

progress

planning consultancy ltd



# Planning Promotion Statement

Warrington Local Plan Review -  
Preferred Development Option Consultation

Land at Park Lane, Higher Walton,  
Warrington

September  
2017

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Progress Planning have been instructed by our client, [REDACTED], to submit representations to the Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Review - "Preferred Development Option Consultation". This represents the second stage in the Local Plan review process, with the Call for Sites stage having been undertaken in late 2016. The Preferred Development Option stage sets out the proposed approach to meeting Warrington's need for new homes and jobs between now and 2037. It also identifies the infrastructure required to ensure that Warrington's growth is sustainable.
- 1.2 The purpose of this representation is to identify and promote our client's land at Park Lane, Higher Walton for removal from the Greenbelt to allow for its redevelopment for housing. Importantly, the representation does not seek re-allocation of the land for housing development because the site is only considered capable of accommodating one residential property, meaning the proposals is not of a scale relevant to the Local Plan itself.
- 1.3 In support of the proposals this representation comprises:
- Covering letter;
  - Planning Promotion Statement;
  - Location Plan; and
  - Block Plan;
- 1.4 This Planning Promotion Statement provides a description of the Site, a justification for the Site's removal from the Greenbelt and a brief description of the development proposals for the site.

## 2. Site Description and Planning History

### Site Location

- 2.1 The land at Park Lane (the Site) is situated within a small cluster of residential properties which comprise a mixture of redeveloped former farm buildings and more modern new-build development (**Appendix A** Location Plan) known as Rowswood Farm and Rowswood Courtyard. The site lies just north of Higher Walton, which is a small settlement that lies to the southwest of Warrington itself.
- 2.2 The Site, which measures approximately 0.25 hectares (0.6 acres), forms part of a larger 1ha land holding owned by our client. The Site is situated between the 2-storey residential development at Rowswood Farm to the west and the modern detached villa known as Yellow Lodge to the east. These residential properties are orientated so that it is their side elevations that face onto the Site, meaning that neither look directly over the Site.
- 2.3 The northern boundary of the site comprises the frontage onto Park Lane, whilst the southern boundary is formed by the Greenbelt in which the site currently sits. Despite the

site's greenbelt allocation its character and appearance is that of an infill site, within a residential setting.

- 2.4 The Site, which is generally flat, slopes very gently towards the road frontage of Park Lane, whilst the land to the South, beyond the site boundary, rises more steeply. Due to this topography and existing mature trees and hedgerows that run along Warrington Road, the site is only visible when travelling directly past it on Park Lane, where the presence of other built form is clearly evident.
- 2.5 The Site has been cleared of trees as part of a previous minor earthworks operations to address site levels across our client's wider land holding to provide land suitable for livestock grazing in the future. Consequently, the site now represents an overgrown parcel of open space, which makes minimal contribution to the Greenbelt and in fact detracts for the character and setting of the adjacent properties (see site photographs in **Appendix B**).
- 2.6 The Site is owned exclusively by our client and therefore there are no ownership constraints to development. The fact that our client also owns the land to the immediate south of the site means that the use of this land is controlled by our client, who has no intention of seeking further development on this land. This control together with the new hedgerow to the south of the proposed release will strengthen the Greenbelt boundary in this location.

### **Planning History**

- 2.6 There is no relevant planning history on the Site, however our client has previously sought pre-application advice from the Local Planning Authority in relation to the development of the site for a private residential dwelling (Ref. PR/2015/03334) and more recently through informal enquiries in June 2017. A copy of the Council's response to our client's pre-application enquiry PR/2015/03334 can be found in **Appendix C**.
- 2.5 Both the formal and informal pre-application enquiry responses confirmed that whilst the site itself may be capable of accommodating an appropriately designed infill development, its location within the Greenbelt meant that the proposed development type constituted inappropriate development since it does not appear on the list of appropriate development in the Greenbelt.
- 2.6 The Site's designation as part of the Greenbelt therefore appears to represent the only barrier to development of the site.

### **3. The Proposal**

- 3.1 Our clients seek the removal of the site, outlined in red on the accompanying plan, from the Greenbelt to allow for its redevelopment for a private residential development.
- 3.2 Whilst it is the principle of this removal that is key to this representation, we can provide an indication of the development our client would seeking to secure. The accompanying Block

Plan (**Appendix D**) provides an illustration of the proposed layout, with access taken off Park Lane to the north of the site. The proposed access point is situated in the centre of the frontage, providing adequate visibility splays in both directions. The driveway will terminate in a car parking/turning area that will allow access and egress from the site in a forward direction.

3.2 It is proposed that the property itself would be a modern single storey, detached 3-4 bedroom villa. It is anticipated that the finishes and materials proposed would be in keeping with the surrounding properties to ensure that the local distinctiveness of the surrounding residential properties is maintained and hopefully enhanced. The properties location within the site is designed to avoid any direct conflict with adjoining properties and given its single storey nature, overlooking or loss of privacy is not considered to be an issue.

3.3 The main garden area is proposed to the rear of the property, minimising further any potential adverse impact on neighbour properties. To the south beyond the garden and site boundary our client is proposing to install a mature hedgerow that would provide a robust boundary with the Greenbelt to the south and provide adequate screening of the development. The introduction of the new hedgerow would also provide mitigation for any loss of ecology habitat that may result from the development of the site.

#### **4. Planning Justification**

4.1 As discussed already, the purpose of this representation is to seek the removal of the Site from the Greenbelt. The primary considerations therefore relate to the character and purpose of the Greenbelt in this location and the contribution that the Site makes to the objectives of the designation.

4.2 In January 2016, as part of the Local Plan Review process, WBC appointed Ove Arup 7 Partners (Arup) to undertake a Green Belt Assessment for the local authority area of Warrington designated by Green Belt. The Assessment identified a series of "General Areas" that comprise the Borough's Greenbelt and undertook a qualitative assessment of each area. The Site lies within General Area (GA) 13, which is identified as making a "Strong" contribution (Figure 1 below) to the overall purposes of the Greenbelt, which were identified in the Assessment as follows:

- Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas
- Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict

and other urban land.

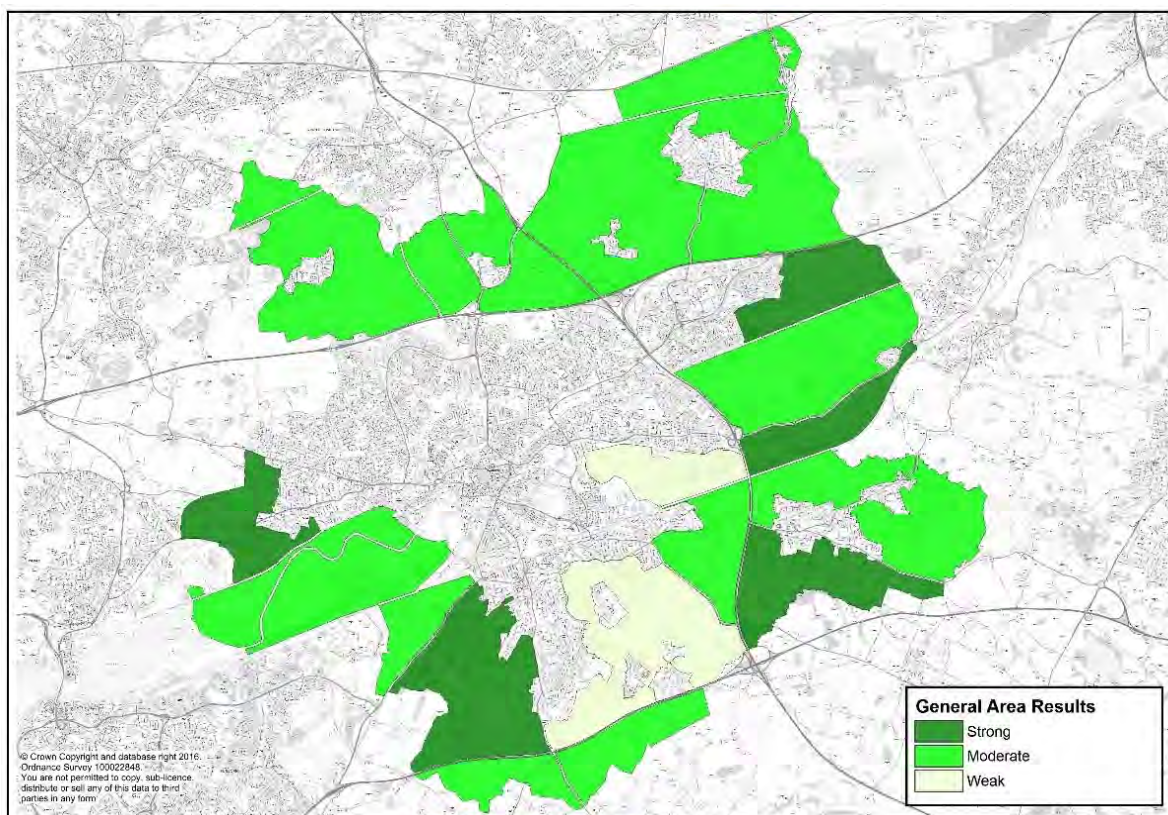


Figure 1. Choropleth mapping showing results of General Area Assessment (Warrington Borough Council Green Belt Assessment Final Report (Arup 21 October 2016)).

- 4.3 The GA has been considered to make a strong contribution overall, despite the Assessment finding that it only makes a strong contribution to two of the identified purposes; Purpose 1 & Purpose 3. Otherwise the GA makes the same moderate contribution to Purpose 5 that every GA does, a weak contribution to Purpose 2 and no contribution to Purpose 4. Of the five GA's identified in the Assessment, GA 13 together with GA 23 were found to have the least strong contributions to the identified purposes with the other GA's scoring higher in the moderate or strong contribution categories.
- 4.4 The GA scores highly on Purpose 1 and Purpose 3 because it is considered that the urban boundary of southern Warrington is durable and therefore at risk of unrestricted urban sprawl. The Greenbelt allocation in this location therefore provides the robust barrier to development that is required to check unrestricted sprawl and safeguard the countryside from encroachment.
- 4.5 In addition to providing a robust settlement boundary, The Assessment identifies that the other key roles of the GA are to prevent further ribbon development along the Hatton Lane corridor and retain the predominantly open countryside character of the Greenbelt in this location. The openness of the GA is defined by the fact that less than 10% of the GA's area

comprises built form, largely focused around the settlements of Higher Walton, Hatton and Stretton.

- 4.6 Having identified the key purposes of the Greenbelt in this part of the Borough, based on the Arup Assessment findings, it is now important to assess whether the removal of our clients site would have a significant adverse, or indeed any, impact on the “Strong” contribution that the Greenbelt GA makes in this location.
- 4.7 Firstly, the Site is not located in either of the locations where the Assessment identified that there was the greatest risk of unrestricted urban sprawl, those being the A49 London Road and B5356 Hatton Lane corridors. The Site’s removal from the Greenbelt and any subsequent redevelopment would not lead to further urban sprawl in either location and would not weaken the Strong contribution the GA currently makes in this regard.
- 4.8 GA 13 is a large area of the Greenbelt spanning most of the countryside wedge south of the Warrington settlement boundary between A49, A56 and M56, only stopping where it meets the neighbouring Halton Borough authority boundary. The site, due to its small scale, is therefore a tiny parcel of the wider GA and does not itself make a meaningful contribution to the purposes of the Greenbelt.
- 4.9 Notwithstanding the small-scale nature of the site, it is worth noting that the Site’s physical boundaries are well defined on three sides also means that development of this small, infill site should not be considered unrestricted urban sprawl. Where the Site’s boundary is less well defined, our client is proposing mature hedgerow planting that will provide the robust boundary that would check further development in this location.
- 4.10 The site is located within a small area of built form, albeit out with one of the identified Inset Villages or Greenbelt Settlements, means the site itself does not make a meaningful contribution to the wider openness of the GA. The Site’s removal from the Greenbelt would not reduce the openness of the GA or increase the percentage of built form within the GA to a noticeable degree. Equally, the site’s development (assuming all other planning policy requirements can be satisfied) would be seen in the context of the surrounding built form and would be well screened by both existing built form and landscape features.
- 4.11 The topography of the surrounding area, which drops down to the level of road at this part of Park Lane means that the site is already effectively screened from view, except from vehicles passing the directly past the site on Park Lane. The Site’s physical contribution to the wider openness is therefore considered to be minimal and development of the site could be well contained within out any noticeable change in the appearance of the Greenbelt in this location.

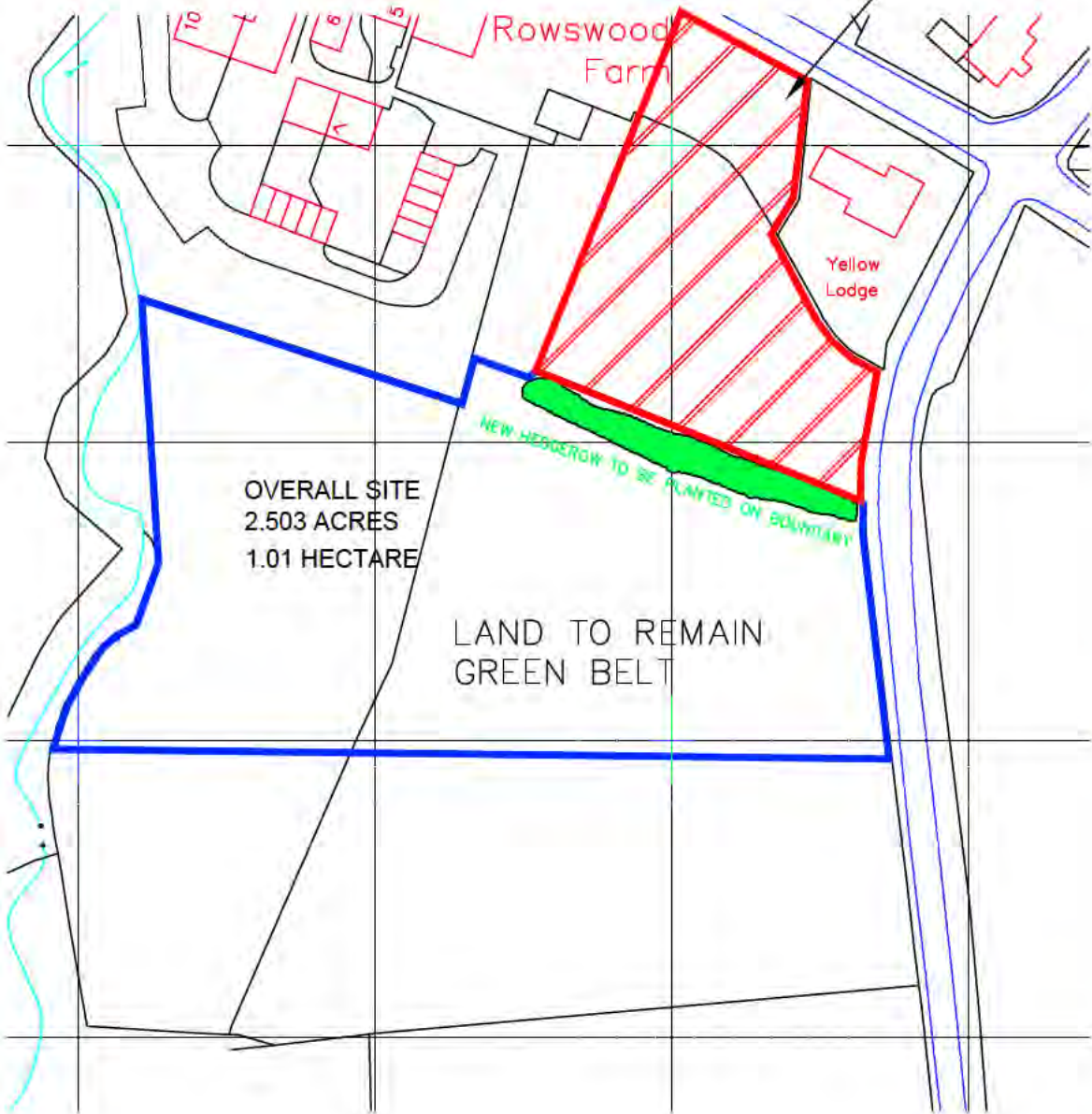
## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 In summary, based on the details outlined above, it is considered that the Site, due to its small scale, location and relationship with existing built form does not contribute in meaningful manner towards the purposes of the Greenbelt in this location.
- 5.2 As such it is considered that removal of this site from the Greenbelt would have no adverse impact on the operation of the Greenbelt in this location and particularly its key contributions to the checking of unrestricted urban sprawl and the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment.
- 5.2 It is also considered that, if removed, any potential future development of the site would enhance the Greenbelt in this location by removing a parcel of low quality scrub land from the Greenbelt and providing a high-quality development that would contribute to the Local Distinctiveness of the built form in this location.
- 5.3 We therefore respectfully ask that the Site is removed from the Greenbelt at this stage of the Local Plan Review process.



APPENDIX A Location Plan

INFILL LAND TO BE TAKEN OUT OF GREEN BELT



**Client**  
 Murraywood Construction Limited  
 Endeavor House  
 Abbotsfield Road  
 St Helens  
 Merseyside  
 WA9 4HU

**Project**  
 Boundary Survey at:  
 Lot 1  
 Land adjoining  
 Park Lane/Warrington Road  
 High Walton and Hatton  
 Warrington, Cheshire

<b>Scale</b> 1:1250	<b>Date</b> JUL 17	<b>Job No</b> 01
<b>Surveyed</b> CD	<b>Drawn</b> CD	<b>Checked</b> BM

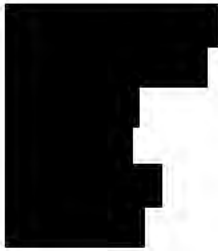
APPENDIX B Pre-Application Enquiry Response PR/2015/03334



Professor Steven Broomhead  
Chief Executive

Peter Astley MBE  
Assistant Director  
Regulation & Public Protection

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH



Our Ref: PR/2015/03334

4<sup>th</sup> December 2015

**Location: Green Space between Rosewood Farm and Yellow Lodge,  
Park Lane, Walton, Warrington**

**Re: Erection of dormer bungalow with access off Park Lane**

Dear

Thank you for your pre application enquiry dated 28<sup>th</sup> September 2015. In response I can provide the following information:

Planning history of the site

- No relevant planning history

Site constrains

- 250m Pond Buffer
- Green Belt

Green Belt

As identified above the application site is located within the Green Belt. Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS5 (Overall Spatial Strategy – Green Belt) is relevant and states that Development proposals within the Green Belt will be approved where they accord with relevant national policy. Policies CS2 (Overall Spatial Strategy – Quantity and Distribution of Development) and SN1 (Distribution and Nature of New Housing), which relates to the distribution of development and housing in the Borough, state that housing development in the Green Belt will only be approved where it accords with the relevant national planning policy.

The NPPF confirms that the construction of new buildings is inappropriate development and that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. Paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF identifies those forms of development which may not be deemed to be inappropriate development,



however unfortunately the construction of new dwellings within the Green Belt in not one of them.

Similarly the site to be developed is not located within either an Inset Village or Green Belt Settlement as defined by the Local Plan Core Strategy where limited infilling may be considered acceptable subject to meeting additional criteria.

As a result for the purpose of both the NPPF and the Local Plan, the proposal does not constitute limited infilling within a village in the Green Belt and is therefore considered to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt. As such, planning permission should not be approved except in very special circumstances. In this instance none have been provided.

#### Principle of housing

The Local Plan Core strategy sets out the Distribution and Scale of Development of new housing under Policy SN1 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. In terms of the proposed development location, policy SN1 sets out that within all of the boroughs defined settlements (comprising of the town of Warrington and those settlements listed in Policy CC1 of LPCS), the Council will support proposals which;

- Relate entirely to the delivery of affordable or social housing which is proven to meet identified needs; or
- Meet identified specialist needs including units specifically provided to meet the needs of the elderly or the infirm;
- Relate to mixed use schemes where the inclusion of an element of housing will make the development as a whole more sustainable and viable; or
- Constitute small-scale, low impact infill development.

In consideration of the above proposal, it would be a consideration as to whether the development constitutes small scale, low impact infill development. The definition of which is contained in the glossary of the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy, setting out:

*What does or does not constitute this form of development will ultimately be determined on a case by case basis through an evaluation of the site in the context of its immediate locality and wider settlement within which it is located. An infill opportunity is generally regarded as a small gap in an existing otherwise built up frontage or the rounding off of an existing settlement boundary. With regards to impacts, consideration will be afforded to the effect of the proposal on the street scene, character and amenity of the area as well as any pressures placed on physical and social infrastructure.*

Notwithstanding the above, in addition to the distribution of housing, Policy SN2 (Securing Mixed and Inclusive Neighbourhoods) sets out that a mixture



of housing types and tenures will be provided through the delivery of new homes in order to help secure mixed and inclusive environments.

#### Highway Matters/Parking

It is the Local Highways Authority (LHA's) understanding that the proposals are for a new dwelling to be installed on green space with an access onto Park Lane, Walton which is a 30mph road.

The vehicular access is shown on one side of the plot and the LHA is concerned that the applicant will not be able to provide a vehicular access that provides adequate visibility splays in this location and may need to be resited more centrally within the plot. The applicant will need permission from the Councils Street works section for the creation of a new vehicular crossing.

To meet Manual for Streets visibility requirements for a 30mph road 2.4m x 43m splays should be provided. The existing footway in front of the proposed house should be hard surfaced to improve pedestrian access. This work will be required as part of the development and should be delivered in liaison with Chris Bluck from WBC's Highway section.

The applicant must ensure that adequate drainage facilities or permeable surfacing is used on the area of hard standing to ensure that localised flooding does not result from these proposals.

No detail is provided in relation to the number of bedrooms proposed at the property, but the Councils car parking standards will need to be met. For a 1 bedroom house: 1 allocated space, 2 bedroom house: 2 allocated spaces, 3 bedroom house: 2 allocated spaces, 4+ bedroom house: 3 allocated spaces. A visitor parking space is also required in addition to the minimums above.

1 cycle parking space per bedroom is required, provision should be made within a storage room, garage or via access to the rear garden to be demonstrated.

Each dwelling with on plot parking is to be provided with an external electric vehicle charging point.

#### Environmental Protection Matters

##### - Contaminated Land:

Following our guidance published within the Environmental Protection Supplementary Planning Document (EP-SPD), any new residential properties would be subject to two conditions being placed on any formal planning application – a pre-commencement condition which requires discharging prior to commencement on site, then a post-completion condition which can be discharged once all building works and landscaping is complete on site.

The first condition would require a preliminary risk assessment to be carried out to investigate the possibility or likelihood of contamination existing on site.



Depending upon findings, intrusive site investigation and sampling of ground conditions may be necessary along with remedial works if deemed appropriate.

If the preliminary risk assessment was supplied with any application then providing the findings are agreed with, then a condition relating to unexpected contamination would be recommended instead of full conditions. The 'unexpected contamination' condition is there to regulate procedures for cleaning up ground IF unexpected ground conditions or contaminants are found. If nothing untoward is discovered during development then the condition can be discharged at the end of the process with no requirement to do anything in relation to contaminated land.

As this proposal is for a single dwelling, there may be an option to circumvent some of the requirements of the full Pre-commencement Condition by means of completing a screening assessment form – which would take information about the site to assess the likelihood of contamination being an issue. This is something that the applicant can complete themselves to be submitted as part of the condition discharge process.

For further advice relating to ground conditions and requirements therein, please refer to the EP-SPD for detailed advice.

- Air Quality:

No issues have been foreseen by this proposal therefore no conditions are likely to be recommended.

- Noise:

No issues have been raised in relation to noise affecting this site. There is a likelihood that a construction hours informative would be included recommending specific times and days for noisy construction works to occur.

- Lighting:

No issues are foreseen by this proposal being erected nor from surrounding uses having any adverse impacts on residential amenity. A general informative is likely to be recommended to ensure that any external lighting is in compliance with advice and guidance from the Institute of Lighting Professionals.

- Other Matters:

For further advice concerning Contaminated Land and assessment requirements, Air Quality Management Areas or any Air Quality Assessments, Noise or Noise Assessments or Lighting requirements, please refer to the Environmental Protection Supplementary Planning Document for further detail ([http://www.warrington.gov.uk/downloads/download/1212/spd\\_environmental\\_protection](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/downloads/download/1212/spd_environmental_protection))



For further verbal advice please contact Mrs Angela Sykes for Contaminated Land on 01925 442557, Mr Richard Moore for Air Quality on 01925 442596 or Mr Steve Smith for Noise or Lighting on 01925 442589.

### Flood Risk

As part of any planning application for a new dwelling, the following condition is likely to be attached to deal Flood Risk:

“Prior to commencement of any development, a surface water drainage scheme and means of disposal, based on sustainable drainage principles with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions (inclusive of how the scheme shall be managed after completion) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

The surface water drainage scheme must be restricted to existing runoff rates. Unless otherwise agreed in writing by United Utilities, no surface water shall discharge to the public sewerage system either directly or indirectly.

The development shall be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved details”.

### Character/appearance of the area

Policy CS1 identifies the need to deliver high standards of design that have regard to local distinctiveness. Policy QE7 states that proposals should reinforce local distinctiveness and enhance character, appearance of the area, and harmonise with the scale, proportions and materials of adjacent and existing buildings. The NPPF identifies that decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment, while permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area.

In this instance the locality appears to consist of a mix of barn conversions forming 2-storey properties and bungalow properties constructed from predominantly red brick walls and slate roofs. Therefore the principle of erecting a bungalow property in this locality would appear acceptable from a character/appearance point of view, however I would suggest that similar material and colours are used to ensure local distinctiveness.

The plans provided do not appear to be to metric scale therefore it has not been possible to scale from the plans in which to compare with the dimensions of surrounding properties or plot ratios. You would therefore need to ensure that they are comparable to the neighbouring properties to retain the existing pattern of built form to prevent harm to the character/appearance of the area.

### Living conditions of neighbouring properties





The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning should seek to secure a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Core Strategy Policy CS1 identifies the need to safeguard public amenity, while QE6 identifies that consideration should be had to the need to respect the living conditions of existing neighbouring residential occupiers and future occupiers of new housing schemes in relation to overlooking/loss of privacy, outlook, sunlight, daylight, overshadowing, noise and disturbance.

It would be necessary to carefully consider the location of any main facing/habitable room windows which would overlook the neighbouring properties. As a guide the Council seeks to achieve a 21m separation distance between main face elevations containing habitable rooms and 13m between main face elevations and windowless/side elevations. However these distances would be increased where there are variations in land levels.

The plans provided do not show the locations of the windows on the proposed property or that of the neighbouring properties, therefore it is not possible to provide further detailed comments.

Depending on the location of the windows on the proposed dwelling and that of the neighbouring properties, this could result in harm to living conditions through loss of outlook, oppressive impact, overshadowing and privacy to the side neighbouring properties. You would therefore need to ensure that the interfaces distances are incorporated into the layout and the location of windows carefully considered.

You would also need to ensure that there is no harm through overlooking of the garden areas of the neighbouring properties. This may be achieved by either ensuring there are no habitable room windows on the proposed side elevations or ensuring that adequate side boundary treatment is provided to prevent loss of privacy.

The proposed scheme will also require the provision of private amenity space, which would appear to be provided.

#### Trees/Landscaping

No information has been given regarding the proximity of the built form to existing trees/planting on site. However from the photographs provided it would appear that there are currently no trees on site.

However given the presence of trees/planting to the western boundary facing Rosewood Farm, a tree survey may be required with any application, along with a landscaping scheme detailing trees/planting to be protected and any additional planting.

#### Ecology

While the proposed development site does not directly affect the nearby Row Wood Local Wildlife Site, it will affect an area of semi-natural vegetation within



a wider north-south green corridor of ecological importance and a length of hedgerow. It is therefore recommended that any future application for this site be supported by an ecological statement and assessment.

If it is found that a development proposal will cause harm to nature conservation value then mitigation for this harm will need to be proposed for consideration during the determination of a planning application.

Summary

The proposal is not listed as an appropriate form of new development in the Green Belt and therefore constitutes inappropriate development which cannot be supported unless very special circumstances exist. In this instance none have been provided.

I should re-iterate that the information provided above represents my own professional opinion and must emphasise that it is given entirely without prejudice to the Council's determination of the planning application and/or Lawful Development Certificate.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted signature]

Senior Planning Officer

Please contact:  
Direct dial:

[Redacted contact information]

[Redacted contact information]



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



## Appendix C Site Photographs









Appendix D Block Plan





**Client**  
 Murraywood Construction Limited  
 Endeavor House  
 Abbotsfield Road  
 St Helens  
 Merseyside  
 WA9 4HU

**Project**  
 Boundary Survey at:  
 Lot 1  
 Land adjoining  
 Park Lane/Warrington Road  
 High Walton and Hatton  
 Warrington, Cheshire

<b>Scale</b> 1:500	<b>Date</b> JUL 17	<b>Job No</b> 01
<b>Surveyed</b> CD	<b>Drawn</b> CD	<b>Checked</b> BM