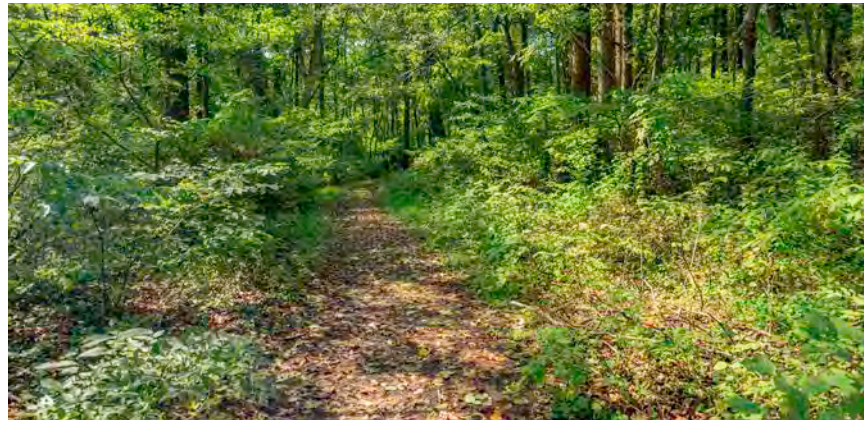


Land North East of Culcheth Development Prospectus

Warrington Local Plan



June 2019



Turley



Client

Peel Holdings (Management) Ltd

Our reference

PEEM3056

Date of issue

June 2019

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Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. A unique opportunity for Culcheth	6
3. The Proposals	12
4. Strategic Context and Development	14
5. Local Context and Site Sustainability	17
6. Opportunities and Constraints	19
7. Green Belt Assessment	21
8. Suitability	22
9. Benefits	26
10. Sustainable and Achievable	27
11. Summary and Conclusions	28
Appendix 1: Sustainability Checklist	30

1. Introduction

This development prospectus has been prepared on behalf of Peel Holdings (Management) Ltd (“Peel”) in respect of land north-east of Culcheth. It sets out a vision and masterplan for the sustainable development of the site and its allocation through the emerging Warrington Local Plan. It also presents an assessment of the site’s suitability for development as proposed.

This prospectus is submitted in response to Warrington Council’s consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan (PSLP). It should be read in conjunction with the suite of papers (dated June 2019) submitted by Peel, in response to the same consultation.

It comprises an update to the Development Prospectus dated September 2017 which accompanied Peel’s representations to the Preferred Development Option (PDO) consultation on the Local Plan.

Context

This prospectus is presented in the context of an acknowledged requirement that Warrington will need to identify a suitable and sustainable portfolio of Green Belt sites to meet its future housing needs over the period 2017 to 2037. Peel agrees with this conclusion as set out in its suite of representation papers. The papers provide general comments on the PSLP published by the Council in April 2019 and the associated evidence base. They consider the following:

- The adequacy of the proposed housing requirement and supply;
- The proposed spatial distribution of residential development and appraisal of spatial options;
- The type and range of sites needed to meet the Borough’s development needs.

Land North East of Culcheth

The site is located to the immediate north of the settlement of Culcheth, located within the northern part of the Borough, close to the intersection of the M6 and M62 motorways. The site is well related to the settlement with its southern boundary adjoining existing residential properties, which currently form the settlement boundary in this location, to the south. The site extends to 97.12 ha in total and currently comprises a mix of agricultural land and woodland.

The site is presently designated as Green Belt land within the Warrington Unitary Development Plan (June 2005). Peel consider that the site would represent a sustainable location for residential development, capable of making a significant contribution to meeting the housing needs of Warrington over the emerging plan period and delivering substantial benefits to the community such as a new Country Park, significant public open space and a school drop-off area. Peel therefore proposes that the site be released from the Green Belt and allocated for residential development through the Local Plan. The benefits which could be realised through the development of this site are unique and of a scale and type that other sites within Culcheth cannot compete.

This prospectus demonstrates that the site represents a sustainable opportunity capable of accommodating a desirable and high quality residential development. It will make a positive contribution to the settlement of Culcheth by integrating into the existing settlement, retaining and enhancing important features within and surrounding the site.

Having regard to this context, the prospectus goes on to consider how the site could be developed in a manner which ensures the role and integrity of the wider Green Belt is maintained and endures over the long term, consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (‘the Framework’).

The remainder of the document is structured as follows:

- Outline of the unique opportunity the site presents;
- A description of the proposals;
- Description of the site and its context;
- An overview of the opportunities and constraints presented by the site;
- An assessment of the contribution which the site makes to the Green Belt;
- An assessment of site deliverability;
- Summary of the benefits that development will secure;
- An assessment of the proposals, to demonstrate that development of the site is sustainable and achievable.



2. A Unique Opportunity for Culcheth

Allocation and subsequent development of the site has the potential to provide substantial benefits for existing and future residents of Culcheth.

The opportunity to deliver these benefits is unique to this site and can only occur with its allocation.

The key, overriding benefits are explored below whilst Section 9 outlines the additional economic and social benefits to be derived from development of land North East of Culcheth.

Country Park

A new extensive green infrastructure network could wrap around the north eastern portion of the site allowing for the retention and enhancement of existing landscape features.

This new recreational and ecological asset would form a Country Park bordering the northern portion of the site. The Country Park would be a significant benefit to the existing and future residents of Culcheth.

The Country Park would provide areas of parkland and more naturalistic space, providing an attractive setting for public rights of way, new footpaths, cycleways and bridleways to create a time leisure destination.

Open Space

An area of open space, to the east of the site would be focused around areas of amenity grassland, wildflower meadows, wetlands and SUDs. Allotments would be provided, along with new sports pitches and a NEAP. Footways, cycleways and bridleways would connect to the Country Park.

Access and Drop-Off Area for Culcheth High School

The existing access to the school is in need of improvement. The Illustrative Masterplan shows that a connection will be provided, via the new access, to Culcheth High School and a new car park and drop-off facility for the school will be provided within the site. Easy access will be provided to this area located a short driving distance from the main road.

The new site access from Warrington Road could include a priority controlled junction or roundabout and will allow significantly better management of access to the school, with conflicts removed from Warrington Road including the u-turns that are made at the Warrington Road/Holcroft Lane junction.

The provision of this new access will provide significant benefits for new and existing residents by relocating the school access from its current position close to the Warrington Road / Holcroft Lane junction.



The Illustrative Masterplan

The Illustrative Masterplan shows a development of 600 residential units, whilst also providing substantial benefits in the form of a large country park to the north, open space to the east and also making provision for a new access, drop-off area and extension to Culcheth High School. The site provides the opportunity to deliver new housing for Culcheth during the current plan period.




















Area measures:

Total site area	97.12 ha
Developable area	19.34 ha
Spine road	4.19 ha
Open Space	32.62 ha
Culcheth Country Park	38.48 ha
Allotments	0.82 ha
Formal sport	1.40 ha
Allotments/sports car park	0.27 ha

This site could deliver up to 600 units at 31 dwellings per hectare.



Key

-  Proposed site boundary
-  Existing vegetation
-  Existing watercourses and waterbodies
-  Proposed woodland buffer
-  Proposed development cell
-  Proposed open space
-  Potential school extension
-  Sites with planning applications / recently developed
-  Proposed new sports pitches
-  Retained PRoWs
-  Proposed pedestrian links
-  Proposed primary road
-  Proposed secondary road
-  Proposed vehicular access
-  Potential emergency link
-  Proposed allotments
-  Proposed SuDS
-  Proposed NEAP
-  Proposed LEAP



Illustrative Masterplan Showing Safeguarded Land

The Illustrative Masterplan presented below shows how the site could be developed in two phases, with Phase 1 being delivered during the plan period, providing approximately 300 dwellings with access from Warrington Road. Phase 2 could be designated as safeguarded land for the provision of an additional 300 dwellings, with an additional access provided from Twiss Green Lane.

The significant benefits that could be achieved through development of this site could still be achieved through ‘phased’ development.

The need for safeguarded land and its distribution to a number of locations across the Borough, including Culcheth, is set out in Papers 2 and 3 of Peels main representation.

Total site area	97.12 ha
Developable area	10.14 ha
Spine road	2.67 ha
Open Space	29.42 ha
Culcheth Country Park	38.48 ha
Allotments	0.82 ha
Formal sport	1.40 ha
Allotments/sports car park	0.27 ha
Proposed safeguarded land	13.92 ha

This site could deliver up to 300 dwellings @ 30 dwellings per hectare



- Key**
- Proposed site boundary
 - Proposed Green Belt boundary
 - Existing vegetation
 - Existing watercourses and waterbodies
 - Existing watercourses and waterbodies
 - Proposed tree and woodland planting
 - Proposed development cell
 - Proposed Culcheth Country Park (retained within Green Belt)
 - Proposed open space
 - Potential school extension
 - Potential school extension
 - Sites with planning applications / recently developed
 - Safeguarded land for future development
 - Proposed new sports pitches
 - Retained ProWs
 - Retained pedestrian links
 - Proposed pedestrian links
 - Proposed primary road
 - Proposed secondary road
 - Proposed secondary road
 - Proposed car parks
 - Proposed car parks
 - Proposed vehicular access from Warrington Road (priority junction or roundabout)
 - Proposed access to Culcheth High School
 - Potential emergency link
 - Potential emergency link
 - Proposed allotments
 - Proposed SuDS
 - Proposed NEAP/LEAP
 - Proposed NEAP/LEAP



Partial development of the site

3. The Proposals

The land north east of Culcheth has the essential components of a high quality place. It has a strong landscape framework and can form a logical and sustainable extension of the existing community. The wider benefits such as the large country park, open space and school facilities which can be realised by development of the site are unique and cannot be delivered by any other sites within the settlement.

The conceptual masterplan takes its cue from the existing landscape features both within and around the site; vegetation, landform, views, ecology, drainage and built form. The key opportunities of the site are explained through the following 'placemaking concept' steps.

1. Enhancing the open space

- The northern & eastern parts of the site would be maintained as open land to create areas for informal recreation including large areas of open space and a new country park within the Green Belt. The existing trees and woodlands would form an integral part of the landscape and would include a NEAP and a LEAP to improve formal recreation provision in Culcheth.
- A new woodland buffer along the eastern boundary would screen the site from the wider landscape and improve woodland connectivity within the site. The provision of new sports pitches within the site could facilitate the extension of Culcheth high school.

2. Well connected pedestrian network

- A series of green links would provide pedestrian and cycle access to the greenspace network for the residents of the proposed development and the existing residents of Culcheth. These green links would be set within wide green corridors and follow the routes of existing Public Rights of Way in places.
- These green links would create an attractive movement network throughout the site and allow the proposed development to integrate with the surrounding residential areas of Culcheth, and the landscape to the north & east.



3. Access and road network

- The primary road network would access the site from two separate locations due to Jibcroft Brook and Wellfield Woods slicing the site into two parts.
- The western part of the site would be accessed from Twiss Green Lane, the road would follow the existing track through this part of the site before looping south. An additional loop provides access to the development to the north.
- The eastern part of the site would be accessed from Warrington Road in the south eastern corner of the site. The primary road would then form a loop within the site, providing a separate vehicular circulation that has little interaction with the proposed green links, creating a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and road users through a clear movement hierarchy. Potential 3m wide emergency service connections would be provided through Wellfield Woods and from Withington Avenue.



4. Development parcels

- The remaining parts of the site would be developed for housing. The development parcels would front onto the greenspace network, the primary road network and the proposed green links to create secure development blocks, which would frame the green infrastructure network and provide focal features in views from within the site.
- The existing trees along the field boundaries within the proposed development blocks would be preserved along road corridors to create a mature landscape setting for some of the street scenes, enhancing the character of the proposed residential areas.



4. Strategic Context and Development Needs

National Planning Policy: National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (“the Framework”) came into effect in March 2012, and has been subject to a number of updates in the years since. The most recent iteration was published in February 2019.

Sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework. In planning for sustainable development, Local Planning Authorities, when ‘plan-making’, should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area (including for housing and affordable housing) with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change. LPAs should identify a supply of specific, deliverable sites to provide a minimum of five years’ housing against their housing requirement as set out within their adopted strategic policies. Beyond this timescale, they should identify specific developable sites or broad locations for growth.

Green Belt boundaries may be altered (but only in exceptional circumstances) through the preparation or updating of Local Plans. When defining Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. New Green Belt boundaries should, inter alia, reflect the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development, identify areas of safeguarded land (where necessary) in order to meet longer-term development needs, be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period and define boundaries clearly, using recognisable physical features which are likely to be permanent.

Warrington Local Plan











The Warrington Local Plan (“WLP”) consultation invites comments on the Council’s Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan (PSLP), the published evidence base and the Council’s conclusions on the Borough’s development needs intended to be met over the plan period.

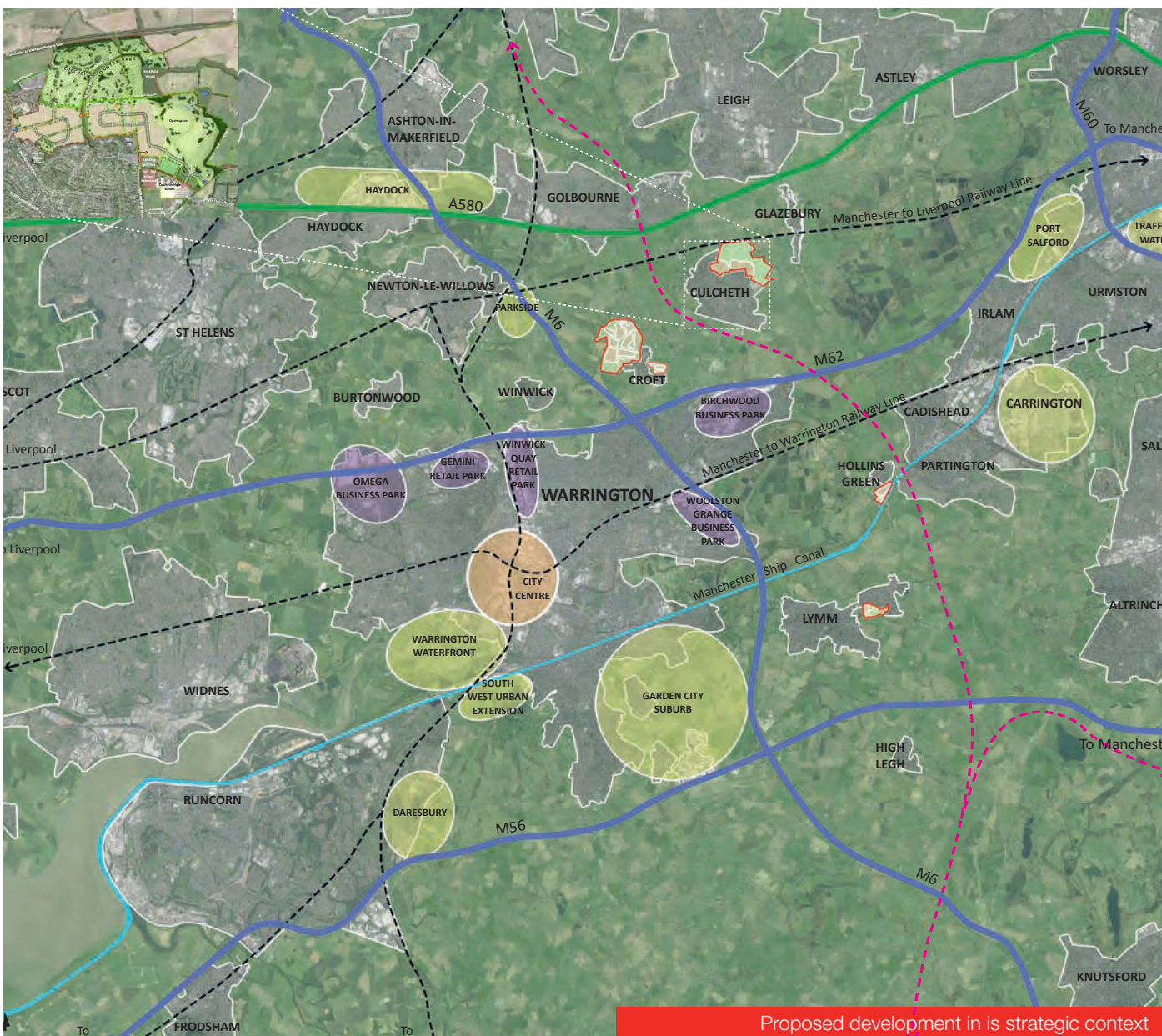
The WLP recognises the need for Green Belt release in order to accommodate the borough’s housing and economic requirements. The suite of papers comprising Peel’s main representations deal with the questions of the extent and location of Green Belt release.

Peel welcomes the progression of the WLP and the opportunity to provide comment on the Borough’s aspirations and strategic policies for the plan period.

The figure to the right shows the proposed development site at Land North East of Culcheth in the context of the wider region.

KEY:

	Urban area
	Primary employment areas in Warrington
	Warrington city centre
	Key future growth areas
	Manchester Ship Canal
	Motorway
	A580 East Lancashire Road
	Railway line
	Indicative proposed HS2 route
	Potential strategic housing sites (green belt release)



Securing a sustainable future for the settlements of Warrington

Evidence prepared by Turley (see suite of papers submitted as Peel's main representations) sets out a case for supporting further levels of growth within the Outlying Settlements of the Borough to ensure the Borough can meet its housing needs across the plan period, that Green Belt boundaries can endure the possibility of further growth in Warrington and that the Outlying Settlements continue to be sustainable places to live.

Peel has critiqued the range of Spatial Options explored by the Council and outline their position that the options tested have been purposely developed and assessed to demonstrate that only a very constrained approach to the growth of the outlying settlements is sustainable. Peel disagrees with this approach and outlines that the 'incremental growth' option identified by the Council is unnecessarily limiting. As an alternative, Peel advocates increased disbursement of additional growth throughout the Outlying Settlements, in order to align with the additional housing need identified within Peel's representations.

The evidence prepared by Peel covers the following broad themes, in regard to growth of the Outlying Settlements:

Impacts of Additional Growth in the Outlying Settlements

Growth within the Outlying Settlements could be delivered through the utilisation of those areas of Green Belt which make no greater contribution to the Green Belt than those identified for growth around South Warrington.

Evidence shows that higher growth within the Outlying Settlements would not be more harmful to their character than those areas identified for growth in South Warrington.

The Outlying Settlements and sites within them are not considered individually within the Council's evidence base and instead are the subject of a number of generalisations. Peel maintains that it is not possible to make assumptions regarding proposed impacts of higher levels of growth and requests that individual sites and settlements are tested for their sustainability.

A Higher Housing Requirement

Paper 2 of Peel's main representation demonstrates that the Local Plan should seek to deliver at least 1,000 dwellings per annum, plus a flexibility allowance of 20%. At this level of growth, an alternative strategy of 'greater disbursement' could be pursued, whilst maintaining the level of growth currently proposed for direction to Warrington.

In the context of a housing requirement of 1,100 dwellings per annum, the Outlying Settlements could accommodate up to 5,974 dwellings through Green Belt release, whilst also maintaining the level of growth so critical to supporting the regeneration and infrastructure benefits associated with the growth of Warrington itself.

Viability of the Outlying Settlements

The growth of the Outlying Settlements is critical to ensuring the long term sustainability of service provision and securing the vitality and viability of local and neighbourhood centres through providing increased local spending capacity. This is critical to securing a sustainable future for all settlements.

Peel supports the Council's view that incremental growth of the Outlying Settlements is favourable to no growth, in the context of ensuring the long term viability of the settlements. However, more evidence is required in order to understand whether incremental growth is sufficient to ensure long term viability, or whether further growth is required to ensure a sustainable future for the Outlying Settlements.

Summary

Peel's position is that the Outlying Settlements are capable of accommodating more than 'incremental' growth. Following points raised within Peel's main representation papers, an uplifted housing requirement would create a need for increased growth, which should be accommodated through Green Belt release in the Outlying Settlements.



5. Local Context and Site Sustainability

Warrington Borough is a Unitary Authority adjoining the city regions of Liverpool and Manchester. It is well connected to both by the strategic transport network and is therefore well placed to capitalise on the growth ambitions for these areas and the wider North, as articulated through the Northern Powerhouse ambition. It has its own plans and aspirations for growth.

The main town in the Borough is Warrington.

Culcheth is an established settlement located close (c.1.5km) to the north-east of the urban area of Warrington. It lies north-east of the interchange of the M6 and M62 Motorways (known as the Croft Interchange) and close to Birchwood Park, one of the borough's flagship employment locations, recognised as being of 'sub-regional importance' in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy. It has a population of c. 11,500 and has a wide range of shops, services and facilities.

The Site and its Surroundings

The site encompasses an area of land to the north east of Culcheth, extending north to the Manchester to Liverpool railway line. The site comprises a number of fields currently used for agricultural purposes, separated by remnant hedgerows, with limited hedgerow trees and small pockets of woodland.

The site is partly bordered by existing housing to the south and west and the Manchester to Liverpool Railway runs east west along the northern boundary. Culcheth High School borders the site to the south east. The Newchurch Hospital Conservation Area lies close to the western tip of the site and a listed building milestone lies adjacent to the south-eastern site boundary.

The site is well related to existing facilities serving the established local residential area, including a high school, 3 primary schools, two supermarkets, public transport routes, 3 pubs, a youth centre and a range of recreational facilities.

The area falls within the 'undulating enclosed farmland' of Winwick, Culcheth, Glazebrook and Rixton, described in the Warrington Landscape Character Assessment (2007) as '*undulating farmland with a medium to large scale field pattern*'.

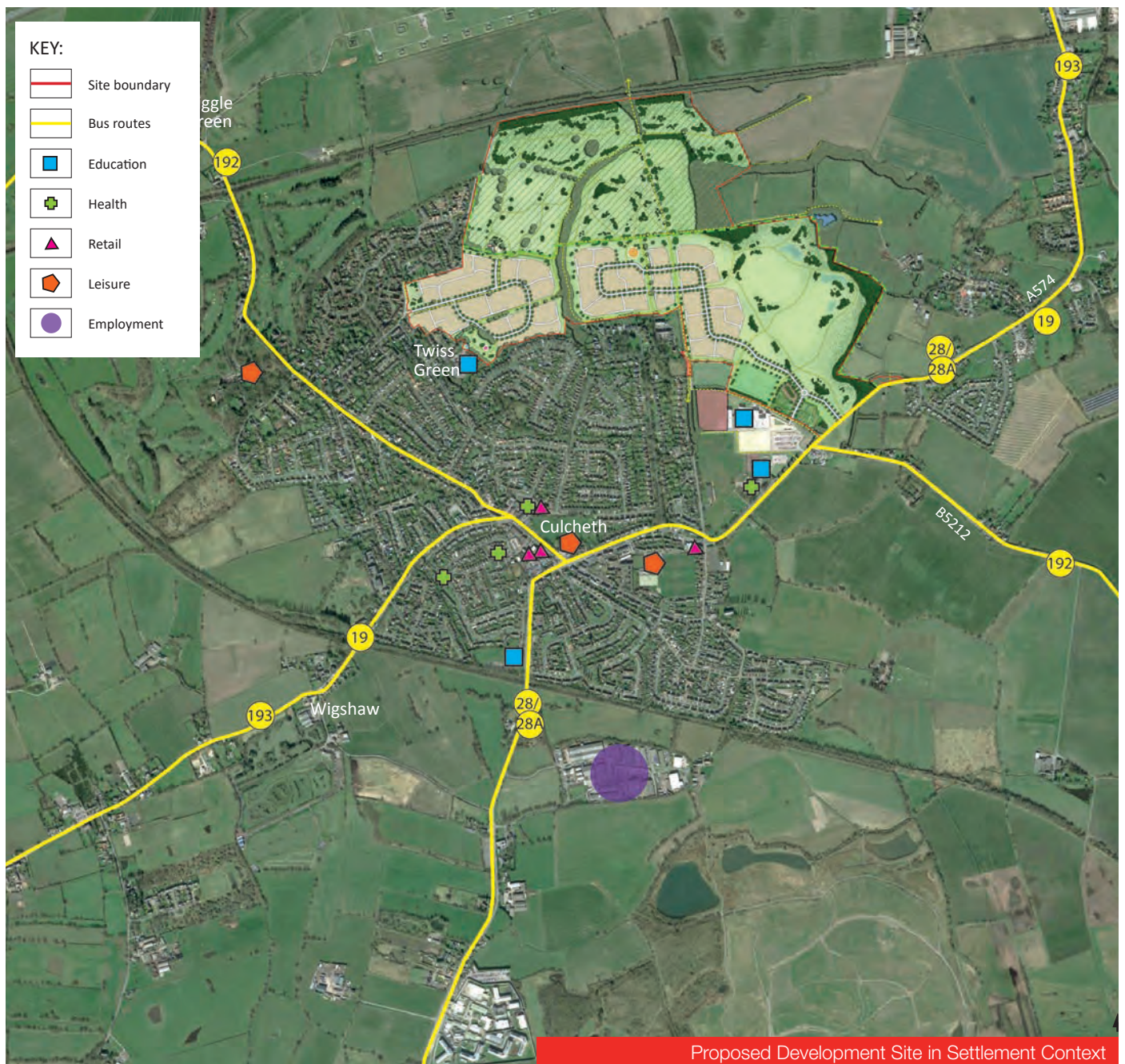
There are two main areas of woodland within the site; Wellfield Wood follows a section of Jibcroft Brook, splitting the site in two, forming a dominant feature within the landscape; and Hitchfield Wood is a well-established area of woodland situated to the north east of the site and is designated as a 'Local Wildlife Site'.

Connectivity

A number of bus services serve the site, these are summarised below:

Service No.	Route	Frequency
28/ 28A	Leigh - Warrington	Hourly
19	Leigh - Warrington	Hourly
587	Culcheth - Leigh	Hourly
192	Rixton - Birchwood	1 daily (Monday - Friday)
193	Birchwood - Glazebury	4 daily (Monday - Friday)

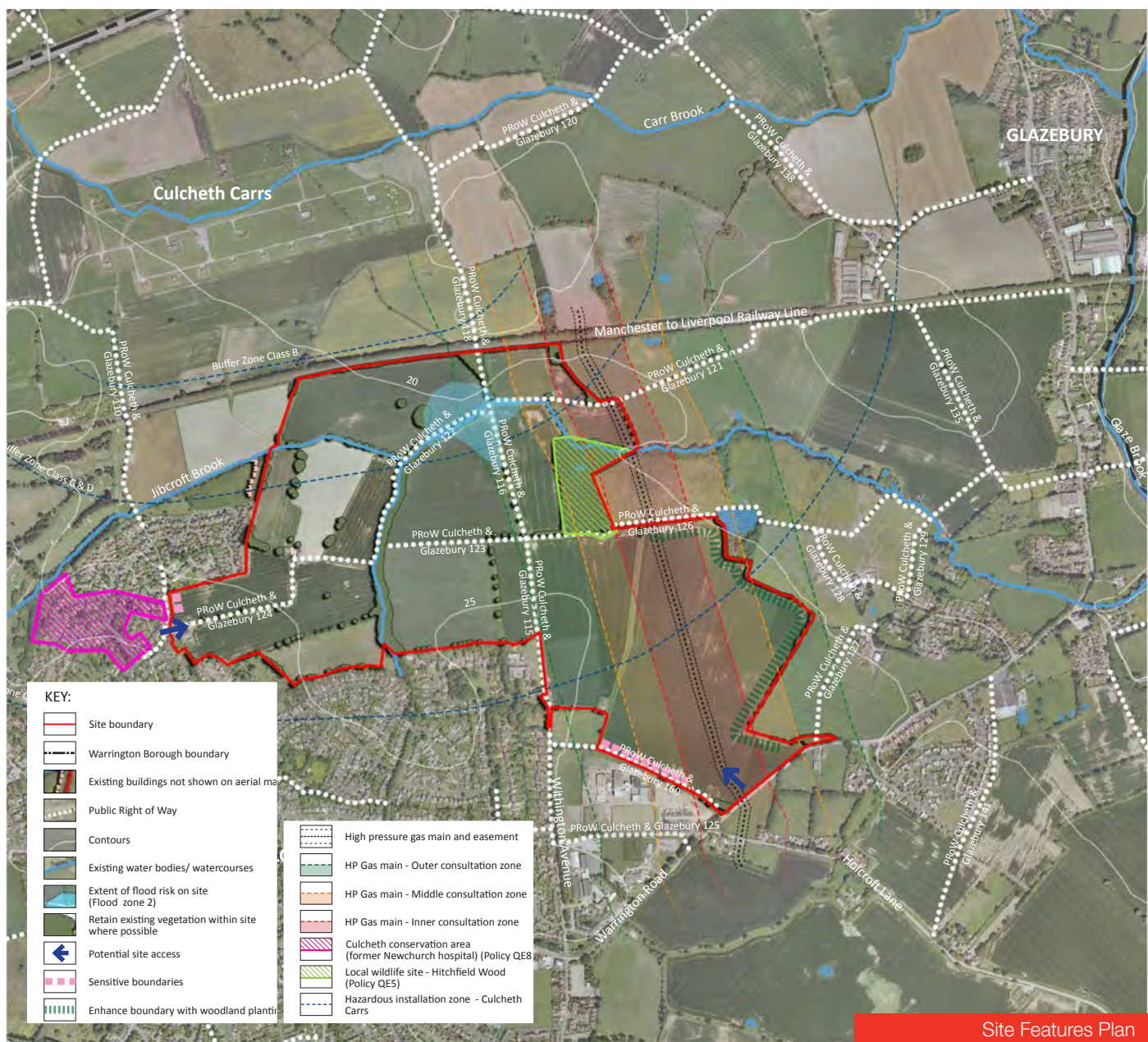
Birchwood Station is accessible through use of the 28 bus service.



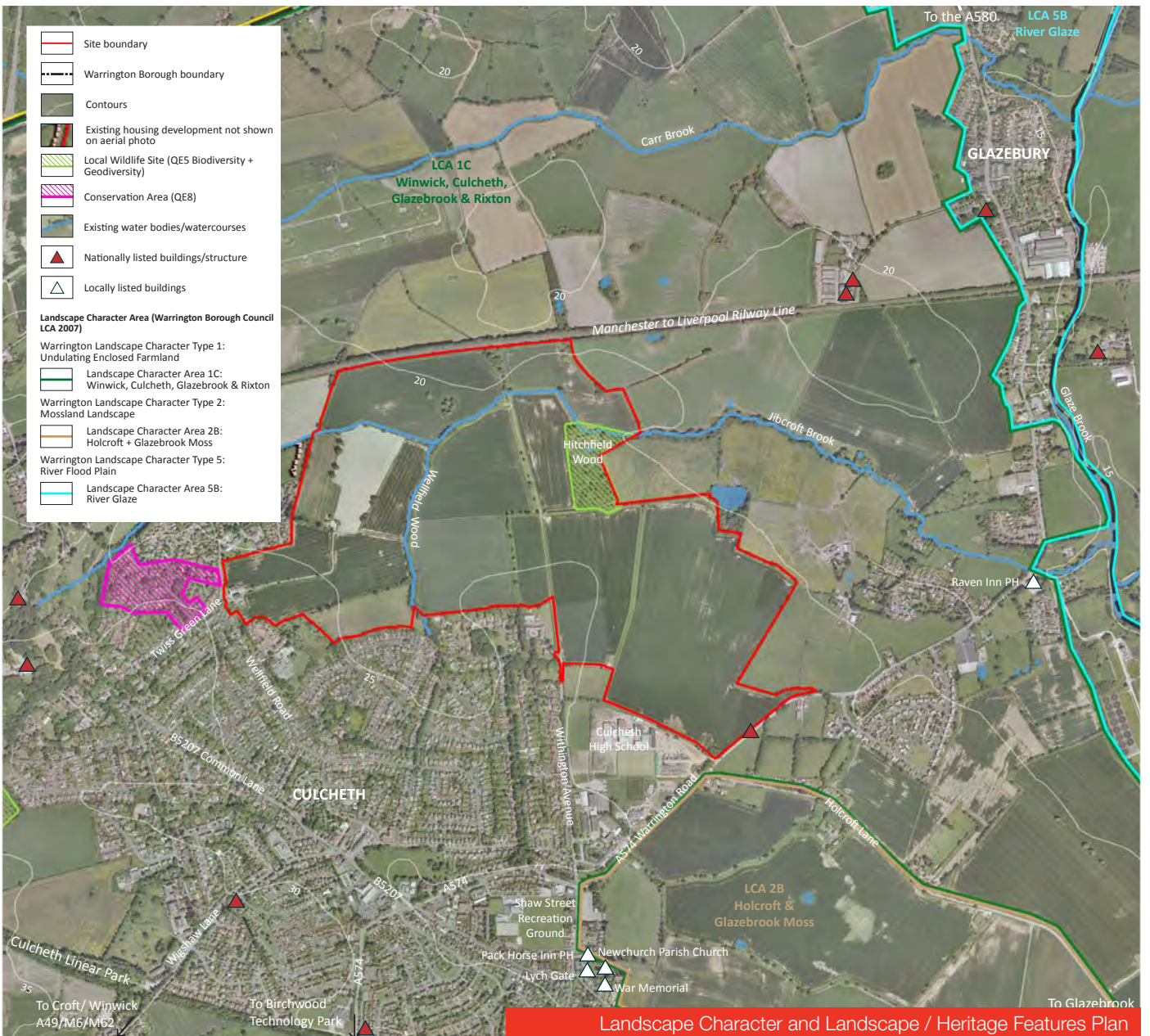


6. Opportunities and Constraints

The following plans below have been prepared to show the opportunities and constraints relevant to development of the site. They have been informed by site visits and by reference to existing data such as the DEFRA Magic Mapping service and evidence base documents such as the Warrington Landscape Character Assessment 2007 and survey work presented in the technical appendix to the Prospectus.



Site Features Plan



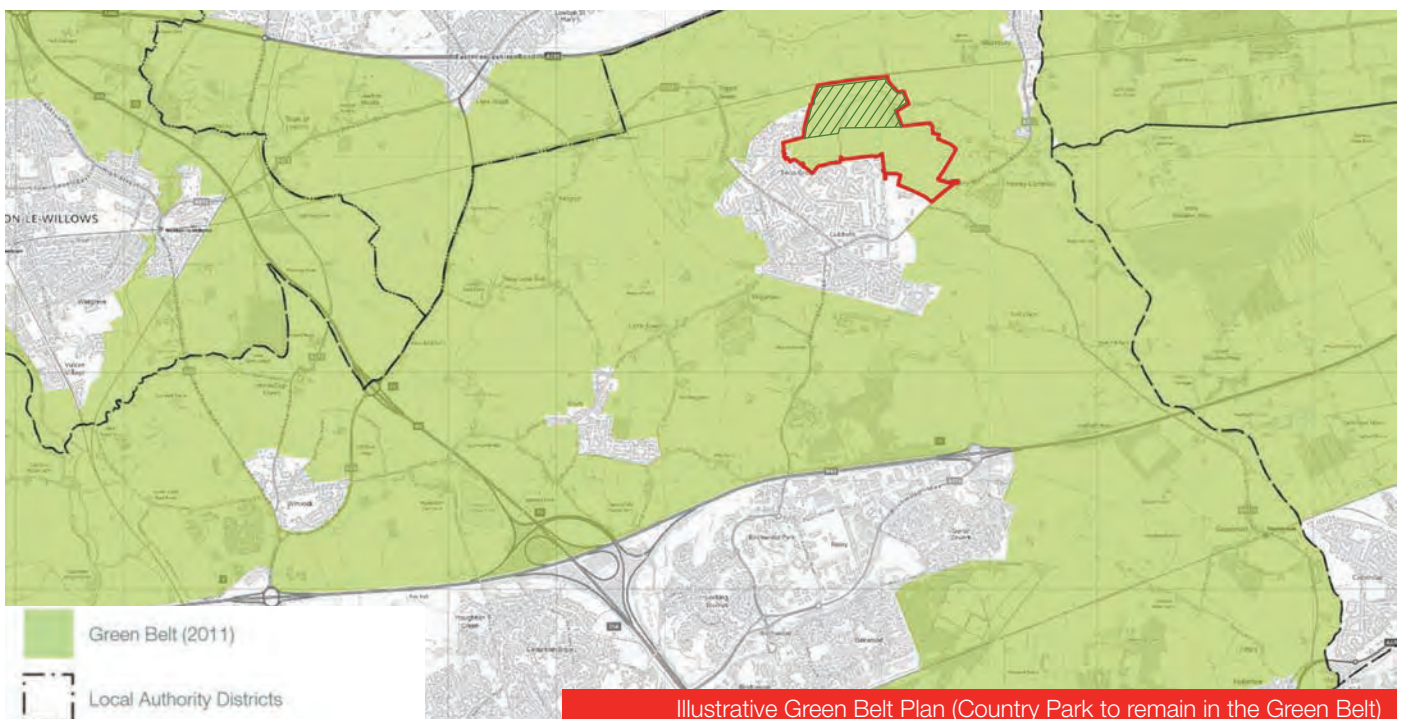
Landscape Character and Landscape / Heritage Features Plan

7. Green Belt Assessment

The Council has published a comprehensive Green Belt Assessment as part of the development of the Local Plan. This considers the Green Belt contribution made by defined parcels of Green Belt land across the Borough. The subject site has not been fully assessed by the council a decision which Peel view as flawed. Peel considers that all sites, including those which may be deemed to make a strong contribution to the Green Belt, should have been considered by the Council.

Peel is also of the view that a consideration of Green Belt harm should be included within any assessment of the site. This is a critical consideration in providing a rounded view on the suitability of sites.

Peel's own assessment of the site demonstrates that it would achieve a score reflective of the most suitable and sustainable site in Culcheth.



8. Suitability

This section demonstrates that the site is suitable to accommodate residential development.

The following suite of investigations have been undertaken to inform this assessment:

- Ecological Appraisal (The Environmental Partnership)
- Heritage Appraisal (Turley)
- Preliminary Drainage Strategy (Shepherd Gilmour)
- Flood Risk Advice (Shepherd Gilmour)
- Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (Randall Thorp)
- Health and Safety Check (Shepherd Gilmour)
- Noise Screening Assessment (Miller Goodall)
- Transport Appraisal (i-Transport)
- Utilities Infrastructure Assessment (Shepherd Gilmour)

These are provided in a separate technical appendix to this prospectus. They are summarised below.

Environment

Ecology

An initial Ecological Appraisal has been carried out to identify the ecological constraints and opportunities and the development potential of the site.

The site does not form part of any statutory nature conservation designations, however the Hitchfield Wood Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located in the north-east of the site. The masterplan will retain this area and ensure that an appropriate buffer is delivered, comprising a green corridor and a country park, to separate the proposed development from this LWS. There is a second LWS (Eleven Acre Common) approximately 800m to the south-west of the proposed site, but given the lack of connectivity between the sites it is unlikely to be negatively impact by development opportunities. Owing to the distances (>1km) of other statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations in the wider area, and taking account of the residential nature of the development proposals, it is very unlikely the development would result in adverse effects here.

The majority of the site has been identified as being of low ecological constraint, consisting of either arable crop or modified neutral grassland, which offers little opportunity to local wildlife. The Ecological Appraisal has identified some features of high and medium ecological value, such as semi-natural broadleaved woodland, hedgerows, ponds, and drainage ditches. The masterplan will retain those features of highest ecological value and will provide buffers to ensure such habitats continue to function as wildlife corridors for a range of species. Where possible the masterplan will retain less sensitive habitats, but if removal is unavoidable, mitigation or compensate will be provided.

The presence of any protected species will be protected through the adoption of relatively simple design principles, which will be informed by future detailed survey work.

There are opportunities to increase the biodiversity of the site through tree and hedgerow planting, drainage design, and provision of new habitat. The retained areas of habitat will also maintained and enhanced to further provide opportunities to both wildlife and the local community. The development can also secure the removal of non-native invasive species (such as Himalayan balsam) recorded within the site boundary which will enhance existing green corridors by removing species that exclude native vegetation.

There are no ecological reasons to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.



Heritage	<p>A Heritage Appraisal has been carried out. This identifies heritage assets with the potential to be affected by development of the site. Although the site contributes to the setting of the Culcheth (New Church) Conservation Area, this is largely attributed to its western side. The site does not contribute to any other heritage assets. Development of the type and arrangement identified in the masterplan will sustain the significance of nearby heritage assets</p> <p>There is no heritage reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Flood Risk	<p>A desktop flood risk assessment has been carried out. The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 as identified by the Environment Agency. The site is therefore within an area considered to have a low risk of flooding (i.e. less than a 1 in 1000 annual probability of flooding) and is sequentially preferable in terms of the Framework and associated technical guidance.</p> <p>There are small areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 to the north of the site, close to Jibcroft Brook. These areas have a medium to high probability of flooding and will therefore be excluded from development in the masterplan.</p> <p>There is no flood risk reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Landscape	<p>An appraisal has been carried out to evaluate the landscape character of the site and an established Study Area and to assess the value and sensitivity of the site and its immediate surroundings. Following this, the appraisal uses the outcome of the sensitivity assessment to advise on the development potential of the site.</p> <p>The appraisal states that there is nothing to indicate that there is anything about the landscape character of Study Area, which should be considered remarkable or out of the ordinary, with the exception of Holcroft Moss in the very south east of the Study Area, which has national conservation interest and lies 3km from the site. The Study Area identifies some features of value that are site specific and would be subject to further assessment or mitigation measures.</p> <p>The site itself is contiguous with the north-east edge of Culcheth and there is an existing railway along the northern boundary of the site.</p> <p>The proposed masterplan would provide a housing development within a well landscaped setting, with existing landscape features preserved within a Country Park in the north eastern parts of the site, and new woodland and tree planting on the northern and eastern site boundaries.</p> <p>The appraisal concludes there is no reason why a well-designed development that preserves the existing landscape features and Public Rights of Way within a green infrastructure network, and responds sensitively to the setting of the existing conservation area near to the west of the site would have any significant effects on the character of Culcheth or the wider landscape of the Study Area.</p> <p>There is no landscape reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Trees and Hedgerows	<p>The development can be designed to retain the boundary hedges and trees and where necessary supplement them with new tree planting. Trees can be retained within open space and footpath links. Development of the site will ensure that the trees are managed for the future and that they are retained as long term landscape features.</p> <p>There are no arboricultural reasons to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>

Land Quality	<p>The most recent use of the site was for agricultural purposes and it has never been subject to a use which may pose insurmountable contamination risks.</p> <p>A Predicted Agricultural Land Classification report has been carried out and states that the land is likely to comprise predominantly Grade 3a and 3b land.</p> <p>There is no contamination reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Health and Safety	<p>A preliminary consultation with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) indicated that a National High Pressure main passes through the eastern part of the site and this is considered to be a major accident hazard pipeline. The site masterplan has been prepared to accord with the HSE safety zoning. Consequently, the proposed housing will be located in the middle and outer zones, which will comply with the HSE guidelines.</p> <p>The Glazebury Orica Explosive Storage Depot is located to north of the site and is classed as a major hazard and is subject to separate safeguarding zones. The masterplan ensures that the vast majority of the site is within the outermost of the three explosive safeguarding zones relating to this facility; within which residential development is acceptable. In any event, it is understood that there are plans for the storage depot to close and this will lead to the withdrawal of the safeguarding zones. The Illustrative Masterplans have been prepared in order to avoid the consultation zones.</p> <p>Discussions will take place with the HSE to agree this position.</p> <p>There is no health and safety reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Noise	<p>A Noise Screening Assessment has been carried out. This confirms that based on the available information, noise would not be a barrier to development. It confirms that the large buffer between the site and railway line will be sufficient to protect homes from railway noise. Good acoustic design should be considered as part of any future development to protect existing noise sensitive receptors.</p> <p>There is no reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development on the basis of noise.</p>



Infrastructure

Highways	<p>An initial transport appraisal has been carried out to identify the potential constraints and opportunities relating to highways and the development potential of the site</p> <p>This site will be served by a range of facilities and services within walking and cycling distance of the site. These include: the primary school and country park on the site; the nearby high school; and education, health, shopping and leisure facilities in Culcheth (including those at the nearby village centre). These will all be within easy walk or cycle ride of residential dwellings and will therefore encourage active travel.</p> <p>The appraisal confirms that access to the site is proposed in several locations and feasibility level designs have been produced and the capacity of these considered. All will operate satisfactorily without giving rise to unacceptable residual highways effects on the local network. Site access is deliverable and achievable.</p> <p>Development in any location in the Borough will increase traffic flows on the local road network surrounding it. The site at Culcheth affords significant and many opportunities for local active travel making which will reduce traffic flows. Indications of traffic speeds in and around Culcheth show that traffic conditions could not be categorised as severe and the Council's own conclusion is that there is only a small amount of peak hour congestion.</p> <p>On this basis it is concluded that, in accordance with the NPPF, development should not be prevented on transport grounds as the residual cumulative impacts of development will not be severe.</p> <p>There is no highways reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Drainage and Sewerage	<p>A preliminary drainage strategy has been prepared. This confirms that the site is greenfield and that any surface water is likely to discharge into local watercourses.</p> <p>The masterplan will be designed to limit surface water to the greenfield run-off rate, and attenuate surface water volumes on site, including an allowance for climate change. Attenuation will be provided either above ground (i.e. swales, ponds and detention basins) or below ground (i.e. oversized pipes or geocellular modules). By restricting discharge rates, the post-development discharge rate will mimic the existing conditions.</p> <p>United Utilities (UU) asset plans indicate a network of foul and surface water sewers located in close proximity to the site. It is likely that any foul drainage generated by the development will connect into the combined sewer which runs across the site. Further consultation will be conducted with UU.</p> <p>There is no drainage or sewerage reason to prevent the site being allocated for residential development.</p>
Utilities	<p>An initial assessment of utilities in the area has identified that existing electricity, gas, water, and telecommunications connections are available in the surrounding area and the proposed development can connect to those without adversely impacting on the provision to the wider community. Some minor works will be necessary to deliver services to the site, however this would not be insurmountable or hinder the delivery of the development.</p> <p>The provision of services will not constrain the development of the site.</p>

Suitability Conclusion





This technical assessment demonstrates that the site is not affected by any insurmountable constraints. The masterplan as presented is therefore fully deliverable.

9. Benefits




Site: Land North East of Culcheth

Proposed development: c.600 - 900 residential dwellings¹





TO BE UPDATED


 <p>30% affordable housing</p>	 <p>38.48ha new Country Park, along with green cycle and pedestrian links</p>	 <p>32.79ha public open space, playing pitches and allotments</p>	 <p>School drop off area</p>
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Construction Phase¹

 <p>£74.1 million Estimated investment in the construction of the proposed development</p>	 <p>75 gross direct FTE (full time equivalent) jobs per annum of construction (8 years)</p> <p>65 direct net additional FTE jobs including 25 in Warrington</p> <p>30 indirect/induced FTE jobs, including 5 in Warrington</p>	 <p>£48.8 million Total GVA² economic output over a 8 year build period, including £18.4m in Warrington</p>
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Operational Phase²

 <p>£7.9 million Uplift in annual retail expenditure</p>	 <p>£4.4 million Uplift in annual leisure expenditure</p>	 <p>95 Jobs Supporting retail and leisure related jobs annually</p>	 <p>£3.3 million Expenditure upon first occupation to make a 'house feel like home'</p>
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 <p>680 Working-age employed residents estimated to live on the new development</p>	 <p>£16.9 million Uplift in gross annual income from new employed residents</p>	 <p>£1.0 million Additional Council Tax revenue per annum for Warrington Borough Council</p>	 <p>£2.1 million Total New Homes Bonus payment to Warrington Borough Council</p>
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¹ All impacts net additional

² GVA (Gross Value Added) measure the value of output created (i.e. turnover) net of inputs used to produce a good or service (i.e. production of outputs). It provides a key measure of economic productivity. Put simply the GVA is the total of all revenue into businesses, which is used to fund wages, profits and taxes.



10. Sustainable and Achievable

New Homes for Culcheth

The site presents a sustainable and achievable development opportunity comprising residential development and a large country park. It is capable of accommodating in the region of 600 homes of mixed tenure (including affordable housing), size and type, with a focus on good quality family housing. It will make a very important contribution to meeting Warrington's housing requirement and meeting the need for new homes in Culcheth whilst maintaining a positive contribution to the long term sustainability of Culcheth and its local services and infrastructure.

The site has the potential to form an attractive and desirable new neighbourhood which is a valuable addition to Culcheth and which is integrated with it.

The concept masterplan provides a framework which responds to its context. It purposely provides a substantial landscape buffer to the outer edges of the site, in the form of the country park, with enhanced structural landscaping, particularly to the eastern boundary. Existing features are retained and enhanced, for example by incorporating Wellfield Wood and existing hedgerows / field boundaries in the green infrastructure which shapes the site layout. This network runs through the site and links Culcheth with the wider countryside beyond. The development also provides the opportunity to deliver an extension to Culcheth High School to secure additional secondary school capacity if needed to serve Culcheth and the north of Warrington.

A Sustainable Opportunity

A sustainability checklist, based on the themes set out in the Warrington Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal is provided at Appendix 1. This demonstrates that the proposal represents sustainable development, having regard to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability.

Delivery

An initial assessment of the site has identified that there are no environmental issues that would preclude delivery of the site. The site does not require the provision of significant or unusual infrastructure to enable it to be delivered. It is also situated in a strong market area, which experiences high demand for new homes. The site is therefore readily deliverable over the plan period.



11. Summary and Conclusions

This development prospectus sets out a vision and masterplan for the sustainable development of land north-east of Culcheth. It is submitted as part of Peel's representations to the Warrington Local Plan Proposed Submission version consultation.

It demonstrates that the site represents a sustainable opportunity capable of accommodating a desirable and high quality residential development surrounded by a new country park. It presents the opportunity to create a new community, but one which is integrated with Culcheth. Existing natural features will be retained and enhanced within and surrounding the site. New service provision will be secured whilst existing provision can be enhanced.

The concept masterplan presented within the document provides a framework which responds to its context. It demonstrates that site is capable of accommodating around 600 new homes (including affordable housing), with a focus on good quality family housing and can therefore make a very substantial contribution to Warrington's housing requirement, along with the significant benefits to future and existing residents, such as the Country Park.

In the absence of any significant or unusual infrastructure to enable it to be delivered and given the strength of the market area the site is therefore readily deliverable over the plan period.



Appendix 1:

Sustainability Checklist

(Based on sustainability themes set out in the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal)

Economy and Regeneration

Strengthen the local economy and ensure sustainable economic growth	The site will generate numerous temporary and permanent economic benefits as set out in this Site Prospectus.
Improve the education and skills of the population overall	The construction phase will provide an opportunity for skills and training to be offered to local residents.
Reduce poverty, deprivation and social exclusion and secure economic inclusion	The provision and supporting of jobs and the generation will contribute to achieving this objective.

Health and Wellbeing

Improve physical and mental health and reduce health inequalities	The site will incorporate areas of open space, including a large country park, and a network of walking / cycling routes (which allow access to the surrounding countryside). These facilities will contribute to physical and mental health wellbeing for future residents and others in Culcheth.
Reduce crime, disorder and the fear of crime	The detailed site layout and design of development can contribute to achieving this objective.
Enable groups to contribute to decision making and encourage a sense of community identity and welfare.	The development will provide a range of housing types and tenure, and a new linear park, offering the opportunity for a mixed and socially inclusive community.
Provide, protect or enhance leisure opportunities, recreation facilities, green infrastructure and access to the countryside	The new linear park, open space and walking / cycling routes proposed can be used for recreation and which allow access to the surrounding countryside.

Accessibility

Reduce the need to travel, especially by car, improve choice and the use of more sustainable modes	<p>The site is located immediately adjacent to an established settlement (Culcheth). By providing good linkages between the site and the surrounding area future residents will have access to a range of facilities and services present in the town without the need to travel by car.</p> <p>Culcheth is accessible by bus with regular bus services serve the town, running between Warrington town centre and other local settlements.</p>
Protect and enhance accessibility for all the essential services and facilities.	An increase in population in Culcheth will support existing services and facilities, with potential for improved facilities and further investment in the future.

Housing

Ensure access to good quality, sustainable, affordable housing	The site presents a sustainable and achievable development opportunity comprising residential development and a large country park. It is capable of accommodating around 480 homes of mixed tenure (including affordable housing), size and type, with a focus on good quality family housing. It will make a very important contribution to meeting Warrington's housing requirement and meeting the need for new homes in Culcheth.
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Natural Resources

Ensure the sustainable and prudent use and management of natural resources including the promotion of natural resources including the promotion of sustainable drainage and water conservation.

The concept masterplan provides a framework which responds to its context. This includes the provision of a significant country park and retention of existing landscape features across the sites as well as the opportunity to incorporate SUDs into the scheme.

Protect, manage and improve local environmental quality including land, air and controlled waters and reduce the risk of flooding.

Any future development will be subject to a rigorous assessment of the environmental impact of the development to ensure that it does not result in any unacceptable environmental effects. Initial appraisals presented in the technical appendix demonstrate that the site is not affected by any insurmountable environmental constraints.

Built and natural heritage

Protect and enhance places and buildings of historic cultural and archaeological value.

By responding to its context through a rigorous process of site analysis, the masterplan achieves a layout which is sympathetic to its position at the edge of the settlement.

Protect and improve the quality and character of places, landscapes, townscapes and wider countryside whilst maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.

Additional safeguards over the quality and character of the development, including the public realm, can be achieved with detailed site layout and design. The masterplan presents an appropriate framework for this.

Ensure high quality and sustainable design for buildings, spaces and the public realm that is appropriate to the locality.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.

The supporting ecological appraisal provided within the technical appendix to this prospectus demonstrates that the site's ecological value is limited. The development provides the opportunity to enhance the site's ecological value through a careful and considered design approach and inclusion of features which will promote this.

Climate Change and resource use

Limit, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Increase energy efficiency and production of renewable energy.

The site offers the potential to incorporate sustainable drainage measures (subject to further assessment) and to ensure that the development will not be susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Minimise waste and maximise reuse, recovery and recycling.

Development will seek to minimise the use of resources as far as possible and the construction process will be subject to a Site Waste Management Plan.

