



WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan

Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation July 2017



Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Responding to Scope and Contents Consultation
 - Evidence Base Issues
 - Housing Needs
 - Employment Land Needs
 - Aligning Housing Need with Job Growth
 - Land Supply
 - Green belt Assessment
 - Proposed Scope of Local Plan Review
 - Duty to Co-operate
- 3 Call for Sites
- 4 Towards a Preferred Development Option
 - Stage 1 - Development Needs and Associated Land Requirements
 - Confirming Development Needs - Planning for Growth
 - Maximising Urban Capacity
 - Land requirements for homes and employment
 - Safeguarding Requirements
 - Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Provision
 - Mineral and Waste Provision
 - Stage 2 - Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan
 - Defining the Strategic Objectives
 - Defining Assessment Criteria
 - Exceptional Circumstances for releasing Green Belt
 - Stage 3 - Assess high level spatial options to accommodate development
 - Preparation of Area Profiles and Growth Scenarios
 - Defining High Level Spatial Options
 - Confirmation of preferred growth level and preferred high level spatial option
 - Stage 4 - Assess options for main development locations
 - Define options for main development locations
 - Initial Confirmation of Preferred Main Development Locations
 - Confirmation and Elaboration of Preferred Main Development Locations
 - Outlying Settlements
 - Employment Development- Assessment of Employment Land Locations
 - Gypsies and Travellers
 - Minerals and Waste
 - Minerals
 - Waste
- 5 Preferred Development Option
 - Overall Approach - Warrington New City
 - City Centre
 - Wider Urban Area
 - Warrington Waterfront
 - Warrington Garden City Suburb
 - South Western Warrington Urban Extension

Outlying Settlements
Gypsies and Travellers
Minerals & Waste

- 6 Next Steps
- 7 How to get involved and comment

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Council is currently undertaking a review of its Local Plan. Following the initial consultation on the scope and contents of the Local Plan review, the Council has now prepared its Preferred Development Option.

1.2 This document provides:

- A summary of the key issues from the previous consultation and the Council's response to them;
- A summary of the sites submitted as part of the Local Plan 'Call for Sites';
- An overview of the process the Council has undertaken to confirm the Preferred Development Option;
- The Preferred Development Option itself;
- The next steps for the Local Plan review; and
- Details on how to respond to the Preferred Development Option consultation.

2 RESPONDING TO SCOPE AND CONTENTS CONSULTATION

2.1 The Council undertook a 6 week period of consultation on the scope and contents of the Local Plan review and the Council's initial Local Plan evidence base between 24th October and 5th December 2016.

2.2 The Council received a total of 78 responses to the consultation. The majority were from developers and landowners although responses were also received from Parish Councils, local residents and other stakeholders. A summary of the main issues that were raised during the consultation, the Council's response to them and additional evidence base work undertaken by the Council, is provided below.

Evidence Base Issues

Housing Needs

2.3 The Council has updated its Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to take account of the most recent population and household projections. As part of this process the Council's consultants have also reviewed responses from the initial Plan consultation relating to housing need. A copy of the updated SHMA and the consultants' response to representations relating to housing need are available on the Council's [web site](#).

2.4 The majority of consultation comments have not necessitated any amendment to the SHMA and its methodology and therefore do not impact on calculation of housing need.

2.5 The one area which the Council accepts needs to be amended is in respect of economic activity rates. This relates to the proportion of the existing population who are currently not working but who could take up new jobs in the future. This is an important consideration as existing residents taking up new jobs do not put the same demands on housing need as people moving into the area.

2.6 The initial SHMA used economic activity rate forecasts from Oxford Economic which the Council accepts are likely to be overly optimistic, particularly given the existing high economic activity rates in Warrington. The Council has therefore analysed alternative forecasts from Experian and the Office for Budget Responsibility. In conclusion, the Experian forecasts are considered the most robust forecasts for Warrington given the borough's demographic make-up and economic buoyancy.

2.7 Using the Experian rates also ensures consistency with the approach of the Liverpool City Region's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA). This is important from a 'Duty to Cooperate' perspective as although Warrington is not within the Liverpool City Region, it remains part of the Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area.

2.8 The result of using the Experian economic activity rate forecast is that Warrington's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for Housing increases from 839 homes per annum to 955 homes per annum.

2.9 It also means that the housing requirement to support the level of job growth proposed in Cheshire & Warrington devolution bid, which was the basis for the Council's preferred approach in the initial Plan consultation, increases from 984 homes per annum to 1,113 homes per annum.

2.10 It should be stressed that the Government will shortly be consulting on a standard methodology for calculating housing need across the country. It will be important to ensure Warrington's housing needs are kept under review in the context of this standard methodology.

Employment Land Needs

2.11 The approach to providing the Objectively Assessed Need for employment land over the plan period in the Council's Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) has been criticised by some representors. Having reviewed the representations the Council is confident that none of the issues raised necessitate any change to the Council's EDNA and its methodology and therefore do not impact on the calculation of need for employment land.

2.12 Planning Practice Guidance is clear that the assessment of future land needs should be determined by looking at both past trends and future forecasting methods, and highlights that these should include historic land take-up and future employment/population change. The methodology employed in the Councils' Employment Development Needs Assessment (2016) assessed both historic land take up and labour demand and associated sensitivity testing when assessing the most appropriate approach.

2.13 The key recommendation of the study is that the preferred forecasting method is a projection forward of past take-up rates that considers both strategic and local needs. The evidence concludes that the Borough has a further land need, of 381 ha, to 2037.

2.14 It is important to note that the past take up rates assessed over numerous years cover a wide range of economic circumstances, from steady growth to recession, and this is reflected in the peaks and troughs of employment development activity. The average derived is therefore a good representation of the underlying, long term trend.

2.15 The current adopted Local Plan Core Strategy employment land requirement was also derived on local evidence of past land take up rates (13 ha per annum) plus an additional allowance of 20% to provide for choice and slippage. Take up rates had been monitored annually for over 20 years. They continue to be monitored annually and provide a proven, robust source of information. The approach was validated through the Examination in Public and was endorsed by the Inspector's conclusions. This aspect of the adopted plan was not subject to challenge.

Aligning Housing Need with Job Growth

2.16 A number of developers considered that Warrington should be uplifting its jobs forecast to match historic rates of job growth in the borough.

2.17 The Council does not agree that continuing past trends is the most robust basis for forecasting jobs growth in Warrington. The borough has undoubtedly experienced a very high rate of jobs growth over the last 20 years, partly as a legacy from its New Town status. Whilst the Council is confident that Warrington will continue to be one of the strongest performing economies in the North West, the predominant growth sector in terms of land for new development is within the distribution sector which has a relative low level of job creation in comparison with other sectors. Technological advances, increased automation and reductions in the size of the public sector are also likely impact on the total number of jobs created. These factors are reflected in the economic forecasts for Warrington, which see the rate of job growth slow down towards the end of the plan period.

2.18 It is also apparent that if the Council was to further uplift its jobs growth figure, then this could result in objections from neighbouring authorities. During 'Duty to Cooperate' discussions, a number of authorities expressed concern that higher levels of job growth in Warrington could undermine their own growth potential and / or risk promoting unsustainable commuting patterns.

2.19 Other representations from residents and other stakeholder organisations considered that the level of growth proposed by the Council was too high and this was resulting in excessive land requirements for future development.

2.20 Warrington has significant ambitions for economic growth, as reflected in the Warrington Means Business regeneration programme, updated in December 2016 and in the scale of development proposed as part of the Cheshire and Warrington Devolution bid. The devolution bid figure has now been embedded in the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The LEP has undertaken further work in preparing the SEP, working closely with the Council, to analyse the job growth figures across Cheshire and Warrington as a whole and specifically in respect of Warrington. The LEP and the Council are confident the level of growth proposed is achievable with the interventions set out in the SEP and the scale of public and private sector investment the LEP is seeking to secure. The Council is therefore making the positive decision to plan for this level of growth.

2.21 Nevertheless, given the uncertainties of forecasting future jobs growth, the Council accepts that it is appropriate to test the impacts of a higher and lower job growth rate as 'reasonable alternatives' through the Sustainability Appraisal /Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) process. The lower growth rate is derived from the baseline economic forecast for Warrington which is the basis for defining Warrington's Objectively Assessed Need for housing of 955 homes per annum. The updated SHMA has also assessed the housing requirement which would arise if historic levels of job growth are maintained over the entire plan period. This is the higher growth rate and equates to a housing need of 1,332 homes per annum.

Land Supply

2.22 The Council produced an Urban Capacity Statement in October last year as part of its initial review of the Local Plan Core Strategy. More detailed work has now been undertaken to determine the available land supply within the existing urban area and on greenfield sites outside of the Green Belt. A more detailed master planning exercise has been undertaken in partnership with Warrington & Co. to produce a comprehensive Masterplan for the Town Centre and Inner Warrington, including the Waterfront & Arpley Meadows Strategic Proposal (identified in the Local Plan Core Strategy) (now known as the Warrington Waterfront Development Area – WWDA). The [Masterplan](#) now provides a more detailed breakdown of specific land uses and phasing, in addition to development capacities (which have been further refined to take account of on-going development proposals / pre-application negotiations).

2.23 The 2016 SHLAA provided an interim assessment of the level of housing supply. A number of developers raised several technical issues with the way that the housing land supply had been calculated. Primarily these concerns related to the way in which the five year supply had been calculated rather than the actual overall level of supply. Although, there were also some issues regarding the longer term supply which were more related to the overall housing requirement. These issues have been considered and where necessary addressed in a more comprehensive assessment (SHLAA 2017) that is published alongside this Preferred Development Option. In most cases this has involved updating the evidence to confirm that the Council's approach to site assessments is still appropriate.

2.24 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.

2.25 Previous iterations of the SHLAA did not utilise a physical size or capacity threshold for the identification of sites, as is now required by Planning Practice Guidance¹. A revised approach has been applied within this SHLAA to bring it up to date with current practice. To this end, a physical site size threshold of 0.25ha has been adopted and only sites that meet this threshold have been assessed. For sites below this size, an allowance is made for the delivery of small sites within the housing land supply, based

1 - Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 3-010-20140306

on historic completion information.

2.26 The NPPF requires Local Authorities to demonstrate five years' housing supply of deliverable sites. The NPPF requires an additional buffer of either 5% or 20% (where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing) to be added to the housing requirement to: "ensure choice and competition in the market for land". Warrington has a good track record of consistent delivery in excess of plan targets and hence for the purposes of calculating the five year supply, a 5% buffer will be applied.

Green Belt Assessment

2.27 The Council's Green Belt Assessment was subject to numerous representations from landowners and developers during the previous consultation. The comments received related to the methodology undertaken and the conclusion of individual parcels. A view was often provided by the representor to justify why a different conclusion should be reached for the parcel and subsequently their submitted site.

2.28 The Council's consultants who prepared the Green Belt Assessment have undertaken individual assessments of all of the call for sites where they differ from the parcels originally assessed. They have also reviewed relevant representations and where they have reached a fundamentally different conclusion to the representation, an explanation for this has been provided. The document prepared by Arup can be found [here](#).

2.29 There are no changes to the Green Belt Assessment methodology recommended as a result of the comments received.

2.30 Twenty nine parcels were specifically requested to be changed in the consultation comments. Arup have reviewed these comments and the parcel assessments and recommend that 5 purpose assessments are changed and 1 parcel boundary is changed. This would only result in 2 overall assessments changing. The revised parcel assessments can viewed here

2.31 One specific comment related to the potential impacts of HS2 on the Green Belt Assessment findings. The HS2 route was not used as a boundary in the Green Belt Assessment as paragraph 76 of the assessment explains that 'only existing boundaries were used. Boundaries relating to proposed development or infrastructure were not used'. Given the likelihood and scale of HS2, Arup has subsequently reassessed those parcels adjacent to or in close proximity to the safeguarded route.

Proposed Scope of Local Plan Review

2.32 There was general support from consultation responses for the proposed scope of the Plan review. This included support for:

- maintaining the current Plan's priority of unlocking major development opportunities in the Town Centre and Inner Warrington whilst addressing existing congestion in the town;
- focussing the Plan Review on identifying land for homes, employment and ensuring delivery of infrastructure;
- the proposed 20 year plan period;
- the need to safeguard land beyond the plan period;
- maintaining current detailed policies where they are consistent with the NPPF (subject to any required minor revisions to bring them up to date); and
- including Gypsies & Travelers and Mineral & Waste sites and policies within the Plan.

2.33 Having further considered the proposed scope of the Review in the context of consultation responses, it is apparent that fundamental elements of the existing Plan - including the amount of development proposed, the Plan period, the approach to Green Belt and the format of the Plan with a Core Strategy and separate Development Plan Documents – will change. The Council has therefore concluded 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 resulting in an alteration to the existing Plan.

2.34 The Council has therefore assessed the scope of the Review against the strategic priorities that the NPPF states that a Local Plan should address (as set out at paragraph 156 of the NPPF) to ensure compressive coverage. The only area the Council acknowledges it has not fully considered as part of the Review to date is the provision of retail and leisure development.

2.35 The Council has a relatively recent Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment which was published in 2015, but this pre-dates confirmation of Warrington's objectively assessed need for new homes and employment land. The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment does however provide a comprehensive basis to understand current retail trends in the borough and the need and that which will arise from development within the existing urban area. It will however be necessary to update this evidence base to inform the submission version of the Local Plan.

Duty to Cooperate

2.36 The Council has held meetings with all neighbouring authorities ahead of preparing the Preferred Development Option through the 'Duty to Cooperate' process.

2.37 No significant issues were raised during these discussions, although neighbouring authorities did express concern 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.

2.38 In discussions with St Helens Council, Warrington has agreed in principle that the extension to the Omega employment site proposed in St Helens' emerging Local Plan should contribute to meeting Warrington's employment land needs. This is however dependent on demonstrating that the development can be accommodated by the improvements to Junction 8 of the M62 which are being undertaken to facilitate the development of the Omega site based on its current extent.

2.39 In addition, the Council has met regularly with Halton and St Helens Councils (the other authorities within the Mid-Mersey Housing Market Area) to specifically discuss housing need issues. Halton and St Helens are part of the Liverpool City Region and they are separately part of an assessment to understand development needs across the City Region area. Warrington is not part of the City Region but remains within the Mid-Mersey housing area so it is important to ensure that Warrington's evidence base work is consistent to that being undertaken by the Liverpool City Region.

2.40 The Council has also engaged early on in the Local Plan process with Highways England and infrastructure providers including United Utilities to understand the potential impacts of the Preferred Development Option on their infrastructure and business planning and to identify any mitigation measures that could be required.

2.41 The Duty to Cooperate requirement is an ongoing and iterative process to inform and shape Local Plan production. A further round of Duty to Cooperate discussions with neighbouring authorities and infrastructure providers will take place after the Preferred Development Option consultation has ended.

3 CALL FOR SITES

3.1 At the same time as the Regulation 18 consultation, the Council also invited developers, landowners, the local community and other stakeholders to submit sites they wanted to be considered as part of the Plan review.

3.2 The Council received over 150 submissions for its Local Plan 'Call for sites'. A table showing the number of sites by use, location and their size is provided below. A map showing all of the call for sites by proposed use can be found on the [Council's web site](#).

	Urban		Green Belt		Total	
	No. of Sites	Hectares	No. of Sites	Hectares	No. of Sites	Hectares
Preferred Use (Housing)	9	38.44	92	1503.59	101	1542.03
Preferred Use (Employment)	0	0.00	10	228.72	10	228.72
Preferred Use (Mixed Use)	5	37.51	35	338.57	40	376.08
Preferred Use (G&T)	0	0.00	1	0.48	1	0.48
No Preferred Use	0	0.00	3	39.28	3	39.28
SHLAA Green Belt Sites	0	0.00	95	241.38	95	241.38
TOTAL	14	75.95	236	2349.24	250	2,427.17

3.3 The vast majority of sites are located in the Green Belt. Of these, the predominate use being promoted is residential, although there are significant employment and mixed use proposal sites.

3.4 Based on an average net site area of 75% and an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare, the total amount of land submitted from the 'Call for Sites' and identified in the SHLAA currently within the Green Belt could potentially accommodate approximately 50,000 houses.

3.5 Only a small number of sites within the existing urban area have been put forward for residential development that are not already identified in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). Whilst a small number of employment and mixed use sites have been put forward for residential development in the urban area through the call for sites exercise, the scale of these sites do not fundamentally change the land supply assessment contained in the Council's EDNA.

3.6 The Council is aware that Fiddlers Ferry power station may come forward for development during the Plan Period. It currently remains an operational coal-fired power station with ash processing operations but its long term future remains uncertain. It may be that the site will continue to be used for power generation but the site could represent a major future brownfield redevelopment opportunity. There is not currently sufficient certainty for it to be allocated as a development site, but given the scale of the site, this will need to be kept under review and the site's future has been taken into account in the Council's approach to flexibility of land supply and safeguarding as set out below.

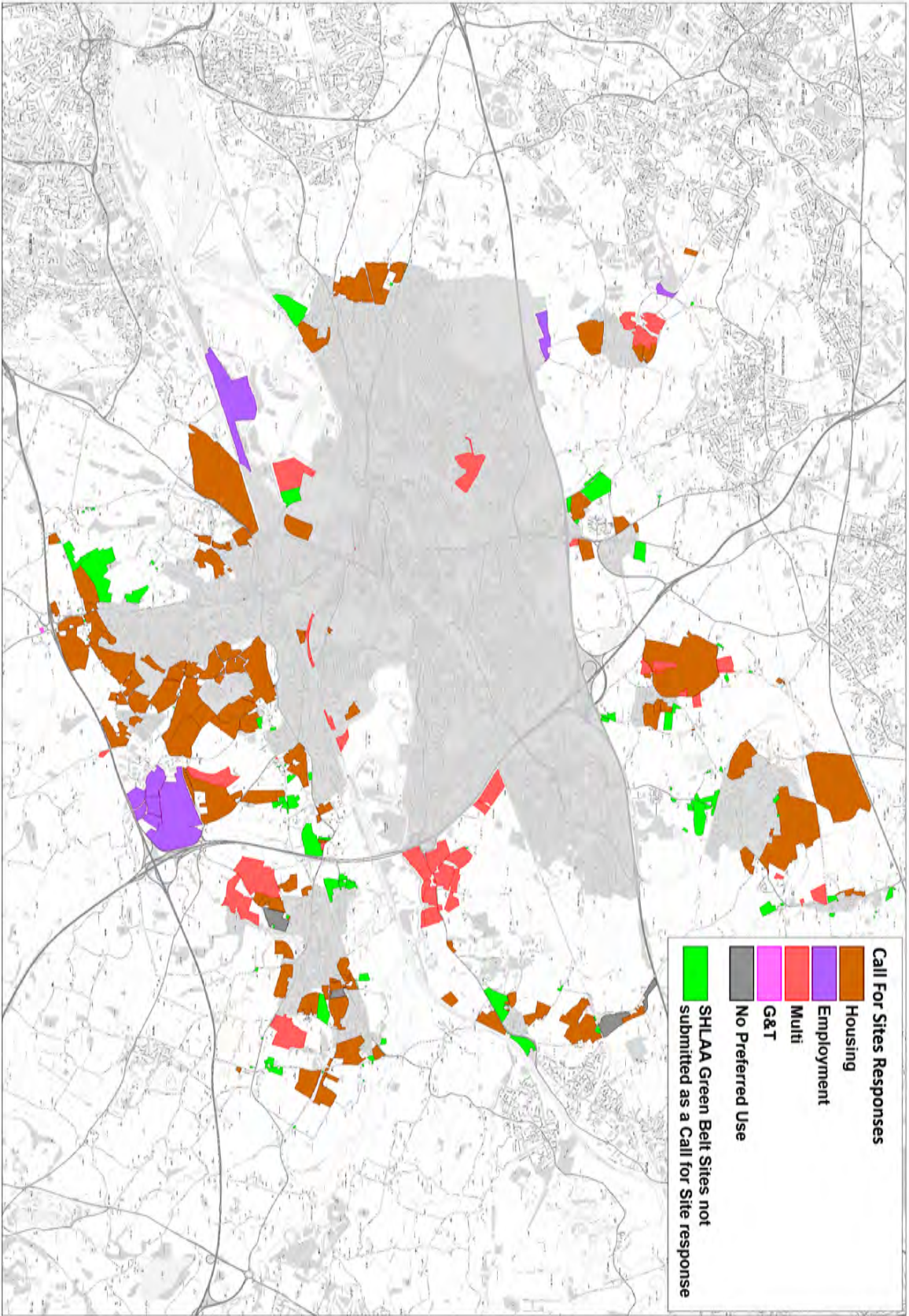


Figure 1: Call for Sites and SHLAA Green Belt Sites

4 TOWARDS A PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT OPTION

4.1 In order for the Council to derive the preferred development option for Warrington, there were essentially four main stages of work:

- Stage 1. Confirm Warrington’s development needs and associated land requirements
- Stage 2. Define the Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan
- Stage 3. Assess high level spatial options to accommodate development
- Stage 4. Assess options for main development locations

4.2 The flow chart below illustrates the iterative process undertaken and the evidence base and sustainability appraisal considerations which have informed the development of the preferred option at each stage.

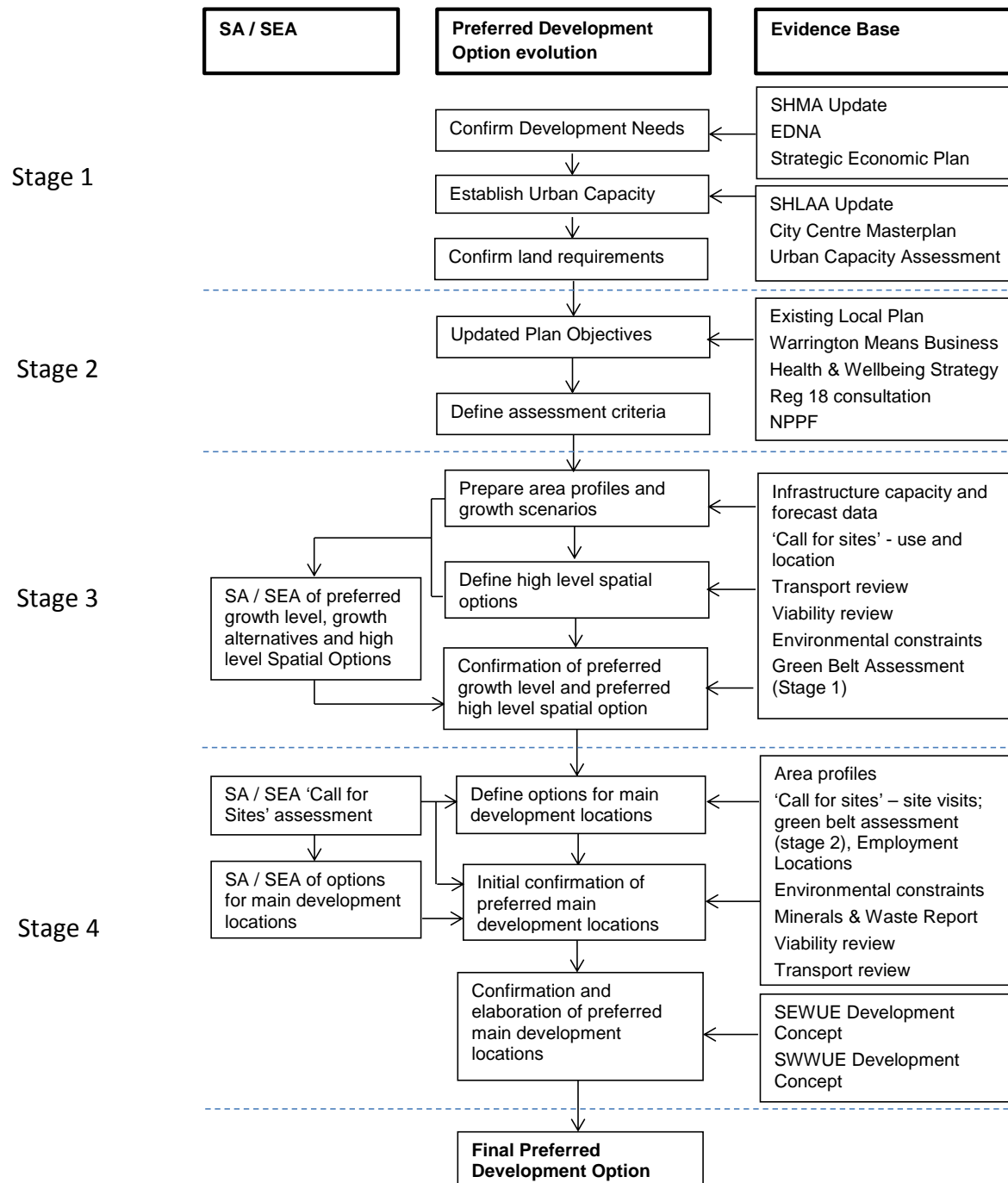


Figure 2: Preferred Development Option Stages

4.3 The process is primarily based on options for assessing the location for new housing. Whilst employment sites have more specific locational requirements, the main employment locations have been considered within the process to understand cumulative impacts on infrastructure and to provide the opportunity to plan for sustainable patterns of development.

4.4 The Council's approach to Minerals and Waste has also fed into the process. Consideration of Gypsies and Traveller sites has been undertaken in parallel to the main Preferred Development Option process but has been cross checked against the main Preferred Development Option to ensure relevant impacts have been considered.

Stage 1 - Development Needs and Associated Land Requirements

Confirming Development Needs - Planning for Growth

4.5 As confirmed in Section 2 above, the Council has taken the decision to plan for a level of growth in accordance with the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, over and above the baseline economic jobs forecasts for Warrington. This reflects the Council's ambitions for growth as set out in the Warrington Means Business regeneration programme, Warrington's past track record of economic success and the scale of private sector interest wanting to invest in Warrington.

4.6 The Council believes planning for this level of growth provides a unique opportunity for Warrington to make the transition from a New Town into a New City. In doing so, it can address the severe congestion which impacts on the town, unlock major brownfield development sites and improve the quality of life for existing residents through improved infrastructure as well as enabling the creation of new sustainable communities. Planning for this level of growth will require the Council to work proactively with the public and private sector to ensure the extensive infrastructure required to ensure growth is sustainable is delivered.

4.7 The Council is therefore proposing a housing target of 1,113 homes per annum over the 20 year Plan period and an overall employment land target of 381 hectares.

Maximising Urban Capacity

4.8 In identifying land to meet Warrington's need for housing and employment, the Council has first sought to maximise the capacity of the existing urban area to accommodate new development. The Council has undertaken a detailed assessment of urban capacity through its SHLAA and EDNA. It has also identified the significant additional capacity that can be delivered through the regeneration plans for the Town Centre, Warrington Waterfront and wider Inner Warrington area. This has involved a detailed masterplanning exercise undertaken in partnership with Warrington & Co, the Council's economic development partnership.

4.9 An [updated urban capacity statement](#) is available on the Council's web site which sets out this work in more detail.

4.10 Through this process the Council has confirmed a total urban capacity for 15,429 homes and 129 hectares of employment land.

Land requirements for homes and employment

4.11 Warrington's need for new homes over the next 20 years and the land requirements to meet this need are set out below in Table 1.

	955 p.a.	1,113 p.a.	1,332 p.a.
Housing Target 2017 to 2037	19,100	22,260	26,640
Flexibility at 5%	955	1,113	1,332
Backlog (from 2015 against OAN)	847	847	847
Total Requirement	20,902	24,220	28,819
Total Capacity within urban area	15,429	15,429	15,429
Green Belt requirement	5,473	8,791	13,390

Table 1: Housing Land Requirements

4.12 As the Council is also testing its baseline Objectively Assessed Housing Need and the housing need which would be required to support past levels of job growth through the SA/SEA process, the land requirements from these scenarios are also shown in the table.

4.13 It is necessary to include provision for flexibility on top of the overall land supply to allow for market choice and in the event that specific sites do not come forward. The Council has chosen to make provision for an additional 5%. This is at the lower end of flexibility rates considered by Inspectors in recent Local Plan examinations, but it is considered this is justified given Warrington's consistent track record of housing delivery, the commitment of the Council to facilitate development through Warrington & Co and the potential that the Fiddlers Ferry Power Station site may come forward for development during the Plan Period.

4.14 The Council also needs to consider past rates of housing delivery. In the period to 2015, the Council consistently exceeded its housing targets set out in its Unitary Development Plan, Regional Planning Guidance and the subsequent Core Strategy. The Council's Local Plan Core Strategy housing target was quashed in 2015 leaving the Council without a housing target for the last 2 years. In the absence of a housing target the Council acknowledges that its housing delivery should be assessed against its Objectively Assessed Need of 955 homes per annum. In the two years since its housing target was quashed, the Council has delivered 1,063 net additional homes. This means there is a backlog of 847 homes that needs to be added to the housing requirement.

4.15 Warrington's need for employment land over the next 20 years and the land requirements to meet this need are set out below in Table 2.

Employment Land Requirement	381 Ha
Supply within the existing urban area	130 Ha
Green Belt requirement	251 Ha

Table 2: Employment Land Requirements

4.16 A buffer of 20% was already included within the calculation set out in the EDNA, reflecting the more specific locational requirements of employment development and its greater sensitivity to market conditions. As Warrington has consistently exceeded its employment land target there is no requirement to apply any backlog.

4.17 Despite maximising the capacity of the existing urban area, it is apparent that if Warrington is to meet the development needs arising from its growth aspirations, it can only do so through the release of Green Belt land to provide for 8,791 homes and 251 ha of employment land.

4.18 The requirement for Green Belt release to provide new homes has increased in the period since the initial consultation. This is primarily due to the overly optimistic economic activity rate forecasts used in the initial SHMA as detailed in Section 2 above, but also due to the application of the flexibility factor and the need to address the backlog since 2015. The requirement for Green Belt release for employment land has fallen slightly due to the Council identifying additional urban capacity through its masterplanning work.

4.19 The Council is confident that exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to justify this scale of Green Belt release. The case for exceptional circumstances is set out in Section 4 below.

Safeguarding Requirements

4.20 The Council is proposing to remove further land from the Green Belt so it can be safeguarded to meet development needs for a further 10 years beyond the Plan period. This is to ensure that once the Council has amended its Green Belt boundaries, they are capable of enduring well beyond the current Plan period. The approach is consistent with guidance contained within the NPPF.

4.21 The calculation for the amount of land to be safeguarded is set out in Table 3 below.

Number of homes per annum (based on OAN)	955
9 year requirement	8,595
Land requirement at 30 dph net density (assuming 75% developable area)	382 Ha
Total land requirement assuming 36% in green belt	137.52 Ha
Employment land per annum	15.24 Ha
5 year requirement	73.25 Ha
Total land requirement assuming 71% in green belt	76.20 Ha
Total safeguarding requirement	213.72 Ha

Table 3: Safeguarded Land Requirement

4.22 Given the uncertainties of forecasting future job growth and the forecast trend for a reduction in the rate of job growth towards the end of the Plan period, the Council is proposing to safeguard for housing based on the OAN figure as opposed to the devolution bid figure. For employment the Council has projected forward the annual land requirement.

4.23 There is already a flexibility of 5% included in the amount of land allocated to meet housing need over the 20 year Plan period. This equates to 1 year of supply and therefore only land for a further 9 years is required to be safeguarded for housing. There is a buffer of 20% included in the amount of land allocated to meet employment need. This equates to 5 years of supply and therefore only land for a further 5 years is required to be safeguarded for employment.

4.24 Of the total housing requirement within the Plan period, 64% is within the existing urban area and 36% is proposed on Green Belt land. For employment 29% is within the existing urban area and 71% is proposed on Green Belt land. Given the likelihood of future brownfield land availability in Warrington, including the Fiddlers Ferry site, it is proposed to continue these ratios of urban to Green Belt land into the safeguarding period.

Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Provision

4.25 To respond to the needs of the whole community, there is a need to ensure adequate provision is made within the Borough to meet the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

4.26 Through the preparation of Local Plans, the Council therefore needs to set pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, while also working collaboratively with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.

4.27 National Planning Policy requires Local Planning Authorities, through their Local Plan, to identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of sites against its locally set target for Pitches and Plots. Local Planning Authorities are also required to identify a supply of specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and where possible, for years 11 to 15.

4.28 The 2014 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), jointly commissioned by Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire West & Chester Council, Cheshire East Borough Council, Halton Borough Council and Cheshire Police, is the most up to date evidence available to establish the level of accommodation need and provision across the Borough.

4.29 An updated GTAA has been jointly commissioned in April 2017 by all the previous stakeholders included in the 2014 assessment, to provide an update on provision and need across the Cheshire wide area, for a 15 year period, up to 2032. This piece of work is currently being undertaken and is not yet available to inform the updated Local Plan provision.

4.30 Since the 2014 GTAA, the Government in 2015 changed the definition of what constitutes a 'Traveller' for planning related purposes, so that it excludes those who have permanently ceased travelling. However, this change in Traveller definition is potentially being challenged through the High Court. It should be noted that if this challenge is successful, it could potentially revise the accommodation needs currently established through the 2014 GTAA and Local Plan.

4.31 Given the uncertainty around the potential High Court challenge to the definition of what constitutes a 'Traveller' and until such time the new GTAA is finalised and published, the Council is not in a position to decide what its five year deliverable land supply should be.

4.32 Table 4 below sets out the current provision, needs and provision deficit up to 2028 and the number of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller pitches across the Borough. This need is based on the findings of the 2014 GTAA.

	2014 GTAA Required Provision (2028)	Approved on a Permanent Basis	Approved on a Temporary Basis	Total Authorised Provision (2017)	Unauthorised Pitches (2017)	Provision Deficit (2017)
Gypsies & Traveller (Number of pitches)	35	5	0	5	20 + 3(3) + 4 = 30	30
Travelling Showpeople (Number of plots)	18	4	0	4	2	14
Gypsies & Travellers Transit Provision (Number of pitches)	5-10	0	0	0	0	5-10

Table 4: GTAA Overview

4.33 As can be seen from table 4 above, there is currently a shortfall in provision across the Borough for Gypsies and Travellers, Travelling Showpeople and Gypsies and Travellers Transit Pitches up to 2028. This will therefore need to be addressed through the new Local Plan and provision extended to cover the proposed 20 year Plan period up to 2037.

Mineral and Waste Provision

4.34 The Council has updated its evidence base in respect of Minerals and Waste issues. A study into the mineral resource (link) that identifies the existing resource and activity in the borough, including storage, handling and processing facilities; assesses future supply (including energy minerals such as conventional oil, gas and Coal Bed Methane); and makes recommendations about the broad extent of mineral safeguarding areas and other policy requirements has been undertaken.

4.35 The Council has also prepared Local Aggregate Assessments (LAA) for the last four years, in association with its sub-regional partners, as required by the NPPF. The latest LAA identifies the sub-regional landbank (as at 31/12/2015) as 8.6 years for sand and gravel and 15.47 years for crushed rock, which is in excess of the minimum required reserves for the sub-region (7 years for sand and gravel and 10 years for crushed rock aggregates). However, whilst the sub-regional landbank is more than the minimum set out in NPPF, it does not reflect the true demand for aggregates and the sub-region is heavily dependent upon imports, mostly from outside of the North West region. Therefore, it is important that this issue is addressed through the Duty to Co-operate process with other mineral planning authorities, particularly those who export minerals to Warrington and the rest of the sub-region.

4.36 In addition, a Waste Needs Assessment that provides estimates of the amount of waste generated in the Borough over the proposed plan period; the capacity of existing and planned treatment facilities; cross boundary waste movements; and an estimate of the capacity gap (together with policy recommendations) has been undertaken.

Stage 2 - Strategic Objectives for the Local Plan

Defining the Strategic Objectives

4.37 The starting point for the Strategic Objectives was to reflect on the current objectives from the existing Plan. These were updated in order to:

- reflect the Council’s New City development aspirations as set out in the Warrington Means Business Regeneration programme;
- confirm the level of growth the Plan will accommodate;
- recognise that Green Belt land is required to be realised;
- establish the principle that new development will be required to contribute to the strategic infrastructure necessary to deliver the New City and regenerate Inner Warrington;
- ensure the Plan aligns with the Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- respond to comments made during the initial Regulation 18 consultation; and
- reflect the Housing White Paper’s objectives of increasing and accelerating housing delivery.

4.38 The new objectives are set out in the table below:

<p>W1 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 whilst:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering a minimum of 22,260 new homes (equating to 1,113 per year) between 2017 and 2037, and • supporting Warrington’s ongoing economic success by providing 381 Hectares of employment land between 2017 and 2037.
<p>W2 To 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.</p>
<p>W3 To strengthen and expand the role of Warrington Town Centre as a regional employment, retail, leisure, cultural and transport hub, whilst transforming the quality of the public realm and making the Town Centre a place where people want to live.</p>
<p>W4 To 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.</p>
<p>W5 To 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.</p>
<p>W6 To minimise the impact of development on the environment through the prudent use of resources and ensuring development is energy efficient, safe and resilient to climate change and makes a positive contribution to improving Warrington’s air quality.</p>

Table 5 – Local Plan Strategic Objectives

Defining Assessment Criteria

4.39 The Local Plan Strategic Objectives have been an important consideration in the assessment of development options. In order to ensure the practical and comprehensive assessment of options against the objectives, the Council developed a set of assessment criteria from the Strategic Objectives, as set out in the table below. The criteria closely align with the objectives but allow for a more detailed assessment, particularly of infrastructure impacts.

	Assessment Criteria
W1	Contribution to New City Concept
W2	Green Belt implications
W3	Supporting Role of Town Centre
W4	Primary school implications
	Secondary school implications
	Health facility implications
	Local Road Network
	Strategic Road Network
	Public Transport
	Active Travel
	Open Space, Sport and Recreation
W5	Character implications
W6	Environmental considerations & prudent use of resources
All	Delivery issues

Table 6 – Local Plan Objective Assessment Criteria

Exceptional Circumstances for releasing Green Belt

4.40 When considered as part of these strategic objectives, the Council considers that the exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to justify the release of Green Belt. Green Belt release will form part of a comprehensive plan for Warrington which will work in parallel with brownfield development and infrastructure delivery to support the concept of Warrington New City. The Plan will enable the creation of new sustainable communities but in a manner which will unlock strategic infrastructure to support the growth of Warrington as a whole, addressing existing issues of congestion and unlocking major development sites with significant brownfield capacity.

4.41 The Council has also considered the consequences of not releasing Green Belt land and therefore not meeting its development needs. In the short term the Council considers that Warrington's economic strength and attractiveness will result in ongoing development pressure. This may initially be accommodated in the existing urban area through higher density development but it will not provide the Council with the ability to plan comprehensively and as a result infrastructure delivery will be piecemeal and reactive. The consequences are likely to include severe congestion on Warrington's transport network, a risk of worsening air quality, increasing pressure on school places, health facilities, sports and leisure facilities and other community facilities and potential detrimental impact on heritage assets.

4.42 In the medium and longer term Warrington's status as a key driver of the North West economy will be threatened as development land is used up, with potential development and investment lost to other regions of the UK and potentially overseas. From the EDNA it is clear that there is already suppressed demand for employment land.

4.43 From Duty to cooperate discussions it is also apparent that if Warrington does not meet its development needs then this will place pressure on the other boroughs within the Mid-Mersey Housing market area and in other adjoining Council areas.

Stage 3 - Assess high level spatial options to accommodate development

4.44 Having confirmed the level of future development requirements and the need for Green Belt release in the borough, the next stage was to assess high level spatial options for where new housing and employment development can best come forward to deliver the Strategic Objectives of the Plan.

4.45 It was important at this stage to understand and consider the 'Call for sites' submissions, particularly the broad locations of these to gain an understanding as to where future development could potentially be located. It was apparent from this exercise that there would be spatial options to assess adjacent to the main urban area and around the outlying settlements.

Preparation of Area Profiles and Growth Scenarios

4.46 In order to help inform the options appraisal process, the Council prepared Area Profiles for the individual parts of the main urban area of Warrington (central, north, south, east and west) and for each of the outlying settlements. The area profiles can also be found on the [Council's web site](#).

4.47 These profiles provide a detailed assessment of the capacity of local schools, health facilities, open space, leisure facilities, community facilities and the transport network assuming that all sites within the urban area are built out in accordance with the timescales set out in the SHLAA. This then enabled different growth scenarios to be tested to understand the level of growth that existing infrastructure could accommodate, the new infrastructure required to support higher levels of growth and comparison of the growth scenarios against Local Plan objectives.

4.48 Of the scenarios assessed those which were considered to be unreasonable development options were not taken forward to the SA/SEA stage. For example the settlement profiles assessed the possibility of large scale settlement extensions of a scale which could effectively double the size of Lymm and Culcheth, given that the call for sites exercise had presented this possible opportunity. Settlement extensions of this scale were considered unreasonable due to the poor performance against Plan objectives, in particular due to the scale of impact on the character of the existing settlements and as a consequence that such a large proportion of growth would occur away from the main urban area of Warrington.

Defining High Level Spatial Options

4.49 Following this process, three options were defined for the spatial distribution of new development:

Option 1 - Green Belt release only in proximity to the main Warrington urban area;

Option 2 - Majority of Green Belt release adjacent to main urban area with incremental growth in outlying settlements; and

Option 3 - Settlement extension in one or more settlement with remainder of growth adjacent to the main urban area.

4.50 The requirement to maximise urban capacity is a constant for each of the options. The difference is their approach to the allocation of Green Belt land for housing. From the number of potential development sites submitted, all three options would be numerically capable of accommodating the level of future development in the borough.

Confirmation of preferred growth level and preferred high level spatial option

4.51 These options were then tested against the Local Plan Objectives assessment criteria based on the Council's preferred growth level scenario (1,113 homes per annum). The option testing was informed by the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Process, which also considered the two reasonable growth level alternatives – the lower OAN (955 homes per annum) and the higher historic job growth level scenario (1,332 homes per annum).

4.52 The Council’s detailed assessment and the SA/SEA Report can be found on the Council’s website. A summary of the overall conclusions from the Council’s assessment of the three options is provided in the table below.

Option 1	This option has the potential to contribute positively to the objectives of the plan and would enable Warrington to meet its development needs whilst also contributing to the delivery of Warrington New City. Depending on the specific locations for development, it could provide a sustainable, viable and deliverable option for meeting Warrington’s development needs and provides the opportunity to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt at a strategic level through managed green belt release.
Option 2	<p>This option has the potential to contribute positively to the plan objectives and would enable Warrington to meet its development needs whilst directly contributing to the delivery of Warrington New City. Depending on the specific locations for development, it could provide a sustainable, viable and deliverable option for meeting Warrington’s development needs and provides the opportunity to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt at a strategic level through managed green belt release.</p> <p>In addition, incremental growth in the outlying settlements could contribute to longer term sustainability of local services and local business, promote local housing choice and deliver a number of smaller sites in the early part of the plan period.</p>
Option 3	<p>Although a settlement extension in itself could provide a sustainable form of development in principle, the option as a whole does not perform as well against the objectives of the Plan as the other 2 options.</p> <p>It could have detrimental impacts on Green Belt, the character of settlements and may result in secondary school capacity issues. It would also result in less development being focussed on the main urban area and therefore could reduce the ability of the Council to deliver strategic infrastructure and therefore dilute the Council’s New City aspirations.</p>

Table 7 – Summary of High Level Spatial Options Assessment

4.53 Following this exercise, the Council confirmed Option 2 - focussing Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area of Warrington, with incremental growth in the outlying settlements - as the preferred option.

4.54 Option 2 enables the majority of growth to be delivered adjacent to the main urban area, contributing positively to the Plan Objectives. It performs stronger than Objective 1 in that it also enables incremental housing growth in the outlying settlements to support local services and widen local housing choice without compromising their character. This will also assist in overall Plan delivery by promoting a larger number of smaller sites which are likely to be deliverable early in the Plan period.

4.55 Option 3 does not perform as strongly as the distribution of growth will begin to impact on the character of one or more of the outlying settlements and a greater proportion of growth is being moved away from the main urban area where it can most positively contribute to the Warrington New City concept.

4.56 With regard to the scale of growth, the SA/SEA confirmed that whilst positive economic benefits generally increase in line with higher levels of growth, the highest growth scenario risks having significant environmental impacts. The SA/SEA process therefore reaffirmed the Council's approach to base its development needs on the devolution growth bid.

Stage 4 - Assess options for main development locations

Define options for main development locations

4.57 Having established the preferred broad spatial option, the next stage was to assess options for the main development locations.

4.58 From the call for sites exercise, it was established that incremental growth adjacent to the outlying settlements would be capable of accommodating a minimum of 1,000 dwellings. This leaves the remainder of approximately 8,000 dwellings to be accommodated adjacent to the main urban area in order to meet the overall housing requirement.

4.59 Given the large number of sites put forward in proximity to the main urban area of Warrington, the Area Profiles also assisted in selecting the possible components for the location of development. The results from individual sites assessments - undertaken in terms of their contribution to the Green Belt, their merits from an SA/SEA perspective and in terms of their site characteristics – were also used in this stage.

4.60 The components are outlined below:

1. A Garden City Suburb to the south east of Warrington of approximately 8,000 homes – providing a new Secondary school, up to 5 new primary schools, district centre, up to 4 local centres, health facility, leisure centre, sports pitches and country park;
2. A Garden City Suburb to the south east of Warrington of approximately 6,000 homes – providing a new Secondary school, up to 4 new primary schools, district centre, up to 3 local centres, health facility, leisure centre sports pitches and country park;
3. A Garden City Suburb to the south east of Warrington of approximately 4,000 homes – providing a new Secondary school, up to 3 new primary schools, district centre, up to 2 local centres, health facility, leisure centre, sports pitches and country park;
4. An urban extension to the south west of Warrington of up to 2,000 homes – to include a new primary school, local centre, satellite health facility and a local park;
5. An urban extension to the west of Warrington of up to 2,500 homes – to include a new primary school, satellite health facility and a local park; and
6. A more dispersed pattern of Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area – to include a new secondary school, up to 5 primary schools, health facility, leisure centre, sports pitches, country park and local parks.

4.61 The Call for Sites exercise also provided the possibility of a number of development sites which could potentially be located to the north and east of the borough. Through undertaking the area profile assessments and more detailed site assessment work, these areas were not considered to be reasonable development options for urban extensions. The individual sites in these areas are however considered under the dispersed pattern of Green Belt release component.

4.62 From the components, a total of 5 options were defined capable of accommodating approximately 8,000 homes. The options were then assessed against the Plan Objectives assessment criteria and subject to SA/SEA.

Option 1 - A Garden City Suburb to the south east of the Warrington main urban area of approximately 8,000 homes;

Option 2 - A Garden City Suburb of approximately 6,000 homes & an urban extension to the south west of Warrington of up to 2,000 homes;

Option 3 - A Garden City Suburb of approximately 6,000 homes & an urban extension to the west of Warrington of up to 2,500 homes;

Option 4 - A Garden City Suburb of approximately 4,000 homes & an urban extension to the south west of Warrington of up to 2,000 homes & urban extension to west of Warrington of up to 2,500 homes; and

Option 5 - A more dispersed pattern of Green Belt release adjacent to the main urban area.

Initial Confirmation of Preferred Main Development Locations

4.63 These options were then tested against the Local Plan Objectives assessment criteria. The option testing was also informed by the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Process.

4.64 The Council’s detailed assessment and the SA/SEA Report can be found on the Council’s website, together with the site assessment information used to support this stage of the assessment process, including Green Belt assessments and SA/SEA Assessments. A summary of the overall conclusions from the Council’s assessment of the 5 options is provided in the table below.

Option 1	<p>Overall, this option has the potential to perform positively against the majority of plan objectives. It will contribute to the wider New City Concept, having the ability to provide infrastructure to support both the Garden City Suburb itself and the town as a whole. It provides the opportunity to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt at a strategic level through managed Green Belt release.</p> <p>However a development of this scale in a single location raises concerns regarding deliverability. More detailed work will be required to understand detailed infrastructure implications, in particular in respect of transport. A development of this will scale will also have significant impacts on the character of this part of Warrington.</p>
Option 2	<p>Overall, this option has the potential to perform positively against the majority of plan objectives. It will contribute to the wider New City Concept, having the ability to provide infrastructure to support the Garden City Suburb and South West Extensions themselves and the town as a whole. It provides the opportunity to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt at a strategic level through managed Green Belt release.</p> <p>The scale of the Garden City suburb in this option is of a sufficient magnitude to be able to deliver necessary infrastructure but provides more scope to address transport and character concerns raised under Option 1. More detailed work will still be required to understand infrastructure and character impacts as this option still presents a significant urban extension.</p> <p>In providing a second development location, the South West extension provides benefits in terms of broadening the supply base of new homes, although it could impact on the character of the wider area. The site is capable of providing local infrastructure to support the development, but more detailed work will be required in terms of assessing transport implications. The benefits provided by the South West Extension are likely to be greater if the Western Link option passes through the site, providing access into the Waterfront Development Area.</p>

Option 3	<p>The Garden City component of this option is the same as Option 2. It therefore provides the same positive benefits to meeting Plan Objectives, although more detailed work will be required to understand infrastructure and character impacts as this component represents a significant urban extension.</p> <p>The Western extension provides the benefit of broadening the supply base of new homes. It does however have significant impacts on the strategic and local importance of the Green Belt. Given the extension would be provided over a number of individual sites, there are concerns regarding deliverability, in particular the ability to plan for comprehensive development and provide the required primary school and satellite health facility. This scale of development is also likely to exacerbate pressure on secondary schools in the west of the Borough. There are limited options to provide additional capacity in this part of the borough and the likely location of new secondary school capacity is some distance from the western extension.</p>
Option 4	<p>This option provides the advantage of further broadening the supply base of new homes from three urban extensions. The assessment of the South West and West components will be the same for this Option as for Option 2 and Option 3 respectively.</p> <p>The smaller Garden City suburb in this option provides potential benefits in term of reducing the impact on the character of the wider south east Warrington area. It may also reduce localised Green Belt impacts in south east Warrington. This needs to be considered against the significant impact on the strategic and local operation of the Green Belt arising from the western extension.</p> <p>The smaller Garden City suburb will reduce the infrastructure requirements and in particular reduce the transport impact. This needs be considered against the ability to deliver new infrastructure and it would need to be demonstrated that this lower level of development could provide the new distributor roads, the new secondary school, the new primary schools and other necessary infrastructure which will still be required. Similarly, there are also uncertainties regarding delivery of infrastructure in the western extension due to the sites being geographically separated. More detailed work would be therefore required to understand detailed infrastructure implications.</p>

Option 5	<p>This option is able to provide sufficient land to meet Warrington’s development needs in principle with the broadest supply base for new homes. However, the more dispersed development is the more poorly it performs against the overall plan objectives, in particular in its contribution to the delivery of the Warrington New City concept. A dispersed development form raises significant concerns about the deliverability of the infrastructure required to support growth, including the delivery of new transport, education facilities, open space and recreational facilities. There is a significant risk that development will exacerbate existing congestion and infrastructure constraints in the main Warrington urban area.</p> <p>Given the location of sites, the scale of growth and the infrastructure constraints in the main urban area, for this option to be reasonable, it is likely that there would still need to be at least one larger concentration of sites which would effectively still result in an urban extension as part of this option, similar to the urban extension components considered in the options above.</p> <p>This would reduce the risks around infrastructure and increase the contribution to the new city concept. It would still however result in infrastructure pressures in other parts of the borough, particularly if development is dispersed in the south.</p> <p>It does however provide the opportunity to maintain the permanence of the Green Belt at a strategic and local level through managed green belt release and provides the opportunity to minimise impact on character and environmental assets, depending on the specific locations for development.</p>
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Table 8 – Summary of High Level Spatial Options Assessment

4.65 Based on the assessment above, it was concluded that overall, Option 2 - A Garden City Suburb of approximately 6,000 homes and an urban extension to the south west of Warrington of up to 2,000 homes - performed best when assessed against the strategic Plan Objectives, taking into account the results of the SA/SEA. It should be noted that the performance of this option strengthens significantly if the western link is developed through the south west urban extension area, providing a more direct link to the Waterfront Development area.

4.66 Whilst Option 1 performed well against Plan objectives, there are deliverability and infrastructure risks regarding concentrating such a high level of development in one location. The Options containing the western urban extension did not perform well against the Green Belt objectives given the relative strong performance of the Green Belt in the west of the borough, both at General Area and individual parcel / development site level. The western component also raised issues from an infrastructure delivery perspective given the relatively fragmented nature of available sites. The main concern with Option 5 was the ability to ensure infrastructure delivery, particularly for larger infrastructure requirements including a new secondary school, with the risk of worsening the already severe congestion within the main urban area.

Confirmation and Elaboration of Preferred Main Development Locations

4.67 Given the scale of development proposed, the Council undertook additional work to confirm that the preferred development areas were able to accommodate the level of growth required and to provide additional detail relating to infrastructure requirements, constraints and development principles.

4.68 This work is available on the [Council’s web site](#) and has provided an additional level of detail for the preferred development option set out in Section 5 below.

4.69 For the Garden City Suburb, the Council has prepared a development concept for the area within General Area 10 of the Green Belt Assessment, which performed poorly in the assessment. Using the General Area as the boundary is considered appropriate when considering this scale of urban extension. This will ensure that the long term Green Belt boundaries that will remain following release of Green Belt land have a high degree of permanence. The Council has also considered safeguarding the adjacent General Area 9 which extends up to the M6, again using the principle of securing long term permanent Green Belt boundaries.

4.70 For the smaller South West Urban Extension, the Council has prepared a Development Concept based on the 'call for sites' put forward in that specific area. This work has confirmed that the capacity of extension is likely to be slightly below the 2,000 homes considered as the upper level in the assessment process.

Outlying Settlements

4.71 Due to the large number of sites put forward in proximity to each of the outlying settlements relative to the level of growth required under the preferred spatial option, the Council is confident there are sufficient sites to deliver this element of the preferred spatial option.

4.72 The Council has decided not to progress to identification of specific development sites for the individual settlements at this stage of the Plan making process. The Council has however undertaken a review of each of the call for sites in proximity to the settlements in terms of their basic characteristics and Green Belt performance. This will provide part of the work necessary to confirm the allocation of individual sites in the submission version of the Local Plan.

Employment Development- Assessment of Employment Land Locations

4.73 Having confirmed the capacity of the urban area for future employment development, the Council has considered options for approximately 251 ha of land which will be required to be released from the Green Belt in order to meet the borough's future employment land needs.

4.74 The Council first considered the call for sites submissions which proposed future employment development, both as employment sites in their own right, taking into account the site size and locational requirements for future need set out in the EDNA, and in the context of the spatial options for housing development set out above.

4.75 The process indicated three broad employment locations adjacent to the main urban area which may be able to contribute to Warrington's employment land need. The broad locations are set out in the table below.

Potential Employment Locations	Total in ha
Land at M56 Junction 9 (Total provided is based on consolidation of a number of individual sites into a strategic employment location, as shown in the South East Urban Area Development Concept).	117
Land at Warrington Waterfront <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port Warrington Wider land within waterfront 	75 25
Land adjacent to Omega <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call for sites Westward extension (within St Helens) 	43 30
Total	290

Table 9: Potential Employment Locations

4.76 The table above indicates that the quantitative options for employment locations potentially exceeds the employment land requirement.

4.77 A qualitative assessment is also important in assessing future employment locations. Table 60 within the EDNA looks specifically at locational land needs for future employment development and the Council is confident that many of the locational requirements for B1/B2 uses are already accommodated for or can continue to be enhanced through masterplanning schemes within the town centre and East Warrington at Birchwood and Woolston. However the study clearly concluded that there is a strong requirement for further B2/B8 distribution. Whilst locations such as Omega and Woolston Grange are contributing positively to this need, additional provision is required and clearly this has a specific locational requirement in close proximity to the strategic road network and in terms of ensuring sufficient site size.

4.78 Having reviewed the sites in the context of the EDNA and the wider development options, the Council is proposing Warrington Waterfront and the Land at M56 Junction 9 for inclusion in the Preferred Development Option. These sites will meet the majority of Warrington's employment land requirement.

4.79 The Waterfront, including the expansion of Port Warrington, is a long standing strategic priority and the principle of Green Belt release to facilitate this development was established in the current Local Plan Core Strategy. There are obviously locational specific requirements for Port Warrington to be adjacent to the Ship Canal, although its development will be dependent on Western Link enabling significantly enhanced transport connections.

4.80 Land at M56 Junction 9 performs strongly against the criteria set out in the EDNA and provides the opportunity to be a key component within the wider Garden City Suburb. This provides the potential for future employment development to contribute to and benefit from wider infrastructure improvements. Green Belt release in this location will also provide long term durable boundaries contained by the M56 and M6 motorways.

4.81 The Council 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. This is however dependent on demonstrating that the development can be accommodated by the improvements to Junction 8 of the M62 which are being undertaken to facilitate the development of the Omega site based on its current extent. A further extension to Omega could also be provided to the north of the existing employment location through a call of site submission.

4.82 Given the uncertainties of the status of the St Helens Plan and the capacity constraints of M62 Junction 8, the Council will consider whether further expansion of the Omega is a possibility ahead of the publication of the submission version of the Plan.

4.83 The Council is also aware that a smaller site within the settlement of Burtonwood is being promoted to enable the expansion of a specific business and that there are numerous mixed use development site options which have also been put forward as part of the call for site exercise which could be capable of delivering smaller employment sites. These will also be considered in detail ahead of the publication of the submission draft of the Local Plan to ensure the Council has sufficient land to meet its needs, including any requirement for potential safeguarding.

Gypsies and Travellers

4.84 There is limited capacity within the existing urban area to meet the full needs for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople accommodation, as is the case for the Council meeting its employment land and housing needs. The Council is not aware of any sites within the urban area currently

being promoted or available to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. This means that Green Belt release will be needed to ensure the required provision is met.

4.85 The National Planning Policy for Traveller sites (2015) makes it very clear that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved, except in very special circumstances. Traveller sites (temporary or permanent) in the Green Belt are inappropriate development. Subject to the best interests of the child, personal circumstances and unmet need are unlikely to clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt and any other harm so as to establish very special circumstances.

4.86 However, national planning policy does allow limited alterations to Green Belt boundaries in Exceptional Circumstances, through the Plan making process to meet a specific identified need for a Traveller site. In removing land from the Green Belt through the Local Plan process to meet identified need, the site should be specifically allocated in the Plan as a Traveller site only.

4.87 The council has assessed the three unauthorised sites currently located in the Green Belt:

- Pennington Lane, Collins Green
- Two Acre Caravan Park, Walton and
- Grappenhall Lodge, Cartridge Lane.

4.88 These sites are well established and perform relatively well against the national planning policy criteria for site location. The sites also perform poorly in respect of their contribution to the Green Belt. These sites would provide the following number of pitches:

Site	Number of Pitches
Pennington Lane, Collins Green	4
Two Acre Caravan Park, Walton	20
Grappenhall Lodge, Cartridge Lane	6

Table 10: Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Provision

4.89 The Council is therefore proposing to remove these sites from the Green Belt and formally allocate them as permanent Gypsy and Travellers sites.

4.90 The Council is in the process of updating its Gypsy & Traveller Needs Assessment in partnership with the Cheshire authorities and Halton. It is unlikely that these existing sites will meet all of Warrington’s need and therefore an additional review of potential sites is proposed to be carried out ahead of the publication of the submission draft version of the Local Plan. This will include further investigation into the potential for sites within the existing urban area and, if required, sites currently in the Green Belt. In addition, the Council is currently looking to identify a Transit site for gypsy and travellers.

Mineral and Waste

Minerals

4.91 The NPPF requires that in relation to planning for aggregate minerals, that Mineral Planning Authorities plan for a steady and adequate supply of minerals and make provision for aggregates in the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria as are appropriate.

4.92 The following aims and objectives for the Local Plan have been identified to ensure accordance with the NPPF in relation to mineral planning:

- Seek to deliver a steady and sustainable supply of minerals to meet Warrington's needs, contribute to the maintenance of the sub-regional aggregate apportionment and safeguard valuable mineral resources and infrastructure;
- facilitate greater use of recycled aggregates and secondary mineral products;
- ensure effective site restoration is undertaken once operations have ceased; and
- support the development of local energy minerals where required to supplement the energy mix nationally and regionally.

4.93 In order to achieve these, the Local Plan will identify Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) for the main mineral resources that are present in the borough, principally sand and gravel and sandstone. It will also seek to safeguard a shallow coal deposit and the clay workings near Rixton. In addition to safeguarding mineral resources which may be of economic importance, it is proposed to safeguard existing, planned and potential minerals infrastructure such as rail heads, wharfs, concrete batching sites, and permanent facilities for the processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material.

4.94 The Local Plan will also aim to direct minerals development to places where there are opportunities to restore land beneficially, avoiding places with a sensitive natural or built environment or that are close to existing communities. These will be places that are accessible by sustainable modes of transport and close to both the existing highway network and the end user.

Waste

4.95 The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) for England directs Councils to deliver sustainable development and resource efficiency, ensuring waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns and providing a framework in which communities and businesses are engaged with and take more responsibility for their own waste. Therefore, local authorities should, within reason, be self-sufficient in managing their own waste. Although it is recognised that waste streams do not always respect local authority boundaries and that this is not always achievable given the need for economies of scale in managing waste flows. In addition, in order to support sustainable development, government policy has an aim for waste management to take place as close to the source of the waste as possible (the proximity principle). In preparing local plans, Councils should; identify the need for waste management facilities and identify suitable sites and areas for new and enhanced waste management facilities.

4.96 The following aims and objectives for the Local Plan have been identified to ensure accordance with the NPPW in relation to waste planning:

- delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy;
- ensuring that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognising the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities;
- providing a framework in which communities and businesses are engaged with and take more responsibility for their own waste, including by enabling waste to be disposed of or, in the case of mixed municipal waste from households, recovered, in line with the proximity principle;
- helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment; and
- ensuring the design and layout of new residential and commercial development and other infrastructure (such as safe and reliable transport links) complements sustainable waste management, including the provision of appropriate storage and segregation facilities to facilitate high quality collections of waste.

4.97 As a result the Local Plan will need to take into account the level of waste arisings forecast to occur through to 2037 and plan for facilities and capacities to accommodate the needs for the following waste streams; Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW); Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Waste; Construction, Demolition and Excavation (CD&E) Waste; Hazardous Waste; Agricultural Waste; Low Level (Non-Nuclear) Radioactive (LLR) Waste; and Water Waste/Sewage Sludge.

4.98 Warrington's Waste Disposal Authority is in the process of commissioning a Waste Transfer Station (WTS) to reduce the reliance on the existing transfer facility in the neighbouring borough of Halton, where the recycling from doorstep collections is currently sent for bulking up before being sent for processing as recycle and where residual waste is also managed prior to being sent to its final destination. The commissioning project will consider the need to plan for the provision of recycling facilities to manage LACW from doorstep collections in the long term.

4.99 The Waste Needs Assessment identifies a small requirement for additional treatment capacity for LACW, C&I and C&D wastes during the plan period. Whilst, it is difficult to assess the exact requirements; the small gap could be met by surplus treatment capacity outside of the borough. However, if the Council's current review of waste disposal services concluded that this additional treatment capacity should be within the borough it is anticipated that there would be a requirement of one small treatment facility for C&I waste which included anaerobic digestion, specialized treatment of biodegradable liquids and waste and organic waste treatment by distillation for C&I waste.

4.100 The Waste Needs Assessment also identifies a requirement for a facility to process and treat LACW and C&I waste to produce RDF (or Solid Recovered Fuel (SRF)) for use in energy recovery. RDF/SRF is currently exported and used as a fuel outside the plan area. There are a number of un-built Energy-from-Waste facilities with planning permission and this requirement will need be kept under review to assess to what extent these permitted sites are being built and able to meet any of Warrington's need.

4.101 There is an identified requirement for hazardous waste landfill during the plan period although it is anticipated that this waste will continue to be exported out of the area. There is an identified capacity requirement for non-hazardous landfill from 2018 and for inert landfill from 2031. The Local Plan will provide information on the gaps identified in waste management capacity and show how the gaps will be met during the plan period. This will most likely be by export to other authorities. Where waste is to be exported, the Council will liaise with other authorities under the DtC and show that this waste is accounted for elsewhere.

4.102 In addition, it is proposed to safeguard existing, planned and potential waste management infrastructure from the impact of proposed, non-waste related development, so as to ensure that it does no prejudice the implementation of the waste hierarchy and/or the efficient operation of such facilities.

5 PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT OPTION

Overall Approach - Warrington New City

5.1 The Preferred Development Option provides an ambitious plan for the future growth of Warrington. It aims to significantly boost development in the Town Centre and across Inner Warrington, complemented by the release of Green Belt land and supported by wide ranging infrastructure investment.

5.2 Warrington is already experiencing congestion which is having a detrimental impact on existing residents and businesses. Through the options assessment work it is apparent that Warrington's roads, schools, health facilities and other community facilities are either already at capacity or will be once development sites within the urban area are built out.

5.3 It is therefore important that the Preferred Development Option not only ensures that new areas of development are well served by local infrastructure, but are part of a comprehensive plan to secure the wider infrastructure required to address existing congestion, unlock major brownfield development sites and support the growth of Warrington as a whole.

5.4 It is this overall comprehensive approach to meeting Warrington's development needs which provides the basis for the 'exceptional circumstances' that the NPPF requires to be demonstrated to support the release of Green Belt.

5.5 The Preferred Development Option identifies four main areas of growth – The City Centre, the Waterfront, the Garden City Suburb and the South West Urban Extension. These areas are complemented by the optimisation of development throughout the remaining neighbourhoods of the main urban area and incremental growth in Warrington's outlying settlements. These areas are shown in Figure 2 with the Preferred Development Option summarised in Figure 9 below.

5.6 The Preferred Development Option shows the main areas where the Council is proposing development. At this stage the Council has not allocated individual sites or identified definitive boundaries. This level of detail will be included in the submission version of the Local Plan.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.7 In order to deliver this scale of growth there is the need for significant investment in infrastructure. At a City-wide scale this includes the 'Western Link', which will connect the A56 or A5060 Chester Road to the A57 or A562 in Great Sankey, opening up the Waterfront Development Area and providing significant congestion relief throughout Warrington. This in turn will facilitate wider development in the Town Centre and the inner urban area. The Council also has 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. A summary of the key transport infrastructure proposals is shown on Figure 10 below.

5.8 The Preferred Development Option also requires the need for new and expanded primary and secondary schools as well as health, recreation and community facilities. This provides the opportunity to improve the quality of facilities for existing as well as future residents of Warrington.

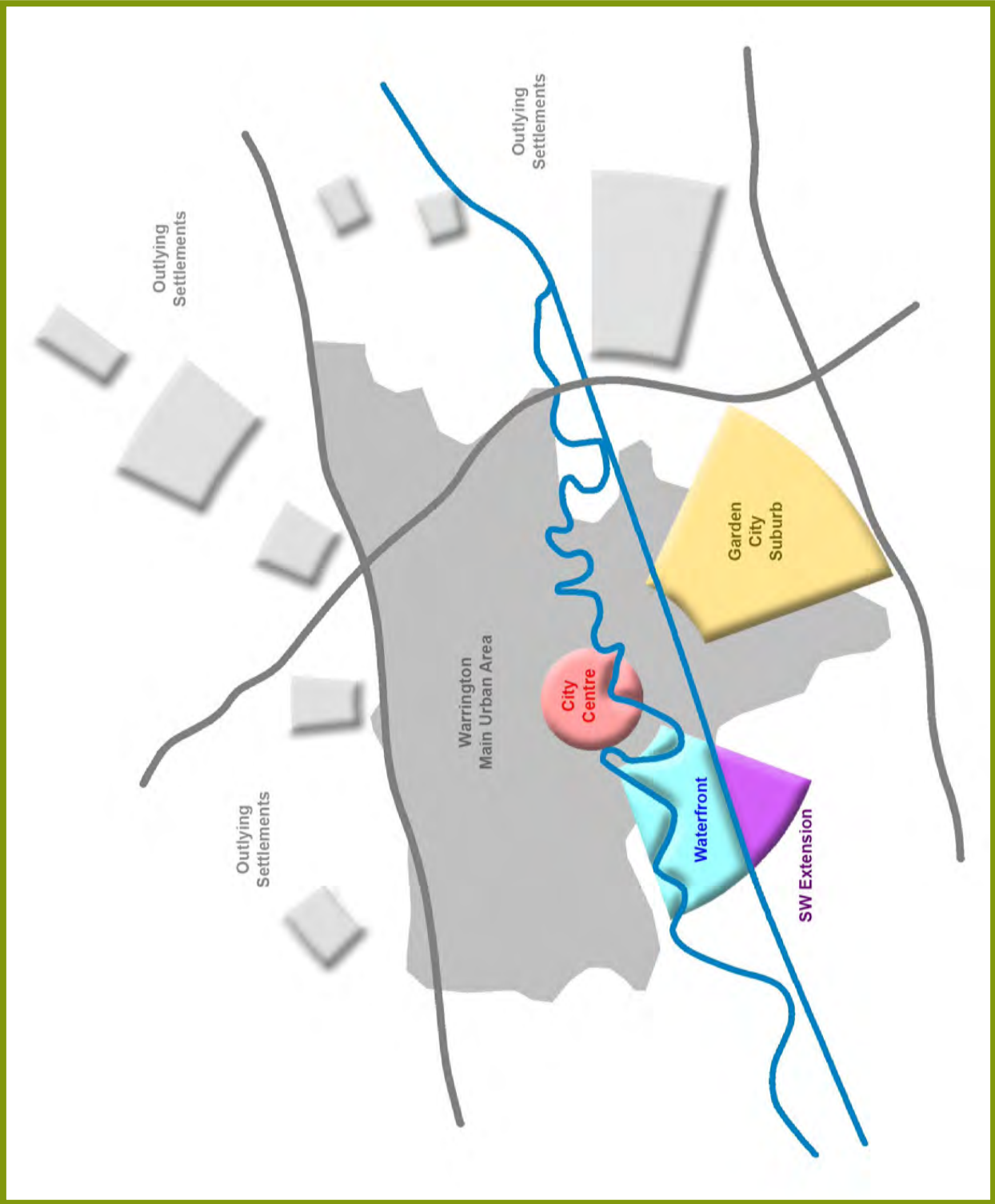


Figure 3: Preferred Development Option Areas of Growth

Development Trajectory

5.9 The tables below demonstrate how these areas will deliver the required number of new homes and amount of employment land over the next 20 years.

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
City Centre	980	1,629	569	348	3,526
Wider Urban Area	1,560	2,271	1,038	0	4,869
Waterfront	728	795	1,790	719	4,032
Garden City Suburb	406	496	48	0	950
Garden City Suburb (Green Belt)	0	2,114	2,096	2,114	6,324
South West Extension (Green Belt)	0	610	610	611	1,831
Outlying Settlements	148	51	40	0	239
Outlying Settlements (Green Belt)	340	850	0	0	1,190
Other	41	10	22	0	73
Small Sites Allowance	435	435	435	435	1,740
Sub Total (Urban)	4,298	5,687	3,942	1,502	15,429
Sub Total (Green Belt)	340	3,574	2,706	2,725	9,345
TOTAL	4,638	9,261	6,648	4,227	24,774

Table 11: Overall Development Trajectory - Housing

5.10 The Preferred Development option identifies sufficient land for new housing to meet Warrington's development aspirations over the next 20 years.

5.11 As the Preferred Development Option requires Green Belt Release and the need for major infrastructure investment, the Council is proposing a stepped housing trajectory. There will be 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 will be delivered at a higher rate over the next ten years of the Plan before reducing towards the end of the Plan period.

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
City Centre (Existing Supply)	0.32	0.05	0	0	0.37
City Centre	10.57	8.23	7.78	0	26.58
Wider Urban Area (Existing Supply)	44.29	36.47	11.66	0	92.42
Waterfront	10.4	0	0	0	10.4
Waterfront (Green Belt)	0	99.83	0	0	99.83
Garden City Suburb (Green Belt)	22	30.3	45.9	18.6	116.8
Sub Total (Urban)	65.58	44.75	19.44	0	129.77
Sub Total (Green Belt)	22	130.13	45.9	18.6	216.63
TOTAL	87.58	174.88	65.34	18.6	346.40

Table 12: Overall Development Trajectory - Employment

5.12 The Preferred Development Option identifies the broad location of the majority of the required employment land. Further sites will be assessed and allocated in the submission version of the Local Plan to ensure that Warrington's full employment land needs are met.

5.13 The following sections provide more detail on each of the main development areas and the infrastructure required to support their development.

City Centre

5.14 The regeneration and evolution of the Town Centre is a priority for the Council. The Town Centre and inner parts of Warrington continue to be the main development focus in the Preferred Development Option. It looks to embed the key elements of the City Centre Masterplan, which was approved by Executive Board in December 2017, into the new Local Plan.

5.15 The masterplan continues to build on the current success of the existing town centre including its traditional retail core but also envisages higher density development in the broader city centre area with improved connections to the waterfront and a significant increase in residential development around this area. The masterplan also includes the introduction of a number of commercial areas around the stadium quarter and to the north of the southern gateway area and the strengthening of the commercial hub around Bank Quay.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.16 The majority of new city infrastructure schemes, in particular the Western Link, will be vital to provide the additional capacity and congestion relief to allow the City Centre is to maximise its development potential. The Council is also working as a member of Transport for the North to improve the strategic transport connections to the city centre from Manchester, Liverpool and other major urban areas in the North West and plans for a major redevelopment of Bank Quay station.

5.17 To complement major infrastructure investment the Council is committed to a programme of ongoing improvements to road and public transport connections to the centre from across the wider Warrington area. These include the Centre Park Link scheme and improvements to the Cockhedge and Dial Street roundabouts on the A49.

5.18 The Council is also working to improve the public realm and accessibility within the centre itself. The proposed Business Improvement District will provide the means for further investment in the centre.

Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
City Centre	980	1,629	569	348	3,526

Table 13: City Centre Housing Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
City Centre (Existing Supply)	0.32	0.05	0	0	0.37
City Centre	10.57	8.23	7.78	0	26.58
TOTAL	10.89	8.28	7.78	0	26.95

Table 14: City Centre Employment Land Trajectory

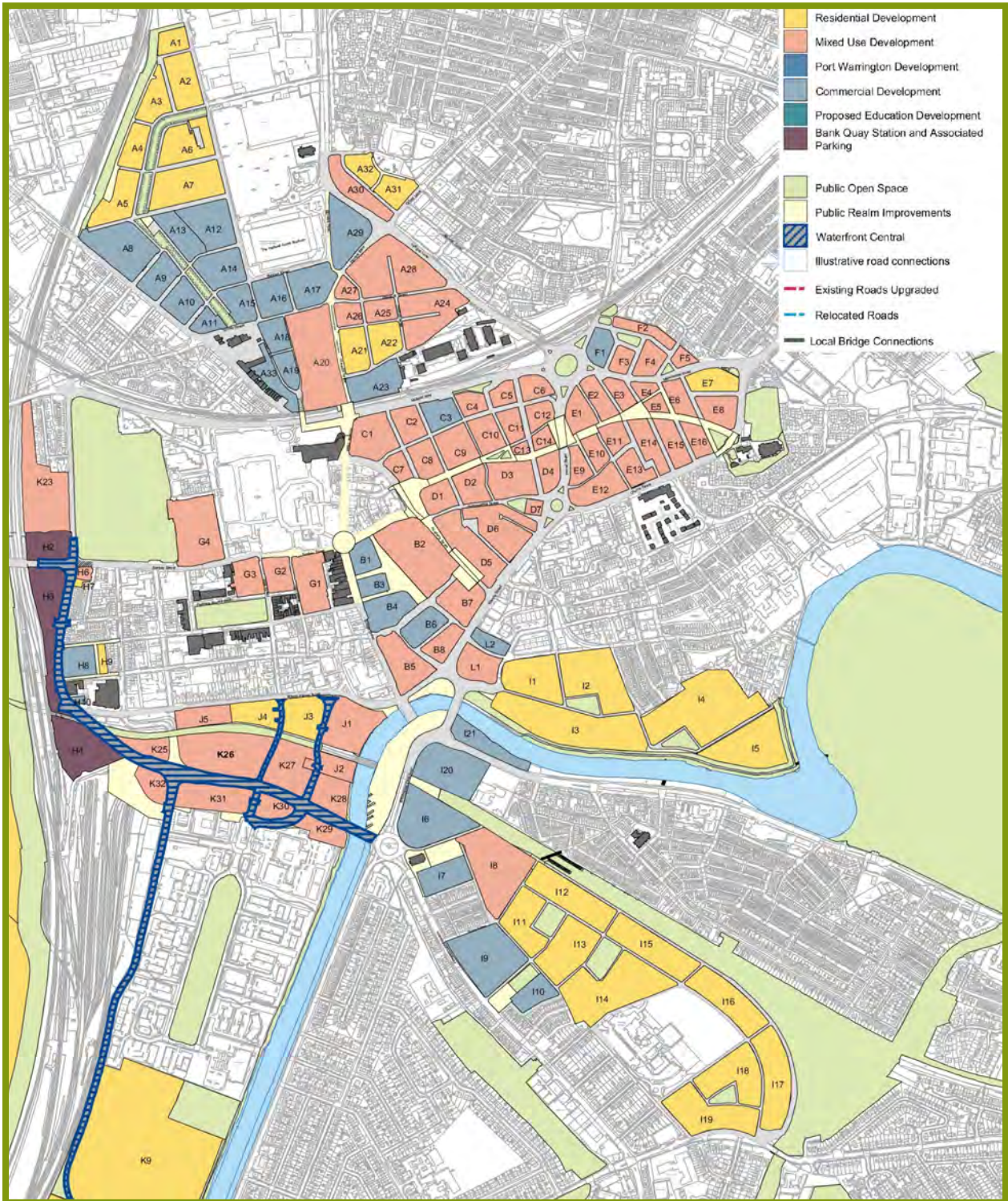


Figure 4: City Centre

Wider Urban Area

5.19 The Council is proposing to follow the same approach to the wider urban area to that set out in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy. Birchwood, Omega and Woolston will continue as strategic employment locations. The retail hierarchy will be maintained, with Westbrook, Birchwood and Stockton Heath continuing to be promoted as District Centres, the main focus for retail and leisure use outside of the Town Centre.

5.20 There are a wide range of sites for new homes throughout the wider urban area, as detailed in the Council's SHLAA.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.21 The Council's latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan details the wide range of infrastructure schemes the Council is proposing to support growth in the wider urban area (link). The IDP will be updated ahead of the publication of the submission version of the Local Plan. Key schemes will include the new Warrington West Station and a programme of east – west improvements to the road and public transport network to improve connections between Birchwood, the A49 and through to Omega.

5.22 Since the publication of the latest IDP, the Council has confirmed the need for a new primary school to be provided as part of the Peel Hall site. There is also the need for major transport improvements to ensure the site can be developed.

5.23 The Council's Pupil Place planning process has also identified the likelihood of a deficiency in primary school places within the central area of the main Warrington urban area, with the potential for knock on implications throughout the wider urban area. There is also increasing pressure to provide for 'early year' places. These issues will need to be addressed ahead of the publication of the submission version of the Local Plan.

Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Wider Urban Area	1,560	2,271	1,038	0	4,869

Table 15: Wider Urban Area Housing Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Wider Urban Area (Existing Supply)	44.29	36.47	11.66	0	92.42

Table 16: Wider Urban Area Employment Land Trajectory

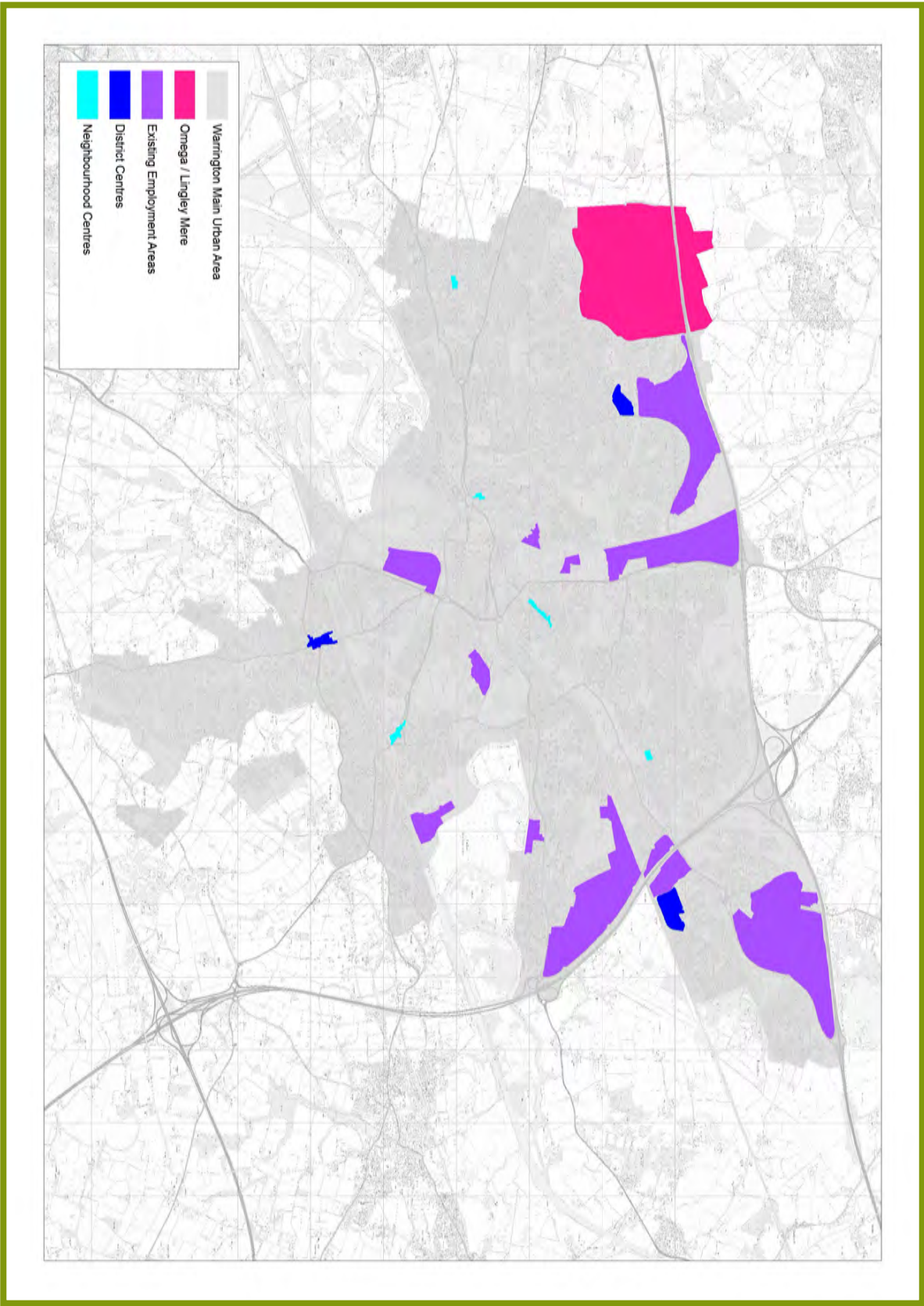


Figure 5: Wider Urban Area

Warrington Waterfront

5.24 The Waterfront provides a major development opportunity, with the potential to connect the City Centre to the Mersey and the Ship Canal. This is a significant area of previously developed land comprised of several components in a central and sustainable location adjacent to the City Centre. It also provides the opportunity to create a new community in close proximity to a major new country park that will be created through the restoration of the Arpley landfill site which has now ceased operation.

5.25 It could deliver around 4,000 homes and open up Port Warrington to become one of the most important employment areas in the North West region. The Port will provide a key distribution centre of around 200,000 sq.m. for freight from the Ship Canal. It also has the potential to become a multi-modal Port with permission already in place for a direct freight rail link into the adjacent West Coast Main Line.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.26 The Waterfront development is dependent on the delivery of the 'Western Link' connection. It also requires a new secondary school and primary school.

Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Waterfront	728	795	1,790	719	4,032

Table 17: Waterfront Housing Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Waterfront	10.4	0	0	0	10.4
Waterfront (Green Belt)	0	99.83	0	0	99.83
TOTAL	10.4	99.83	0	0	110.23

Table 18: Waterfront Employment Land Trajectory

5.27 The final development site layout will need to be amended following confirmation of the preferred route of the Western Link. This may impact on the capacity for new homes and employment land identified above. Similarly the development trajectory will also be dependent on the final alignment and delivery of the Western Link connection. The final site layout, capacity and trajectory will all be reviewed ahead of the publication of the submission version of the Local Plan to ensure it reflects the preferred route and latest timetable for the Western Link programme.

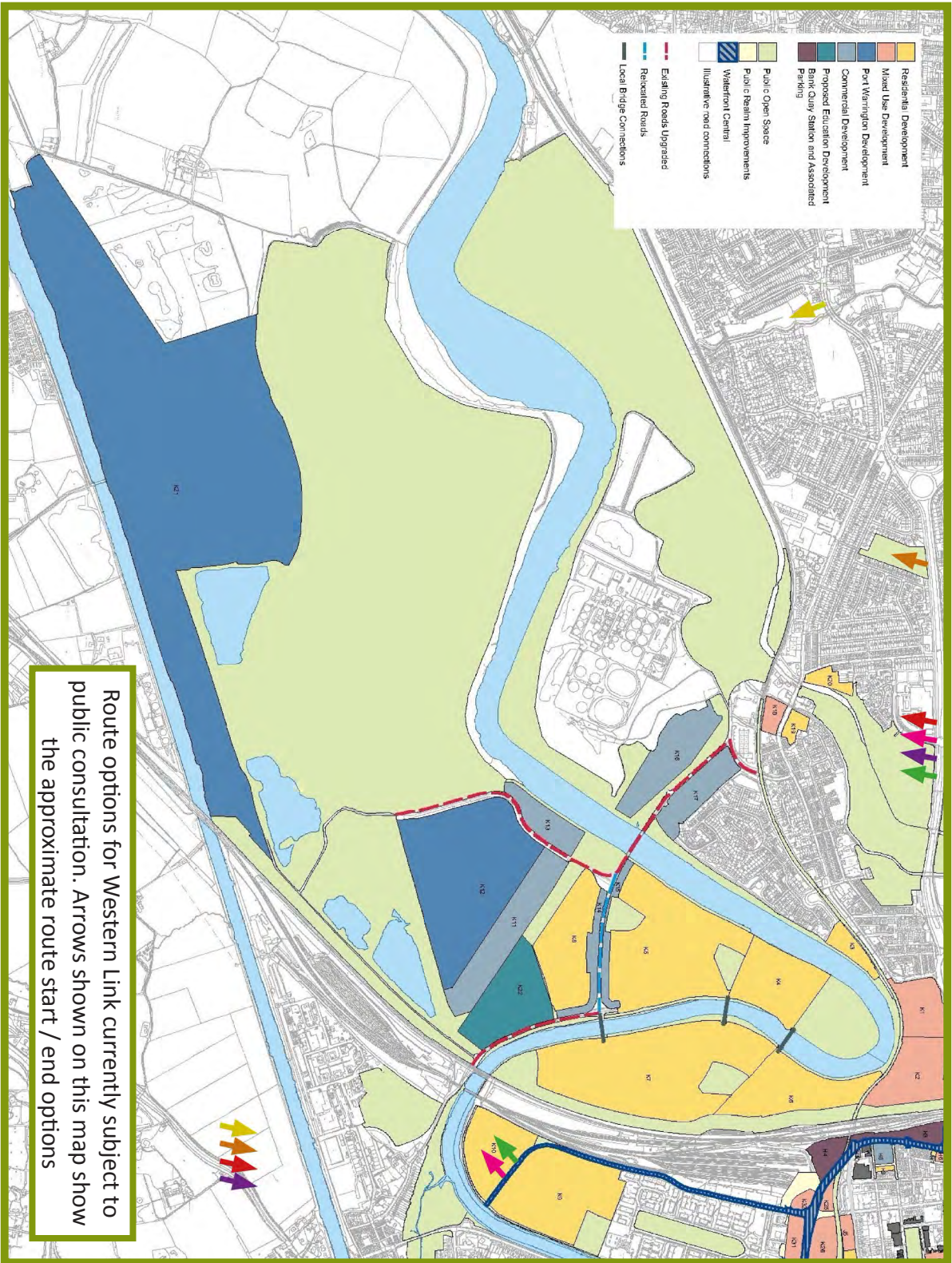


Figure 6: Warrington Waterfront

Warrington Garden City Suburb

5.28 The south eastern extension of Warrington will create a new Garden City Suburb, providing the potential development of around 7,000 new homes to be delivered over the full 20 years of the Plan. This includes land for 950 homes which is outside of the Green Belt.

5.29 The suburb will also provide a major new employment area as an extension of the existing Appleton Thorn / Barleycastle estates at the intersection of the M6 and M56.

5.30 The initial development concept envisages this area will be focussed around three garden neighbourhoods centred around a new district centre and a new country park. Walking, cycling and public transport linkages will connect these neighbourhoods to their local and district centres, Stockton Heath, the new employment zone and the City Centre. An extensive and attractive green network would form the framework to this development area.

5.31 The Council has prepared a more detailed Development Concept which assesses the capacity of the area, identifies indicative infrastructure requirements, sets out proposed development principles and an indicative development phasing.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.32 There is a significant requirement for infrastructure to support this level of growth, including a network of new distributor roads, a new secondary school, up to 4 new primary schools, a major new park, district centre, health facilities and leisure facilities. To achieve the full development potential of the area may require a further higher level connection across the Ship Canal.

5.33 Given the scale of this development proposal, 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.

Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Garden City Suburb	406	496	48	0	950
Garden City Suburb (Green Belt)	0	2,114	2,096	2,114	6,324
TOTAL	406	2,610	2,144	2,114	7,274

Table 19: Garden City Suburb Housing Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Garden City Suburb (Green Belt)	22	30.3	45.9	18.6	116.80

Table 20: Garden City Suburb Employment Land Trajectory

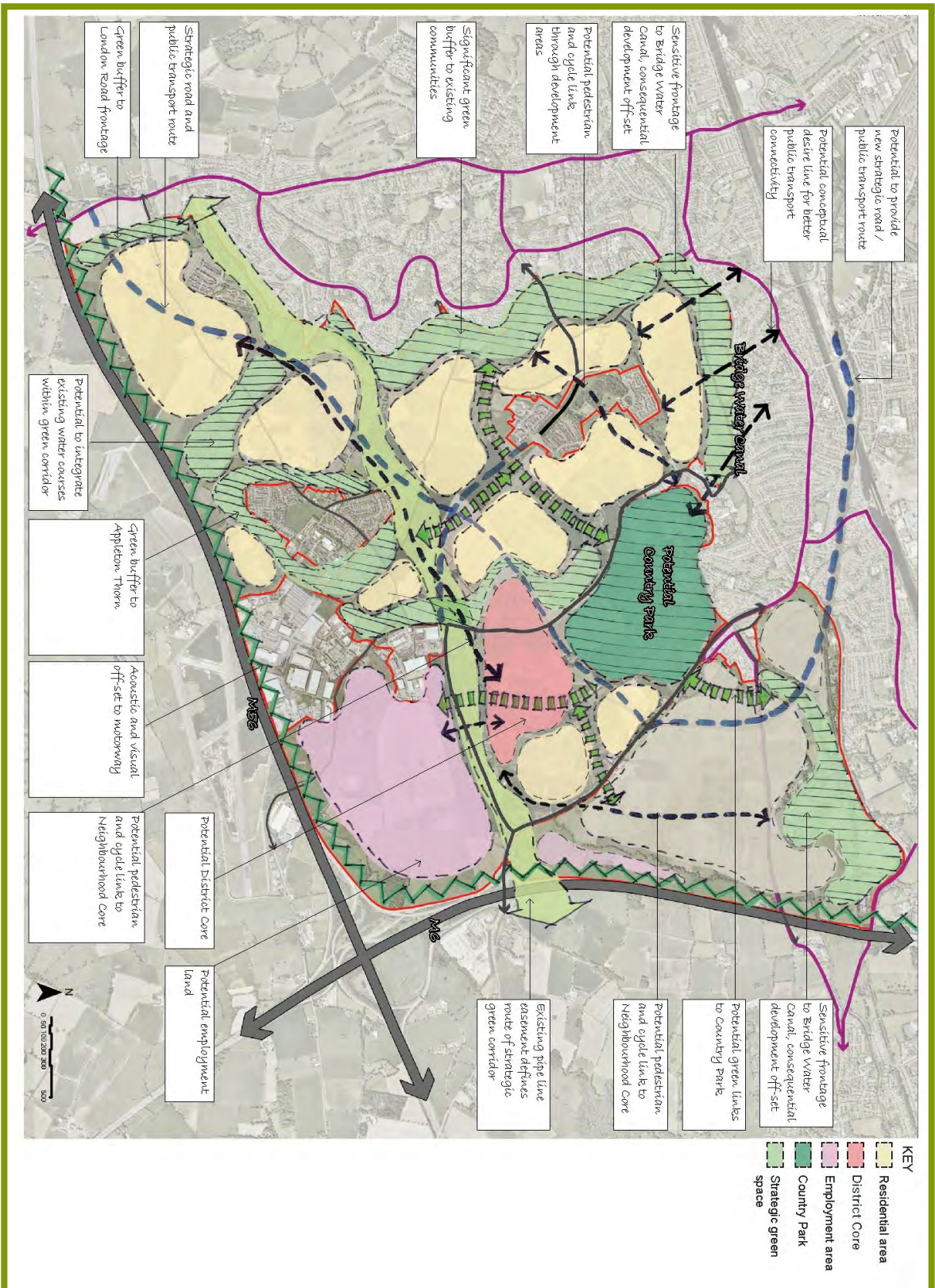


Figure 7: Warrington Garden City Suburb

5.34 The trajectory is based 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 the new strategic road link is completed. There is therefore no Green Belt Release during the first 5 years of the Plan. In addition, the new secondary school must be completed by the end of the 5 to 10 year period for any further Green Belt land to be released.

5.35 The assumptions around development capacity are set out in the Development Concept document. The trajectory is based on a gross density of 20 dwellings per hectare. This is below the standard Green Field assumption contained in the Council's SHLAA but is considered to be appropriate for the type of development envisaged in this part of Warrington. It reflects best practice examples from successful urban extensions of a similar scale and context to south east Warrington. It also provides an overall balance between built and green space which is consistent with the most recent guidance on garden city design.

5.36 The Council has however also assessed the potential capacity if the standard SHLAA density assumption is applied. This would increase the capacity of the area by around 1,000 homes. As part of the consultation on the Preferred Development Option, the Council will be seeking views on the appropriate density to be applied in this area to balance residential quality against the need to minimise Green Belt release.

Safeguarded Land

5.37 The Council is proposing to safeguard the land adjacent to the Garden City Suburb. The Council considers this represents a continuation of the preferred development option, providing the opportunity to increase the size of the suburb to meet future development need beyond the Plan period. The safeguarding area will cover the General Area 9 as set out in the Green Belt Assessment and will ensure a long term defensible boundary to the Green Belt is provided by the M6 and M56.

5.38 The balance of land to be allocated for development and safeguarded for future development will be dependent upon the density applied across the Garden City suburb. Based on a gross density of 20 dwellings per hectare, it is likely that the whole of General Area 10 will need to be allocated. This may therefore require further land to be safeguarded, beyond General Area 9 to meet the requirement set out in Table 3.

5.39 If the standard SHLAA density is applied then not all of General Area 10 will need to be allocated. Based on the illustrative masterplan contained in the Development Concept, this will mean the area comprising development parcels C1 to C3 as well as a portion of the district centre would be safeguarded as opposed to being allocated. Together with General Area 9, this may be sufficient to meet all of Warrington's safeguarding requirement. It should be noted however that the Council has only undertaken an initial assessment of development Capacity within General Area 9 and there are sensitive environmental assets to the north of the area which would need to be protected.

South Western Warrington Urban Extension

5.40 The south western urban extension will provide a smaller urban extension of around 1,800 homes based on a new primary school and local centre. The location of the site adjacent to the Ship Canal provides a potential waterside setting although the aspect is significantly impacted by the Chemical works on the north side of the Ship Canal. The Chemical Works also poses Health and Safety restrictions which impacts on the capacity of the site. The northern part of the site is in proximity to Higher Walton and it will be important for the new development to respect the existing character of this area.

5.41 The form of development will be dependent on the final location of the Western Link. If a new road runs through the area to a new high level crossing over the Ship Canal, then the area will benefit from access into the Waterfront Development Area, although this will mean that residential development is not possible on the eastern part of the site.

5.42 Provision of extensive open space therefore will be important for recreation and visual amenity and also to ensure an appropriate design response to the area's surroundings.

Infrastructure Requirements

5.43 The urban extension will require a new primary school, local centre and satellite health facility, together with a new local park and extensive landscaping.

Development Trajectory

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
South West Extension	0	610	610	611	1,831

Table 21: South Western Warrington Urban Extension Housing Trajectory

5.44 A more detailed assessment of highway capacity will be required to confirm the development trajectory of the urban extension. If the Western Link is to be located through the area then this will need to be completed prior to any significant development taking place to ensure the traffic generated from the development can be accommodated.

5.45 If the Western Link does not pass through the site then this will require a greater understanding of the traffic improvements required to facilitate the development of the site. This may require significant upgrade to existing junctions which will need to be completed prior to any significant development taking place.

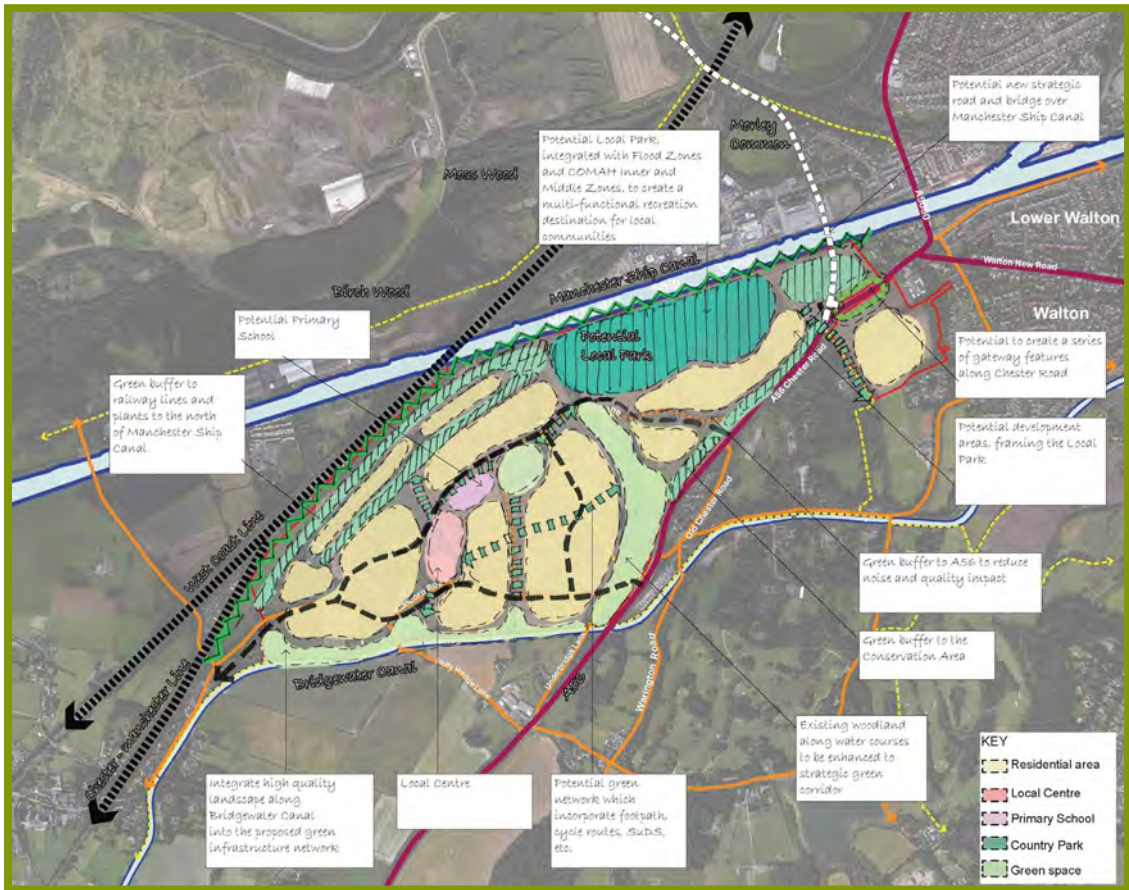


Figure 8A: South Western Warrington Urban Extension with Western Link

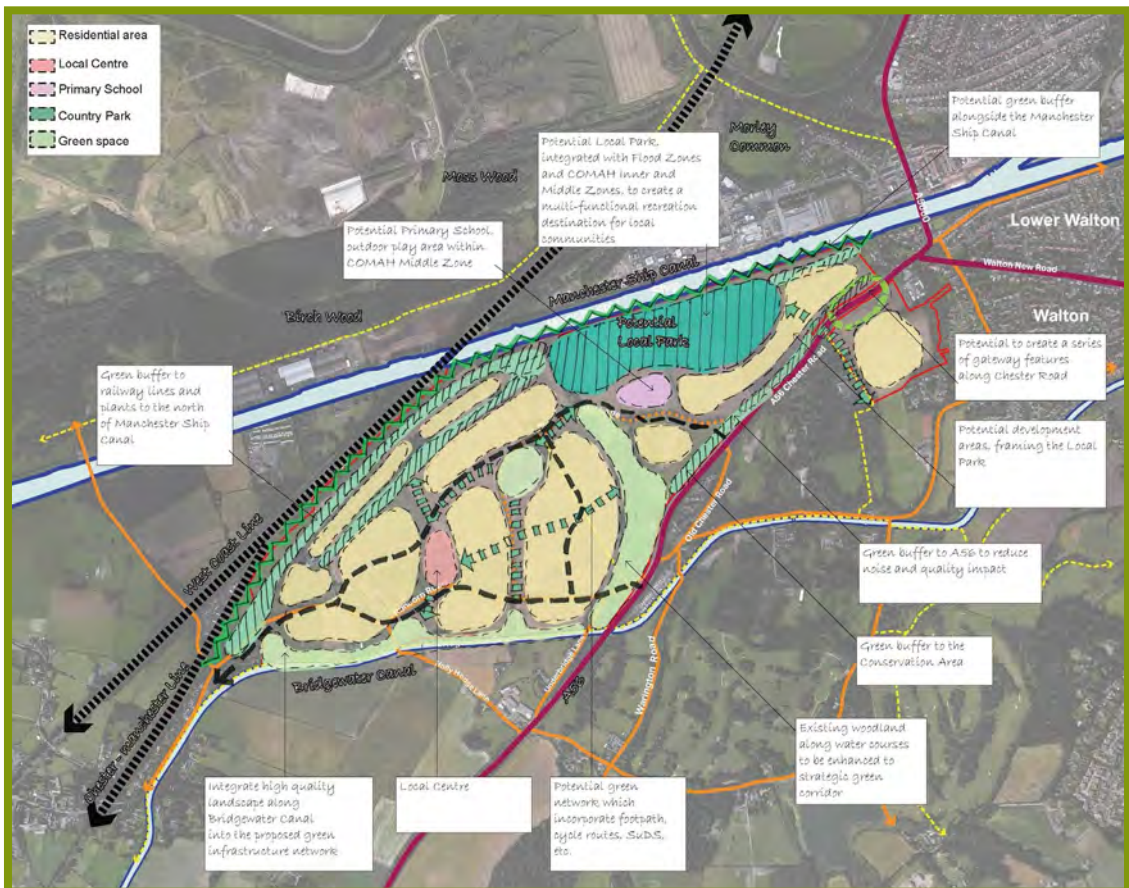


Figure 8B: South Western Warrington Urban Extension without Western Link

Outlying Settlements

5.46 The preferred option defines an approximate number of homes the Council considers can be accommodated by each of the outlying settlements under the 'incremental growth' scenario.

Settlement	Indicative Green Belt Capacity
Lymm	500
Culcheth	300
Burtonwood	150
Winwick	90
Croft	60
Glazebury	50
Hollins Green	40
TOTAL	1,190

Table 22: Outlying Settlements - Indicative Green Belt Capacity

5.47 In order to deliver this level of development it will be necessary to expand existing primary schools in Lymm, Culcheth and Burtonwood. It will also be necessary to provide additional primary care capacity in Lymm and in Burtonwood.

5.48 Due to the large number of sites put forward in proximity to each of the outlying settlements relative to the level of growth required under the Preferred Development Option, the Council has decided to hold back detailed site assessment work to confirm the individual sites to be allocated until after the Preferred Development Options Stage.

5.49 The numbers provided in the table above are therefore indicative at this stage. The final numbers will depend on the detailed assessment of potential development sites, including a more detailed assessment of the implications for the character of the respective settlements, the permanence of the amended Green Belt boundaries and transport impacts.

5.50 The Council has undertaken an initial review of each of the call for sites in terms of their land use characteristics and Green Belt performance. This information has been published as part of the consultation process and will provide the starting point for identifying sites to be allocated and / or potentially safeguarded.

5.51 The Council is aware of the proposal in the Housing White Paper to enable Neighbourhood Plans to make minor revisions to Green Belt boundaries to support housing development. This may provide the opportunity for Parish Councils themselves to determine which sites to release, should they wish to prepare Neighbourhood Plan. The Council intends to discuss the potential for Neighbourhood Plans with Parish Councils during the consultation period.

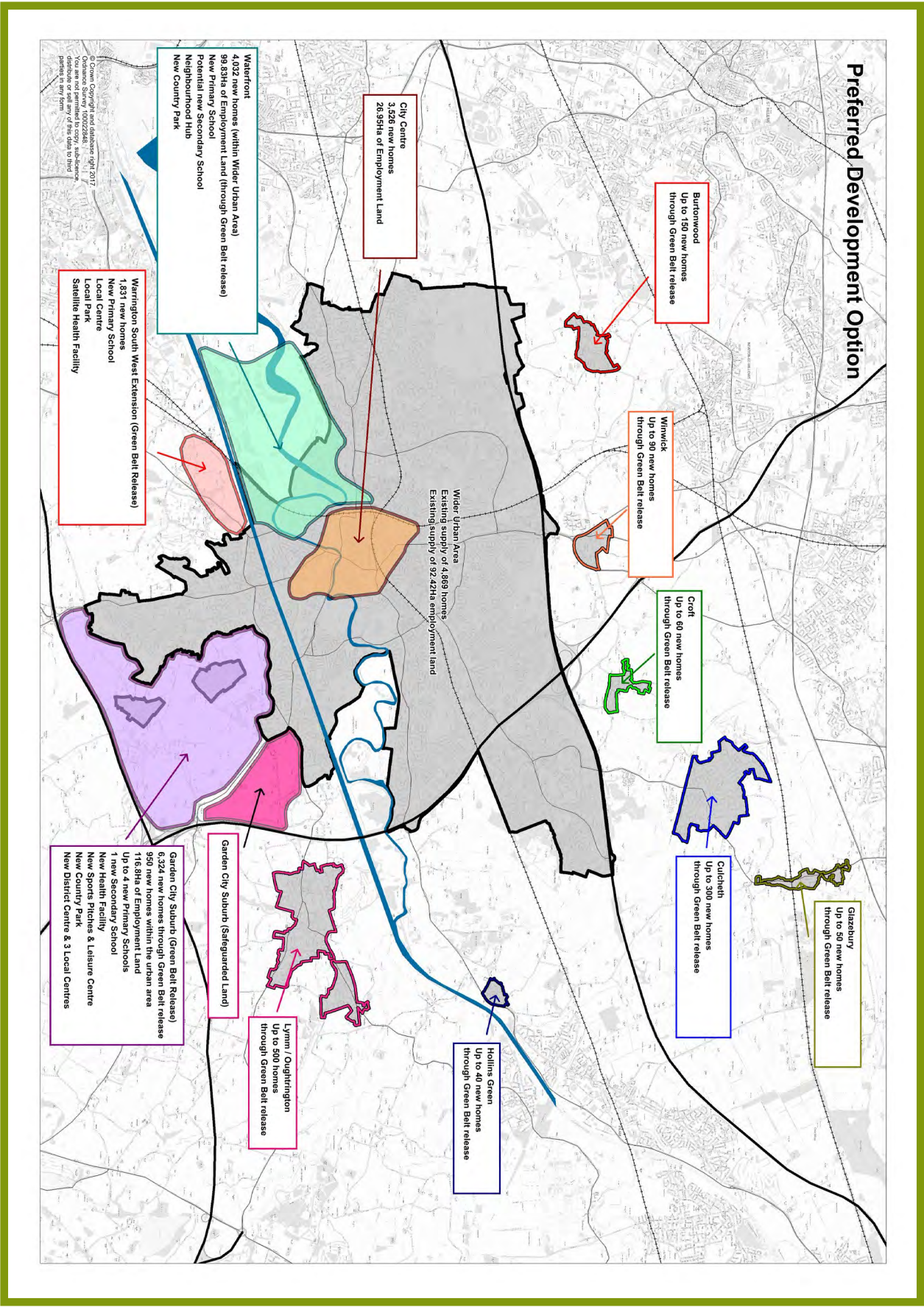


Figure 9: Preferred Development Option

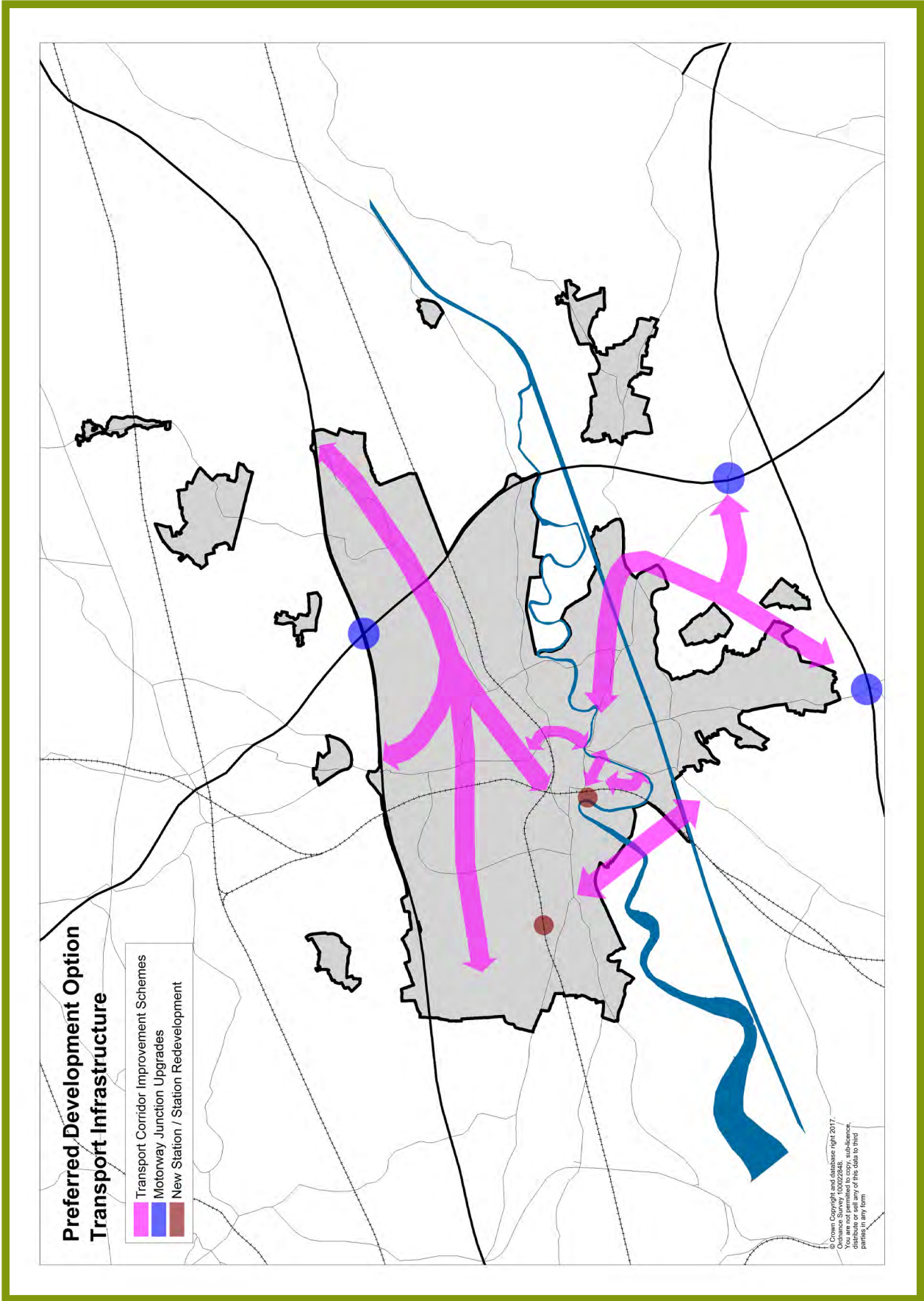


Figure 10: Preferred Development Option - Transport Infrastructure

Gypsies and Travellers

5.52 There are currently three unauthorised sites for Gypsy and Travellers, which are all located in the Green Belt. The table below indicates the number of pitches that these three sites would provide.

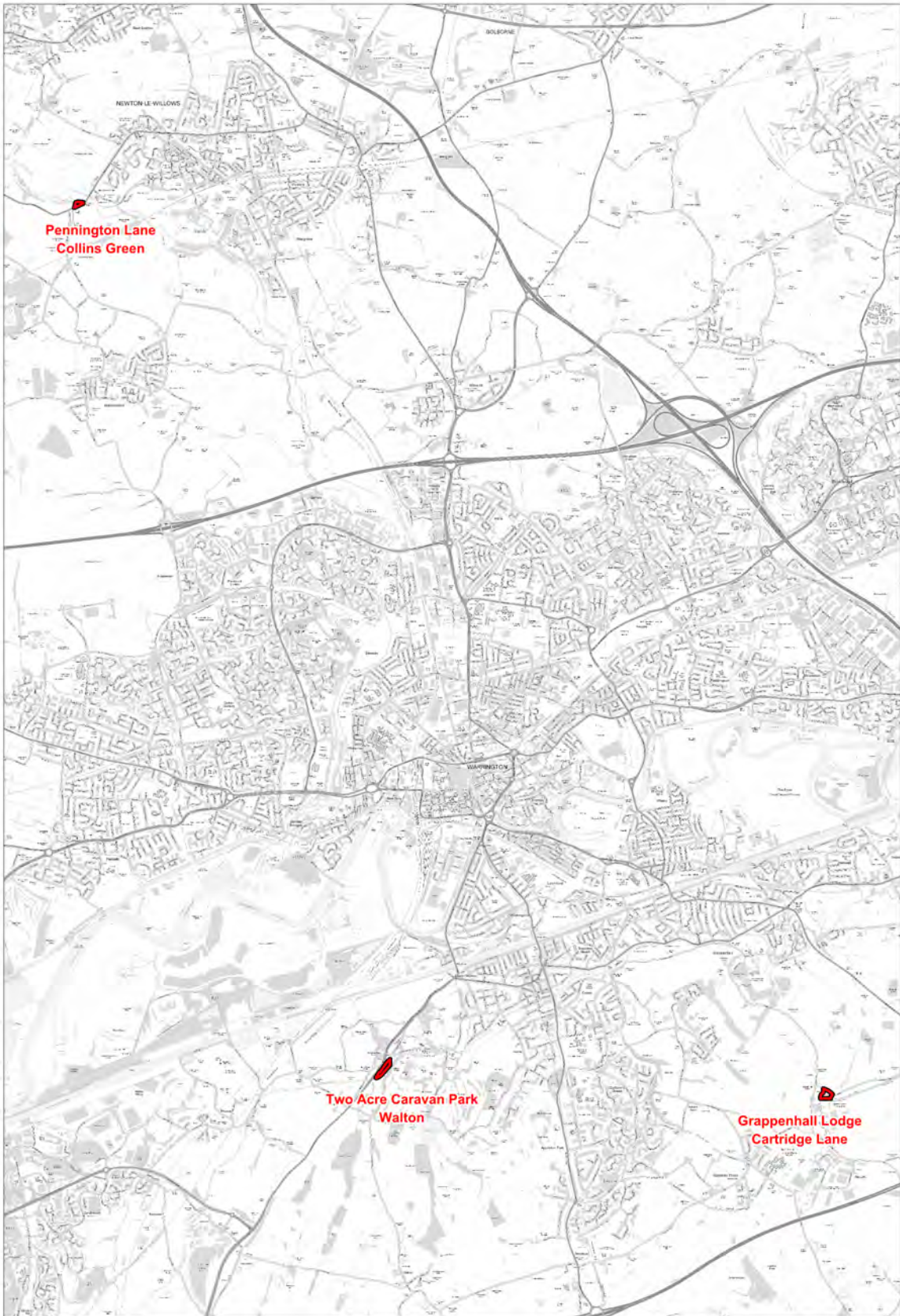
Site	Number of Pitches
Pennington Lane, Collins Green	4
Two Acre Caravan Park, Walton	20
Grappenhall Lodge, Cartridge Lane	6

Table 23: Gypsy and Traveller Sites - Pitch Provision

5.53 The Preferred Development Option proposes to remove these three sites from the Green Belt and formally allocate them as permanent Gypsy and Travellers sites.

5.54 It is unlikely that these existing sites will meet all of Warrington's need and therefore the Council will continue to look for additional sites ahead of the publication of the submission draft version of the Local Plan. This will include further investigation into the potential for sites within the existing urban area and, if required, sites currently in the Green Belt both for permanent gypsy and traveller/travelling showpeople sites and for a transit site.

5.55 A criteria based policy will be developed to assess any applications for proposals for additional provision that is identified through the updated Needs Assessment that come forward in the future.



Minerals & Waste

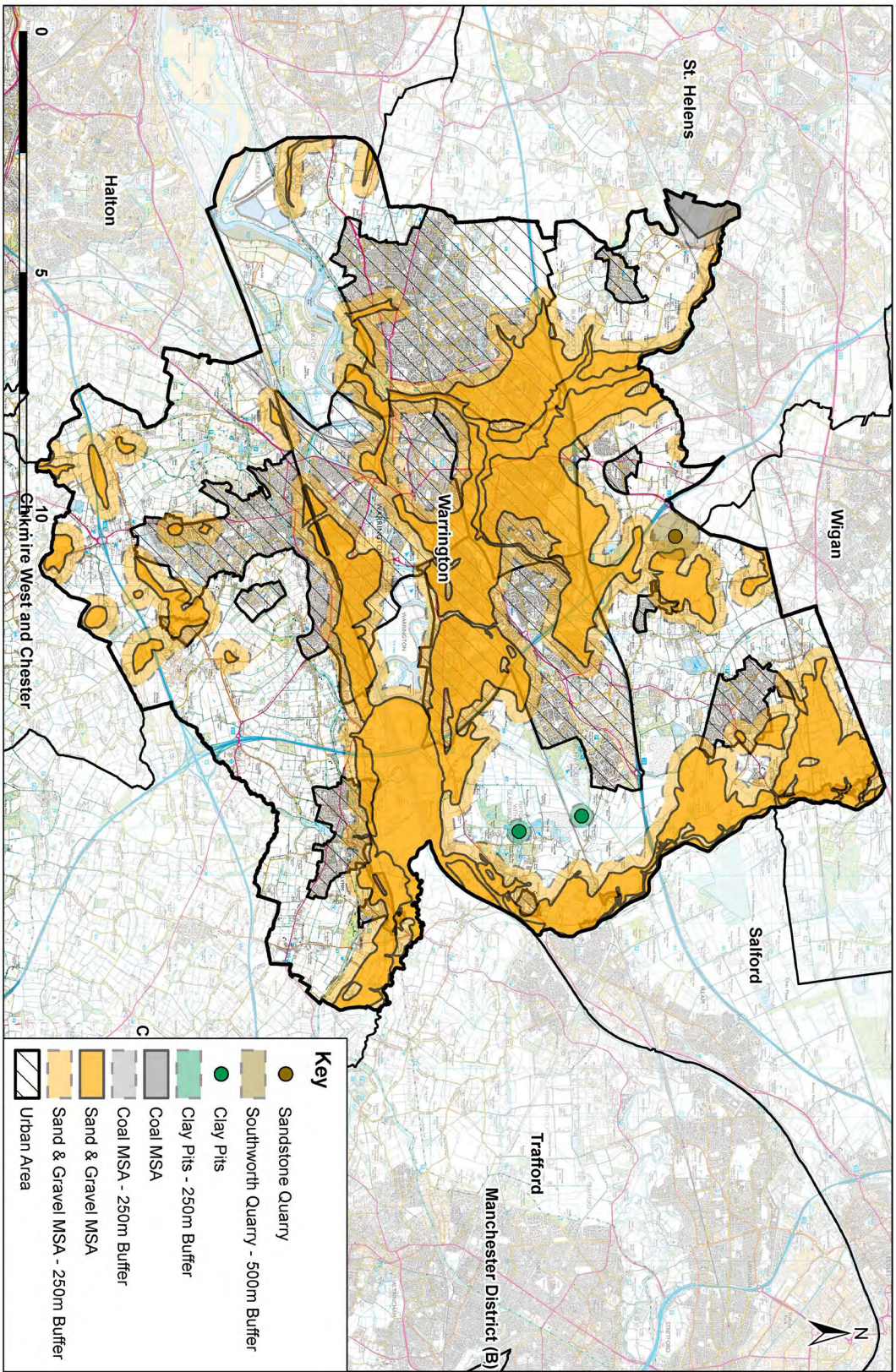
5.56 The map below shows the proposed mineral safeguarded areas for the mineral reserves and infrastructure that have been identified as in need of protecting.

5.57 Applications for the extraction and/or processing of sand, gravel or sandstone/gritstone within the Areas of Search will be supported subject to other Development Management and environmental considerations being satisfied.

5.58 Planning permission will not be granted for incompatible non-mineral development within the Minerals Safeguarding Areas unless it can be demonstrated that the mineral is not of economic value or potential value, or does not exist; or that extraction of the mineral would not be physically viable or practicable; or the proposals would be contrary to other development management and environmental considerations.

5.59 The Council's approach to dealing with waste is as set out in paragraphs 4.95 to 4.102 in the previous section.

Warrington Mineral Resource Maps
 Figure 7 - Sand & Gravel and Coal MSAs



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6 NEXT STEPS

6.1 Following the end of the consultation period, the Council will consider representations received in preparing the submission version of the Local Plan.

6.2 The Council will be undertaking more detailed site assessments relating to the main development areas as well as all of the submitted 'call for sites'. This will enable the Council to provide definitive details on all sites to be allocated or safeguarded in the Local Plan.

6.3 A key element of this work will be to test the proposed development allocations through the updated Warrington Multi-Modal Transport Model. This will enable the Council to consider local and borough wide transport impacts arising from new development. It will also allow the Council to confirm the infrastructure required to mitigate these impacts and contribute to the wider New City concept.

6.4 The Council will ensure that all infrastructure required to support the delivery of the Local Plan is set out in an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan to be published with the submission version of the Plan. This will include infrastructure costs and the mechanisms to ensure timely delivery. This will be supported by a viability assessment of the submission version of the Plan.

6.5 The Council will also be working up individual planning policies for inclusion in the Local Plan. Where policies in the current adopted Local Plan remain up to date and consistent with the new Local Plan Strategic Objectives, the Council is proposing to carry these policies forward into the New Local Plan.

6.6 The Council is aware that it will need to undertake a more detailed review of its affordable housing policy to reflect changes to national planning policy and the latest evidence on the borough's affordable housing need. The Council is also aware from evidence base work informing the Council's forthcoming Housing Strategy that additional detail may be required to ensure that the Local Plan is able to address issues relating Warrington's aging population, including provision of extra care facilities and the need to design new homes to enable independent living for people as they grow older.

6.7 In addition, once the Preferred Development Option has been finalised following the consultation it will be subject to further sustainability appraisal review and an analysis of its potential likely effects on any European sites of nature conservation importance through a Habitat Regulations Assessment.

6.8 The Council's Local Development Scheme sets out the programme for the Review of the Local Plan. The consultation of the Preferred Development Option has been delayed due to the pre-election period ahead of the General Election. This will have a knock on delay for the consultation on the Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan. Consultation on the Proposed Submission Version of the Plan is now anticipated to start in February 2018.

7. HOW TO GET INVOLVED AND COMMENT

7.1 You are invited to comment on the Preferred Development Option. We would also welcome your views on the evidence base we have prepared, the Council's conclusions on Warrington's development needs and the scope of the work the Council intends to undertake in preparing the submission version of the Local Plan.

7.2 The standard response form is the quickest and simplest method for submitting your comments and a blank form can be found [here](#).

7.3 Please send your comments, representations and completed standard reply forms to:

By e-mail: ldf@warrington.gov.uk

By writing to: Warrington Borough Council, Planning Policy and Programmes, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, Cheshire, WA1 2NH.

7.4 Representations must provide a contact name and address. Any comments you make will not be confidential and will be made publicly available, however your address and contact details will not be shown online.

7.5 Should you require further advice and guidance, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442826 or by e-mail at ldf@warrington.gov.uk

Consultation Period

7.6 The Regulation 18 consultation will run from Tuesday 18th July to Tuesday 12th September 2017.

7.7 Please return your representation(s) to Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on 12th September 2017.

7.8 The Council acknowledges that Parish Councils are not scheduled to meet in August and may not have sufficient time to be able to discuss the Local Plan at their September meetings and submit their representation by the close of the consultation period. If a Parish Council notifies the Council prior to 12th September that they are unable to submit their formal representation for this reason then the Council will be prepared to accept their response up to Friday 29th September 2017.

7.9 A number of consultation events are taking places across the borough during the consultation period. Details of the consultation events are on the Council's web site.

7.10 What will happen to your Comments?

- Your comments will be acknowledged either in writing or by email.
- A summary of the results of the consultation will be publicly available.
- Your comments will be considered by the Council in working up the submission draft of the Local Plan.
- All comments will be made available for viewing.
- In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 your details will be retained on our database for the purposes of preparing the Local Plan and any other planning policy documents, they will not be used for any other purpose.



WARRINGTON
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