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# **Warrington Borough Council**

## **Local Plan**

### ***Preferred Development Option***

### **Regulation 18 Consultation**

### **Standard Response Form**

**July 2017**

## 2: Questions

### Question 1

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

**Response: See attached representations**

## **Question 2**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 3**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

**Question 4**

Do you agree with the new Local Plan Objectives?

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 5**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

## **Question 6**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 7**

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

**Response: See attached representations**



### **Question 8**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 9**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 10**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 11**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

## **Question 12**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 13**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

**Question 14**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 15**

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

**Response: See attached representations**



## **Question 16**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

### **Question 17**

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

**Response: See attached representations**

# **Warrington Local Plan Preferred Development Option**

**Representations on behalf of**

**Orica Europe Ltd**

September 2017

**LICHFIELDS**

**LICHFIELDS**

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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 These representations have been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Orica Europe Ltd [Orica] in response to Warrington Borough Council's Local Plan Review Preferred Development Option [PDO] consultation, which, amongst other things, seeks to allocate strategic development sites for the proposed 20 year plan period to 2037. The existing Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted July 2014) sets out the current planning framework for guiding the location and level of development in the Borough up to 2027 and will be replaced by the new Local Plan.
- 1.2 By way of background, these representations have been prepared in the context of land owned and operated by Orica at Glazebury Depot, which forms part of a wider site to the north of Culcheth that is currently being promoted for development to meet a significant proportion of the Borough's housing needs over the long term.
- 1.3 Lichfields has previously submitted representations to the Local Plan Review 'Scope and Contents' document [Appendix 1] and Call for Sites exercise [Appendix 2] in relation to the land to north of Culcheth. A Delivery Statement, which seeks to demonstrate that this land represents a unique opportunity to create a sustainable, distinctive and attractive community that could deliver much needed housing and support economic growth and prosperity within Warrington and the wider region has also been prepared and is included at Appendix 3.
- 1.4 Whilst these representations do not repeat the content of previous submissions to the Local Plan Review consultation or the Delivery Statement, it is highlighted that:
- 1 The vision for the site is to deliver a new garden settlement that has capacity for up to 5,500 homes that is people focused, well-structured and adaptable and a model for sustainable growth;
  - 2 Social benefits include the provision of high quality market and affordable homes, accessible open and recreation space, infrastructure such as a potentially a new train station, direct access to the A580, schools, local retail, leisure and employment uses;
  - 3 Economic benefits would be recognised through job creation, additional monies to the local authority and increased expenditure in the economy;
  - 4 Environmental benefits will be realised through opportunities to provide additional tree cover and a network of greenspaces, retention and enhancement of ecological features of value where possible and the provision of SUDS;
  - 5 The development is capable of delivering highways and transport improvements to assist in alleviating pressure on the existing road network such as greater highway connectivity and improved public transport; and,
  - 6 The removal of the land from the Green Belt and its allocation for development will not harm any of the five purposes of the Green Belt set out in the paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]. Its release from the Green Belt would provide for significant housing delivery throughout the plan period and beyond.
- 1.5 The purpose of this representation is to highlight the fundamental concerns with the proposed housing requirement for the Borough, distribution of housing allocations, the assumed housing trajectories, and the deliverability of the identified strategic sites within the PDO. We also provide a critique of the methodology used in arriving at the PDO, with specific reference to the assumptions made in the exclusion of Orica's site.

1.6

A brief summary of each section of this report is set out below:

- Section 2: Housing Requirement - comments on the future housing requirement over the plan period to 2037;
- Section 3: Distribution - sets out concerns with the planned distribution of housing;
- Section 4: Delivery - comments on the housing trajectories with regard to delivery rates;
- Section 5: Deliverability - identifies the main constraints to deliverability and the lack of evidence supporting the Council's approach;
- Section 6: Land to the North of Culcheth - details the attributes, suitability and sustainability of the site for housing and shortcomings of the Council's methodology to select and exclude sites;
- Section 7: Consideration of Options - raises concerns with the Council's approach to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment; and,
- Section 8: Concluding Comments - summarises the representations and sets out next steps.

## 2.0 Housing Requirement

- 2.1 The Council proposes a housing target of 1,113 homes per annum and as such is planning to deliver a minimum of 22,260 new homes over the 20 year plan period to 2037. Whilst Lichfields has not undertaken a detailed review of the proposed housing requirement for the Borough as part of these representations, we are concerned that the approach to calculating Objectively Assessed Housing Need [OAHN] does not accord with guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework [Framework] and Planning Practice Guidance [Practice Guidance]. In summary:
- 1 It is considered that Warrington is likely to be a self-contained Housing Market Area [HMA], rather than being part of a combined HMA with St Helens and Halton. The GL Hearn 'Review of Representations on OAN' (May 2017) does not evidence why Warrington is not a self-contained HMA;
  - 2 The methodology applied by GL Hearn in assessing whether an uplift is required to the OAN is not undertaken in accordance with the PPG. For example, it does not consider whether the market signals for Warrington are worsening and compare them with similar local authorities and average trends across the North West and England. The PPG is clear that if market signals have worsened and there are signs of housing market pressures such as change in house prices or increase in overcrowding, an uplift should be applied; and,
  - 3 There are inconsistencies between the employment land and housing evidence base, with the Council pursuing an economic growth target below that achieved over the past number of years. In order to ensure that the Local Plan delivers the 'New City' aspirations for Warrington, it is imperative that economic and housing strategies are aligned. Failure to do so would mean that the plan is not positively prepared and the full housing needs of the Borough will not be met.
- 2.2 Lichfield's key concerns in relation to the Borough's housing requirement relates to the issue of safeguarded land. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Council is proposing to safeguard land within the Green Belt for 10 years beyond the plan period, it is considered that this timescale is insufficient. Paragraph 85 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should:
- "wherenecessary,identifyintheirplansareasofsafeguardedland'betweentheurbanarea andtheGreenBelt,inordertomeetlonger-termdevelopmentneedsstretchingwellbeyondthe planperiod."*
- 2.3 The Framework does not provide any further guidance on the identification of safeguarded land, nor does it define 'longer term development needs', however, Lichfields consider that the key issues to be considered are the quantum of safeguarded land required, how this relates to the current OAN and the interpretation of 'well beyond the plan period'.
- 2.4 In calculating its safeguarded land requirement, the Council has assumed that the proportion of Green Belt needed to accommodate the Borough's housing and employment requirements will be 36% and 71% respectively (i.e. a continuation of existing ratios). This is questionable given that the Council has previously concluded that there is an absence of available land within the existing urban area to meet long term housing requirements.
- 2.5 Paragraph 4.24 of the PDO makes reference to 'future brownfield land availability', including the Fiddlers Ferry site, and takes this into account in the approach to calculating safeguarded land. The Council's aspirations to 'unlock major brownfield development sites' are also noted, however, there is no evidence to demonstrate how this will be achieved. The availability of brownfield land beyond the plan period is therefore unknown. With regard to Fiddlers Ferry in



particular, the site remains operational and there is no certainty that it could deliver additional development in the future should it be decommissioned. Any redevelopment is likely to be an extremely complex process and the brownfield nature of the site does not necessarily outweigh its relatively isolated location and lack of access to services. Overall, it is considered highly likely that the scale of Green Belt land required to meet the Borough's housing and employment requirements beyond the plan period will be well in excess of that assumed in Table 3 of the PDO.

- 2.6 The Council should therefore identify a greater proportion of safeguarded land over a 20 year time period; longer than that is currently allowed for in the PDO. It is also imperative that it adopts an appropriate and sound strategy to provide flexibility that allows such land to be brought forward quickly without a fundamental review of the whole Local Plan if its housing requirement is found to be higher than that claimed, or if the strategic sites are unable to deliver the quantum of development envisaged.

## 3.0 Delivery

3.1 Lichfields have significant concerns regarding the assumed delivery rates assumed in the PDO and the evidence base which underpins it. Fundamentally:

- 1 Net to gross ratios are too high for large strategic sites, and should be about 65% allowing for new infrastructure etc;
- 2 Lead in times of large strategic sites have been under-estimated with significant difficulties in providing infrastructure, land assembly etc. for large sites of the scale that are relied upon. It is inappropriate to apply the same standard lead in time for all sites over 150 dwellings, and that there should be a different approach to strategic sites; and,
- 3 There is no evidence that the sites can be delivered at the rates assumed, with build rate assumptions for strategic sites being applied inconsistently and without accordance with the 2017 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [2017 SHLAA] methodology.

3.2 These issues are considered in further detail below.

### **Nettogrossratios**

3.3 In considering developable area ratios, the 2017 SHLAA assumes an average net site area of 75% for sites over 2ha. In our experience, a net to gross ratio of approximately 60:40 for sites of more than 500 homes on Green Belt sites is more realistic having regard to the necessary delivery of highways and social infrastructure.

3.4 The 2017 SHLAA goes on to suggest that a density range of between 30-50 dwellings per hectare applied to the net developable area of a site is appropriate when estimating capacity for sites without planning permission or where a developer/landowner has not offered specific details. The 'Development Concept' documents that have been prepared in relation to the South West Urban Extension and the Garden City Suburb are based on a gross density of 20 and 28 dwellings per hectare, respectively.

3.5 An adjustment to the assumptions made in relation to strategic sites in line with those set out above (i.e. a net to gross ratio of 60:40 on developable site area and density of 30 dwellings per hectare) is likely to reduce the quantum of development that could be achieved at strategic sites.

### **Leadintimes**

3.6 Table 2.54 of the 2017 SHLAA sets out a number of assumptions in relation to lead-in times. Whilst Lichfields does not have any particular comments on the assumptions for sites below 150 units, we are concerned that a standard lead-in time of 4 years has been used for all sites above 150 dwellings without planning permission.

3.7 Lichfields consider that such an approach fails to recognise the time taken for larger sites to begin to deliver. This is particularly important when considering the nature of some of the strategic sites that are proposed for allocation in PDO. There is no evidence to demonstrate that the complex nature of delivering sites with no existing infrastructure capable of accommodating the proposed levels of development (i.e. the Garden City Suburb) has been taken into account. Such sites are likely to have a long lead in time as the provision of infrastructure is a long, complex and costly process. These sites could therefore only provide new homes towards the end of the plan period and there is no certainty over the potential supply due to the complexities of delivery.

3.8 The same conclusion can also be made in relation to strategic sites such as Warrington Waterfront, where there are significant infrastructure issues. Whilst it is accepted that part of

this strategic site will come forward earlier in the plan period, there is no known solution to the delivery of infrastructure that is required to unlock this site. This is acknowledged at paragraph 5.26 of the PDO, which concludes that *“theWaterfrontdevelopmentisdependentonthe deliveryofthedeliveryofWesternLink”* . In this regard, we would note that the Western Link has not progressed further than high level assessment, nor is there any funding for its delivery. Furthermore, there is no evidence to demonstrate that it is environmentally acceptable, viable and capable of coming forward during the plan period. The lead-in times assumed for Warrington Waterfront therefore need to be adjusted accordingly to reflect the realities of delivering major infrastructure such as the Western Link.

- 3.9 Research undertaken by Lichfields into the lead-in times and build-out rates on 70 different strategic housing sites (delivering 500 or more homes) concludes that the average lead in time prior to the submission of the first planning application is 3.9 years. For schemes of 2,000+ units, the average planning approval period is 6.1 years. The current timetable for adoption of the Local Plan is mid-2019. Applying the average lead-in times and planning approval periods outlined above, it could be 2030 before the strategic sites are able to deliver housing. It can therefore be concluded that the development trajectories set out at Table 17, Table 19 and Table 21 are wholly unrealistic in that they assume that the Warrington Waterfront, Warrington Garden City Suburb and South West Extension are capable of delivering 5,149 new homes within the first 10 years of the Local Plan.

### **Deliveryrates**

- 3.10 The Overall Housing Trajectory set out in Table 11 of the PDO suggests a total of 24,774 homes could be delivered over the plan period. 4,638 units would be delivered over the course of the first 5 years of the plan from sites within the urban area and on Green Belt sites. As set out above, it is our view that these trajectories are totally unrealistic and the sites included will not deliver the quantum of development envisaged over the plan period.
- 3.11 The 2017 SHLAA methodology sets out a variety of build rates for different site thresholds. For sites of more than 150 dwellings, it assumes a build rate of 55 dwellings per annum. This does not translate to the development trajectories set out for each of the strategic sites. Whilst Lichfields welcome the use of individual site circumstances (where possible) to provide the most accurate assessment of delivery, the Council’s assumptions on delivery rates for Warrington Waterfront, Warrington Garden City Suburb and the South Western Warrington Urban Extension are totally unachievable.
- 3.12 In January 2017, Lichfields produced an insight document entitled ‘Stock and Flow<sup>1</sup>’ that considers the different variables that effect delivery of development and provides an analysis of average delivery rates based on independent research.
- 3.13 The research found that sites of 2,000+ units would provide up to 160 units per year on average i.e. up to 800 units over 5 years. Taking the Garden City Suburb as an example; the Council expect this will achieve 2,114, 2,096 and 2,114 new homes over successive five year periods. This is over 2.5 times the number of dwellings likely to be built with regard to average build out rates.
- 3.14 To achieve the rate of development required to meet the targets of the trajectory for the Garden City Suburb set by the Council, over 400 homes would need to be built each year over the last 15 years of the plan period. Given that the highest level of delivery recorded by Lichfields across its entire research piece was 300 homes in one year based on a relatively high land value of £3m/ha it seems wholly unrealistic to plan for a delivery rate that would need to exceed this by a further 35% consistently for 15 years.

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<sup>1</sup>StockandFlowproducedbyLichfields,January2017

- 3.15 The trajectory also does not take in to consideration other factors such as affordable housing, land values and the number of sales outlets which have all been found to influence delivery rates. For example, when accounting for affordable housing delivery on large sites such as the Garden City Suburb, this shortfall is likely to expand. Warrington has an affordable housing requirement in the adopted Local Plan of 30% for sites of over 15 units outside urban area and 20% if sites are within the urban area. For sites outside the urban area such as the Garden City Suburb, provision of 30% affordable housing results in annual average delivery rates of 135 dwellings per annum<sup>2</sup> which is a further shortfall against the proposed trajectory; sites with a 20% affordable housing requirement have lower delivery rates still at 82 dpa<sup>3</sup>.
- 3.16 The Council also proposes a ‘stepped’ housing trajectory for sites such as Garden City Suburb and South West Extension with zero delivery in the first 5 years of the plan period, justified by the need to deliver major infrastructure investment early on<sup>4</sup>. Whilst it is reasonable to incorporate time for the completion of infrastructure, a 5 year timeframe is unrealistic in this instance for a number of reasons. Principally, the Council has not undertaken any infrastructure capacity assessments or presented any form of evidence to demonstrate that the substantial scale of development, likely to be required within a relatively confined part of the Borough could be accommodated by existing or planned infrastructure. There is no understanding of the scale, nature or amount of infrastructure that is required to be delivered.
- 3.17 The unrealistic delivery trajectory for each strategic site is a result of the lack of evidence base prepared by the Council. Given the uncertainty over infrastructure requirements to support the PDO, it is highly questionable how the Council has been able to predict delivery rates for the strategic sites with any reasonable degree of accuracy. It is also noted that the PDO refers to the Council’s intentions to revise the Infrastructure Delivery Plan [IDP]. The document is therefore based on the latest IDP (July 2016) which identifies that some of the infrastructure required to support the strategic sites is expected to take up to 10 years for implementation (e.g. works for the ‘Western Link’). The development trajectory is therefore inconsistent with the timeframes in the IDP in assuming that homes could be completed within years 0-5 of the plan period. Overall, 5 years to complete an unknown form and quantum of infrastructure is not realistic.

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<sup>2</sup>Based on research undertaken by Lichfields and published in Stock and Flow, January 2017

<sup>3</sup>Stock and Flow produced by Lichfields, January 2017

<sup>4</sup>Paragraph 5.11 of Preferred Development Option

## 4.0 Distribution

- 4.1 Figure 3 provides an illustrative diagram of the PDO areas. The allocated sites are overwhelmingly located to the south of Warrington, west of the M6. There is a blatant over concentration of development to the south of the Borough. For example, of the 24,774 homes the Council believe can be delivered over the plan period over half (13,137) would be located across 3 major sites to the south; Garden City Suburb (7,274), South West Extension (1,831) and the Waterfront (4,032). When added to the proposed provision in the Main Urban Area (4,869) and the city centre (3,526) the Council proposes that these five spatial locations would account for 87% of all housing development over the plan period.
- 4.2 There are no housing allocations north of the M62 outside of the urban area or east of the M6, despite sites coming forward through the 'Call for Sites' exercise. As set out in further detail below, this unbalanced pattern of distribution and overconcentration of development is likely to result in pressures on infrastructure in the south/south west of the Borough.
- 4.3 The PDO contains a limited narrative to explain how, or why, the Council has chosen this strategy, nor does it set out the implications of this pattern of spatial distribution or discuss the alternative options considered. Lichfields consider that the approach adopted by the Council fails to make best use of existing infrastructure and resources, as well as ensuring that the needs of the local community are met. In particular, the south of Warrington suffers from a lack of public transport, train line or other related infrastructure. Such an approach does not promote sustainable patterns of development as required by the Framework, and therefore conflicts with national guidance.
- 4.4 The PDO acknowledges existing congestion issues in Warrington that is having a detrimental impact on residents and businesses<sup>5</sup>. With regard to the Garden City Suburb the Council states: *"there is significant requirement for infrastructure to support this level of growth"* and acknowledges the need for an assessment of highway capacity for the South Western Extension. The proposed scale of new homes in the south of the Borough would require significant new social infrastructure, whilst also putting substantial pressures on physical infrastructure. Whilst the Council acknowledges highway capacity issues within the PDO, it does not identify any solutions. The result of the PDO is therefore to put more traffic on to the already congested strategic highway network.
- 4.5 Furthermore, there is no evidence of spatial demand to justify the heavy distribution of new housing to the south of the Borough. The 2016 Mid Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment [HMA] does not provide any analysis of household preferences to move to certain areas within Warrington, nor does it consider migration patterns. There is nothing with the HMA which suggests that there is an absence of sub housing markets operating i.e. households wishing to form, move to or relocate within Warrington having no spatial preference. Clearly, demand is likely to exist in the north of the Borough, which the Council has had seemingly little regard to.
- 4.6 Needless to say, over supply in the south of the Borough could impact on demand for new housing, which in turn could negatively impact on delivery. A more even distribution of development across the Borough would respond more effectively to demand. A review of local level housing market factors would enable the Council to understand housing demand across the Borough and inform the PDO. It is too simplistic an approach to assume that mass concentration of housing in the south/south west will meet the needs of the entire Borough. In

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<sup>5</sup>Paragraph 5.2 of Preferred Development Option

selecting the PDO, the Council seem to have been overly reliant on its contribution to the Warrington New City Concept which in itself is subjective.

- 4.7 The absence of any capacity assessment to inform/underpin the spatial distribution of the PDO is a fundamental issue. The Council has failed to present any evidence or research that gives any assurance that adequate capacity is achievable to accommodate the strategic sites.
- 4.8 Lichfields also wish to highlight that the land to the north of Culcheth has not been assessed as an individual parcel or collection of parcels within the Council's Green Belt Assessment. It lies within General Area 22 and is described as making a moderate contribution to the Green Belt. Land forming part of the South West Urban Extension is identified as making a moderate contribution to Green Belt and land comprising the Garden City Suburb is a mix of parcels identified as providing a weak, moderate or high contribution to Green Belt. Overall, there is no clear distinction and justification why the development of areas of Green Belt to the south of the Borough is preferable to development of Green Belt land to the north.

## 5.0 Infrastructure and Deliverability

- 5.1 As detailed in preceding sections, Lichfields is concerned over the deliverability of the PDO, specifically the Garden City Suburb and South Western Extension, as there is no evidence to demonstrate that these sites are deliverable in terms of the infrastructure required. As already laboured within this representation, there is a fundamental lack of assessment undertaken by the Council to understand the current highways capacity and required supporting infrastructure in producing the PDO. This is despite the existing congestion in Warrington that is acknowledged in the PDO.
- 5.2 The PDO makes reference to various planned infrastructure projects such as the Western Link, Bank Quay Station redevelopment, Centre Park Link and roundabouts on the A49. However, these planned works do not increase capacity to support new homes, but simply resolve existing issues. The Council's summary of the Western Link confirms this position, in stating:
- "Over the last 10 years Warrington has experienced significant economic development which has given rise to increased traffic congestion. **To help solve this**, the Department for Transport (DfT) has awarded us funding to develop the business case for a potential new road which would link the A56 Chester Road in Higher Walton with the A57 Sankey Way in Great Sankey<sup>6</sup>." [Lichfields emphasis added]*
- 5.3 In terms of the 'planned' Bank Quay Station redevelopment, it is assumed that such works would be undertaken in association with HS2, the first phase of HS2 which is officially scheduled to be complete by 2026. However, the National Audit Office expect that this timeframe is unrealistic<sup>7</sup>. On this basis, it is unclear how the planned Bank Quay Station redevelopment would support housing coming forward in the short to medium term.
- 5.4 It is noted also noted that the Transport Assessment [TA] carried out for the Centre Park Link (approved in May 2017)<sup>8</sup> concludes that the link "might have potentially significant impact" on a number of junctions although they would continue to operate within capacity and goes on to say "it is likely that further investigation into capacity improvements across the network is likely to be needed with or without the proposed Link Road". In summary, the TA is clear that the link is responding to existing congestion and is not intended to support future large scale development.
- 5.5 Aside from the planned infrastructure works highlighted above, the PDO is not clear on the extent of required highways infrastructure that is required to deliver the scale of development proposed. For example, the PDO states at paragraph 5.32 that the Garden City Suburb "may require a further higher level connection across the ship canal." With regard to the South Western Urban Extension the Council does not commit to whether the Western Link passes through the site.
- 5.6 In this context, it is surprising that Option 3 of the three high level spatial options considered by the Council was ruled out due to concern over the ability to realise infrastructure delivery<sup>9</sup>. It is entirely possible that the same, or potentially worse, infrastructure delivery pressures would be created by pursuance of the preferred option (Option 2).

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201248/warrington\\_waterfront/2134/warrington\\_western\\_link](https://www.warrington.gov.uk/info/201248/warrington_waterfront/2134/warrington_western_link)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-36641720>

<sup>8</sup> <https://warrington.gov.uk/Centreparklink>

<sup>9</sup> Paragraph 4.52 of Preferred Development Option

## 6.0 Land to the North of Culcheth

- 6.1 The PDO does not allocate any sites for housing in Culcheth or north of the M62 outside of the urban area. Outlying settlements in the Green Belt will provide for 1,190 dwellings over the plan period. For Culcheth, an indicative Green Belt capacity of 300 new homes is identified. The Council has not confirmed individual sites to be allocated at this stage.
- 6.2 Putting matters of distribution aside (as discussed in Section 3.0 of this representation), the Council has disregarded suitable and sustainable sites in north Warrington, for reasons that apply equally, and potentially to a greater degree, to the large scale development sites identified in the PDO.
- 6.3 The information at Appendices 1 to 3 details the potential of land to the north of Culcheth to significantly boost the supply of housing and provide social and physical infrastructure improvements. The site is suitable, available and achievable for development and it is Lichfields view that the Council is not justified in excluding it from the PDO.
- 6.4 In arriving at its PDO, the Council produced 'Settlement Profiles' for outlying settlements, including Culcheth, as well as an accompanying technical note. Each outlying settlement was assessed in terms of its current social and physical infrastructure capacity and then considered against the following 3 growth scenarios:
- **Option 1** Incremental Growth;
  - **Option 2** Sustainable Settlement Extension; and,
  - **Option 3** Extension based on maximising potential of call for sites.
- 6.5 The Settlement Profiles do not specify any sources of information or assessment criteria that underpin the comments made. For example, Culcheth and Twiss Green Primary Schools and Culcheth High School are all described as having no expansion potential. However, there is no supporting text as to how this view has been arrived at.
- 6.6 It is noted that the Settlement Profile for Culcheth lists a number of positive attributes, such as its close proximity to both the M6(J22) and M62 (J11), as well as its bus connectivity. The assessment for Option 3 acknowledges there would be increased traffic levels but does not provide any evidence or commentary that suggests that there would be no solution/potential to increase highway capacity as necessary. Despite this, it concludes that "*it is uncertain whether the uplift in development value would be sufficient to contribute to the delivery of the significant level of infrastructure required*". Such a conclusion only serves to substantiate Lichfields fundamental concern that the PDO is not based on sufficient evidence. The Council is therefore unjustified in dismissing a settlement expansion at Culcheth on this basis.



## 7.0 Consideration of Options

7.1 Paragraphs 4.44 and 4.66 of the PDO set out the Council's approach to Sustainability Appraisal [SA] and Strategic Environmental Assessment [SEA]. None of the options that have been considered could be said to broadly align with Orica's proposals. The Council are well aware that Orica is promoting the land to the north of Culcheth as an option and that it has made representations to previous stages of the Local Plan and 'Call for Sites' exercise. Paragraph 4.61 appears to refer to the Orica site, amongst others that were promoted in the north and east of the Borough. It identifies that:

*“Through undertaking the area profile assessment and more detailed site assessment work, these areas were not considered to be reasonable development options for urban extensions.”*

7.2 However, there is no part of the evidence base where it is apparent that this option was considered and dismissed and there is no rationale or explanation for the Council so doing. The PPG [Reference ID: 11-017-20140306] requires that an SA / SEA consider reasonable alternatives.

7.3 Paragraph 4.61 of the PDO suggests that Option 5 (dispersal) is sufficient to assess the individual sites and thus consider the reasonable alternatives. However this clearly does not relate to the option proposed by Orica through the Local Plan process and it fails to have any regard to the benefits arising from this option as an alternative to the current preferred option. This is a fundamental failing in the assessment of the effects of the preferred option and represents a total failing to consider what is an entirely reasonable and logical alternative.

7.4 On this basis the PDO fails to have regard to the PPG, the relevant Regulations and the advice in the Framework (and in particular paragraph 152). This is a fundamental failing in the PDO which illustrates the Council's disregard of what is considered to be more sustainable option than is currently being pursued.

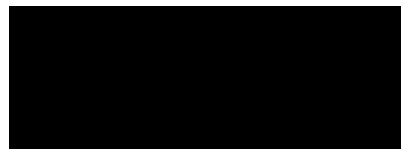
## 8.0 **ConcludingComments**

- 8.1 This representation has detailed our client’s fundamental concerns with the Council’s Preferred Development Option which relate to unrealistic housing trajectories, proposed distribution of housing allocations and the lack of evidence underpinning the document with regard to delivery, distribution and deliverability.
- 8.2 There is a clear lack of understanding of infrastructure requirements for the PDO and as such no assurances that it is achievable. Furthermore, in discounting a settlement expansion to Culcheth (which directly relates to Orica’s site), the Council uses the required delivery of a significant level of infrastructure as a reason to exclude it in the absence of any supporting evidence, when the same potential constraints apply to the strategic sites in the PDO.
- 8.3 On this basis, there is a need for the Council to reconsider the extent of its evidence and methodology in arriving at the PDO. In doing so, due regard should be given to these representations which highlight the shortcomings of the current approach and the sustainability and suitability of sites around Culcheth as a strategic housing location to be taken forward as part of a revised PDO.
- 8.4 Orica’s vision for the land to the north of Culcheth is set out in the enclosed Development Statement and it is more than willing to have open discussions with the Council in the interests of achieving a more balanced PDO that is supported by a sound and robust evidence base.

**Appendix1: RepresentationstotheLocal  
PlanReview‘ScopeandContents’dated5  
December2016**

Warrington Borough Council  
Planning Policy and Programmes  
New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
Cheshire  
WA1 2NH

3rd Floor  
One St James's Square  
Manchester M2 6DN



Date 5 December 2016  
Our ref 41888/SPM/CR/12892809v1  
Your ref

Dear Sir/Madam

## Warrington Local Plan Review: Scope and Contents

The following sets out the comments of Orica Europe Ltd [Orica] on the *Warrington Local Plan Review Scope and Contents* document, which was issued by the Council for consultation on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Orica welcomes the opportunity to provide further comments on Warrington's Local Plan Review, in particular from the perspective of addressing future housing needs. Orica is keen to work with WBC to achieve an adopted Local Plan for Warrington that fully meets the need for housing across the Borough and which also enables the Council to sustainably meet its economic ambitions.

In this regard, we submit the following comments to the specific questions posed in the consultation document. The comments are supported by a detailed technical report which is appended to this letter and which provides further analysis of Warrington's future housing requirement and the level of supply necessary to meet that need in full.

Orica will continue to engage in the Local Plan Review process and will provide further detailed commentary in future consultations. Further site-specific representations have been made by Orica separately.

### Q1: Do you have any comments to make about the Council's evidence base?

The National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] requires that local authorities "*should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area*" [§158].

In this regard, Orica has reviewed the evidence base and is broadly satisfied that it is in accordance with the requirements of the Framework in that it incorporates a Strategic Housing Market Assessment [SHMA], Urban Capacity Statement, Green Belt Assessment and an Economic Development Needs Assessment. The Council confirms that it is in the process of



updating its Multimodal Transport Model and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, which will feed into the broader assessment of development options, which is appropriate.

However clearly there will be other elements of this evidence base that will require updating prior to the Local Plan Examination in Public (particularly the SHMA given the subsequent release of the 2014-based household projections). Orica also notes that WBC is currently undertaking a 'Call for Sites' exercise and expects that an updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [SHLAA] will be forthcoming.

## **Q2: Do you consider the assessment of Housing Needs to be appropriate?**

The Framework requires that LPAs prepare a SHMA in order to assess the full housing need for their area [§159]. The evidence base comprises the Mid-Mersey SHMA, published in January 2016, and an Addendum published in October 2016. The Addendum focuses solely on alternative growth assumptions for Warrington derived from the Local Enterprise Partnership [LEP] devolution proposals.

The SHMA identifies an OAN of 839 dpa, whilst the Addendum suggests that to align with a higher level of economic growth (+28,520 jobs 2014-37) a figure of 984 dpa would be appropriate. The Local Plan Review refers to both figures, but states that to ensure a balance between homes and jobs it will be necessary to increase the minimum supply of homes to around 1,000 per annum.

Orica welcomes the Council's recognition that to support economic growth sustainably there is a need to increase the level of housing provided in the Borough above the demographic OAN.

NLP has undertaken a review in the light of new evidence that has emerged in the intervening period. This includes the LEP devolution proposals which underpin the Council's new housing requirement.

The key points to emerge from this analysis on Warrington Borough's housing need are as follows:

- Warrington clearly functions as a standalone HMA and should look to meet its full housing within its own local authority boundaries.
- The SHMA's modelling has over-estimated the likely impact of the 2014 MYE and made an unjustifiable UPC adjustment to the modelling. Both measures artificially suppress the housing need identified.
- The SHMA conflates the supply-side market signals adjustment with demand side adjustments to household formation rates which are distinct steps in Practice Guidance.
- The application of unrealistic economic activity growth rates over-estimates the extent to which the local economy can sustain high levels of job growth without higher levels of net in-migration.
- There is a misalignment between the Council's now preferred employment-led LEP projection of 28,520 new jobs (which underpins the housing requirement of 1,000 dpa) and the level of employment land provided. The 381 ha target is more than double the amount that could be justified on the basis of the LEP devolution proposal approach.



- Although the latest 2014-based household projections are around 10% lower than the 2012-based equivalents that underpinned the SHMA analysis, this is due primarily to a fall in the underpinning population projections, rather than any significant change to household formation rates. On this basis it would be less likely to affect any employment-driven housing requirement, which would not be constrained to the 2014-based SNPP at the outset. For this reason it is considered that the latest projections in isolation would not justify WBC departing from the 1,000 dpa employment-led target.
- The SHMA's market signals uplift, at just 2.3%, is insufficient to address the signs of housing market stress currently exhibited in the Borough. On the basis of NLP's own analysis of the Practice Guidance's 6 key market signals, and the emerging LPEG approach, NLP considers that a 10% uplift should be applied to the demographic baseline in the Warrington context.
- The 2016 SHMA identifies a need for 220 affordable dpa in Warrington Borough over the period 2014-2037. Whilst NLP has some reservations concerning this figure, at an average delivery rate of 25% this would suggest a need for **880 dpa** to be provided overall.
- 1,147 dpa represents the level of housing growth necessary to provide a sufficiently large labour force to support the Experian job growth forecasts for the Borough. Warrington Borough has experienced very high levels of job growth over the past few years. Were this level of growth to continue, this would require an even higher dwelling need, of up to 1,367 dpa. This would suggest an employment-led range of housing need between 1,147 dpa and 1,367 dpa.
- The level of job growth associated with the Council's preferred option (the LEP devolution proposal) would indicate a level of housing need somewhere in between these two extremes. It is NLP's view that a figure of **at least 1,200 dpa**, rather than the 1,000 dpa suggested in the 2016 SHMA Update, would be the minimum level of housing growth needed to sustainably accommodate this level of job growth, using realistic economic activity growth rates.
- NLP considers that a suitable housing OAN range for Warrington Borough would therefore be in the order of **880-1,200 dpa**, with greater weight attached to the higher end of the range in order to align with the Borough's stated job growth objectives.

### **Q3: Do you consider the assessment of Employment Land Needs to be appropriate?**

No comment, other than there appears to be a misalignment between the level of employment land identified in the Local Plan Review (381 ha) and the level that could be sustained by the 1,000 dpa housing requirement (276 ha).

### **Q4: Do you consider the alignment of Housing Needs and Jobs Growth to be appropriate?**

Orica considers that it is wholly appropriate that WBC seeks to align both housing need and jobs growth and that such an approach is in accordance with the requirements set out in the Framework [§158].

Orica also welcomes the incorporation of a new employment-based scenario within the October 2016 SHMA Addendum. The Addendum model is based upon the LEP devolution proposals which seek to generate some 1,240 jobs per annum. The SHMA Addendum has translated this into a requirement of 984 dpa, subsequently rounded up to 1,000 dpa within the *Local Plan Review Scope and Contents* document.



Orica acknowledges that the use of the LEP devolution proposals for modelling future housing needs is appropriate as this features in both the housing and employment strategies. However, Orica considers that the LEP devolution proposals should be treated with an air of caution, as the scenario projects job growth at a rate that is below historic long term trends:

*“The long term trend in the Borough has shown an average employment growth of 1,573 over the 23 year period 1992-2014. If the same rate of growth was projected from 2016-2037 employment would have increased to 170,975, representing an increase of 36,175”<sup>1</sup> (Mickledore October 2016).*

Perhaps an even more fundamental concern than the overall level of job growth that the Council is planning for is the manner by which it has been factored into GL Hearn’s PopGroup model to generate an equivalent housing need.

Whilst this is considered in further detail in the Technical Report appended to this letter, we are concerned that GL Hearn has used what appear to be extremely optimistic economic activity growth rates for Warrington Borough. For example, to expect the economic activity rate for males aged between 35-49 to increase by 8 percentage points, from an already high rate of 89%, to 97% by 2037 is unrealistic; similarly, an increase of 12% for females in the same age category, resulting in a virtually full employment rate of 98%, does not accord with what might reasonably be expected to happen. This suggests that almost all families with children in Warrington will have both parents (aged between 25 and 49) in work. In contrast, across the country as a whole, the OBR forecasts that the proportion of economically active residents (both male and female) will actually decline in the 30-44 age bracket, and hence more workers will be required to support the same number of jobs.

Furthermore it is NLP’s view that the economic activity rates published by the forecasting agencies cannot be applied outside of each specific model, since they are influenced by all of the assumptions made about population, jobs, unemployment and commuting rates within the model. A more appropriate approach might have been the application of fixed economic activity rates based upon the local economic context and robust assumptions about future change, supported by external data sources such as OBR.

The application of unrealistic economic activity rates within both the SHMA and SHMA Addendum, under-estimates the level of net in-migration that would be required to sustain the local economy at the desired level and hence underplays the true level of housing need to reach a desired economic objective.

#### **Q5: Do you consider the assessment of land supply to be appropriate?**

On behalf of Orica, NLP has reviewed WBC’s 5-year housing land supply evidence in detail, with the findings appended to this letter. Having regard to the review of the 5 year housing land supply we consider that:

- There has been a shortfall in the number of new dwellings provided during the period 2014-2016 in the order of 1,282 dwellings (against a target of 1,000 dpa).
- Overall it is considered that a 5% buffer should be applied to the requirement and backlog in accordance with the Framework [§47] and Practice Guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> Mickledore (October 2016): *Analysis – A review of economic forecasts and housing numbers*, page 5



- The 5 year supply incorporates a windfall allowance of 64 for each year. NLP considers that for the first two years it is not unreasonable to assume that the Council would already have identified the vast majority of sites likely to come forward and are unlikely to be completely unforeseen opportunities. Consequently NLP considers that two years' worth of windfall allowance should be discounted from the supply.
- NLP notes that the Council has failed to make an allowance for lapse rates. NLP considers it to be appropriate to apply a 10% discount on deliverable sites with planning permission and a 15% discount of deliverable sites without planning permission. Such an approach would be in accordance with established case law.

With these caveats in mind, Table 1 indicates that, based on the Council's approach and their data assumptions, Warrington Borough would appear to have around 2.9 years forward supply of sites.

Table 1: 5-Year Land Supply Scenario Outcomes

Five Year Supply of Deliverable Housing Land	Council (assumed) five year housing land supply position	NLP five year housing land supply position	
		@880 dpa OAN	@1,200 dpa OAN
Total Housing Requirement (OAN = 2016/17 – 2020/21)	5 x 1,000 dpa = 5,000	4,400	6,000
Shortfall (2014-16= 1,282 dwellings delivered)	718	478	1,118
5% buffer (to requirement and backlog)	286	244	356
<b>Housing Supply Required 2016/17 – 2020/21</b>	<b>6,004</b>	<b>5,122</b>	<b>7,474</b>
Sites with Planning Permission	1,330	1,197	
Sites without Planning Permission	1,884	1,601	
Supply based on windfall allowance	320	192	
<b>Deliverable Supply</b>	<b>3,534</b>	<b>2,863</b>	
Surplus of Deliverable supply over supply required	<b>-2,470</b>	<b>-2,259</b>	<b>-4,611</b>
Number of Years Supply (expressed as Years of Residual Requirement)	<b>2.94</b>	<b>2.79</b>	<b>1.92</b>

Source: NLP analysis

Applying NLP's OAN range, incorporating a lapse rate and discounting two-years' worth of windfall allowance, would reduce this 5-year supply of housing land supply still further, to between 1.9 and 2.8 years depending upon the scale of housing need identified.

As such, NLP considers that even under the most optimistic assumptions and using the lowest housing OAN, Warrington Borough Council cannot demonstrate a defensible five year housing land supply position at the current time.

**Q6: Do you consider that Green Belt land will need to be released to deliver the identified growth?**

Orica agrees with the statement within the *Local Plan Review Scope and Contents* document [§2.20] that it will be essential that WBC releases substantial areas of land from the Green Belt if Warrington is to meet its own needs for housing and employment development.





Provision will also need to be made for the release of safeguarded land to provide the Plan with the necessary flexibility going forward (see Q8 below).

**Q7: Do you consider the three identified Strategic matters being the appropriate initial focus of the Local Plan Review?**

Having regard to the elements of the Local Plan quashed in the High Court, Orica considers that the scope of the three strategic matters is sufficient for the initial focus of the Local Plan Review.

**Q8: Do you agree that further land will need to be removed from the Green Belt and Safeguarded for future development needs beyond the Plan period?**

The Framework [§85] provides guidance to local authorities on the process of defining Green Belt boundaries, the following are of particular relevance:

*“where necessary identify in their plans areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt in order to meet longer term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period; and*

*Satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period.”*

Orica considers that in order for the Plan to accord with the requirements of the Framework, it will be necessary for WBC to ensure that sufficient land is released from the Green Belt to accommodate future development beyond the 20-year Plan period.

**Q9: Do you consider it is appropriate to include Minerals and Waste and Gypsy Traveller needs in the scope of the proposed Local Plan Review?**

No comment.

**Q10: Do you consider the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report to be appropriate?**

No comment - see separate site-specific representations.

**Q11: Do you consider the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process at Appendix 2 to be appropriate?**

No comment – see separate site-specific representations.

**Q12: Do you agree with the assessment of Local Plan Policies at Appendix 1?**

No comment.

**Q13: Do you consider the proposed 20 year Local Plan period to be appropriate?**

The Framework [§157] requires that Local Plans should “*be drawn up over an appropriate time scale, preferably a 15-year time horizon....*” Orica therefore considers that the proposed Plan period of 20 years accords with the Framework and is therefore appropriate.

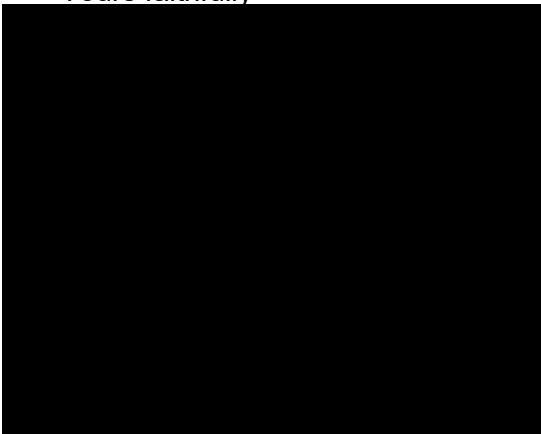


**Q14: Having read this document, is there anything else you feel we should include within the 'Preferred Option' consultation draft. Which you will be able to comment on at the next stage of consultation?**

No comment. See separate site-specific representations.

We trust that the above concerns will be given full and proper consideration by the Council. If you require anything further at this stage please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



**Appendix2: 'CallforSites'submission  
dated5December2016**

Planning Policy  
Warrington Borough Council  
New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH  
**BY EMAIL: LDF@WARRINGTON.GOV.UK**

3rd Floor  
One St James's Square  
Manchester M2 6DN

Date 5 December 2016  
Our ref 41888/SPM/WS/12855096v2  
Your ref

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Warrington BC Call for Sites Submission: Land at Glazebury Depot, Wilton Lane, Culcheth and Wider Land to the North of Culcheth**

Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) is pleased to submit, on behalf of our clients Orica Europe Ltd [Orica], representations in response to Warrington Borough Council's 'Call for Sites' request, which will help to shape, influence and inform the preparations of their new Local Plan, and the supporting background evidence.

Our representations relate to two sites:

- Land at Glazebury Depot, Wilton Lane, Culcheth; and,
- Wider land to the north of Culcheth (incorporating Land at Glazebury Depot).

It is anticipated that the information collated and presented as part of this consultation will form key evidence which will underpin the strategy and policies contained within the new draft Local Plan, and clearly demonstrates that sites should be allocated in the emerging draft Local Plan. This will provide beneficial information to ensure the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [SHLAA] and other related evidence is robust and up to date in support of the Local Plan.

When reviewing the Plan and preparing these representations, we have had due regard to the tests of 'soundness' set out in the National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] [§182] which stipulates that plans should be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with National Policy.

The guidance for preparing a SHLAA and the criteria for assessing sites are set out in the Framework and in more detail within the Planning Practice Guidance [PPG] (March 2014). The Framework identifies the advantages of carrying out land assessments for housing and economic development as part of the same exercise, in order that sites may be allocated for the use which is most appropriate. The Framework states that an assessment should:



- identify sites and broad locations with potential for development;
- assess their development potential;
- assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability).

This approach ensures that all land is assessed together as part of plan preparation to identify which sites or broad locations are the most suitable and deliverable for a particular use. Assessing the suitability, availability and achievability (including the economic viability of a site) will provide the information as to whether a site can be considered deliverable, developable or not currently developable for housing.

The PPG sets out criteria for sites to be considered:

- deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.
- developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development and there should be a reasonable prospect that the site is available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

When assessing whether a site is deliverable, developable or not currently developable local planning authorities should consider the suitability, availability and achievability of each site.

### **Land at Glazebury Depot, Wilton Lane, Culcheth**

Our client's site lies to the north of Culcheth and is illustrated in **Appendix 1**.

The site is approximately 20ha. Taking into account the need for strategic landscaping, open space and community facilities it is anticipated that the capacity of this site is approximately 540 to 900 homes (based on a density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare as indicated within SHLAA). It is an irregular rectangular shape and comprises land utilised for the storage of explosives and is enclosed by agricultural land. The site, accessed via Wilton Lane, is owned by Orica, who are promoting the site for residential and/or employment development.

The brownfield site lies within the defined Green Belt and the northern area is located within Flood Zone 2.

The attributes which make the site such a suitable location for future housing include:

- The site is previously developed brownfield land;
- The site is available and is capable of delivering housing and/or employment development within the medium term.
- The proximity to existing highway and public rights of way networks;
- Proximity to the existing built-up area of Culcheth for local services, including primary and secondary schools, shops and other facilities;
- There are existing and proposed employment opportunities for future residents are available in a number of nearby settlements, both within Warrington Borough and Wigan Borough;



- The capacity of the local infrastructure being able to accommodate the development (subject to any necessary contributions and investments);
- The site is capable of absorbing housing without coalescing adjoining settlements; and,

### ***Sustainability of the Site***

The Site is a sustainable location for housing and should be allocated for residential and/or employment development in the Council's new Local Plan, as it represents a sustainable, achievable and viable location with good access to services and facilities within Culcheth (Warrington), Lowton and Leigh (Wigan).

The redevelopment of the site will result in the removal of an existing hazardous installation and is of a sufficient size to accommodate a sustainable range of housing types, mix and size, which in turn will add to the creation of a vibrant and sustainable community. There is sufficient capacity within the existing schools, subject to contributions, to accommodate the proposed increase in residents.

The site is located approximately 2km (by road) from the defined Neighbourhood Centre of Culcheth which is served by a Sainsbury's food store in addition to other convenience and comparison retailers. The settlement also benefits from two local banks/building societies, two health centres / GP Practices, three primary schools and a high school. Existing public transport to Culcheth provides services to Warrington, Birchwood, Newton-le-Willows, Croft, Winwick, Burtonwood, Earlestone, Woolston, Leigh and Martinscroft.

The site is located approximately 8km from the town centre of Leigh and is served by a wide range of convenience and comparison retailers and the usual array of services and facilities associated with a town centre.

The site is located within 3km of the A580 which provides excellent access to major employment locations within the local area and beyond, such as Haydock Industrial Estate, Stone Croft Business park

The site has the potential to be well linked to the existing Public Rights of Way network, and provide excellent foot and cycle paths for both future residents of the site and residents of the nearby settlements.

Land located within the northern area of the site is located within flood zone two and has a limited risk of flooding. Any potential development can achieve the required level of flood resilience through appropriate layout and design in addition to incorporating attenuation and an appropriate surface water drainage system.

The site is not identified as a place of heritage or conservation significance.

### **Wider Land to the North of Culcheth**

This site comprises the Orica Glazebury depot and adjacent land which lies to the north of Culcheth and is illustrated in **Appendix 2**. The Site is in multiple ownership and various parties are promoting the site for residential and/or employment development.



The Government recognises that large new settlements have a key role to play in the meeting the future housing need of the country<sup>1</sup> and are seeking to encourage authorities to promote '*ambitious locally-led proposals for new communities that work as self-sustaining places*'. The Government are therefore proposing to update the New Towns Act 1981 to provide legislative support for the delivery of new garden cities, towns and villages. Orica consider that this site represents an excellent opportunity for a Garden Village scheme.

The Site extends to approximately 111ha; however additional adjoining land may also be available for development. Taking into account the need for strategic landscaping, open space and community facilities it is anticipated that the capacity of this site is approximately 3,300 to 5,500 homes (based on 150 ha with density of 30-50 dwellings per hectare in accordance with the SHLAA).

The site is broadly rectangular shape and comprises land utilised for the storage of explosives and Grade 3 agricultural land and is bounded to the north by the A580, the Chat Moss railway line to the south and agricultural land to the east and west. The site has limited tree cover with most specimens forming part of the field hedgerows. There are no designated heritage assets within or adjacent to the site. The nearest listed buildings and the North and South Barns at Hurst Hall Farm located to the east of the site. Other listed buildings within the general area include the Church of the All Saints and Speakman House to the east, Light Oaks Hall to the south east, Kenyon Hall and Lodge to the south west, Fair House farmhouse to the north west and Yew Tree Farm House to the north. The site has a number of existing public rights of way which can be maintained and enhanced to provide excellent foot and cycle links between settlements;

The site is subject to a number of constraints. It lies within the defined Green Belt. An area extending to approximately 30 ha along Carr Brook is situated within flood zone 2 with small sporadic areas of flood zone 3. An underground high pressure gas main crosses the site to the east running north / south.

The site has capacity to accommodate 3,500 to 6,500 new homes and therefore sits comfortably within the recommended range of 1,500 to 10,000 new homes that Government considers appropriate for Garden Village proposals. There is evidence to indicate that Warrington borough will need to release sufficient land from the Green Belt to accommodate between 3,976 and 11,448 new homes in order to meet future housing needs. Consequently it is considered that the site has potential to meet a significant proportion, if not all, of this need and therefore the allocation of this site would reduce the pressure to release Green Belt land from other more sensitive locations across the borough.

The LEP devolution proposals target a job growth of 28,520 during the period to 2037 whilst the Scope and Context document indicates a need for 381ha of employment land during the same period. Having regard to both the location and constraints of the site, it is well placed to accommodate new, high quality employment space with excellent access to the strategic highway network. It is therefore considered that the site is well located and has the qualities that will provide both new employment opportunities and accommodate the labour force required to meet the growth aspirations of both Warrington and Wigan Boroughs;

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<sup>1</sup> Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities (DCLG March 2016)



Due to the scale of development potential the site can form a new free-standing self-sustaining settlement within the northern area of Warrington borough. The opportunity to undertake such large scale development provides an opportunity to take advantage of economies of scale and act as a catalyst to maximise the extent of infrastructure that could be funded and supported. Potential infrastructure enhancements could include new services and facilities such as a new local centre, improved provision of services within Culcheth centre, a new school, sports and leisure facilities, direct access to the A580 and a new station at Kenyon Junction;

The site has an excellent location which has to scope to provide direct access to the A580 and the B5207. Residents within the area surrounding the site lack access to local railway services and significant investment has already been made into ascertaining viable solutions for the reduction in the use of the private car. The Leigh Area Rail Study undertaken by Halcrow on behalf of Transport for Greater Manchester and Wigan Council analysed a number of options to provide both hourly and half hourly services to Manchester Victoria and Liverpool Lime Street. The study concluded that a station at Kenyon with a Road Link and bus shuttle services (Leigh Guided Bus) would have the greatest Benefit to Cost Ratio of the 5 options, and would serve an annual passenger demand of 303,000. The development of a new Garden Village in this location would further boost the likely annual passenger demand for services. Having regard to the proximity of the site to Kenyon Junction, there is scope for the development of a new station to serve the residents of the Garden Village, Culcheth and Lowton through the provision of appropriate s106/CIL contributions.

In addition to the potential for a new rail station and enhanced rail services, the proposed site is of a sufficient scale to support new public bus services to serve new and existing residents.

A brief assessment of existing educational facilities within the area indicates that many are operating at or close to maximum capacity. Adopting a somewhat piecemeal approach to new housing development across the borough is likely to result in an increase in pressure across many schools. The development of a new Garden Village on a single site will provide a new school and focussing S106 / CIL contributions in such a manner will result in greater value for money in terms of educational outputs.

In considering the key aims of Warrington Borough, it is considered that the site provides an excellent opportunity to make a significant contribution to meeting the future housing needs of the borough in addition to a modest contribution to employment needs. The location provides an excellent opportunity to maximise potential links with a range of transport modes and minimise the reliance on private vehicles.

Overall the site is considered to be suitable, available and achievable, with Orica and other landowners keen to bring this site forward for development at the earliest opportunity in order to support the Borough in meeting its housing requirements and needs.

### **Green Belt Release**

WBC have accepted that the release of land from the Green Belt will be necessary in order to meet the future development needs of the Borough. The recent Green Belt Assessment undertaken by ARUP has not assessed these particular parcels of land in terms of their contribution to Green Belt function, although it has assessed the general area in which they are located.





It is noted that the methodology for the assessment has not allowed for due consideration to be given to the potential impact of the release of a small number of large sites. In terms of release, the methodology has been geared towards the assessment of site specific parcels and the assessment of strategic purposes of the Green belt has not extended as far as the consideration of areas of search for wider release and the overriding role and purposes of the Green Belt in Warrington. Instead the assessment appears to focus on the potential of a larger number of smaller sites that would represent small scale urban extensions. Having regard to the volume of land that Warrington Borough is likely to be required to release from the Green Belt, it is recommended that due consideration be given to garden village style development opportunities when reviewing Green Belt boundaries and allocating land for development.

Figure 7 of the Green Belt Assessment illustrates the sites are located within *General Area 22*, which is considered to make an overall moderate contribution the Green Belt. The assessment concludes that the general area makes no contribution to urban sprawl or the preservation of the setting of a historic town. The assessment states that the area makes a moderate contribution to the prevention of neighbouring towns merging into one another, however it notes that *'whereby a reduction in the gap would significantly reduce the actual distance between the towns, albeit it would not result in them merging'*.

Orica acknowledge that as a large area of generally undeveloped land, the sites do perform some Green Belt function. Orica also acknowledge that WBC will be required to undertake a further review of the Green Belt in order to identify an appropriate volume of land to accommodate its future development requirements. Orica consider that the release of a single large tract of land which is considered to make a 'moderate' contribution to the Green Belt could significantly reduce the potential number of sites required, minimising the widespread degradation of Green Belt across the borough. Orica also consider that it appropriate for WBC to consider any potential impact on the Green Belt against other key long term impacts including public transport, provision of local services , general infrastructure enhancements and future developments, including HS2.

## Conclusions

The sites north of Culcheth will significantly boost the housing supply in the Borough. Allocation of these sites would contribute to ensuring that the new Local Plan would be sound as it would be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Based upon the above and in line with the factors to be considered in assessing the sites' suitability, as set out in the PPG, with the exception of the Green Belt designation, there are no policy restrictions, physical problems or limitations, other potential impacts or environmental conditions which cannot be accommodated and managed which would preclude either residential or mixed use development on these sites. WBC acknowledge that the release of Green Belt land will be necessary in order to meet the future development requirements of the Borough and Orica consider that the release of this site, having regard to it size, location and ability to significantly enhance public transport access for adjacent settlements, would make a significant contribution to meeting these needs.

Orica is keen to continue the discussions in relation to the potential for the development at the Glazebury depot and the wider site, and with the possibility to contribute to the delivery of infrastructure both within and in close proximity to the site to enable the delivery of public transport, highways links and employment floorspace.

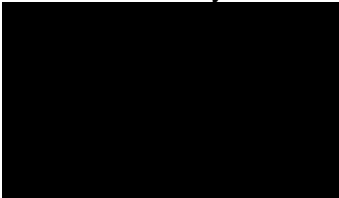


These representations have demonstrated that the sites at Culcheth are sustainable opportunities, with limited flood risk and are development-ready in the medium to long-term. In particular the larger site has potential to make a significant contribution to meeting the future needs of the borough and be developed in accordance with Garden Village principles. Accordingly we respectfully request that both sites are released from the Green Belt and allocated for future housing to allow the long-term housing land requirements to be met.

These sites are suitable, available and achievable for residential development. In light of these conclusions we request that the Council include these sites in the emerging new Local Plan for the Borough.

We hope that the above assists in the Council's consideration of the sites. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully



Senior Director

Copy

■

# **APPENDIX 1**

LAND AT GLAZEBURY DEPOT  
WILTON LANE  
CULCHETH

<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

# 'Call for Sites'

## Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

### Call for Sites Registration Form

October 2016

**Please note this 'Call for Sites' is for five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500sqm of floor space) and above, Gypsy, Traveller and Show People and Minerals and Waste sites.**

The identification of sites does not imply that the Council considers that the site is suitable for development, either now or in the future. It cannot be taken as representing either an intention to allocate these sites, or as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Potential sites that have been identified will be further tested through the Plan-making process, including through the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, several stages of public participation and independent examination.

Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

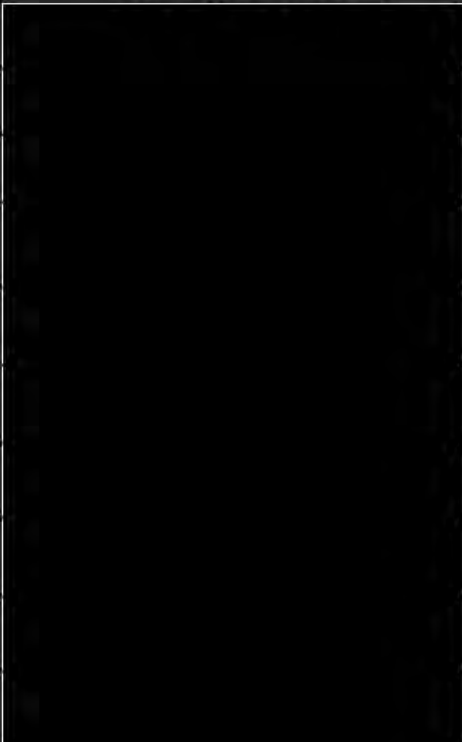

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

	Your details	Your Agent's details	
Name			
Position			
Organisation			
Address			
	Town		
	Postcode		
Telephone			
Email address			

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a separate form.

Name of site /other names it's known by	Glazebury Depot	
Address	Land at Glazebury Depot	
	Wilton Lane	
	Town	Culcheth
	Postcode	
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	Easting : 364988	Northing : 396995
Site area (hectares)	20	
Net developable area (hectares)	20	
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)	Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lessee <input type="checkbox"/>
	Prospective Purchaser <input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour <input type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Please state:

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.

**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses: 900	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)	B1, B2, B8					
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	30-50 dwellings per hectare					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3
Name	██████████		
Address	██████████		
	██████████		
	██████████		
	Town ██████████		
Postcode ██████████			

Or: I do not know who owns the site

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?  
Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?

--

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Any comments</i>
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

--



## (6) Site Condition

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)	[REDACTED] Storage Depot	
Neighbouring Uses	Agricultural Land	
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	20 %	Proportion not covered by buildings	80 %
---------------------------------	------	-------------------------------------	------

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?	20	buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use: 75	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant: 25	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?	No	

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?	100	%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?		% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?		% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)	100	% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Mains sewerage	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Drainage, flood risk	Yes	Part of site within Flood Zone 2	detailed flood Risk Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Tree Preservation Orders	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Electricity supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Gas supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Telecommunications	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## **(8) Site Availability**

*Please indicate when the site may be available*

Excluding planning policy constraints, when do you believe this site could be available for development?

Immediately

(Note: to be "immediately available", a site must be cleared, unless being considered for conversions.)

If not immediately, please state when it could be available: TBC - BUT WITHIN 5 YEARS

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

Site is an [REDACTED] storage facility and would require closure and remediation prior to development.

## **(9) Any Other Information**

Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary.

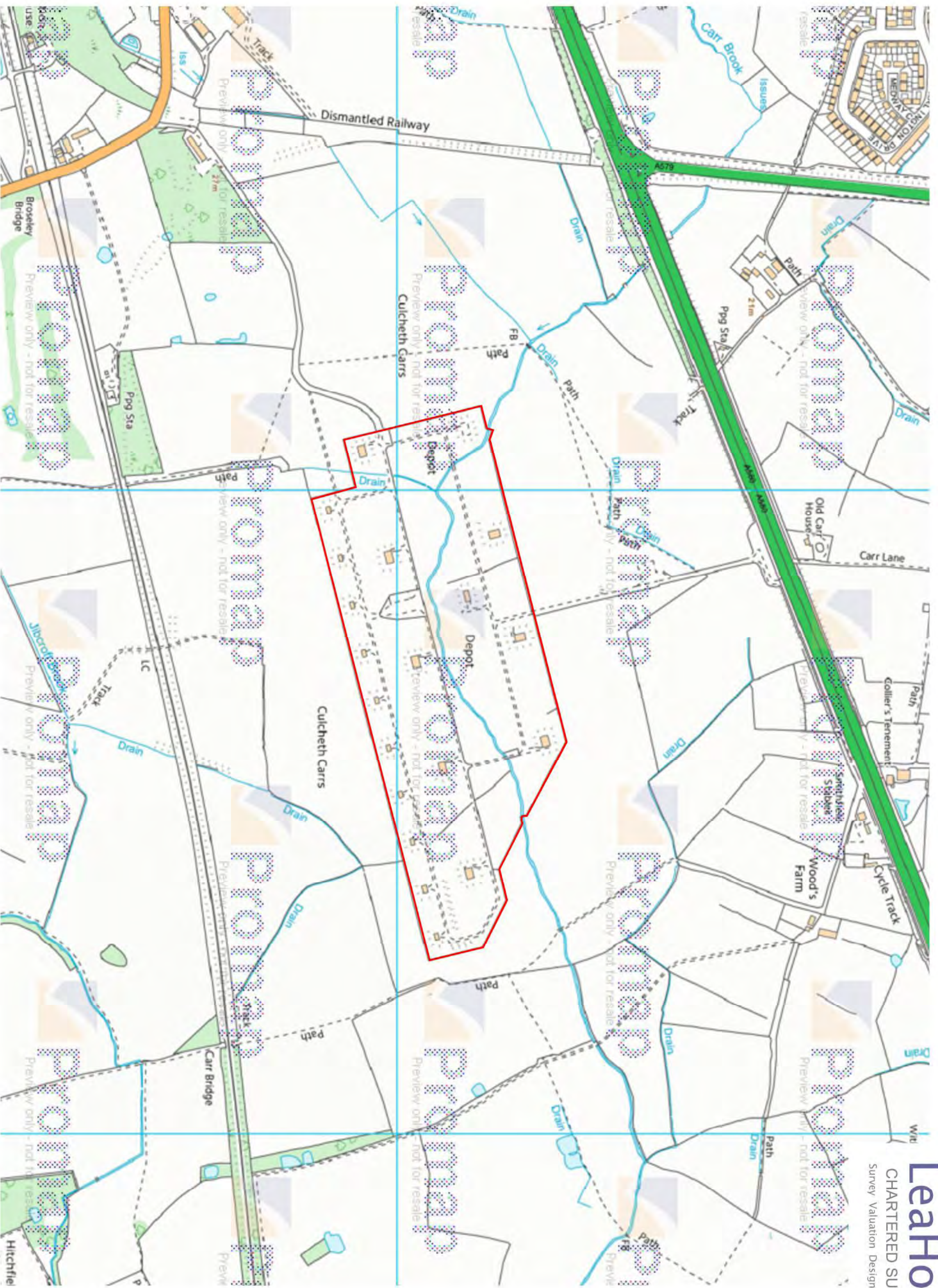
Please see supporting letter.

**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

**01925 442841**

This form is available in other formats or languages on request.



# **APPENDIX 2**

WIDER LAND TO THE NORTH OF CULCHETH

<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
Date received:	
Scanned /Saved:	
Plotted:	
Site Ref:	
SHLAA Site Ref:	

# 'Call for Sites'

## Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review

### Call for Sites Registration Form

October 2016

**Please note this 'Call for Sites' is for five or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500sqm of floor space) and above, Gypsy, Traveller and Show People and Minerals and Waste sites.**

The identification of sites does not imply that the Council considers that the site is suitable for development, either now or in the future. It cannot be taken as representing either an intention to allocate these sites, or as a material consideration in the determination of a planning application.

Potential sites that have been identified will be further tested through the Plan-making process, including through the Spatial Distribution and Site Assessment Process, Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment, several stages of public participation and independent examination.

Please also note that all the responses and information received as part of the 'Call for Sites' will be published and made available for public viewing as part of the open and transparent Plan making process.

**NOTE:** Please read the accompanying guidance note [here](#) before completing this form and complete a **separate** form for each site that you are submitting to the Council.

***Please return your completed form and any accompanying supporting material to Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council no later than 5.00pm on Monday 05<sup>th</sup> December 2016.***

By e-mail: [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

By post: Planning Policy, Warrington Borough Council, New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH

Should you require further advice and guidance on completing this form, please contact the Planning Policy Team by telephone on 01925 442841 or by e-mail to [ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

## (1) Your Details

Please provide your contact details and those of your agent (if applicable). Where provided, we will use your Agent's details as our primary contact.

	Your details	Your Agent's details
Name		
Position		
Organisation		
Address		
Town		
Postcode		
Telephone		
Email address		

## (2) Site Details

Please provide the details of the site you are suggesting. If you are suggesting more than one site, please use a separate form.

Name of site /other names it's known by	Wider Land to the North of Culcheth	
Address		
	Town	
	Postcode	
Ordnance Survey Grid Reference	Easting : 364664	Northing : 396787
Site area (hectares)	111	
Net developable area (hectares)	111	
What is your interest in the site? (please tick one)	Owner <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lessee <input type="checkbox"/>
	Prospective Purchaser <input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Please state:

**Please Note:** It is essential that you provide a map showing the site's location and detailed boundaries for each submission.



**(3a) Proposed future use(s)**

Please indicate the preferred use that you would like the site to be considered for. Please also indicate any other uses you would consider acceptable. If you wish the site to be considered for a mix of uses, please tick all uses that apply.

	Residential	Gypsy & Travellers	Employment	Retail	Leisure	Other*
Preferred future use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative future use(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potential Capacity	houses: 5500	Number of Pitches:	SqM	SqM	SqM	SqM
	or flats:					
Employment Use Class (E.g. B1)	B1, B2, B8					
* If "Other", please indicate which use(s):						
Potential Density	up to 50 dwellings per hectare					
	Has any design, viability, master planning work or other studies been undertaken for any proposed use?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**(3b) Proposed future use(s) - Minerals and Waste**

Details:

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3
Name			
Address			
Town			
Postcode			

Or: I do not know who

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?

Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?

TBC

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

		<i>Any comments</i>
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

#### (4) Site Ownership

Please record the site ownership details. If there are more than three owners, please record the fourth owner, etc. on a separate sheet. Please indicate the extent of individual landholding(s) on the site map.

If you do not know who owns the site, please state so below.

	Owner 1	Owner 2	Owner 3
Name			
Address			
	Town		
	Postcode		

Or: I do not know who owns the site

Has the owner (or each owner) indicated support for proposed redevelopment?  
Please also record these details for the 4<sup>th</sup> and subsequent owners (where necessary).

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Are there any Restrictive Covenants & Ransom Strips affecting the site?

TBC

#### (5) Market Interest

Please choose the most appropriate category below to indicate what level of market interest there is in the site:

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Any comments</i>
Site is owned by a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site under option to a developer	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Enquiries received	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Site is being marketed	<input type="checkbox"/>	
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Not known	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

## (6) Site Condition

Please record the current use(s) of the site (or for vacant sites, the previous use, if known) and the neighbouring land uses.

Current use(s)	[REDACTED] Storage Depot and Agricultural Land	
Neighbouring Uses	Agricultural Land	
If vacant	Previous use(s)	
	Date last used	

What proportion of the site is made up of buildings, and what proportion is (open) land?

Proportion covered by buildings	5	%	Proportion not covered by buildings	95	%
---------------------------------	---	---	-------------------------------------	----	---

If there are buildings on the site, please answer the following questions:

How many buildings are there on the site?	20	buildings
What proportion of the buildings are currently in use?	% in use: 75	%
	% derelict:	%
	% vacant: 25	%
Are any existing buildings on the site proposed to be converted?	No	

For the **parts of the site not covered by buildings**, please answer these questions:

What proportion of the land is currently in active use?	100	%
What proportion is <b>greenfield</b> (not previously developed)?	80	% (A)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> and cleared?	0	% (B)*
What proportion is <b>previously developed</b> but not cleared? (e.g. demolition spoil, etc.)	20	% (C)*

\* A plus B plus C should add to 100%.

Please provide any additional comments on a separate sheet if necessary.

## (7) Constraints to Development

Please tell us about any known constraints that will affect development for the proposed use, details of what action is required, how long it will take and what progress has been made.

Please use a separate sheet where necessary to provide details. If using separate sheets, it would be helpful to make reference there to the particular constraint, e.g (7)(e) – Drainage.

	Yes, No or Don't know	Nature and severity of constraint *	Action needed, timescales and progress	Confirmed by technical study or by service provider?	
				Yes	No
a) Land contamination	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Land stability	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Mains water supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Mains sewerage	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Drainage, flood risk	Yes	Part of site within Flood Zone 2		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Tree Preservation Orders	No			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Electricity supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Gas supply	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Telecommunications	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Highways	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
k) Ownership, leases etc.	Yes	Multiple Owners		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
l) Ransom strips, covenants	TBC			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
m) Other (Please provide details)				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## **(8) Site Availability**

*Please indicate when the site may be available*

Excluding planning policy constraints, when do you believe this site could be available for development?

Immediately No (Note: to be "immediately available", a site must be cleared, unless being considered for conversions.)

If not immediately, please state when it could be available: TBC - BUT WITHIN 5 YEARS

If the site is not available immediately, please explain why – e.g. the main constraint(s) or delaying factor(s) and actions necessary to remove these:

Most of land currently within agricultural use, but farming activities are able to cease prior to development. Part of land is an [REDACTED] depot and would need to be cleared and appropriate remediation undertaken

## **(9) Any Other Information**

Please tell us anything else of relevance regarding this site if not already covered above that will ensure that it contributes positively to the achievement of sustainable development. Please use a separate sheet/s if necessary.

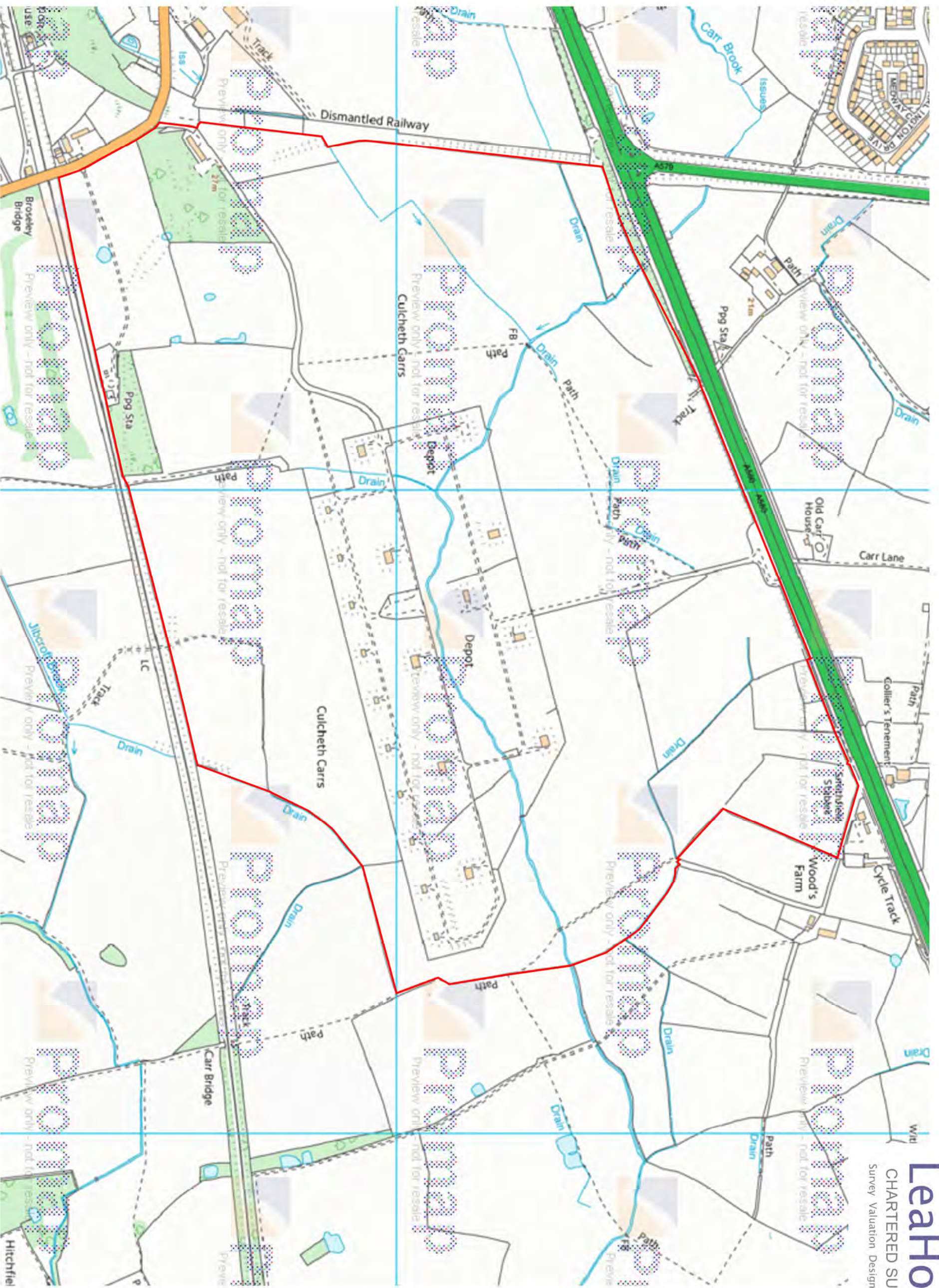
Please see supporting letter.

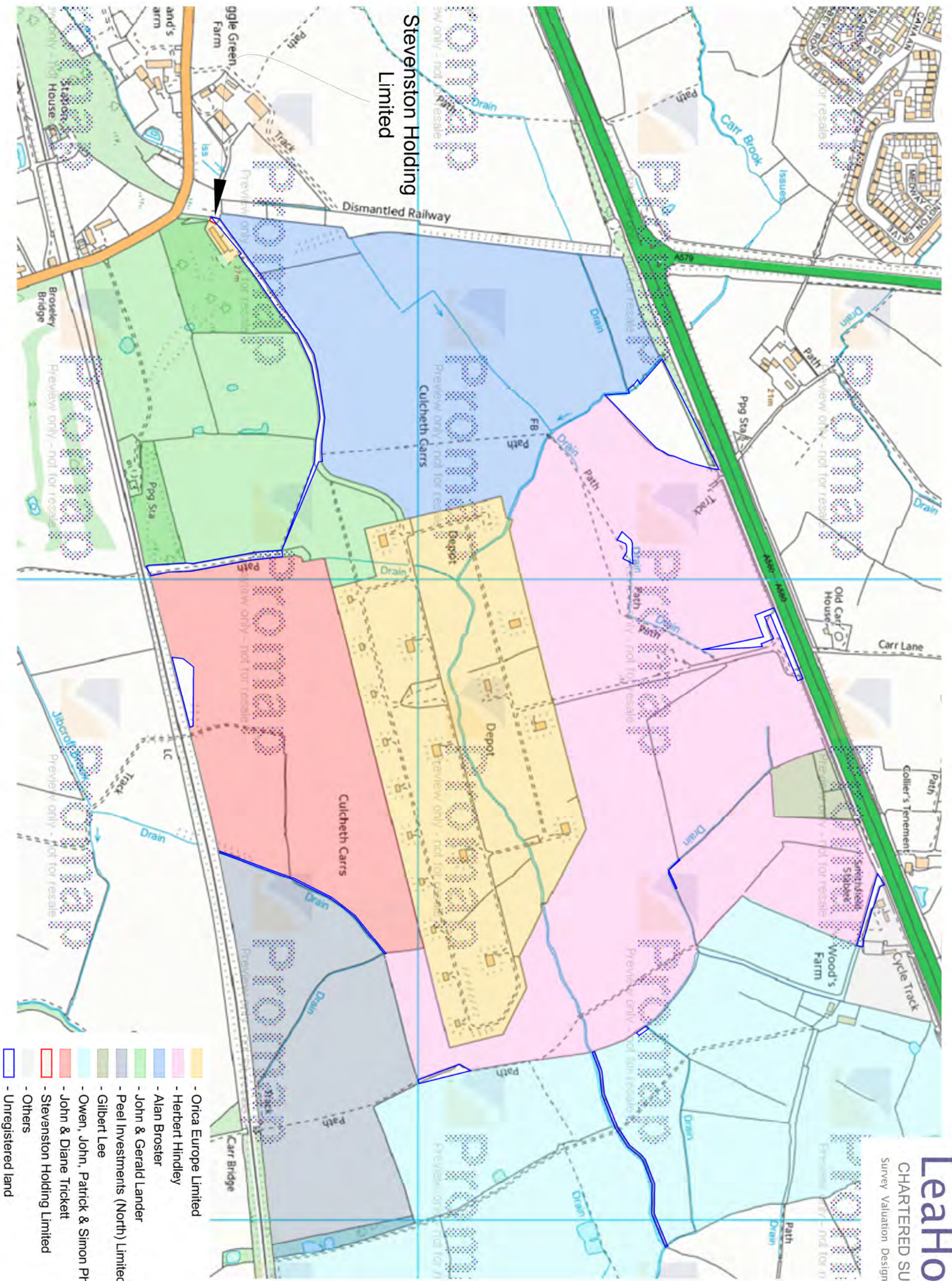
**Planning Policy– Warrington Borough Council,  
New Town House, Buttermarket Street, Warrington, WA1 2NH**

[ldf@warrington.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@warrington.gov.uk)

**01925 442841**

This form is available in other formats or languages on request.





- Orica Europe Limited
- Herbert Hindley
- Alan Broster
- John & Gerald Lander
- Peel Investments (North) Limited
- Gilbert Lee
- Owen, John, Patrick & Simon Philbin
- John & Diane Trickett
- Stevenston Holding Limited
- Others
- Unregistered land

Stevenston Holding Limited



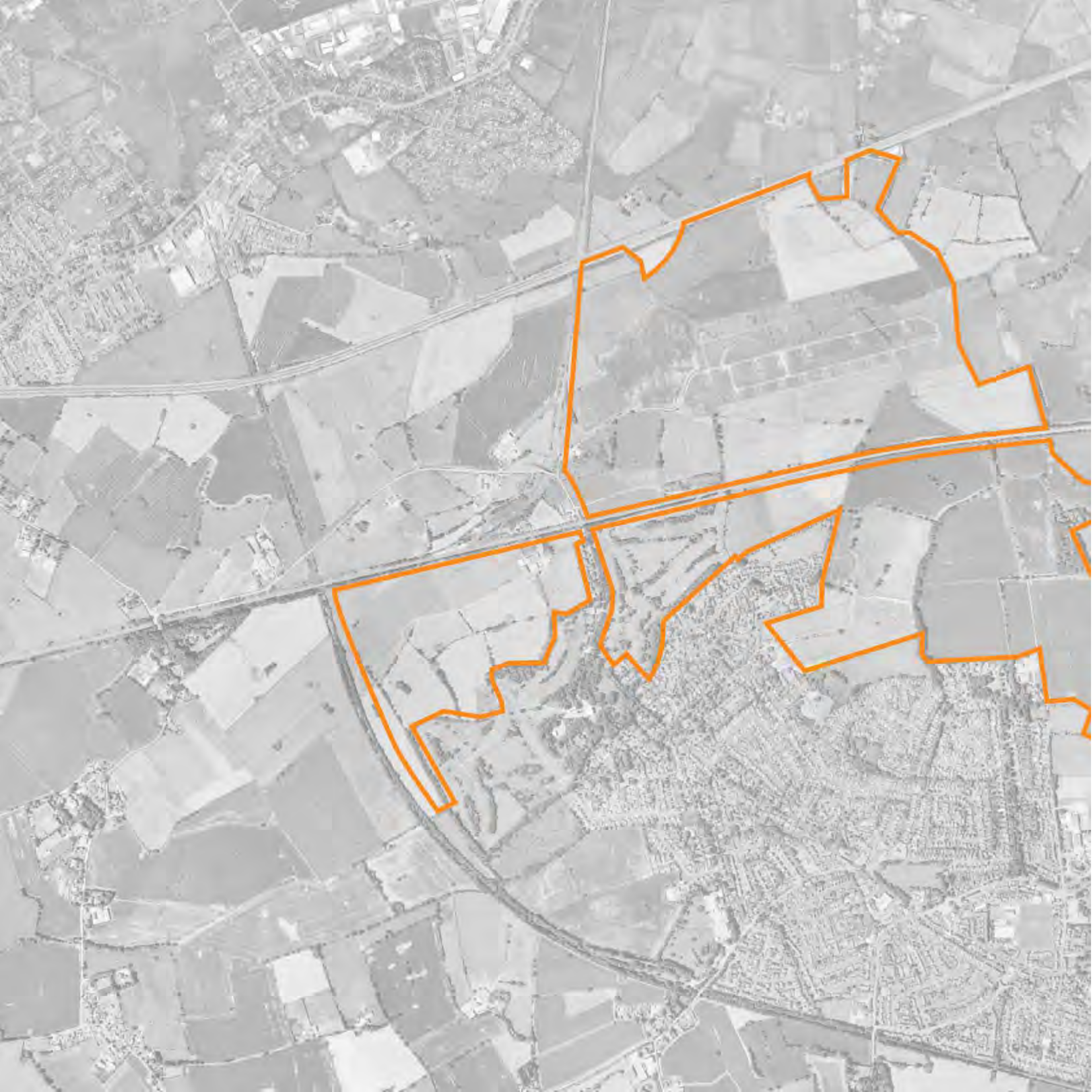
# **Appendix3: DevelopmentStatement**

# CARR BROOK

## Garden



**Culcheth**





# CONTENTS

**01** introduction & vision

**02** strategic context

**03** need for green belt development

**04** technical considerations

**05** initial masterplanning

**06** benefits

**07** conclusions

# 01

## INTRODUCTION & VISION

1.1 introduction

1.2 vision





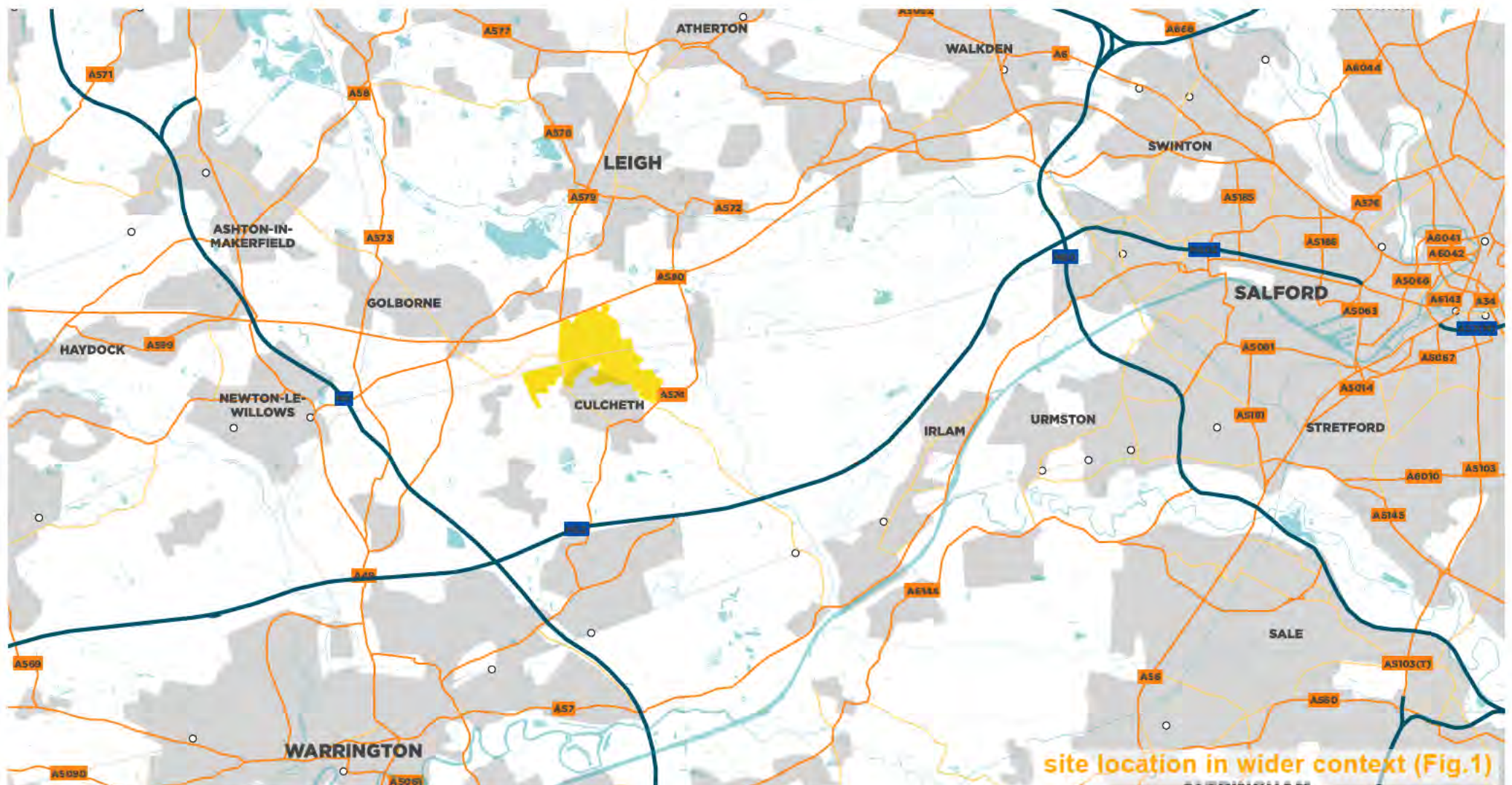
# 1.1 introduction

This Development Statement has been prepared on behalf of Orica Europe Ltd [Orica] to promote their land to the north of the settlement of Culcheth for development. The site is a significant constraint on the growth potential of Culcheth, and its redevelopment provides a real opportunity to meet the development needs of the area in a sustainable and co-ordinated way whilst facilitating investment in strategic infrastructure, enhancing sustainability and economic growth of the region.

The land at Carr Brook Garden, identified in Figure 1 presents a unique opportunity to create a sustainable, distinctive and attractive community that could deliver much needed housing and support economic growth and prosperity within Warrington and the wider region.

The purpose of this Development Statement is to:

- 1 Set out the strategic context for Carr Brook Garden and its relationship with the surrounding area;
- 2 Explain why the land no longer fulfils Green Belt purposes and identifies the exceptional circumstances which necessitates its removal from the Green Belt in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework;
- 3 Illustrate Orica's vision for Carr Brook Garden;
- 4 Identify the scale of development that can be accommodated and the potential benefits that arise from it; and,
- 5 Demonstrate that Carr Brook Garden provides a unique opportunity for the creation of a new sustainable settlement which will provide identified housing and employment needs and provide economic benefits not only to local communities but also the wider Warrington region.



## Context

Founded in 1874, Orica has more than 140 years of experience in innovation and investment. They are the global leader in mining and civil services, with a diverse workforce of around 11,500 employees, and are well established internationally. Their commitment to operating safely, responsibly and sustainably underpins everything they do. It is acknowledged that this document is the start of the process of future development of this site and Orica are committed to undertaking further technical work as required and to consult widely with the local community and stakeholders, to refine and develop the strategy for the site, to the benefit of neighbouring communities.

Orica own the Glazebury explosives storage depot, a site of approximately 20 hectares [ha] in area, located north of Cul-

cheth, positioned between the East Lancashire road (A580) and the Liverpool to Manchester railway line. As a result of the site's current function, a use-limiting explosion safeguarding zone (circa 120ha) put in place by the Health and Safety Executive [HSE] radiates uniformly from the site extending as far as the northern limits of the residential areas of Culcheth.

Orica are considering options for the future of the site. The release of this wider land, which is currently mainly in agricultural use, is beholden upon the cessation of Orica's operations. However, this could offer a great opportunity for the development of a new community providing much needed housing and employment provision for Warrington and the wider region.





# 1.2 vision

Carr Brook Garden represents a unique and strategic

Warrington and the wider area; provide much needed housing for Warrington that would be supported by new transport and social infrastructure, including potentially a new train station, schools, local retail, leisure and employment uses.

There is scope for Carr Brook Garden to deliver up to 4,500 new homes. The scale of growth is such that it is capable of creating a successful, liveable place focussed around a series of neighbourhoods that are genuinely sustainable. It should facilitate the delivery of strategically important rail / public transport infrastructure, facilitating the connection of the existing network maximising connectivity for the proposed and surrounding communities.

The vision for Carr Brook Garden has been informed by a number of underlying design principles. These have been derived from a study of its context, including the surrounding

settlement of Culcheth, the historic growth pattern of the area, existing features on site and from the needs of the local and wider communities.

carefully considered to create a coherent masterplan with a compelling narrative, and a focus on the creation of a sustainable new community with direct access to green spaces within a countryside setting in accordance with the Garden Village concept.







train station



cycle routes



farmer's market



high street



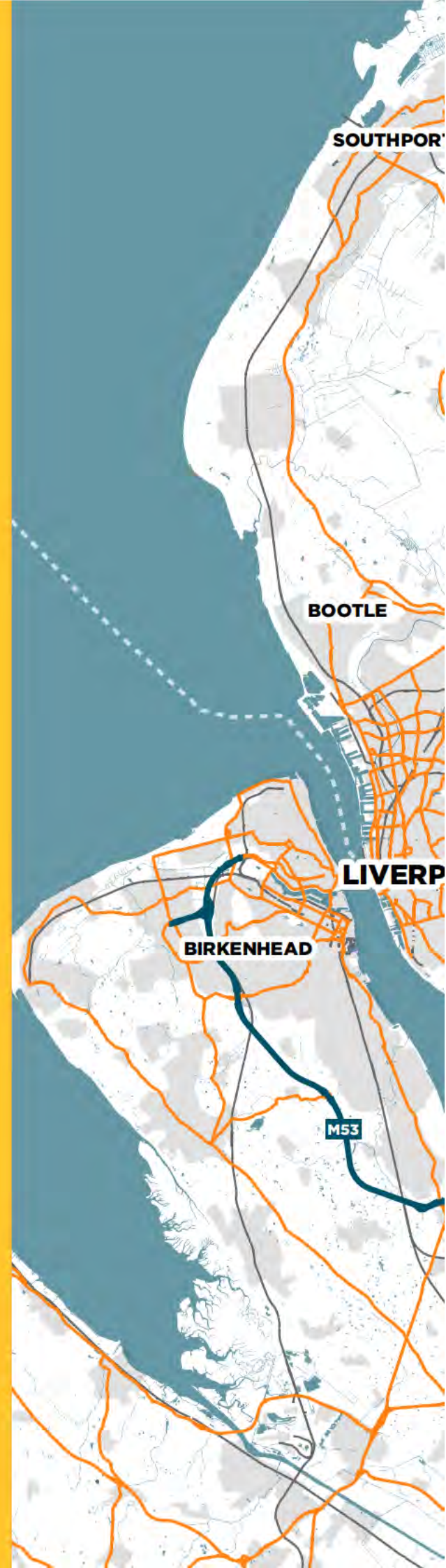
RUNDLE PLACE

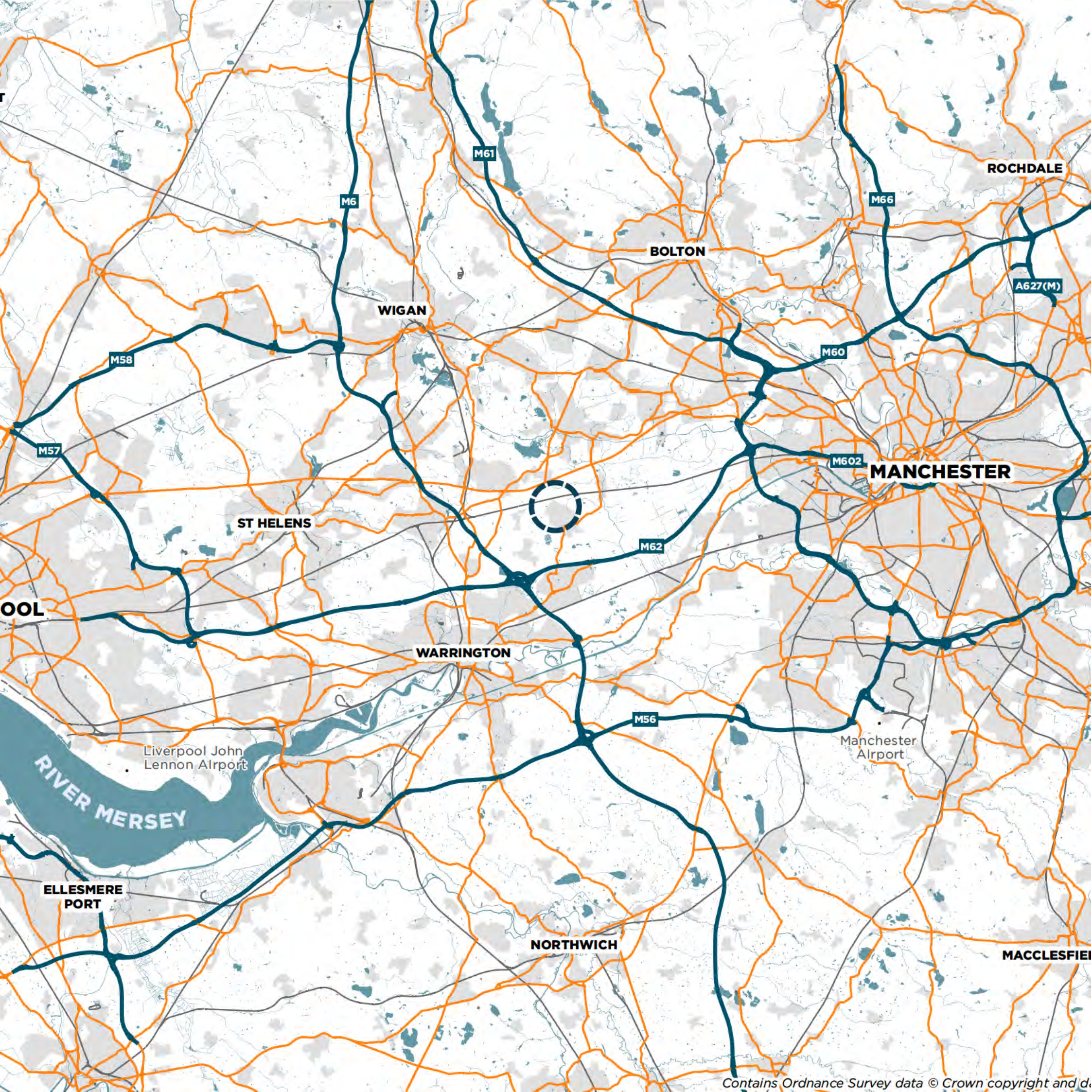


# 02

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 setting & relationships
- 2.2 historic growth patterns
- 2.3 sustainability





ROCHDALE

BOLTON

WIGAN

MANCHESTER

ST HELENS

WOLLESTON

WARRINGTON

Liverpool John Lennon Airport

Manchester Airport

RIVER MERSEY

ELLESMERE PORT

NORTHWICH

MACCLESFIELD

# 2.1 setting and relationships





The land at Carr Brook Garden, positioned to the north of Culcheth comprises Glazebury Depot which extends to approximately 20 hectares, along with surrounding agricultural land, totalling approximately 120 hectares. Culcheth is located 11.4km north-east of Warrington town centre and is ideally positioned between the major cities of Liverpool and Manchester. Equally Culcheth is conveniently located close to a number of towns including Leigh, Land Side, Lowton, Aspull Common, Hope Carr, and Glazebury.

Strategically the development land north of Culcheth is ideally located, being positioned immediately adjacent to the East Lancashire Road (A580) which links Manchester and Liverpool. The development land is also bisected by the Liverpool-Manchester railway line which offers the opportunity for the creation of a new train station which would encourage sustainable travel by residents of Carr Brook Garden and the surrounding urban areas.

There are a number of physical features which demarcate the extent of land available for Carr Brook Garden. The A580 bounds the land to the north, Culcheth Linear Park (a dismantled railway line) lies to the west and the northern fringes of housing developments in Culcheth lie to the south. To the west is the proposed alignment of HS2 as it approaches its connection onto the existing West Coast Main Line to the north of Lowton / Golborne.

The site is bisected by the Liverpool-Manchester railway line; and the Carr Brook, from which the proposed community derives its name, runs through the site east to west. The Glazebury Depot currently accommodates an explosives storage facility, and is therefore associated with the Glazebury Depot, there are a small number of agricultural buildings located across the wider area.

An area extending to approximately 30 ha, along Carr Brook, is

An underground high pressure gas main crosses the eastern edge of the site running north / south. There are a number of listed buildings within the general vicinity of the land to the north of Culcheth, but they are located at such a distance that it is not anticipated that Carr Brook Garden would negatively impact upon them.



# 2.2 historic growth patterns

## Agricultural origins

The basic structure of settlement at Culcheth was established in the medieval period. Culcheth was predominantly an agricultural settlement with sparsely inhabited land, surrounded by areas

the adjacent cottages generated a basic street network that still underlies the settlement structure today.

## Industrial age

Culcheth remained relatively undeveloped during the industrial age despite the development of the railways to the north known as the Liverpool & Manchester Railway [L&MR] line and west the Great Central Railway [GCR] line between Manchester Central and Wigan Central. Two stations served the area with Culcheth Station located on the GCR line and Kenyon Junction enabling interchange between the GCR and the L&MR.

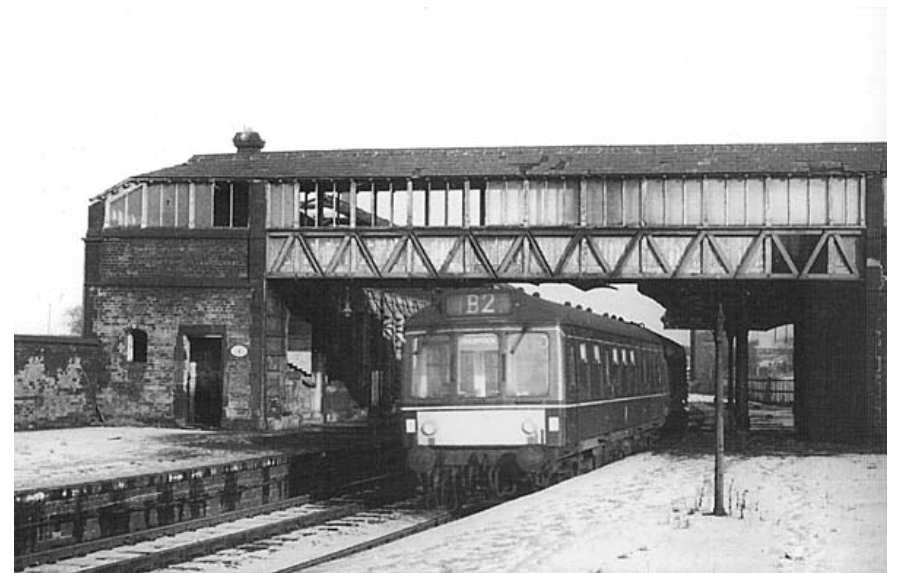
The village became home to the cotton industry with individual cottage-based weavers and later the development of Daisy Bank Mill. The Cottage Homes to the north of the village originally were developed to house orphans which later became Newchurch Hospital.

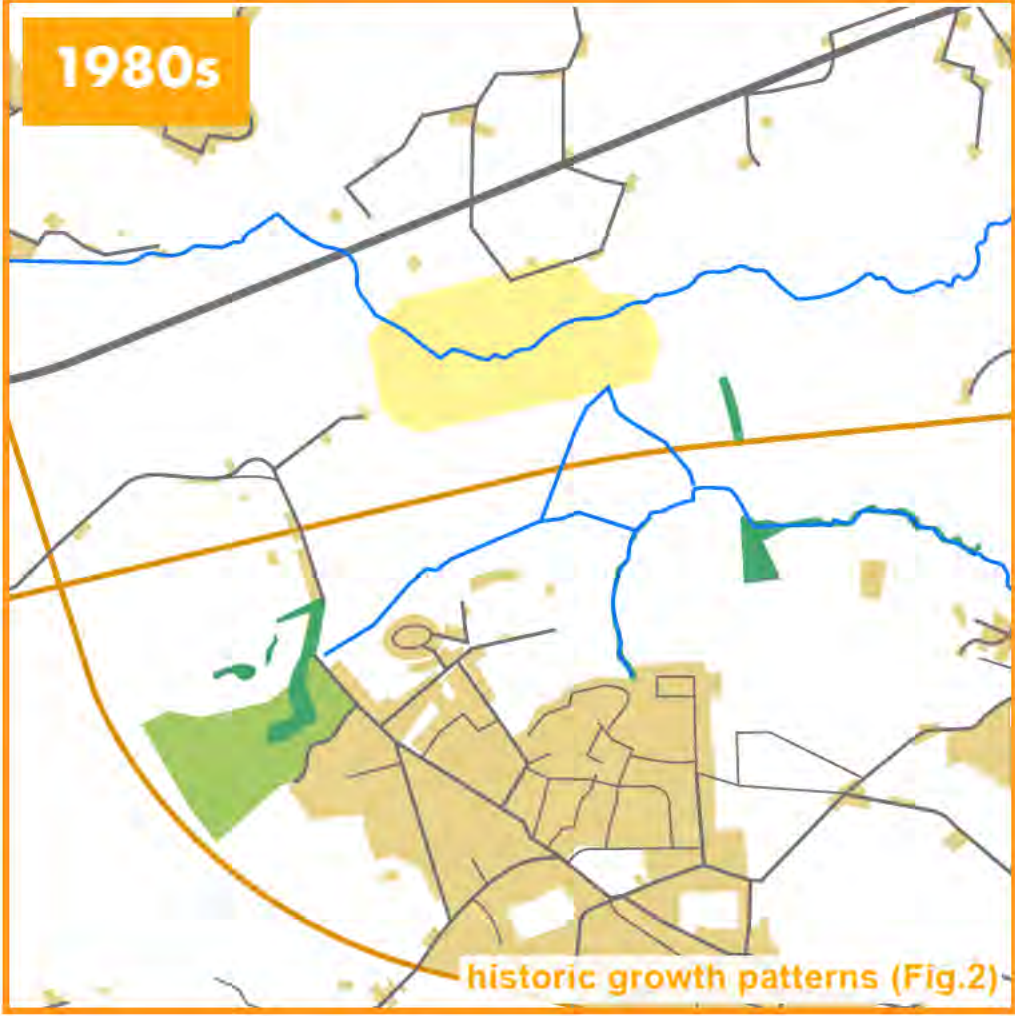
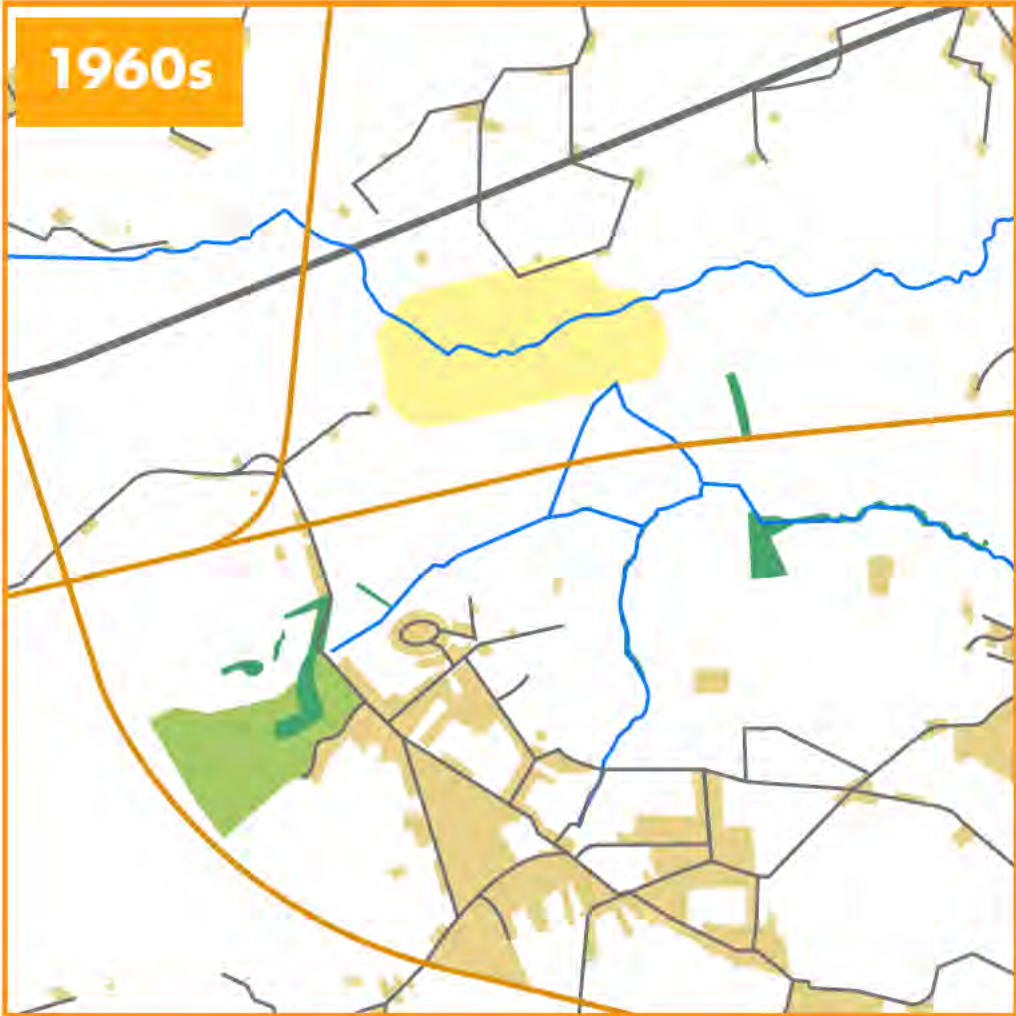
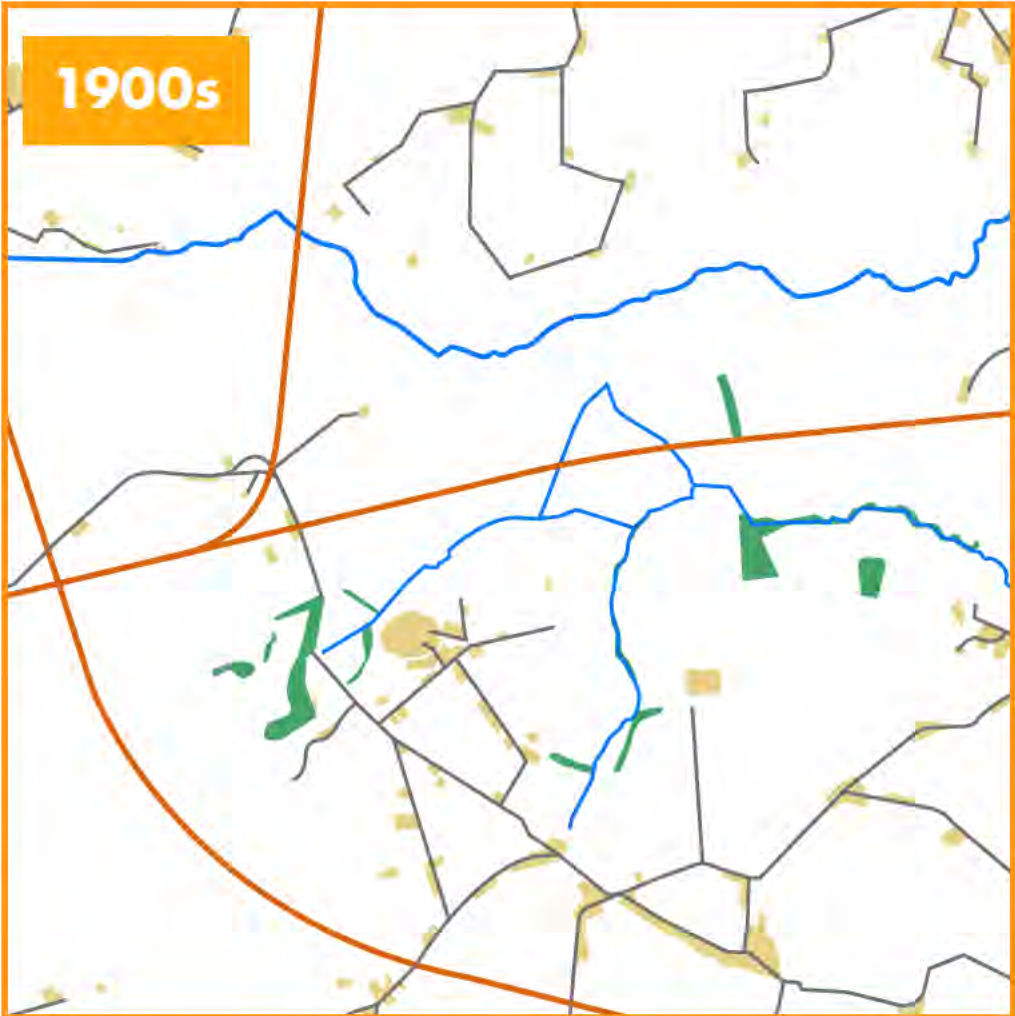
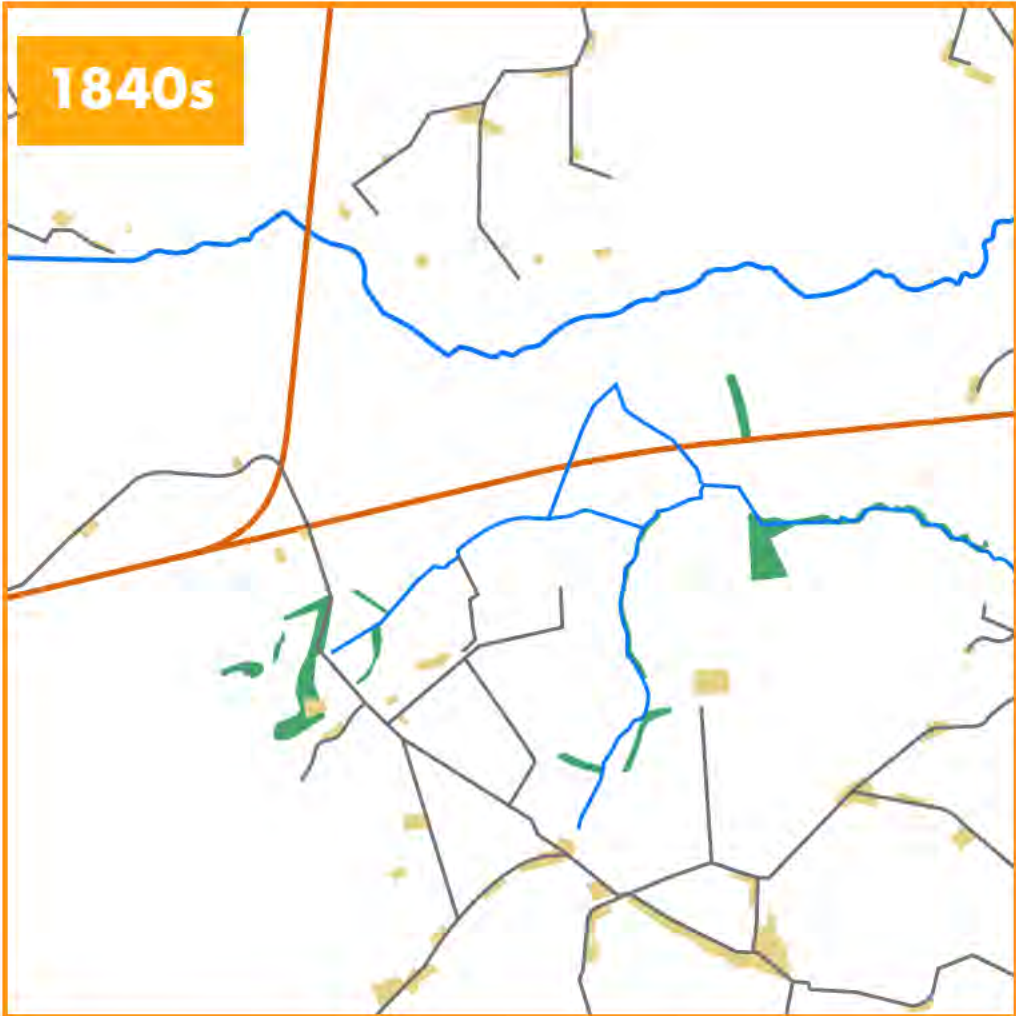
## New Town era and beyond

Culcheth remained relatively unaltered through the early part of the 20th century with small areas of ribbon development. The train stations serving Culcheth were closed during the period of the Beeching cuts in the mid-1960s.

It was not until the major growth period of the 1970s and 80s, during the period of major growth at Warrington New Town that Culcheth took its current form. A major period of housing development merged Twiss Green into the main village and grew the settlement to the north and east beyond W

Growth thereafter has focused around small scale housing and the redevelopment and expansion of the Newchurch Hospital site for residential use to the North West of the village. The availability of the Carr Brook Garden land now presents a unique opportunity to meet the development needs of the area in a sustainably planned way and bring economic growth to the region.





## 2.3 sustainability

As demonstrated in Figure 3, Carr Brook Garden is well-located in relation to existing services and facilities within Culcheth. It is also proximate to Leigh town centre which is served by a wide range of convenience stores, supermarket retailers and community services and facilities.

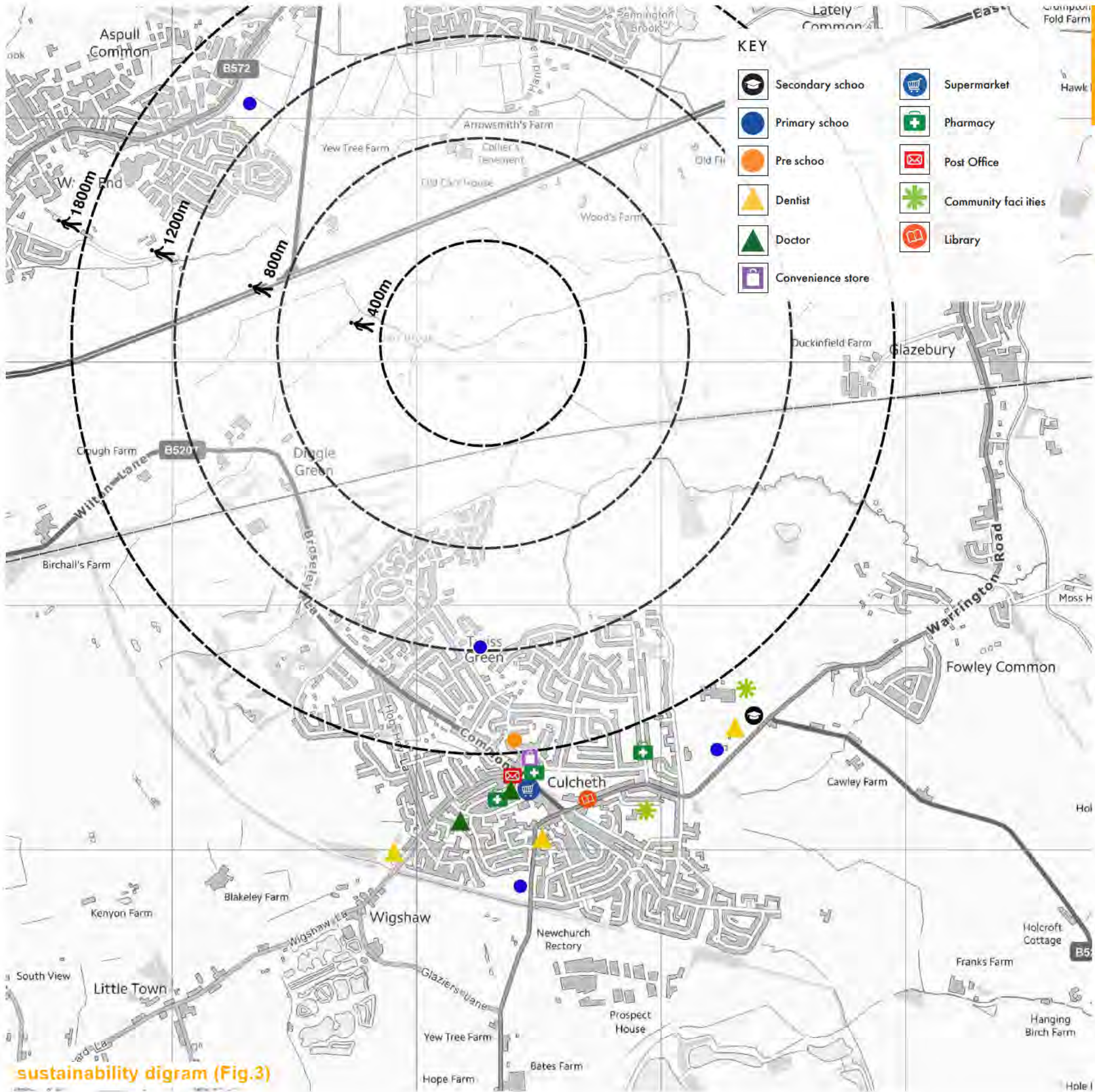
Existing public transport services in Culcheth provide access to Warrington, Birchwood, Newton-le-Willows, Croft, Winwick, Burtonwood, Earleston, Woolston, Leigh and Martinscroft. Leigh ben-

ter, which could be extended into the site, providing a potential connection to the existing railway line. The A580 also provides excellent access to major employment locations within the local area and beyond, such as Haydock Industrial Estate and Stone Croft Business Park.

The existing Public Rights of Way network offer good foot and cycle paths for both future residents of the site and residents of the nearby settlements.

Carr Brook Garden of hancements to local infrastructure, including a new local centre, a new primary school, sports and leisure facilities, direct access to the A580 and a new train station.





sustainability digram (Fig.3)

# 03

## NEED FOR GREEN BELT DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1** local plan review
- 3.2** warrington green belt
- 3.3** green belt assessment
- 3.4** green belt purposes compliance





# 3.1 local plan review

## Local Plan Review

The Council is currently undertaking a review of its Local Plan, primarily to set out the number of new homes and jobs required to meet the needs of the Borough over the next 20 years. As part of the process the Council held a 'Scope and Contents' consultation and a 'Call for Sites' during November and December 2016.

The 'Scope and Contents Document' published in October 2016 states that in order to align housing need with job growth in the Borough it will be necessary to increase the minimum supply of homes from the quashed Local Plan Core Strategy [LPCS] target of 500 dpa to around 1,000 dpa. In terms of employment land, the Council's Economic Development Needs

This exceeds the existing LPCS requirement by over 100 ha. The scale of housing and employment growth envisaged for

Town into a 'New City'.

Based on a review of its housing and employment land supply, the Council has concluded that it will be necessary

approximately 5,000 homes and 261 ha of employment land over the next 20 years.

therefore be released from the Green Belt to provide for

beyond. The scale of the proposed development is such that

infrastructure to create a vibrant new community, as well as highways and transport improvements to assist in alleviating pressure on the existing road network.

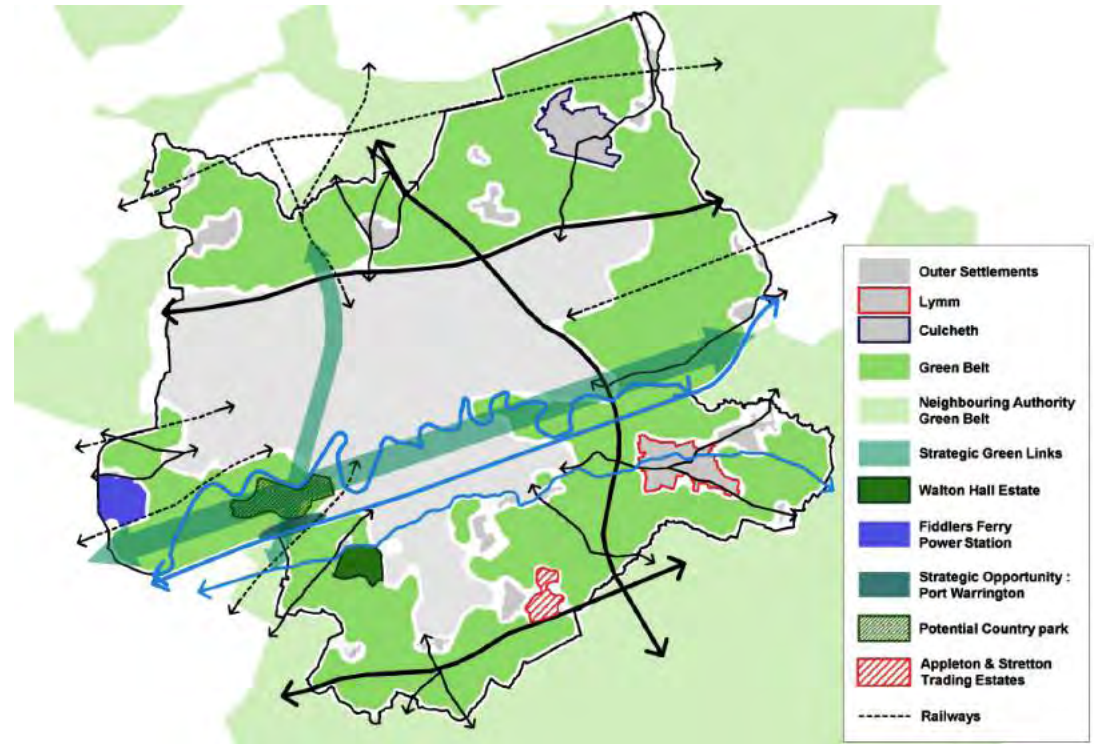


# 3.2 warrington green belt

## Warrington Green Belt

The extent of Green Belt around Warrington was formally introduced by the Cheshire Structure Plan in 1979. Culcheth is one of the largest inset settlements within the Green Belt. The extent of Green Belt designation is contiguous with the Green Belt in Merseyside, Greater Manchester and North Cheshire and has, largely, remained unchanged since 1979.

In 1998 Warrington became a unitary authority, whereupon priority shifted from expansion, towards a policy emphasising regeneration of existing urban areas. The 2016 Green Belt Assessment prepared by Arup on behalf of Warrington Borough Council notes that “the Green Belt is seen as a key policy tool in achieving urban regeneration and preventing further outward expansion of the Borough” [Para. 12]. This position is clearly outdated when considering the lack of available land within the urban area to meet development needs.



local plan core strategy 2014 countryside and constituent settlements map (Fig.4)





# 3.3 green belt assessment

The purpose of the 2016 Green Belt Assessment is to provide an understanding of how Warrington's Green Belt performs

Framework [para. 80]. The assessment considers only large portions of land, or parcels, and makes broad statements as to their value to the Green Belt.

Carr Brook Garden is located within General Area 22. The assessment concludes that this broad area makes no contribution to checking the unrestricted sprawl of the large built up area and to the setting and special character of historic towns. It also states that its contribution to preventing the merging of towns and safeguarding the countryside from

makes a strong contribution to assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment, this is no different from most other sites in the assessment. Overall, the assessment concludes that General Area 22 makes only a moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes.

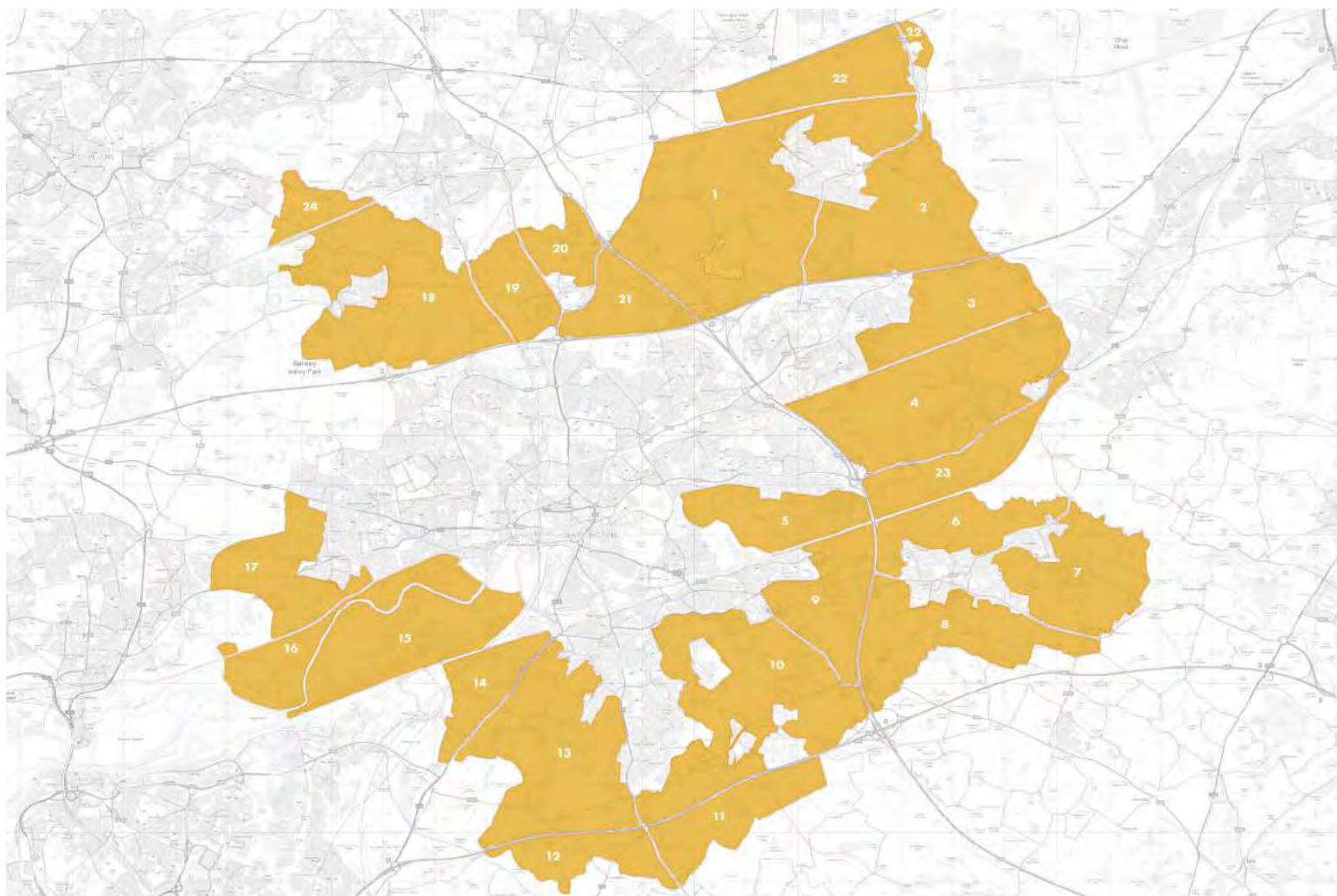
The area of land located between Culcheth and the railway line to the north falls within General Area 1. The assessment

Area 1 could be developed without resulting in the merging of towns. The as-

ustainable boundaries between the General Area and the countryside which could prevent encroachment on the countryside if this area of land were developed. Overall General Area 1 was assessed as making a moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes.

A review of the land to the north of Culcheth has been undertaken, on behalf of Orica, which concludes that the removal of the Carr Brook Garden development area from the Green Belt and its allocation for a sustainable garden village will not

Framework (para. 80). This is summarised in section 3.4.



warrington borough council green belt

2016: general area map (Fig. 5)

# 3.4 green belt purposes compliance

## Check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

, on behalf of Orica, align with those of the 2016 Warrington Green Belt Assessment which concludes that the Green Belt land around Culcheth makes no contribution to preventing the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. This is because the land is not adjacent to the Warrington urban area.

## Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another

The removal of the Carr Brook Garden from the Green Belt will not result in the merging of neighbouring settlements. The main settlements to which this section of the Green Belt seeks to separate are Lowton to the north, Leigh to the north-east and Culcheth to the south.

The existing strong physical boundary of the A580 will restrict future development of land north of Culcheth towards Leigh and Lowton in the neighbouring borough of Wigan. Development of the land to the north of Culcheth would therefore not reduce the existing gap between the A580 and the towns of Lowton and Leigh. The 2016 Warrington Green Belt Assessment concludes that whilst development in the general area would reduce the distance between the neighbouring towns, it would not merge them.

## Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

It is accepted that the release of Green Belt in this location will result in the loss of countryside and would therefore have an impact on this purpose. However, it is important to highlight that the use of the land to the north of Culcheth has in the past been restricted due to the presence of the Glazebury explosives depot and the explosive safeguarding zone. It has therefore remained open land due to it being a hazardous installation, rather than for its strategic Green Belt function, its contribution to the open nature of the countryside or any special landscape character.

There are strong physical boundaries in the railway line to the south and the A580 East Lancashire Road to the north. This is one of the most important factors in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and the Arup Green Belt Assessment recognises that both represent durable boundaries between General Area 22 and the countryside which could prevent encroachment if the area were to be developed. In addition to the existing boundaries, the Masterplan framework also demonstrates that new strong eastern and western

development and prevent encroachment in these directions.

## Preserve setting and special character of historic towns

There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments within the immediate vicinity of the land to the north of Culcheth. The area of Newchurch, bounded on its north side by Jibcroft Brook and Leigh golf course, is a designated Conservation Area. This has been taken into account during the formulation of the illustrative masterplan framework. There are few if any non-designated heritage assets. The residential properties to the south largely have no historical or architectural importance.

The 2016 Green Belt Assessment concludes that development of land to the north of Culcheth from the Green Belt will have no impact on the setting or character of a historic town and will not impact on important viewpoints.

## Assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

The release of the land to the north of Culcheth from the Green Belt will not contravene this purpose because evidence based

meet Warrington's development needs within the existing ur-

would development in this location, away from the main urban area of Warrington, impact upon the regeneration priorities of

in the urban area. It will however facilitate the development of

The site

ated as part of any redevelopment.

## Summary

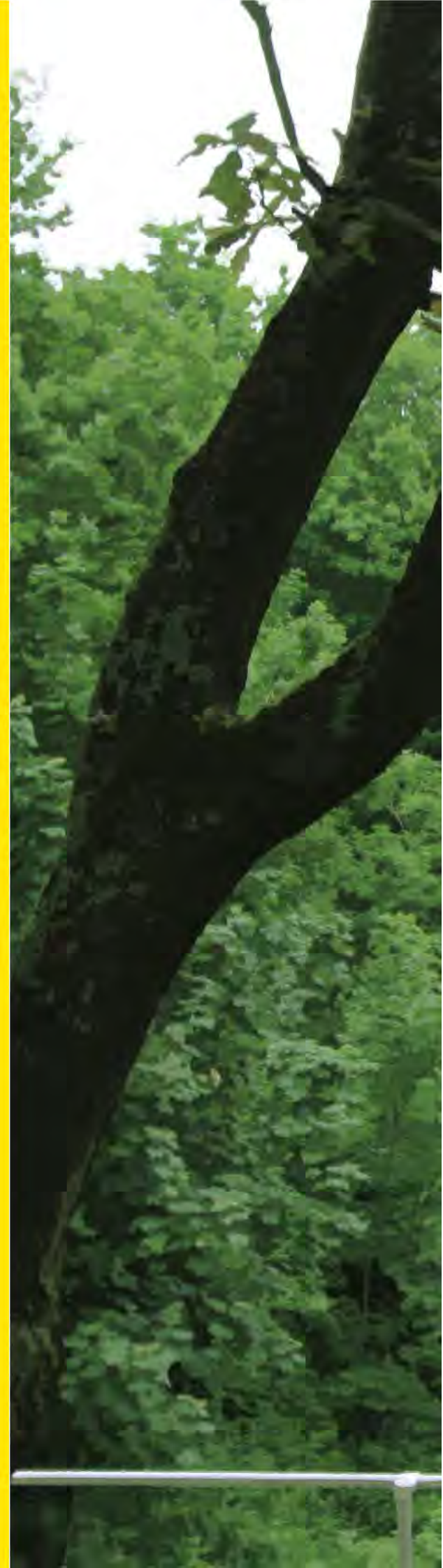
There are clear exceptional circumstances that warrant the removal of land from the Green Belt in Warrington including the s failure to demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and the absence of available land within the existing urban area to meet long term housing requirements.

The removal of the land from the Green Belt and its allocation as a Garden V the Green Belt set out in the Framework [Para. 80].

# 04

## TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 highways and movement
- 4.2 landscape features and boundaries
- 4.3 ecology
- 4.4 technical summary





# 4.1 highways and movement

## Highway connectivity

A number of opportunities are available for new road connections in the immediate area in order to integrate the proposed development site with existing settlements, create new connections to strategic routes and alleviate pressure on the existing road network.

There is potential for the creation of two new access points on the A580 East Lancashire Road to distribute existing traf-

The proposed masterplan explores the possibility of creating new north-south corridors, on the western and eastern sides of Culcheth, with the potential to facilitate a connection to the existing M62, which clearly would provide wider strategic

New access routes would provide improved access for the existing residents of Culcheth, allowing more direct access to strategic routes. Two potential new access points are available to the A580 located to the north.

connection between the A580, the A579 Atherleigh Way and Wilton Lane/Broseley Lane along the western side of the development area, would provide opportunities for development access and enhance access for Twiss Green and the western areas of Culcheth.

A second potential connection is possible on the eastern side of the proposed development, providing a north-south link between the development area and the existing local centre and community facilities within Culcheth. This has the potential to connect through to the A574 Warrington Road and on to form a new north-south link between the A580 and M62. No north-south connection is currently available between the A580 and M62 or between the M6 and M60 and so formation of this new link has the potential to alleviate congestion over a wide area.

## Accessibility & sustainable transport

Carr Brook Garden will be well integrated with the existing village of Culcheth, not just through the formation of new vehicular routes but through the creation of additional safe and attractive routes for pedestrian and cycle movement. These routes allow opportunities for access to existing amenities within Culcheth and the creation of a new local centre and community facilities within Carr Brook Garden. These new facilities will reduce the need to travel outside of the immediate area and increase opportunities for non-car travel.

Research reveals that 48% of existing residents in the area currently work in Warrington, with a further 34% working in the Greater Manchester area. These journeys are currently heavily reliant on travelling by car. Carr Brook Garden affords

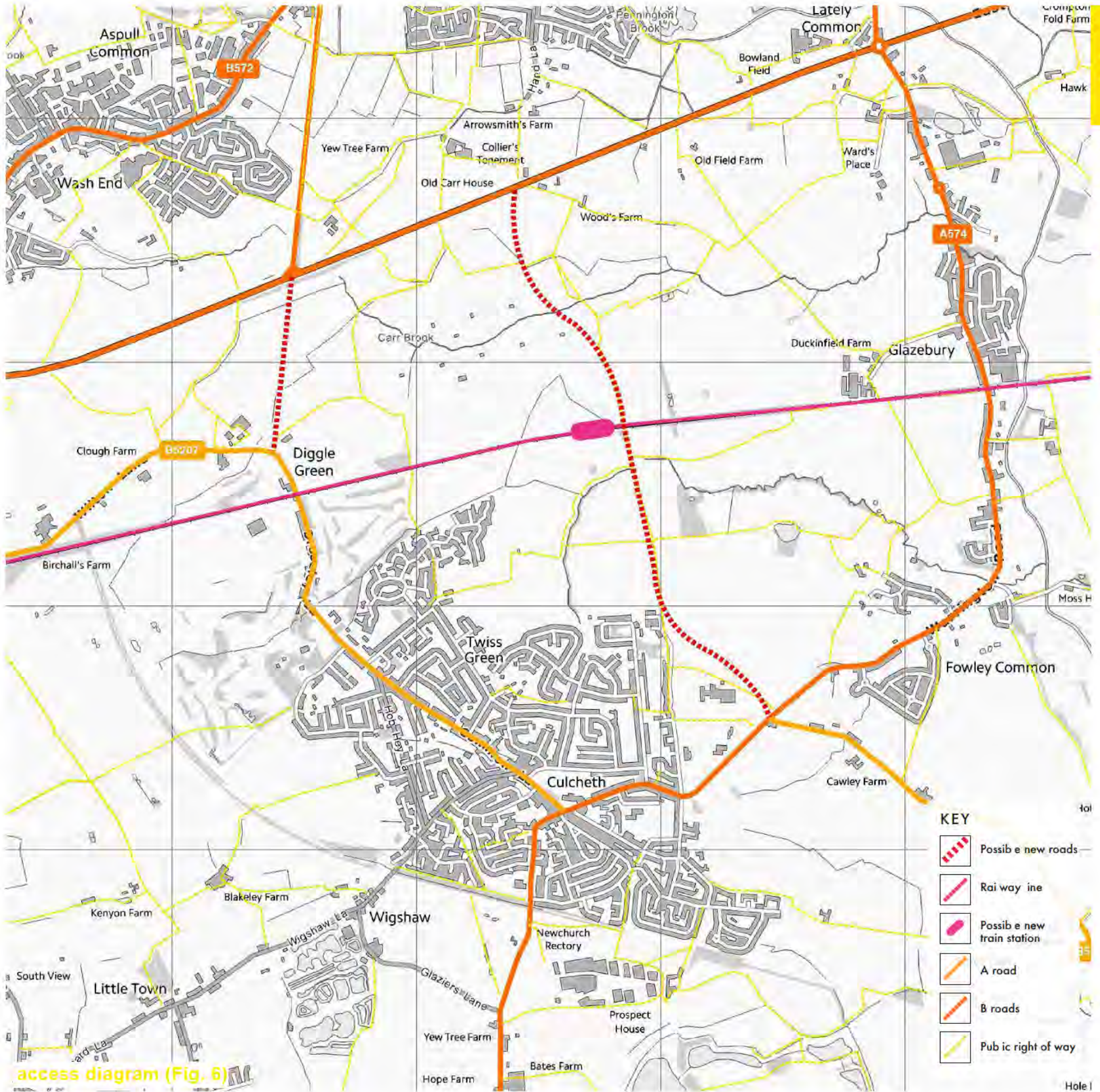
the existing neighbouring communities.

The proposed development area is strategically positioned beside the main Manchester to Liverpool rail line, affording a unique opportunity for a new station to serve both the Carr Brook community and the surrounding areas. This critical

-  
mising recent investments in public transport infrastructure, whilst improving the accessibility of a wide area.

Similarly, the scale of Carr Brook Garden will have the potential to facilitate enhancement of local transport services including bus connections to the existing guided busway rapid

-  
dents. Development of a new train station facility would act as a natural passenger transport hub providing integrated transport options for the local and wider areas.



access diagram (Fig. 6)

# 4.2 landscape features & boundaries

The proposed site sits mainly within agricultural land with

Glazebury Depot. The Liverpool to Manchester railway line bisects the available land, becoming steeper and more elevated as it moves eastward through the site.

North of the railway line water bodies can be found, including the Carr Brook, which runs across the site East to West. Along this brook the pastoral grass land becomes more of a wetland with the appearance of tall rushes which run along the brooks banks.

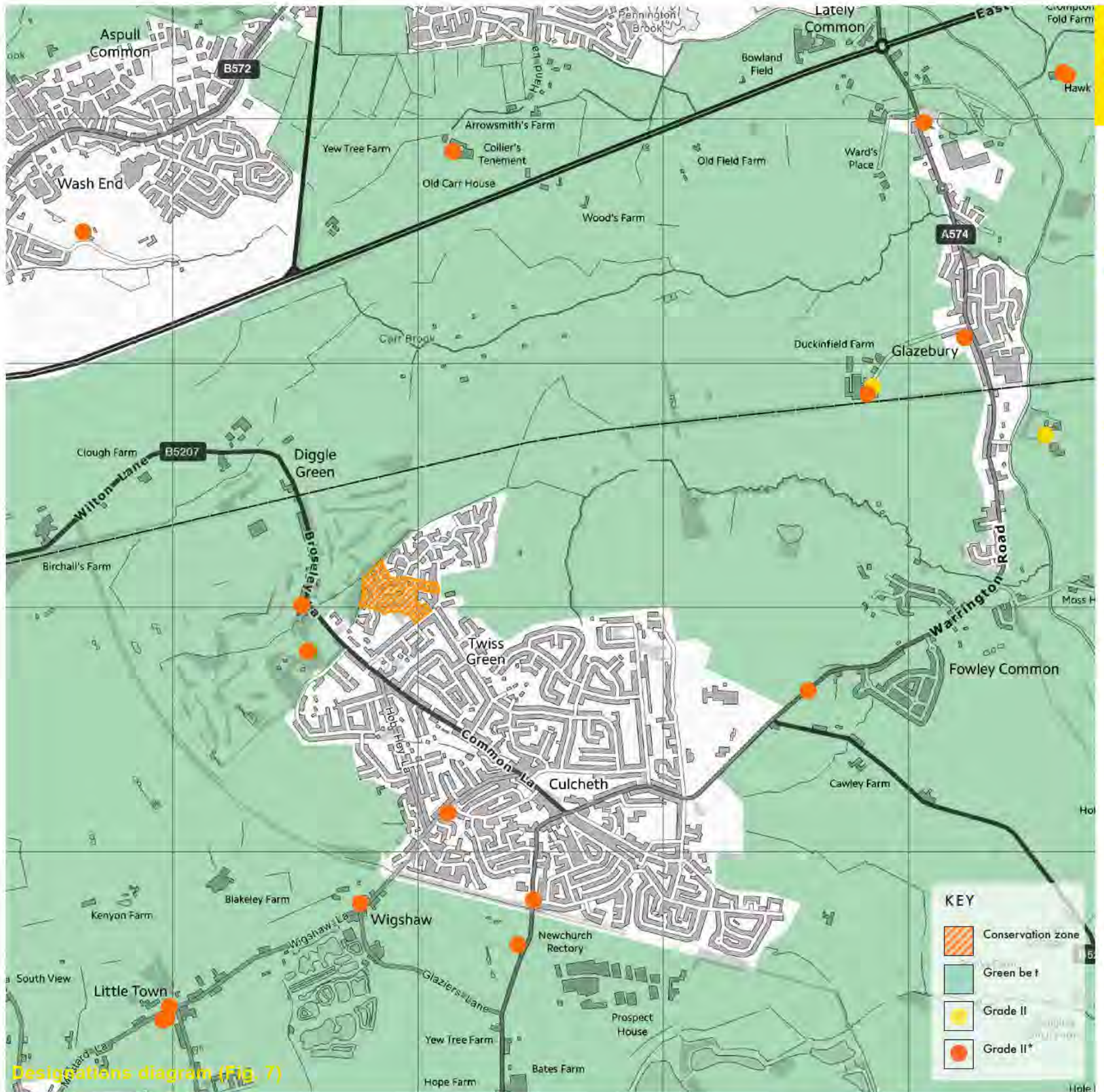
countryside. Small clusters of wooded areas sit within the  
ood, which sits south  
of the railway line to the east. Hedgerows can also be found,  
These existing landscape

features have the effect of surrounding the site and limiting views of the site.

The northern edge of the site that meets the East Lancashire road is lined by a combination of mature trees and hedgerows which provide good screening of the site from the main road. The Eastern and W  
hedgerows, looking out onto open grass land. The southern

further south, by the northern edge of Culcheth's housing developments.





Designations diagram (Fig. 7)



# 4.3 ecology

An ecological walkover assessment was undertaken at the proposed development area, which encompasses the Glaze-

between the A580 and the Liverpool to Manchester railway line.

## Habitats

The dominant habitats found within the site include arable and poor semi-improved pasture form, alongside scattered hedgerows, scrub and tree lines. Additional habitats comprise

central area of the site; and a number of ponds associated

The wider landscape is characterised by arable and pasture land. Pennington Flash Local Nature Reserve [LNR] is located approximately 1.05 km north of the site and is recognised for the diversity of fauna, including wildfowl and wetland birds. However, the site is isolated from the LNR by the A580, which represents a major barrier to the movement of fauna from the north.

Records indicate the presence of three non-statutory des-

Wood Local Wildlife Site [LWS] (0.27 km south), Elean Acre Common LWS (0.97 km south) and Hope Carr Nature Reserve (0.75 km north-east). Future development of the Orica site is not anticipated to pose impacts to these LWS, due to distance and isolation (intervening roads, urban areas and the railway). No extensive areas of notable or rare habitats occur within the site.

## Fauna

Existing opportunities for fauna within the site are largely restricted to boundary features. Tree lines and hedgerows offer suitable foraging and commuting routes for bats, whilst occasional mature trees provide potential bat roosting sites. Field boundaries within the site provide foraging and nesting resources for a range of tree and shrub nesting bird species, whilst open areas offer potential for ground nesting birds. No evidence of badger or other mammals was noted during the site walkover. Waterbodies and other natural feature on site

of species but detailed surveys to establish the presence of protected species was beyond the scope of this ecological as-

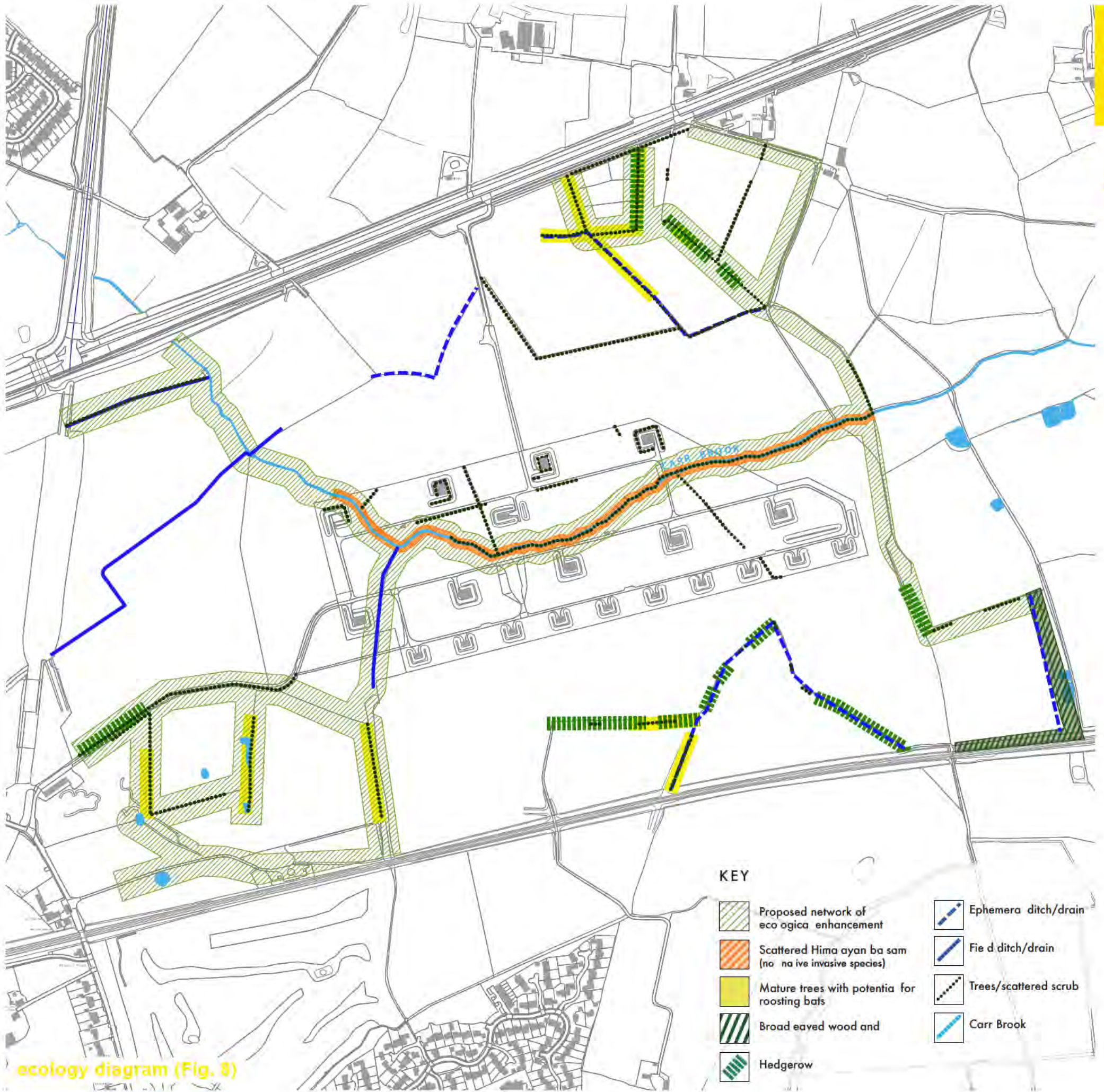
essment. Further ecological surveys will be carried out and stakeholders consulted at the appropriate stages.

## Ecological Enhancement










The presence of linear habitats, such as the existing hedgerows, offers localised ecological constraints, however also provides suitable focus for future enhancements within the site and connectivity to the wider landscape. In accordance with the aims of Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy Policies CS6 and QE3, future development provides ample opportunity to enhance and create areas of green infrastructure and improve local ecological networks. Furthermore, if future sur-

tion or compensation measures. In conjunction with habitat enhancements (e.g. the linking of watercourses, hedgerows, etc.) it is anticipated that Carr Brook Garden will result in a net gain for biodiversity in the area.





KEY

-  Proposed network of ecological enhancement
-  Ephemera ditch/drain
-  Scattered Himantopus (no native invasive species)
-  Field ditch/drain
-  Mature trees with potential for roosting bats
-  Trees/scattered scrub
-  Broad-leaved woodland
-  Carr Brook
-  Hedgerow

ecology diagram (Fig. 8)

# 4.4 technical summary

The adjacent plan (Figure 9) spatially maps some of the key constraints and opportunities on site. Whilst there are a range of constraints on site none would preclude the site from residential development and all can be accommodated or mediated through the design process.

**High pressure gas pipeline** - The buried high pressure gas pipeline runs north-south along the eastern edge of the site. The HSE's land use planning methodology categorises land use zones above the pipeline (inner, middle and outer) and outlines suitable land uses for each zone. Housing development is not advised within the inner zone, but is permitted in the middle and outer zones.

**Ecology** - The site comprises mostly of pastoral grass land. Hedgerows and tree lines provide good foraging habitat for local fauna, creating a wildlife corridor. It is important when designing the development that as much of this is retained as possible, and reinforced when feasible. Carr Brook also runs through the site. The brook can be designed into the development and act as a key feature which may sustain local wildlife whilst providing green space for the local residents.

**Noise** - The northern section of this site suffers from some noise pollution due to its proximity to the A580 East Lancashire Road.

noise can be heard along the north edge of the site. A train line also cuts through the site, some points at grade and others elevated. Sound from the passing trains can be heard when near the tracks. Trains were not overly frequent and so

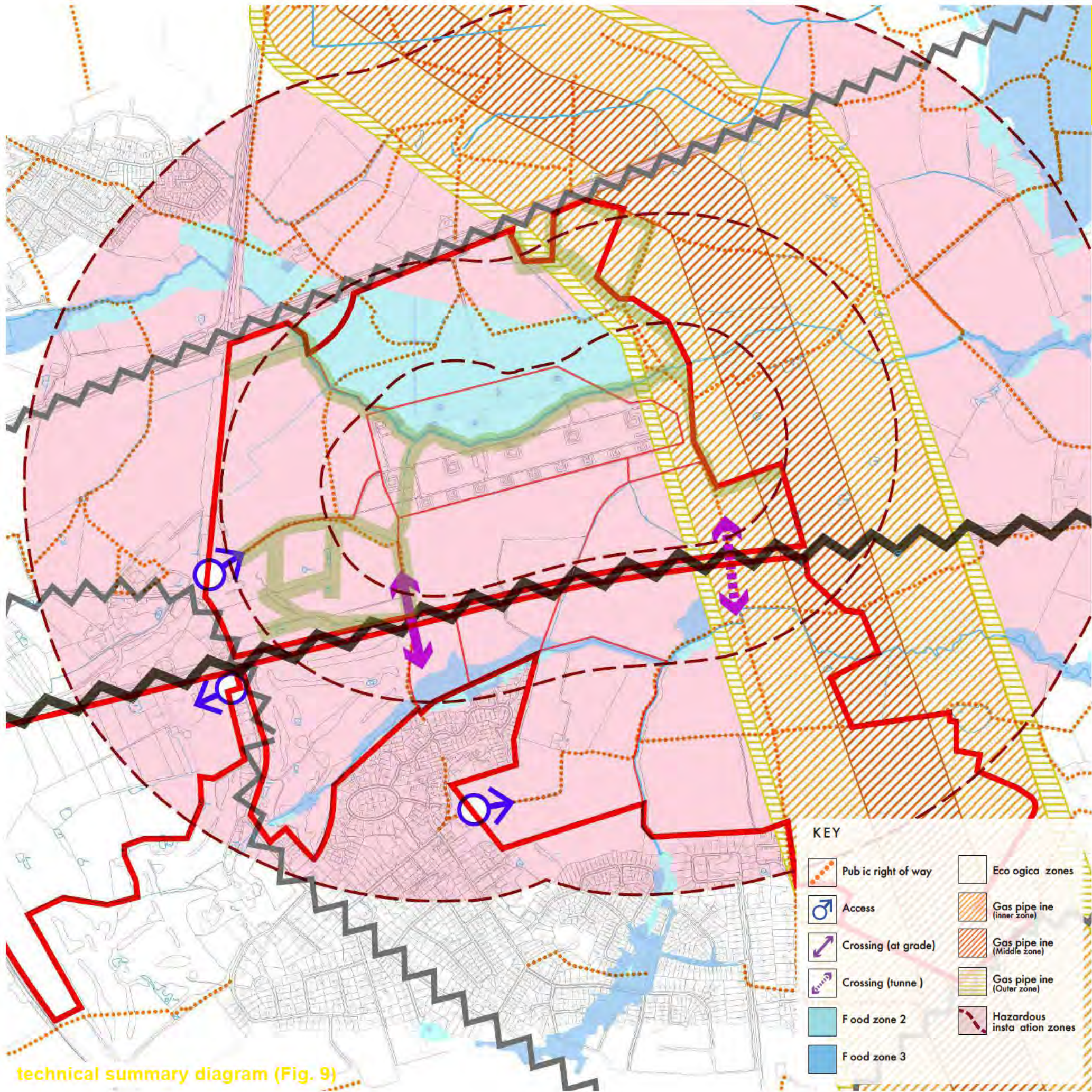
shire Road. This can be mitigated by reinforcing this tree line, the incorporation of appropriate attenuation, and setting development back from the road.

**Access & highways** - The site can currently be accessed from 3 main access points. Two of these are from B5207 Broseley lane and one from the end of Twiss Green lane within a residential development. There is currently no direct connection onto the East Lancashire Road. There are many public rights of way that must be considered, many in everyday use. These routes lead to two railway crossing points. The one located to the West of the site is at grade, and the pedestrian

must cross by walking across the tracks. The second lies to the East of the site. Here the railway line is elevated allowing for a small pedestrian tunnel which provides access.

## **Flooding & drainage** -

northern area of the site. This may be due to its close proximity and low lying. This can be overcome using a variety of natural barrier to development.



technical summary diagram (Fig. 9)

# 05

## INITIAL MASTERPLANNING

- 5.1** a new garden settlement
- 5.2** shaping a new place
- 5.3** urban structure
- 5.4** illustrative framework





Leigh

East Lancs. Rd

Aspull  
Common

A580

wton

Glazebury

Carr Brook

Possible  
A580 - M62 Link

C H A T M O S S

HS2 Safeguarded Corridor

Culcheth

M62

Irlam

Glazebrook

Birchwod

# 5.1 a new garden settlement

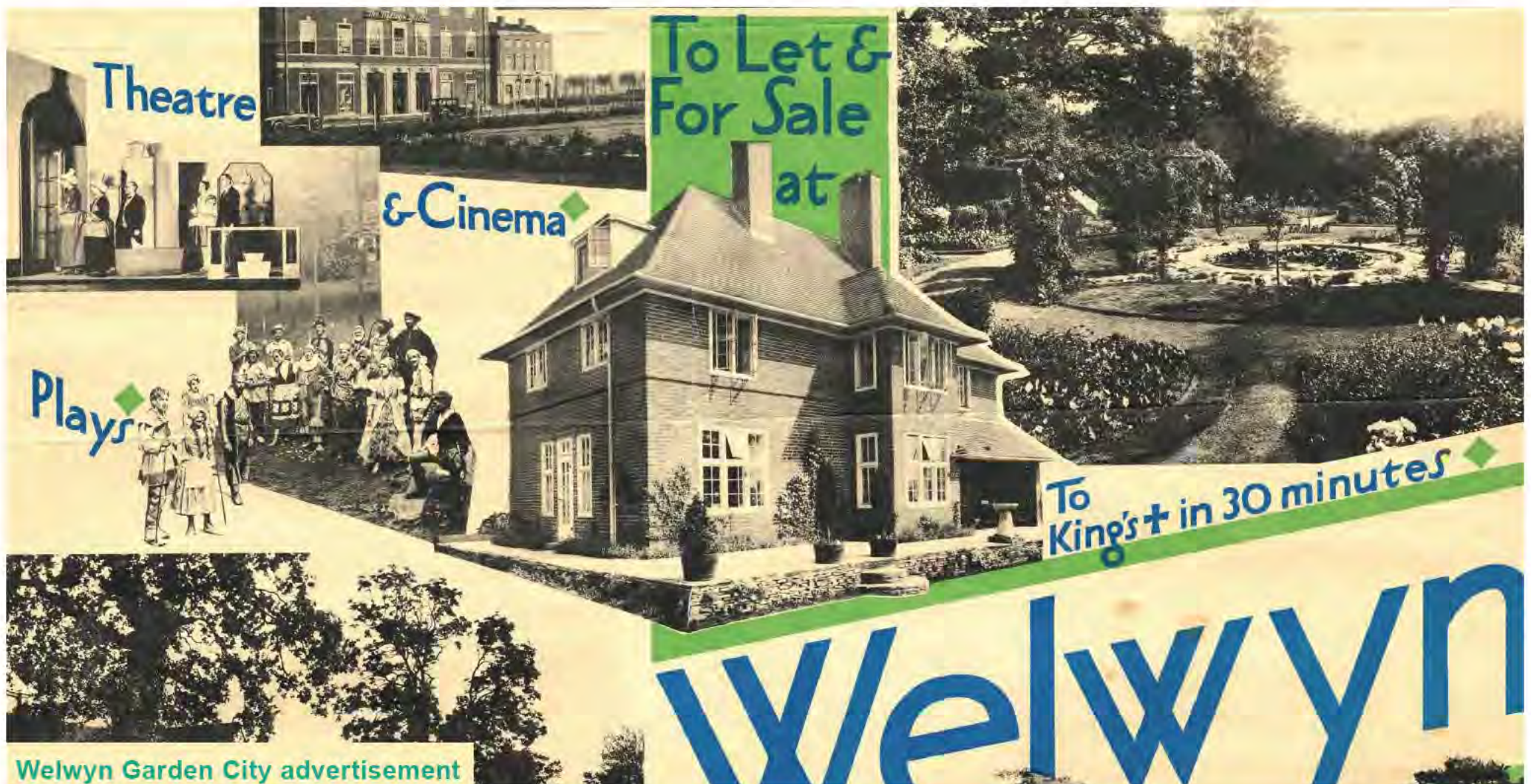
## A new garden settlement

Pressures on the housing market and a need to dramatically increase the delivery of new homes has led to increased interest in Garden Villages and suburbs as a model for growth. They offer a sustainable and attractive means of reducing pressure on existing urban centres as well as growing existing communities in an environmentally sensitive manner. The fundamental principles associated with Garden Villages are well suited to this site.

Carr Brook Garden will be a new community fit for the future. It will be planned based on an updated set of principles, “Strong Community, Ordered Development and Environmental Quality” as set out in Ebenezer Howard’s original concept but shaped to react to the new environmental and societal drivers we see today.

Carr Brook Garden will be a place that is:

- **People focused** – it will deliver a broad range of homes and rich and diverse environments, where people live, work and spend their leisure time. It will be shaped for and by the community that will live there.
- **Well-structured and adaptable** – influenced by traditional settlements and Garden Village principles but shaped for today’s lifestyles and adaptable to tomorrow’s demands.
- **A model for sustainable growth** - Carr Brook Garden will establish infrastructure networks and environmental features that sustain it in the future.



Welwyn Garden City advertisement



URBED's Winning entry for the 2014 Wolfson Economics Prize on new Garden Cities



Original Garden City concept by Ebenezer Howard



# 5.2 shaping a new place

## Masterplan framework

The emerging masterplan for Carr Brook has been based on an understanding of:

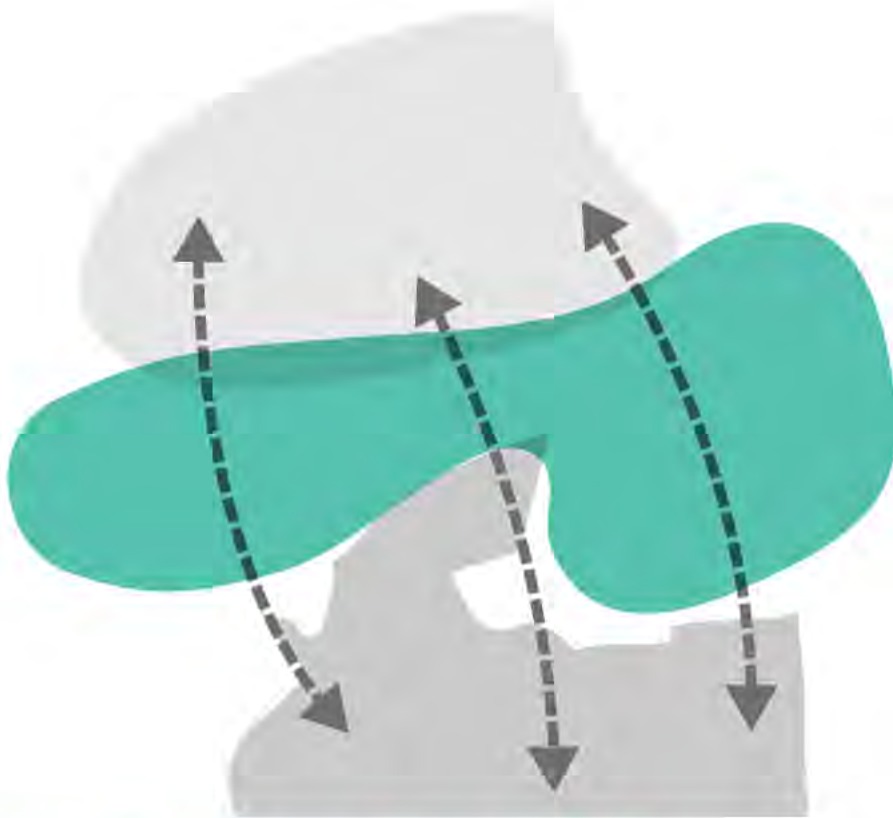
- The development context and relationship to other similar settlements around Culcheth;
- The physical conditions on Carr Brook, its opportunities and constraints; and,
- Current best practice and the study of exemplary developments of this scale.

## Scale and form

In developing initial designs for Carr Brook Garden a range of criteria have been considered. These include the scale, density, distribution of development and its relationship with the surrounding settlement of Culcheth, neighbouring communities and the wider landscape.

## Development of ideas

- **A Garden Village** (Figure 10) – Located to the north of the existing rail line this would be distinct and separate from Culcheth but with strong physical connections to the existing village. This proposal could deliver up to 2,500 homes with local facilities and amenities. There is potential for employment use with road links to Leigh and the potential for a new rail halt on the Liverpool to Manchester railway.
- **A Garden Town** (Figure 11) - Expanding Culcheth to create a larger but more integrated place with a major transport interchange, connecting rail and bus services and a new strategic north-south road link between the A580 and M62. This has the potential to deliver around 4,500 new homes with a range of local retail and employment opportunities.



Concept diagram-garden village (Fig. 10)



Concept diagram-garden town (Fig. 11)

### Carr Brook transport interchange

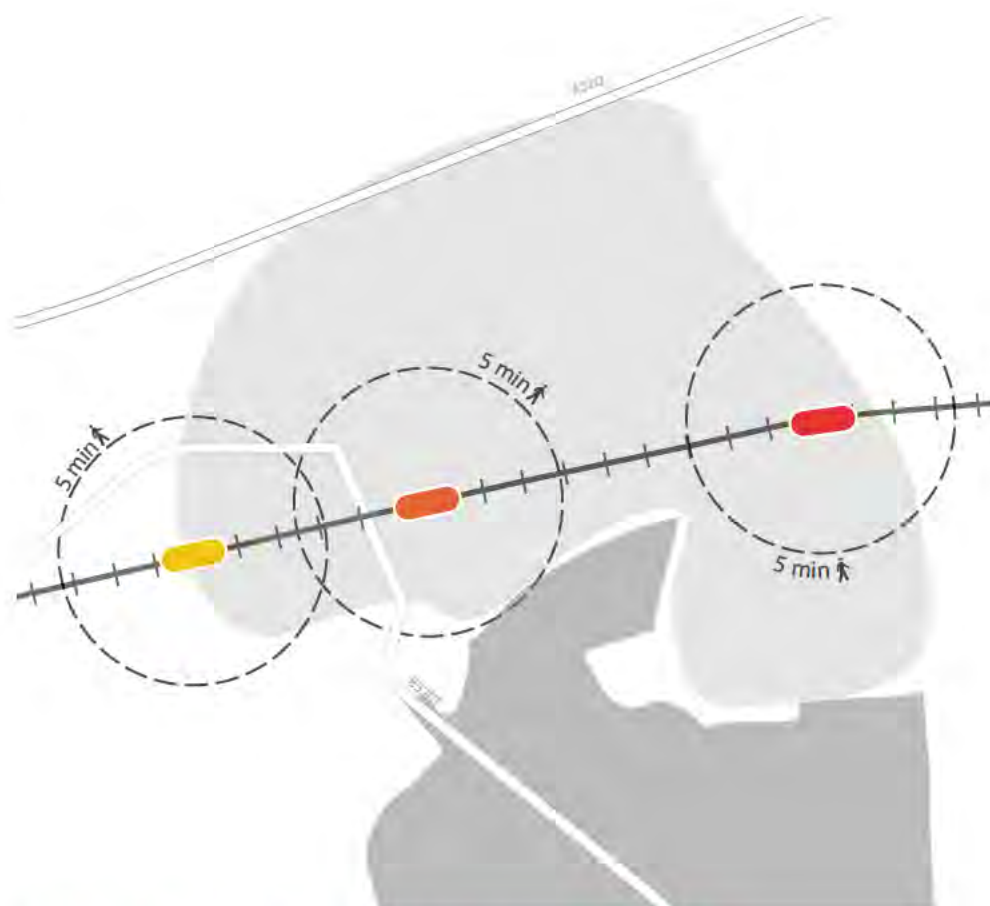
In the past Culcheth benefited from two railway stations, connecting the village's residents to major cities and towns in the region. The establishment of a new community at Carr Brook allows the opportunity to explore the re-opening of Kenyon Junction station. A station in this location would enable direct connection to Liverpool and Manchester for commuters, serving Carr Brook Garden, and Culcheth but also residents of Leigh, Land Side, Lowton, Aspull Common, Hope Carr, and Glazebury.

Previous studies have considered the potential for a new station in this location. The increased patronage and infrastructure investment which Carr Brook Garden can bring makes this a viable consideration. It also provides the opportunity of connecting with a broader range of locations and integration with other infrastructures.

A possible extension to the Leigh Guided Busway could create a regionally important transport interchange which could enable a Park & Ride facility. A potential north-south road link between the M62 and A580 could provide convenient access to this facility, whilst also providing load balancing potential to the existing highway network. Both of these options would dramatically enhance the business case for a new or re-opened station. In this way a new station can also act as the driver for the establishment of a welcoming and attractive mixed-use town centre providing facilities and services to the residents of Carr Brook Garden, Culcheth and surrounding areas.



Culcheth station in 1963.

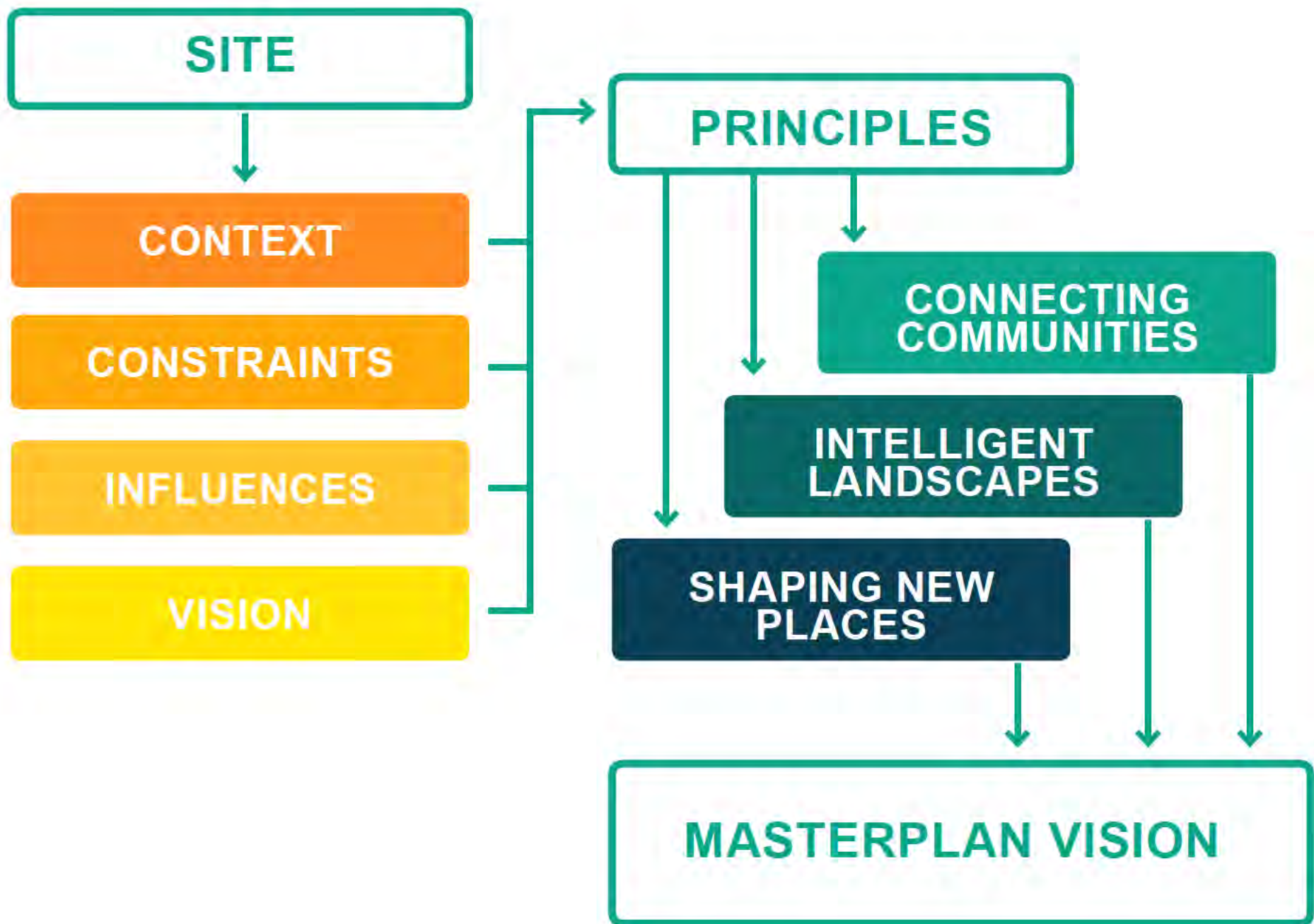


Possible train station locations (Fig. 12)

# 5.3 urban structure

## Principled development

The Carr Brook Garden proposals have been shaped in response to the site and the characteristics of the Culcheth area. The following key principles generated the form of the proposals and will guide the development as the details of the proposals are refined through the ongoing masterplanning process.

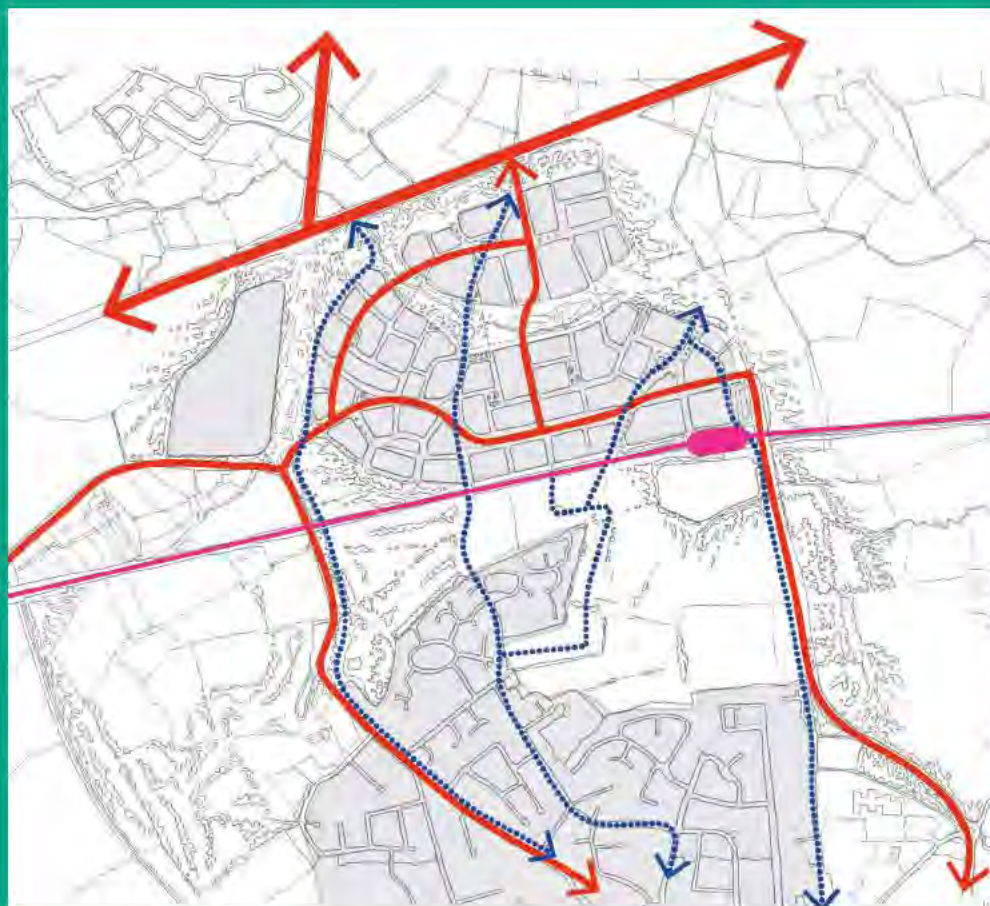


design development flow diagram (Fig. 13)

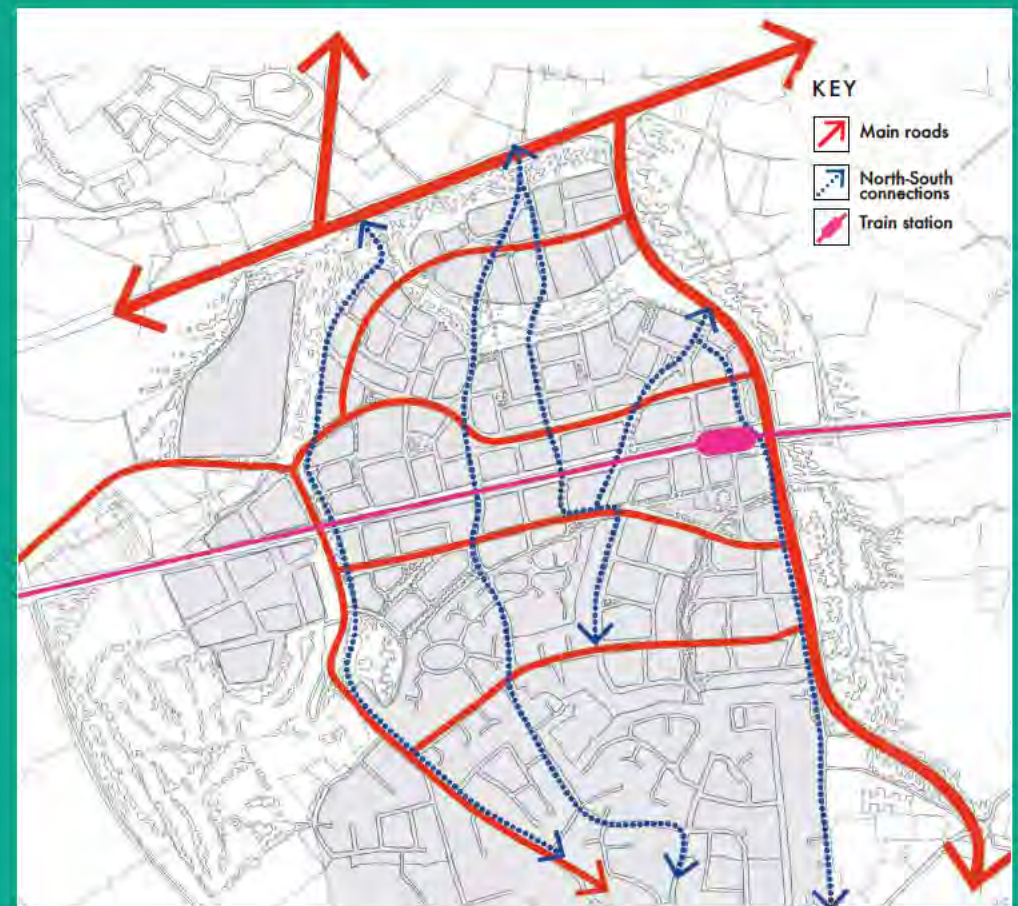
## Connecting Communities

Proposals of this scope provide opportunities to consider the nature of relationships between existing places. By providing strategic infrastructure and improving connectivity Carr Brook Garden can bring lasting benefit to neighbouring communities.

The promotion of a new station on the main railway line through the area will provide lasting benefit, sustainably connecting Culcheth, Leigh and other neighbouring communities to Manchester and Liverpool. New road and bus links between Leigh and Culcheth to the West and a potential a new strategic link from the East Lancashire Road to the M62 to the east of Carr Brook Garden can enhance north-south connectivity.



garden village - access



garden town - access

Fig. 14

## Intelligent Landscapes

The design process has been driven by the aim of providing a high-quality living environment that exists in harmony with its countryside setting. Carr Brook Garden will be a place defined by its landscape setting, both in terms of an attractive internal structure and its relationship with existing neighbouring settlements.

The proposals seek to retain existing mature planting, hedgerows, water-bodies and other features wherever possible. Green spaces create strong landscape features around the Carr Brook creating the potential for new recreational resources and amenities. By blending these features with a new pedestrian focused network of streets a characterful new settlement can be generated from the outset.

The layout of Carr Brook Garden is purposefully set back from the East Lancashire Road, providing a landscape buffer with enhanced tree and hedgerow planting, which reinforces

the already strong visual separation between settlements either side of this arterial route. To the west of Carr Brook Garden a more dynamic relationship between the built environment and surrounding countryside can be established drawing in elements such as the Culcheth Linear Park and existing golf course to create a recreational green edge which will extend to the proposed HS2 alignment. To the east a new north-south route linking the settlement to Culcheth High School and the village centre (as well as potentially connecting the M62 through to the East Lancashire Road) create a strong edge to any new development. Beyond this, land to the east of Carr Brook Garden has the potential for recreational use, providing visual separation between Carr Brook and Glazebury.

The wider structure will work in retention of existing landscape features such as tree planting, hedgerows and land drains, preserving and developing character and opportunities for bio-diversity.



garden village - landscape

garden town - landscape

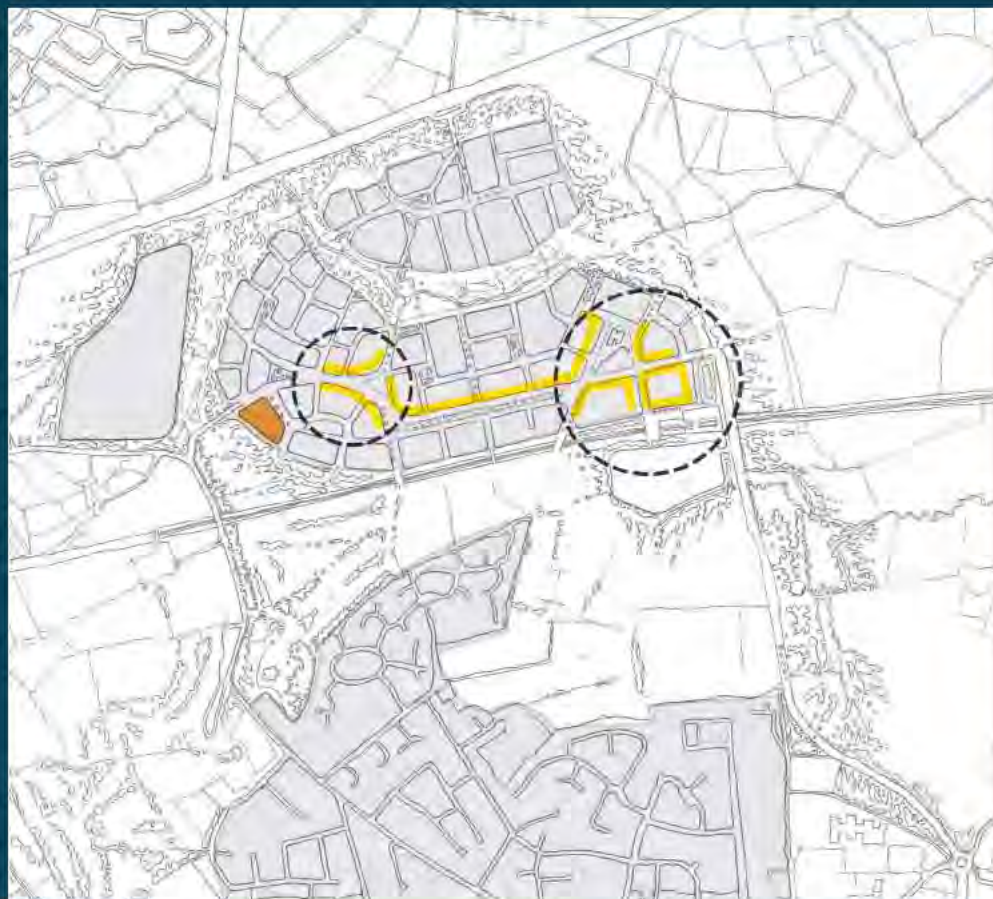
Fig. 15

## Shaping New Places

In shaping a new settlement we are influenced by the strategic movement and landscape features described above as well as the desire to create a sustainable pattern of walkable neighbourhoods.

These will be mixed in character, offering a range of uses and facilities such as schools, local retail, leisure and employment that can be delivered incrementally, alongside housing growth. As these features combine they create a dispersed local high street, running from the new train station in the east to an employment area in the west.

Alongside these new features the settlement will connect with existing facilities in Culcheth. Residents of Carr Brook and Culcheth can enjoy the benefits provided by these accessible facilities whilst still enjoying the natural setting and rural feel of smaller communities.



garden village - character



garden town - character

KEY  
School  
Retail  
Gateway

Fig. 16

# 5.4 illustrative framework



garden village (Fig. 17)



The illustrative frameworks bring to life the two proposal options in their surrounding settings; garden village Figure 17 and garden town Figure 18.



**garden town (Fig. 18)**

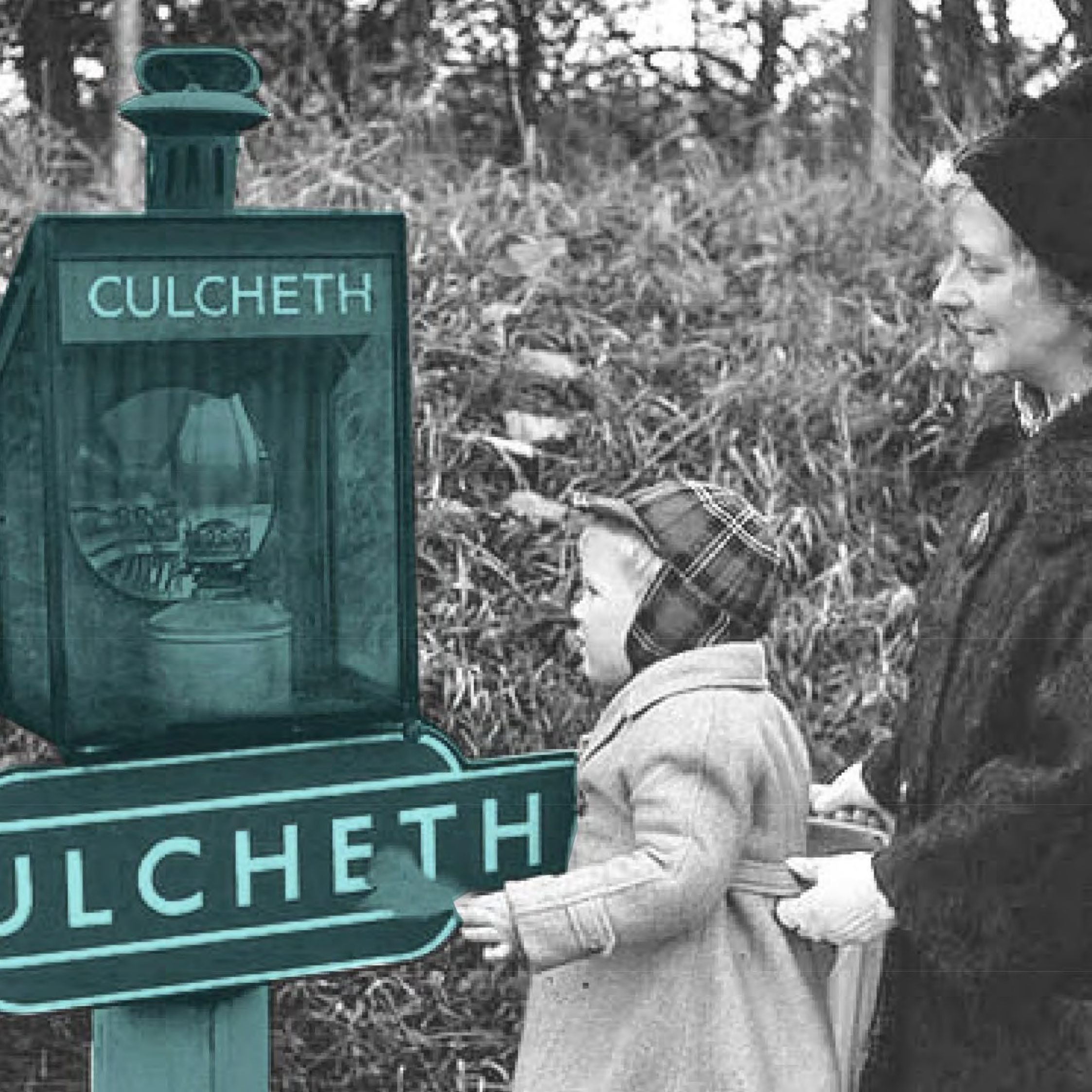


# 06

## BENEFITS

- 6.1** economic, social & environmental benefits
- 6.2** deliverability





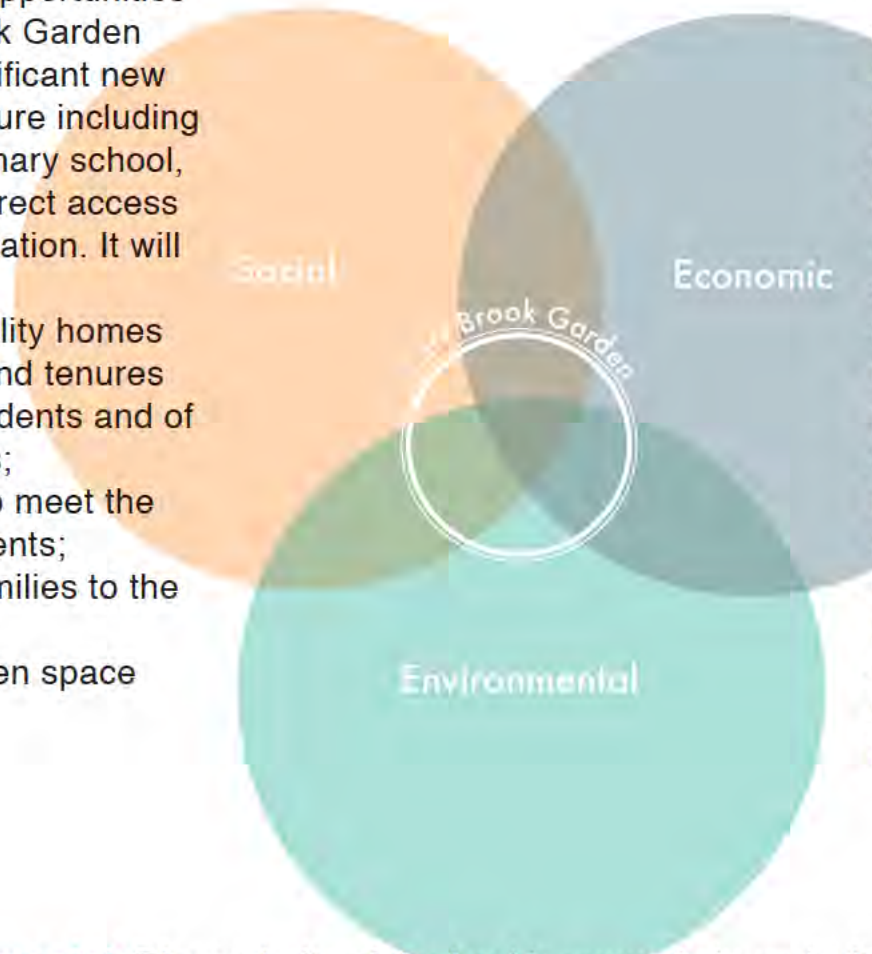
CULCHETH

CULCHETH

# 6.1 economic, social & environmental benefits

**Social** - The vision for the site is to integrate living, employment and social spaces and facilities that provide opportunities for all. The scale of Carr Brook Garden is such that it can deliver significant new physical and social infrastructure including a new local centre, a new primary school, sports and leisure facilities, direct access to the A580 and a new train station. It will also:

- Provide a choice of high quality homes across a mix of types, sizes and tenures to meet the needs of new residents and of the neighbouring communities;
- Deliver affordable housing to meet the identified needs of local residents;
- Attract and welcome new families to the area; and,
- Deliver accessible public open space and recreation space.



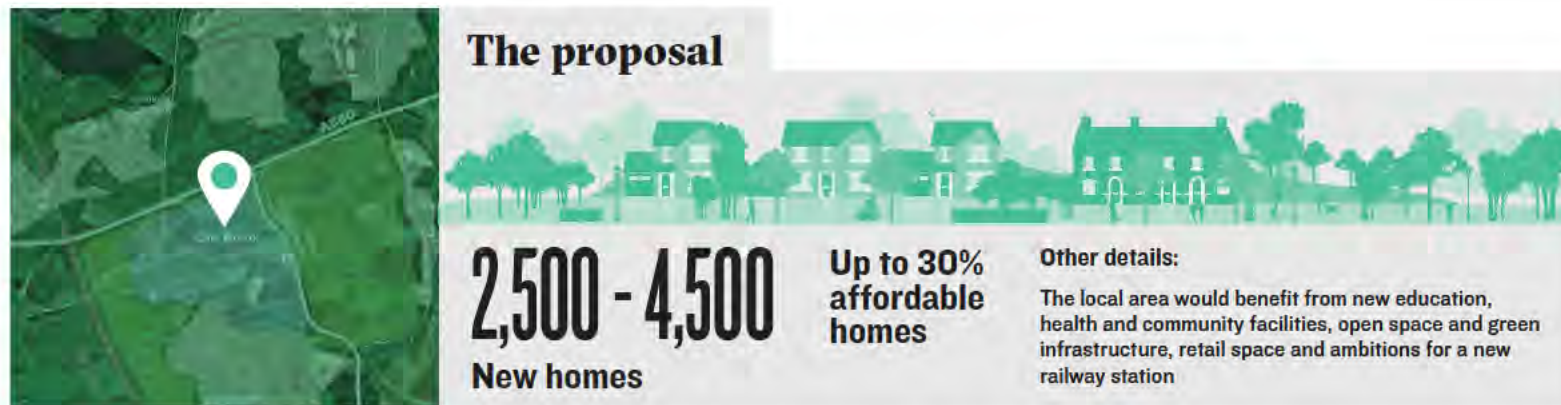
**Economic** - The delivery of Carr Brook Garden will bring about a number of economic and fiscal benefits (Figure 19) in terms of job creation, additional monies to the local authority and increased expenditure in the economy. This could, dependent on the scale of development adopted, potentially include:

1. Creation of between 265 and 485 construction jobs;
2. Delivery of between £2.3m and £4.7m GVA per annum through the construction period;
3. Resident expenditure would amount to between £19.8m and £35.6m per annum in the local area;
4. Between £14.6m and £26.4m in New Homes Bonus payments would be gained over a four year period; and,
5. Council Tax revenues would amount to between £3.5m and £6.3m per annum.

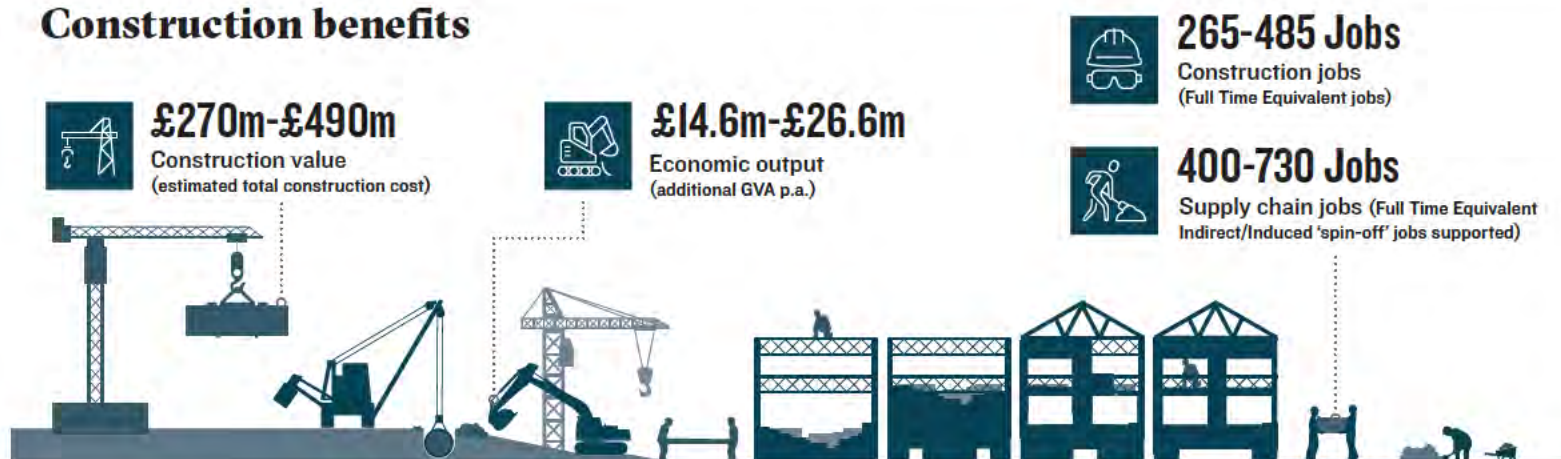
**Environmental** -The majority of the land is currently in agricultural use and so is of little ecological value. Although the proposals would result in the loss of greenfield land it also presents a number of opportunities in terms of providing additional tree cover and a network of greenspaces.

Where possible, the new development would retain and enhance ecological features of value and suitable ecological mitigation would be incorporated as necessary. The site also offers the opportunity for the retention and enhancement of landscaping and provision of SUDS which would provide ecological benefits.

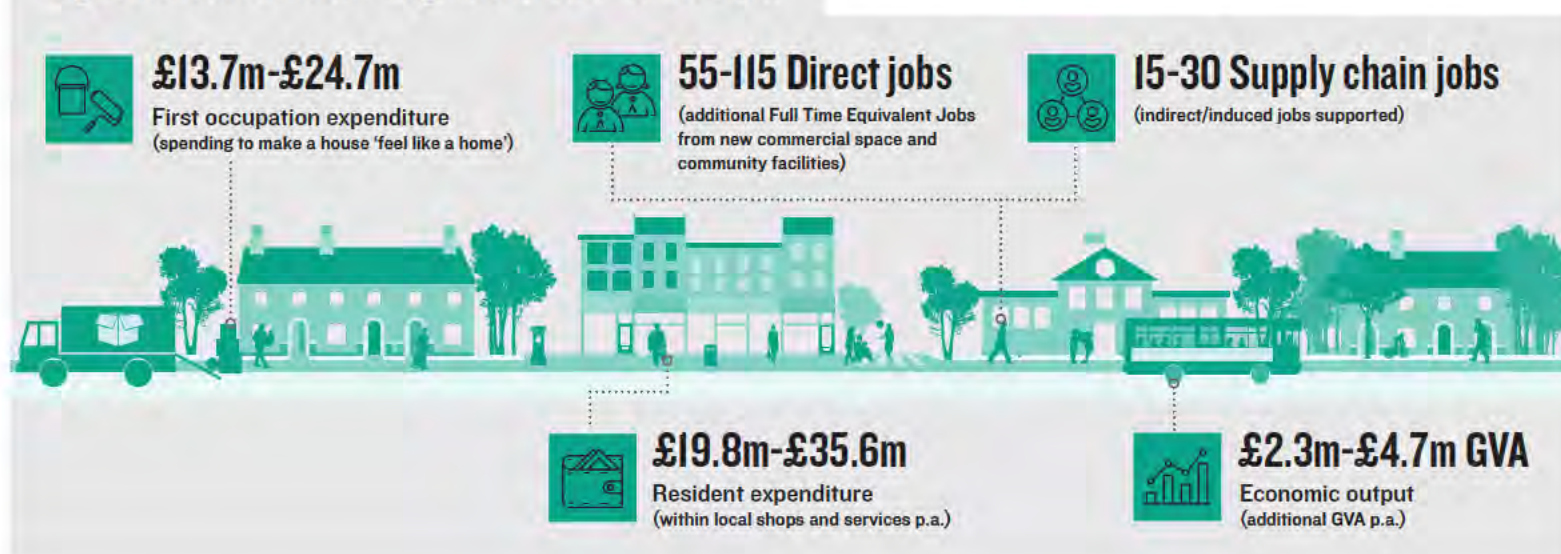
Carr Brook Garden will not negatively impact upon any heritage or historic assets. It will be designed and built to a high standard, creating a new garden village balanced by recreational and open green spaces.



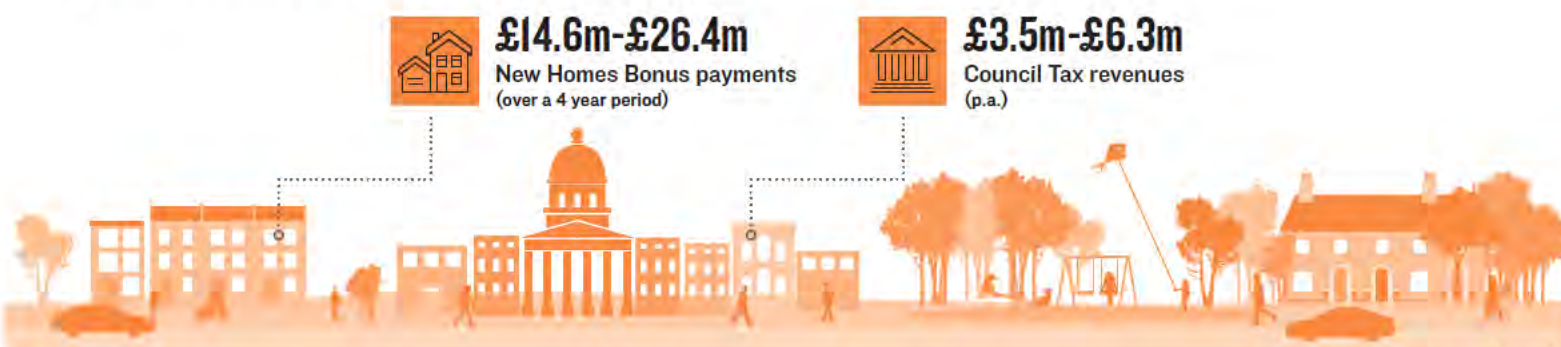
### Construction benefits



### Operational and expenditure benefits



### Local Authority revenue benefits



# 6.2 deliverability

## **Available**

The Glazebury Depot land is under the single ownership of Orica. Ownership of the surrounding land is made up of a number of farmland and commercial landowners and they have all expressed interest in making their respective parcels of land available for development. Orica has a good understanding of the land ownership and the availability of land within the area proposed for development is well explored. It can be concluded that the site is available.

## **Achievable**

Orica have undertaken a high level evaluation of the technical and environmental constraints that could prevent or restrict the development of the land to the north of Culcheth and

impede its delivery. It can be concluded that delivery of this site is achievable.

## **Suitable**

Due to the proposed site's position in relation to Culcheth village the site' detrimental impact on the form and character of the existing settlement. The development land is not subject to any heritage, ecological, environmental or landscape designations.

The existing railway line to the south of the proposed development area has been carefully incorporated within the proposed landscaping scheme to provide safe pedestrian and cyclist crossing points, which integrate with the existing public rights of way, to provide ease of access to Culcheth village.

Any existing constraints on the development site have been carefully considered and the masterplan designed to enhance links with the neighbouring communities. The land

through the addition of improved infrastructure can unlock

the wider borough of Warrington. It can be concluded that delivery of this site is suitable for the proposed development.





# 07

## CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1 the case for change





Farmers  
...MARKET...  
← →  
Sweet Corn  
PUMPKIN  
Fresh Eggs  
Heirloom





# 7.1 the case for change

## Conclusions

The allocation of Carr Brook Garden for development would not arrington' needs over the long term, but would also reduce the pressure on more sensitive locations across the region. The scale of growth envisaged at Carr Brook Garden would enable the delivery of sustainable transport and social infrastructure which could not be achieved if development were to be dispersed on smaller sites across the Borough. Carr Brook Garden therefore represents the most appropriate and sustainable solution to accommodate the housing needs of Warrington whilst also achieving the aspirations of the wider region and Northern Powerhouse agenda.

National planning policy recognises that the supply of new homes "...can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities..."

Carr Brook Garden provides a real opportunity to meet the development needs of the area in a sustainable and co-ordinated way whilst facilitating investment in strategic infrastructure, enhancing sustainability and economic growth across the Warrington region.





**open**  
optimised environments

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