
- Strategic Locations**
- Ⓐ Grappenhall Heys
 - Ⓑ Appleton Cross
 - Ⓒ Pewterspear Green

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Appendix 5: Drawing SW4 – Indicative Masterplan Option 1



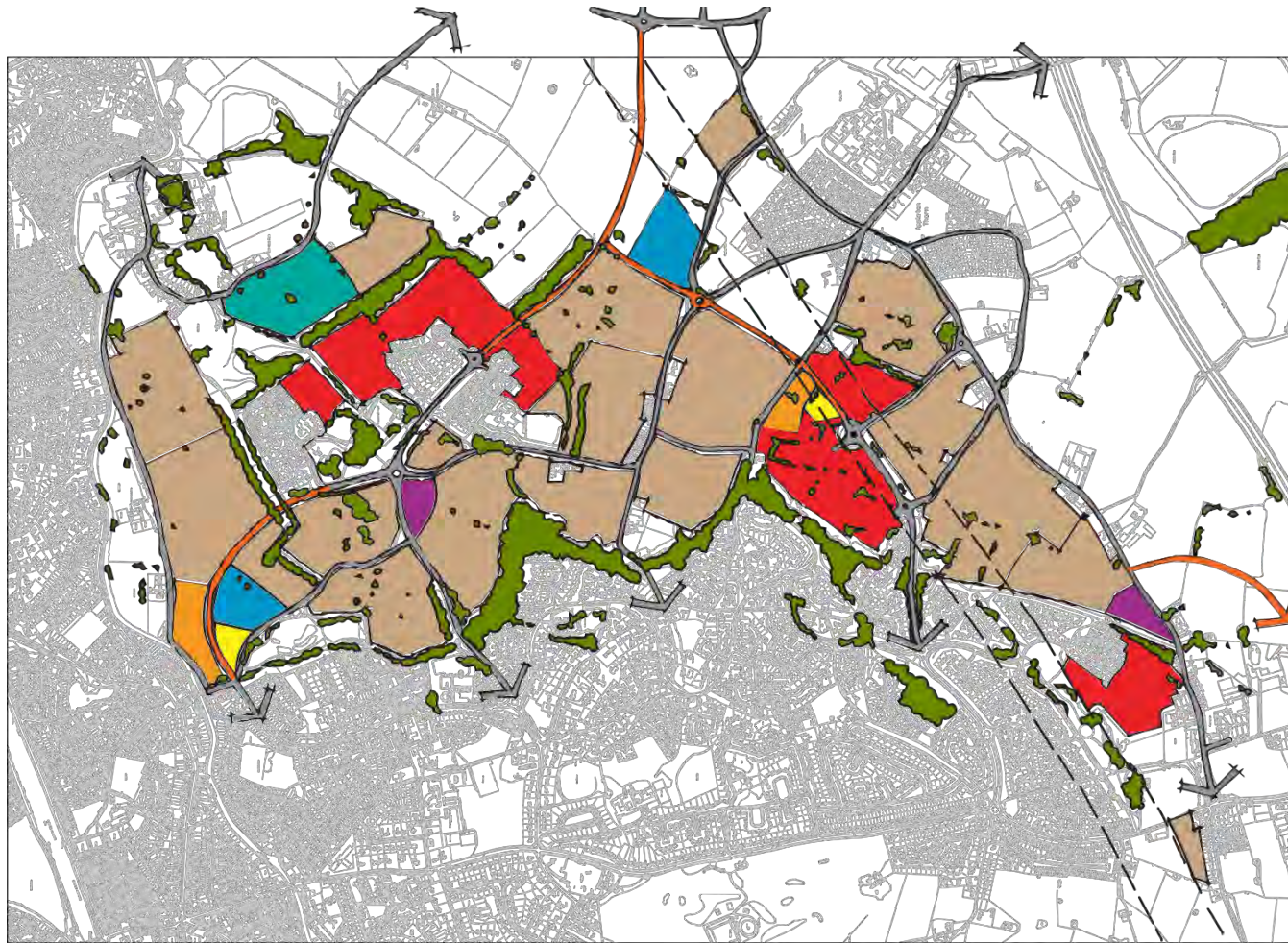
Drawing SW4
Indicative Masterplan Option 1

Key

-  Significant Existing Vegetation
-  Strategic Sites historically removed from Green Belt and at Outline Planning Stage
-  Shell Pipeline Easement
-  Proposed Residential Development Plots
-  Proposed Primary Schools
-  Proposed Secondary School
-  Proposed Health Centres
-  Proposed Retail Stores / Supermarkets
-  Local Centres
-  Existing road network
-  Proposed road network



Appendix 6: Drawing SW5 – Indicative Masterplan Option 1



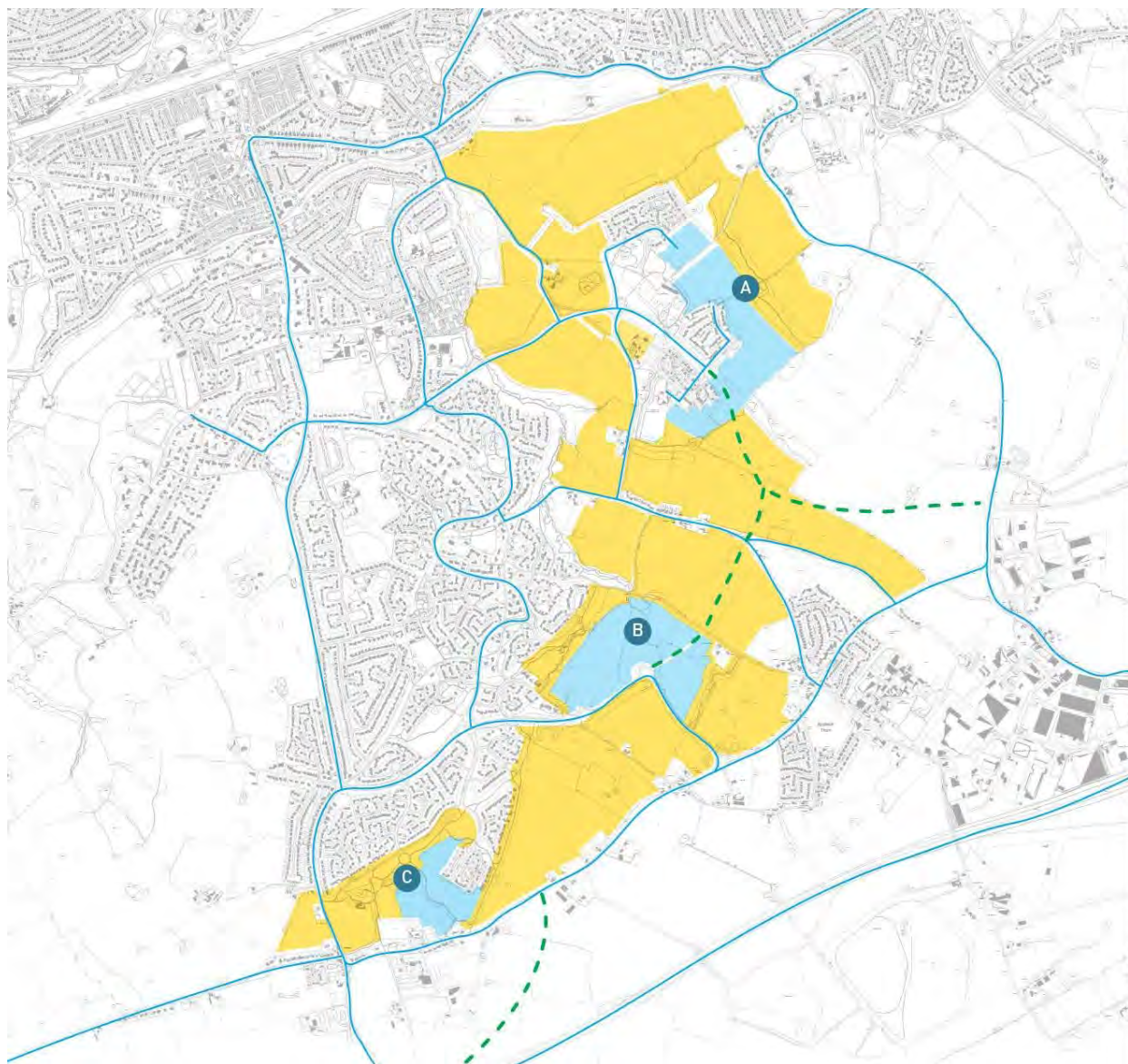
Drawing SW5
Indicative Masterplan Option 2

Key

-  Significant Existing Vegetation
-  Strategic Sites - historically removed from Green Belt and at Outline Planning Stage
-  Shell Pipeline Easement
-  Proposed Residential Development Plots
-  Proposed Primary Schools
-  Proposed Community Hub
-  Proposed Health Centres
-  Proposed Retail Stores / Supermarkets
-  Local Centres
-  Existing road network
-  Proposed road network



Appendix 7: Drawing SW6 – Transport Infrastructure



Drawing SW6
Transport Infrastructure

KEY

- HCA Land Ownership
- Existing Highways
- Proposed Highways

Strategic Locations

- A Grappenhall Heys
- B Appleton Cross
- C Pewterspear Green

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Homes &
Communities
Agency

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