

ST. HELENS UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**(Originally Adopted by St. Helens
Metropolitan Borough Council
on 2nd July 1998)**

**As Amended by a Direction from the Secretary of State for Communities
and Local Government under Paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8
to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.**

27th September 2007

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ADDENDUM TO ST. HELENS UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

St.Helens Unitary Development Plan was originally adopted by St. Helens Metropolitan Borough Council on 2nd July 1998.

Following a Direction from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government under Paragraph 1(3) of Schedule 8 to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the majority of policies in the UDP were saved. Those policies that were deleted from 27 September 2007 are contained in table 1 below, and are shown in this document struck through with a black line.

On 31 October 2012, the St.Helens Core Strategy was adopted. Several Core Strategy policies replace saved UDP policies. Following publication of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy GB3 was superseded and was deleted. Those policies that were replaced from 31 October 2012 are contained in table 2 below, and are shown in this document struck through with a red line.

Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy identifies which UDP policies continue to be saved and which are replaced. The Saved Policies will gradually be replaced by Local Plan documents such as the Core Strategy Local Plan and Forest Park Area Action Plan.

On 10 July 2013, the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan was approved for adoption by St.Helens Council, and adopted by the Merseyside and Halton Councils on 18 July 2013. Several Joint Waste Local Plan policies replace saved UDP policies. Those policies that were replaced from 18 July 2013 are contained in table 3 below, and are shown in this document struck through with a blue line.

These Saved Policies together with the Core Strategy and the Joint Waste Local Plan form the Development Plan for the Borough.

Table 1 Policies deleted with effect from the 27th September 2007.

PART 1: POLICIES	
S1A	GREEN BELT OBJECTIVES
S5	RETAIL DEVELOPMENT
S6	PROVISION OF LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
S10	MINERAL EXTRACTION
S11	WASTE DISPOSAL
S12	RENEWABLE ENERGY
PART 2: POLICIES	
General Development	
GEN 13	Temporary Development
Green Belt	
GB 4	Dwellings for Key Agricultural and Forestry Workers
GB 9	Agricultural Permitted Development

GB 11	Residential Caravans
Transport	
TRA 1	Blackbrook Diversion
Environment	
ENV 6	Local Nature Reserves
ENV 8	Derelict Land as a Wildlife Resource
ENV 14	Agricultural Land Quality
ENV 15	Farm Structure
ENV 19	Heritage Landscape
Minerals	
MIN 3	Aggregate Minerals
MIN 4	Protection of Mineral Resources
Waste Disposal	
WD 3	Waste Recycling
WD 4	Renewable Energy
Area Policies	
AP 1.2	Lyme and Wood Pits
E 3	Earlestown Pedestrianisation
E 4	Earlestown Highway Improvements
AP 5.2	Ibstocks Quarry
AP 6.3	Bold Power Station

Table 2 Policies replaced with effect from 31st October 2012

PART 1: POLICIES	
S2	PROVISION OF LAND FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
S3	PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
S4	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE ALLOCATED AREAS
S7	SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
S8	DERELICT AND VACANT LAND
S9	THE COUNTRYSIDE
PART 2: POLICIES	
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GEN 1	Primacy of the Development Plan
GEN 2	Good Environments
GEN 3	Equal Access Opportunities
GEN 4	Security and Crime Prevention
GEN 5	Design and Layout of New Housing
GEN 7	Communal and Institutional Uses
Green Belt	
GB 10	Recreational Developments
GB 12	Development Adjoining the Green Belt

Economy	
ECON 2	Development of Tourism
Retailing	
RET 2	Out-of-Centre Retail Developments
RET 6	Alterations and New Shop Fronts
Transport	
TRA 2	Traffic Calming
TRA 7	Cycling
Residential Land Supply	
RES1	Residential Land Allocation
Environment	
ENV 7	Nature Conservation within Development Sites
ENV 9	Species Protection Policy
ENV 18	Landscape Protection
ENV 29	Pollution Control
Recreation	
REC 1	Indoor Recreation
REC 8	Community Facilities
Area Policies	
AP2.1	Area 2 Haydock and Blackbrook
TC 1 & TC 2	St.Helens Town Centre Inset Map

Table 3 Policies deleted with effect from the 18th July 2013.

PART 2: POLICIES

ECON 1 (part)	Economic Development Land Allocation – Only allocation 6Ec15 is deleted from policy Econ 1. The rest of the policy and allocations are not deleted
WD1	Development control Criteria for Waste Disposal Applications
WD2	Operational Criteria

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INTRODUCTION, PLAN FORMAT AND PLAN PERIOD

INTRODUCTION, PLAN FORMAT AND PLAN PERIOD

Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) were introduced by the Local Government Act 1985 to combine the strategic and local planning functions previously divided between the former Metropolitan County Councils and Metropolitan Districts. The main provisions are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Planning and Compensation Act 1991.

The UDP is in two parts:

Part 1 sets out the Council's Borough-wide strategic policies and takes into account:

- (i) current national and regional policies;
- (ii) Strategic Planning Guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment;
- (iii) the resources likely to be available.

Part 2 translates the general policies of Part 1 into more detailed policies, contains proposals for specific areas and a detailed Proposals Map.

The UDP supersedes all previous planning documents for the Borough, including the Structure Plan, old-style Development Plans and Local Plans. A full list of statutory plans which have been superseded is given in Appendix 1.

The policies contained in the Merseyside Structure Plan (1980) and in the Local Plans listed below have been reviewed and wherever appropriate incorporated into the UDP. The intention has been to ensure continuity between the earlier Plans and the UDP, subject to updating and improving the policy framework in the light of changing circumstances.

Newton-le-Willows District Plan 1982

Merseyside Green Belt Local Plan 1983

Sutton Local Plan 1983

St. Helens Town Centre Local Plan 1984

Draft Haydock Local Plan 1984

Draft Ravenhead Local Plan 1986

The UDP is primarily a land-use plan for the development and other use of land. However, account is taken of the Council's wider corporate responsibilities. It is important that these are reflected in the land-use plan, not least to ensure that limited resources can be properly targeted.

Public Consultation

A draft Plan was published in January 1993 for public consultation. This included an insert in a local newspaper, exhibitions, individual presentations and consultation with a wide range of organisations. A total of 230 responses were received raising 811 separate issues. These were considered and a number of amendments made to the Plan to take account of the views expressed. The opportunity to further refine policies was also taken. All these changes were included in the Deposit version of the Plan which was published in April 1994.

The Deposit draft Unitary Development Plan was placed on formal deposit between 14 April and 26 May 1994. A total of 161 organisations and individuals made 509 representations.

On 24 November 1994 the Council considered the objections made to the Plan and approved a number of amendments. These were also put on deposit between 1 December 1994 and 12 January 1995.

A Public Local Inquiry was held between 14 February 1995 and 19 April 1995 to consider objections made to the Plan and the Inspector's report was received on 23 November 1995.

The Council considered the recommendations made by the Inspector on 19 September 1996 and resolved to place on deposit a number of proposed modifications to the Plan. A total of 148 objections were received to the modifications necessitating a second public local inquiry which was held in September 1997.

The Inspector's report was received in October 1997. The Council resolved to accept his recommendations and the plan was approved for adoption on 18 December 1997.

The Plan was finally adopted by the Council on 2 July 1998.

Boundary Changes

In April 1994, following the Metropolitan Boundary Review the amended boundaries to St. Helens Metropolitan Borough took effect. The Unitary Development Plan relates to the revised boundary.

Plan Format

Part 1 of the UDP provides the general context for all the policies including reference to the Council's wider corporate objectives; national and regional policy; and resources likely to be available. Part 1 policies are in UPPER CASE and prefixed S. These are of a strategic nature and provide the overall land-use framework for the Plan's other policies and proposals.

Part 2 contains the UDP's detailed policies and proposals including development control guidance.

- (i) Part 2 policies relating to the Borough as a whole. These are printed in bold lower case, prefixed by an abbreviation of the policy subject and standard numbering, eg. ENV 5 for the fifth environment policy.

- (ii) Area policies. For the purposes of the Plan the Borough has been sub-divided into six Areas (see Fig. 2);

Area	1 Newton-le-Willows
	2 Haydock and Blackbrook
	3 Rainford, Billinge and Moss Bank
	4 St. Helens West
	5 Southern Corridor
	6 Parr, Sutton and Bold

The main issues relating to each Area are described and Area-specific policies are printed in bold lower case and prefixed by the Area number eg. AP 6.2 is the second policy relating to Parr, Sutton and Bold.

- (iii) There are three inset areas where the policies are prefixed:

TC	Town Centre
SV	Sutton Village
E	Earlestown

- (iv) The Proposals Map is in three parts, one relating to Areas 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6, one relating to Area 3, and the third the inset areas.

Supplementary Planning Guidance is available for certain topics to assist in understanding and meeting the requirements of the appropriate policy. These are:

- (1) Fire Escapes
- (2) New Farm Buildings and Roads
- (3) Sites of Community Wildlife Interest and Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites (RIGS)
- (4) Hazardous Installations and Pipelines
- (5) Design and Layout of New Housing
- (6) Householder Developments
- (7) Garaging, Parking and Servicing
- (8) Advertising in St. Helens

Plan Period

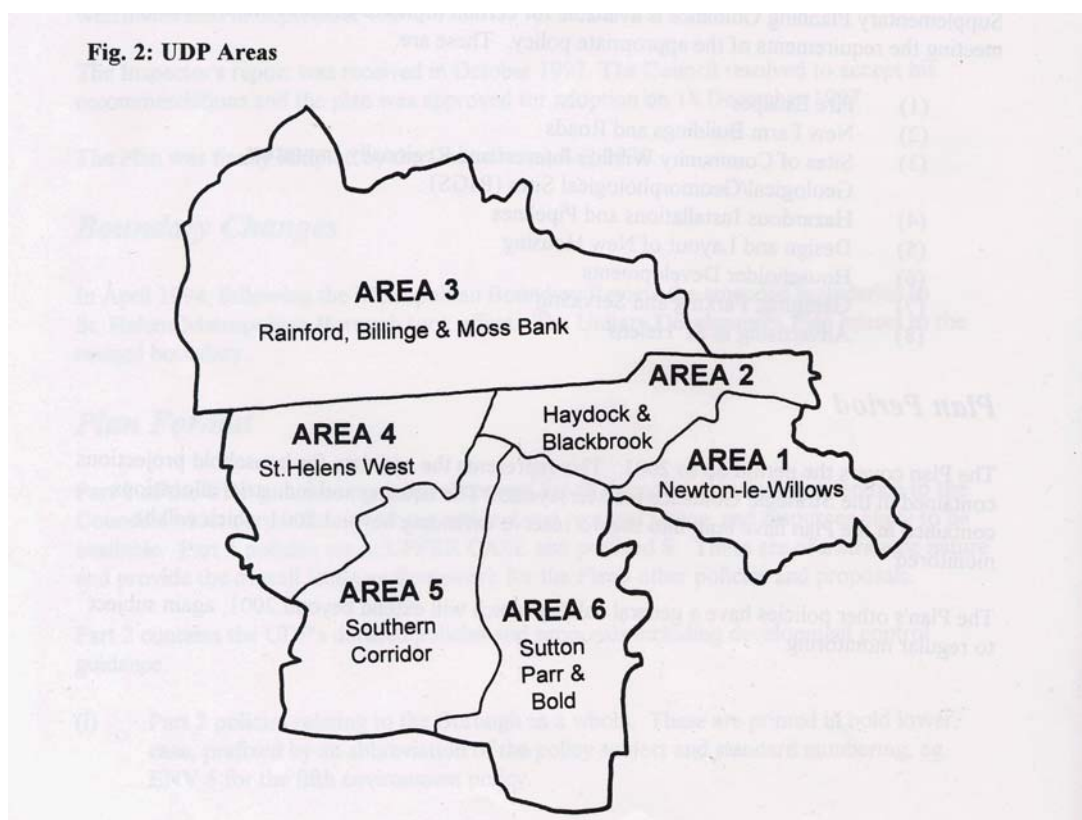
The Plan covers the period up to 2001. This represents the end date for household projections contained in the Strategic Guidance for Merseyside. The housing and industrial allocations contained in the Plan have built into them a reserve extending beyond 2001 which will be monitored.

The Plan's other policies have a general validity which will extend beyond 2001, again subject to regular monitoring.

Fig. 1: Context for Policies

	National and Regional	Council Programmes	Other Authorities
ST. HELENS UDP	<p>(i) Legislation and White Papers, eg. Town and Country Planning Act 1990; Sustainable Development - The UK Strategy 1994</p> <p>(ii) Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (1996)</p> <p>(iii) Planning Policy and Minerals Planning Guidance Notes</p> <p>(iv) Circulars</p>	<p>(i) Economic Development Plan</p> <p>(ii) Housing Investment Programme (HIP)</p> <p>(iii) Transport Policies and Programme (TPP)</p> <p>(iv) Countryside Recreation Strategy (CRS)</p> <p>(v) Derelict Land Strategy</p>	<p>(i) Structure Plans for Lancashire and Cheshire</p> <p>(ii) Neighbouring UDPs including Wigan and Knowsley</p> <p>(iii) Neighbouring Local Plans, including Halton, West Lancashire and Warrington</p>

Fig. 2: UDP Areas

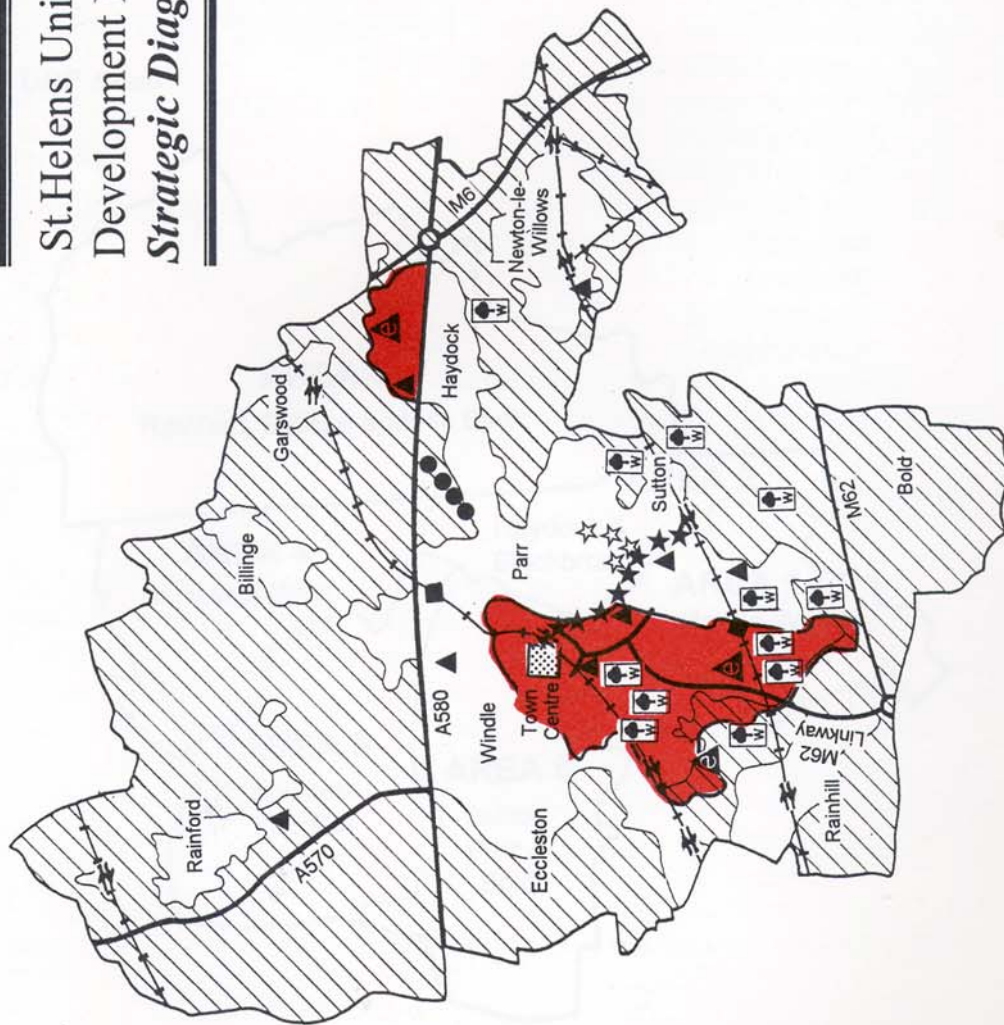


Part 1

THE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

St.Helens Unitary Development Plan *Strategic Diagram*

	All Purpose Trunk and Motorways
	Proposed Strategic Road
	Existing Railway Line
	Proposed Railway Line
	Existing Railway Station
	Proposed Railway Station
	St.Helens Town Centre
	Priority Area for Economic Development
	Strategic Economic Development Site
	Other Economic Development Sites (over 5ha in size)
	Industrial Site Proposed for De-allocation
	Green Belt
	Key Site for Woodland Planting



1. PLAN AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

Plan Aims

1.1 The primary aims of the UDP are:

- A1 To secure urban regeneration.
- A2 To balance the needs of new development and protection of the environment.
- A3 To improve the quality of the environment to make St. Helens a more attractive and safer place in which to live, work, play, invest and to visit.
- A4 To promote new economic activity in order to diversify and expand the existing industrial base and provide future job opportunities.
- A5 To take account of the need of all sectors of the community in the provision of housing, employment, transport, recreation facilities and infrastructure.
- A6 To conserve resources and work towards the principles of sustainable development.

Plan Strategy

1.2 The principal underlying strategy of the UDP is urban regeneration. This continues the approach of the Merseyside County Structure Plan which was approved in 1980 and is restated as a key objective in the Regional Planning Guidance for the North West. The strategy seeks to concentrate new development in the built-up areas of the Borough, particularly on vacant or derelict land. This will be complemented by applying Green Belt policies within the surrounding countryside. At the same time, the UDP will ensure that the built-up parts of the Borough are not overdeveloped, through 'town-cramming' and by ensuring the protection of open spaces and wildlife resources.

1.3 The process of urban regeneration will be pursued by:

- (i) strict adherence to Green Belt policies and boundaries;
- (ii) working with the private sector to regenerate inner urban areas;
- (iii) the reclamation of derelict land;
- (iv) refurbishment of the Borough's ageing housing stock;
- (v) the preparation and implementation of policies for environmental protection and enhancement;
- (vi) the promotion and construction of major new infrastructure;
- (vii) targeting resources to alleviate deprivation.

- 1.4 The strategy will endeavour to implement the Government's intention to work towards ensuring that development and growth are sustainable and that decisions should not deny future generations the best of today's environment.
- 1.5 There are a number of specific policies contained in the Plan which can be referenced back to proposals contained in the White Paper, 'This Common Inheritance' and the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development as follows.
- (i) support for an efficient and effective public transport system (TRA 3, 4, 5, 6);
 - (ii) concentrating new development within the built-up areas (S1);
 - (iii) proposals for community forests and promotion of woodland (ENV 10);
 - (iv) ensuring the re-use of derelict land for positive uses (S8);
 - (v) encouraging appropriate new uses in the rural economy (ENV 17);
 - (vi) nature conservation (ENV 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9);
 - (vii) improving the quality of local traffic management (TRA 2);
 - (viii) encouraging greater provision for cycling (TRA 7, REC 5);
 - (ix) supporting waste recycling measures (WD 3)
- 1.6 The Council do not propose any significant Green Belt amendments to accommodate new development needs. Sufficient land is allocated to satisfy Strategic Guidance residential land requirements to 2001. Additional land is allocated to satisfy current assessment of demand up to the year 2007. This is regularly monitored and future housing requirements assessed in the context of Regional Planning Guidance. The requirement that industrial land should provide a wide choice by size, location and suitability for different uses is satisfied.
- 1.7 The UDP seeks to stabilise the Borough's population and reverse the decline experienced between 1981 and 1991. Reducing net outward migration will be essential to achieve this and the economic policies will contribute to reversing the loss of job opportunities.
- 1.8 The Council's Economic Strategy will tackle the regeneration of the local economy on a broad front including:
- (i) the provision of education and training to satisfy the needs of industry;
 - (ii) the co-ordination of business advice; and
 - (iii) financial packages

- 1.9 The UDP's contribution will be through a number of land use based policies, including environmental improvements, transport infrastructure and the provision of an adequate supply of land and premises to ensure:
- (i) existing industrial and commercial undertakings are not constrained when seeking to relocate or expand in the Borough;
 - (ii) new start-up businesses can be accommodated;
 - (iii) the attraction of inward investment to the Borough.
- 1.10 The Southern Corridor, focusing on the M62 Link Road, and the existing Haydock Industrial Estate will be targeted as priority areas for new industrial development.
- 1.11 The protection and enhancement of the environment is necessary in its own right and in order to:
- (i) complement initiatives to regenerate the local economy;
 - (ii) provide an attractive, safe and healthy living and working environment for the Borough's residents;
 - (iii) give visitors to St. Helens a favourable impression;
 - (iv) respond to the national commitment expressed through "This Common Inheritance" and the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development.
- 1.12 Policies include:
- (i) reclamation of derelict land, with particular emphasis on:
 - (a) reclamation for development purposes;
 - (b) the creation of new woodland which will contribute to the Mersey Forest, with a target figure of 400 ha by 2001;
 - (c) treatment of contaminated sites;
 - (ii) concentrating improvements along major transport corridors, in and around St. Helens Town Centre, and, in run-down residential areas, including Sutton Village;
 - (iii) the protection of the Borough's environmental assets, including its:
 - (a) ecological resources
 - (b) archaeological heritage;
 - (c) trees and woodlands;
 - (d) green spaces:which all contribute to the character and quality of life in St. Helens;

- (iv) ensuring land use based policies contribute to reducing waste production and the promotion of waste recycling.
- 1.13 While the Plan seeks to raise environmental standards throughout the Borough, priority attention and available resources will be targeted at the following areas:
- (i) an area of degraded landscape stretching south from St. Helens town centre, between Rainhill and Thatto Heath/Sutton Manor; north of the M62 and south of Clock Face and Sutton; between Newton-le-Willows and Haydock; and to the south and east of Newton-le-Willows. This is the core area for landscape restoration through woodland planting;
 - (ii) the enhancement of the major transport corridors;
 - (iii) the St. Helens Canal Corridor;
 - (iv) St. Helens Town Centre;
 - (v) the Borough's run-down residential areas.
- 1.14 Approximately 50% of the Borough's area is countryside which will be protected. Most of this area is Green Belt and much is under pressure from the built-up areas. A balance will be sought to encourage greater recreational use while at the same time protecting agricultural land, farming activities and the appearance and amenities of the countryside.
- 1.15 The Council's Housing Strategy is directed towards meeting the needs of the community, encouraging the provision of better housing and ensuring an attractive residential environment. This general aim is to be achieved by:
- (i) improvement and repairs of the Borough's public and private housing stock;
 - (ii) improving the quality of the residential environment by providing better pedestrian and vehicular access and improved play facilities;
 - (iii) effective targeting of resources to alleviate housing stress and need;
 - (iv) dovetailing housing association and private sector development of Council owned land with the Council's own housing investment.
- 1.16 Particular emphasis will be placed on securing progress towards providing affordable housing which is relevant to the needs of the Borough's population.

PLAN OBJECTIVES

Urban Regeneration

- 01 To direct new development toward the established urban areas, encourage the redevelopment of outworn infrastructure and maximise opportunities to use public transport.

- 02 To encourage energy-efficient patterns of development which reduce dependence on the private car.
- 03 To restrict development on the edge of the urban area, uphold the Green Belt and encourage the re-use of derelict, vacant and under-used sites.
- 04 To ensure an adequate supply of economic development sites and premises to attract inward investment, foster new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses.
- 05 To satisfy the housing requirements of the Borough by:
 - (i) ensuring an adequate supply of housing land in relation to identified needs;
 - (ii) seeking the physical improvement of the existing housing stock;
 - (iii) safeguarding the amenity and improving the environment of residential areas.

Resource Protection

- 06 To protect the Borough's greenspaces and improve the linkages between them.
- 07 To protect and enhance ecological resources and create new areas of ecological value.
- 08 To protect and enhance existing trees and woodlands and encourage new tree and woodland planting, as a contribution to the Mersey Forest.
- 09 To protect the best and most versatile agricultural land and minimise the conflict between agricultural operations and activities generated from within the urban area.

Built Environment

- 010 To safeguard and improve the built environment by:
 - (i) the protection and enhancement of listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, conservation areas, sites and areas of archaeological importance and other areas of townscape value;
 - (ii) encouraging improved standards of design and land maintenance.

Countryside

- 011 To safeguard the countryside from inappropriate development, protect and enhance its appearance, and at the same time, promote its quiet enjoyment by the general public

Environmental Improvement

- 012 To promote a safe, attractive and healthy environment.
- 013 To reduce pollution of the land, water and air.
- 014 To provide suitable access and facilities in developments for people with disabilities and young children.

Tourism

- 015 To promote and encourage measures which would generate tourist visits to St. Helens, including the development of visitor attractions and accommodation.

Shopping Centres

- 016 To maintain and enhance St. Helens Town Centre and district shopping centres.

Transport

- 017 To ensure that transport policies will complement urban regeneration by:
- (i) improving the strategic road network with particular emphasis on improved access to the region's motorway network;
 - (ii) securing minor road improvements to improve access to employment areas;
 - (iii) seeking improved access to the region's port, air and rail facilities;
 - (iv) securing access and parking facilities in town centres, existing industrial areas and areas for new development.
- 018 To encourage the development of an efficient, attractive and effective public transport system.
- 019 To pursue transport improvements which secure public safety, environmental enhancement and energy efficiency.

Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities

- 020 To support and encourage the development of leisure, community and recreation facilities to meet the needs of the Borough as well as those facilities which service a wider market and foster tourism.

Minerals and Waste Disposal

- 021 To ensure the safeguarding of mineral reserves and their extraction subject to protecting the environment and amenity of the Borough.
- 022 To minimise the environmental impact of waste disposal activities while encouraging measures to reduce the production of waste and to secure its efficient disposal.

2. AN INTRODUCTION TO ST. HELENS

- 2.1 St. Helens is an industrial town of approximately 179,000 people, comprising an area of almost 13,900 hectares, located 12 miles east of Liverpool and 23 miles west of Manchester. The East Lancashire trunk road (A580) which links these two cities passes east-west through the Borough. It is adjoined by the Metropolitan Districts of Knowsley and Wigan, the District of West Lancashire, within the County of Lancashire, and the Districts of Warrington and Halton.

Fig 3: Local Context



- 2.2 The town of St. Helens provides a strong sense of identity for the Borough and is a focus for many of its functions and activities. In addition, there are also the well-established settlements of Newton-le-Willows and Haydock and housing areas surrounding the village centres of Billinge, Rainford and Rainhill.

Fig 4: Main Settlements

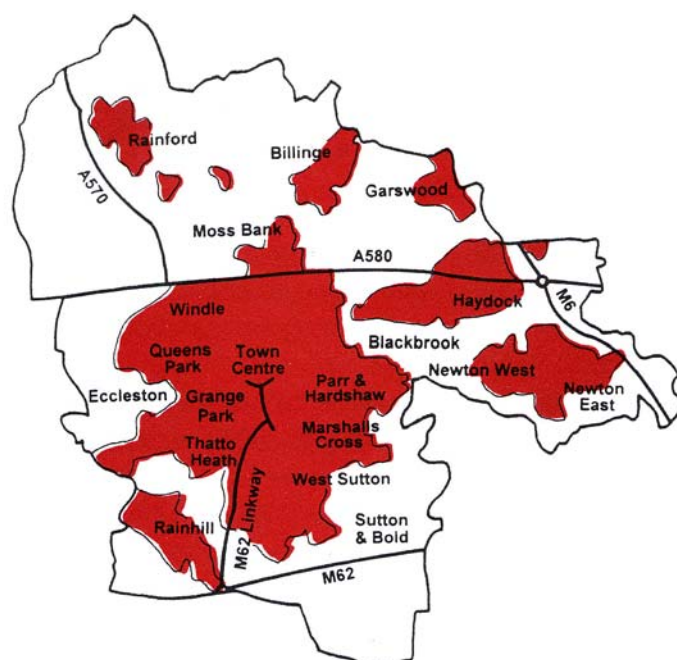
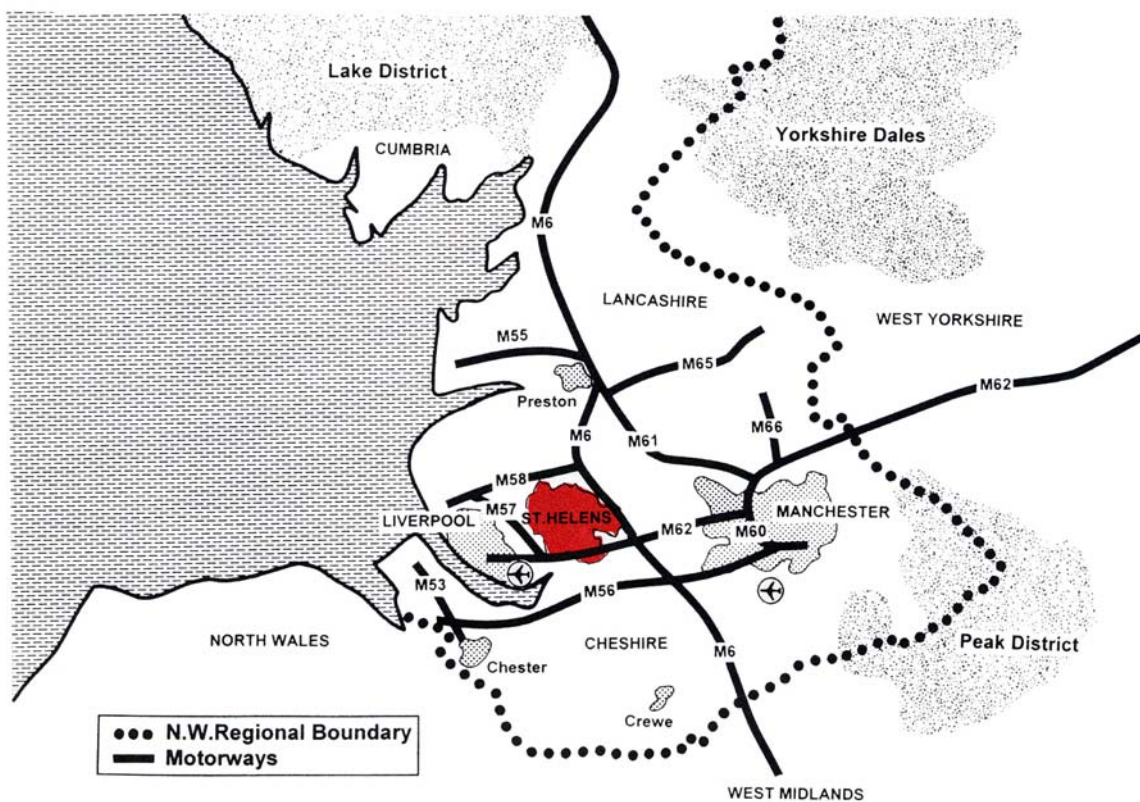


Fig 5: Regional Context



- 2.3 The town experienced a population decline of 9,500 between 1981 and 1991. The Office of Population Census and Surveys 1993 based population projection for the Borough, up to 2011, shows the population levels staying relatively stable. The decline in population up to 1991 is accounted for by a drop in the birth rate together with a significant number of persons migrating to other areas in search of work. The most mobile people are young, skilled and qualified and it is they who have tended to leave for the more prosperous regions. The elderly, who are less mobile, tend to remain resulting in the Borough having an increasing proportion of elderly persons.
- 2.4 St. Helens is a relatively modern town. Its historical growth, paralleling that of the industrial revolution was based primarily on coal. In 1757 the opening of the St. Helens Canal, the first modern canal, acted as a catalyst for the expansion of a range of industries, including glass and chemicals. Rainhill was subsequently the site of the famous railway trials in 1830 and Earlestown the base of an important railway works on the pioneering Manchester - Liverpool line constructed by George Stephenson.
- 2.5 The rapid and intensive process of industrialisation has left a legacy of dereliction, including severe problems of ground instability and contamination. Over 10% of the built-up area is either vacant or despoiled.
- 2.6 Almost 70% of this dereliction can be attributed to the effects of mineral extraction, past or present. Industrial and residential areas are often in close proximity, creating problems of noise, traffic access and pollution. The infrastructure of housing and roads is worn-out and in need of renewal. In 1993 almost 21% of the total housing stock was identified as unfit, whilst a further 28% was in need of renovation (HIP 1994/95).
- 2.7 The employment structure reflects an increasing proportion of employment within the service sector, albeit below national levels. The last coal mine, at Parkside, closed in June 1993. Although, glass manufacture (the second largest employer in the Borough), and engineering continue to be well represented, it is industries such as these which remain vulnerable to changing market conditions, as was witnessed by the 20,000 redundancies in St. Helens between 1979 and 1986. Over this period the unemployment rate has remained consistently 5% above the national average, despite considerable effort and success in generating new business investment, particularly since 1987.
- 2.8 Unemployment continues to be a Borough-wide problem. The September 1993 figures varied from 7.1% in the Rainford Ward to 21.6% in Parr and Hardshaw, averaging out at 13.1%. The worst concentrations occur alongside other aspects of deprivation affecting low skill and low income groups.
- 2.9 Two main areas with severe concentrations of deprivation have been identified. One is the inner area of older terraced housing in St. Helens, including all or part of the following wards: Queens Park, Parr and Hardshaw, Broad Oak, Grange Park, Thatto Heath, West Sutton and Marshalls Cross. The other is the Earlestown and Wargrave areas of Newton-le-Willows (see para. 4.15).
- 2.10 Despite the problems faced by the Borough, St. Helens has a number of assets, including its proximity to the motorway network, an excellent workforce, high quality

agricultural land, areas of pleasant countryside, some fine buildings, Haydock Park Racecourse, industrial archaeology and areas of wildlife value (see Fig. 6).

- 2.11 Whilst the built-up area of St.. Helens is surrounded by motorways to all sides, ie. M6, M62, M58 and M57, the major roads linking the town to the motorway network particularly to the north have always been considered inadequate. The M62 Linkway, opened in 1994, has significantly improved the situation and accessed major development opportunities in the southern part of the Borough.

Fig. 6: Characteristics of the Environment

Environmental assets:

- (i) close-knit coal mining settlements with strong community ties underpinned by their physical separation by open space;
- (ii) the St. Helens Canal, dating back to 1757, which links the town and country areas;
- (iii) the Borough's greenspace, including parks and ecological features, many of which have become established on derelict land;
- (iv) the surrounding countryside, covering 50% of the Borough area, including large areas of high quality agricultural land and heritage landscape;
- (v) elements of the built environment, including Conservation Areas, listed buildings and archaeological remains, many reflecting the railway age and the industrial heritage of the Borough;
- (vi) a thriving town centre.

Environmental problems:

- (i) the extent and concentration of derelict and vacant land;
- (ii) the generally poor quality of the built environment;
- (iii) a shortage of trees and woodland;
- (iv) conflict between residential areas and other activities eg. noise and pollution;

3. THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DIMENSION

National Policies

- 3.1 It is a requirement of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990 that local authorities take national policies into account when preparing their UDPs.
- 3.2 In accordance with the advice contained in PPG 12, the Council have paid particular attention to the contents of the Government's Environment White Paper, 'This Common Inheritance', and the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development.
- 3.3 The underlying message of 'This common Inheritance' is that environmental concerns will need to play an increasingly important part in planning decisions and that there is a balance to be struck between economic growth and conservation.
- 3.4 In broad terms, there is consistency between this environmental concern and the urban regeneration philosophy of the Plan, which has the twin aims of protecting the Green Belt and maximising the re-use of urban land. In paragraph 1.5, reference is made to a number of policies contained in the Plan which show the Council's commitment to the environmental framework of sustainable development and energy conservation contained in national guidance.

Regional Matters

- 3.5 The Secretary of State, as expressed in Strategic Guidance for Merseyside and subsequently in Regional Planning Guidance for the North West, sees revitalising the sub-regional economy in general and promoting urban regeneration in particular as key objectives for Merseyside. It is important therefore that the policies and proposals of the St. Helens UDP are neither prepared nor perceived in a vacuum but in the context of broader sub-regional initiatives.
- 3.6 The following initiatives in particular have either influenced the preparation of the Plan or will be of continued relevance during the Plan's lifespan.

Merseyside Integrated Development Operation (MIDO)

- 3.7 In 1984 an EC-funded consultancy study analysed the problems of Merseyside and the opportunities available, and concluded that a Merseyside Integrated Development Operation (MIDO) would be a sensible and practical way of helping to rectify the Region's structural imbalances. This was accepted by the European Commission and provided the basis for ERDF and ESF support over the period 1988 to 1992. MIDO 2 extended European funding to 1994. MIDO involved a co-operative effort by the Merseyside Councils, Government Departments and private sector to achieve the objectives set out in Fig. 8.

Fig. 7: Merseyside Integrated Development Operation Strategic Objectives

To build a positive image of Merseyside to enhance its attractiveness to investors, employers, prospective newcomers and existing residents.

To modernise the major economic infrastructure of Merseyside and provide the necessary foundations for private sector initiatives.

To improve the accessibility to national and international markets and enhance the ability of the local transport network to service a more effective and productive local economy.

To exploit the existing advantages and realise the potential of tourism to strengthen Merseyside's economic base, improve the image and increase the number and variety of job opportunities.

To encourage the modernisation, competitiveness and the expansion of indigenous firms and facilities and establishment of new economic activities.

To provide a relevant and adaptable skill base to meet the need of the Integrated Development Operation

To increase confidence, and encourage investment in the area, making it a better place in which to live and work as well as to visit.

To ensure that a co-ordinated approach is adopted to the implementation and monitoring of the MIDO action programmes and the supporting action and related measures to reinforce their impact and maximise their effectiveness.

Regional Conversion Plan

- 3.8 In 1993, Merseyside was granted Objective 1 status by the European Community, providing access to enhanced EC grant aid. The Regional Conversion Plan for the period 1994-1999 has been prepared by a broad partnership, including the five Merseyside Authorities, and sets out a vision for Merseyside to be achieved with support from EC Structural Funds money.
- 3.9 The vision for Merseyside is to:
- establish it as a prosperous city region with a diverse economic base;
 - emphasise its role as a gateway between Europe and the rest of the world;
 - establish it as a region of learning excellence; and
 - establish it as a region of environmental excellence that supports a high quality of life.
- 3.10 The Objective 1 Plan is set in the context of the wider North-West and will be guided by the Regional Economic Strategy for North West England (see para. 3.11).

North West Regional Association

- 3.11 This Association of all Local Authorities in the North West Region was established in 1992, with the initial task of preparing a Regional Economic Strategy. A key purpose for the Regional Strategy is to make the case for European Community Structural funds for regional development and to set out a clear framework for the application of these funds. The document concentrates on the period from 1992 to 2000 and the main objectives are summarised in Fig. 8.
- 3.12 The Association was instrumental in assisting the preparation of Regional Planning Guidance which is of significance for the longer-term plan-making process beyond 2001.

Fig. 8: Regional Economic Strategy for North-West England: Strategic Objectives

- Ensuring full exploitation of the region's knowledge base
- Raising the skills of the workforce to best European standards
- Achieving economic restructuring and effective redeployment of skills from vulnerable sectors
- Developing effective mechanisms for small firms support to raise survival and growth rates
- Developing effective mechanisms for delivery of strategic sites
- Improving the environment of the most prominent areas of dereliction
- Improving and maintaining water quality
- Preserving and improving the region's environmental assets
- Developing European centres for arts, leisure and culture
- Improving the region's image by promotion and marketing
- Ensuring the continued expansion of the region's air, sea and rail gateways
- Developing and improving key links in the internal transport network
- Improving strategic external road and rail links to the region

Merseyside Strategic Sites and Premises Study

- 3.13 This consultancy study was commissioned to ensure that Merseyside's strategic land resource was appropriate to the objective of attracting inward investment to the sub-region. The study which was completed in March 1992 highlighted the future growth sectors of the economy which could benefit Merseyside; identified the key development sites to meet this demand; and recommended an action plan to bring forward sites capable of meeting the needs of expanding or relocating companies. The findings of the study have been taken into account in the UDP.

Merseyside Integrated Transport Study (MERITS)

3.14 In 1992, the Merseyside districts and Merseytravel commissioned consultants to carry out the Merits study with the following aims:

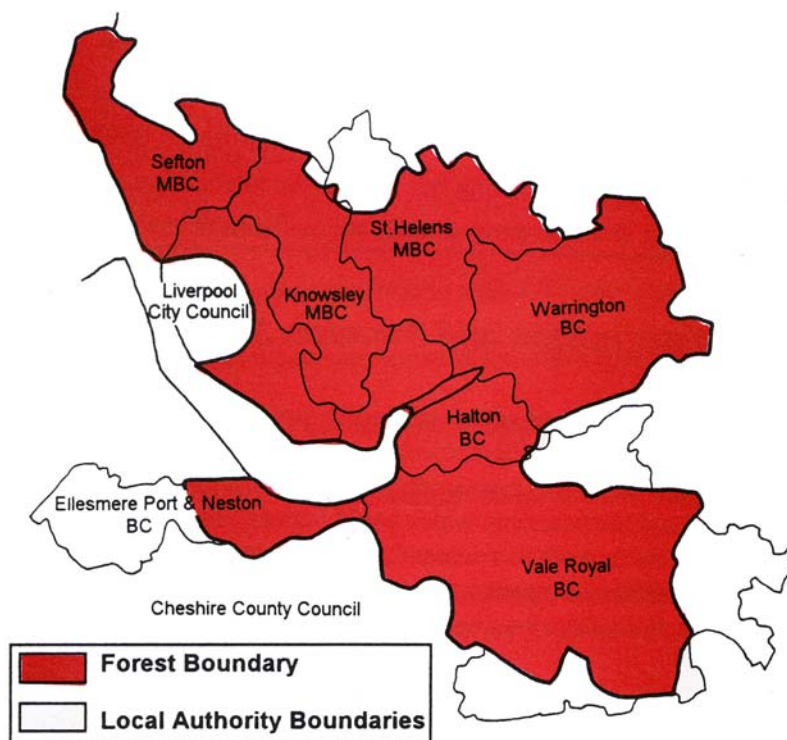
- (i) to develop a Merseyside-wide transport strategy integrated with the aims and objectives of urban development; and
- (ii) to develop a "vision" and unanimity of purpose in representing this area in both a regional and national context.

The study was completed in 1994 and formed the basis of subsequent annual Package Bids by the Merseyside Districts and Merseytravel for transport funds for the area.

The Mersey Forest

3.15 St. Helens has combined with eight other authorities to support the Countryside Commission's Community Forest initiative. A Project Team commenced work in 1991 and the non-statutory Merseyside Forest Plan was approved in 1994. Close working relationships have been forged between the local authorities and Forest Team to ensure that the Plan is compatible with emerging planning policies, including those of the Unitary Development Plan. Within St. Helens, the Wasteland to Woodland initiative will contribute to the implementation of the Forest Plan (see para 4.20).

Fig 9: Mersey Forest Area



4. A CORPORATE VIEW

4.1 The Unitary Development Plan has been prepared within the context of wider Council strategies and programmes and provides, where appropriate, the planning dimension.

4.2 The major strategies with a planning dimension are briefly summarised below.

Economic Strategy

4.3 In 1986 the Council reviewed existing policies in response to a range of economic problems and identified an Action programme with three broad aims:

- (i) to provide and encourage education and training for perceived needs;
- (ii) to intervene to develop a broader based economy;
- (iii) to take account of the need to encourage and retain industrial and commercial undertakings in the way the Council carries out its other activities.

The Strategy has been used as the basis for the Economic Development Plan for St. Helens required by the Local Government and Housing act 1989.

4.4 The implementation of the strategy has taken a number of forms. Attention is given to the way in which activities and services of the Council relate to economic development in one way or another, eg. the need for executive housing, support for community initiatives, planning control, education and housing. The Council is extending the range and quality of advice and assistance to businesses. A major aim is to broaden the economic base and at the same time to tackle the environmental problems of the Borough, thus improving its image and making it a more attractive place for business investment.

The strategy focuses on three critical initiatives:

- (i) Ravenhead Renaissance Limited;
- (ii) the M62 Link Road and associated development opportunities;
- (iii) St. Helens Technology Campus.

(i) *Ravenhead Renaissance*

4.5 Ravenhead Renaissance Limited is a private company limited by guarantee and established in 1987. The initiative to establish this partnership of public and private sector interests was taken by the Council to provide a co-ordinated mechanism to secure the regeneration of the Ravenhead area for the wider benefit of the Borough as a whole.

4.6 The partnership has had considerable success in securing private sector funding and government grant to enable the reclamation of land for retail, residential and hotel developments and to refurbish the Town Centre. The mechanism, which has the

particular advantage and strength of local commitment, is expected to continue during the Plan Period as an essential component of economic regeneration. Ravenhead Renaissance administers the Single Regeneration Budget funds for the Southern Corridor and Newton 21.

(ii) M62 Link Road

4.7 The M62 Link Road, linking St. Helens Town Centre with Junction 7 of the M62 motorway at Rainhill, was designed to fulfil the following objectives:

- (i) facilitate improved accessibility between the Town Centre and the motorway network;
- (ii) promote the economic regeneration of St. Helens;
- (iii) assist in the redevelopment of vacant, derelict and underused sites;
- (iv) maintain and enhance the commercial viability of St. Helens Town Centre;
- (v) provide improved access to existing and proposed industrial areas;
- (vi) reduce the conflict and environmental impact of heavy traffic within residential areas, reduce traffic delays and reduce accidents.

4.8 The road, which was opened in 1994, generates a number of development opportunities and other planning issues in the Southern Corridor. These are considered in the UDP.

(iii) St. Helens Technology Campus

4.9 The Campus is being developed on a former glassworks site to the north of the Town Centre. A facility has been created on one site where existing and new innovative enterprises will be encouraged to locate and develop in an environment conducive to business development as a direct result of the wide range of training and research facilities available to those enterprises.

4.10 The broad objectives of the Campus are:

- (i) to encourage new innovative industries to develop in St. Helens;
- (ii) to provide employment in new industries for local people.
- (iii) to provide an area where such industries can develop, using the excellent facilities offered by the main training organisations in St. Helens;
- (iv) to publicise, promote and realise the full potential of the training facilities available in the Borough;
- (v) to promote the interchange of ideas between academics and new innovative enterprises;
- (vi) to encourage the commercial development of research findings and to promote technology transfer.

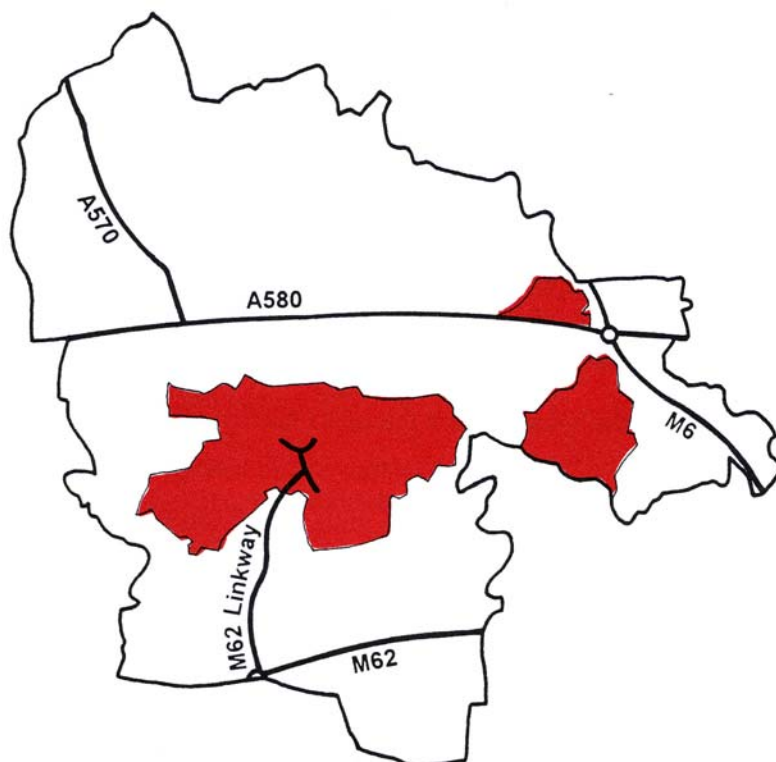
Housing Strategy

- 4.11 The Council's Housing Strategy is integral to its economic and social strategies and seeks to attract and keep people in the Borough and to provide a decent living environment for residents in the tenure of their choice.
- 4.12 The objectives of the housing strategy are:
- (i) to assess housing need in the Borough in relation to demand, suitability, affordability and condition;
 - (ii) to analyse housing stock condition across all tenures, measuring unfitness, disrepair and the need for investment;
 - (iii) to seek solutions both as a direct provider of housing and housing services and as the strategic authority working with a variety of agencies and organisations. These solutions will maximise resources available internally, through Government programmes and through partnerships and joint working;
 - (iv) to manage the housing stock through a quality, effective service run in partnership
 - (v) to ensure an integrated approach within the Council's broader economic and environmental regeneration strategy and encompassing its social care and community services plans.
- 4.13 As part of its enabling role, the Council is committed to using its powers and resources to help generate a range of housing opportunities across the Borough:
- new affordable rented and low-cost houses;
 - work with public and private sectors to attract government funding and other special initiatives to facilitate housing development;
 - build on a wide range of partnership activities already in place with Housing Associations and private builders to target selected areas in need;
 - promote the best use of the housing stock across all tenures, whilst maintaining standards and ensuring good residential environments.
- 4.14 The resources required to secure the implementation of the housing strategy are the subject of annual bids in the Housing Investment Programme. It is significant that the resource cover granted to the Council by Central Government has been declining and this is likely to continue to determine the pace at which the housing strategy is implemented during the Plan Period.

Priority Areas

- 4.15 An analysis of urban deprivation in St. Helens, using selected census indicators, has revealed two main areas with severe concentrations of deprivation. One is the inner areas of older terraced housing in St. Helens; the other is the Earlestown and Wargrave areas of Newton-le-Willows. These were identified as the Council's priority areas in 1983. Further consideration of deprivation led to the addition of the Haydock Industrial Estate and areas of Local Authority housing at Four Acre and Cherry Tree Drive to those areas demonstrating particular problems.

Fig 10: Priority Areas



- 4.16 An initial analysis of the 1991 Census indicates that the older inner areas remain severely deprived. It is the intention that these areas will be the focus for seeking Government and European funding, such as the Single Regeneration Budget.
- 4.17 Many social problems in such areas can be directly related to the effects of unemployment and low income levels and lead to a high dependence on statutory services. Characteristically the areas are very poor environmentally and the provision of social and community facilities is inadequate. The Council is undertaking further work on ways in which resources can be targeted to areas of greatest need. It should be pointed out, however, that the areas of the Borough which have the worst social and economic problems do not necessarily coincide with areas having the best development opportunities. The Council's strategy for tackling economic deprivation is based on the principle of promoting development in areas of the Borough with the greatest potential for investment and jobs.

Environment Strategy

- 4.18 The protection and enhancement of the environment is viewed by the Council as an essential component of its economic policies to attract new investment and to create an attractive living environment for its residents.
- 4.19 Environmental policies are pursued on a variety of fronts and include the following which have land-use implications.
- 4.20 The Council's land reclamation strategy is designed to provide a coherent approach to the treatment of derelict and neglected land consistent with the Council's overall development plan and priority areas. Ravenhead Renaissance is one mechanism to promote the redevelopment of derelict land. A second initiative is also a partnership between the public and private sector, focusing on derelict land which is unsuitable for supporting hard after-uses like housing and industry. This project, known as 'Wasteland to Woodland' concentrates on the southern and eastern parts of the Borough, where there is the greatest concentration of despoiled land. Through large-scale woodland development the project aims to:
- (i) create a new landscape from derelict and underused land;
 - (ii) create a new recreational resource;
 - (iii) enhance the appearance of economic development sites;
 - (iv) secure a positive land use for sites where hard after-use is not possible;
 - (v) conserve and enhance the area's natural resources;
 - (vi) achieve the above in a partnership between the public, the private and voluntary sectors and involving the local community.

Fig 11: Wasteland to Woodland Core Area



- 4.21 Wasteland to Woodland will form part of the Mersey Forest (see para. 3.15).
- 4.22 The Council has invested in the creation of Greenways, One route of particular significance is the Sankey Valley Park, which links St. Helens to Warrington and Halton along the route of the St. Helens Canal. In 1991 work commenced to restore the Ravenhead branch of the canal close to the Town Centre, as an integral part of the Ravenhead Renaissance and Wasteland to Woodland initiatives. Stretches of the canal adjacent to the Technology Campus and between Pocket Nook Street and Corporation Street have now been fully restored.
- 4.23 The Council's Policy for Nature sets out a range of policies to protect, manage and enhance the considerable wildlife resources of the Borough. The land-use policies have been updated and incorporated into the UDP.
- 4.24 A "Clean Up Campaign", launched in 1989 seeks to establish a programme of ongoing action with all sections of the community. Improvements to the road and rail corridors and prominent open space areas feature as key elements of a campaign which recognises the poor image of the Borough presented to visitors and potential investors. Although, as yet, only limited priority has been given to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings, a successful pilot project has secured the removal of excess advertising material along the A572.
- 4.25 In 1982 Operation Groundwork was established in St. Helens and Knowsley. The success of this pioneer Groundwork area has subsequently resulted in the establishment of a Groundwork Foundation and many other Groundwork Trusts throughout the country. Underlying Operation Groundwork objectives is a concern to protect and enhance the environment. Operation Groundwork has been a learning experience for the Council and has seen, among other things, the preparation of the Policy for Nature and changing perceptions of the nature and solutions to the problem of derelict land. The opportunity has been taken to incorporate the lessons of the Groundwork experience into the UDP. The close working relationship between the Groundwork Trust and the Council will also remain a key partnership to secure environmental improvement and countryside recreation.

Transport Policies and Programme

- 4.26 The Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) is submitted annually to the Department of Transport and forms the basis on which capital allocations and grants are obtained. It sets out the Council's policies and proposed programme for all transport capital spending on local roads which the Council considers best meets the needs of its area. It also includes an outline road programme for five years ahead, together with policies and programmes for highway maintenance.
- 4.27 The TPP is consistent with the transport policies and proposals in the UDP.
- 4.28 From 1995/96 onwards the Council has submitted a package bid for transportation schemes in association with the other Merseyside District Councils and the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority. The bids were based on the strategy developed by the MERITS study (see para. 3.14).

5. RESOURCES AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 The Unitary Development Plan must have regard to the resources which will be available to implement its policies. Over a ten year period this is impossible to predict with any accuracy. Underpinning the Plan, therefore, are three basic principles.
- 5.2 First, that the level of resources available to the Council directly via Government support to business and domestic ratepayers is unlikely to rise significantly above existing levels.
- 5.3 Second, the Plan's policies are presented in such a way as to take advantage of resources as and when they become available.
- 5.4 Third, the Council must encourage resources into the Borough by whatever means possible. This includes developing partnerships with both the private and voluntary sectors, which is consistent with the growing importance of Councils as enabling and co-ordinating agencies.

Funding availability

- 5.5 Changes in the systems for determining the funding of Local Government have led to a reduction in the proportion of the Council's expenditure met by Central Government over the last 10 year. Government spending targets are used as a basis for controlling expenditure. In practice, this means that there may be a mismatch between what the Council perceive as a spending requirement and the resources actually available.
- 5.6 A good example of this is the consistent gap between the Council's annual Housing Investment programme bid and the approved allocation.
- 5.7 The likelihood of insufficient resources means that policies will have to be prioritised.
- 5.8 Grant aid and funding approval for the implementation of the Plan's policies will be pursued through a number of bid strategies including:
- (i) Housing Investment Programme (HIP);
 - (ii) Derelict Land Grant (DLG);
 - (iii) Capital Challenge;
 - (iv) Transport Policies and programme (TPP);
 - (v) Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)
 - (vi) Objective 1 Plan;
 - (vii) Countryside Recreation Strategy.
- 5.9 These are all the subject of separate strategy statements and bids, usually on an annual basis, although initiatives such as the SRB have longer term programmes. Account

will have to be taken of changes within funding regimes, such as the establishment in 1994 of English Partnerships and its responsibility for administering derelict land grant. The UDP will provide an important dimension to each of these strategies, including safeguarding of land, policy support, environmental protection and a stable development context to assist investment confidence.

- 5.10 It will be important to secure private sector assistance to implement the Plan's policies. This is consistent with Strategic Guidance.
- 5.11 The Council has already made a considerable effort to develop partnerships with the private sector. Ravenhead Renaissance (para. 4.5) and Wasteland to Woodland (para. 4.20) indicate the type of mechanism which may be appropriate over the plan period.

Implementation

- 5.12 The policies contained in the plan will be implemented in a number of ways and by a number of separate agencies. The main mechanisms are summarised below.

Development Control

- 5.13 The great majority of policies provide specific guidance to potential developers. Accordingly, the local planning authority, through the development control process, will exert a significant contribution to fulfilling the aims and objectives of the plan. The process of development control by the grant of planning permission (with or without conditions or a S.106 Agreement) or the refusal of permission will control the location and character of development and its impact on surroundings.

Consultation

- 5.14 In its consideration of planning applications the Council will consult a wide range of individuals and organisations including those who can provide specific guidance and technical advice. In addition to General Development policies such as GEN 1, which will activate a number of consultations, there are several policies contained in the Plan which will necessitate specific advice, including the following:-

ENV 4 & 5 Lancashire Wildlife Trust and English Nature

ENV 14 Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

ENV 23 Sites and Monuments Record, Liverpool Museum

ENV 26 Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA)

ENV 27 & 28 Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

ENV 29 Environment Agency (EA), HSE and other appropriate pollution control agencies

ENV 30 Environment Agency

REC 7 Environment Agency

Private Sector and Partnership

- 5.15 The driving force behind the majority of development will be the private sector and it is through this mechanism that most of the residential and industrial investment will be secured.
- 5.16 The Council will continue to take an active role to guide and assist the private sector, and in appropriate circumstances will continue with existing formal partnerships or develop new working relationships such as, Ravenhead Renaissance (see para. 4.5) and Wasteland to Woodland or develop new working relationships including the SRB partnerships.

Capital Funding

- 5.17 As explained in para. 5.3, many of the policies involving capital expenditure by the Council will be implemented as and when resources permit. A small number of proposals in the Plan are in current capital programmes for implementation in the shorter term.
- 5.18 The Council intends, as part of its monitoring of the Plan to report annually through the appropriate Committee mechanisms on achievements over the preceding year and identify projects for inclusion in future capital programmes and bids for funding approval.

Agencies and Organisations

- 5.19 There are a wide range of agencies and organisations who will be instrumental in plan implementation in a variety of ways by advising, grant aiding, direct funding, enforcement and so on. The Council has a close working relationship with many of these such as the Groundwork Trust, Merseytravel, English Partnerships and Housing Associations. Formal working arrangements where they exist, such as the Wildlife Advisory Group and Housing Association Liaison Group, will continue, and where appropriate, new working arrangements may be developed.

6. MONITORING

- 6.1 It will be necessary to ensure that the policies and proposals in the Plan are up to date and continue to be relevant. This will involve monitoring the key factors influencing development upon which the policies have been based.
- 6.2 Local planning authorities have a duty to keep under review the matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development (Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 11). The results of the monitoring process will influence the timing and scope of any review affecting the UDP.
- 6.3 Strategic Guidance for Merseyside states that in consultation with neighbouring strategic planning authorities the Councils should pay particular attention to:
- (i) the scale and pace of urban regeneration;
 - (ii) trends in the factors affecting housing provision in the County;
 - (iii) the success of the Green Belt in restricting the outward growth of the build-up areas and re-directing development to inner city areas;
 - (iv) the effects of shopping development outside existing centres on the shopping and other functions of those centres and on the shopping public.
- 6.4 These issues remain relevant in relation to Regional Planning Guidance for the North West.
- 6.5 It is intended that monitoring will be continuous and the results published on a regular basis, most probably at six monthly intervals. Considerable emphasis will be placed on the monitoring of planning applications, permissions and development to assess:
- (i) developments in the Green Belt;
 - (ii) industrial land take up and floorspace;
 - (iii) retail development by type and floorspace;
 - (iv) residential land take up and housing completions by number and type;
 - (v) reclamation and development of vacant land;
 - (vi) developments affecting greenspaces including Sites of Community Wildlife Interest.
- 6.6 A particularly important issue affecting plan monitoring is the 1991 Census. The housing targets contained in Strategic Guidance were based on 1983-base OPCS projections derived from the 1981 Census. Population forecast and household projections based on the 1991 Census will form the basis of future monitoring of the Plan and collaboration with the Merseyside Districts on the development and implementation of Regional Planning Guidance.

PART 1

POLICIES

GREEN BELT

S1 A GREEN BELT, AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP WILL BE MAINTAINED IN ORDER TO:

- (i) CHECK THE UNRESTRICTED SPRAWL OF LARGE BUILT-UP AREAS;**
- (ii) PREVENT NEIGHBOURING TOWNS FROM MERGING INTO ONE ANOTHER;**
- (iii) ASSIST IN SAFEGUARDING THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM ENCROACHMENT;**
- (iv) ASSIST URBAN REGENERATION BY ENCOURAGING THE RECYCLING OF DERELICT AND OTHER URBAN LAND.**

A Green Belt boundary was established in 1983 when the former Merseyside County Council adopted the Merseyside Green Belt Local Plan. This defined a tight Green Belt boundary and was an integral part of the strategy for urban regeneration.

Planning Policy Guidance: Green Belt (PPG 2) places great emphasis on the permanence and protection of Green Belt boundaries and Strategic guidance for Merseyside (PPG 11) now superseded by Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG 13) confirms that the main objectives of the Green Belt are to check urban sprawl, safeguard valuable countryside and assist urban regeneration. The purposes of including land in the Green Belt are of paramount importance to their continued protection.

Having reviewed the land availability for residential and economic development, the Council is satisfied that no significant amendments are needed to the Green Belt boundary to accommodate foreseeable development needs. However, rationalisation is necessary in a few locations.

It has also become apparent in using the existing Green Belt Local Plan that there are a number of boundary anomalies and draughting errors. To comply with guidance in PPG 2 Revised, these anomalies have been corrected.

GREEN BELT OBJECTIVES

S1A THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE POSITIVE ROLE THAT LAND WITHIN THE GREEN BELT CAN PLAY IN FULFILLING THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

- (i) PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS TO THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE FOR THE URBAN POPULATION;**
- (ii) PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUTDOOR SPORT AND OUTDOOR RECREATION NEAR THE URBAN AREA;**
- (iii) RETAINING ATTRACTIVE LANDSCAPES, AND ENHANCING LANDSCAPES NEAR TO WHERE PEOPLE LIVE;**
- (iv) IMPROVING DAMAGED AND DERELICT LAND;**
- (v) SECURING NATURE CONSERVATION INTERESTS; AND**

Within the Green Belt, the use of land has a positive role to play in fulfilling the objectives stated in Policy S1A and planning applications will be considered accordingly. This is particularly relevant in St. Helens where the Green Belt covers most of the Borough's countryside, there is a commitment to urban fringe management and enhancement consistent with Countryside Commission advice, there is Groundwork Trust activity and extensive afforestation and recreation opportunities within the Mersey Forest. However the extent to which the use of land fulfils these objectives is not itself a material factor in the inclusion of land within the Green Belt, or in its continued protection.

(vi) **SUSTAINING AGRICULTURE,
FORESTRY AND RELATED USES.**

***PROVISION OF LAND FOR ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT***

***S2 THE COUNCIL WILL ENSURE THAT
SUFFICIENT INDUSTRIAL AND
COMMERCIAL LAND IS AVAILABLE
TO PROVIDE A WIDE CHOICE BY SIZE,
LOCATION AND SUITABILITY FOR
DIFFERENT USES.***

Keys Facts

- * ~~Between 1978 and 1986 the Borough experienced 20,000 job losses, 66% of which were from the glass industry.~~
- * ~~Capital investment replaces labour, eg. Pilkington's UK5 Float Glass Plant costing £70 million replaced 3,000 employees with 250.~~
- * ~~Bold Colliery closed in 1985 (700 job losses), Sutton Manor in 1991 (400 job losses), Parkside in 1993 (750 job losses), SmithKline Beecham in 1994 (500 job losses).~~
- * ~~Between 1978 and 1991 male full-time employment fell by 18,744.~~
- * ~~35% of the unemployed are aged 24 and under (July 1995).~~
- * ~~37% of the unemployed have been unemployed for over a year (July 1995).~~
- * ~~There is a projected decline of 4,000 people in the 16-24 age range between 1993 and 2001.~~

~~A healthy economy is an essential requirement of urban regeneration and social well-being. The Council therefore gives a high priority to its Economic Strategy, which seeks to address the issues through a wide range of mechanisms, including the provision of transport infrastructure, availability of land and premises, business advice, education and training and environmental improvement.~~

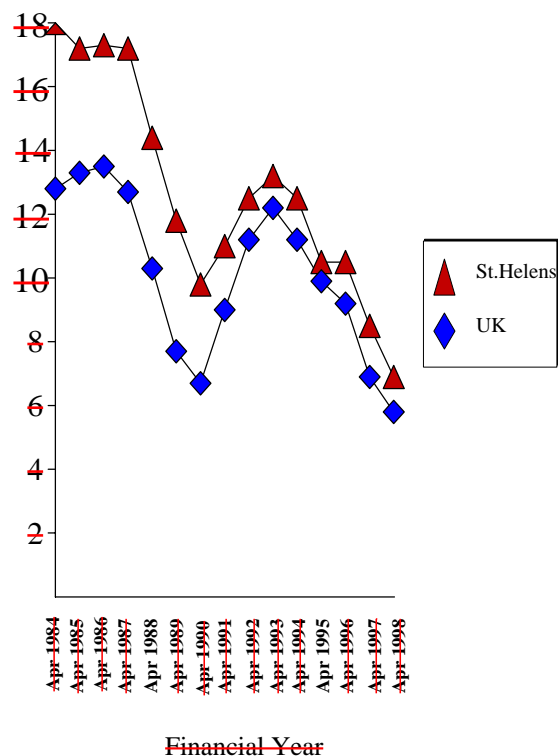
~~The Unitary Development Plan has a number of important functions to fulfil in relation to the Economic Strategy:~~

- (i) ~~allocation of an adequate range of economic development sites to meet the needs of existing, expanding and new businesses;~~
- (ii) ~~provision of a framework for implementation, with specific attention to the Southern Corridor and Haydock priority areas;~~
- (iii) ~~development and improvement of road and rail links serving the Borough;~~
- (iv) ~~safeguarding and promoting St. Helens Town Centre as a focus of economic activity;~~
- (v) ~~promotion of environmental improvements generally within industrial and commercial areas;~~
- (vi) ~~and minimising conflict between economic activity and residential amenity~~

~~The industrial structure of St. Helens is in a process of change. Traditional industries such as glass, coal and engineering are in decline or replacing labour with capital investment. There is a legacy of workers with redundant skills. While the employment structure reflects an increasing proportion within the service sector, this remains below the national average and is insufficient to compensate for job losses from the industrial sector.~~

~~Unemployment rates, which declined from a peak in 1985 but started to rise again from 1990, have remained above the UK average. The St. Helens average masks pockets of the Borough where the rate is significantly higher. The Borough's industrial structure remains extremely sensitive to changing market conditions.~~

Fig. 12: Unemployment Rates (unadjusted)



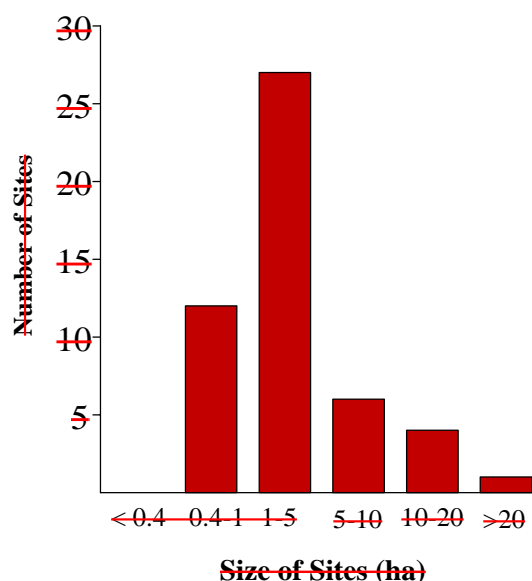
Source: St. Helens WURM
UK NOMIS

Labour force projections indicate that the population of working age will decline, particularly with fewer young people entering the labour market. In addition to UDP policies to encourage new industrial investment, which will assist in further diversifying the economic base with modern processes, there will be a need for complementary efforts to address the issue of training.

Land allocation

A total of 198 hectares of land are allocated for economic development on 50 sites (Policy ECON 1). The majority of these sites are contaminated, small, unattractive, lacking basic infrastructure or remote from the strategic highway network. A further restraining factor on development is the historical legacy of industrial development and sites in close proximity to housing. This problem is at its worst in the Sutton Area (Area 6).

Fig. 13: Size of Industrial Sites



Source: Development Plans Section

While the Council will continue to take steps to bring forward existing sites and remove constraints, it is of the view that the range and quality of the industrial land base must be improved to meet the variable needs of modern industry, including existing firms' expansion or relocation needs, the generation of new business within St. Helens and increasing inward investment. This objective is also a requirement of Strategic Guidance.

Strategic Sites and Premises Study

As indicated in paragraph 3.13, this study commissioned by the five Merseyside Districts identified three sites in St. Helens of strategic significance at Lea Green Farm (5Ec1), Millfield Point 23 (2Ec1) and Rainhill Hospital (5Ec10), which should enable St. Helens to compete with other regions for inward investment.

Industrial Land Demand

The period 1980-1993 was characterised by a generally low level of industrial land take-up (see Figure 14). The take-up varied from 5.8 ha in 1991 to 0.55 ha in 1982, averaging out at 2.36 ha per annum, which was well below the Merseyside Structure Plan allocation of 10.28 ha per annum. The low level can be attributed to a variety of factors, including:

- (i) lack of demand;
- (ii) depressed rental levels;
- (iii) competition from elsewhere, such as Warrington New Town;

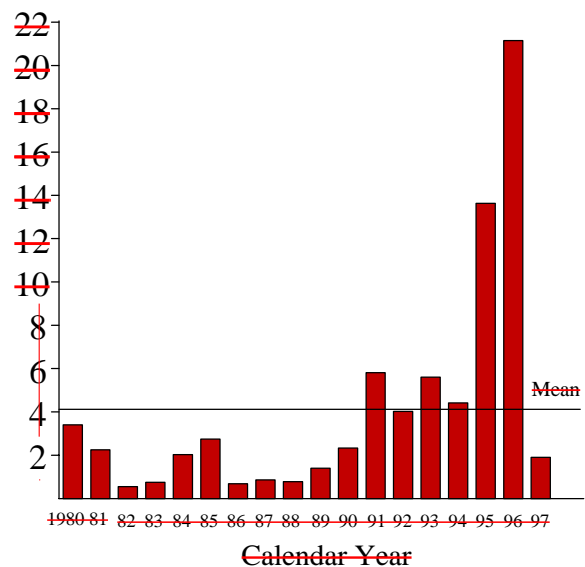
(iv) lack of quality sites.

Between April 1993 and April 1996 a further 28 ha were developed consisting predominantly of 20 ha at Point 23.

Strategic Guidance contains no basic requirements for the amount of industrial land that should be allocated in the UDP. However, it is reasonable to assume that the annual demand for land up to 2001 will be above the figure of 2.36 ha for the following reasons:

- (i) Major locally based economic regeneration mechanisms, such as Ravenhead Renaissance and St. Helens First;
- (ii) the opportunities offered by the construction of the M62 Link Road;
- (iii) improved targeting and marketing by the Merseyside Districts;
- (iv) slow down in the growth of Warrington New Town.

Fig. 14: Industrial Land Take-Up



Source: Economic Development Unit

The Southern Corridor and Haydock estate have been identified as the areas where economic activity in the form of industry, office and warehouse/distribution development should be encouraged. The Council will concentrate existing sources of finance towards the environmental enhancement and infrastructure improvement of allocated sites, and work in partnership with others, to implement this Policy.

The Southern Corridor will be the main focus for major new investment in the Borough over the

PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- S3 IN ORDER TO TAKE MAXIMUM ADVANTAGE OF THE PRIMARY ROAD NETWORK AND TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY ON RESIDENTIAL AREAS, THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITY LOCATIONS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ARE**
- (i) THE SOUTHERN CORRIDOR (AREA 5)**
 - (ii) HAYDOCK INDUSTRIAL ESTATE (AREA2)**

~~Plan Period. The Council already invested heavily in the area by constructing the M62 Link Road, which will improve access to existing sites and enable new ones to be developed.~~

~~The Lea Green Farm and Millfield Lane (Point 23) sites, identified in the Strategic Sites and Premises Study are located within the Priority locations.~~

~~The Haydock Industrial Estate is well established and a well known existing area of investment. It is well located in relation to the primary road network, contains a number of available development sites and is conveniently located for hotels and Haydock Park Racecourse, which has good exhibition and conference facilities.~~

~~The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to consider if Simplified Planning Zones (SPZs) would be appropriate as a special stimulus to economic activity for any part of their area. Consideration has been given to SPZ status for the Ravenhead and Haydock areas. However, the Council has taken the view that the most appropriate mechanism to promote economic activity is close working with the private sector, such as the Ravenhead Renaissance partnership, linked to a positive and flexible response to development proposals.~~

~~The Council is concerned that the historical development of St. Helens has left a legacy of existing allocations which, if developed, could give rise to significant conflict between industrial use and residential amenity.~~

~~This has particularly been the case in Area 6, Parr, Sutton and Bold. The M62 Linkway introduces a significant new opportunity to improve the distribution of economic development and reduce the impact of industrial development in residential areas.~~

~~**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE ALLOCATED AREAS**~~

~~**S4 IN THE EVENT OF MAJOR
EMPLOYMENT GENERATING
OPPORTUNITIES ARISING OUTSIDE
ALLOCATED AREAS THE COUNCIL
WILL CONSIDER THEM AGAINST THE
FOLLOWING TESTS:**~~

- ~~**(i) THE CONTRIBUTION THE
DEVELOPMENT WOULD MAKE
TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE COUNCIL'S ECONOMIC
OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES;**~~
- ~~**(ii) THE WIDER REGIONAL
CONTEXT;**~~
- ~~**(iii) THE AVAILABLE SCOPE FOR
ACCOMMODATING THEM
WITHIN ALLOCATED AREAS;**~~

~~If large scale industrial or office developments generating a significant number of new job opportunities are proposed outside allocated areas, the Council will need to consider whether an exception to existing policies should be made. Policy S4 sets down criteria against which such proposals will be assessed. If a proposal were such that it would bring significant employment into the Borough, then the Council would have to carefully consider the potential benefits against the possible long term effect of weakening key policies.~~

- ~~(iv) MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF THE URBAN REGENERATION STRATEGY;~~
- ~~(v) THE IMPACT ON THE UDP'S OTHER POLICIES FOR GREEN BELT, ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT~~

RETAIL DEVELOPMENT

S5 THE COUNCIL WILL:

- (i) PERMIT NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN EXISTING RETAIL CENTRES;**
- (ii) PERMIT PROPOSALS WHICH IMPROVE THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF EXISTING CENTRES;**
- (iii) REQUIRE PROPOSALS FOR LARGE-SCALE NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EXISTING CENTRES TO SATISFY THE CRITERIA DETAILED IN POLICY RET 2.**

The quality, location and efficiency of retailing facilities are of great importance to the Borough as a whole and to its local communities. Shopping is a key factor in the Borough's local economy, providing major employment opportunities and attracting new investment and business confidence into the area. Access to a range of shops with competitive prices, and the ability to shop in convenient and pleasant surroundings, is an important component of the quality of life. Restricted access to shops, or a poor choice of shops, is a form of deprivation which may make worse other inequalities. It is also important that those who rely on public transport can gain access to retail centres.

St. Helens Town Centre is a shopping centre of major importance within Merseyside. The Merseyside Structure Plan classified St. Helens as one of a group of second tier "major shopping centres" after Liverpool City Centre. Several shopping studies have shown that it draws its trade from a catchment area which approximates with the Borough boundary, although these studies were carried out before the opening of major new stores and environmental refurbishment in the town centre.

Elsewhere, only Earlestown is of sufficient size, with a range of retail outlets, to be considered a District Centre, in addition to providing convenience shopping for nearby residential areas.

There are 15 Local Centres restricted primarily to convenience and local service provision which play an important role, in addition to their immediate function, by acting as a community focus for the populations they serve. They are listed in Schedule 2, accompanying Part 2 Policy RET 1.

The Council is committed to protecting and improving existing centres, particularly the Town Centre, and this is consistent with Regional Guidance and PPG 6. It recognises that shopping centres are often in need of improvement to meet changes in the operational needs of retailers and to make them more attractive to shoppers. Modernisation and refurbishment of town centres is welcomed in PPG 6 and the Council will continue to encourage the enhancement of the Town Centre through environmental improvements, traffic-management schemes, the

provision of adequate car and cycle parking and improved provision for those with special access needs.

For the purposes of this policy and Policy RET 2 large-scale is defined as having a gross floor-space of around 1,000 square metres or more.

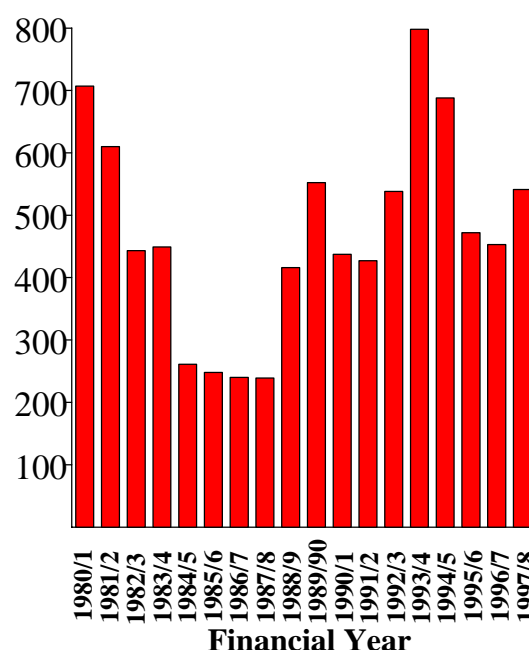
PROVISION OF LAND FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

S6 THE COUNCIL WILL ENSURE THAT SUFFICIENT LAND IS MADE AVAILABLE DURING THE PERIOD APRIL 1986 TO MARCH 2001 TO ACCOMMODATE THE STRATEGIC GUIDANCE HOUSING REQUIREMENT OF 6,700 NEW DWELLINGS

Strategic Guidance requires that 6,700 new dwellings are accommodated in St. Helens during the period April 1986 to March 2001. This represents an annual house building rate of 450 dwellings. This figure has been derived from assumptions relating to:

- (i) allowance for trends in the number of vacant dwellings;
- (ii) the need for new dwellings arising from growth in the number of households;
- (iii) replacement of properties demolished.

Fig. 15: St. Helens Housebuilding Progress 1980 - 1993



Source: P2 and NHBC Returns

In estimating housebuilding requirements, the number of households has been taken to increase from 68,565 in 1986 (DOE projections) by 1,246 to 69,811 in 1991 and by a further 447 to 70,258 in 2001. An assumption of a clearance rate of 400 dwellings per annum from 1991 onwards was made. Vacancy rates in St. Helens are assumed to rise to 3.8% by the year 2001, in line with the trend between 1971-1981.

In comparison with the Strategic Guidance housing requirement of 450 completions per year, housing completions reached a peak in 1980/81 and 1981/82 (707 and 610 respectively) before falling to 239 units in 1987/88. Since then there has been a recovery, peaking again in 1993/94 and 1994/95 (797 and 687 respectively). The average annual housing completion rate April 1986 to March 1996 is 481.

Whilst there is no justification for seeking an alteration of Strategic Guidance housebuilding targets, it remains necessary to monitor building rates and demographic trends.

The 1993 DOE household projections demonstrate a significant increase in the number of households between 1991 and 2001, whilst the need to replace cleared housing (currently less than 50 per annum) is significantly less than the 400 per annum assumed in Strategic guidance. Similarly the vacancy rate from the 1991 Census (3.0%) is significantly less than those figures previously assumed.

The implications of these figures are currently being assessed by the Merseyside Districts in association with the other North West local authorities in the context of Regional Planning Guidance for the North West. It is on the basis of this Guidance that the housing land requirement and how this can be met will be reassessed.

Joint Land Availability Study

Planning Policy guidance: Housing (PPG 3) advises Councils to ensure that a five year supply of residential land is available and to undertake joint studies with the housebuilders.

St. Helens together with the other Merseyside Districts and the House Builders Federation have prepared a joint land availability study for the period 1989 - 1994. This shows that the residential land supply in St. Helens exceeded the five year requirement while satisfying the market needs as defined by the private sector housebuilders. An Interim Study has also been undertaken for the period 1992 - 1997.

The Merseyside Districts are nearing completion of the 1994-1999 study with the housebuilders. St. Helens has achieved 94% agreement on its housing land supply.

The Council will continue to review during the Plan Period the land available for housing and its suitability for a variety of market requirements.

It is also necessary to ensure that the land supply caters for all housing needs.

Existing Housing Stock

The Borough's housing stock consists predominantly of late 19th and early 20th Century terraced and semi-detached private housing, interspersed with pockets of low-rise Council housing.

There are considerable problems of unfitness in the Borough, caused by a combination of the age of the properties, poor construction techniques, poor ground conditions resulting from traditional industries, such as coal mining.

St. Helens has, in conjunction with the other Merseyside Districts conducted a survey into private sector stock conditions. The survey carried out in 1995 indicated that 20% of all private homes are unfit, with 55% of houses built before 1919 unfit. In terms of the Council's stock, up to 70% of the Council houses need major investment.

Fig. 16: Housing Stock April 1995

Private Sector	52,537	71.8%
Council Houses	16,594	22.7%
Housing Association	3,829	5.2%
Other Public Sector	165	0.2%
Total Housing Stock	73,125	100.0%

Source: HHP 1996/97 Submission

Underfunding of housing renewal over many years has resulted in a backlog of clearance, a slow and piecemeal redevelopment process and limited improvement programmes. The introduction of Housing Renewal Areas, in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, led to one of the first Housing Renewal Areas in the country being declared as part of the Sutton Village Initiative. However, progress has been severely hampered by the lack of resources for grants and group repairs.

In recent years, the Council has invested heavily in its own stock to bring properties up to an acceptable standard. Since 1987, it has successfully completed, or in the process of completing 17 Estate Action and Greenhouse Programme Schemes by investing over £58 million in 3,671 houses. Yet despite this investment and the Council's own initiatives, major repair works are still required.

Maintenance and improvement of both the public and private sector stock in the older housing areas is important to ensure that clearance and new house building requirements are minimised. Priority will be given to existing improvement programmes, whilst establishing the framework for future provisions, if procedural and financial arrangements allow.

Quality of Residential Areas

The Council considers it important that new residential development creates a good quality environment and that the quality of existing residential areas is protected and improved. This will be pursued by the application of the relevant development control policies (GEN-5, 6), particularly to provide open space within new developments and to make new developments accessible to those with special needs. Reference should be made to traffic calming measures required by TRA 2.

Housing Needs

If local needs of Borough residents are to be met in the future, then changing housing needs must be monitored. The Plan will provide the framework for identifying and promoting sites which are appropriate for meeting particular housing needs. This can be defined as any type of housing for which needs are not adequately provided, and would include elderly, disabled or homeless people, one parent families or affordable housing.

St. Helens is a low wage, high unemployment economy, yet house prices have remained relatively high in a buoyant housing market. 44% of young households in St. Helens cannot afford to buy property and many households are experiencing difficulty in paying for their housing.

This is not resolved in the rented sector, where low wage households, once in rented accommodation, are often caught in the 'benefit trap' of being unable to afford high rents.

Right to buy sales and estate re-modelling has significantly reduced the options available in the Council stock, whilst, applications for rehousing have continued to rise since 1991.

Homelessness is also a reflection of the shortage of affordable accommodation within the Borough. Homelessness applications have continued to rise since 1989.

The lack of suitable vacancies in both public and private sector housing, particularly for elderly and young single people, has increased the demand to provide more and better houses targeted at these particular sectors of the market. St. Helens Care in the Community programme which caters for people with mental illness, learning or physical disabilities, children and families and elderly people, emphasises the need for accommodation to be provided within the community rather than in institutions. St. Helens is especially affected by the run-down of six regional hospitals.

The issue of affordable low-cost housing is particularly important in St. Helens. The Council will follow the lead provided by PPG 3 (paras 38-44) and the Circular 13/96 Planning and Affordable Housing issued in 1996, and pursue the provision on certain sites of a reasonable mix and balance of house types and sizes to cater for a range of housing needs. Such housing may be supplied through partnership or trust arrangements with other housing agencies or planning conditions/agreements to ensure that such housing is reserved for those who need it.

The Council are aware that as the urban regeneration strategy relies on attracting new investment and new businesses into the Borough, particularly the Southern Corridor and Haydock Park Industrial Estate, it may undermine the confidence of the senior and management personnel of potential new businesses or industries if the Plan overlooked their housing requirements. The needs of this sector as well as the retention of existing residents have therefore been considered and allowed for in the Plan's policies and proposals. There are sufficient sites identified under Policy RES 1 to offer housing for this sector, generally in accordance with the proportion of the higher socio-economic groups in the Borough's population.

Land Supply

A total area of 170 hectares is allocated for residential purposes which it is estimated could accommodate approximately 3,955 dwellings. For sites identified in the UDP (RES 1) without detailed planning permission, an estimate of the likely number of dwellings has been derived from recent developments and is considered to be realistic for St. Helens. The small sites contribution (<0.4 ha) is a conservative figure derived from the rate of completions (100 per annum) 1990 - 1995 and is consistent with advice in PPG 3. Similarly, windfall sites contribution (>0.4 ha, <1 ha) is also based on a past rate of

completions (35 per annum) but is defined so as not to double count the small sites assumption. An assumption is also included for the contribution which housing conversions make to the dwellings stock, although this is very limited in St. Helens. The contribution which these allocations make to Strategic Guidance requirements are shown in Fig. 17. The housing land allocation in the Plan meets the Strategic Guidance requirements for the period 1986 – 2001 and, the respective five year land supply requirement. In addition, the supply exceeds the requirement by 5.8 years, assuming a continuation of completions at the rate of 450 units per annum. There are other additional sites which could accommodate residential development in the long term, such as Bold Power Station (Policy AP 6.3).

The overall land supply situation means that amendments to the Green Belt boundary for housing purposes will not be necessary during, nor immediately beyond the Plan Period, consistent with advice in PPG 2, and ensures that a wide range of sites by size, location and quality appropriate to market requirements is available, which is also consistent with advice in PPG 3.

The Regional Context

The Secretary of State's response to the Cheshire 2001 Examination in Public called for greater awareness between strategic planning authorities in the North West, especially when forecasting and estimating housing land provision. St. Helens was mentioned as an area where housing demand could be met as a result of increased employment development in Warrington.

Since then, authorities in the North West have combined to assist in the preparation of Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 13) which was issued by the Secretary of State in May 1996. Regular liaison takes place between St. Helens and the other Merseyside Districts and informal links have been developed with other neighbouring authorities. RPG and the liaison mechanisms will provide the framework for reassessing future housing requirements beyond 2001 to be incorporated in a future revision of this Plan.

Fig. 17: Housing Land Supply (April 1996)	
Strategic Guidance (450 pa)	6,700
Units completed Apr 1986-Mar 1996	4,808
Balance to be supplied Apr 1996 – Mar 2001	= 1,892
New Build Contribution (identified in Policy RES 1 and on other committed large sites) to 2001	2,435
Supply Contributing beyond 2001	+ 1,352
Small Sites Contribution	+ 500
Windfall Contribution	+ 175
Conversion/Net gain contribution	+ 60
Total anticipated supply	= 4,522
Comparison with Strategic Guidance rate ie: 450 pa	= 10 years
Comparison with current building rate ie: 481 pa	= 9.4 years

~~SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT~~

~~S7 THE COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT. PLANNING PERMISSION FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE IT MINIMISES ANY ADVERSE EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT. PROPOSALS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE NEED TO CONSERVE AND REDUCE DEMANDS FOR ENERGY, ESPECIALLY FOSSIL FUELS, AND TO REDUCE THE NEED TO TRAVEL, PARTICULARLY BY PRIVATE CAR~~

~~The importance of the environment and the careful stewardship of natural resources is an issue of growing importance recognised at the international, European and national levels of decision making. The Government's White Paper 'This Common Inheritance' is Britain's first comprehensive survey of all aspects of environmental concern.~~

~~Policy S7 is intended, therefore, to address all matters of environmental concern including impacts on air, water, soil, landscape and amenity.~~

~~In considering the impact of development on certain elements of the environment, such as the best and most versatile agricultural land (ENV 14) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (ENV 4), minimises any adverse effect may be interpreted as having no adverse effect.~~

~~Development Plans are perceived as having a major responsibility in ensuring that environmental considerations are comprehensively and consistently taken into account. This includes the 'traditional' aspects of planning concern such as nature conservation, the built environment and Green Belt, as well as newer environmental concerns such as global warming and the consumption of non-renewable resources. Development and growth should be sustainable.~~

~~The definition of sustainability and sustainable development varies widely as does the perception of the weight to be placed on environmental matters to secure sustainable development. Aim 6 of the Plan (para 1.1), identifies the need to work towards the principles of sustainable development. The Government, too, is in the process of developing its policies consistent with sustainability. For the purposes of the UDP the definition contained in PPG 12 will be taken as the starting point. "The sum total of decisions in the planning field, as elsewhere, should not deny future generations the best of today's environment".~~

~~The planning system, and the preparation of development plans in particular, can contribute to the objectives of ensuring that development and growth are sustainable (PPG 12, para 1.8).~~

~~This policy will guide the consideration of all development proposals and planning applications in the Borough, and will ensure:~~

- ~~(i) that all development proposals take full account of those policies which seek to protect the Borough's environmental resources;~~
- ~~(ii) that new development which occurs minimises the impact on the environment; and~~

- (iii) ~~that in the context of (ii) and guidance contained in PPG 13, proposals will be considered in the context of how access can be improved by encouraging development patterns which give people the chance of using more environment friendly means of transport than the car. In this way, land use planning can help to reduce transport emissions into the atmosphere as well as reduce other impacts on the environment.~~

~~Reference should be made to Part 2 policies, in particular those in the Environment chapter which give greater definition to the environmental resource. However, concern for the environment should run through all developments and accordingly account should also be taken of General Development Policy GEN 1.~~

~~The Government has made clear the intention to work towards ensuring that development and growth are sustainable. This is likely to be an evolving process and this Policy will be applied in the light of Government Guidance on sustainability.~~

Environmental appraisal

~~Government guidance emphasises the need for local authorities to consider the environmental implications of their development plans and PPG 12 introduced the requirement to undertake environmental appraisals of development plans.~~

~~To introduce an environmental appraisal at a relatively late stage of the plan process in a responsible and comprehensive manner would take time and delay final adoption. Alternatively, a superficial appraisal would be misleading. It is therefore the Council's intention to carry out a comprehensive environmental appraisal at review stage.~~

~~Nevertheless this Plan gives great attention to environmental considerations. Many environmental organisations have been actively involved in the Plan's preparation. The Plan has sought a balance between the needs of development with the protection of the environment. The strategy of urban regeneration contributes to sustainable development by recycling derelict and vacant urban land, maximising the opportunity to use public transport, encouraging the use of existing infrastructure and defending the countryside from urban sprawl. A wide range of policies for the enhancement and protection of the environment are included, while Policy S7 will ensure that environmental considerations are comprehensively and consistently taken into account.~~

~~DERELICT AND VACANT LAND~~

~~S8 THE COUNCIL WILL PROMOTE THE POSITIVE USE OF VACANT AND DERELICT LAND AND, IN SO DOING, WILL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WHICH:~~

- ~~(i) CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESIDENTIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND SUPPLY;~~
- ~~(ii) PROTECT AND ENHANCE NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE;~~
- ~~(iii) CONTRIBUTE TO THE MERSEY FOREST THROUGH WOODLAND CREATION;~~
- ~~(iv) CREATE RECREATION RESOURCES;~~
- ~~(v) REMOVE OR SAFELY CONTAIN CONTAMINATION AND OTHERWISE IMPROVE PUBLIC SAFETY;~~
- ~~(vi) IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE LOCALITY;~~
- ~~(vii) CONTRIBUTE TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES SURROUNDING THE SITE~~

~~The 1993 Department of the Environment survey of derelict land identified 505 ha of derelict land in St. Helens an increase of 136 ha since the previous survey in 1988. However the true extent of vacant and despoiled land, in the Council's estimation, is over 900 ha.~~

~~While this uses a broader definition than the DOE's official definition, it is believed to be a more accurate reflection of environmental degradation and the importance of pursuing the treatment of such land through a wide range of policies. The policy also covers derelict structures.~~

~~Derelict land constitutes a major problem adversely affecting the image of the area both as a place in which to live and work; discouraging inward investment; attracting fly tipping, concealing dangers due to the condition of the ground or in places the hazardous nature of the material dumped. One specific constraint is that of methane generation from waste disposal sites in the Borough.~~

~~It must also be recognised that derelict land can be of positive benefit, providing recreational opportunities and a haven for wildlife. The need to take this into account in any proposals affecting derelict land is reflected in Policy ENV 8. The Council will continue its efforts to reclaim derelict land through a variety of mechanisms and partnerships with the private sector will be an important aspect. To these ends the UDP includes policies to make the best use of derelict land by:~~

- ~~(i) incorporating sites into allocations for hard after uses such as housing and industry. 65% of the land allocated for housing (Policy RES 1) is currently vacant or derelict as is 73% of the industrial allocation (Policy ECON 1);~~
- ~~(ii) incorporating sites into policies for nature conservation, woodland development and greenways. 20% of vacant and derelict land is of sufficient wildlife merit to be identified as Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (Policy ENV 5); Policy ENV 10 allocates 300 ha (31% of the vacant and derelict land total) for woodland development;~~
- ~~(iii) promoting the redevelopment of cleared housing sites to an agreed programme;~~
- ~~(iv) concentrating efforts to improve the appearance of the main road and rail corridors in the Borough.~~

~~Vacant land is a wasted resource and, given the scale of the problem in St. Helens, it is going to take many years to secure long term beneficial uses for all sites. In the interim, and subject to the~~

~~THE COUNTRYSIDE~~

~~S9 THE COUNCIL WILL SAFEGUARD THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM INAPPROPRIATE USES AND DEVELOPMENT AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROMOTE ITS QUIET AND INFORMAL ENJOYMENT BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC BY:~~

- ~~(i) THE PROTECTION OF THE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE AGRICULTURAL LAND (GRADES 1, 2 AND 3A), FARM STRUCTURE AND VIABILITY;~~
- ~~(ii) HAVING REGARD TO THE EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT ON THE APPEARANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE;~~
- ~~(iii) SEEKING TO MINIMISE CONFLICT BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES GENERATED FROM WITHIN THE URBAN AREAS;~~
- ~~(iv) IMPROVING PUBLIC ACCESS, WHERE APPROPRIATE;~~
- ~~(v) ENCOURAGING THE PROTECTION AND PLANTING OF NEW WOODLANDS~~

~~availability of resources, temporary landscaping of such sites will assist in reducing their impact.~~

~~There may also be opportunities for temporary uses, such as sitting out areas, allotments and car parking, possibly generated by communities in the vicinity. Subject to such uses not conflicting with the Plan's overall policies, proposals will be viewed sympathetically.~~

~~The Council's policies for the countryside have been prepared to comply with guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance: The Countryside and the Rural Economy (PPG 7) and the government's policies for the countryside included in 'This Common Inheritance', which are;~~

- ~~- to encourage economic activity in rural areas;~~
- ~~- to conserve and improve the landscape, and encourage opportunities for recreation;~~
- ~~- to conserve the diversity of our wildlife, particularly~~
- ~~- by protecting and enhancing habitats~~

~~The countryside surrounding the built up area covers some 50% of the Borough and has an important role to play in providing an attractive setting and positive image, as well as presenting opportunities for amenity and recreation use. While the urban and rural areas of the Borough present a range of difference environmental and planning issues, they should not be viewed in isolation. There are important linkages, not least the footpath networks and open space wedges. These issues will also be developed in the Council's Countryside Recreation Strategy.~~

~~There is a high proportion of Grade 1, 2 and 3A agricultural land. Whilst the changing situation affecting the agricultural industry will apply pressure for farm amalgamation and diversification, it is expected that agriculture will remain important, both in economic and landscape terms.~~

~~The landscape provides an attractive setting for the built up areas and complements the recreational potential of the countryside. The most attractive existing landscape occurs in the northern and western parts of the Borough; by contrast the southern fringe of St. Helens has been badly affected by mineral working and industrial development.~~

~~The Merseyside Structure Plan identified two areas of heritage landscape within St. Helens, a northern area around Billinge and Rainford, of attractive undulating and wooded countryside, and a southern one incorporating the remains of the historic landscape of Bold Hall.~~

~~The UDP confirms the importance of these assets and it is proposed to undertake further studies to assess which additional areas of the Borough may merit designation as landscapes of high landscape quality.~~

~~Similarly, the crescent of degraded landscape fringing the southern and eastern parts of the built-up area, identified in the Structure Plan, remains in need of priority attention for landscape enhancement. This area had provided the focus for the Borough's 'Wasteland to Woodland' initiative.~~

~~The reference to improving public access in criterion (iv) is not meant to imply that the public can claim rights of access over land in private ownership where this has not been agreed.~~

~~As a general rule, any new or replacement planting should use native species.~~

MINERAL EXTRACTION

S10 IN PURSUING ITS RESPONSIBILITIES AS MINERAL PLANNING AUTHORITY, THE COUNCIL WILL:

- (i) WHERE APPROPRIATE, PROTECT KNOWN MINERAL RESOURCES FROM STERILISATION;**
- (ii) WHERE APPROPRIATE, ENSURE THAT THE BOROUGH CONTRIBUTES TO MEETING THE DEMAND FOR MINERALS;**
- (iii) SET OUT CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF MINERAL PROPOSALS;**
- (iv) ENSURE THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF MINERAL OPERATIONS IS MINIMISED;**
- (v) ENSURE THAT SITE OPERATIONS ARE OF A HIGH STANDARD AND THAT RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE SCHEMES ARE OF AN APPROPRIATE STANDARD HAVING REGARD TO THE LIKELY AFTER-USE, SURROUNDING LAND USES AND THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD AMENITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

The extraction of minerals is an essential activity providing the necessary raw materials for power, construction and manufacturing industries. Mineral working also provides employment not only in extraction but also in the transport and processing of minerals.

Unlike other activities covered by the planning system, mineral working can only take place where minerals naturally occur and it is inevitable that mineral working will at times, conflict with the amenities of residents and the environment. The Council acknowledges that the Borough has to pay a part in the provision of essential minerals in the national interest. However any contribution to meeting mineral demand will need to be balanced against the protection of the Borough's environment

In drawing up policies for the planning of mineral operations the Council pays due regard to Regional Planning Guidance, the role of the North West Aggregates Working Party (NNAWP) and Government Guidance issued in the form of Mineral Planning Guidance Notes.

The principle minerals that have been extracted from St. Helens in the past are coal, clay, aggregates (sandstone, sand and gravel), special industrial sands and peat. The lack of adequate planning control on all but the latest workings has left a legacy of dereliction throughout much of the Borough.

The adverse effects of mineral extraction on the environment can be considerable and may be detrimental to the amenity of the local community; sometimes long after mining has ceased. Almost 70% of the dereliction in St. Helens can be attributed to the effects of mineral extraction.

Deep-mined coal and clay extraction in particular, are major long-term contributors to the unsatisfactory environment in some parts of the Borough. Other operations, like coal washing and opencast coal mining also contribute to a poor environment, albeit for a shorter time period; although the cumulative effect over time can be considerable.

The Council is determined to ensure that future mineral extraction is carried out in an environmentally satisfactory manner and that all sites are not only adequately restored, but can, in accordance with the Council's aim of urban regeneration, show a positive environmental improvement as a result of the site's restoration.

The appropriate development control criteria to be applied by the Council in respect of applications for mineral exploration, working and associated disposal of mineral waste and the provision of aggregate depots are set out by Policy MIN 1 in Part 2 of this Plan.

WASTE DISPOSAL

S11 IN PURSUING ITS WASTE DISPOSAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY, THE COUNCIL WILL:

- (i) **HAVE REGARD TO THE MERSEYSIDE WASTE DISPOSAL PLAN AND THE PRINCIPLES OF REGIONAL SELF SUFFICIENCY, PROXIMITY AND MOVEMENT OF WASTE MANAGEMENT UP THE WASTE HIERARCHY;**
- (ii) **GENERALLY SUPPORT INITIATIVES TO MINIMISE WASTE DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROMOTE WASTE RECYCLING;**
- (iii) **ENSURE THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF WASTE OPERATIONS IS MINIMISED;**
- (iv) **ENSURE THAT SITE OPERATIONS ARE OF A HIGH STANDARD AND THAT RESTORATION AND AFTERCARE SCHEMES ARE OF AN APPROPRIATE STANDARD HAVING REGARD TO THE LIKELY AFTER-USE, SURROUNDING LAND USES AND THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD AMENITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT; AND**
- (v) **SET OUT CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF WASTE PROPOSALS**

Urbanised areas, such as St. Helens, produce considerable quantities of wastes from households, shops and industry, all of which needs to be collected, treated and suitably disposed of.

In drawing up policies for the control of waste disposal, transfer and recycling facilities, the council has paid due regard to Regional Planning Guidance, the Merseyside Waste Disposal Plan and Government Guidance in the form of Planning Guidance Notes and Waste Management Papers.

Control over waste:

Control over the waste disposal industry is vested in a number of bodies that are subject to evolving legislation, there is, as a result, some degree of overlap of responsibility.

The Council is currently responsible for the collection of domestic and some commercial and industrial wastes, and is also responsible for planning control over waste facilities.

The Waste Disposal Authority is responsible for the provision of disposal services for household and associated commercial waste collected by the District Councils in Merseyside, and for the provision of Waste Reception Centres for bulky household waste, delivered by local residents. Their services may only be provided through contracts let after competitive tendering.

As well as ensuring that these contracts are performed to a high operational and service standard, the Waste Disposal Authority has responsibilities to encourage recycling and to restore several closed landfill sites which it still occupies.

The Environment Agency has increased powers and responsibilities for the control and enforcement of environmental standards for waste disposal activity. This will include the licensing of all waste disposal sites including landfill sites, transfer stations, treatment plants and processing and storage facilities. There is inevitable overlap between licensing and planning functions and the Council will work closely with the Environment Agency in this respect.

The current Waste Disposal Plan for Merseyside was approved by MWDA in May 1989. Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG 13) requires the Council, amongst other things, to have regard to the policies of the Waste Disposal Plan.

Waste Generated

The Merseyside Waste Disposal Plan estimates that approximately 350,000 tonnes of wastes (215,000 tonnes of household and factory wastes, and 135,000 tonnes of building and demolition wastes) are recycled. It is anticipated that during the UDP Plan Period more wastes will be recycled and policy WD 3 provides support for recycling and waste minimisation initiatives. Another significant change within the Plan Period will be the phasing out of marine disposal of sewage sludge, in accordance with European Community Directives. Whilst it may be possible to recycle some of this waste, there will inevitably be increased pressure on landfill or incineration as a means of disposal.

Disposal Capacity

The Merseyside Waste Disposal Plan estimates that over 6 million cubic metres of licensed landfill capacity existed within St. Helens. (It can generally be assumed that 1 tonne is equivalent to 1 cubic metre of void space).

Since the plan was published in 1989, there have been no significant planning permissions granted and some sites have now been completed, with others continually filling. The current void capacity will therefore have decreased since the Waste Disposal Plan was published but still remains sufficient to accommodate the waste generated within the Borough beyond the UDP Plan Period. However, it is not possible to reserve this void capacity for the Borough's own waste alone and waste from other Districts is imported. As a result, if current rates of infill continue, the Borough capacity could be exhausted by the end of the UDP Plan period.

The active site or sites with planning permission are listed below together with estimated completion dates:

Billinge Hill Quarry 2001
Holiday Moss, Rainford 1997
Berringtons Lane, Rainford
Simon Vicars Ltd., Junction Lane

In the event that further waste disposal or waste transfer facilities are required within the lifetime of the Plan, in considering such facilities, the Council will ensure that proposals do not prejudice the overall aims of urban regeneration, or have an unacceptable effect on residential amenities (Policy WD 1). Where waste proposals are acceptable the Council will ensure that working, restoration and aftercare are implemented in an environmentally acceptable manner (Policy WD 2).

The appropriate development control criteria to be applied by the Council in respect of applications for waste transfer, treatment or disposal facilities are set out by Policy WD 1 in Part 2 of this Plan.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

S12 PROPOSALS FOR THE GENERATION OF POWER FROM RENEWABLE AND/OR RECOVERABLE ENERGY SOURCES WILL BE ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED UNLESS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT WOULD CAUSE DEMONSTRABLE HARM TO INTERESTS OF ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE

Renewable energy is the term used to cover those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – energy from the sun, the wind and the oceans, and the fall of water. The heat from within the earth itself, geothermal energy, is usually regarded as renewable, although locally it cannot always sustain continuous extraction. Plant material is an important source of renewable energy. Combustible or digestible industrial, agricultural and domestic waste materials are also regarded as renewable sources of energy.

Recoverable energy would include the positive use of landfill gas.

The development of such energy sources would complement the plan's primary aim A6 and Policy S7 for sustainable development

The Council are not aware of any physical activities which would make St. Helens particularly suitable as a location for such developments. However, at a time when rapid technological developments can be expected, it is appropriate to include such a policy and this is consistent with guidance in PPG 22. However, the Council will wish to ensure that any proposals for renewable and/or recoverable energy do not adversely affect existing environmental quality and accordingly will be weighed carefully against policies in the plan for environmental protection.

Part 2

**BOROUGHWIDE POLICIES
AND PROPOSALS**

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Introduction

The General Development policies, set out on the following pages and in Supplementary Planning Guidance incorporate in revised form a number of non-statutory guidelines adopted by the Council in the 1980s; others have been absorbed into the Retailing policies.

All the foregoing Part 1 objectives and policies are potentially relevant to the consideration of individual applications for planning permission, and other forms of planning clearance, depending on the circumstances. So, in particular are other Part 2 policies.

The purpose of this chapter is to ensure that they are properly taken into account (encouraging reference to the complete schedule of policies listed after the contents page and also to provide further general policies to assist in the consideration of all such applications.

This is to accommodate suitable proposals in locations for which the Plan envisages no significant change and to establish common principles with respect to a variety of matters, such as accessibility and designing out crime, as well as housing layouts and car parking. Some matters of general significance are also dealt with elsewhere, such as the safeguarding of trees and new planting (ENV 11-13).

The Council is aware of the need to achieve a consistent approach. It also recognises that some proposals have effects which are both localised and cumulatively important, eg. hot food shops (RET 4) and house extensions (GEN 8).

Primacy of the Development Plan

GEN 1 Development projects of all kinds will be allowed provided they do not materially conflict with the Plan's objectives, other policies and proposals and, where relevant, will therefore be expected to:

- (i) maintain or enhance the character and appearance of the local environment, in particular through their layout, scale, design, materials and landscaping (including means of enclosure);
- (ii) make adequate and safe provision for access (including visibility splays and, where necessary, off-site highway improvements) for all classes of road user;
- (iii) respect archaeological and nature conservation interests and, wherever possible, safeguard the habitats of protected species (ENV 23, ENV 4-5, ENV 7, ENV 9);
- (iv) provide landscaping (including means of enclosure) as an integral component, whenever appropriate, and, wherever possible, contribute new wildlife habitats;
- (v) make efficient use of existing infrastructure and services and, where practicable, avoid the need for new service investment;
- (vi) include satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of foul sewage, trade effluent and contaminated surface water;
- (vii) incorporate flood defences, balancing ponds or other appropriate measures to accommodate land drainage constraints and any necessary steps to prevent pollution;
- (viii) where appropriate and, in particular, on larger redevelopment sites, include comprehensive measures for the removal of any redundant structures and phased programmes of remedial ground treatment, service provision, new construction, landscaping, maintenance and monitoring of landfill gas (ENV 26);

One of the aims of the Plan is to improve the general environment, correcting problems which are the result of the Borough's historical development. In some areas still, there is an unacceptable mix of industry and housing. The Plan seeks to avoid making similar mistakes in the future, whilst avoiding a rigid zoning approach. In particular, off-site highway works may be necessary to ensure that development sites benefit from good access to major routes and do not inflict heavy goods traffic on nearby residential streets.

As redevelopment sites released by the contraction of traditional industries, such as coal and glass, come forward, it is important to take a comprehensive approach to the identification of assets, deal with ground contamination, take opportunities to plant trees, create new amenities, plan for future needs and generally to balance new facilities with the capacity of existing infrastructure. It is particularly important to avoid circumstances which can lead to unsightly open storage and pressure to encroach on landscaped areas of common benefit to industrial estates.

For the purposes of PPG 12, infrastructure extends to education and health provision. Lack of capacity may be a material reason for refusing permission. In some areas, outmoded sewer systems are becoming overloaded. Further development in areas served by such systems increases the risks of water course pollution unless additional infrastructure is provided. Where contributions from developers towards drainage infrastructure costs are appropriate these will generally be secured by means of a Planning Obligation, or other appropriate agreement.

On the other hand, even quite small projects can make positive contributions to local needs and developers will be encouraged to recognise the advantages for St. Helens as a whole of shunning mediocrity and striving for excellence. Wherever possible, projects should contribute variety, colour and originality to the local economy, built environment and quality of life in St. Helens.

Contributions to public works of art will be voluntary, but the Council may wish to negotiate for such provision in the case of particularly important developments.

- (ix) ~~take account of and be sympathetic to surrounding land uses and, in particular, avoid significant loss of residential amenity or other adverse impact on the environment (GEN 3);~~
- (x) ~~make prudent allowance for possible expansion and diversification, particularly in the case of industrial and commercial developments;~~

~~The Council intends to publish guidelines for the making of applications, to ensure that they take proper account of site characteristics and the surroundings (along the lines indicated in SPG 6 for residential development sites). Early discussion of projects is recognised good practice and, in the case of those with wider implications, will help to identify the need to provide supporting information or a formal Environmental Assessment under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations.~~

~~The Plan identifies areas of expected change and pressure over the coming period and provides specific proposals and policies for them, as indicated on the Proposals Map. However, this does not preclude changes of use or new built developments in other locations, so long as they are compatible with the policies of the Plan as a whole.~~

~~The Council accepts that redundant premises will become available for redevelopment during the plan period.~~

~~The Planning system has always recognised that secondary, complementary or ancillary land uses have been accepted among areas of primary land use, for example, the presence of corner shops and other local facilities within residential areas. It is also generally accepted now that mixed-use areas offer many advantages, not least of which is the avoidance of undue travel and the attendant reduction in pollution. Many small developments, such as the provision of surgeries, churches, day centres and other community facilities (REC 8), will be needed and will take place. Some more substantial developments must also be anticipated.~~

~~In addition to Plan policies, appropriate safeguards are provided by statutory publicity; all larger proposals, together with those affecting public rights of way, are subject to press and on-site notices. Further, proposals involving significant change not provided for in the Plan (whether in policies or on the Proposals Map) will also be subject to the procedures for development plan departures.~~

~~Good Environments~~

~~GEN 2 In exercising its powers of control and enforcement as Local Planning Authority, the Council will:~~

- (i) ~~encourage the establishment of pleasant and safe conditions within new built developments;~~

~~This policy, which flows from Plan Objectives 10 and 12, carries forward an important urban regeneration principle from Policy 9.3 of the Merseyside Structure Plan, ie. that we should not spoil existing good environments or further penalise those who do not enjoy standards of amenity but who have rising expectations.~~

- (ii) ~~safeguard existing good environments from the adverse external effects of new built developments and other proposals, including changes of use and extensions;~~
- (iii) ~~protect those who do not currently enjoy levels of amenity appropriate to new developments from further deterioration in their circumstances and, where practicable, secure environmental improvements;~~
- (iv) ~~take appropriate account of the uniqueness of each proposal~~

~~Once established, even on a temporary basis, bad neighbour developments are notoriously difficult to get rid of. They can also deter beneficial investment. Similarly, redevelopment of small sites without regard to future opportunities for better and more comprehensive layouts can be short sighted, resulting in new buildings without significant improvement in general environmental conditions (GEN 5).~~

~~For such reasons, during the 1980s the council adopted, and made widely available, a series of development control policies. They secured a good level of public credibility, were generally supported by Inspectors through their appeal decisions and may therefore be judged to have struck the right balance between robustness and flexibility.~~

~~The Plan incorporates their essential elements and, accordingly shows a strong measure of continuity. Through this policy, it also recognises that it is important to look beyond normal standards, with or without relaxations, to ensure that the overall result is satisfactory. Standards are not available to measure all possibly relevant factors and, in any event, need to be applied with judgement (ie. appropriate weighting), according to the circumstances. Mere compliance with normally accepted standards will not necessarily guarantee an environmentally satisfactory development.~~

~~In implementing this policy the council will therefore expect compliance with the requirements of other relevant Plan Policies (in particular GEN 5 and GEN 8) and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes 5 to 9.~~

~~At the same time, this policy allows for the Council to pay proper regard to general environmental concerns, about issues such as proximity of dwellings to noisy roads and railway lines, sources of air borne pollution (including main roads) and high voltage transmission lines, as and when authoritative advice emerges.~~

~~**Equal Access Opportunities**~~

~~**GEN 3** In exercising its powers of control and enforcement as Local Planning Authority, the Council will ensure that proper consideration is given to the access and other needs of special groups in the community, such as elderly people, disabled people and adults in charge of small children, to the extent they are not met by obligations existing under other legislation.~~

~~There are many groups in society that have special needs. The Planning system can play a part in meeting these needs, as is acknowledged in PPG 1, which states "The development of the land and buildings provides the opportunity to secure a more accessible environment for everyone ..." The guidance encourages resolving problems through negotiation.~~

~~In larger developments (1000 m² or more gross floor space) the Council will expect developers to provide toilets suitable for both disabled people and general use, together with baby changing facilities available for use by parents of either sex, where premises will be open to the general public as customers or visitors. Such provision will also be encouraged in smaller developments to which the public will have access.~~

~~Local Planning authorities have a statutory duty to draw the attention of developers to the needs of the disabled (1990 Act, Section 76), but they can go further. The Council has used its powers to refuse permission to alter shop fronts in instances when the proposed means of access have not been to the appropriate standard, to good effect, and will, if necessary do so in the future (RET 6). Its standards for car parking (Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 7) also seek to ensure that approximately 5% of spaces are laid out and marked for use by the disabled.~~

~~It is a common experience that toilet provision for women is either totally lacking or inadequate, as a result of architects allocating the same physical areas as for men. A more enlightened approach is required, matched to likely demands.~~

~~Access requirements within sites and, in particular, buildings are governed in large measure by the Building Regulations. As time goes by, the scope of the Regulations is being extended to encompass a wider range of circumstances. The role of the Council as Local Planning Authority, therefore, is to encourage a comprehensive approach, to cover those needs for which the Buildings Regulations do not provide.~~

~~In the same light, Policy GEN 5 seek to encourage a better standard of housing design, including disabled people provision for wheelchair users.~~

~~**Security and Crime Prevention**~~

~~**GEN 4** The Council will encourage the adoption of best practice, to ensure that new built developments enjoy the benefits of natural surveillance and other strategies that can be designed into layouts to provide a sense of security and well-being, as well as to actively deter criminal activities, including vandalism.~~

~~As a general rule, such developments and changes of use should:~~

- ~~(i) provide means of enclosure chosen for their robustness, appearance, quality and security purpose;~~
- ~~(ii) utilise changes of road or pavement surface and other features to define gateways to more private areas, where natural surveillance will apply;~~

~~The role of Planning in limited criminal behaviour has been recognised since at least 1984, when Home Office Circular 1/84 was issued. PPG 1 confirms the relevance of good layout design and liaison with the police. The council will encourage developers to take appropriate advice before submitting applications and will continue its existing practice of referring larger schemes for police comments, as appropriate.~~

~~This policy provides a checklist of design parameters and practical measures which can be incorporated in developments from the outset. However, it also seeks to achieve a balance (as do the complementary policies GEN 5, GEN 12 and RET 6)~~

- (iii) ~~accommodate private vehicles within individual curtilages, or where they can be directly overlooked, and apply similar principles to car park design, including proper attention to lighting (GEN 12);~~
- (iv) ~~ensure that necessary through routes for pedestrians and cyclists are well-defined, direct, generous in width, suitably lit, overlooked by nearby houses or other premises, barriered to use by motorists and motor cyclists, enjoy through vision and do not provide hidden corners to encourage loitering (GEN 5);~~
- (v) ~~incorporate choices of trees and shrubs which contribute to security by their density of growth, hostility to climbing and natural suitability for the purpose (notably, thorny species);~~
- (vi) ~~adopt approaches to landscape design, including suitable temporary fencing, which are resistant to vandalism and do not lead to the present or future creation of hiding places for anti-social activities;~~
- (vii) ~~build in active security features, such as lighting and cameras (GEN 12), shutters (RET 6) and janitorial facilities commensurate with perceived problems, without causing unnecessary apprehension, loss of amenity, or encouragement of criminal activity through poor siting, inappropriate design or over-emphasis on such measures.~~

~~Whilst neighbourhood watch and similar schemes have a part to play, there are dangers attached to designing with only physical security in mind. Proper facilities for public transport within developments, good access for emergency and other services and spaces for healthy social contact (REC 2, GEN 6) are also important; directly and indirectly, they may provide the conditions in which crime, vandalism and other forms of antisocial activity are least likely to take hold. An unduly overt approach to bolt-on, deterrent security measures can create a ghetto-like atmosphere which, far from allaying concern, may actually invite the very bad behaviour that heavy shutters, loud alarms and stark security lights seem to anticipate.~~

~~Security is not necessarily well-served by erecting high concrete post and panel fences surmounted by coils of razorwire, even where such a choice is visually acceptable. A combination of railings and appropriate landscaping may provide better overall conditions for supervision of premises, as well as a more prestigious appearance.~~

~~*Design and Layout of New Housing*~~

~~GEN 5 In the case of estate developments, the Council will expect developers to make best use of existing site characteristics (climatic and otherwise), and should~~

- (i) ~~provide for pedestrian priority;~~
- (ii) ~~limit traffic speeds;~~
- (iii) ~~accommodate cyclists and buses;~~
- (iv) ~~wherever appropriate in relation to site conditions, meet the access requirements of disabled people;~~
- (v) ~~recognise the contribution of good layout design to domestic security;~~

~~PPG 1 (A6) and PPG 3 advise Councils to indicate their design expectations, safeguard local character and recognise the need for flexibility; planning should safeguard basic standards whilst allowing developers to respond to market demands.~~

~~The Council's Plan Objectives (5, 10 and 12) indicate that new developments, particularly those on larger sites, should be built to the highest possible specifications. As a general rule, developers have accepted the guideline standards introduced by the Council from the~~

- ~~(vi) ensure the overall scale and design of proposals are appropriate to the character of the area;~~
- ~~(vii) ensure separation for light and privacy;~~
- ~~(viii) make appropriate off-street provision for garaging and parking of cars;~~
- ~~(ix) make provision for incidental open space (see Policy GEN 6)~~

~~early 1980s onwards (GEN 3). However, some are still inclined to design down to minimum standards, treating them as maxima. This rather defeats the purpose of allowing reasonably exceptions, as part of a flexible response to particular circumstances, and has persuaded the Council that certain minimum standards should be raised.~~

~~In practice, more emphasis should be given to recognising the special characteristics of individual sites and, where necessary, the Council's formal powers will be exercised to ensure necessary survey information, including cross sections, is provided.~~

~~The increasing number of older people in the population, together with recognition of the needs of disabled people of all ages, the impact of care in the community and the obvious advantages to parents of small children, and others, of providing easy access, combine to make the case for designing housing for the most general possible use.~~

~~Policies GEN 1-3, GEN 4, GEN 9, GEN 11, TRA 3 and RES 2 are also relevant, together with ENV 4-5, ENV 7, ENV 9, ENV 11-13 and ENV 23-25, amongst others.~~

~~Further guidance and advice is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5.~~

Incidental Open Space Provision

GEN 6 As a general rule, residential developments of 40 or more dwellings, or on sites of 1.5 hectares or more, should provide incidental open space at the rate of 40 m² per unit, subject to a minimum of 0.15 hectares, to be laid out and maintained at the developer's expense.

Where garden sizes are generous and/or a site is reasonably close to existing facilities, nil provision may be acceptable if the developer is prepared to make an appropriate compensating contribution to the extension or enhancement of open space in the vicinity, whether by provision of land, direct funding of equipment or commuted payments.

Provision should normally be made in the form of one area, in a generally accessible location overlooked by nearby houses, to encourage natural surveillance and, so far as practicable, avoid nuisances caused when large numbers of children congregate.

Estate developments require informal recreation areas for the social benefit of all ages, from the very young to the very old, together with provision for the specific needs of children's play, in a secure environment.

Providing incidental open space also confers general amenity value, adding interest to the overall design and focal points for landscaping to complement gardens, adoptable highway verges and other open areas.

The intention is to ensure provision which strikes a balance between a variety of competing considerations, including existing provision, demand generated and plot sizes: small gardens may argue for greater communal provision, large gardens may more readily accommodate play activities without nuisance to neighbours. It is not the intention that communal open space provision should be made at the expense of usable garden space.

Landscaping strips and verges adoptable as part of the highway and leftover areas conveyed to or managed by householders should not normally be counted towards the basic provision. However, suitably treated, they may contribute to establishing an environment which justifies some abatement of it.

The guideline standard is based on provision at the rate of 8 m² per person on an average development of houses of five habitable rooms (ie. three bedrooms, maximum occupancy of five persons), assuming an average net density of 27 dwellings per hectare. The yardstick of 8 m² correlates with the National Playing Fields Association's standard of 0.8 ha per thousand population, referred to in PPG 17 and adopted for the purposes of REC 2: given the likelihood of existing provision, it allows a margin for informal recreation. It can also be applied to the housing mix to determine upward and downward variations (subject to the minimum of 0.15 ha).

For example, 40 smaller dwellings of four habitable rooms may warrant no more than the minimum 0.15 ha provision ($40 \times 4 \times 8 = 0.128$), whereas 40 larger dwellings of six habitable rooms may deserve rather more ($40 \times 6 \times 8 = 0.192$), subject to consideration of the local circumstances and the potential of smaller dwellings, in particular, to be extended.

Greater or lesser provision may be appropriate, depending on a variety of circumstances, such as:

(i) within the site

a high proportion of larger or smaller than average or specialised units, a preponderance of houses with rear gardens of above average length or a low net site density (dwellings per hectare);

If there is a significant relaxation in the open space requirement justified by this caveat, the Council may consider attaching to a planning permission a condition to restrict future change of use of such a building within the relevant use class.

(ii) immediate context

accessibility to existing large public open spaces and greenways open to the public (REC 2);

(iii) level of provision within the area

the extent to which the existing level of provision in the relevant Community Area meets the NPFA target of 0.8 ha per thousand population, without undue accessibility constraints.

Nil provision will not normally be acceptable unless the proposed net site density is at or below 20 dwellings per hectare or there is a surplus in the immediate area, based on the NPFA standard.

Related and neighbouring sites will be aggregated as appropriate, to ensure that the standard is applied fairly and consistently.

(Where a redevelopment site straddles an existing road, it follows that the road width should be included in calculating the relevant area.)

It is also intended to include sheltered accommodation that, on its own or in combination with family housing, exceeds the threshold. Such accommodation makes demands on general open space and also attracts visitors, including children.

In those cases where off-site provision is acceptable as an alternative, it is envisaged that a legal agreement will be negotiated. Viable arrangements will also be needed for open-site provision. Whether management is to be the responsibility of the developer, the residents collectively or transferred to the Council, a legal agreement will usually be necessary, to ensure that the open space remains an asset to the area and does not become a problematic liability.

In that connection, it is particularly important to avoid fragmented and marginalised areas, which are either of no real value or an actual cause of nuisance, whether through over-use or neglect.

~~*Institutional and Communal Uses*~~

~~GEN 7 The Council will expect proposals for the establishment or expansion of institutional or communal uses, in, or adjacent to primarily residential or mixed use areas, to comply with the following criteria, where relevant:~~

- ~~(i) institutional uses should be conveniently located for shops, services, community facilities and public transport, taking into account the needs of the occupiers, staff and visitors (including elderly and disabled relatives);~~
- ~~(ii) premises should be detached and large enough for the proposed purpose, with sufficient attached land or grounds to meet the expected needs of the occupiers, users or visitors, as the case may be, and to provide adequate separation from neighbouring houses;~~
- ~~(iii) alterations and extensions, including fire escapes, should complement the character and setting of existing buildings, both in scale and detailed design, and meet all the relevant standards for householder developments (GEN 8) but, on the other hand, should not result in undue loss of amenity space or parking areas;~~

~~The case for institutional uses in the countryside has to be made in terms of Green Belt Policy (GB 1.2), convenient access and proximity to facilities. This policy is concerned with such uses in the developed parts of the Borough, and applies in particular to nursing homes, residential care homes, retirement homes, hostels, refuges, retreats, day centres, children's nurseries and play groups~~

~~Although some institutional and day facilities will find a place close to shopping and employment centres, the natural place for many of them is in residential and mixed use areas. They may be run for profit, as a public service or by charities, but they are either essentially residential in character or, as in the case of day centres and children's nurseries, complementary to housing, in that they provide respite, recreational and play facilities which, ideally, should be within easy walking distance. Many of the same considerations apply as for the location, siting and design of sheltered housing.~~

~~Homes and hostels should be convenient for public transport and other facilities, so that those staying in homes can receive visitors and exercise some degree of independence, as~~

- (iv) ~~intended occupancy levels of institutions, usage levels of day facilities and the extent of any ancillary activities, such as the carrying out of surgical operations or provision of advisory services, should be consistent with road safety considerations, available on-site parking and servicing provision to the relevant standard (GEN 9), and the safeguarding of amenity in the affected locality;~~
- (v) ~~the amenity value of existing mature trees and gardens should be maintained;~~
- (vi) ~~extensions and parking areas should be carefully integrated, with complementary hard and soft landscaping appropriate to the character of the area;~~
- (vii) ~~signage levels, consistent with easy identification, advertisement of the available facilities and maintenance of local amenity, should not exceed 0.5 m² per road frontage;~~
- (viii) ~~taking into account unimplemented permissions, there should be no undue concentration of uses of a commercial character in otherwise residential frontages.~~

~~appropriate. The requirements of the relevant registration authority (the Health Authority for nursing homes, the Council for care homes) also have to be met.~~

~~Day facilities may have some potential to cause more disturbance and bunched arrivals and departures. However, subject to security, they are correspondingly quieter neighbours in the evenings and at weekends. They also perform a vital service in helping elderly people to continue living in the community, providing respite to carers, and so reducing the overall need for care homes. (Providing for children can also be an important link in the web of mutual support, depending on family circumstances).~~

~~Having regard to the provisions of the Use Classes Order, suitable properties for conversion need to be large enough and have sufficient grounds for the functional needs of the use, as well as to provide reasonable separation from surrounding houses, bearing in mind that first floor rooms in homes may double as bed-sitters and that fire escapes may be necessary.~~

~~In practice, this means that few post-1914 dwellings are eligible and that semi-detached houses are unsuitable, because of problems with noise transmission and difficulty in carrying out alterations and extensions without loss of amenity to neighbours. Buildings of less than 1,200 m³ are not usually adequate for institutional uses. Grounds should, as a rule, provide at least 10–15 m² space per person in occupation, net of parking and servicing areas.~~

~~Similar considerations arise where new building is involved. The policy sets out a number of requirements and limitations intended to minimise the commercial impact of such uses or their undue concentration in particular locations. As a general rule, the number of properties in a given frontage in any form of commercial use should not exceed 20% and those of an institutional character should, in any event, be separated by at least four dwellings/properties of 100 metres, whichever is the greater distance. However, a sensible exception to this guideline may be to allow two institutional uses side by side (bearing in mind the possibilities and benefits of common management, in some cases.~~

~~Having regard to the scope of the Use Classes Orders and traffic considerations, it may also be necessary to impose restrictions on changes of use, prevent separate or in-house staff accommodation being turned over to other purposes, limit occupancy/usage levels and restrict ancillary activities. It is, of course, open to the Council to challenge excessive advertisement displays by exercising its discontinuance powers.~~

~~Separate staff accommodation should meet all the relevant standards for a new dwelling (GEN 5).~~

~~A Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on Fire Escapes is available (SPG 1).~~

Householder Developments

GEN 8 The Council will expect householder developments to comply with the following requirements:

- (i) respect for the scale, design, character and appearance of the original dwelling in question;**
- (ii) respect for the character of its neighbours and local setting;**
- (iii) maintenance of reasonable standards of light and privacy for the dwelling in question and its affected neighbours (including, in both cases, garden privacy);**
- (iv) avoids unacceptable intrusiveness, overshadowing and dominance at close quarters in respect of both homes and gardens;**
- (v) adequate provision for motor cars and other common domestic needs, including outdoor pursuits, so as to maintain unimpeded visibility for all road users, the safe and free flow of traffic, pedestrian safety and appropriate levels of visual amenity.**

Extensions to dwellings and other domestic developments have a substantial effect on the local environment, as time goes by. They are also an important part of local business activity. However, if not properly controlled, they can compromise living conditions, spoil particular streets and damage the attractiveness of the area to wider investment.

The Borough contains many modern houses built to very modest standards, in terms of plot sizes and separation distances. Very often, once "permitted development" extensions and garaging requirements have been taken into account, there is little scope for further expansion. Even single-storey extensions can have a seriously detrimental effect on neighbours.

This policy is complemented by Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 6 which provides comprehensive guidelines for the benefit of householders and their advisers.

Some compromises are called for when dealing with older housing. However, it is important to consider the interests of whole blocks of terraced houses, not least when their backs are fortunate enough to be oriented towards the sun, before allowing any first floor rear extensions. As a rule, a systematic approach to all units in a block and, in particular, joint extensions undertaken by neighbours can ease many problems.

Special considerations may also arise in Green Belt locations and within or adjacent to Conservation Areas (GB 6, ENV 24B).

Satellite antennae are dealt with via GEN 11.

Parking and Servicing

GEN 9 ~~New development, including changes of use, will be required to make suitable provision for car parking or contribute to means to facilitate access to it, such as public transport, cycleways or pedestrian routes.~~

A ~~The exact requirement will vary according to specific circumstances and the Council will take the following into account:~~

- ~~(i) the Council's parking standards will provide the basis for negotiating provision. As a general rule, operational requirements will be kept to a minimum, and non-operational requirements will be interpreted as a maximum level of provision;~~
- ~~(ii) the extent to which the development can be reasonably and adequately served by alternative means of transport;~~
- ~~(iii) a reduction in car parking requirements will not be acceptable if this would result in a danger to public safety or demonstrable harm to residential amenity;~~
- ~~(iv) the car parking requirement should be satisfied within the curtilage of the development site;~~
- ~~(v) where the development is of significant scale and

 - ~~(a) it is inappropriate to require on-site parking, for example in urban centres where alternative parking exists, or~~
 - ~~(b) the development could be served by improvements to an identified alternative transport mode then, as an alternative to providing parking the Council will negotiate a planning obligation which may include a commuted payment towards the cost of one or more of public or shared parking, the improvement of public transport and the provision of cycle routes serving the site.~~~~

B ~~New developments, including changes of use, will also be required to make adequate provision for cycle parking.~~

~~PPG 13 has introduced the need for a far-reaching re-assessment of parking policy, opening up the possibility that requirements for provision of parking spaces might be reduced in circumstances where the potential exists for developments to be served by public transport.~~

~~This could take place in association with the securing of commuted payments from the beneficiaries of planning permissions, with the funds received being spent on implementation of public transport proposals and environmentally beneficial transport schemes included in the UDP.~~

~~The policy reflects PPG 13 guidance to discourage unnecessary use of private cars by establishing a graduated approach to any requirements for parking provision. The circumstances in which parking provision will be required are identified, and a distinction is drawn between 'operational parking' needs ie space required for cars regularly and necessarily involved in the operation of the business/use of particular buildings, and 'non-operational' needs, ie. space required for vehicles which do not necessarily have to be parked on site, (for example employee or visitor parking).~~

~~It is acknowledged that a review of car parking policy and standards will have to be carried out. Until such time as any new standards have been formulated, applications for planning permission will be determined in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy, and by reference to previously adopted parking standards as a basis for discussion and negotiation with developers. It is the intention that the previously adopted standards, which are contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 7, should be considered as maximum standards as recommended in PPG 13.~~

~~The Council will remain committed to ensuring that any relaxation of car parking requirements does not result in hazards to all road users and loss of amenity to residents, when parking spreads into the surrounding area.~~

~~Street parking adds to dangers by impairing visibility and places children and partially sighted people at risk, amongst others. Parking on footways and margin strips is also a serious nuisance; it creates problems for all pedestrians, including mothers with push chairs. Similarly, there are dangers associated with trying to park too many cars in front or side gardens, including vehicles overhanging footways and~~

~~difficulties in maintaining safe access to front doors. In addition, when any of these aspects get out of hand, residents suffer a loss of amenity because of arguments about rights to park and an outlook dominated by cars (GEN 5, GEN 8).~~

~~Streets must be kept reasonably clear for the passage of all classes of vehicles, including emergency vehicles, buses and drivers of peripatetic support services consequent upon increased emphasis on care in the community.~~

~~In those circumstances where a planning obligation and/or commuted payments is sought as part of a planning permission, there must be a clear mechanism or proposal in place to which the funding contribution is directed. The calculation of a commuted sum will be based on a sum equal to the current rate for provision of non-operational car parking which would otherwise be deemed necessary for the development to receive planning permission.~~

~~In accordance with the advice in PPG 6, the Council has produced an Implementation Strategy (1996) for St. Helens town centre which includes a strategy for car parking.~~

~~This involves:~~

- ~~(i) changing the balance of short and long stay parking to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport for particular journeys such as those to work and to give priority in the allocation of spaces to short term visitors to the town centre such as shoppers;~~
- ~~(ii) seeking a long term reduction in the number of public spaces available in the town centre;~~
- ~~(iii) commencing a comprehensive review of on-street parking and increased enforcement. It is the Council's intention to incorporate this Strategy into the UDP at the first opportunity.~~

Advertising in St. Helens

GEN 10 In considering any application for Advertisement Consent, including exercising its powers to require the periodic renewal of express consents, removal at the end of a fixed term and the discontinuance of existing displays, the Council will have regard to the Plan Objectives and take the following into account:

The Council recognises that advertising has a useful role to play in the commercial life of the Borough and the appearance of the built environment.

On the other hand, excessive advertising material can create the wrong impression, in terms of inward investment and the detrimental effects on local amenity. For such reasons, it is intended to continue the use of discontinuance powers in transport corridors and other locations where there is a problem (ENV 21).

Amenity

- (i) **advertisements should be compatible with the character of their surroundings, including the scale and detailing of any building against which they are seen, by reason of their size, siting, height above ground level, materials, colour and design;**
- (ii) **free-standing displays should be integrated with their surroundings by appropriate design and landscaping;**
- (iii) **advertisements on buildings should appear as an integral and not a dominant feature of the building;**
- (iv) **advertisements should not conflict with the character, appearance, architecture, setting or historical merits of Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings;**
- (v) **the advertisement should not lead to intrusive visual clutter;**
- (vi) **the advertisement should not prejudice the amenity of the occupiers of nearby dwellings or other buildings, either by reason of inappropriate design or means of illumination;**
- (vii) **in the right locations, (and in particular in relation to free-standing poster displays) whether advertisements can offer the opportunity to secure vitality and environmental benefits, by screening eyesores and redevelopment sites or providing a solution to the use of marginal land left by road works, albeit on a temporary basis where appropriate;**

Safety

- (viii) **the effect of the advertisement upon highway safety, the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport, including the safety of pedestrians;**
- (ix) **as advertisement should not impede the visibility of road users in the vicinity of junctions, accesses, bus stops and crossing points**

Telecommunications Apparatus

GEN 11 Planning permission will be granted for telecommunications developments provided that the following general principles are satisfied:

Government policy on advertisement control is contained in PPG 19, which recognises that the only factors to be taken into account in determining the acceptability of an advertisement, are the interests of amenity and public safety. The policy is structured to reflect these two considerations.

In some circumstances hoardings can make a useful contribution to improving the environment, for example by tidying vacant land in the short term with appropriate complementary landscaping. Poster displays will normally be unacceptable in open countryside and residential areas.

Further guidance on advertisement control in St. Helens is contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 8, 'Advertising in St. Helens'.

Government advice (PPG 8) asks Local Planning Authorities to take account of the strategic requirements of telecommunications networks and to recognise their special needs in preparing development plans.

- (i) **wherever possible, non-domestic apparatus should be sited within the urban areas;**
- (ii) **wherever possible, masts and towers should be shared and mounted apparatus should otherwise be grouped to minimise visual clutter;**
- (iii) **apparatus in the countryside and close to open land within the urban areas should normally either be sited so that it is out of sight of the general public or where the landform, buildings, established trees and opportunities for new woodland planting make it possible to ensure that views are masked or broken up;**
- (iv) **apparatus should normally be unobtrusive in relation to primary residential areas, areas of mixed use, Conservation Areas and the setting of Listed Buildings;**
- (v) **in areas frequented by the general public for their business, shopping and pleasure, apparatus should be out of sight from street level, so far as practicable;**
- (vi) **siting at ground level, with appropriate screening, is to be preferred to mounting on buildings or other structures;**
- (vii) **wall-mounted dishes and apparatus should be placed in the least obtrusive position possible, taking account of the architectural detailing of the building and its neighbours;**
- (viii) **dishes and antennae should not normally be placed above the highest part of the roof of a building, on chimneys or otherwise, except where they would be no more obtrusive than a conventional television aerial;**
- (ix) **apparatus, mountings and ancillary structures should be coloured in a durable finish appropriate to the background against which they will be seen, usually so as to merge into it.**

In exercising its powers of control and enforcement as Local Planning Authority, the Council will have regard to the wider benefits of telecommunications developments, the technical consideration which may limit the range of options available to operators providing important services, and the need to strike a sensible balance between operational demands and constraints. In addition to policies protecting the countryside from unnecessary and obtrusive developments (GB 2, GB 13, ENV 18-19), including inappropriate development on the edges of urban areas, it will apply the general principles contained in Policy GEN 11.

This policy is intended to provide guidelines for both commercial and domestic situations in a way that is sufficiently flexible to accommodate the rapid pace of technological change in this particular field. The Council acknowledges that modern telecommunications apparatus facilitates new choices in matters such as banking and working from home; established and new systems contribute in some part to cutting down the need to travel and thus should not be seen as inherently hostile to the environment.

The General Development Order provides opportunities to erect many facilities without reference to the Council, though in some cases there is a short notification period which allows for intervention where there is a significant amenity issue. Therefore, with respect to larger and more intrusive installations, where full control exists, it is appropriate to insist on the best possible arrangements. Indeed, it will be for operators to demonstrate that sharing of facilities and other solutions have been fully explored.

A variety of options exists for avoiding adverse visual impact, down to and including ground siting of equipment on nearby land and running the signal by cable to the reception point.

Special issues arise in relation to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. Separate Listed Building Consent will also normally be required for any apparatus on or within the curtilage of a Listed Building

The design and performance of dish aerials is improving, so that they are generally becoming smaller and generally less obtrusive. However, it remains necessary to ensure that domestic

Lighting and Security Apparatus

GEN 12 In exercising its powers of control and enforcement as Local Planning Authority, the Council will have regard to the available choice of lighting and security measures appropriate to the illumination and oversight of sports facilities, car parks, service areas and security compounds. So far as practicable consistent with their purposes, it will require the siting, height, design and colouring of columns and towers, together with their fittings, to be such as to limit their visual impact, glare, light spillage and actual or perceived intrusion on the privacy and general amenities of nearby occupiers.

installations and commercial installations close to houses are, so far as practicable, out of direct public view, out of the line of sight from principal windows and so positioned or treated as to avoid nuisance from glare.

It is acknowledged that technical consideration will mean it may not be possible to satisfy all of the relevant general principles listed in the policy in every case. Therefore, in such cases it will be necessary to come to a balanced judgment over whether the benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the perceived harm.

This policy is intended to complement GEN 4 and GEN 11, concerning general security and telecommunications apparatus, since there are common issues.

There is a trend towards provision of high intensity security lighting and security controls, mounted on high columns or towers for which planning permission is required.

A balance has to be struck between better operating conditions or security, on the one hand, and local amenity, on the other. Such installations can be associated with increased usage of sports facilities or longer working hours, with potential for general disturbance later in its day.

In any event, the direct effects need to be recognised. Glare from lights without cutoffs or baffles can be extremely intrusive and create a prison-like atmosphere which is offensive to local residents. Lights tripped by sensors may be even more disturbing.

Similarly, cameras designed to improve commercial security can give rise to concern that they will be improperly used to look into nearby houses, impairing their sense of security. However, loss of privacy in this way can be overcome by sensitive siting and building in mechanical stops to limit camera sweep.

A comprehensive approach to such matters, perhaps involving local residents, may identify simpler, cheaper and less intrusive solutions, whilst enhancing the general sense of well-being. For example, smaller lights at lower levels, mounted on buildings, may suffice. More generally, security installations represent a use of energy and source of general light pollution, which it is desirable to keep to the minimum (see also GEN 10).

Temporary Development

GEN 13 Planning permission for temporary developments will be granted on sites allocated for development in the Plan, or elsewhere, where:

- (i) the proposal will not prejudice the long term after-use of the site;
- (ii) the proposal complies with the Plan's other policies;
- (iii) the proposal is for a specified period.

Circumstances can arise where a temporary use of land may be appropriate even though this is not the same use as the plan allocation.

Examples might include temporary play facilities, car parks, temporary housing while refurbishment is in progress and so on. The Council will adopt a positive and flexible approach to such circumstances, so long as the proposal is consistent with the Plan's overall aims and policies.

Backland and Tandem Development

GEN 14 Planning permission for backland development will be permitted subject to satisfying all of the following criteria:

- (i) safe vehicular access, whether shared or otherwise, should be available;
- (ii) adequate provision should be made for normal servicing requirements, such as refuse collections;
- (iii) use of the access should not cause unreasonable disturbance or loss of privacy to existing dwellings or their gardens
- (iv) the site should be large enough to accommodate one or more dwellings of a size and type reasonably appropriate to the character of the area, having regard to plot size;
- (v) appropriate standards of light, privacy (including garden privacy) and security should be achieved in respect of both the existing and proposed dwellings and, in particular, should be such as to ensure that large gables do not dominate houses and gardens at close quarters;
- (vi) where land is being severed, adequate space should be retained to ensure satisfactory provision for the servicing, garaging/parking and garden needs of existing houses;
- (vii) the development should not cause undue loss of trees of public amenity value or otherwise be detrimental to the residential character of the locality;
- (viii) the scheme should not prejudice development of neighbouring land or frustrate a more appropriate form of development in association with such land.

Backland and tandem development, as opposed to the comprehensive development of backland, is normally taken to refer to the building of one, two or three dwellings behind existing dwellings (directly behind, in the case of tandem development) served by a private drive, whether existing or specially provided for the purpose. It includes the development of severed garden land which does not enjoy direct frontage access (which would otherwise be classed as infilling or rounding off) and the conversion of coach-houses and other such buildings on backland.

This policy does not necessarily preclude the development of pockets of backland on an ad hoc basis provided the requirements identified are satisfied.

GREEN BELT POLICIES

General Criteria for Development Control in the Green Belt

GB 1 (a) New Buildings
New buildings within the Green Belt will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances, unless it is for the following purposes:

- (i) **agricultural and forestry (unless permitted development rights have been withdrawn) - see Policy GB 9;**
- (ii) **essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, and other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it (see Policies S1 and GB 10);**
- (iii) **limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings (see Policy GB 6 and GB 6A)**
- (iv) **limited infilling or redevelopment of specified major existing developed sites (see Policy GB 3).**

(b) Mining Operations and Other Developments

Planning permission for mineral extraction, engineering and other operations and material changes in the use of land will not be permitted unless the proposal:

- (i) **does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt;**
- (ii) **maintains openness;**
- (iii) **so far as possible, contributes to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in the Green Belt;**
- (iv) **in the case of mining operations, high environmental standards must be maintained and the site be well restored.**

GB 2 **Subject to the provisions of Policy GB 1, development in the Green Belt will be judged against the following criteria:**

- (i) **it is appropriate in terms of its siting, scale, design, materials and landscaping and does not detract from the appearance and openness of the Green Belt;**

In the Green Belt there will be very strict control, in accordance with national policy, which establishes a general presumption against inappropriate development defined in para 3.2 of PPG 2 as development which is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt. An applicant seeking planning permission will therefore have to demonstrate that very special circumstances exist why it should be granted unless the proposal falls within the categories defined in Policy GB 1. It should not be assumed that it will be possible to demonstrate such special circumstances in every instance. Any application to be permitted on grounds of very special circumstances must first be referred to the Secretary of State as a departure from the development plan.

With regard to Policy GB 1(ii), only facilities of an essentially rural character will be acceptable, such as playing fields. This would normally exclude a facility such as a football stadium, which is essentially urban in character.

In all cases, the onus will be on the developer to prove the case for development. For example, PPG 21 indicated tourism development is not a good reason for relaxing the general restraint on development in the Green Belt and all proposals will have to meet the requirements of GB 2.

Minerals can be worked only where they are found. The development need not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, so long as high environmental standards are maintained. In applying this policy the Council will take account of the existing environmental quality of the site, the methods of working and restoration proposals.

This policy is intended to give further clarification of the general approach to applications for development in the Green Belt and the criteria for safeguarding the value of the Green Belt as an amenity.

- (ii) it will not generate so much traffic as to cause nuisance or danger nor require any major improvements to rural roads;
- (iii) it does not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt;
- (iv) it will not conflict with other objectives for the use of land within the Green Belt (see Policy S1A), and wherever appropriate, will make a positive contribution to their achievement.

~~Major Existing Developed Sites in the Green Belt~~

~~GB 3 Limited infilling or redevelopment of the major existing developed site listed below and shown on the Proposals Map will be permitted subject to the criteria below, and the additional requirements of any site specific policy;~~

~~Bold Industrial Estate, Neills Road~~

~~Infilling should:~~

- ~~(i) have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt than the existing development;~~
- ~~(ii) not exceed the height of the existing buildings;~~
- ~~(iii) not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site;~~

~~Redevelopment should:~~

- ~~(i) have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land in it, and where possible have less;~~
- ~~(ii) contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in the Green Belt (see Policy S1);~~
- ~~(iii) not exceed the height of the existing buildings;~~
- ~~(iv) not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings (unless this would achieve a reduction in height which would benefit visual amenity);~~

Subject to satisfying the criteria in Policy GB 2, consideration will also be given to the extent to which proposed industrial or commercial developments, including extensions, are essential to the continuation of an existing industrial or commercial enterprise and the importance of the contribution they would make to the economic development of the Borough.

~~Annex C of PPG 2 Revised acknowledges that there are major developed sites in the Green Belt which pre-date the Green Belt designation. It is recognised in the guidance that infilling and/or redevelopment of such sites can help to secure jobs and prosperity without prejudicing or adding to the impact on the openness of the Green Belt. Policy GB 3 therefore identifies one site in the Green Belt where infilling/ redevelopment is acceptable in principle.~~

~~In applying Policy GB 3, the following considerations will apply:~~

- ~~(i) the relevant area for the purposes of (iv) is the aggregate ground floor area of the existing buildings ("the footprint"), excluding temporary buildings, open space with direct external access between wings of a building, and areas of hardstanding;~~
- ~~(ii) the character and dispersal of proposed redevelopment will need to be considered as well as its footprint. The location of the new buildings should be decided having regard to the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts, the main features of the landscape, and the need to integrate the new development with its surroundings;~~

- ~~(iii) the site will be considered as a whole, whether or not all the buildings are to be redeveloped;~~
- ~~(iv) proposals will be considered in the light of all material considerations, including visual amenity and the traffic and travel implications of redevelopment~~

Dwellings for Key Agricultural and Forestry Workers

GB 4 Applications for new dwellings to accommodate key agricultural and forestry workers will only be permitted where:

- ~~(i) it can be demonstrated that there is an overriding operational requirement for the worker to live close to the workplace;~~
- ~~(ii) it can be demonstrated that reasonable steps have been taken to find suitable accommodation within the locality, including nearby settlements, and that no such accommodation is available;~~
- ~~(iii) the siting of the dwelling is convenient to the source of the employment and is well related to existing farm buildings or other dwellings;~~
- ~~(iv) the dwelling is commensurate in size with the agricultural or forestry needs of the enterprise;~~
- ~~(v) and the development otherwise meets the requirements of Policy GB 2 and the functional requirements of the enterprise.~~

~~Where fully satisfied in all these respects, the Council will normally impose an occupancy condition in terms such as the following and may, where appropriate, also seek a legal agreement to like effect: "The occupation of the dwelling shall be limited to a person solely, mainly employed, or last employed, in the locality in agriculture as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, or in forestry, or a dependent of such a person residing with him or her, or a widow or widower and, for the avoidance of doubt, the locality shall include any place of employment within a radius of five kilometres from the dwelling".~~

As a general rule, an application for a new dwelling must demonstrate that there is a real need for the dwelling to be built in the Green Belt because of an overriding employment consideration requiring residence in the immediate locality, (see PPG 7, Annex E). Supporting evidence from recognised agricultural consultants will normally be required. The activity giving rise to the need for the dwelling should be viable and capable of being sustained for at least ten years. Very often it is appropriate to proceed by way of temporary accommodation, in the first instance (see PPG 7 and GB 11).

The purpose of Policy GB 4 (iii) is to ensure that the siting of new dwellings is visually acceptable and is not detrimental to the appearance of the Green Belt.

The definition of locality in the proposed occupancy condition is not intended to be inflexible, although the wording has been supported on appeal. The wording is intended to avoid ambiguity and may, in certain circumstances, be varied or omitted in recognition of the implications of a particular siting.

Redundant Occupancy Conditions

- GB 5** The Council will be prepared to remove agricultural occupancy conditions if justified, having regard to:
- (i) the nature and method of farming in the vicinity;
 - (ii) the proximity of settlements and similarly restricted dwellings;
 - (iii) the extent to which the operational need which gave rise to the original permission for the dwelling is no longer applicable having regard to current and foreseeable needs in the area as a whole; and
 - (iv) the length of time which has elapsed since the condition was imposed.

In order for the Council to be satisfied that the condition is genuinely redundant, it will be necessary for an application to be accompanied by:

- (a) a reasoned statement in support, normally from recognised agricultural consultants; and
- (b) evidence that the property has been advertised as a dwelling with an occupancy restriction, at regular intervals over at least a 12 month period, or such period as may be agreed with the Council, in both local and agricultural trade papers at a justifiable asking price, having regard to the effect of the occupancy condition on market value, and that there have been no genuine offers received.

There are a number of dwellings in the Green Belt which have existing agricultural occupancy conditions, some of which date back to the 1940s. The increase in farm diversification and the decrease in farm labour employment are likely to lead to an increase in applications to remove such restrictions. Policy GB 5 sets out the criteria against which the Council will judge such applications. As a general rule, the Council consider that there are unlikely to be justifiable grounds to consider the removal of an occupancy condition until at least 10 years have elapsed.

Agricultural advice on behalf of applicants may also be submitted by other persons whose qualifications and competence are agreed by the council. In all cases, those providing advice should state their credentials.

Alterations and Extensions to Existing Dwellings

- GB 6** Alterations and extensions to existing dwellings in the Green Belt may be permitted, provided that they satisfy all of the following criteria:
- (i) the building is structurally sound or can be made so without partially rebuilding or otherwise losing the identity and character of the original;
 - (ii) their scale, design and materials are appropriate to the character of the original and its setting;

Provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, the extension or alteration of dwellings is not inappropriate in Green Belts. In dealing with alterations and extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt, the Council is concerned to ensure that there is a continuity in style and that refurbishments inappropriate to a rural setting are avoided.

For the purposes of this policy, the original dwelling is defined as it was at 1st July 1948, or when first built, if erected at a later date.

- (iii) **general compliance with the Plan's policies for householder developments, (GEN 8) including proper garaging of cars, in the interests of safeguarding rural amenity;**
- (iv) **in the case of larger extensions, appropriate landscaping (screen walls, planting) is incorporated in the scheme from the outset;**
- (v) **the scale of extensions is in keeping with the plot size, there being sufficient curtilage around the dwelling to accommodate normal domestic activities (including any vehicles to be parked in the open) without undue detriment to its setting.**

Where appropriate, conditions will be used to make it clear that the separate occupation of large extensions, including detached outbuildings, is not permitted.

Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt

GB 6A Replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt may be permitted provided that:

- (i) **the new dwelling is not materially larger than the dwelling it replaces;**
- (ii) **the design and materials are appropriate to its setting.**

It is recognised that, in some circumstances, the replacement of existing dwellings may be desirable, for example if it maintains the character of a settlement or as a contribution to affordable housing. Government guidance recognises that the replacement of existing dwellings need not be inappropriate development

Policy GB 6A sets out the matters which will be taken into consideration.

In applying the policy, the Council will be particularly concerned to ensure that where the dwelling proposed for replacement contributes to the quality of its setting in the Green Belt, then this will be safeguarded through careful and sympathetic design, including where appropriate the re-use of existing materials or their replacement by a modern equivalent.

Change of Use of Existing Buildings

GB 7 The change of use of existing buildings in the Green Belt will be permitted provided:

- (i) **the proposal satisfies the criteria contained in GB 2;**
- (ii) **it does not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;**
- (iii) **the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and are capable of conversion without major or complete reconstruction;**

Many buildings exist in the Green Belt which can usefully be converted to other uses. The majority, but not all, of these will be redundant agricultural buildings which are attractive and their retention is necessary if the character and visual amenity of the Green Belt is to be maintained and enhanced. In these circumstances, sympathetic conversion to alternative uses is preferable to gradual dilapidation and demolition. Conversion of buildings also provides an opportunity to foster diversification of the rural economy, which is encouraged by Strategic Guidance and PPG 2.

- (iv) **proposals for the relocation of any residual activities are consistent with Green Belt objectives and the countryside setting;**
- (v) **the new use is compatible with its immediate neighbours in terms of general environmental considerations;**
- (vi) **the proposal as a whole, including any alterations, is not detrimental to the contribution which the building makes to its surroundings;**
- (vii) **there is no conflict with obligations to safeguard protected animals and birds;**
- (viii) **any necessary off-site access improvements, inclusive of passing places, can be provided to the appropriate standard, together with any necessary compensating works to make good lost hedgerows, walls and other features of ecological and/or visual merit;**
- (ix) **public utility services can be provided without detriment to the appearance of the countryside; and**
- (x) **sufficient space is available for parking, surfacing and amenity purposes, without encroachment into surrounding fields or risk of danger to landscape features of ecological and/or visual importance.**

Of course, not all buildings are suitable for re-use, for structural and other reasons. Some are not available for re-use at all, or to their full potential, because they are occupied by protected birds and other animals, such as owls and bats (see ENV 9). However, their retention as refuges may make it possible to permit new uses of other buildings in the same locality. The same is true of more ruinous buildings not capable of re-use which are not necessarily unsightly. On the other hand, some prefabricated structures are ugly and, wherever possible, should be removed.

Change of Use of Existing Buildings into Dwellings

GB 8 **Conversion of existing buildings into dwellings in the Green Belt will be permitted where all of the following criteria are satisfied:**

- (i) **The proposal satisfies the general criteria contained in Policy GB 7;**
- (ii) **the building is in sound condition and large enough to provide usable accommodation without substantial reconstruction of the main external walls and roof and substantial extensions or raising of the roof, or loss of features of internal architectural, historic or intrinsic interest, the onus being on the developer to provide evidence of structural stability and a full survey of the building as existing;**

This policy is directed at the specific issue of the conversion of existing buildings (especially those of agricultural origin) into dwellings.

In order to further safeguard the character of such buildings, and the appearance of the Green Belt, conditions will normally be attached to maintain control over future extensions and, where appropriate, outbuildings and other alterations.

- (iii) the main external walls and roof have sufficient existing openings (including any previously blocked up which are possible to reuse without loss of character) to accommodate windows and doors so as to permit conversion without loss of identity, provided that, in the absence of good reasons to the contrary, the total door and window areas, less rooflights, may be increased by up to 25%;
- (iv) the outward appearance of the main elevation of the building, viewed in its setting, is substantially unaltered in terms of form and openings, provided that, where a free-standing building is exposed on both main elevations, one may be altered within the terms of the criteria in (iii), subject to the provision of suitable means of enclosure or (off-site) landscape screening;
- (v) total extensions do not exceed 25% of the original ground floor area, defined by the main walls (measured externally), no allowance being made for demolished floorspace;
- (vi) detailing is in accordance with the building tradition and materials of the original building;
- (vii) free-standing garages are designed in accordance with the building tradition of the original building and executed in identical harmonising materials;
- (viii) garden yard areas and exposed secondary elevations are screened with brick or stone walls, all-timber fences of appropriate specification and/or (off-site) tree belts of native species, as existing, made good, supplemented or to be provided.

Agricultural Permitted Development

GB-9 ~~When granting permission for the use of agricultural buildings for non-agricultural uses, agricultural permitted development rights may be withdrawn in respect of the particular agricultural unit or holding~~

PPG 2 Revised indicates that when granting permission for the use of agricultural buildings for non-agricultural purposes, local planning authorities should consider whether proliferation of farm buildings constructed under permitted development rights could have a seriously detrimental effect on the openness of the Green Belt. In granting permissions for conversions, the Council will consider the use-

of Policy GB 9 and will be guided by the advice in PPG 2 Revised that any condition withdrawing permitted development rights should be used with great care, and must fairly and reasonably relate to the proposed development

Recreational Developments

- GB 10** ~~Applications for the development of new outdoor recreational or sports facilities, or extensions to existing facilities, will be assessed with regard to the general criteria for development in the Green Belt and the following specific criteria:~~
- ~~(i) the retention of open breaks between settlements;~~
 - ~~(ii) the extent to which proposals would reduce conflicts between urban and rural uses;~~
 - ~~(iii) the effect on agricultural land and the quality of the landscape; and~~
 - ~~(iv) environmental impact.~~

~~Whilst open recreational uses, such as golf courses and parks, are generally appropriate in the Green Belt, it is likely that there will be increasing pressure for developments in the Green Belt, which are related more to buildings, such as public houses, hotels and restaurants. The changing agricultural economy means that pressures for such developments in St. Helens are likely to increase. Whilst, in general terms, the Council wishes to support new enterprises which would benefit local needs and tourism, the quality and amenity of the Green Belt must be protected. Policy GB 10 sets out general criteria against which all proposals for recreational uses will be assessed.~~

~~The onus of proof rests with developers to show that a Green Belt location is necessary and that appropriate provision cannot be made by conversion of existing buildings or appropriate expansion of existing facilities.~~

Residential Caravans

- GB 11** Applications for the siting of residential caravans in the Green Belt will be considered in the same way as proposals for the erection of permanent dwellings.

Some people prefer to live permanently in caravans. However residential caravans require the same services, water, sewerage and electricity as ordinary houses and they should be within easy reach of schools, shops and community services. Applications for the siting of residential caravans should be considered in the same way as proposals for the erection of permanent dwellings. However, this is without prejudice to the occasional use of appropriately sited temporary accommodation for key workers, pending release of existing accommodation or new provision for the needs of a particular enterprise (See GB 4).

Development Adjoining the Green Belt

- GB 12** ~~In considering applications for development on land adjoining the Green Belt, the Council will have special regard to the risk of subsequent encroachment and its effect on the visual amenity of the open countryside and, in appropriate circumstances, will require that suitable schemes of planting and boundary treatment are carried out.~~

~~There have been instances in the Borough where development outside the Green Belt has had a detrimental impact on the functions of the Green Belt and the amenities of the countryside. Policy GB 12 seeks to ensure that urban fringe development complements, rather than detracts from, the amenity of the Green Belt. It is particularly important to define suitable boundaries by fencing and/or landscaping. This complements the amenity of the Green Belt, avoids untidy edges and will assist in preventing encroachment.~~

~~Circumstances where this could arise include industrial developments with external storage and turning areas as well as opportunities for permitted development. While any encroachment into the Green Belt could be unintentional and would be subject to enforcement action, the policy is intended to prevent such problems from arising in the first place.~~

ECONOMY

Introduction

This chapter contains the Plan's allocation of sites for economic development and the Council's policy for encouraging the development of tourism.

The allocation satisfies the requirements of Part 1 policies S2 Provision of Land for Economic Development and S3 Priority Locations for Economic Development.

The Council considers it important to raise the standard of existing and new industrial estate development in the Borough. Design requirements are set out in Policy GEN 1 and GEN 2.

Economic Development Land Allocation

ECON 1 In accordance with Part 1 Policy S2 the following sites are allocated, or have planning permission, for economic development. Planning permission will be granted on the allocated sites for the class of development indicated subject to normal site considerations. Only sites over 0.4 ha are listed and shown on the Proposals Map, with the exception of the Sutton Village Inset Map.

Sufficient industrial and commercial land is allocated to provide a wide choice of site by size, location and suitability for different uses.

The construction of the M62 Link Road introduces a significant new opportunity to improve the distribution of economic development and reduce the impact of industrial development in residential areas. It is for this reason that the previous industrial allocations on a number of sites in Area 6 are not being carried forward in the Plan. This approach is also being applied to a site in Area 1 at Vista Road. All such sites are listed in Schedule 1.

Sites indicated with an * have the benefit of a current planning permission. In the event of the existing permissions lapsing, subsequent development proposals on these sites will be considered in accordance with relevant policies. Alternative economic land uses compatible with surrounding uses will normally be acceptable in principle.

For those sites being allocated for development, it is considered that planning policies must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that advantage is taken of opportunities which arise. For this reason, alternative acceptable uses are suggested for a number of sites. Where more than one use is proposed, a mixed use scheme involving all or some of the uses will usually be acceptable.

Proposed uses not specified will be considered in accordance with the policies contained within the Plan.

Sites in close proximity to residential areas will be restricted to uses which would not have a detrimental effect on residential amenity.

<i>Schedule 1</i>		
<i>De-allocated Industrial Sites</i>		
<i>Sub-Area</i>	<i>Industrial Sites</i>	<i>Area (ha)</i>
1	Vista Road	4.22
6	Worsley Brow	3.19
6	West of Morris Street/south of Helsby Street	0.26
6	East of Sutton Road/west of Morris Street	0.27
6	Bentinck Street	0.58
6	East of Morris Street	0.26

Proposals for development of these de-allocated sites will be considered in relation to the policies of the Plan and with particular attention being given to the environmental impact on adjoining sites. Several of the Area 6 sites may be suitable for residential use, subject to consideration of the views of the Health and Safety Executive (Policy ENV 28).

In addition to the above, Bold Power Station (Area 6) is allocated in the Plan for environmental enhancement and residential development, whereas in the Sutton Local Plan it has a presumption in favour of industrial development.

The Highways Agency has indicated that it is concerned to ensure that development on sites in the Southern Corridor and off the East Lancashire Road (A580) is not detrimental to the safety and free flow of traffic using trunk roads. In accordance with advice contained in PPG 13, a Traffic Impact Assessment, to a specification agreed by the Highways Agency, will be required in relation to the following sites.

2Ec1, 2Ec2, 2Ec3, 2Ec4, 2Ec5, 2Ec6, 2Ec9, 2Ec11, 2Ec12, 4Ec1, 4Ec2, 4Ec3, 5Ec1(a), 5Ec1(b), 5Ec3, 5Ec4, 5Ec5, 5Ec7, 5Ec8.

Assessments will be required to identify whether or not development proposals are acceptable in traffic terms, and to ascertain the necessity for incorporating highway improvement works to protect the safe and efficient operation of the all-purpose trunk roads and motorways.

Reference should be made to Policy ENV 30 which sets out the Council's requirements to satisfy various drainage matters in consultation with the Environment Agency.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT LAND ALLOCATION

Site Ref.	Name	Area (Ha)	Acceptable Uses	Uses Granted
AREA 1 - NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS				
1Ec1	* Sankey Valley Industrial Park	2.18	B1, B2, B8	B2, B8
1Ec2	Sankey Valley Industrial Park	2.09	B1, B2, B8	
1Ec3	* Site of 67-151 Earle Street	0.61	B1	Childrens Day Nursery on 0.06ha
AREA 2 - HAYDOCK AND BLACKBROOK				
2Ec1	* Land north-east of Sainsburys Dist. Depot , Haydock	2.37	B1, B2, B8	B1,B2,B8
2Ec2	Land east of Sainsburys Dist. Depot, Haydock	6.11	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec3	Land at Millfield Ln/Haydock Ln	0.90	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec4	Land east of Millfield Ln, Haydock	0.80	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec5	Haydock Lane	1.84	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec6	North Florida Road	2.85	A1 (non-food) B1, B2, B8	
2Ec7	Land north-west of North Florida Road	1.31	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec8	Kenyons Lane	0.73	B1, B8	
2Ec9	Land north of Kilbuck Ln	3.57	B1, B2, B8	B2, B8
2Ec10	* Land south-west of Kilbuck Ln	0.95	B1, B2, B8	B1,B2,B8
2E11	Kilbuck Lane	2.62	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec12	Old Boston/Wilcock Rd	6.85	B1, B2, B8	
2Ec13	Land north of The Parks, Lodge Ln	1.35	B1, B8	1 House
2Ec14	Land west of Piele Rd	2.65	B1, C1	
AREA 3 - RAINFORD, BILLINGE & MOSS BANK				
3Ec1	* Land east of Mill Ln, Rainford	0.51	B1	B1
3Ec2	* Land south -west of Sandwash Close, Rainford	7.20	B1, B2, B8	B1,B2,B8
AREA 4 - ST. HELENS WEST				
4Ec1	Land west of Scafell Rd	1.00	B1, B2, B8	
4Ec2	Land to south of Washway Ln and east of City Rd	15.14	B1, B2, B8 Retail (1000 m ² gross max) Car-related uses	
4Ec3	* Land north-east of Washway Lane	2.54	B1, B2, B8 Other service facilities	

Site Ref.	Name	Area (Ha)	Acceptable Uses	Uses Granted	
AREA 5 - SOUTHERN CORRIDOR					
5Ec1(a) *	Land at Lea Green Farm	25.64	B1, B2	B1,B2 Motorists facilities	
5Ec1(b)	Land at Lea Green Farm	12.8	B1, B2		
5Ec2	Land at rear of Reality furniture east of Lea Green Road	2.54	B1, B2, B8	B1,B2,B8 Petrol Station	
5Ec3 *	Land to east of M62 Link, south of Lea Green Industrial Estate	4.92	B1, B2, B8		
5Ec4	Land to east of M62 Link/north of Lea Green Industrial Estate	9.53	B1, B2, B8		
5Ec5	Former Lea Green Colliery	13.44	B1, B2, B8		
5Ec6	Land off Delphwood Drive	2.29	B1, B2, B8		
5Ec7	The Score	8.92	B1, B2, B8		
5Ec8	Land off	Land off Burtonhead Rd (Ravenhead Pk)	16.91	B1, B2, B8	B1
5Ec9		Land at Stoney Lane Industrial Estate (West) Rainhill	0.96	B1, B2, B8	
5Ec10 *	Former Rainhill Hospital	3.54	B1		
AREA 6 - PARR, SUTTON & BOLD					
6Ec1	North of Bedford Street	0.55	B1, B2, B8	B1,B2,B8	
6Ec2	Land south of Fleet Lane	0.98	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec3	Land north of Webb St/south of Sutton Rd	0.49	B1		
6Ec4	Land south of Webb St/east of Baxters Ln	1.30	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec5	Land west of Lancots Ln (north of Hays Chemical Plant)	1.73	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec6	Land east of Baxters Ln (south of Hays Chemical Plant)	1.84	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec7 *	Land between Lancots Ln and Ellamsbridge Rd (former Sidac site)	7.31	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec8	Nook Lane	1.51	B1		
6Ec9	Rolling Mill Ln	1.96	B1		
6Ec10	Land at Penlake Industrial Estate	1.15	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec11	Land north of Reginald Road	1.58	B1		
6Ec12	Land at Abbotsfield Rd. Industrial Estate (north of Gateway)	0.43	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec13	Land off Brindley Road	1.01	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec14	Land at Abbotsfield Rd Industrial Estate (east of Gateway)	0.95	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec15	Land at Abbotsfield Rd Industrial Estate (north of TAC)	1.30	B1, B2, B8		
6Ec16	Land at Abbotsfield Rd Industrial Estate (south of TAC)	1.79	B1, B2, B8	B8	
6Ec17 *	Land at Abbotsfield Rd Industrial Estate (east of TAC)	1.00	B1, B2, B8		

Site Ref.	Name	Area (Ha)	Acceptable Uses	Uses Granted
SUTTON VILLAGE INSET (SHOWN ON INSET MAP)				
SEV1	Land at St. Helens Junction, Station Road	0.66	B1, B8	
SVE2	* Land at junction of Helena Road/Normans Road	0.09		Car Park Office

~~*Development of Tourism*~~

~~ECON 2 The Council will normally consider favourably development proposals which would encourages tourist visits to St. Helens, such as:~~

- ~~(i) development of visitor attractions and accommodation;~~
- ~~(ii) improved access;~~
- ~~(iii) protection and enhancement of environmental resources (subject to other relevant Policies in the Plan, eg. REC 5 (ii) and REC 6)~~

~~Development proposals which would have a detrimental effect on existing or potential tourist facilities will normally be refused.~~

~~St. Helens is not a traditional tourist area. However, the Council considers there is scope to encourage visitors to the Borough and thus broaden its economic base. This is consistent with Strategic Guidance, which identifies the development of tourism as being important for Merseyside, in relation to urban regeneration, PPG 21 on Tourism and the Regional Tourism Strategy as contained in the document "Building on Success". The development of the World of Glass visitor attraction is an example of the style of tourist development which the Council wish to encourage. Whilst ECON 2 seeks to encourage tourist related development, planning applications will also be judged against all other relevant policies in the Plan, particularly the Green Belt and General Policies.~~

~~Several of the other policies in the Plan will assist the growth of tourist visits, in particular:~~

ENV 10	The Mersey Forest
ENV 22	The St. Helens Canal
REC 5	Strategic Footpaths and Cycleways
REC 6	Key Recreation Areas

RETAILING

Retail Development in Existing Centres

RET 1 Retail development and associated service uses in, or immediately adjacent to, an established shopping centre as shown on the Proposals Map and listed in Schedule 2 will be permitted, subject to there being no conflict with other Plan proposals and policies and provided that, in particular, the following criteria are all satisfied:

- (i) the site enjoys good access to the highway network and is capable of satisfactorily accommodating the estimated peak flows of traffic, including heavy goods vehicles;
- (ii) the layout provides adequate car parking, cycle parking and servicing arrangements that comply with Policy GEN 9 and is conveniently located in relation to public transport and pedestrian routes; and the scheme will not result in harmful environmental effects or undue loss of amenity to local residents.

The concentration of new retail development within existing centres (see Schedule 2) is the approach identified in Part 1, Policy S5 and endorsed by Regional Planning Guidance. Within this policy framework however, the Council considers that it is necessary to have a set of criteria against which to assess development proposals, in order to ensure that proper standards of highway safety are maintained, that they are truly sustainable in location and that residential amenity is protected.

Schedule 2 - Shopping Centres

1. St. Helens Town Centre shopping area
2. Earlestown Town Centre
3. Local Shopping Centres:
 - (i) Main Street, Billinge
 - (ii) Boundary Road, West Park
 - (iii) Chain Lane Shopping Precinct, Haresfinch
 - (iv) Chancery Lane, Parr Stocks
 - (v) Clipsley Lane, Haydock
 - (vi) Clock Face Road between 103/111
 - (vii) Walmesley Road, Eccleston
 - (viii) Higher Parr Street, Fingerpost
 - (ix) Four Acre Lane, Marshalls Cross
 - (x) Cambridge Road, Newtown
 - (xi) High Street, Newton-le-Willows
 - (xii) Church Road/Ormskirk Road, Rainford
 - (xiii) Warrington Road, Rainhill
 - (xiv) Peckershill Road/Junction Lane, Sutton Village
 - (xv) Elephant Lane/Thatto Heath Road, Thatto Heath

The local centres contained in Schedule 2 are identified on the Proposals Map in a diagrammatic manner only, ie. definitive boundaries are not shown. Where there is more than one concentration of shops, additional symbols are used.

~~Out of Centre Retail Development~~

~~RET 2 Any proposal for large-scale retail development outside an existing centre will be considered against the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) it makes a positive contribution to the economic and environmental improvement of the urban areas and does not undermine the plan strategy;~~
- ~~(ii) it is not located within the Green Belt;~~
- ~~(iii) it will not cause significant harm to the viability and vitality of any shopping centre identified in Schedule 2 and shown on the Proposals Map, or in adjacent authority areas, through the diversion of trade and/or deterrence of investment;~~
- ~~(iv) it is readily accessible by both public and private transport;~~
- ~~(v) evidence that a sequential approach to site selection has been adopted which demonstrates firstly, that no suitable town centre sites are available, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres;~~
- ~~(vi) there is no significant harmful environmental effects or undue loss of amenity to neighbouring residential areas and the surrounding locality;~~
- ~~(vii) the proposal will have good access to the highway network capable of satisfactorily accommodating the estimated peak flow of traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, and provide adequate car parking and servicing (GEN 9); and~~
- ~~(viii) the effect on overall traffic patterns~~

~~Strategic Guidance states that existing town centres should continue to be the main focus for the provision of shopping facilities within the Borough. St. Helens and Earlestown town centres have already received substantial investment and there is a need to ensure that maximum use is made of the existing infrastructure. Shopping is the major land use in town and local centres and the key to their vitality and viability. PPG 6 defines town centres as, "town and traditional suburban centres which provide a broad range of facilities and services and which fulfil a function as a focus for both the community and public transport". For Plan purposes, the above definition encompasses the centres as defined in Schedule 2.~~

~~However, the Council acknowledges that some forms of retailers have specific site requirements which may not always be capable of being accommodated in or adjacent to existing centres. Proposals for large retail developments outside the existing centres (large being defined as having a gross floorspace of around 1,000 square metres) will be considered against the criteria in RET 2. As advised by PPG 6, the Council will take into account other recent or proposed retail developments in assessing the extent to which the proposal would threaten the vitality and viability of existing centres. The Council may also wish to impose conditions to restrict the impact of a proposal on the role of existing centres, including a limitation on the types of goods sold.~~

~~In assessing the extent to which the proposal would threaten the vitality and viability of existing centres, the Council will consider the likely cumulative effects of outstanding planning permissions in the catchment areas of these centres.~~

~~The Council may require the preparation of an environmental Assessment and will be guided by the provisions of Circular 15/88 and the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1988.~~

~~For clarification of the phrase, "deterrence of investment", contained in criterion (iii), this relates to PPG 6 which advises that in assessing applications for developments which may have an impact on a nearby town, district or local centre, the local planning authority should consider:~~

- (i) ~~the extent to which developments would put at risk the strategy of the town centre, taking account of progress being made on its implementation, in particular through public investment; and~~
- (ii) ~~the likely effect on future private sector investment needed to safeguard the vitality and viability of that centre.~~

~~Advice in PPG 6 indicates that retail development should be sited where it is likely to be accessible by a choice of means of transport. This approach is supported by the general advice on planning for less travel in PPG 13. The Council will require developers to demonstrate the impact of the proposed development on overall travel patterns with the aim of reducing the amount of travel by the private car and maximising public transport use.~~

~~The wording of the Policy acknowledges that in considering development proposals, a balance may need to be struck between the various criteria. PPG 6 is largely concerned with the effect of new proposals on the vitality and viability of existing centres but does advise that this has to be weighed against the economic, social and environmental impacts a new scheme may produce. In carrying out this balancing exercise, the Council will ultimately be guided by the advice in PPG 6 that new retail developments should support the Government's objectives of sustaining and enhancing existing centres.~~

Amusement Centres

RET 3 Amusement Centres are generally acceptable in secondary shopping areas and local centres (see RET 1) subject to consideration of effects on amenity, but will not be permitted in defined primary shopping areas (TC2(a), E2) or in small local parades or isolated shop units within predominantly residential areas, and as a general rule,

- (i) **the use should relate to the ground floor only;**
- (ii) **the external appearance should be such as to avoid a break in the shopping frontage;**
- (iii) **measures will be required to prevent any undue nuisance by reason of noise, general disturbance or otherwise, eg. installation of insulation and self-closing doors, prohibition of external loudspeakers;**

Whilst Amusement Centres are now a common feature of everyday life, applications for new facilities are often controversial and can give rise to strong feelings in the community. Objections of a 'moral' nature are not the concern of the Council as Local Planning Authority. However, such applications also raise issues of amenity and Policy RET 3 is intended to protect residents and direct Centres to the most appropriate locations.

The appearance of Amusement Centres requires careful control. Problems of dead frontage caused by non-retail uses can be resolved by the provision of a shop window display. Noise will be the most common effect on amenity generally. This can be dealt with by the imposition of planning conditions dealing with noise insulation, self-closing doors, and the prohibition of external loudspeakers. Where an amusement centre is proposed in a shopping area containing residential flats or near to other

- (iv) hours will be restricted to shop opening hours;
- (v) the number, location and types of machine to be provided and details of circulation space for customers should be made clear;
- (vi) provision should be made for the disabled;
- (vii) customer WCs should be provided.

residential property, its effects on amenity will be less during shopping hours than in the evening, when ambient noise levels are usually lower. In such cases a limitation on opening hours may be appropriate. Account must always be taken of the amount of noise already generated by shops and other establishments in the area. It would be unreasonable to require Amusement Centres to be quieter than their neighbours.

Hot Food Shops, Restaurants and Cafes

RET 4 The building or change of use of establishments to provide hot food for consumption on or off the premises will only be permitted where:

- (i) the amenities of the occupants of residential premises in the vicinity, including accommodation above and adjacent to the proposed use, would not be unduly harmed;
- (ii) there will be no unreasonable loss of amenity in the locality from cooking smells;
- (iii) artificial ventilation, where proposed, is acceptable in terms of siting, appearance and noise;
- (iv) appropriate on-site provision is made for disposal of both casual litter and wastes;
- (v) hours of opening are consistent with maintenance of amenity in the locality;
- (vi) the use will not result in traffic hazards or disturbance arising from on-street parking in the locality;
- (vii) the overall impact of the use on the locality is acceptable, having regard to other uses of like nature in the vicinity.

Applications for hot food shops, restaurants and cafes can be controversial proposals and often the issues arising are not directly planning matters.

In general terms, such uses are acceptable in town and local centres, although the amenity of residents must be protected.

The Council will require applications to be accompanied by details of the proposed means of ventilation and litter disposal.

As a general rule, the Council will require new establishments near to residential properties to close no later than 2300 on Mondays to Thursdays, 2330 on Fridays to Saturdays and 2230 on Sundays. These general hours may be amended according to circumstances. Premises in town and local centres, where residential amenity is not affected, will normally not be subject to hours restrictions.

The nature of these uses means that traffic problems can arise. Whilst the availability of off-street parking is the preferred situation, such facilities are often not available. Of prime concern, in fully assessing proposals will be highway safety and loss of amenity arising from on-street parking.

The Use Classes Order means that there is a degree of freedom to move to other uses within A3 or from A3 to other uses. Where appropriate, the Council will consider restricting permissions granted to the specific use applied for.

Taxi Offices

RET 5 The building or use of premises to provide taxi and vehicle hire services, radio-control centres, associated facilities for drivers and waiting rooms will only be permitted where:

- (i) 24 hour activities will not cause unacceptable disturbance to the locality as a whole, having regard to other uses in the vicinity;
- (ii) there is no residential accommodation above or in premises adjoining the taxi office which would continue to be occupied separately;
- (iii) sound-proofing, where proposed, will be effective in preventing problems of noise transmission;
- (iv) radio equipment will not cause loss of amenity through unreasonable interference to radio and television reception in the immediate locality;
- (v) the use will not result in traffic hazards;
- (vi) appropriate off-street provision is made for the service vehicles.

Various forms of taxi businesses are a feature of public service provision and have grown in importance in recent years. Even where vehicles are supposed to remain on the road, remote from the office, experience shows there is a tendency for drivers to return for rest, to lie over or pick up passengers. Given that services are frequently targeted at night club, restaurant, public house and hot food patrons, there is considerable potential for disturbance, indiscriminate parking, and abuse of waiting restrictions.

Locations outside main shopping centres or in proximity to residential accommodation are therefore generally inappropriate, however booking offices are regulated. The Council cannot prevent vehicles congregating in a particular area; it can only test proposals by allowing temporary periods, where appropriate, and subsequently refusing permission, should working practices turn out to be unsatisfactory.

There is a tendency for customers to call at offices, even when no waiting facilities are provided and conditions seek to ensure that a radio-control centre is closed to calling customers or is only open at certain times. As a general rule, therefore, voluntary restrictions on opening hours are not sufficient to overcome amenity objections.

Vehicles may be parked at or near the premises or at a remote location. In some instances there may be a service road or lay-by which can legitimately be used. However, to the extent that vehicles are likely to congregate in public view, rather than in an enclosed parking area, the likelihood of disturbance is enhanced and will be taken into consideration.

~~*Alterations and New Shop Fronts*~~

~~**RET 6 (i) Design**~~

~~The Council will expect all new and altered shop fronts to:~~

- ~~(a) be appropriate to the building in which they are set in terms of proportions, detailing and materials;~~
- ~~(b) respect the context of the street or space in which they are set;~~
- ~~(c) accommodate the shop signage in a way that contributes to the overall design.~~

~~Given that the built environment in St. Helens is in need of improvement, it is considered important to ensure that, with regard to shop fronts, existing features of quality are retained and that new developments do not worsen the situation. Particular attention will be given to ensuring that architectural features are retained and that advertisements are in scale with the buildings, are not unduly dominant, do not conflict with architectural features and are positioned so as to be seen as integral features. For the avoidance of doubt, the positioning of "Dutch blinds" at first floor level will not~~

(ii) Security

The Council will expect security measures to be accommodated in an unobtrusive manner and should not include:

- (a) the blanking out of windows;**
- (b) projecting shutter boxes;**
- (c) unperforated roller shutters;**
- (d) galvanised finishes.**

(iii) Access for Those with Special Needs

All new and significantly altered shop fronts should normally make full and proper provision for access by those with special needs.

~~normally be acceptable. In other positions they will be judged on the basis that they are of short-lived materials and can add to the vitality of a commercial street without doing long term harm.~~

~~Whilst the Council acknowledge that the need for security is often paramount to the retailer, the creation of "dead" frontages in town centres and suburban areas can create a desolate and even threatening environment. The Council will therefore seek a balance between the security needs of the industry and the need to protect amenity. With regard to roller shutters, the steel link mesh see-through style is preferred. Solid shutters may be acceptable if properly integrated and provided with a suitable decorative finish (see also GEN 4).~~

~~For those groups in society with special needs, access to shopping facilities is an essential aspect of daily life. Whilst Policy RET 5 (iii) is aimed primarily at the disabled, it is considered that any resultant improvements in access will benefit others with special needs, such as the elderly and adults in charge of small children.~~

~~The Council will therefore require designs to incorporate appropriate measures, such as ramps, automatic doors, handrails, etc. to facilitate access.~~

~~It is acknowledged that, in certain circumstances, such as small shop units, the provision of ramps will simply not be practicable. However, in most cases it should be possible to widen doorways and lower stall risers. Where automatic teller machines are being provided, at least one should be placed at the appropriate height for wheelchair users.~~

TRANSPORT

Introduction

It is acknowledged in Government guidance that there are important interactions between transport and land-use. PPG 13 (1994) on Transport states that planning should integrate with transport policies to:

- (i) reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys
- (ii) encourage alternative means of travel which have less environmental impact
- (iii) reduce reliance on the private car

The Council's transport policies are contained in the Transport Policies and Programme (TPP), which is submitted on an annual basis to the DETR. It complements the Merseyside transport package bid produced by the five Merseyside Highway Authorities and Merseytravel based on the Merseyside Integrated Transport Study (MERITS) completed in 1992.

The primary objectives of the TPP are consistent with the overall objectives of the Plan:

- (i) to target additions or improvements to the transport network on schemes which are essential to support economic development and urban regeneration;
- (ii) to increase the relative attractiveness of public transport and non-motorised forms of transport as a means of moderating the upward trend in car use and securing a shift of mode away from the private car;
- (iii) to secure the most efficient and effective use of the existing highway network through the application of measures appropriate to the defined function of each road;
- (iv) to give a high priority to safety and environmental schemes and measures aimed at reducing casualties and improving the quality of life for those working and living in Merseyside.

At a strategic level PPG 13 indicates that Development Plans have an important role to play, through locational policies, in helping to reduce the need to travel by car and by encouraging development patterns which give people the choice of using more environment-friendly means of transport than the car.

A prime concern of the transport policies is to assist economic regeneration. However, the Council also consider that the main land-use and transport policies of the Plan interrelate to produce an underlying theme of "sustainability". In particular:

- (i) the continued concentration of development within the built up area as a consequence of urban regeneration;
- (ii) the concentration of new economic development within priority areas;
- (iii) support for the continued regeneration of local shopping centres;
- (iv) the improvement of public transport, notably the development of new railway stations linked to the major economic development opportunities;
- (v) the development of a network of cycleways to provide an alternative long-term means of travel between major land-uses (see Policy REC 5)

Highway Improvements

The Strategic Highway Network is shown on the Proposals Map. This Network has been derived from the Council's TPP, which distinguishes between Motorways and Trunk Roads the Primary Road Network (routes of more than local significance) and the Strategic Route Network (routes which carry significant cross-boundary flows or significantly higher flows than would be generated by the local communities through which they pass).

The existing Motorways and Trunk Roads in the Borough are the M6, M62, A580 (East Lancashire Road), A570 (Rainford Bypass), the Widnes Eastern Bypass Northern Section and the A57/M62 (Junction 7) roundabout. In addition to these existing routes, the DOT propose the widening of the M62 between Junction 6 and 7. Of significance to the Borough is the proposal for a new Junction 8 on the M62.

In addition to Motorways and Trunk Roads, improvement of the other routes is also vital to the maintenance and development of the local economy. A considerable proportion of the Council's highway investment resources will be required for this purpose.

The TPP identifies expenditure on three major highway schemes, as follows:

- (i) the St. Helens M62 Link Road.
- (ii) the Blackbrook Diversion.
- (iii) St. Helens Inner Ring Road Stage V.

The St. Helens Link Road, completed in October 1994, is the most significant highway scheme to be implemented in the Borough. The construction of the road has provided the impetus for economic regeneration and an opportunity for reduction of traffic in residential areas. The Link Road is therefore, not surprisingly, the focus of a number of Plan policies, particularly the priority location for economic development in the southern corridor (Part 1 Policy S3) and related transport proposals (TRA 3 and 4) .

The Blackbrook Diversion is a bypass of an older residential area on the A58 to the north-east of St. Helens town Centre. Heavy traffic flows on the road cause serious environmental problems and significant numbers of injury accidents. The existing route is poor with slow speeds and congestion. The new road will provide a much improved link to St. Helens town Centre, Haydock Industrial Estate and, via the Town Centre and M62 Link Road, areas to the southwest (see TRA 1).

The St. Helens Inner Ring Road Stage V will complete the last section of the town centre inner ring road and would enable further traffic management and pedestrianisation measures to take place in the northern part of the town centre. The route would link Standish Street to Higher Parr Street near the St. Helens Linkway replacing the existing Atlas Street. Funding has been secured through Capital Challenge.

Public Transport

St. Helens is an area of lower than average car ownership. Strategic Guidance recognises the importance of ready access by public transport to jobs and shops and for recreation. The Council will continue to work closely with the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority and Executive, Railtrack and, where appropriate, neighbouring authorities, to seek improvements to public transport.

Buses

Total bus mileage in St. Helens has increased by 24% since deregulation in October 1986, although the overall number of passengers has decreased. This increase in mileage has led to considerable traffic congestion on the popular routes in St. Helens Town Centre, and is causing particular problems for the Council as Highway Authority. Whilst the Mersey Passenger Transport Executive (MPTE) has overall responsibility for co-ordinating public transport throughout Merseyside, it is only directly involved with the subsidised bus services, which amount to just 20% of the total. There is a need, therefore, for the Council and MPTE to maintain close liaison, to ensure that bus services operate

in the public interest. The new bus station in St. Helens Town Centre, opened in 1995, is an example of the improvements to public transport infrastructure that the Council wishes to promote.

Rail

The need for adequate cross-boundary services and links to the national and Regional Services run by the relevant Rail companies are recognised and the Council have attempted to establish a better dialogue with them through the MPTE in an effort to influence the level of service in St. Helens. The introduction of a stop on the Liverpool - Edinburgh/Glasgow route at St. Helens Central is an example of the improvement in level of service that is required to assist the regeneration of the Borough.

In addition to supporting efforts at the regional level to seek improvements in the rail network to the North-West such as the West Coast Main Line, the Council will also press for the following local improvements:

- (i) the introduction of a rail service between St. Helens Central and Warrington via Earlestown;
- (ii) the electrification of the Liverpool to Wigan route via St. Helens Central; and
- (iii) the electrification of the Liverpool to Manchester route via St. Helens Junction.

Car Parking and Servicing

The Council's policy on car parking and servicing, as set out in GEN 9, is to require all new developments to make an appropriate level of on-site provision as well as accommodating the requirements of public transport, cyclists motor-cyclists and pedestrians.

The policy reflects guidance in PPG 13 to discourage unnecessary use of private cars by establishing a graduated approach to any requirements for parking provision. In appropriate circumstances the Council will negotiate as an alternative to parking provision a contribution toward public on shared parking or public transport improvements.

Blackbrook Diversion

~~TRA 1 A highway to bypass Blackbrook will be constructed between Blackbrook Bridge and the junction of Vicarage Road (A58) and the East Lancashire Road (A580). Within the corridor defined by the safeguarded lines on the Proposals Map, development will not be permitted which would prejudice the effective and economic construction of the route.~~

The bypass is required:

- to improve the environmental conditions of people living in Haydock, especially adjacent to the A58 spine road;
- to reduce delays, congestion and accidents on the A58;
- to improve the redevelopment potential of vacant housing sites along the A58;
- to ensure that a high standard route exists between St. Helens and the trunk routes to the north and east;
- to provide a much improved link from Haydock to St. Helens Town Centre and; via the M62 Link Road, to the south-west; and
- to complement the Council's proposals to upgrade and develop the Haydock Industrial Estate.

Traffic Calming

~~TRA 2 The Council will normally require traffic calming measures to be incorporated into the design of all new residential developments where new road construction is necessary. In addition, where the traffic consequences would include increased risk to safety or loss of amenity, permission may be refused unless developers are prepared to render appropriate financial contributions to implement necessary off-site calming measures.~~

~~One of the Plan's objectives is to pursue transport improvements which secure public safety and environmental enhancement. It is considered that Policy TRA 2 will assist by civilising traffic in residential areas and that physical features such as ramps, chicanes and "narrowings", where other design measures may not achieve the necessary calming effect, can help to keep vehicle speeds down and improve driver behaviour.~~

~~The TPP's minor works programme includes schemes which:~~

- (i) assist public transport;
- (ii) reduce congestion; and

- ~~(iii) improve access to residential areas and schools.~~

~~TRA 2 is intended to complement the Council's highways programme by ensuring that traffic calming measures are provided in connection with new residential developments. Where the new housing development will create a demonstrable deterioration in the conditions of safety and environment quality on surrounding roads, in order to secure off-site works, developers will normally be expected to enter into legal agreements with the Council. The amount of contribution which the developer will be expected to make towards the cost of such works will be related to the degree to which conditions on the affected roads may have been, or will be changed by the new housing scheme. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy will be aimed at measures within estates and/or locations such as schools in the vicinity which would be affected by significant increases in the level of traffic resulting from developments.~~

New Rail Facilities

TRA 3 The Council will support the provision of new railway stations. Land required for the construction of the proposed Marshalls Cross and Carr Mill Stations, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded from development.

In addition, the Council will support the provision of new railway sidings and railhead facilities where these are proposed for economic development sites.

The Council recognises the important environmental benefits that can be gained from greater use of the rail network. Rail travel is an energy-efficient means of transport which can contribute to reducing road congestion at peak periods and help to reduce accidents. The Council will therefore continue to work closely with Merseytravel on the provision of new railway stations and the enhancement of station facilities. The proposed station at Marshalls Cross relates to the Lea Green Farm economic site (Site 5Ec1 a & b) and demonstrates the intention of relating rail travel opportunities to strategic developments wherever possible.

In accordance with the advice in PPG 13 to promote acceptable alternatives to the private car and the conveyance of commercial traffic by road vehicles, the Council will support the servicing of economic development sites by the rail network where feasible. It is envisaged that opportunities for such provision relate primarily to sites in the Southern Corridor and the former Parkside Colliery.

The Council will give particular attention to protecting the amenities of the occupiers of residential property in the close vicinity of the new stations and, where appropriate and necessary, this may include seeking specific amelioration, including off-site measures, by means of a legal agreement with the developers.

Park and Ride

TRA 4 The Council will support a policy of providing park-and-ride facilities at suitable locations. Sites are allocated for park-and-ride at:

- (i) land west of Marshalls Cross Road/south of Eltonhead Road (Area 5); and
- (ii) land north of Newton Station (Area 1).

PPG 13 on Transport suggests that, where appropriate, plans should include provision for park-and-ride schemes to encourage use of public transport and reduce congestion.. Merseytravel wish to encourage park-and-ride in St. Helens and the Council are fully supportive of that aim.

The Council will give particular attention to protecting the amenities of the occupiers of residential property in the close vicinity of the new stations and, where appropriate and necessary, this may include seeking specific amelioration, including off-site measures, by means of a legal agreement with the developers.

Rail/Bus Interchange

TRA 5 The Council will support a policy of providing rail/bus interchanges at key locations. Land required for the provision of such a facility at St. Helens Junction, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded from development.

This policy is intended to be complementary to TRA 4 with the aim of promoting public transport in order to ease the environmental problems caused by increased use of the private car. Merseytravel have indicated that they specifically wish to provide such a facility at St. Helens Junction.

Sutton Oak Link Line

TRA 6 Development which would prejudice the restoration of the rail link between St. Helens Central and St. Helens Junction (the Sutton Oak branch) will not be permitted.

The role of the Sutton Oak branch line, currently used (in part) for freight only, is vital to the improvement of links to national and regional services, particularly the introduction of a passenger connection to the inter-city network at Warrington.

Cycling

~~**TRA 7** The Council will encourage greater provision for cycling, both for recreation and commuting to work, and improve conditions of safety for cycling and facilities for cyclists. Measures to be pursued will be:~~

- ~~(i) provision of secure cycle parks the location and types of which will be reviewed in the light of demand;~~
- ~~(ii) identifying and developing new multi-purpose cycle routes across the Borough, away from main traffic routes where possible or desirable;~~

~~Cycling is an increasingly popular mode of transport and recreation for which little provision is currently made in the Borough. It is likely that the absence of such provision is a disincentive to increased cycle use. Cycling organisations have commented that St. Helens is a hostile place for cyclists. It is considered important therefore that greater support of cycling is given to meet the demand and because cycling is an efficient form of transport which is relatively cheap, available to all, takes up little space, is noiseless, emits no fumes and promotes good health.~~

- ~~(iii) the consideration of cyclists in new developments and the design of highway schemes (GEN 6, GEN 9);~~
- ~~(iv) the development of an off-road pedestrian/cycle network (see Policy REC 5).~~

~~The provision of secure cycle parks has started in St. Helens Town Centre and will be pursued in other centres. Merseytravel have commented that this proposal complements their own policy of providing secure cycle parking at railway stations in the Borough.~~

~~The implementation of (ii) will focus on St. Helens Town Centre, which is the main destination for journeys in the Borough. Policy TRA 7 should be read in conjunction with Policy REC 5 which seeks to provide strategic routes for pedestrians and cyclists.~~

RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

Introduction

This chapter contains the plan's allocation of sites for residential development and the Council's policy for increasing the provision of affordable housing.

The allocation satisfies the requirement of Part 1 Policy S6, Provision of Land for Residential Development.

Quality of Residential Areas

The Council considers it important that the new residential development creates a good quality environment and that the quality of existing residential areas is protected and improved. This will be pursued by the application of the relevant development control policies (GEN 5), particularly through the provision of open space within new developments and making dwellings accessible to those with special needs. Reference should also be made to traffic calming measures required by TRA 2.

Drainage

Reference should be made to Policy ENV 30 which sets out the Council's requirements to satisfy various drainage matters in consultation with the National Rivers Authority.

Residential Land Allocation

RES 1 In accordance with Part 1 Policy S6, the following sites are either allocated for residential development or have the benefit of planning permission.

These sites, which are over 0.4 ha in site, are shown on the Proposals Map (eg. 1H1).

Strategic Guidance requires that the Plan makes provision for 6,700 dwellings to be constructed between 1986 and 2001. In addition, the Council is required to have a five-year supply of housing land to accord with the guidance contained in PPG 3.

As indicated in Part 1 of the Plan, it is considered necessary to have a supply in excess of these suggested figures. At current building rates (1996), the sites listed in RES 1 would satisfy demand up to at least 2005.

Sites indicated with an * have the benefit of a current planning permission.

Site capacity figures are given as estimates unless indicated by planning permission.

UDP Ref.	Address	Area (Ha)	Site Capacity (Actual or Estimated)
AREA 1 - NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS			
1H1	North of Cherry Street	0.54	20
1H2	* Earle Street/Viaduct Street	1.34	40
1H3	* Belvedere Road/Vista Road	13.83	350
1H4	* Dean Meadow	3.42	78
1H5	* Cheshire Close (Former Newton Hall)	0.53	16
1H6	* Mill Lane	0.45	9
1H7	Land at Bertram Street	0.49	16
1H8	Common Road	5.53	165
1H9	* North of Newton Park Drive	4.78	79
AREA 2 - HAYDOCK AND BLACKBROOK			
2H1	* Islands Brow Burgy, west of Hinckley Road	22.90	320
2H2	* East of Finney Grove	1.59	52
2H3	* Princes Pit	12.15	326
2H4	Station Road	0.91	27
2H5	* Coopers Lane	1.35	46
2H6	* Site of 212 - 290 Clipsley Lane/Darent Road	1.74	46
2H7	Juddfield Street	1.09	30
2H8	* New Boston	0.94	35
2H9	Rear of Owl's Nest Hotel, PH, West End Road	0.52	17
2H10	Avondale Road	0.48	16
AREA 3 - RAINFORD, BILLINGE AND MOSS BANK			
3H1	Land west of Alder Lane, Crank	0.40	11
3H2	Leyland Green Road, Downall Green	0.51	13
3H3	* Land off Billinge Road, Downall Green	0.43	9
3H4	* Land at Sidings Lane, Rainford	0.56	8
3H5	* Former Soldiers & Sailors Club, Billinge Road, Downall Green	0.55	9
AREA 4 - ST. HELENS WEST			
4H1	* College of Technology, North Road	0.50	44
4H2	* Cowley Street/Albert Street	1.56	46
4H3	* North of Marsden Avenue	2.53	76
4H4	* Marsden Avenue	0.93	38
4H5	* Eccleston Hall Hospital	3.72	39
4H6	Land off Knowsley Road	1.21	24
4H7	* Former West Park School, Alder Hey Road	3.50	98
AREA 5 - SOUTHERN CORRIDOR			
5H1	* Land south of Sherdley Road	1.30	72

UDP Ref.	Address	Area (Ha)	Site Capacity (Actual or Estimated)
5H2	Land off Marshalls Cross Road	1.49	47
5H3	Land to south of Green End Lane/north of M62 Link spur road	3.13	71
5H4	* Stonecross Park	3.85	64
5H5	Former Clay Colliery	16.27	300
5H6	Nutgrove Colliery	1.89	51
5H7	* Greenbank, Canal Street	16.44	400
5H8	* Land off Chapel Lane	0.77	19
5H9	* Land off School Lane	0.55	9
5H10	Land off Elephant Lane	4.31	130
5H11	* R/o Woodland Cottage, Rainhill	0.44	4
5H12	Land north of Walkers Lane	0.86	26
5H13	* Land south of Rainhill Road	9.48	123
5H14	* Land at Lea Green Farm, Marshalls Cross	1.69	84

AREA 6 - PARR, SUTTON AND BOLD

6H1	* Land at Tunstall's Way	0.58	9
6H2	Land south of Fleet Lane	1.62	40
6H3	Land at Willow Tree Avenue	3.99	80
6H4	Land east of Boardmans Lane	2.05	48
6H5	Land at Hollybank Street	0.53	20
6H6	Land south of Sorogold Street	2.08	70
6H7	Land off Monastery Road	1.58	57
6H8	* Land at junction of Newton Road/Provident Street	1.30	43
6H9	* Land off Eaves Lane	0.50	6
6H10	* Land south of Leach Lane	0.61	20
6H11	* Land at Peasley View Estate	0.91	29
6H12	Land adjacent Bold Miner's Welfare Club, Fleet Lane	1.17	35

~~Affordable Housing~~

~~RES 2 On suitable sites the Council will expect provision to be made for affordable dwellings, the number of which shall be the subject of negotiation between the Council and the developer. In this context affordable is defined as being available for those whose incomes generally deny them the opportunity to enter the housing market.~~

~~In considering whether a site is suitable for accommodating affordable housing, the following criteria will be considered:~~

- ~~(i) a site size over 1.5 ha or developments of 40 dwellings or more;~~
- ~~(ii) the proximity of the site to local services such as schools, shops and medical facilities;~~
- ~~(iii) the proximity of the site to public transport;~~
- ~~(iv) the market suitability of the site to accommodate an element of high density development;~~
- ~~(v) evidence of local housing need; and~~
- ~~(iv) whether there will be particular costs associated with development of the site and whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in development of the site.~~

~~The affordable dwellings shall be provided either through a partnership between the developer and a Housing Association for rented or shared ownership or by the construction of low cost units for sale.~~

~~In granting permission, the Council will consider imposing the following condition:~~

- ~~(i) the occupation of the dwelling shall initially be limited to:~~

~~In its 1993 Housing Strategy, the Council described the extent of housing problems in the Borough as follows:~~

- ~~- economic conditions preventing many households from gaining access to an active and relatively buoyant private housing market~~
- ~~- rising demand for rented housing whilst losses from Council and private rented stock outstrip the supply of new housing association properties~~
- ~~- many older houses in the public sector in need of investment~~
- ~~- increasing levels of rent in all sectors~~
- ~~- rising homelessness, particularly among young families and single people~~
- ~~- under investment in private sector clearance, improvement and area renewal leading to potentially serious problems for the future.~~

~~St. Helens is a low wage, high unemployment economy. This means that for many, "owner occupation is either not reachable or is a very high risk venture" (St. Helens Housing Strategy 1993). Of the properties available for sale in St. Helens in June 1993, only 19% fell within the mortgage capacity of a skilled manual worker (based on average earnings) and a mere 0.6% would have been available to an unskilled manual worker. Affordability in the rented sector gives rise to similar concerns, with rents increasing in the private rented sector by 13% in 1992.~~

~~In accordance with DOE guidance, consideration has been given to an overall target for the provision of affordable housing in the Borough. Taking into account the numbers on Council waiting lists (2,600 at 1st April 1993), a sample survey of the Borough carried out during the summer of 1993 and the analysis of housing need contained in the 1993 Housing Strategy, it is concluded that a figure of 2,000 dwellings would be a realistic target.~~

- ~~(a) a qualifying person; or~~
- ~~(b) a wife or husband (or person living as such), licensee, dependent or sub-tenant of a qualifying person.~~
- ~~(ii) a person is a qualifying person in relation to the dwelling if they have an interest in the dwelling and, immediately prior to occupying the dwelling, they satisfied the Council that they were in need of affordable housing in terms of the Council's approved criteria and obtained confirmation in writing from the Council that they were so satisfied.~~

~~If the dwelling remains unoccupied for a period of three months as a result of no qualifying persons being available, then the dwelling can be sold or let on the open market with priority being given to St. Helens' residents.~~

~~The Housing Strategy proposes a range of measures aimed at providing affordable housing, primarily by the Council in its enabling role. The purpose of RES 2 is to provide legitimate planning assistance to the enabling process and ensure that a percentage of the required affordable housing is delivered through planning permission.~~

~~The scope for the involvement of the planning system in St. Helens is limited. Of the total housing land supply identified in the Plan, approximately 65% already has the benefit of a planning permission. However, implementation of RES 2 in conjunction with other initiatives, such as Bold Power Station, could deliver approximately 300 affordable dwellings by 2001.~~

~~RES 2 has been devised following a series of meetings with major house builders, Housing Associations and close collaboration with the Council's housing section. The advice received was that generally, on suitable larger sites, a mix of tenures and densities would be acceptable. RES 2 therefore only applies to sites over 1.5 ha, subject to policy criteria (i)-(iv). The Council will negotiate on the basis of a figure being derived from applying a density of 40-50 dwellings per hectare to 25% of the site area, subject to a maximum of 50 per site.~~

~~In accordance with the advice in Circular 13/96 the Council may consider that, on certain qualifying sites, it is preferable to seek a financial or other contribution towards the provision of affordable housing on a different site in the Borough.~~

~~Before planning permission is granted for the development of a site which will include an element of affordable housing, the developer should be able to demonstrate the means by which the affordable houses will be brought onto the market and made available to a qualifying household and, if appropriate, how such dwellings will remain available for households in this sector thereafter. This could include a partnership agreement with a housing association, or other social body, to offer houses for rent or a scheme which would involve shared ownership. For the purpose of this policy, criterion (v), local housing need, shall be defined as the need identified by the Council in the part of the Borough within which the proposal is sited. The Council will be able to advise developers on the nature of the local housing need.~~

~~For the avoidance of doubt, dwellings referred to in this policy, includes flats.~~

~~Clearly, there could be a conflict between the need for higher density developments and the Council's standards for residential development as contained in the Plan. Appropriate relaxations will be made consistent with maintenance of an acceptable level of amenity.~~

~~For the purposes of RES 2, the Council's approved criteria will be as follows:~~

- ~~(i) a person(s) shall be priority homeless; or~~
- ~~(ii) a person(s) shall have been on St. Helens Council Housing Register more than one year and be in need of housing; or~~
- ~~(iii) a person(s) shall be in receipt of an income which does not permit entry to the housing market.~~

~~In accordance with the advice in Circular 13/96, the occupancy criteria incorporates a cascade approach. This approach should ensure that occupants will always be found for any accommodation whilst ensuring that people in local housing need take priority.~~

Vacant Floorspace

RES 3 The Council will encourage the re-use of suitable redundant and vacant floorspace for residential use. In particular:

Planning permission will be granted for the re-use or conversion of vacant floorspace located above shops and offices into housing units in St. Helens Town Centre, Earlestown

and the remaining local centres as set out in Schedule 2 of the Plan, subject to satisfying the following criteria:

- (i) that a separate means of access can adequately be provided; and**
- (ii) that a satisfactory level of residential amenity can be provided.**

Advice on encouraging vacant floorspace to be put to productive housing use is contained in various documents including the Circular on Planning and Affordable Housing. PPG 6 and the national Empty Homes Strategy initiative. Such development can be considered as sustainable and in line with PPG 13.

Developments involving units outside of the defined town centres will be considered against the Policies contained in the Plan. Unless there are highway safety reasons to the contrary, it will not be normal practice to require dedicated parking provision to be provided for proposed residents.

ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT

The quality of our physical environment has a significant influence on our physical and psychological well being. It is becoming increasingly an issue of public awareness and community concern. A wide range of environmental issues has therefore been considered in preparing the UDP, having regard to the White Paper "This Common Inheritance" and the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The Planning and Compensation Act 1991, requires all development plans to include policies in respect of the conservation of natural beauty and amenity.

The Plan seeks to balance the requirements of development and the environment and this is consistent with Regional Planning Guidance, PPG 1 and PPG 12.

Environmental issues have a more far reaching significance than the policies contained in this section of the Plan. For example, the location of development influences the pattern and mode of travel which, in turn, affects the consumption of energy, air quality and global warming. The need for all Plan policies to accommodate such wider concepts as energy consumption and sustainable development is, for such reasons, reflected in Part 1, Policy S7.

The policies of the UDP seek to tackle not only the legacy of environmental problems inherited from the past in St. Helens, such as derelict and contaminated land, but also to protect and enhance its valuable resources. Although St. Helens may be under-represented in statutorily protected features such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature reserves and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, it does not mean that the assets it does possess do not merit the fullest protection through the policies of the Plan.

In an area which, since the industrial revolution, has borne the full impact of rapid industrial expansion and exploitation, these environmental assets have come to be particularly highly valued by the local communities.

The protection and enhancement of the environment is equally a major component of the Council's Urban Regeneration initiatives to generate new business confidence and attract inward investment.

Protection of Open Space

ENV 1 Planning permission for development involving the loss of existing open space will not be permitted if any of the following apply:

- (i) it is of value for formal or informal recreation (see also Policy REC 2);**
- (ii) the open space has a specific value;**
 - (a) for nature conservation;**
 - (b) for historic or archaeological reasons;**
 - (c) as a visual amenity, or important visual break in an otherwise intensively developed area;**
 - (d) for children's play;**
 - (e) as a buffer between incompatible uses.**
- (iii) the development would have an adverse effect on the amenity of any neighbouring open space, including the Green Belt.**

Where an area of open space is of value (as defined by Policies ENV 1 and REC 2), any relaxation will only be considered where the developer provides a replacement facility, or its equivalent, convenient to the access requirements of the users.

Open spaces form an integral and vital part of the urban fabric. They may fulfil a variety of functions:

- formal and informal recreation;
- visual amenity, including the "image" of the Borough;
- nature conservation;
- cultural association, such as links between the open space and the historical/social development of the area;
- education, in particular the availability within easy, and if possible walking distance from schools, of sites which can act as a teaching resource.

Open spaces include formal parks, recreation and sports grounds, including those in private ownership, school playing fields, amenity open space, informal space, allotments, church grounds and woodlands. Derelict land may also have existing or potential value as open space.

A number of open spaces have been developed for residential use in recent years. Without an adequate policy framework further inappropriate losses may occur. The Sports Council, National Playing Field Association and Central Council of Physical Recreation have jointly expressed concern about the national loss of playing fields to built development.

The role and value of urban open space has been acknowledged in Planning Policy Guidance: Housing (PPG 3) and Planning Policy Guidance: Sports and Recreation (PPG 17), which includes the following paragraph:

"The Government attaches great importance to the retention of recreational and amenity open space in urban areas. Demand is concentrated there, and it is important that people - particularly children and elderly people - should have access to open space close to where they live. Open space, whether or not there is public access to it, is also important for its contribution to the quality of urban life. It enhances the character of conservation areas, listed buildings and historic landscapes; it can attract business and tourism; it is part of the urban regeneration process. Use of land as open space is no less important than other uses. Once built on, open space is likely to be lost to the community for

ever; planning decisions resulting in the development of open space should, therefore, take into account the long term impact of the loss of such space."

A Borough survey of open space in 1990, updated in 1993, identified a total open space resource of approximately 1191 hectares, as follows:

	Hectares
(i) Formal Parks	189
(ii) Sports Grounds/Recreation Grounds	554
(iii) General Public Open Space	126
(iv) Informal Open Space	322

It should be noted also that approximately 505 hectares of vacant or derelict land has the potential to fulfil an open space function. Policy ENV 10 identifies fourteen such areas totalling 300 hectares where informal recreation could be accommodated in a woodland setting.

The open space sites to which Policy ENV 1 applies are shown on the Proposals Map and for information purposes described as:

- (i) maintained as Public Open Space for both formal and informal recreation;
- (ii) Sites used in connection with educational establishments;
- (iii) private sports grounds;
- (iv) other open spaces;
- (v) Golf Courses

As a general rule sites less than 0.4 ha in size have not been shown on the Proposals Map. Their exclusion does not necessarily mean that the requirements of Policy ENV 1 will not be applied.

There is considerable variation in the nature of the open space resource between the Areas. In the Borough overall, the provision of playing pitches is below the NPFA recommended level of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. Formal Parks and Sports Grounds are best represented in the western parts of the Borough, although it is here that there has been the greatest loss recently of playing fields to residential development. Informal Open Space is most strongly represented in the Newton, Haydock and Carr Mill areas. The lowest levels of

existing informal open space are in the southern parts of the Borough, but it is here that the greatest potential for increasing provision exists due to the large number of opportunity sites, many of which form part of the Wasteland to Woodland and Ravenhead Greenway initiatives.

There is an increasing local appreciation of environmental issues, such as visual amenity, nature conservation and informal recreation needs, which has been demonstrated where development proposals have threatened local informal open areas, such as the Burgy Banks and Sutton Mill Dam, and local residents have organised campaigns for their retention and enhancement.

In assessing whether an open space is of value for recreation the Council will take into account the requirements of Policy REC 2. A number of factors will be considered including the existing use of the threatened open space; whether alternative facilities exist; the accessibility of the threatened and alternative facilities.

The policy does not preclude development. However, it has been drafted in the context of sufficient land having been allocated to satisfy development requirements during the Plan period. Accordingly, the loss of any open space identified in the policy would only be permitted where the developer was able to provide replacement facilities, or their equivalent, which were convenient and attractive, and were likely to prove no less attractive for the members of the public. This requirement could take the form of a contribution to the extension or enhancement of open space in the vicinity.

School Playing Fields

ENV 2 In the event of a school closing and its associated playing fields being declared redundant, applications for development will be considered on the following basis:

- (i) redevelopment of the footprint of the school buildings, including hardstandings and other incidental open spaces, will normally be permitted;**
- (ii) the development of the playing fields will not normally be permitted, unless all the requirements of ENV 1 are satisfied and it can be demonstrated that the land will not be required in the longer term for school use.**

The rationalisation of school places has resulted in a programme of school closures. While the redevelopment of such sites, usually for housing, can contribute to the residential land supply, the playing fields may also fulfil important open space functions. Full consideration must be given to these aspects. PPG 17 (para. 43) recognises that once redeveloped, it is unlikely that school playing fields can be recovered, and that particular attention should be given to the possible longer term requirement for educational or community use.

While any redevelopment would normally take place on the site of the original school buildings, the policy, in appropriate circumstances, may be more flexibly applied to permit the development of an equivalent area elsewhere within the redundant school curtilage where this would produce an improved distribution of development and open space and accord with the maintenance of local amenity and other Plan policies.

Greenways

ENV 3 (a) A strategic network of Greenways, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded, in order to:

- (i) secure a landscape structure based on the physical characteristics specific to St. Helens**
 - (ii) give additional definition and protection to the network of wildlife corridors, historic and archaeological resources;**
 - (iii) provide a recreational resource easily accessible to the main concentrations of population and priority areas capable of assisting the development of footpath, cycle and bridleway routes within the Borough and linking with the surrounding countryside;**
 - (iv) complement the Borough's economic initiatives by improving the appearance of the area;**
- (b) Development proposals in Greenways will only be accepted if they satisfy all of the following:**
- (i) they do not prejudice the appearance of the Greenway and the contribution it makes to the landscape structure of the area;**

St. Helens is characterised by substantial wedges of open land, partly protected by Green Belt policies, but also extending into the urban area. These areas of open land have, in places, been developed as Greenways, in some cases providing opportunities for public access and informal recreation; in other locations, informal use has developed. Of particular importance is the relationship between the Greenways and the Council's priority areas (see Part 1 para 4.15). Significant wildlife resources exist within these corridors, together with features of industrial archaeological significance. The combination of these features make the Greenways particularly valuable for education. The linear nature of these green spaces is also valuable in enhancing wildlife links between open spaces.

Some of the designated Greenways are in private ownership. However, although there may not be public access over these areas, and such access may not always be appropriate, they fulfil either or both of the first two purposes listed under sub-section (a) of the policy, and make a valuable contribution to the quality of the environment and ecology in the Borough.

Existing Greenways in St. Helens are extremely popular with the public. Sections of the Sankey Valley Park at Blackbrook and Newton-le-Willows have recorded levels of use as great as the most intensively managed town park.

- (ii) they would not prejudice the establishment of an access link;**
- (iii) they would not destroy the integrity of the Greenway network, in terms of linkages, character and amenity;**
- (iv) they would not destroy or impair the integrity of the Greenway, as a wildlife corridor.**

The Council attaches considerable priority to the development of the Greenway network and is seeking public access onto more of the Greenways. This will be achieved through negotiation and agreement with the relevant landowners. Recent investment has been concentrated on the Ravenhead Section and further development will be pursued as resources permit.

The network, as shown on the Proposals Map, has been defined on the basis of physically or visually linking existing open spaces along the major linear features of the Borough, such as river valleys, canal systems and disused railway lines. These corridors are also particularly important in defining the physical character of St. Helens, contributing to the Borough's individuality.

Within the urban area of St. Helens (outside the Green Belt) there are 18 km of main river, 61% of which are covered by this Policy. Protection of aquatic habitats, a commitment to keep land open where possible and, where necessary, to re-establish the continuity of the river corridor is an important function of the Policy.

The full value of wildlife, particularly within an urban setting such as St. Helens, is the extent to which it is an integral part of a range of community benefits.

One particularly valuable relationship, from an educational and historical perspective, is the extent to which different species of plants have become established on a variety of waste products from the town's industrial past. For example, certain plant groups growing on alkali from the chemical industry provide a reference to the past in the absence of other physical remnants. The juxtaposition of these sites and their relationship within the Greenway network increases their value to the community.

The Greenway network is an important framework for the development of a footpath and cycle network through the Borough (see Policy REC 5). However, it is inevitable that there will be constraints in achieving this, not least adequate financial resources. It is important to stress that this does not devalue the principle of Greenways; even without public access they can perform important landscape, amenity and nature conservation functions.

While the emphasis of Policies ENV 1, 2 and 3 is the protection of existing open spaces, opportunities to create new open spaces will also be pursued. In particular, new development will generate additional pressure for recreational and amenity space, and Policy GEN 5 and Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 5 provide guidelines for new provision in the context of housing estate layouts.

Nature Conservation

In 1986 the Borough Council published its draft 'Policy for Nature'. This was a corporate approach to the issue of nature conservation and reflected the importance of wildlife for: community value - wildlife sites provide pleasure, well-being and opportunities for informal recreation; education; environmental health; the image of the Borough, assisting to change perceptions about the environmental assets of St. Helens; an informal ecological approach to landscape management, which can be a cost-effective method of treatment.

The Policy stated that, despite the urban characteristics of St. Helens, there is a wealth of sites with wildlife interest. These include relics of old woodland and mossland preceding the Borough's industrialisation, as well as a range of wasteland sites which have developed as a result of industrial processes. This coincidence of industrial history and wildlife interest is a feature of particular importance in St. Helens.

The preparation of the "Policy for Nature" was overseen by the Wildlife Advisory Group, which was established by the Council in 1982 to advise on nature conservation. It brought together organisations operating in St. Helens with a special involvement and expertise in nature conservation, such as English Nature, the Lancashire Wildlife Trust, the Groundwork Trust, Landlife and National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside.

The Group has assisted in reviewing the "Policy for Nature" and an updated version was published early in 1998.

PPG 9 Nature Conservation gives guidance to local authorities to include in their UDPs policies and proposals to give appropriate effect to nature conservation. The Plan takes account of the Nature Conservancy Council which in its document "Planning for Wildlife in Metropolitan Areas" identify three elements of a wildlife conservation programme:

- protection of established sites;
- securing linkages between sites; and
- ensuring wildlife sites are available to everyone

Statutory Site Protection

ENV 4 Development will not be permitted which would destroy or significantly harm, directly or indirectly, the nature conservation interest of a designated or proposed Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

This policy relates to sites of particular value which merit statutory protection under Section 28 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The designation of an SSSI is made by English Nature. There is one SSSI in St. Helens, at Stanley Bank Meadow, Haydock, to which this policy applies.

Where, in the opinion of the Council, a specific proposal would impinge directly or indirectly on an SSSI, it will be the applicant's responsibility to show that the value of the site would not be damaged, degraded or otherwise changed by any works connected with the proposal. This may require the applicant to engage suitably qualified consultants to provide the necessary assessment.

Sites of Community Wildlife Interest and Local Nature Reserves

ENV 5 Development directly or indirectly affecting sites of local nature conservation interest which are shown on the Proposals Map and listed in Schedule 3, will only be permitted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the nature conservation interest can be safeguarded. If necessary this may require appropriate conditions and/or seeking legal agreements.

Features of wildlife interest and value can be found throughout the Borough. The sites referred to in Policy ENV 5 are of particular importance locally and worthy of protection. Policy ENV 6 proposes the establishment of Local Nature Reserves, to which this policy will apply.

The PPG on Nature Conservation advises that the protection and enhancement of national and local nature conservation interests is properly co-ordinated in development and land-use policies.

The Sites of Community Wildlife Interest have been identified following an updated survey in 1990, with guidance from the St. Helens Wildlife Advisory Group, based on the following botanical criteria:

- habitat diversity on site
- habitat rarity of occurrence
- species rarity
- species diversity
- contiguity
- naturalness

Other factors, such as value for birds, mammals, insects and potential for education, will also be taken into account by the Council, in considering proposals, when these data are available.

It is the Council's view that it is the combination of the biological with other factors, such as educational potential and recreational value (including relationship with the town's industrial archaeological past), which make these sites particularly valuable in the St. Helens context and worthy of protection.

Exceptions to this policy may be permissible if an applicant can demonstrate that the benefits of the proposed development exceed the harm to the nature conservation value of the site and that any such harm has been kept to a minimum and fully compensated for by habitat creation or local enhancement elsewhere within the site or local area.

All sites were scored on the basis of these biological criteria and those scoring highest included in the Schedule. These sites were subsequently scored on the basis of their educational and community value as well as a further 31 sites which had just missed selection on purely biological grounds. Thus all sites included in the Schedule have been consistently evaluated on biological, educational and community criteria.

Further detail on the process is explained in Supplementary Guidance Note 3.

The schedule will be kept under review and in the event of sites coming to the attention of the Council, which satisfy the selection criteria, then these will be added to the Schedule and Policy ENV 5 will apply.

Equally, sites could be deleted from the Schedule if they no longer satisfy the selection criteria.

Where, in the opinion of the Council, a specific proposal would impinge directly or indirectly on a Site of Community Wildlife Interest or RIGS, it will be the applicant's responsibility to show that the value of the site would not be damaged, degraded or otherwise changed by any works connected with the proposal. This may require the applicant to engage suitably qualified consultants to provide the necessary assessment.

It will also be an applicant's responsibility to show that development in the vicinity of an identified site of wildlife interest will not have a detrimental effect on them, for example by affecting drainage and water quality.

English Nature is promoting the establishment of locally-based groups to identify sites of regionally important geological/geomorphological interest (RIGS) which could be safeguarded through Local Authority planning policies. These would be essentially equivalent in status to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest. A RIGS group has been established in Merseyside which has identified a number of sites to which Policy ENV 5 will apply. Further sites may be designated as RIGS when identified and evaluated.

Schedule 3 Sites of Community Wildlife Interest

UDP REF	SITE NAME	UDP REF	SITE NAME
1W1	Wood Pit Covert	2W1	Acidic grassland; west of M6
1W2	Lyme Pit Tip	2W2	Glasshouse Close Wood
1W3	Wood Pit Tip	2W3	Stanley Bank Meadows, Wood and Pond
1W4	Crow Lane Copse	2W4	St. Helens Canal, Blackbrook
1W5	Newton Common Pond	2W5	Haresfinch Burgy Bank
1W6	The Dingle	2W6	St. Helens Canal, Merton Bank
1W7	Grassland, North of Sankey Brook	2W7	Merton Bank Marsh
1W8	Mucky Mountains	2W8	Haydock Wood
1W9	Red Brow Wood	2W9	Havannah Flash
1W10	Former Garden, Wargrave	2W10	Cloghe Wood and Grassland
1W11	Newton Brook		
1W12	Gallows Croft		
1W13	Old Hey Wood		

UDP REF	SITE NAME	UDP REF	SITE NAME
3W1	Siding Lane, Rainford	6W1	St. Helens Canal, Broad Oak Basin
3W2	Rainford Linear Park, North	6W2	Banks of Hardshaw Brook
3W3	Rainford Linear Park, South	6W3	Banks of Sutton Brook, Worsley Brow
3W4	Billinge Beacon	6W4	Grassland by Parr Moss
3W5	Wooded Gulley, Billinge	6W5	Sutton Moss
3W6	Disused Depot, Rainford	6W6	Ellamsbridge to Watery Lane
3W7	Twelve Yarder Ponds	6W7	Bold Moss
3W8	Birchley Wood	6W8	Sutton Leach Former Reservoir
3W9	Stream - Birchley/Fir Wood	6W9	Rough Grassland around Sutton Dam
3W10	Fir Wood		Stream
3W11	Fairfield Wood	6W10	Grassland and Scrub by Mineral
3W12	Goyt Hey Wood		Railway
3W13	Carr Mill Road	6W11	Small Ponds groups, south Abbotsfield
3W14	Carr Mill Dam		Road
3W15	Fenny Bank Farm	6W12	Pond, north of Gorsey Lane
3W16	Woodland beside Old Garswood Railway	6W13	Coney Green Wood/Currant Dam
3W17	Moss Plantation, Windle		Plantation
3W18	Clinkham Wood	6W14	Pond, east of Disused Railway
3W19	Emma Wood	6W15	Pond, north of Eccles Plantation
3W20	Carr Mill Dam, South Bank	6W16	Holly Nursery
3W21	Woods at Shaley Brow		
3W22	Bispham Hall Woods and Billinge		
	Plantations		
4W1	St. Helens Borough Cemetery, Windlehurst	Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites	
4W2	Windlehurst Quarry		
4W3	Windlehurst Copse		
4W4	Mill Brook, Eccleston		
4W5	Mill Wood, Eccleston		
4W6	Eccleston Bottom Dam		
4W7	Sales Wood/Gorse Plantation		
4W8	Former Thatto Heath Reservoir		
5W1	Ravenhead Ponds	RIGS 1	Windlehurst Quarry
5W2	Thatto Heath Meadows	RIGS 2	Crank Caverns
5W3	Dobbs Wood - Sherdley Park	RIGS 3	Thatto Heath Railway Cutting
5W4	Delph Wood - Sherdley Park	RIGS 4	Wargrave Quarry
5W5	Dam Wood - Sherdley Park	RIGS 5	Cronton Lane
5W6	Ansdell's Wood	RIGS 6	Taylor Park Quarry
5W7	Disused Railway, Micklehead Green	RIGS 7	The Dingle

Local Nature Reserves

ENV 6	Land at Stanley Bank, Haydock is allocated as a Local Nature Reserve. The Council will declare further Local Nature Reserves where appropriate and Policy ENV 4 will apply to such sites.	-	The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (Section 21), enables Local Authorities to declare Local Nature Reserves, which bestows additional protection to sites and the opportunity to manage them for public enjoyment.
		-	

The first Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is at Stanley Bank, which includes the Borough's only Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). In considering further designations, priority will be given to examples of habitats under greatest threat from the SCWI/RIGS list or which provide opportunities for environmental education.

~~*Nature Conservation Within Development Sites*~~

~~ENV 7 In determining applications for planning permission and when considering its own development schemes and proposals, the Council will ensure that effects upon wildlife and geological features are taken into full account. Where development proposals are acceptable in principle, the developer will be required to include measures to mitigate their effects upon features of nature conservation value.~~

~~Policies ENV 5, 6 and 8 deal specifically with sites which should be protected on account of their nature conservation value. However, it should not be assumed that nature conservation interest is restricted to such sites. It is quite likely that development sites contain features of value – a pond or hedgerow for example. Equally, opportunities may exist to add to the Borough's wildlife resources.~~

~~This policy is intended to cover those situations where the wildlife interest may not be of sufficient value to resist development but where, with a sympathetic approach, it may be possible to integrate existing features into the final scheme design. Where that is not possible, conditions will be applied to require the creation of new wildlife habitats as part of a landscaping scheme, wherever possible.~~

~~There are certain sites in the Borough which, on botanical grounds, would merit inclusion in the Register of Sites of Community Wildlife Interest. However, these sites either have the benefit of planning permission or coincide with an alternative allocation in the Plan, where the Council, in seeking a balance between the interests of conservation and development, has considered that the development interest should prevail. Nevertheless, the wildlife value of these sites should remain a policy consideration because:~~

- ~~(i) development may be delayed, in which case temporary management of the site, with the landowner's agreement, may be possible;~~
- ~~(ii) in considering specific development proposals, opportunities may exist to integrate the wildlife interest.~~

~~The sites are as follows:~~

~~Islands Brow Burgy (2H1)~~

~~Marshes on Wasteland, Haydock Industrial Estate (2Ee11)~~

~~Pond at Piele Road, Haydock Industrial Estate~~

~~Marshes on Wasteland, Haydock Industrial Estate (2Ee6 and 7)~~

~~Berrington Lane Sand Pit
Sedgemoor, Windlehurst
Lea Green Colliery (5Ec5)
Sherdley Colliery (5Ec7)~~

Derelict Land as a Wildlife Resource

ENV 8 **Consideration will be given to the retention, creation or enhancement of features of wildlife value in proposals for the treatment of derelict and vacant land.**

Derelict and vacant land can be a major resource in St. Helens where unusual plant communities have arisen on spoil heaps, resulting from the glass, coal and chemical industries. Disused railway lines and canals have also been identified as wildlife resources.

Species Protection Policy

ENV 9 **~~Development will not be permitted where the Council is satisfied that it would have an adverse effect on wildlife species and their habitats protected by law. In sensitive locations, where such harm can be avoided, and subject to all other relevant considerations, planning permission will be granted but conditions will be attached to the permission, and/or obligations sought under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to ensure protected species and their habitats are adequately safeguarded.~~**

~~The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 recognised that protecting sites of interest for nature conservation was only a part of the necessary protection for wildlife. A number of species are also protected. These may be plants or animals, on land or in water, and are identified in Schedule 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Animals which are mobile may use areas outside designated sites for shelter and/or breeding. If damage or destruction to these places occurs or if the animal itself is killed or prevented from using these areas, then prosecutions may result.~~

~~The species most likely to be encountered in St. Helens and which may be affected by development are bats, the barn owl and great crested newt.~~

~~The Council has a duty to take full account of wildlife in determining all planning applications, and therefore, will require the developer to provide details relating to protected species, prior to considering an application. This is likely to be in the form of surveys undertaken by suitably qualified persons and incorporation of mitigation measures where appropriate.~~

~~There is other current legislation aimed at protecting particular species and their habitats, for example, the Protection of Badgers Act 1972 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994. It is possible that further legislation may be enacted during the currency of the UDP of which this policy will take account where it is relevant to land use planning matters.~~

~~**Trees and Woodland**~~

~~Trees and woodlands make an enormous contribution to the image of the Borough and provide a variety of benefits, including:~~

- ~~(i) visual amenity;~~
- ~~(ii) informal recreation;~~
- ~~(iii) nature conservation;~~
- ~~(iv) shelter~~
- ~~(v) educational opportunities;~~
- ~~(vi) renewable resources;~~
- ~~(vii) reduction in pollution.~~

~~Whilst the average woodland cover of the United Kingdom is 10% of the land area, in St. Helens only some 3.5% is woodland.~~

~~Many opportunities for woodland planting are available on derelict land, particularly in the southern part of the Borough, with community and improved landscape benefits. The Wasteland to Woodland project and Mersey Forest initiative will enable these opportunities to be realised.~~

~~There is a wide range of activities which a local authority can pursue to secure the protection, management and planting of trees and woodlands, including the management of its own land. It is the intention to review these opportunities in a comprehensive manner and produce a Strategy for action.~~

The Mersey Forest

ENV 10 The Council will encourage woodland planting especially where this would contribute to the creation of the Mersey Forest. The sites identified below are allocated for woodland planting, informal recreation and wildlife habitat creation.

The Mersey Forest as described in para 3.15 (Part 1), is a joint initiative between nine local authorities and the Countryside and Forestry Commissions to establish a 'community forest' north and south of the River Mersey, to the east of Liverpool.

Area			
(i)	Lyme and Wood Pits	1	St. Helens is playing a significant part in a number of ways but particularly by targeting derelict, neglected and underused land for woodland planting. The Council through its Wasteland to Woodland partnership has recognised this potential, especially in the area of degraded landscape to the south and east of the Borough. Approximately 400 hectares of wasteland have been identified for large-scale woodland planting through joint action by the major landowners, funding agencies and the Council.
(ii)	Princess Pit	2	
(iii)	Greengate Tip	5	
(iv)	Roughdales Tip	5	
(v)	Ravenhead Nature Park	5	
(vi)	Ibstocks complex including Buff Quarry	5	
(vii)	Red Quarry	5	
(viii)	Sutton Manor Colliery	5	
(ix)	Lea Green Colliery	5	
(x)	Lea Green Farm (part)	5	
(xi)	Clock Face Colliery	6	As well as promoting the woodland planting of sites identified in Policy ENV 10, the Council will keep under review the opportunity to bring additional areas into the Mersey Forest initiative and other sites will be identified as programmes develop. While many of the Plan's policies will assist in achieving the aims of the Mersey Forest, the following are particularly important:
(xii)	Bold Moss Tip	6	
(xiii)	Bold Colliery	6	
(xiv)	Ex-Sidac Car Park and Filter Beds	6	

ENV 3 Greenways

ENV 11-13 Other Tree Planting policies

ENV 20	Landscape Renewal
ENV 21	Environmental Improvements within Transport Corridors
ENV 22	The St. Helens Canal
REC 5	Strategic Footpaths and Cycleways

As a general rule, any new or replacement planting should use native species.

Tree Surveys

ENV 11 Where a proposal affects a site containing existing trees or woodlands, the Council will normally require applications to be accompanied by a tree survey, to enable the effect of the development on the trees to be properly assessed.

It is necessary to have adequate information about the condition, location, size and type of trees on a site if proposals are to be properly assessed. Surveys should be carried out by a qualified arboriculturalist, particularly on those sites with significant tree cover.

The survey should provide the following information, as appropriate:

- (i) location of all trees, tree groups, where appropriate, woodlands and hedgerows;
- (ii) trunk girths of free-standing trees at 1.3m above ground height and extent of canopy spread;
- (iii) species of free-standing trees, or numbers of different species in tree groups or percentage of different species in woodlands;
- (iv) assessment of general condition of trees;
- (v) information on the existing and proposed ground levels at tree bases within the canopy spread.

Development Affecting Existing Trees

ENV 12A Proposals affecting existing trees and woodlands will not normally be permitted if they:

- (i) would result in significant loss of trees;
- (ii) do not incorporate measures for the successful retention of existing trees;
- (iii) do not make adequate provision for replacement planting to compensate for any losses as a result of development.

Trees are a scarce resource locally and consequently there is a need to conserve existing features whether in the countryside, urban fringe or built-up areas.

The attraction of the St. Helens countryside relies to a significant extent on the small woodlands which break up the agricultural field pattern. The wooded valleys, in the north of the Borough are particularly noteworthy and include ancient woodlands. Many of the woods are now mature or over mature and in a degraded state and there are very few younger woodlands. There is a need for new planting for landscape improvement and to assist rural economy

- ENV 12B** Where planning permission is granted the Council may impose conditions requiring:
- (i) trees or woodlands affected by development to be replaced on at least a 2:1 basis, either within the development site, or in a suitable area nearby, under an agreement between the Council and the developer;
 - (ii) layouts to provide adequate spacing between existing trees and buildings, taking into account the existing and potential size of trees and their impact both above and below ground level;
 - (iii) retained trees and woodland to be protected and managed before, during and for a prescribed period after construction;
 - (iv) trees to be replaced in the event of failure or damage during a prescribed period.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 places a specific duty on the Council to ensure, when granting planning permission that adequate provision is made for the preservation and planting of trees. In appropriate circumstances, the Council will make use of its powers to secure the protection of amenity trees and woodlands including newly planted trees, by making a Tree Preservation Order. Existing large or mature trees are of a higher amenity importance and should be retained in favour of proposed replacement trees, as a general rule.

Landowners often require advice and guidance on techniques and grants. The Council will encourage owners and tenants to manage, maintain and restore existing woodlands through recognised grant schemes operated by the Forestry Authority, Countryside Commission or other grant-assisting bodies.

As a general rule, replacement planting should be of locally native species.

New Tree Planting on Development Sites

- ENV 13** The Council will normally require the planting of trees on development sites, and, in particular, will require planting to be an integral part of proposals for sites which are:
- (i) adjacent to roads or other public frontages;
 - (ii) adjoining amenity areas and open spaces;
 - (iii) in or adjacent to the Green Belt;
 - (iv) within or adjacent to any environmental improvement area or corridor defined elsewhere in the Plan;
 - (v) in areas deficient in trees.

It is desirable to increase tree cover in the Borough, thus improving the appearance of the area, giving shelter and enhancing wildlife habitats. With increasing traffic and associated pollution, the value of trees and shrubs for intercepting pollutants is an additional reason for well landscaped traffic routes

The Council will expect trees to be designed into development proposals from the outset. Conditions will be imposed to ensure that planting proposals are carried out and maintained.

Agricultural Land Quality

- ENV 14** In considering planning applications for development on agricultural land the Council will:
- (i) ~~not normally permit development on the best and most versatile land, that is grades 1, 2 and 3A as classified by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; and~~

Practically all agricultural land in St. Helens is within the Green Belt. Almost half (46.7%) of farmland in St. Helens is classified as Grades 1 and 2, compared to 17.4% in England and Wales. Government guidance (PPG 7) states that Grades 1, 2 and 3A constitute the best and most versatile land and considerable weight should be given to

- (ii) **require proof that, where planning applications entail the use of land for purposes other than built development, the land will be capable of return to agricultural production in the future without significant loss of land quality.**

protecting such land against development. Once agricultural land is developed, even for soft uses such as golf courses, return to best quality agricultural use is seldom practicable.

Farm Structure

ENV 15 Development which would substantially erode the viability of a farm holding or impair farm structure will not normally be allowed. Applicants will be expected to submit details of the effect of proposed developments on farm structure and viability.

PPG 7 acknowledges that the loss of part of a holding can have important implications for the remainder and that the effect of severance and fragmentation upon the farm and its structure may be relevant. In St. Helens in 1991, 61 out of a total of 153 holdings were smaller than 20 hectares and only 13 were larger than 100 ha (June 1991 Agricultural Census). The viability of many holdings is thus marginal.

Design of Agricultural and Forestry Developments

ENV 16 New buildings for use in connection with agriculture and forestry, together with alterations and extensions to existing buildings, and other developments, will be required to:

- (i) minimise impact on the surrounding landscape, trees and features of wildlife value;**
- (ii) be sited close to existing building , wherever possible;**
- (iii) have no significant adverse effect on the amenities of any neighbouring dwellings or other buildings connected with agriculture;**
- (iv) respect the scale and local tradition of existing buildings.**

Many modern agricultural buildings are stark and utilitarian in design, with little attempt being made to blend them in with traditional farm buildings in the area or with the landscape. Government guidance in PPG 7, while acknowledging that choices of design and materials may be constrained by operational needs, expects farm buildings to be designed and built to blend with neighbouring buildings and with the surrounding countryside. Where planning permission or prior notification to the Council for agricultural built development is required, the Council will seek to achieve these aims by reference to Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 2.

Farm Diversification

ENV 17 Planning permission may be granted for small, farm based developments where it can be demonstrated that:

- (i) the proposal relates to land that is part of an existing agricultural holding under the control of the applicant;**
- (ii) the proposal will assist in maintaining the viability of that agricultural holding;**

Government guidance (PPG 7) states that changes in agriculture mean that it is no longer necessary to retain as much land as possible in agricultural use. It suggests that the priority should now be to sustain diversification of the rural economy, so as to provide wide and varied employment opportunities and to encourage a broadening of the economic base of rural areas, while protecting the environment. This would generally include the re-use or adaptation of

- (iii) the proposal does not involve the division of the proposed enterprise from the existing agricultural holding;
- (iv) the enterprise will not reduce the viability of neighbouring agricultural holdings, by increasing problems such as trespass, vandalism, theft or in any other way;
- (v) the development will not lead to irreversible development or reduction in quality of the best and most versatile agricultural land;
- (vi) the enterprise is not a clear case of over development of the site and would not harm the objectives of the Green Belt;
- (vii) the activity, and any related building works or change of use is compatible with its immediate neighbours, in terms of general environmental consideration;
- (viii) in relation to proposed farm shops where a specific planning permission is necessary that:
 - (a) the net retail floorspace will not exceed 100 square metres;
 - (b) in the case of new buildings, no existing farm buildings are available to accommodate the use;
 - (c) the primary purpose is the sale of produce grown on the farm or in the immediate locality.

agricultural and other rural buildings, provided their form, bulk and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. It is not necessary to consider whether a building is needed for its present agricultural use or other purposes. The PPG remains, however, fully committed to policies for conserving and protecting all areas of countryside, including Green Belts.

Any proposals for farm diversification will also be required to comply with other relevant Plan policies, particularly those relating to car parking standards, satisfactory access to the highway network, design of any new building and use of appropriate materials and adequate landscaping/boundary treatment.

The immediate locality will be interpreted as within 5 km of the proposed farm shop.

For clarification, criterion (iii) would permit the development to be operated by somebody other than the farmer so long as the enterprise is not self-contained and either physically or financially separated from the farm.

~~Landscape Protection~~

ENV 18 ~~In considering applications for development in, or on the edge of the countryside, the Council will have regard to the effect on the appearance of the surrounding area.~~

~~Much of the countryside surrounding the built up of the Borough is attractive and worthy of safeguarding. While Green Belt designation will protect much of this rural landscape from the direct effects of development, a policy is required which ensures that new developments in or near open countryside do not damage the rural landscape.~~

Heritage Landscape

ENV 19 ~~Two areas of Heritage Landscape, at Bold Hall and between Rainford and Billinge are identified on the Proposals Map. Development will not be permitted which would adversely affect the special character, amenity and appearance of these areas.~~

The Merseyside Structure Plan identified two areas of Heritage Landscape in St. Helens. One, primarily historic in character, centred on Bold Hall in the south; the second was a more extensive area of relatively unspoilt, undulating landscape between Rainford and Billinge, in the north, including the highest

point in the District. These are confirmed and shown on the Proposals Map.

However, the Council intends to review the heritage Landscape designations for possible amendment at a future update of the Plan, to assess:

- (i) whether areas of historic or archaeological value in addition to Bold Hall merit such designation; and
- (ii) where broader criteria, such as visual quality, are to be applied, whether areas in addition to that previously identified around Rainford and Billinge, including that inherited from Wigan as a result of boundary amendments, should be included.

Landscape Renewal

ENV 20 The Council will give priority to landscape renewal within that area which includes:

- (i) land between Rainhill and Thatto Heath/Sutton Manor;
- (ii) land north of the M62 and south of Clock Face and Sutton;
- (iii) land between Haydock and Newton-le-Willows;
- (iv) land to the south and east of Newton-le-Willows

Within this area new development will not normally be permitted if it would lead to further deterioration of the landscape or prejudice efforts to secure landscape renewal.

This area broadly conforms to the zone of 'degraded landscape' diagrammatically identified in the Merseyside Structure Plan. It has also provided the focus for the Wasteland to Woodland initiative (para. 4.20, Part 1). The need for priority action is influenced by the visual prominence of the area from several strategic transport routes, including the M62 Link Road and the Liverpool-Manchester railway line.

The Council will continue to promote the improvement of the landscape in partnership with the private sector and other agencies. The area now forms part of the proposed Mersey Forest (para. 3.15, Part 1 and Policy ENV 10)

Environmental Improvements within Transport Corridors

ENV 21 Within the major transport corridors as shown on the Proposals Maps, the Council will:

- (i) require new development to be of a high design standard and suitably screened or landscaped, wherever necessary;
- (ii) refuse consent for advertisements and take action to remove existing advertisement displays which, by reason of their size or character, would detract or already detract from their visual amenity;
- (iii) serve notices, where appropriate, requiring landowners to maintain their land in a tidy condition;
- (iv) give priority attention to the treatment of land in Council ownership, promote enhancement schemes and encourage other agencies to do likewise.

The policy will apply to the major transport routes within the Borough which carry the majority of the visitors to St. Helens and those passing through. The appearance of the Borough from these routes is important in creating a favourable impression thus complementing the Borough's efforts to attract new investment, as part of its urban regeneration initiatives.

The routes in question are:

- (i) the A580 (East Lancashire Road);
- (ii) the M62;
- (iii) the M62 Link Road;
- (iv) the M6;
- (v) the Liverpool to Wigan railway line;
- (vi) the Liverpool to Manchester railway.

The level of advertising throughout the Borough is generally at a reasonable level, but there are certain concentrations, particularly on radial routes, which can be described as excessive. A successful pilot programme of discontinuance on Parr Stocks Road/Broad Oak Road will be repeated elsewhere in the Borough as necessary and as resources permit.

St. Helens Canal

ENV 22 The Council will:

- (i) protect the route of the St. Helens Canal;
- (ii) encourage its restoration for recreational and other uses;
- (iii) improve the environment along the canal corridor.

Development proposals which would prejudice the long-term aspiration of returning the canal to navigational use will normally be refused.

The St. Helens Canal, although not a listed structure, is of major historical importance, being the first modern canal of the industrial revolution. Although it had been neglected for many years, it is now being gradually restored by the Council and voluntary sector, particularly the Ravenhead section within the Town Centre and Newton Locks in Area 1. The canal is the central feature of a major part of the Greenway network (see Policy ENV 3) and provides opportunities for wildlife, informal recreation, education and general environmental enhancement. As restoration of the canal proceeds and public accessibility increases, opportunities for economic development may also increase. These, also, will be considered positively subject to not prejudicing the environmental and navigational aspirations of the canal restoration.

Opportunities to return the canal to navigational use are severely affected by past development. Although resource constraints may restrict significant advances during the

Archaeology

ENV 23 In considering development proposals affecting archaeological sites or remains the Council will:

- (i) require developers, landowners and other interested parties to take full account of known or anticipated archaeological remains in their proposals;**
- (ii) normally resist any proposal adversely affecting a Scheduled Ancient Monument;**
- (iii) normally refuse planning permission where:**
 - (a) in the opinion of the Council, insufficient information is provided to determine the archaeological impact or development;**
 - (b) the development would prejudice the preservation of archaeological features where they are found;**
 - (c) in those situations where preservation is not feasible, adequate provision has not been made for the excavation and recording of the site.**

Plan period, the Plan can assist in ensuring that no further impediments are placed in the way of securing this objective.

Archaeological remains are unique, finite and irreplaceable. The Borough has a rich heritage of archaeological sites, which contribute towards a greater understanding of the social and historical development of the area.

Archaeological information for over 2000 sites in St. Helens is held on the Merseyside Sites and Monument Record (SMR). This definitive record is held, maintained and continuously updated by Liverpool Museum.

There are ten Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Borough. Applications for Scheduled Monument Consent must be submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment.

Government guidance, PPG 16 'Archaeology and Planning' recognises the importance of archaeological remains and the need to give them full consideration in the planning and development control process.

Developers will be encouraged to discuss their proposals at an early stage with a recognised archaeological body.

Work undertaken as a requirement of ENV 23 (iii)(c) should be by a qualified archaeologist in accordance with a programme approved by the Council and the results lodged with the Sites and Monuments Record at Liverpool Museum.

Designation and Review of Conservation Areas

ENV 24A In considering whether the designation of Conservation Areas is necessary in order to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of an area, the Council will apply the following criteria:

- (i) the area should have a special architectural or historic character and interest, which is desirable to preserve or enhance;**

There are seven Conservation Areas in the Borough as follows:

- (i) Victoria Square, St. Helens Town Centre**
- (ii) High Street, Newton-le-Willows**
- (iii) Willow Park, Newton-le-Willows**
- (iv) Rainhill**
- (v) Rainford No. 1**
- (vi) Rainford No. 2**
- (vii) Vulcan Village, Newton-le-Willows**

- (ii) **the area should mainly comprise buildings and the spaces between buildings but may include peripheral land where it is important to the setting of the core area;**
- (iii) **while the area may contain Listed Buildings this is not essential. The spaces between buildings will include roads, footpaths, walls, fencing, railings, gates, landscaped areas, trees and other features of landscape interest;**
- (iv) **the resources available for designation, consultation and enhancement**

With the exception of Vulcan Village (1986), all the areas were designated as Conservation Areas in 1976. The current relevant legislation is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 69 of this Act states that it shall be the duty of Local Planning Authorities 'from time to time' to review existing Conservation Areas and to investigate whether other parts of their administrative areas shall be designated as new Conservation Areas.

A review exercise has already been carried out in the Rainhill, High Street and Willow Park areas. It is not necessary to review Vulcan Village because of its relatively recent designation. It is considered that Billinge and Eccleston Park should be the initial focus for future investigations into new designations.

Section 71 of the 1990 Act states it shall be the duty of Local Planning Authorities 'from time to time' to formulate and publish proposals for the 'preservation and enhancement' of their Conservation Areas. Due to the financial constraints within which the Council operates, it will be necessary to secure external sources of funding to satisfy this requirement.

Development in Conservation Areas

ENV 24B The Council will preserve or enhance the special character of its Conservation Areas by:

- (i) **requiring a high standard of design for new buildings or alterations to existing buildings, thus ensuring that any new building is designed to harmonise, in form, scale and materials with the area as a whole, and immediate surroundings, in particular;**
- (ii) **ensuring that materials used in paving or other ground surface treatment are sympathetic;**
- (iii) **encouraging the retention of existing mature trees, open spaces and other features which contribute to the character of the area and planting of additional trees, where appropriate;**
- (iv) **resisting residential development in the rear gardens of existing dwellings where this would be out of character with the area;**
- (v) **the preparation of enhancement schemes, subject to the availability of resources; and**

In considering applications for demolition the Council will take into account the quality of the building, its contribution to the overall character of the area; and the positive effect redevelopment would have on the Conservation Area in question. Replacement development will not be permitted unless it would serve to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area.

Where demolition is acceptable in principle, consent to demolish will not normally be granted unless a satisfactory treatment of the site is specified or a satisfactory replacement development is proposed.

- (vi) normally resisting the demolition of buildings which contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

Listed Buildings

ENV 25 The Council will seek to protect Listed Buildings, and their settings from harmful development and in considering applications for Listed Building Consent the Council will:

- (i) **require that all alterations are in keeping with the character of the building;**
- (ii) **seek continued occupation or alternative use of the building in preference to demolition.**

Buildings are listed because of their individual architectural merit, historical associations, sociological interest, value in technological innovation or for their contribution to the townscape of rural or industrial groups.

The 120 Listed Buildings in the Borough are very varied in type and include the railway viaduct at Newton-le-Willows, Birchley Hall at Billinge, the former Pilkington Brothers Head Office in Grove Street, the double locks on the St. Helens Canal and 17 churches.

Because there are relatively few statutorily protected buildings in the Borough, their overall contribution to the quality of the environment is important. The Council will therefore exercise great care when dealing with applications for development affecting Listed Buildings.

However, there are other buildings in the Borough which have architectural or historical merit which are not statutorily listed. The value of these buildings often does not become apparent until they are threatened by development proposals. In such circumstances, the Council would seek to obtain statutory protection.

The legislation and national guidance are designed to ensure that listed buildings are preserved and that alterations are subject to strict control. This policy is intended to see to it that appropriate high standards are set.

Details of what steps have been taken to secure continued occupation or alternative use will be required as part of a comprehensive case, in the event of any application for partial or total demolition.

Contaminated Land

ENV 26 On contaminated sites or sites suspected of being either contaminated or affected by contamination, the Council will require developers to carry out investigations to assess the nature and extent of contamination and to prepare programmes or schemes of works to treat or minimise the problems. Planning permission will normally only be granted subject to conditions requiring appropriate remedial works to be undertaken.

Contaminated land is a significant problem in St. Helens, as a result of its industrial past. The problems include heavy metal contamination, alkali waste from the chemicals industry and methane gas from landfill sites. The Environment Agency has notified the Council of 60 sites where it requires to be consulted on any development within 250 metres, under the terms of Article 10 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995. Approximately 16% of the

Borough's land area may be affected by landfill gas within these consultation zones.

Circular 21/87 advises local planning authorities to set out in their Development Plans policies for the use of contaminated land and criteria which will be applied in determining planning applications.

Development or disturbance of contaminated land may mobilise contaminants and introduce them into the water environment. Schemes for developing contaminated land must include measures to avoid pollution of groundwater and surface water.

New Hazardous Development

ENV 27 New development which would be notifiable, under the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982, or which could give rise to serious nuisance to the surrounding population will not be permitted. However, sympathetic consideration may be given if all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- (i) there would be an overriding benefit to the community, such as assisting in safeguarding significant existing employment opportunities or reducing existing risk levels;**
- (ii) the proposal would not prejudice the overall Plan Strategy;**
- (iii) the proposal would not place residents within the vicinity of the plant at unacceptable risk; and**
- (iv) the proposal would not cause a nuisance to residents within the vicinity of the plant.**

Certain sites and pipelines are designated as notifiable installations by virtue of the quantities of hazardous substance stored or used. The siting of such installations will be subject to planning controls aimed at keeping these separated from housing and other land uses with which such installations might be incompatible from the safety viewpoint. To this end the Council will seek the advice of Health and Safety Executive on the suitability of a development in relation to the risks that the notified installation might pose to the surrounding population.

There are currently four notifiable processes in St. Helens. The Health and Safety Executive have identified a consultation zone around each plant and are consulted on significant planning applications within the zones. One of these, the Hays Chemicals Plant, is in addition, the only installation in the Borough where the Control of Industrial Major Accident Hazards (CIMAH) Regulations 1982 also apply. Details of the zones and the HSE guidance are provided in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4.

It is the intention that ENV 27 shall apply primarily to development which is new to the Borough and not to existing sites. However the policy will be used as a guide to proposals to extend development at existing sites, with the exception of the Hays Chemicals plant which is subject to a separate policy AP6.1.

Experience of the operation of these installations has been varied. In some cases, few problems have arisen but at the Hays Chemicals plant, there have, in the past, been incidents of chemical emission and community disruption. However, there has been no significant emission from the plant since 1986.

The UDP has enabled the Council to draw up policies on the siting of future hazardous development and on the use of land near hazardous installations. A balance is sought between the requirements of this industrial sector, public safety, amenity and the requirements of urban regeneration. It is the Council's view that the introduction of any new processes must be viewed with extreme caution, to minimise the possibility of risk to existing residents and occupiers, the negative impact such processes can have on the image of the area, and avoid conflict with the aims of urban regeneration.

Development within Health and Safety Executive Consultation Zones

ENV 28A Within the consultation zones of existing notifiable installations, the Council, in consultation with the Health and Safety Executive, will seek to ensure that no new developments take place which would significantly increase the population at risk.

The areas covered by the Unitary Development Plan already contain a number of installations handling notifiable substances, including high pressure natural gas transmission pipeline. Whilst they are subject to stringent controls under existing health and safety legislation, it is considered prudent to control the kinds of development permitted in the vicinity of these installations. In determining whether or not to grant consent for a proposed development within these consultation distances, the Council will take account of the advice it receives from the Health and Safety Executive about the risks to the proposed development from the notifiable installation.

Details of the following matters will be required in support of applications for new development in the HSE consultation zones:

- (i) type of development;
- (ii) number of people normally present;
- (iii) length of time spent in the premises both indoors and outdoors;
- (iv) age and health of people normally present;
- (v) extent of control over activities at the facility;
- (vi) ease of evacuation/sealing off the building;
- (vii) physical design and construction methods.

ENV 28B Where the proposal is for the redevelopment of a previously occupied site, the Council will give particular consideration to the contribution which the proposal would make to the regeneration of the area.

It is the Council's responsibility to reach a decision on development proposals within a consultation zone taking account of all the relevant planning factors including HSE advice. While being mindful of the need to keep the population at potential risk to a minimum, the Council also considers it has a responsibility to avoid blighting and constraints on urban regeneration, particularly if such a policy is supported by the local community directly affected.

The Council consider that an appropriate balance of objectives can be secured, in certain circumstances, by being prepared to consider favourably applications for development on those sites previously developed but now cleared.

This particular issue relates to land in Sutton (Area 6) affected by the consultation zone surrounding the Hays Chemical Plant.

The information listed in ENV 28A is required in order to assess the potential risks to occupants of new development.

Pollution Control

ENV 29 ~~The Council will not permit development which would introduce or increase pollution to an unacceptable level as a result of emissions or discharge affecting:~~

- ~~(i) surface water including watercourses, ponds and lakes;~~
- ~~(ii) groundwater;~~
- ~~(iii) the air;~~
- ~~(iv) noise levels~~

~~All new developments will be required to meet existing standards relating to air, water, groundwater pollution and noise.~~

~~Pollution is the release of substances into the air, water or on to land which are capable of causing harm to man or other living organisms.~~

~~The purpose of this policy is to prevent levels of pollution which would cause harm, adversely affect amenity, prejudice nearby land or adversely affect urban regeneration. The policy will contribute to reducing pollution levels locally, nationally and internationally.~~

~~The primary legislation for pollution control rests outside the Planning Acts, in particular the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Clean Air Act 1993 and the Environment Act 1995 which includes provisions for air pollution and the licensing of waste disposal. It is not the purpose of this policy to be setting standards for pollution control which is the responsibility of other legislation.~~

~~Nevertheless, development plans may also include policies designed to control pollution and to limit and reduce nuisances such as noise, smells and dust.~~

~~However, in implementing the policy the Council will consult with the agencies responsible for applying standards set by Government legislation, including the Environment Agency and Health and Safety Executive.~~

~~As a consequence of this guidance account will be taken of the standards to which these organisations refer, insofar as they have a bearing on land use planning.~~

~~While many improvements have been made, for example in reducing air pollution through the Clean Air Acts, much remains to be done and it can be expected that new targets will be introduced as a result of international agreements and European Community Directives. The quality of the Borough's watercourses remains poor. A contributory factor is the significant area of contaminated land in St. Helens. While Part 1 policy S8 provides a framework for the treatment of such land the process will be expensive and lengthy. It is important to ensure therefore that the existing situation is not worsened by new developments. Reference should be made to Policy GEN 1 which sets out criteria for all new development.~~

~~A large part of St. Helens is situated upon a major aquifer which is used for both public and private water supply. The Council will, in consultation with the Environment Agency, ensure that development will not damage these groundwater resources or prevent their use.~~

Drainage

ENV 30 Planning permission will not be granted for those forms of development which:

- (i) are in areas liable to flooding;**
- (ii) cause loss of access to watercourses for future maintenance;**
- (iii) cause loss of natural flood plain except in exceptional circumstances and where compensatory measures are provided as agreed in consultation with the Environment Agency;**
- (iv) give rise to substantial changes in the characteristics of surface water run-off unless adequate off site works can be provided;**
- (v) incorporate drainage or other works which would have a detrimental effect on the conservation of the water environment including its present value or potential for wildlife and recreation;**
- (vi) affect the integrity of flood defences.**

Surface water run-off from new development is a major concern in the Borough and this can prejudice the development of land downstream by increasing the risk of flooding.

This policy has been requested by the Environment Agency and is consistent with Circular 30/92 and PPG 12. The Council will consult the Environment Agency on development proposals and the developer will be required to carry out any necessary flood prevention/alleviation works identified.

The policies in the Plan and in particular the allocation for residential and industrial development in the Plan have been considered by the Environment Agency. Developers attention will be drawn, in particular, to the sites listed below where there will need to be a careful investigation of increased run-off and arising from such an investigation, the possibility that improvement works to the affected watercourse will be required or run-off attenuation measures agreed as part of the development: 5H5, 5Ec1-5Ec5.

Criterion (v) complements Policy ENV 3 Greenways, by giving additional definition to the protection of the water environment outside the Greenway network. Reference should also be made to Policy REC 7 which encourages the recreational use of water areas.

Water Industry Investment

Adequate water and waste water services are vital to new developments, the communities they serve and to the environment. Department of the Environment Circular 17/91 (Water Industry Investment, Planning considerations) gives guidance to Planning Authorities about the planning implications of an investment programme being undertaken by the Water Industry. Investment by the Water Industry is concentrated in a number of areas covering water and waste water treatment and the production of incidental renewable energy resources. Much of this investment is required to comply with EC Directives including the:

European Communities Bathing Water Directive (76/60/EEC), EC Drinking Water Directive (80/778/EEC), implemented by the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 1989, and EC Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (92/271/EEC).

The Council recognises the requirements placed upon the Water Industry and:

- (i) will work with the Industry to facilitate development proposals which will have major environmental benefits both in St. Helens and regionally;
- (ii) will work with North West Water Limited, the Environment Agency, the Mersey Waste Disposal authority and other Local Authorities in the region to ensure that investment by or on behalf of the Water Industry is planned in an effective manner;
- (iii) will continue to work closely with North West Water to enable them to meet their statutory obligations to the benefit of the community and environment;
- (iv) will make every effort to handle applications expeditiously in accordance with Government Guidance given in Circular 17/91;
- (v) will also work with the Water Industry to help ensure that the environmental impacts of new investment are minimised and careful evaluation given to, amongst other issues, environmental amenity and pollution.

Storage of Caravans

ENV 31 Favourable consideration may be given to proposals to store caravans within buildings in the countryside, provided that the Council is satisfied that the building is not required for agricultural or other purposes appropriate to a rural area. Applications for the storage of caravans within the enclosed farm complexes or in unobtrusive locations on associated land will be considered in accordance with the following criteria:

- (i) **the effect on visual amenities, including existing trees;**
- (ii) **the effect on productive agricultural land;**
- (iii) **the effect on areas of ecological interest;**
- (iv) **the quality of proposed landscaping (planting of native species will be a normal requirement and may be required off-site);**

Householders recognise that the appearance of a residential area may be spoiled by the presence of caravans in front gardens. They can also be a source of friction with neighbours whose light and outlook is affected. However, planning permission is not required by a person wishing to store a touring caravan within the curtilage of a dwelling. There is a need, therefore, for the provision of sites where caravans may be kept when not in use. Whilst it would be best for caravans to be stored in the urban area, they are frequently stored in the countryside in old buildings or in corners of fields. However, unlike many other forms of storage, there is little associated activity with storage of caravans and, provided they are well screened, they may have little impact on the amenities of the Green Belt.

- (v) **standard and location of vehicular access; and**
- (vi) **the effect on the objectives of the Green Belt.**

RECREATION

RECREATION

Recreation opportunities make a significant contribution to the quality of life and well-being of the Borough's population. The leisure industry represents a growing sector of the national economy in terms of employment, income and investment. Demand is growing and an increasing proportion of consumer expenditure is directed toward leisure activities.

Strategic Guidance asks Councils to work with the Regional Sports Council when considering sports and leisure facilities. The Council intends to prepare a Sport and Recreation Strategy in response to the North West Council for Sport and Recreation's encouragement to local authorities to take a strategic approach to the planning, provision and development of such facilities.

The UDP provides the land use planning framework for the provision and safeguarding of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities in the Borough. This role is emphasised in the Government's PPG Note 17 "Sport and Recreation".

The Countryside Commission, in its 'Recreation 2000' strategy highlights the role of all relevant organisations in promoting opportunities for countryside recreation and raising public awareness of countryside issues. The UDP will provide the planning framework for the Council's Countryside Recreation Strategy which focuses on the general management of the countryside, raising public awareness and understanding and promoting public access.

Indoor Recreation

~~REC 1 The Council will encourage the provision of indoor leisure and recreation facilities, including those serving a wider regional market, provided proposals do not conflict with other UDP policies.~~

~~Existing indoor facilities consist of four swimming pools and four sports halls available for community use. The Council will review the adequacy of these facilities, as part of the preparation of its Sports and Recreation Strategy. However, it is likely that limited resources will restrict the Council's action to make further improvements to existing facilities.~~

~~A flexible approach to potential initiatives from the private sector is required, in order to take advantage of opportunities to enhance the Borough's leisure facilities, subject to compliance with relevant policies.~~

Development Affecting Recreational Facilities

REC 2 Planning permission will not be granted for developments which would result in the loss of outdoor formal and informal recreation facilities, including sports pitches, where there is an identified local need.

In assessing local need the Council will have regard to the following:

- (i) the existing recreational use of the facility;**
- (ii) existing levels of provision in relation to the following minimum standards:**

Open space is a valuable resource for outdoor recreation for the community, including the young, elderly and disabled. It can take the form of formally laid out facilities for organised sports, such as playing fields, courts and bowling greens, either in the public or private sector; equipped children's play areas; and other playing areas suitable for informal use such as by children organising a game of football among themselves.

- (a) 1.6 ha per 1000 population of formal youth and adult playing space;**
- (b) 0.8 ha per 1000 population of children's playing space.**
- (iii) all households should be within 400 metres of open space suitable for informal recreation use and/or children's play;**
- (iv) the results of any local assessments of recreational need.**

In addition to its recreational value, an open space may have other important qualities, such as amenity or wildlife value. Any proposal involving the loss of open space should, in the first instance, be assessed against Policy ENV 1.

The purpose of Policy REC 2 is to give greater definition to recreational need, and provide guidelines against which any development involving the loss of recreational open space will be assessed.

The Council will use the National Playing Field Association's guidelines for the provision of open space in making a general assessment of recreational need, bearing in mind they relate only to formal outdoor sports provision in the public and private sector such as pitches, greens and courts, school playing fields (where available for public use) and outdoor equipped playgrounds. In general terms, the Borough falls below the recommended minimum guidelines target (2.4 ha per 1000) varying from a high in Parr of 4.1 ha to a low of 0.6 ha in Haydock. The area for consideration will be defined initially in relation to the Community Areas shown in Fig. 18. However, depending on the location of the threatened facility, eg. on the boundary of a Community Area, it will be necessary to adopt a flexible but realistic approach.

Wherever possible the NPFA guidelines will be supplemented by assessments of local need. In 1989 Winter Sports Pitch, Tennis and Bowling Strategies were produced. The Winter Sports Pitch Strategy concluded that pitch provision was broadly in balance with demand, with the exception of Billinge and Seneley Green and Newton-le-Willows. It also recognised the role of school playing fields in dual educational and public use.

These strategies are being updated and will be taken into account.

Ease of access to local public open space should be an important consideration in plan preparation. As a general rule the Council will seek to ensure as a minimum that every household has access to at least one area of public open space within 400 metres of home. The ease of accessibility will be taken into account when considering proposals affecting open space.

Fig. 18 Recreation Community Areas

Children's Play

REC 3 Planning permission will not be granted which would lead to a loss of equipped children's play areas, where there is a local need. If the Council allows an exception it will require the developer to provide a replacement play area in the vicinity, or enhance an existing one nearby, acceptable in terms of safety, quality and suitability for children's play.

Play is essential for children's healthy development. It is important therefore that sufficient safe and accessible areas of play are provided close to children's homes. In response to the generally poor condition of the Borough's play areas, the Council have approved a strategy for fixed play provision on children's play areas. A number of sites have been refurbished but, in general terms, significant improvement is restricted by limited resources.

The Council is also seeking to support voluntary sector initiatives which improve provision.

New housing developments often generate additional demand for play facilities which place a strain on existing facilities. Reference should be made to Policy GEN 6 which requires new open space provision to be made on most large developments.

Allotments

REC 4 Planning permission will not be granted for development which would lead to the loss of allotments in the Borough unless:

- (i) the allotments no longer fulfil a local need, and there is unlikely to be a future demand for the plots;
- (ii) a suitable replacement allotment can be provided in the locality of at least equivalent quality and size.

Allotments for growing fruit, vegetables and flowers provide a valuable recreational facility, as well as supplies of fresh produce particularly in those parts of the Borough where private gardens are restricted in size. There are approximately 30 ha of allotments, of which half are in Council ownership. The distribution of sites is uneven, with little provision in Haydock/Blackbrook and Rainford/Billinge/Moss Bank. In general terms, there is sufficient land set aside for allotments, although the popularity of individual sites is governed by the quality of site management.

Footpaths and Cycleways

REC 5 The Council will promote a network of strategic footpaths and cycleways as shown on the Proposals Map and listed below:

- (i) Rainford Junction to Carr Mill;
- (ii) the Sankey Valley;
- (iii) the Sutton Brook Greenway;
- (iv) the Sutton-Bold Mineral Railway;
- (v) Carr Mill to Sutton via the Ravenhead Greenway and Lea Green;
- (vi) Carr Mill to Sutton Manor via Haydock and Bold Moss;
- (vii) Slag Lane;
- (viii) Stanley Bank Farm/Blackbrook Diversion

Several Greenways, such as the Sankey Valley and large parts of Sutton Brook, already exist and are extremely popular for informal recreation. The Borough is characterised by river valleys, canal systems, disused railways and wedges of open land which present opportunities to extend the network and promote links between town and country.

The Council commissioned a feasibility study from the Groundwork Trust to investigate the recreational potential of the disused railway lines. This highlighted the potential of the disused mineral railway between Sutton and the Borough boundary but also identified a network of potential routes taking as its basis those facilities in existence.

The Council will:

- (i) not grant permission for any development which would prejudice the recreation route, unless specific arrangements are made for a suitable alternative linkage;**
- (ii) give due weight to development proposals which would provide new links in the network or improve existing links.**

The network identified has a number of functions:

- (i) to improve access between town and country. The network will assist in improving access to informal recreation opportunities for all. This is in accordance with the Countryside Commission's Recreation 2000 Strategy and the Council's Countryside Recreation Strategy;
- (ii) to create an informal recreation facility accessible to the main concentration of population. The network runs through the built-up area, and the Council's priority areas (see para 4.15, Part 1). The provision of a recreational opportunity within such areas is an important consideration;
- (iii) to link existing and proposed recreational facilities and, in particular, the woodlands to be created as part of the Mersey Forest (see ENV 10). Opportunities to improve cross boundary links such as a link between St. Helens and the Trans Pennine Trail at Widnes, as part of the Mersey Forest route network will be explored. The network, over part of its length, coincides with the Greenways and this Policy should therefore be read in conjunction with Policy ENV 3.
- (iv) to facilitate cycling as a recreational activity and as an alternative method of transport for a range of other activities, such as shopping and journey to work. The network is, therefore, an important complement to Policy TRA 7 which seeks to promote cycling in the Borough. The network, particularly through Route (v), coincides with one of the Council's Economic Priority Areas (Part 1, Policy S3).

In developing the network the Council will liaise with landowners, developers and neighbouring authorities and, where appropriate, make provision for cross-boundary linkages. Account will be taken of the needs of and pressures on agriculture, and the careful management of access to sites of nature conservation interest. The policy is to prevent the long-term implementation of the network being prejudiced. It will not necessarily prevent development on the network so long as provision is made for the footpath/cycleway route.

There is a shortage of bridleways in St. Helens. Opportunities to create new bridleways, particularly within the context of the Mersey Forest sites (ENV 10) will be explored. It is not

considered feasible to include facilities for horseriding throughout the whole network identified in REC 5, particularly in the more urban parts. However, where appropriate, consideration will also be given to this use particularly where the network could link new woodland sites (ENV 10) and any other opportunities for new bridleway creation.

Key Recreation Areas

REC 6 The following areas are identified as Key Recreation Areas:

- (i) **Lyme and Wood Pit;**
- (ii) **St. Helens Canal;**
- (iii) **Haydock Park Racecourse;**
- (iv) **Carr Mill Dam;**
- (v) **Sherdley Park**

Planning permission will not be granted for any development within or adjacent to these areas which could prejudice existing or future recreation potential.

In addition to the recreation potential of the Greenway network (ENV 3) and Wasteland to Woodland sites generally (ENV 10), it is considered that the areas identified in the policy have particular significance for recreation.

Lyme and Wood Pit is a large area of despoiled land which offers considerable potential for sporting and informal recreation activities, and is attracting the interest of the private sector.

The St. Helens Canal, particularly the stretch known locally as 'The Hotties' in St. Helens Town Centre, has significant recreational potential in conjunction with proposals for the World of Glass, focusing on the science and technology of glass-making.

In the case of Haydock Park Racecourse, this is an existing facility attracting approximately 180,000 people per annum.

Carr Mill Dam is a major regional angling and water sports venue, although there is evidence of conflicting interests. Sherdley Park hosts the St. Helens Show, which is one of the largest events of its kind in the country, as well as other sporting and entertainment events.

All of these areas have the potential to attract visitors from beyond the Borough area and may have particular significance as part of the Council's tourism aspirations (see Policy ECON 2).

Water Features

REC 7 The Council will protect the Borough's water areas (rivers, streams, ponds, canals, dams and reservoirs) and seek to promote their recreational use, provided there is no conflict with the ecological value of the area. Development proposals which prejudice existing or potential recreational use will be resisted.

St. Helens, in common with most other areas of Merseyside does not possess any naturally occurring still water areas of any significance.

Many of the water features which do exist in the Borough owe their existence to the area's industrial past. They have been susceptible to neglect and misuse, which can lead to their loss by reclamation or infilling. Between 1968 and 1984, there was a 14% reduction in the total

area of dams, reservoirs and canals in the Borough. In addition, many water courses are affected by pollution, while in the countryside, many ponds have been filled by farmers.

Water provides opportunity for activities such as angling, and water sports (Eccleston Mere and Carr Mill Dam)

In many instances water areas are also of wildlife value and can provide an attractive visual setting for more passive pursuits such as walking and picnicking.

Community Facilities

~~REC 8 The Council will:~~

- ~~(i) not grant planning permission for development involving the loss of existing community facilities for which there is an identified need, unless a suitable alternative facility is provided;~~**
- ~~(ii) grant permission for new community facilities, subject to:~~**
 - ~~(a) there being no adverse effect on residential amenity;~~**
 - ~~(b) car parking requirements being satisfied; and~~**
 - ~~(c) the other requirements of Policy GEN 1 and other relevant general policies being met.~~**

~~Local community facilities are an important feature of community life and can provide social, recreation and educational and spiritual benefits. They include churches and church halls, community halls, libraries, sports halls and schools.~~

MINERAL POLICIES

MINERAL POLICIES

Development Control Criteria

MIN 1 Applications for mineral exploration, working or associated disposal of mineral wastes and the provision of aggregate depots will only be permitted if they meet the following criteria:

- (i) in accordance with the appropriate Government guidance, and with the exception of hydrocarbons, that there is a demonstrable need and market demand and that in the case of all minerals there are proven adequate reserves in terms of quality and quantity;
- (ii) in the case of drift mining and deep mining, the scheme of working minimises subsidence and risk of damage to buildings, structures and land;
- (iii) operations will not have an unacceptable impact on dwellings or other environmentally sensitive uses and identified development sites in terms of visual amenity, noise, vibration, dust, smells, litter, vermin, air, land or water pollution or other nuisance;
- (iv) satisfactory provision is made for screening and landscaping whilst work is in progress, for restoration on completion of operations, which in the case of larger schemes should be phased, and for appropriate aftercare;
- (v) operations will not have an unacceptable effect on the water environment, water resources, groundwater flows or the capacity of flood storage areas;
- (vi) access arrangements are satisfactory and traffic generated will not have an unacceptable effect on properties adjoining routes used by mineral traffic or on safety anywhere between the site and the strategic highways network;
- (vii) operations will not have an unacceptable effect on the viability or structure of agricultural holdings or lead to the permanent loss or reduction in quality of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where

The Plan adopts a criteria-based approach to the assessment of future mineral working proposals and does not identify particular sites for extraction or indicate areas of search. To have attempted to do so would have been technically difficult as the necessary background information is not sufficiently accurate and the required level of research could not be justified by the small number of proposals expected. Prospective mineral operators will need to satisfy the various criteria set out in policy MIN 1, which will be applied Borough-wide.

Because of the broad scope of the policy, covering both underground extraction and surface working, all of the criteria may not be relevant in every case.

All mineral proposals must show that operations can be screened and worked without an unacceptable environmental impact and that, where appropriate, the site can be satisfactorily restored in reasonable time, and that in the case of non-hydrocarbons, there is a demonstrable need for the mineral.

Most mineral exploration is classed as permitted development under the General Development Order (as amended). However, there are circumstances when planning permission is required and in such cases the Council will ensure that environmental impacts are minimised.

Whilst a proposal for mineral extraction may, when considered in isolation be acceptable in that it fulfils the criteria of MIN 1, it may result in the concentration of mineral activity in a restricted area, causing a prolonged and unacceptable burden on local communities. Planning permission will therefore, not be given if proposals increase the overall level of environmental disruption to an unacceptable degree (GEN 2).

necessary conditions will be imposed to ensure that problems caused to adjacent agricultural operations are minimised

- (viii) operations will not have an unacceptable effect on the structural integrity or setting of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, heritage landscapes or conservation areas;
- (ix) operations will not have an unacceptable impact on areas of recreational use or features of landscape, ecological, archaeological or geological interest;
- (x) operations will not prevent the working of other mineral deposits or will not lead to the unacceptable sterilisation of minerals within the site or in adjacent areas;
- (xi) operations will not have an unacceptable impact on the general landscape setting;
- (xii) operations do not increase the extent of active workings in a particular locality to an acceptable degree; and
- (xiii) in the case of oil and gas exploitation, it forms part of an overall scheme for the development of a field approved by the Council.

Operational Criteria

MIN 2 Where working is acceptable in principle, the Council will require applicants to submit schemes of screening, working, progressive restoration (which in the case of larger schemes should be phased) and aftercare for approval. The Council will also, as appropriate:

- (i) limit the duration of operations;
- (ii) control the levels of noise and vibration;
- (iii) control hours of working, vehicle movement and maintenance of plant and equipment;
- (iv) ensure satisfactory access to the site;
- (v) prevent or control the production and disposal of polluted water and dust;
- (vi) ensure the satisfactory disposal of mineral waste; and

Mineral working that is acceptable in principle and fulfils the criteria set out in MIN 1 will be subject to conditions to ensure that precise standards of working and restoration are maintained, in order to minimise the environmental impact of such operations. Where appropriate, legal agreements will be used to reinforce obligations and deal with any off-site matters (MIN 6). Wherever practicable, schemes should provide for progressive restoration, to limit the overall period of disturbance for local communities and harm to the appearance of the area.

- (vii) ensure satisfactory measures are taken to safeguard any known or anticipated features of landscape, ecological, archaeological or geological interest likely to be affected by the workings.

Aggregate Minerals

MIN 3 In considering planning applications for the extraction of aggregate minerals, the Council will have regard to:

- (i) the contribution the proposal may make towards maintaining Merseyside's share of the regional production of aggregates, as expressed in Government Guidelines; and
- (ii) the need to maintain a landbank of reserves with permissions within the Merseyside area, in accordance with MPG 6 - Guidelines for Aggregate Provisions for England and Wales.

The revised MPG 6 was published in April 1994 and uses the results of the 1989 Aggregates Survey as a basis for forecasting regional production and demand for aggregates to the year 2006.

The North West Aggregates Working Party has apportioned likely demand to County level, which in the case of Merseyside has had to be combined with Greater Manchester to protect the commercial confidentiality of producers. The two former County areas are anticipating a demand for 6.6 m tonnes of sand and gravel and 25.2 m tonnes of crushed rock to the year 2006.

Within this period Mineral Planning Authorities are required to provide for a landbank of permissions sufficient for at least seven years extraction, unless exceptional circumstances prevail. This is because the overall process of site selection, acquisition, development and the gaining of planning and other approvals, is very time consuming, and there is a need to ensure a steady and regular supply of aggregate minerals to the construction industry.

In June 1990 the Council granted planning permission for a major aggregates quarry (6.5 million tonnes) in the Bold Heath area of the Borough. These reserves satisfy the landbank requirement for crushed rock throughout the Plan Period.

Protection of Mineral Resources

MIN 4 The Council will normally protect known mineral resources from sterilisation by other forms of development, and will, consider prior extraction of minerals before other development proceeds, subject to compliance with MIN 1-2.

Mineral resources are finite and are likely to be lost when building or other forms of development takes place. Resources which are scarce or economically important should therefore be safeguarded from sterilisation whilst alternative sites can be utilised. Where development is inevitable, the prior extraction of resources will be encouraged, where this is feasible in terms of size and location and subject to compliance with the other Plan policies and proposals. The existing consultation process in the case of special industrial sands will continue to be implemented. Where planning permission is granted for mineral extraction, the Council will expect that all minerals with an economic value within the approved site are exploited.

~~For example, in the case of opencast coal, it is often possible to extract clays of commercial value. Such dual extraction will reduce the demand to exploit other mineral sites.~~

Use of Secondary Aggregates

MIN 5 The Council will support the use of waste materials (such as colliery shale, demolition materials, pulverised fuel ash and ash from railway embankments) as alternatives to newly won minerals, subject to compliance with other Plan policies and provided the urban regeneration strategy is not prejudiced.

In many cases, the use of materials, often perceived as waste, as an alternative to natural aggregates is technically feasible, economically sound and helpful in achieving sustainable development. The use of waste as a secondary aggregate produces benefits in conserving valuable aggregate resources and reducing the quantity of materials requiring disposal.

Transport of Minerals

MIN 6 The Council will support the provision of rail-linked aggregate depots, mineral extraction and disposal points, subject to compliance with policy MIN 1 and other policies and proposals in the UDP. Where road transport is unavoidable the Council will, where appropriate, enter into planning or other agreements to control the routing of vehicles to and from such sites, and secure any necessary highway improvements.

Provision of rail-linked facilities in appropriate locations will reduce the need to move mineral wastes by road and hence provide environmental benefit through reduced traffic congestion and fuel usage. Care will need to be taken to ensure that the resulting road traffic serving the rail facility does not give rise to significant local environmental costs which outweigh the environmental gains elsewhere.

The routes used by heavy vehicles carrying minerals or mineral wastes from mineral workings or depots may be unsuitable on highway and/or environmental grounds. If suitable alternative routes are available, or can be provided, agreement of the operator to use such routes will be required.

Review of Minerals Permissions

MIN 7 In the case of mineral workings which have longstanding planning permissions with inadequate conditions of working or restoration, the Council will seek to bring them up to current standards, in consultation with the operators. The Council will only consider extensions to existing workings if they are included within a comprehensive scheme to ensure interim landscaping, full restoration and appropriate aftercare.

Many old planning permissions characteristically contain a limited number of conditions which are grossly inadequate by today's standards in terms of the controls over site operation and restoration.

The Town and Country Planning (Minerals) Act 1981, as now consolidated in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, gives Local Planning Authorities the power to review existing planning permissions and to modify or revoke earlier permissions, although compensation may be payable to operators where restrictions affect the winning and working of the minerals.

Where extensions to existing sites are sought, the opportunity to consolidate earlier permissions, in order to ensure the comprehensive working and restoration of the

whole of the site, will be a matter for consideration, together with the criteria set out in MIN 1-2.

WASTE DISPOSAL POLICIES

WASTE DISPOSAL POLICIES

Development Control Criteria

~~WD-1 Applications for waste transfer, treatment or disposal facilities will only be permitted if they meet the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) there is a demonstrable need for the facility;~~
- ~~(ii) operations will not have an unacceptable impact on dwellings or other environmentally sensitive uses and identified development sites in terms of visual amenity, noise, vibration, dust, smells, litter, vermin, air, land or water pollution or other nuisance;~~
- ~~(iii) satisfactory provision is made for screening and landscaping whilst work is in progress, for restoration on completion of operations, which in the case of larger schemes should be phased, and for appropriate aftercare;~~
- ~~(iv) operations will not have an unacceptable effect on the water environment, water resources, groundwater flows, or the capacity of flood storage areas;~~
- ~~(v) that access arrangements are satisfactory and traffic generated will not have an unacceptable effect on properties adjoining routes used by traffic, or on road safety anywhere between the site and the strategic highways network;~~
- ~~(vi) operations will not have an unacceptable effect on the viability or structure of agricultural holdings, or lead to the permanent loss or reduction in quality of the best and most versatile land. Where necessary conditions will be imposed to ensure that problems caused to adjacent agricultural operations are minimised;~~
- ~~(vii) will not have an unacceptable effect on the structural integrity or setting of listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, heritage landscapes or Conservation Areas;~~
- ~~(viii) will not have an unacceptable impact on areas of recreational use or features of landscape, ecological, archaeological or geological interest;~~

~~The Plan adopts a criteria-based approach to the assessment of future waste facilities (paying due consideration to the Waste Disposal Plan), and does not seek to identify or allocate specific new sites.~~

~~There are a number of reasons for the Council adopting this approach:~~

- ~~(i) by identifying new sites, little incentive is given to waste minimisation and recycling, as plentiful void supply will maintain current low disposal costs.~~
- ~~(ii) to identify landfill sites, especially those receiving putrescible material, will require detailed technical site assessment for each prospective site, the information for which is not currently available.~~

~~With regard to criterion (i), the Council will consider the principles of proximity, sustainability, regional self-sufficiency and the need to encourage movement up the waste hierarchy when determining applications for planning permission~~

~~In the past, waste facilities and particularly landfill sites have often caused environmental disruption and pollution that would have been unacceptable by today's standards, as a result of inadequate control and a lack of understanding of processes. Previous tipping has, for example, resulted in 16% of the Borough now falling within consultation zones for methane gas, etc. as referred to in Policy ENV 27. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that future waste facilities meet a high standard of working and where applicable, restoration, and that they have an acceptable impact on amenities and the environment (GEN 2).~~

~~Planning permission will not normally be granted to proposals that cannot satisfy the criteria established in this policy.~~

~~In implementing this policy the Council will consult and work closely with the Environment Agency who are responsible for site licensing.~~

- (ix) ~~will not lead to the unacceptable sterilisation of minerals within the sites or in adjacent areas;~~
- (x) ~~will not have an unacceptable impact on the general landscape setting; and~~
- (xi) ~~will not conflict with land use proposals contained in the Plan or be contrary to the overall aims of urban regeneration.~~

~~Where relevant, the Council's assessment will take into account the possible effects of subsequent landfill gas generation on the immediate environment and the development potential of neighbouring land, having regard to Article 18 of the General Development Order 1988, together with measures proposed to limit such effects. In appropriate cases, the Council may seek a legal agreement to provide for off-site investigation or monitoring and containment or remedial works.~~

Operational Criteria

WD 2 ~~Where proposals are acceptable in principle, the Council will require operators, to submit schemes of screening, working, progressive restoration (which in the case of large schemes should be phased) and aftercare for approval, as necessary.~~

~~The Council also will, as appropriate:~~

- (i) ~~limit the duration of operations;~~
- (ii) ~~control the level of noise and dust;~~
- (iii) ~~control hours of working, vehicle movement and maintenance of plant and equipment;~~
- (iv) ~~ensure satisfactory access to the site;~~
- (v) ~~ensure there are adequate measures to safeguard any known or anticipated features of landscape, ecological, archaeological or geological interest likely to be affected; and~~
- (vi) ~~ensure the site is satisfactorily restored and that suitable provisions are made for aftercare, including, where appropriate, the long-term management of leachate and gas emissions.~~

~~Operations that are acceptable in principle by fulfilling the criteria set out in WD 1 will be subject to conditions to ensure that proper standards of working and restoration are maintained, in order to minimise the environmental impact of such operations. In this respect the Council will work closely with the Environment Agency to avoid unnecessary duplication of control. For example, while the long-term management of leachate and gas emissions has now been brought under the control of the waste licensing system the infrastructure involved requires planning permission.~~

~~Agreements with operators may be necessary to regulate traffic routes and guarantee full restoration of sites through a financial surety, in some instances.~~

~~The Council will, where appropriate, encourage the direct use of methane for energy/heat generation (WD 4).~~

Recycling

WD 3 ~~The Council will support the development of waste recycling and collection facilities, including Waste Reception centres and operations that will reduce the volume of waste requiring ultimate disposal, subject to compliance with WD 1 and other Plan policies and provided the urban regeneration strategy is not prejudiced.~~

~~Landfill, by reason of its low relative cost, is by far the most widely used form of waste disposal but it is not the only option. Landfill has long-term and concealed costs and is likely, because of higher environmental standards, to become more expensive in the future.~~

~~The Government's White Paper, "This Common Inheritance", indicates that the Government's priorities are to reduce waste at source, re-use what is left where possible, and dispose of the~~

rest in the most environmentally responsible way. St. Helens council has taken up this challenge and has a Government approved recycling plan which seeks to recycle 25% of all household waste in the Borough by the year 2000.

Discussions between the Council and the MWDA have considered whether there is a need for a main sorting/transfer station to handle St. Helens' waste, thus lessening the demand for distant landfill. This is only one option for increasing recycling and it is likely that there will be an increasing need for outlets for reclaimed and recycled materials.

The MWDA have a policy of providing Waste Reception Centres within a three mile radius of all housing. This provision has been met in the Borough but there are known problems with some existing WRCs, which have essentially outgrown their sites, and alternatives may need to be found within the Plan period. In addition to Waste Reception Centres, there are many collection points for recycling waste materials, such as bottle banks, located throughout the Borough.

In St. Helens, existing activities for processing or treating materials range from high technology materials reclamation to scrap dealers. A number of these activities generate environmental problems due to inappropriate locations and inadequate control over operations. The purpose of WD 3 is to ensure that in future, the environmental impact is acceptable. It is the intention that proposals for such uses will be assessed using WD 1, in addition to other policies of the Plan.

Renewable Energy

WD-4 The Council will support the development of facilities to beneficially use gas generated by waste and sewage treatment schemes, subject to compliance with WD 1 and other Plan policies and provided the urban regeneration strategy is not prejudiced.

If proper precautions are not taken, the generation of gas from the decomposition of waste and sewage can present a potential hazard and result in the release of methane into the atmosphere, with damaging effects on the ozone layer. However, landfill and sewage gas can become a valuable resource if collected and used to produce heat and/or electricity. The Council will therefore encourage schemes that beneficially use the gas produced at landfill sites and sewage treatment works subject to appropriate environmental safeguards.

PART 2

AREA POLICIES

AREA 1 - NEWTON-LE-WILLOWS

1. *Main Issues*

1.1 The main issues affecting the Area are as follows:

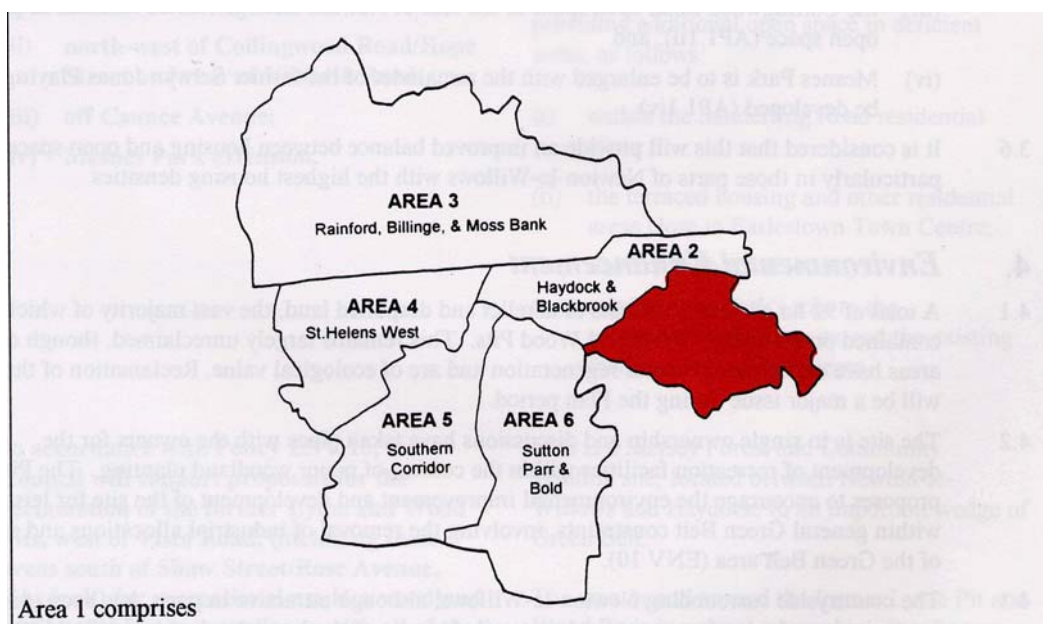
- (i) population and employment changes;
- (ii) the relationship between housing development and open space;
- (iii) the need for environmental enhancement, including opportunities arising from the Mersey Forest;
- (iv) the Green Belt;
- (v) the future of the closed Parkside Colliery

2. *Population and Employment*

2.1 Newton-le-Willows is a free-standing settlement combining the characteristics of village (Newton-le-Willows) and small industrial centre, (Earlestown). The town had a generally stable population between 1951 (21,860) and 1971 (22,000) before declining to 19,273 in 1981. The increase to 19,417 by 1991 is a consequence of fewer house demolitions and an upturn in housing completions after 1986.

2.2 Journey-to-work patterns in Newton-le-Willows are complex, with strong commuting links to Wigan and Warrington. Although the majority of Newton residents work in Wigan and Warrington, the 1991 census indicated that there has been an increase in the numbers working in West Lancashire, Liverpool and Sefton.

2.3 Detailed proposals for Earlestown are contained in a separate Inset Map.



Area 1 comprises

- (i) the main shopping centre of Newton-le-Willows (Earlestown)
- (ii) the older centre of Newton-le-Willows, based on the High Street and Willow Park Conservation Area;
- (iii) the residential areas of Newton Common, Southworth Road/Willow Park, Ashton Road and Vulcan Village;
- (iv) the former mining area of Lyme and Wood Pits;
- (v) the former Parkside Colliery
- (vi) the Sankey Valley Industrial Park and Deacon Trading Estate industrial areas;
- (vii) the Sankey Valley Park;
- (viii) Green Belt, (874 ha - 60% of the Sub Area)

3. *Housing and Open Space*

- 3.1 Policy RES 1 allocates a total of 33.5 ha for development in Area 1 consisting largely of previous Local Plan allocations. Of this total, 29 ha are sites on open land.
- 3.2 Recent housing developments in Newton-le-Willows have highlighted the importance of achieving an adequate balance between open space and development. There are 132 ha of open space in Newton-le-Willows comprising:
- | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|
| Parks | 13 ha | (10%) |
| Formal Recreation | 51 ha | (39%) |
| Public Open Space | 11 ha | (8%) |
| Informal Open Space | 57 ha | (43%) |
- 3.3 Between 1982 and 1995, 30 ha of open land were developed for housing.
- 3.4 In Newton-le-Willows some places are worse off than others in terms of open space provision. For instance, the residential area south of the Manchester/Liverpool railway line, between Park Road North and Wargrave Road, is particularly short of both formal open space and breaks in built development.
- 3.5 The following approach has been adopted:
- (i) existing residential allocations have been retained (RES 1);
 - (ii) the Newton Brook and Sankey Valley, with extensions into the Dingle and Red Brow Wood, are identified as Greenway with potential for informal recreation (ENV 3);
 - (iii) the Collingwood Road open space to the rear of Newton College will be retained as public open space (AP1.1ii); and
 - (iv) Mesnes Park is to be enlarged with the remainder of the former Selwyn Jones Playing Field to be developed (AP1.1iv)
- 3.6 It is considered that this will provide an improved balance between housing and open space, particularly in those parts of Newton-le-Willows with the highest housing densities.

4. *Environmental Enhancement*

- 4.1 A total of 92 ha of Area 1 consists of derelict and despoiled land, the vast majority of which is contained on the former Lyme and Wood Pits. This remains largely unreclaimed, though certain areas have experienced natural regeneration and are of ecological value. Reclamation of this land will be a major issue during the Plan period.
- 4.2 The site is in single ownership and discussions have taken place with the owners for the development of recreation facilities within the context of major woodland planting. The Plan proposes to encourage the environmental improvement and development of the site for leisure uses within general Green Belt constraints, involving the removal of industrial allocations and extension of the Green Belt area (ENV 10).
- 4.3 The countryside surrounding Newton-le-Willows, although attractive in parts, has been identified as a priority area for landscape renewal primarily because of the large derelict areas (ENV 20). Opportunities for woodland creation in the area such as Newton Common and the Sankey Valley Park will be explored.
- 4.4 The Plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are 13 such sites within Area 1 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 4.5 The Plan proposes a strategic network of Greenways throughout the Borough (ENV 3). The network is shown on the Proposals Map and in Newton-le-Willows includes two major corridors:
- (i) the Sankey Valley Park from Havannah Flash/.Newton Common in the west to Hey Lock/Winwick;
 - (ii) the Newton Brook from Castle Hill and Newton Lake in the north-east, southwards to Wargrave.
- 4.6 Newton Lake is an asset to the amenity of Willow Park and the area as a whole but has deteriorated in recent years, due to pollution and neglect. Local residents, the Council and the Groundwork Trust have been involved in assessing environmental damage and voluntary efforts are securing its restoration and environmental enhancement.

5. *The Green Belt*

- 5.1 One significant change to the Green Belt boundary has been made at Vista Road where the Green Belt has been extended over former industrial allocations.

6. *Sites of Possible Change*

Parkside Colliery

- 6.1 Parkside Colliery ceased operation in 1992 and the pit-head buildings subsequently demolished. However the site remains derelict with extensive areas of hardstanding.
- 6.2 In a proposed modification to the Plan approved on 19th September 1996 the Council proposed removing 34 ha from the Green Belt and allocating it for industrial use. The matter was considered at a Modifications Inquiry in September 1997 with the Inspector subsequently recommending that Parkside Colliery remain in the Green Belt.

AREA POLICIES

AP1.1 The following sites are allocated for Public Open Space use:

- (i) east of Victoria Road;
- (ii) north-west of Collingwood Road/Hope Street and rear of Victoria Road;
- (iii) off Counce Avenue;
- (iv) Mesnes Park extension.

Policies ENV 1 and ENV 3 are proposed to protect existing open spaces and to develop a greenway network. Policy AP1.1 is aimed at providing additional open space in deficient areas, as follows:

- (i) within the Sanderling Road residential site;
- (ii) the terraced housing and other residential areas close to Earlestown Town Centre;
- (iii) the Bradlegh Road locality;
- (iv) reinforce the Park's role in the neighbourhood and to extend the existing facilities for local residents.

AP1.2 In accordance with Policy ENV 10, the Council will support proposals for the reclamation of the former Lyme and Wood Pits, west of Vista Road, (including those areas south of Shaw Street/Rose Avenue, Haydock) for recreational use in a woodland setting, subject to compliance with all of the following criteria:

- (i) the uses are compatible with its Green Belt location;
- (ii) any proposals for coal washing must satisfy the requirements of Policy MIN 1; and
- (iii) provision is made for public access by a network of routes between Vista Road and Swan Road, with links to Rose Avenue and Church Road, Haydock

This is a Mersey Forest and Community Wildlife site, located between Newton-le-Willows and Haydock, in an important wedge of Green Belt.

The area in and around the former Lyme Pit and Wood Pit is in private ownership. It is known that the owners wish to investigate the potential of the former colliery site for recreational and associated uses. However, any future scheme will have to be assessed in the light of Green Belt policy, highway capacity and general amenity considerations, particularly where the site is closest to existing residential properties.

AP1.3 The Council will promote and support proposals for the reclamation and redevelopment of the former Sankey Sugar works and Mendbill Oil sites, south of Junction Lane for industrial purposes

Whilst the majority of the industrial land allocated in the former Newton-le-Willows District Plan has been reclaimed and infrastructure constructed to facilitate development, this land remains largely derelict and occupied by some environmentally unacceptable commercial uses. Acute pollution has been caused by operations at the former Mendbill Oil site and its reclamation would, in particular, improve the environmental condition of the area and its commercial viability.

EARLESTOWN TOWN CENTRE - INSET MAP

1. *Introduction*

- 1.1 Earlestown is the Victorian Town Centre of the Area. It is the main shopping centre of the Area and is the only other Town Centre in the Borough, apart from St. Helens. Its continued improvement and regeneration will remain a priority.

2. *Summary of Problems*

- (i) the older nature of the highway network and building stock;
- (ii) the need to satisfactorily redevelop cleared sites;
- (iii) vacant sites that have only been developed to a temporary standard;
- (iv) poor rear servicing to commercial premises;
- (v) poor environment for residents and shoppers;
- (vi) under-used sites/buildings, particularly Earlestown Station, listed for its special architectural and historic interest.

3. *Improvement of Servicing and Parking*

- 3.1 Some improvement to servicing and car parking would come about by the redevelopment of some of the vacant sites. However, some of the existing car parks were only ever laid out to temporary specifications and are now showing signs of wear and tear. It is proposed to upgrade these car parks, subject to the availability of finance.

4. *Highway Improvements*

- 4.1 The Council has completed the first phase of pedestrianisation at Market Street and it is proposed to continue the project to its conclusion.

5. *Earlestown Railway Station*

- 5.1 Whilst an attempt to market the redundant station building on the "island" platform has been made, the Council is concerned that the potential of the station's historical importance has not been realised. The significance of the building ideally merits full restoration, preferably involving an interpretative centre. Railtrack has indicated that it supports this idea but that its funds are limited. Council financial assistance is unlikely in the foreseeable future. In the absence of such a scheme, alternative commercial uses may be acceptable, including offices, although access to the site is problematic.

INSET POLICIES

E1 The following sites are allocated for development and are shown on the Inset Map.

It is considered that planning policies must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that advantage is taken of those opportunities which do arise. For this reason alternative acceptable uses are suggested for a number of sites. Where more than one use is proposed, a mixed use scheme involving all or some of the uses may be acceptable.

Ref. No.	Site Name	Area (ha)	Acceptable Use
1	Earle Street/Gable Street/Legh Street/Wellington Street	1.2	a) Retailing b) Housing c) Financial & Professional Services(A2) d) Food & Drink (A3)
2	Site of 27-45 Haydock Street	0.6	Car Parking
3	Former railway line, rear of 52-94 Haydock Street	0.11	Car Parking
4	Temporary car park bounded by Tamworth Street, Lord Street, St. John's Street and Sankey Street	0.26	Car Parking
5	Temporary car park bounded by Tamworth Street, Lord Street and Legh Street	0.18	a) Car Parking b) Bus Station
6	Site of 1/23 Haydock Street	0.07	a) Retailing b) Offices c) Financial & Professional Services (A2) d) Food & Drink (A3)
7	Grafton Street	0.07	Extensions to existing shops on Market Street, rear servicing and a rear access road

Proposed uses not specified will be considered in accordance with the policies contained within the Plan.

In the event of the existing permission lapsing, development proposals on this site will be treated in accordance with the policies contained within the Plan.

Proposals for retail development on sites E1 (1) and E1 (6) must be of an appropriate scale and type which would not significantly detract from the vitality and viability of the existing Earlestown shopping centre, as defined in Policy E2 and the Earlestown Inset Proposals Map

- E2 The following streets or parts of street shall be defined as the prime shopping area of the Town Centre**
- (i) Market Street, 9-47, 6-42**
 - (ii) Bridge Street, 7-31, 4-40**
 - (iii) Oxford Street**
- Within this area, which is shown on the Inset Map, the Council will not normally allow those non-retail uses at ground floor**

Whereas in the Newton-le-Willows District Plan, non-retail uses were restricted in Market Street only, it is now considered appropriate to strengthen the retailing core of the Town Centre around to Oxford Street and Bridge Street, in order to retain its viability. Non-retail uses which are considered appropriate to prime areas are restaurants and cafes which complement retailing. Certain other non-retail activities such as banks, estate agents and building

level which are considered inappropriate to prime shopping streets.

societies also complement Town Centre shops and are generally acceptable in a prime street location. However, other non-retail activities, such as amusement arcades and betting offices, do not require main street locations and can be located elsewhere in the Town Centre.

There will be no objection in principle to non-retail uses within the prime shopping area at first floor level.

- E3 The following streets will be pedestrianised in a phased programme:**
- (i) Oxford Street at its junction with Market Street;**
 - (ii) Legh Street at its junction with Market Street**

Market Street has already been pedestrianised. The Council will continue the process of pedestrianisation to improve the environmental quality of the Town Centre.

- E4 The following highway improvements will be implemented either as part of private redevelopment proposals or by Council capital expenditure:**
- (i) improvement and widening of Back Bridge Street between Haydock Street and Grafton Street;**
 - (ii) the junction of Earle Street, Queen Street and Bridge Street.**

During the 1980s the Council carried out several highway improvements in and around the Town Centre. A number of further improvements are considered necessary in the interests of highway safety and will be implemented subject to finances being available.

- E5 Any redevelopment or change of use of properties in the following street must be designed, where possible, to allow servicing from the rear:**
- (i) Market Street (from Bridge Street to Stanley Street);**
 - (ii) Haydock Street (from Bridge Street to Stanley Street);**
 - (iii) Bridge Street**

Given the proposal to pedestrianise certain Town Centre streets, it is important that new uses or proposals to redevelop sites in those streets accommodate adequate rear servicing.

- E6 The Council will encourage the protection and enhancement of Earlestown Station building. Proposals for new uses or alteration will be considered on the basis of compatibility with the historic fabric of the building, though with due consideration of existing problems of access and safety.**

Earlestown Station is of great historical importance in the development of the country's railways. It is considered that the importance of the building has not been sufficiently recognised, not only in terms of its wider historical importance but also as an individual Listed Building of special architectural and historic value. The development of Liverpool and Earlestown junctions has resulted in awkward access to the station building, with pedestrian access only via a footbridge. However, despite this problem, it is felt that more should be done to preserve and enhance

the building, The Council will encourage uses that would lead to investment in safeguarding the existing fabric.

AREA 2 - HAYDOCK AND BLACKBROOK

1. *Main Issues*

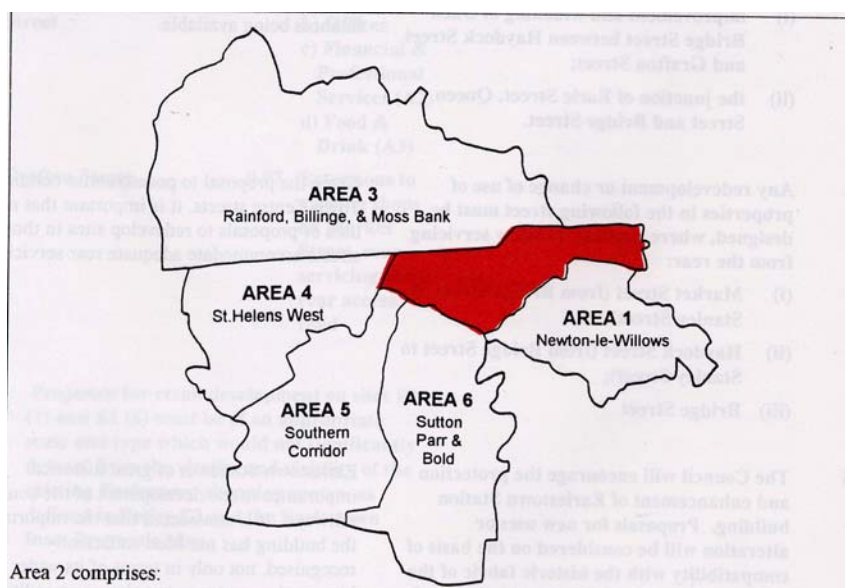
1.1 The main uses affecting the Area are as follows:

- (i) the extent of its contribution to the Borough's residential and economic land supply;
- (ii) the need to fulfil the potential of the Haydock Industrial Estate which is identified in Part 1 of the Plan as a priority location for economic development (Policy S3);
- (iii) the need to improve the strategic highway network;
- (iv) the need to safeguard and make available accessible open space for public use, including the reclamation of despoiled sites;
- (v) environmental enhancement, including opportunities arising from the Mersey Forest.

2. *Housing*

2.1 44 ha of land is available for residential development in Haydock and Blackbrook (RES 1). A significant proportion of this land is concentrated in two large sites;

- (i) Islands Brow Burgy, west of Hinckley Road, Blackbrook (2H1)
- (ii) the former Princess Pit, east of Haydock Lane, Haydock (2H3)



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) (vi) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the residential areas of Blackbrook, Haydock, Haresfinch (part), Grange Valley, Laffak and New Boston; industrial areas at the Haydock Industrial Estate, the former Central Works, Church Road and The Parks Business Park, Lodge Lane; The former Princess Pit; Haydock Park Racecourse; Florida Farm and Stanley Bank Farm; Green Belt/agricultural land in and around the built-up area (518 ha - 44% of the Area) |
|---|---|

3. *Commerce and Industry*

- 3.1 A total of 35 ha is available for industrial development, the majority of which (88%) is within the Haydock Industrial Estate.
- 3.2 This estate will continue to make a significant contribution to meeting the demand for commercial and industrial development in the Borough as a whole and is identified as one of two priority economic areas in the Borough (S3). Between 1994 and 1996 the former Shell Terminal site, renamed Point 23, was substantially redeveloped by major distribution centres for J Sainsbury, Booker Belmont and The Book People.

4. *Traffic and Highways*

- 4.1 The highway network through the Area is dominated by the A58 from St. Helens Town Centre to the West End Road/Vicarage Road junction and the A599 which continues eastwards to the A49 at Lodge Lane. The volume and noise of traffic using this main route through Blackbrook and Haydock causes environmental problems for pedestrians and residents, as well as congestion, accidents and delay for motorists.
- 4.2 It is therefore proposed to construct a bypass from the Ship Inn at Blackbrook Bridge, through Stanley Bank Farm to the junction of Vicarage Road (A58) and the East Lancashire Road as shown on the Proposals Map (TRA 1).
- 4.3 In 1997 a new access road to serve the Haydock Industrial Estate was completed.

5. *Open Space*

- 5.1 A survey undertaken in 1990 and updated in 1993 revealed a total of 130 ha of open space in the Area which consisted of:

Parks	5 ha	(4%)
Formal Recreation	34 ha	(26%)
Public Open Space	11 ha	(9%)
Informal Open Space	80 ha	(61%)

- 5.2 Playing fields are limited to four main locations:
- (i) King George V Playing Fields, north of Church Road;
 - (ii) Blackbrook Recreation Ground, west of Old Whint Road;
 - (iii) Vista Road Playing Field, south of Queens Road
 - (iv) Macdonald Avenue Recreation Ground

6. *Environmental Enhancement*

- 6.1 Environmental refurbishment of the Area is an important aspect of the Council's efforts to improve Haydock and Blackbrook. Opportunities will be taken to promote Boroughwide policies such as the Wasteland to Woodland Initiative and the Policy for Nature and to investigate potential improvements to the Sankey Valley Park and the Greenway from the Sankey Valley to Carr Mill and the Haresfinch Burgy.
- 6.2 A large area of open space is at the former Princess Pit. Following restoration, the eastern half of the site will be landscaped and tree planted and made available for informal recreation, although likely to remain in private ownership. This is one of the major sites identified in the Wasteland to Woodland Initiative for woodland planting and will form part of the Mersey Forest (ENV 10).
- 6.3 The Plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are 10 such sites within Area 2 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.

- 6.4 The Plan defines a network of Greenways throughout the Borough (ENV 3). This network is concentrated towards the western end of the Area and comprises a variety of different open spaces which are mainly suitable for informal recreation:
- (i) both the Islands Brow and Haresfinch Burgy Banks are significant areas of open space of value for wildlife. However, the Islands Brow site is allocated for housing purposes as a result of a planning permission granted on appeal. A sizeable area around the lake at the northern end of the site will be incorporated as a public open space within the residential development;
 - (ii) the St. Helens Canal extending along the Sankey Valley Park including Merton Bank Marsh, Bosworth Field, a significant area of woodland and meadow of major wildlife interest at Glasshouse Close Wood, Stanley Bank Meadow and Stanley Bank Wood, designated as a Local Nature Reserve (ENV 6). Stanley Bank Meadow is the Borough's only Site of Special Scientific Interest designated by English Nature;
 - (iii) a route following the Clipsley Brook.

~~AREA POLICIES~~

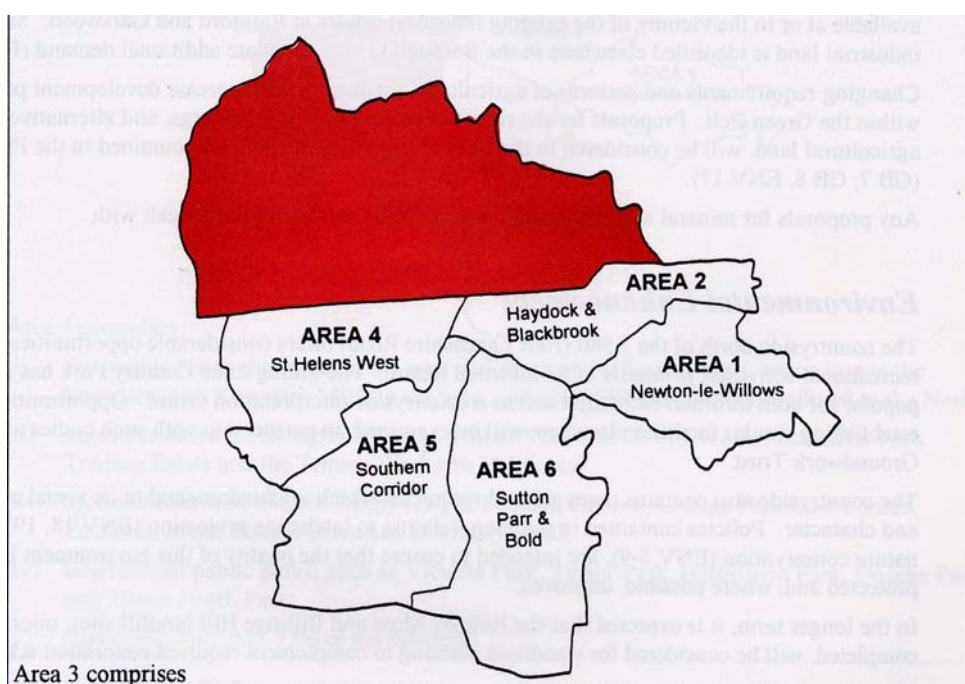
~~AP2.1 All new development along the main spine road through Blackbrook (A58) and Haydock (A599) must be adequately provided with off-street car parking and servicing facilities (see GEN 9).~~

~~Notwithstanding the proposed construction of the Blackbrook Bypass, the A599 will continue to be congested and a potential hazard for drivers and pedestrians. Means considered to relieve congestion along the spine route will include traffic management techniques such as reviewing waiting and loading restrictions and provision of bus laybys on frontage sites where opportunities arise, eg. following clearance.~~

AREA 3 - RAINFORD, BILLINGE AND MOSS BANK

1. *Area Context*

- 1.1 The Area is predominately rural in character and much of the Green Belt is agricultural land of the highest quality.
- 1.2 The boundary of the Green Belt is drawn tightly to the outer edges of the main settlements of Rainford, Billinge, Moss Bank and Garswood. The attractiveness of these areas as places both to live and work in continues to generate demands for new housing and industrial developments.
- 1.3 There is a continuing need to maintain control over the form and extent of new development within the area, in order to safeguard its primarily rural character, to limit the outward spread of urban development and to protect the Green Belt for its aesthetic, recreational and educational value.
- 1.4 Specific issues affecting the sub-Area as follows:
 - (i) control of new development; and
 - (ii) environmental enhancement



- (i) the area of the Borough located to the north of the A580 East Lancashire Road, but excluding the Haydock Industrial Estate;
- (ii) four settlements at Rainford, Billinge, Moss Bank and Garswood with more isolated housing areas at Rainford Junction and Crank;
- (iii) one industrial estate off Mill Lane, Rainford and smaller areas of established industrial/commercial uses;
- (iv) two large waste tips at Holiday Moss and Billinge Hill Quarry, Fairfield Private Hospital at Crank, Siding Lane Country Park at Rainford, Carr Mill Dam, Golf Clubs at Ashtons Cross and Houghwood and the Liverpool St. Helens rugby ground off Moss Lane;
- (v) remaining land within the area is in agricultural use, interspersed with woodlands, the most significant of which are located on the Knowsley Estate, Siding Lane Country Park, Moss Bank Wood and Goyt Hey Wood;
- (vi) a Heritage Landscape area;
- (vii) Green Belt (3651 hectares - 87% of the Area).

2. *Control of New Development*

- 2.1 The settlements of Rainford, Billinge, Moss Bank and Garswood are popular residential areas for people working in St. Helens and surrounding employment centres such as Liverpool, Wigan and Warrington. All these settlements have experienced major new developments during the last three decades.
- 2.2 The establishment of a tightly drawn Green Belt boundary in the early 1980s has since been generally effective in restricting their outward spread and has supported the policy of urban regeneration through the restriction of new development to existing built-up areas.
- 2.3 Sufficient housing sites, offering a wide range of choice in terms of size and quality, have been identified in other areas of the Borough to satisfy market demands (RES 1). It is not, therefore, proposed to allocate further sites for housing in the Area, but to maintain the existing Green Belt boundary.
- 2.4 The consequences of such restrictive policies are likely to be continuing pressures to develop existing open land within the built-up areas. This will be resisted, to ensure that open space and/or landscape features are retained where they constitute important elements in the character of the built environment (ENV 1).
- 2.5 It is expected that demands for further industrial development within the Area will be met on land available at or in the vicinity of the existing industrial estates at Rainford and Garswood. Sufficient industrial land is identified elsewhere in the Borough to accommodate additional demand (ECON1).
- 2.6 Changing requirements and patterns of agricultural production will increase development pressures within the Green Belt. Proposals for the re-use of redundant farm buildings, and alternative uses for agricultural land, will be considered in the light of Boroughwide policies contained in the Plan (GB 7, GB 8, ENV 17).
- 2.7 Any proposals for mineral extraction and waste disposal will be similarly dealt with.

3. *Environmental Enhancement*

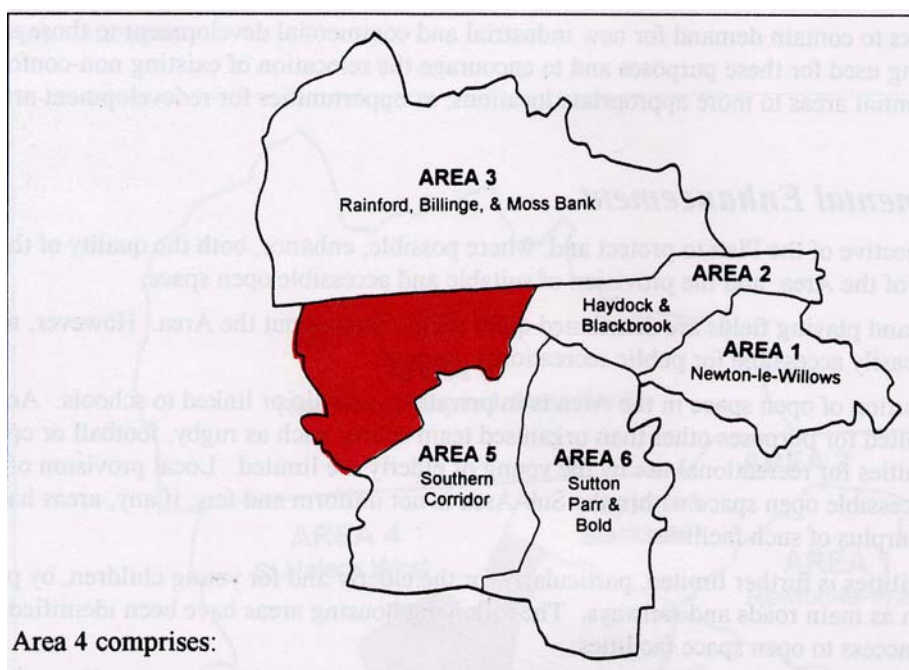
- 3.1 The countryside north of the A580 (East Lancashire Road) offers considerable opportunities for recreational activities, primarily of an informal nature. The Siding Lane Country Park has proved popular for both informal recreation and as a countryside interpretation centre. Opportunities for establishing similar facilities elsewhere will be examined, in partnership with such bodies as the Groundwork Trust.
- 3.2 The countryside also contains many natural resources, which are fundamental to its visual amenity and character. Policies contained in the Plan, relating to landscape protection (ENV 18, 19) and nature conservation (ENV 5-9), are intended to ensure that the quality of this environment is protected and, where possible, improved.
- 3.3 In the longer term, it is expected that the Holiday Moss and Billinge Hill landfill sites, once completed, will be considered for woodland planting to complement required restoration schemes.
- 3.4 The plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are 20 such sites within Sub-Area 3 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 3.5 Large tracts of existing agricultural land in this part of the Borough have, over time, been reclaimed from ancient peatlands. It is thought there may be other areas of natural peat or mossland which remain to be identified, with a view to affording them protection, particularly around Rainford.
- 3.6 The Area contains two Conservation Areas, based around the central core of Rainford. The character of the old settlement will continue to be safeguarded (ENV 24).
- 3.7 It is proposed to examine other areas of older townscape, for example in Billinge, with a view to establishing whether the designation of additional Conservation Areas is justified.

AREA 4 - ST. HELENS WEST

1. *Area Context*

1.1 The specific issues affecting the Area are as follows:

- (i) rationalising land-use conflicts relating to demands for new house building;
- (ii) containment of further commercial/industrial development; and
- (iii) environmental enhancement



- (i) the mainly residential areas to the west and north of the Town Centre, extending to the boundary with Knowsley MBC to the west, and the A580 East Lancashire Road to the North;
- (ii) industrial areas at Pilkington's Cowley Hill and Gerards Bridge Works, Eccleston Park Trading Estate and the Triplex Works on Millfields;
- (iii) sports venues at St. Helens Rugby League Football Ground, Grange Park Golf Course, Eccleston Mere, Ruskin Drive and Boundary Road;
- (iv) large formal public parks, such as Victoria Park, Taylor Park, Haresfinch Park, Queens Park and Thatto Heath Park;
- (v) Green Belt (660 ha - 37% of the sub-area)

2. *Demands for New House Building*

2.1 The built environment of the Area is characterised by large areas of mature open space, made up of formal public parks, public and private sports facilities, informal areas of open space, and land within the Green Belt, all with differing levels of accessibility to the general public.

2.2 It is this diversity and quality of environment which contributes to the attractiveness of the area and which in turn, creates conflicts in attempting to accommodate demands for new development. In recent years, the relatively buoyant housing market has resulted in the redevelopment of sites, such as surplus school land and private sports facilities, resulting in loss of open space features and recreational opportunities at the local level.

- 2.3 It is the overall objective of the Plan, and of policies relating to this Area specially, to identify a framework of sites for future development which strikes a balance between the need to satisfy local and Boroughwide demands for new house building, without a resultant loss of open land, recreational facilities or landscape features.

Commercial and Industrial Development

3

- 3.1 Much of this Area has not been affected by development relating to manufacturing or extractive industries, unlike other parts of the Borough. There is, therefore, no legacy of derelict land, and few areas which could accommodate new industrial/commercial development without having an adverse impact on residential or environmental amenity generally.
- 3.2 There are, however, some industrial and commercial uses which are of significance, such as Pilkington's Cowley Hill and Gerards Bridge works, as well as areas which are isolated from the more traditional industrial areas of the Borough, such as the Triplex Works on Millfields, the Eccleston Park Trading Estate on Prescott Road and an area between Boundary Road, Knowsley Road and Eccleston Street.
- 3.3 The Plan seeks to contain demand for new industrial and commercial development to those areas currently being used for these purposes and to encourage the relocation of existing non-conforming uses in residential areas to more appropriate locations, as opportunities for redevelopment arise.

4. *Environmental Enhancement*

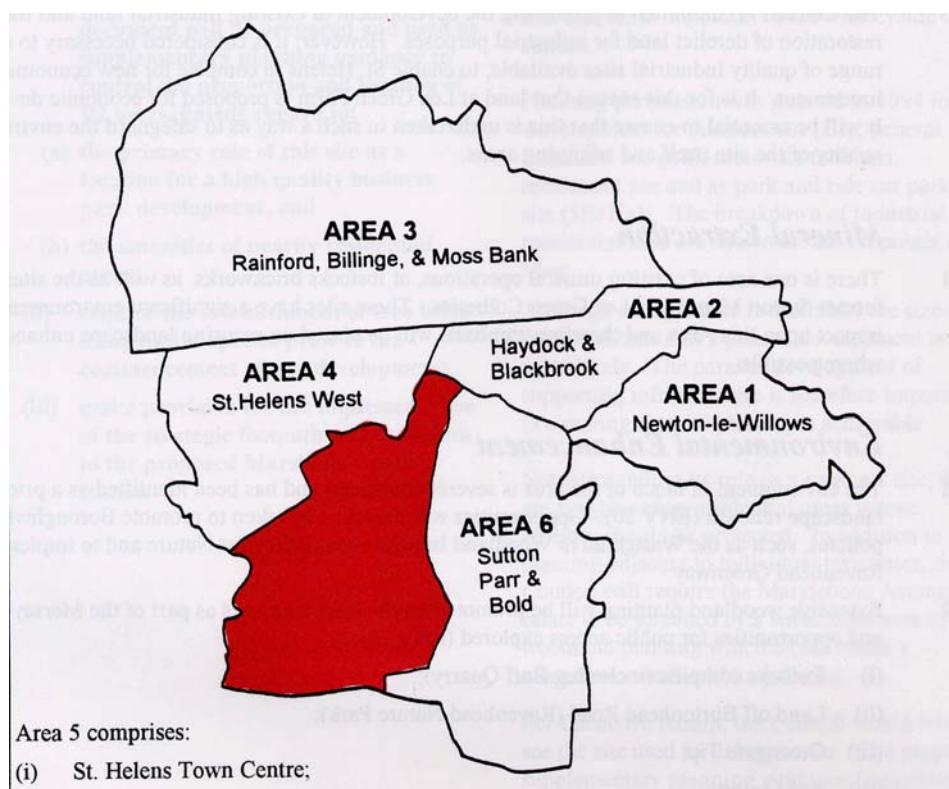
- 4.1 It is a key objective of the Plan to protect and, where possible, enhance, both the quality of the built environment of the Area, and the provision of suitable and accessible open space.
- 4.2 Public parks and playing fields are distributed quite evenly throughout the Area. However, not all the sites are easily accessible for public recreational purposes.
- 4.3 A high proportion of open space in the Area is in private ownership or linked to schools. Access is generally limited for purposes other than organised team sports, such as rugby, football or cricket, and opportunities for recreational use by the young or elderly are limited. Local provision of genuinely accessible open space within the Sub-Area is not uniform and few, if any, areas have an identifiable surplus of such facilities.
- 4.4 Access to facilities is further limited, particularly for the elderly and for young children, by physical barriers, such as main roads and railways. The following housing areas have been identified as having poor access to open space facilities:
- (i) the area of Queens Park bounded by Knowsley Road, Dunriding Lane, Prescott Road and Boundary Road;
 - (ii) the area of Grange Park bounded by Prescott Road, Thatto Heath Road, Scholes Lane and Broadway; and
 - (iii) the area of Eccleston Park bounded by Prescott Road, Old Lane and Portico Lane.
- 4.5 Opportunities for the provision of new or enhanced open space to these areas is limited, if only by the lack of open land, particularly in Eccleston Park.
- 4.6 Opportunities exist to protect and enhance the existing open space through the establishment of Greenways as part of the Boroughwide network. The Greenway system shown on the Proposals Map is based upon the water courses of the Windle and Mill Brooks (ENV 3).
- 4.7 The Plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are 9 such sites within Area 4 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 4.8 The possible designation of Eccleston Park as a Conservation Area will be investigated.

AREA 5 - SOUTHERN CORRIDOR

1. *Area Context*

1.1 The main issues affecting the sub-area are:

- (a) M62 Linkway/strategic land release;
- (b) mineral extraction;
- (c) environmental enhancement, including opportunities arising from the Mersey Forest;
- (d) Green Belt;
- (e) transport



- (ii) the Ravenhead industrial area (including the St. Helens Technology Campus, United Glass Works and Pilkington's UK5 and UK6 Works);
- (iii) Sherdley Park;
- (iv) the residential areas of Sutton Manor, Clock Face (part), Thatto Heath, Sutton Heath and Rainhill;
- (v) the former Rainhill Hospital;
- (vi) large areas of derelict land including the former Sutton Manor, Lea Green and Sherdley Colliery sites;
- (vii) Ibstock clay quarries and associated brick works;
- (viii) the M62 link road; and
- (ix) Green Belt (518 ha - 44% of the Sub-Area)

2. *M62 Link Road/Strategic Land Release*

- 2.1 This Area is one of two areas proposed in the Borough by Policy S3 where economic growth and environmental regeneration will be concentrated up to the year 2001 and beyond; the other area being the Haydock Industrial Estate.
- 2.2 At the core of the growth corridor is the dual carriageway road, the M62 Linkway which links Junction 7 of the M62 to the Town Centre and opened in 1994.
- 2.3 The road will assist economic recovery of the Borough by providing improved access to existing industrial areas, derelict land and major new development sites.
- 2.4 Within this Area a total of 101 ha of land will have direct or significantly improved access as a result of the Link Road. This total includes the sites at Lea Green Farm (5Ec1), Lea Green Colliery (5Ec5) and Sherdley Business Park (5Ec7) (totalling 66 ha) which did not have existing economic allocations and had not been previously promoted for economic development
- 2.5 The Council is committed to promoting the development of existing industrial land and the restoration of derelict land for industrial purposes. However, it is considered necessary to extend the range of quality industrial sites available, to enable St. Helens to compete for new economic investment. It is for this reason that land at Lea Green Farm is proposed for economic development. It will be essential to ensure that this is undertaken in such a way as to safeguard the environmental quality of the site itself and adjoining areas.

3. *Mineral Extraction*

- 3.1 There is one area of existing mineral operations, at Ibstocks brickworks, as well as the sites of the former Sutton Manor and Lea Green Collieries. These sites have a significant environmental impact upon this Area and therefore emphasis will be placed on securing landscape enhancement, where possible.

4. *Environmental Enhancement*

- 4.1 The environment of much of the area is severely degraded and has been identified as a priority for landscape renewal (ENV 20). Opportunities will therefore be taken to promote Boroughwide policies, such as the Wasteland to Woodland Initiative and Policy for Nature and to implement the Ravenhead Greenway.
- 4.2 Extensive woodland planting will be promoted on the following sites as part of the Mersey Forest and opportunities for public access explored (ENV 10):
 - (i) Ibstocks complex (including Buff Quarry);
 - (ii) Land off Burtonhead Road (Ravenhead Nature Park);
 - (iii) Greengate Tip;
 - (iv) Red Quarry;
 - (v) Roughdales Tip;
 - (vi) Sutton Manor Colliery Tip
- 4.3 The Plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are seven such sites within Area 5 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 4.4 The Plan proposes the establishment of a Boroughwide network of Greenways, including a number of significant sites in this Area (ENV 3).

5. *Green Belt*

- 5.1 The existing Green Belt between the M62 Link Road and Rainhill and boundaries around Rainhill itself will be maintained and any encroachment or development pressures arising from the M62 Link Road will be vigorously opposed.
- 5.2 The former Sherdley Division of Rainhill Hospital is allocated for residential and office development.

6. *Transport*

- 6.1 The Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority is investigating the siting of a new passenger station on the Liverpool/Manchester railway line at Marshalls Cross (TRA 3). The Council support this proposal and consider it to be complementary to the proposed release of development land at Lea Green Farm. Land is also allocated for a park-and-ride facility at Lea Green Farm (TRA 4).

AP 5.1 In dealing with proposals for the Lea Green Farm site (5Ec1(a) and 5Ec1(b), the Council will:

- (i) **require a comprehensive development framework, with phasing and development of supporting infrastructure. The framework document will be prepared and used as supplementary planning guidance to control the proportion and location of B2 users, having regard to:**
 - (a) **the primary role of this site as a location for a high quality business park development, and**
 - (b) **the amenities of nearby residential areas;**
- (ii) **require the establishment of tree belts using native species prior to the commencement of any development;**
- (iii) **make provision for the implementation of the strategic footpath and cycle link to the proposed Marshalls Cross station**

Lea Green Farm is one of the key development sites in the Borough. The attractiveness of its setting and relative greenfield characteristics combine to produce a site which is capable of supporting a prestige type of development within a landscaped setting. The Merseyside Strategic Sites and Premises Study confirmed that the site is important in the Merseyside context.

Planning permission was granted in 1994 for 'development for business use (B1), general industrial use (B2), motorists facilities, residential use and as park and ride car park on site (5Ec1(a)). The breakdown of industrial and residential uses are shown on the Proposals Map.

Although a single user is desirable, the size of the site means that a phased development is more likely. The parallel development of supporting infrastructure is therefore important in ensuring that the phasing is achievable.

Notwithstanding its role as a strategic site, there are neighbouring residential areas whose amenity should be protected. In addition to planting adjacent to individual properties, the Council will require the Marylebone Avenue estate to be screened by a substantial area of woodland planting which would make a contribution to the Mersey Forest.

For the above reason, the Council would wish to see the site used for B1 type uses. The proposed supplementary planning guidance framework document will set out the manner in which the Council expect the site to be developed.

The implementation of the footpath and cycle link (REC 5) and the Marshalls Cross station (TRA 3) will complement future development on the site and ensure that such a major land release is linked to transport opportunities in addition to the private car. It is, therefore, considered appropriate for provision to be made for them within the development.

AP 5.2 ~~The Council will enforce existing agreements to ensure long-term restoration of Ibstocks (Lord St. Helens) Quarry. Within the overall context of environmental enhancement of the site, the Council may consider favourably a limited amount of new 'hard' development.~~

The clay resources at Ibstocks (Lord St. Helens) Quarry are limited and there is an existing legal agreement to ensure long-term phased restoration of the site. Planning permission subject to a legal agreement was granted in 1997 for a comprehensive restoration scheme involving waste disposal and including the adjoining areas at Buff and Daisyfield Quarries. The whole site has a potentially important role as part of the Strategic Greenway (ENV 3) and Mersey Forest (ENV 10). There may be some scope for a limited amount of 'hard' development, subject to ground conditions.

ST. HELENS TOWN CENTRE INSET MAP

1. *Introduction*

- 1.1 St. Helens Town Centre is the focal point of the Borough. It is a major shopping and commercial area, an administrative centre and the focus of the Borough's transport network. Continued regeneration and improvement of the Town Centre is an essential part of the Council's overall economic and environmental strategy outlined in Part 1.
- 1.2 In recognition of the importance of the role of the Town Centre, the planning framework is contained in an Inset Map.

2. *Inset Boundary*

- 2.1 Prior to the UDP, the planning context for the Town Centre was contained in the St. Helens Town Centre Local Plan, which was adopted by the Council in March 1984. Whilst the UDP Inset Map supersedes that Local Plan, relevant policies have been retained and, where appropriate, updated.
- 2.2 One of the main differences between the UDP Inset Map and the Town Centre Local Plan is that the plan boundary is considerably enlarged, to include land at Kirkland Street and south of Chalon Way. The change acknowledges that the M62 Link Road now effectively forms the southern boundary of the Town Centre. The area has also been enlarged to include the St. Helens Technology Campus.

3. *Plan Strategy*

- 3.1 The overall aim of the Plan is to make the Town Centre a more attractive place to work, live or shop in, or to visit. This overall aim can be split into the following interrelated objectives:

- (i) to support and enhance the Town Centre as a shopping centre;
- (ii) to expand employment opportunities;
- (iii) to improve the appearance and quality of the built environment;
- (iv) to protect the amenities of existing Town Centre residents;
- (v) to improve transport links to and around the town and to achieve an effective public transport interchange within the centre;
- (vi) to make the centre accessible to all forms of transport;
- (vii) to provide an even distribution of car parks; and
- (viii) overall, to attract investment

Total Area of Inset Map	138.5 ha
Total Population	2,691 (1991)
Total Number of Shopping Units	327 (1997)
Total Shopping Floorspace	58,960 net (1997)

- 3.2 The Council has demonstrated a commitment towards refurbishment and environmental improvement of the Town Centre, including the construction of Phase IV of the Inner Ring Road and extensive pedestrianisation.
- 3.3 There has been considerable activity in the Town Centre over recent years by the private sector. Much of this development has been achieved through public/private partnership, managed by Ravenhead Renaissance. Completed developments include:
- (i) two food superstores (ASDA and Safeway)

- (ii) an 80 bed hotel (Chalon Court); and
- (iii) shopping arcade refurbishment.

3.4 It is likely that during the Plan Period there will be four main centres of activity in the Town Centre as follows:-

(i) Chalon Way

Activities include:

- (a) development of a Visitor Centre based on glass centred on a Grade II listed Building (Glass Cone);
- (b) further improvements internally and externally to the Chalon Way Car Park; and
- (c) partnership with the private sector to secure improvements to the closed section of Chalon Way, to include expansion of the markets, additional car parking, improved access for the disabled and a secondary bus terminal (Policy TC 9).

(ii) Bridge Street/Ormskirk Street

The commercial centre of gravity has shifted to the east of the Town Centre. The western part of the town has suffered to some extent from this and increasing numbers of vacancies have appeared in Bridge Street. This part of town also contains a number of secondary shopping streets, such as Westfield Street and Duke Street which have a greater concentration of older and increasingly run down property. However, these secondary streets have a number of important strengths: a wide range of both small and large specialist retailers, a small scale character and a sense of continuity with the past.

The Plan therefore seeks to ensure that the qualities of this part of the Town Centre are enhanced, for example by extending pedestrianisation (TC 10(ii)).

(iii) Ravenhead Greenway

Open space in the Town Centre is in short supply. The proposed restoration of Lyons Yard and proposed pedestrian bridge across the Canal will rectify this shortage of the eastern fringe of the town. The general enhancement of the Greenway will also complement the Visitor Centre and increase the attractiveness of the town to a wide range of residents and visitors (TC 5).

(iv) St. Helens College

St. Helens College intend to implement a major expansion of learning facilities on the site of the former SmithKline Beecham works. This project is funded by SRB and European monies.

4. *The Balanced Approach*

- 4.1 Clearly the objectives contained in paragraph 3.1, though inter-related, are, in some cases, conflicting. A policy to allow total access for the private car, for example, would not be compatible with protecting the amenity of existing residential areas and promoting further pedestrianisation of the main shopping streets.
- 4.2 It is the intention, therefore, that the policies should amount to a balanced approach which, overall, will provide the framework to produce a Town Centre which the people of St. Helens can be proud of and which will attract shoppers and visitors from outside the Borough.

5. *Shopping*

- 5.1 Following the submission of a series of major retailing planning applications, the Council commissioned consultants in 1986 to prepare a retail demand and impact study of the Borough.
- 5.2 The study found St. Helens Town Centre experienced its most rapid growth in the 1970s, nearly doubling its floorspace and changing the balance of the centre towards the south-eastern end. This

has left an area of more traditional, independent and convenience traders serving local inner-area needs at the northern and western ends which is not typical of many town centres. The study also concluded, at that time, there was a high level of traditional loyalty to St. Helens by local residents.

- 5.3 On the basis of the findings of the study, the Council issued an interim set of shopping policies in 1986. These policies have been updated in accordance with current Government advice and are contained in RET 1 and 2.
- 5.4 Since the shopping study was produced in 1986, there have been a number of major investments in the Town Centre. The Safeway Foodstore (3,716 m² net) followed in 1992. MEPC Ltd. have refurbished the St. Mary's and Tontine Arcades. A major loss to the Town Centre was the closure of the Co-op at Helena House in 1989. The site has now been redeveloped with a new store for Wilkinsons. The total Town Centre net floorspace of 58,960 m² can be divided into 48,684 m² durable and 10,275 m² convenience goods. This represents approximately 60% of total Borough retail floorspace and provides employment for over 3,200. A survey in August 1997 revealed a vacancy rate of only 7%.

6. *Development Sites*

- 6.1 The Plan identifies 11.8 ha of land for future development. Clearly, if all this were to be developed over the Plan Period, it would have a fundamental impact on the Town Centre. Where appropriate, alternative acceptable uses are suggested for individual sites. This is to ensure that the Plan is flexible enough to deal with the differing proposals that may emerge. The introduction of additional housing within the Town Centre is proposed and suitable sites are identified.

7. *Offices*

- 7.1 The Town Centre currently includes several business areas containing a range of office accommodation. It is considered that there is a demand for further office provision in the Town Centre. The Council wishes to encourage this demand, which it sees as an element of economic regeneration in the Borough. The Plan therefore indicates which development sites are considered suitable for office use.

8. *Leisure and Tourism*

- 8.1 Another important element in the Council's economic strategy is to promote tourist opportunities in the Borough. The Town Centre has a role to play within this overall strategy. In addition to major proposals, such as the World of Glass Visitor Centre, and existing facilities, such as the Transport Museum and the Theatre Royal, the Plan identifies development sites which have potential for leisure developments. The long-term aim is to establish a tourist office within the World of Glass Centre.

9. *Environment*

Open Space

- 9.1 The Town Centre is not well provided with open space, amenity areas and greenery to soften the predominantly hard landscape of concrete and tarmac.
- 9.2 Opportunities exist, however, to improve the situation through:
- (i) landscaping conditions attached to planning permissions (although the scope is limited);
 - (ii) the creation of small amenity areas within existing and proposed pedestrian streets; and
 - (iii) the Ravenhead Greenway.
- 9.3 The implementation of the Ravenhead Greenway based on the St. Helens Canal is the major opportunity. Within the Town Centre, it is intended that implementation of the Greenway will:
- (i) improve the appearance and potential of the Canal as an amenity resource;
 - (ii) provide a footpath link to the remainder of the Ravenhead area and Greenway network;
 - (iii) provide areas of open space accessible to all users of the Town Centre; and

- (iv) conserve and interpret features of interest.

Built Environment

- 9.4 St. Helens Town Centre is relatively modern, with a declining stock of older buildings. However, these older buildings can provide cheaper premises for a variety of small industrial and commercial uses, a sense of continuity with the past and, by contrasting with newer developments, create a more interesting and varied environment.
- 9.5 The Town Centre contains eight buildings and structures listed as being of architectural and historic value, as follows:
 - (i) Friends Meeting House, Church Street;,
 - (ii) St. Helens Parish Church, Church Street;
 - (iii) Church of St. Mary, Lowe Street;
 - (iv) Glass Cone (south of Chalon Way Car Park);
 - (v) 'The Bank' Public House, Hardshaw Street;
 - (vi) Statue of Queen Victoria;
 - (vii) Holy Cross RC Church, Corporation Street; and
 - (viii) Beechams Factory, Westfield Street.

In addition, there are a number of older buildings whose demolition or insensitive alteration would detract from the street scene (see TC 8)
- 9.6 The original Pilkington Head Offices at Grove Street, which are also listed, relate to the Town Centre, although they are just outside the inset boundary. Work commenced in 1997 to convert the vacant offices for residential use.
- 9.7 The Victoria Square Conservation Area is one of the focal points of the Town Centre. It is a large central area defined by buildings of quality. Policies are proposed to ensure its protection and enhancement.

10. *Transport*

Introduction

- 10.1 Although this section of the Plan deals with transport as a separate issue, it is necessary to emphasise that there is a clear inter-relationship between transport and land-use planning. The starting point for the production of a transport strategy, therefore, is the same as the overall aim for the Plan.

Traffic Management

- 10.2 Traffic coming into the Town Centre can be categorised as follows:
 - (i) service traffic, ie. vehicles delivering or collecting goods;
 - (ii) private cars, ie shoppers, tourists or persons conducting business in the town;
 - (iii) public transport;
 - (iv) through traffic, ie. traffic which does not have business in the Town Centre and is using it as part of a route between its origin and destination.

Existing Situation

- 10.3 Since the adoption of the Town Centre Local Plan, the major change to the network has been the construction in 1990 of the western arm of the Ring Road (King Street). There is now a continuous ring-road from the Landings roundabout, using King Street and Chalon Way, to Parr Street. The completion of the M62 Link Road has enabled Chalon Way to be closed to through traffic.
- 10.4 Traffic counts have revealed that, despite the construction of King Street, there is still considerable through traffic on the following routes:
 - (i) Shaw Street/Bickerstaffe Street/Corporation Street (westward);

- (ii) Corporation Street (eastbound); and
 - (iii) Baldwin Street/Ormskirk Street/Bridge Street
- 10.5 It is estimated that both Corporation Street and Baldwin Street are currently carrying more than 50% through traffic in the morning peak. Removal of this through traffic would have several benefits:
- (i) an improvement in the general environment of the Town Centre;
 - (ii) less pollution;
 - (iii) fewer accidents; and
 - (iv) less delay to traffic requiring access.

Objectives for Town Centre Traffic

- 10.6 The long-term mechanism for removing through traffic is the construction of the Eastern Link of the Town Centre Ring Road.
- 10.7 The objectives for dealing with Town Centre traffic are as follows:
- (i) to remove unnecessary through traffic;
 - (ii) to help traffic with a Town Centre destination to find it easily and reach it without undue delay;
 - (iii) to ensure convenient accessibility for all sections of the community (particularly those with special access needs) to Town Centre facilities, by all modes of transport;
 - (iv) to help drivers to identify the most appropriate route by which to leave the Town Centre and to do so without undue delay.
- 10.8 These objectives have been used as the basis for the formulation of traffic management measures.

Traffic Management Measures

- 10.9 The main elements are as follows:
- (i) the establishment of strategic through routes including:
 - (a) the northern section of the new Link Road between the A58 at Peasley Cross Lane and the Westfield Street roundabout.
 - (b) King Street;
 - (c) College Street (A571);
 - (d) Standish Street (improved);
 - (e) an eastern link from Pocket Nook Street to Parr Street;
 - (f) North Road;
 - (g) Kirkland Street.
 - (ii) traffic management measures to create access-only 'cells';
 - (iii) pedestrianisation schemes in Bridge Street (part), Ormskirk Street, Westfield Street and Victoria Square (Part); and
 - (iv) the preparation of a traffic management plan for the Hardshaw Street residential area.

Phasing/Implementation/Finance

- 10.10 The means of implementing the traffic management plan will be via the Council's annual submission to the Government of its proposed transport plans (TPP), and any other funding opportunities which may arise.

Car Parking

Existing Situation

- 10.11
- (i) Council-managed car parks, consisting of 1,930 long-stay and 661 short-stay spaces;
 - (ii) privately owned car parks with some general function, 1028 spaces; and
 - (iii) on-street limited waiting, estimated to be 165 spaces (excluding the Hardshaw Street area, which has a residents parking scheme).

10.12 In overall terms, the Council-managed car parks have approximately 31% spare capacity at daily peak times. In the case of the short-stay spaces, however, this spare capacity is estimated to be only 16%.

10.13 Recent surveys of the on-street parking provision indicate that there is heavy over-subscription of spaces. The areas of heavy demand are:

- (i) Duke Street/Mill Street and College Street;
- (ii) the vicinity of St. Helens Technical College; and
- (iii) Hall Street (north of Corporation Street).

The surveys have indicated that there are twice as many vehicles parking as there are legitimate spaces and that at least 50% of these parkers are exceeding their permitted waiting times.

Trends

10.14 There are a number of factors which are likely to have an impact on car parking demand, as follows:

- (i) population level;
- (ii) car ownership levels;
- (iii) use of the car for Town Centre trips;
- (iv) level of retail and office floorspace in the Town Centre, which could increase by approximately 20% if all available sites were developed during the Plan Period;
- (v) level of attractiveness of the Town Centre; and
- (vi) the suitability and availability of public transport.

10.15 Given that a number of the above factors cannot be measured, either accurately or at all, it is not possible to be precise about the likely increase in car parking demand. However, a figure of 2% per annum has been used in order to test the potential effect on parking facilities. In applying it, it has been assumed that a proportion of additional parking provision will be provided via the development sites.

Implications

10.16 Without growth, the current off-street parking provision will cater for the requirements of the Plan Period. However, the uneven distribution of car parks will mean particular pressures at certain locations. A 2% growth rate would mean that overall capacity could be at or near saturation point by the end of the Plan Period. This may become a serious issue if either the growth turns out to be more than assumed or there is a major new development not presently anticipated. At the same time the Council will need to keep under review parking policy in the Town Centre in the light of Government guidance contained in PPG 13 in order to achieve a balance between the needs of the private car and the need to promote alternative means of travel.

10.17 The above assessment takes into account the changes that will follow from the proposed closure of Chalon Way, its part re-use for car parking and the proposed development of the World of Glass Visitor Centre.

10.18 The existing problems relating to on-street parking will clearly be exacerbated if no action is taken. Means of increasing turnover of existing spaces and of providing additional spaces will therefore be investigated during the Plan Period.

10.19 With regard to the level of overall parking provision, it will be necessary for the Council to monitor the per annum increase and to carefully assess the implications of all new developments against capacity. If it becomes apparent at any particular stage that the potential parking demand cannot be catered for, then the Council may have to reconsider the allocation of the development sites contained in Policy TC 4.

Development Sites

10.20 A considerable amount of additional car parking can be provided by development of the sites identified in the Plan. The Council will examine methods of maximising car parking provision in

those areas of acute pressure, ie. Duke Street, Mill Street, College Street, Hall Street and in the vicinity of the Technical College. Maximising provision will entail a combination of new car parks, which requires finance and suitable sites to be available, and reviewing traffic regulation orders.

Public Transport

- 10.21 Given the lower than average level of car ownership in the Borough, it is essential that the Town Centre is accessible to an efficient and effective public transport system.
- 10.22 The Council has regular liaison with the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (MPTE) to review bus provision and matters such as positioning of bus stops etc. and this will continue.
- 10.23 Improvements have recently been carried out to St. Helens Central Station and the Council will continue to press the MPTE and British Rail for improvement both to the physical fabric of the facilities and to the level and quality of the service.
- 10.24 Bickerstaffe Street (St. Helens) Bus Station
- An expanded and enhanced bus station was opened to the public in November 1995. This was a joint venture between the Council and the MPTE including National and European funding. The closure of Chalon Way provides an opportunity for increased bus access and use as a secondary terminal.
- 10.25 Other transport-related issues addressed in the Plan are:
- (i) future provision for parking for the disabled; and
 - (ii) means of improving pedestrian movement around the Town Centre.

ST. HELENS TOWN CENTRE INSET MAP - POLICIES

- TC 1** ~~New shopping developments, including the expansion of existing facilities will be allowed within the central shopping area, as defined on the Inset Map, provided that:~~
- ~~(i) parking to the appropriate Council standard, servicing (preferably off-street) and access arrangements can be achieved; and~~
 - ~~(ii) the proposed development does not obstruct the achievement of other policies in the Plan.~~
- ~~It is considered that the Town Centre is the proper place for the accommodation of major shopping development as suggested by Strategic Guidance and reflected in the Plan's shopping policies. It is further considered necessary to define a central area, within which shopping proposals will generally be acceptable in order both to maintain the consolidation of the Town Centre, in the interests of sustainability and to protect the residential amenity of those living within the Town Centre.~~
- ~~Proposals for retail development on sites outside the Prime Shopping Area (as defined in Policy TC 2(a) and shown on the Town Centre Inset Proposals Map) must be of an appropriate scale and type which would not significantly detract from the vitality and viability of the Prime Shopping Area~~
- ~~Proposals for major shopping developments outside the central shopping area, will be assessed against the criteria relating to out-of-centre retail developments as contained in RET 2.~~

~~TC 2(a) The following parts of streets shall be defined as the prime shopping area of the Town Centre:~~

- ~~(i) Church Street Nos. 3-85, 2-56;~~
- ~~(ii) Ormskirk Street Nos. 2-28, 1-5, 13-25;~~
- ~~(iii) Bridge Street Nos. 2-16, 1-11; and~~
- ~~(iv) Market Street Nos. 17-18.~~

~~Within this area, shown on the Inset Map, the Council will not permit non-retail uses at ground floor level either;~~

- ~~(i) which are considered inappropriate to prime shopping streets; or~~
- ~~(ii) which would raise the overall proportion of non-retail uses to a level which could undermine the predominant retail function of the prime shopping area.~~

~~Church Street is the prime shopping street in St. Helens Town Centre. Ormskirk Street and the top of Bridge Street form important links between Church Street and other shopping streets. It is therefore considered necessary to maintain a predominantly retail frontage in Church Street and prevent further changes to non-retail use in Ormskirk Street and Bridge Street, in order to secure an attractive and thriving retail spine, thus consolidating the Town Centre. Non-retail uses which are considered appropriate to such areas are restaurants and cafes which complement retailing. Certain other non-retail activities such as banks, estate agents and building societies also complement Town Centre shops and are generally acceptable in a prime street location. However, other non-retail activities, such as amusement arcades and betting offices, do not require main street locations and can be located elsewhere in the Town Centre.~~

~~In January 1996, the total number of units within the designated prime shopping streets was 75, of which 56 (74.6%) were in retail use. The total frontage of the units was 1,386m of which 1046m or 75% were in retail use. The Council, therefore, consider that the existing balance between retail and non-retail uses in these prime shopping streets is satisfactory and considers that any reduction in the number of retail uses below a figure of 75% would begin to damage the vitality and viability of the town centre.~~

~~There will be no objection in principle to non-retail uses within the prime shopping area at first floor level.~~

~~TC2(b) In remaining parts of the central shopping area, as defined on the Inset Map, applications for non-retail use at ground floor level will be assessed against the following criteria:~~

- ~~(i) need for passing trade;~~
- ~~(ii) extent of window display space; and~~
- ~~(iii) impact on the character of existing properties.~~

~~In granting any permissions, the Council will safeguard the overall character of the shopping area by securing adequate window display areas.~~

~~There will be no objection in principle to non-retail uses within the remaining parts of the central shopping area at first floor level.~~

TC 3 Within business areas, as defined on the Inset Map, general retailing will not normally be allowed. An exception may be made where:

- (i) the retailing is ancillary to the non-retail use;**

Traditionally, there have been parts of the Town Centre which have fulfilled the function of business areas:

It is considered necessary to ensure that such areas are retained in order to:

- (ii) the retail use is of a small-scale and specialist nature;
- (iii) the retail use will not give rise to servicing problems

- (i) provide opportunities for the establishment of non-retail uses which would be excluded by Policy TC 2.
- (ii) provide opportunities for the establishment of small scale and specialist retail uses near the main shopping centre in lower-cost property; and
- (iii) to avoid the unnecessary sprawl of the central area.

For the purposes of implementing this policy, small scale retailing is defined as less than 250 m² floorspace.

TC 4 The following sites are allocated for development and are shown on the Inset Map.

Ref. No.	Site Name	Area (ha)	Acceptable Uses
1.	Former Lowe House RC School, Duke Street	1.28	a) Retail (A1) b) Offices c) Leisure d) Financial & Professional Services (A2) e) Food and Drink (A3) f) Car Parking g) Housing
2.	Land north of Standish Street	0.29	a) Housing b) Car Parking
3.	Land at Atlas Court	0.33	a) Light Industry (B1) b) Gen. Industry (B2) c) Offices
4.	Land south of Chalon Way (including surface parking and existing Council Offices)	1.10	a) Leisure b) Offices c) Car Parking
5.	Land east of Central Station	1.19	a) Light Industry (B1) b) Offices c) Leisure d) Car Parking e) Housing
6.	Land east of Hall Street	0.91	a) Light Industry (B1) b) Offices c) Car Parking

For those sites being allocated for development, it is considered that planning policies must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that advantage is taken of opportunities which arise. For this reason, alternative acceptable uses are suggested for a number of sites. Where more than one use is proposed, a mixed-use scheme involving all or some of the uses will usually be acceptable. Given the special nature of a number of these Town Centre sites, there will also normally be no objection, in principle to mixed use schemes containing ancillary uses not specifically mentioned, such as small-scale retail, food and drink and financial and professional service outlets. Other uses not specified will be considered in accordance with the Policies contained within the Plan.

The Town Centre currently contains a number of residential areas, the largest of which is centred on Hardshaw Street. It has long been realised that there is a demand from certain sections of the community for Town Centre housing, particularly for young persons, and that the re-introduction of residential uses can bring back life to Town Centres, particularly in the hours after most retailing has ceased.

Housing has therefore been identified as an acceptable use on a number of sites. In addition, subject to normal site planning considerations, the Council will support proposals to bring upper floors into housing use.

In the event of the existing permission lapsing, development proposals on these sites will be treated in accordance with the Policies contained within the Plan.

Ref. No.	Site Name	Area (ha)	Acceptable Uses
7.	Former Transport Offices, Hall Street/ Shaw Street	0.25	a) Light Industry(B1) b) Offices c) Leisure d) Car Parking e) Housing
8.	Telephone Exchange, Foundary Street	0.2	a) Retail (A1) b) Offices c) Leisure d) Car Parking e) Financial & Professional Services(A2) f) Food & Drink (A3)
9.	Former School Buildings, College Street	0.17	a) Offices b) Leisure c) Car Parking d) Housing
10.	Land east of Brynn Street	0.14	a) Car Parking b) Open Space c) Housing
11	Former Cinema Bridge Street	0.17	a) Retail (A1) b) Financial & Professional Services(A2) c) Food & Drink (A3) d) Leisure e) Offices f) Housing
12	Former Lead Works Chalon Way	1.4	a) Offices b) Leisure c) Housing

The following sites with the benefit of planning permission are also shown on the Inset Map.

Ref. No.	Site Name	Area (ha)	Acceptable Uses (Status)
13.	Land west of Brynn Street	0.27	Car Parking (Full)
14.	St. Helens Technology Campus, Standish Street	2.28	Tech. Campus (Outline)
15.	Land west of Atlas Street	1.11	Light Ind./ General Ind./ Offices (Full)

TC 5 In partnership with other agencies, the Council will restore the St. Helens Canal, enhance adjoining areas of land and develop a strategic footpath, (see also Policies ENV 3, ENV 22 and REC 5). Planning applications for development affecting the Canal or adjoining areas of land will be refused if the Council considers that they would conflict with or obstruct these objectives.

The stretch of the Canal between the Safeway Superstore and Rainford Brook (adjacent to the Technology Campus) is an important element in the Ravenhead Greenway. It offers significant opportunities to improve appearance, provide open space in the vicinity of the Town Centre and develop recreational and educational opportunities, some of which could be directly related to adjoining development sites. In addition to public sources of finance, commitment from the private and voluntary sectors will be sought to achieve implementation.

TC 6	<p>New development and extensions to existing development will be required to respect the character of the Victoria Square Conservation Area, in terms of setting, scale, design, and materials. Detailed consideration will be given to the overall design of shop fronts, to ensure architectural features are retained, appropriate materials are used and the street scene is not damaged.</p>	<p>The Victoria Square conservation Area was designated in 1976 and development control policies are needed to protect its amenity and retain and enhance the character of the area.</p> <p>The boundaries of the area will be reviewed during the Plan Period.</p>
TC 7	<p>Applications for consent to display advertisements within and adjoining the Victoria Square Conservation Area will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ensure the proposals are in scale with the building on which they are displayed or the setting; (ii) not be unduly dominant; (iii) not conflict with architectural features; and (iv) be designed as an integral feature of the building or the setting. 	
TC 8	<p>The Council will refuse planning applications for development, and applications for express consent for advertisements, which it considers will adversely affect the character and appearance of the following streets, parts of streets or individual buildings;</p> <p>Sefton Arms, Baldwin Street;</p> <p>Chalon Brasserie, Barrow Street;</p> <p>Globe Buildings, corner of Barrow Street;</p> <p>Lincoln Square, Bridge Street;</p> <p>Nelson Hotel, Bridge Street;</p> <p>Cannon Cinema, Bridge Street</p> <p>Church Street (7, 9-11, 23-55, 89-109)</p> <p>Yorkshire Building Society, Church Street;</p> <p>Raven Lodge, Church Street;</p> <p>Corporation Chambers, 8-10 Corporation Street.;</p> <p>Lamb Hotel, Corporation Street;</p> <p>Gas Showrooms, Cotham Street;</p> <p>Assembly Rooms, George Street;</p> <p>George Street (3-5);</p> <p>2 Hall Street/ 87 Church Street;</p> <p>Hardshaw Street (between Church Street and Claughton Street);</p> <p>Haydock Street (9-15);</p>	<p>Older buildings in the Town Centre help to provide continuity with the past and a sense of identification with the town. Those streets and buildings listed in Policy TC 8, taken in consideration with more recent developments, create a more interesting and varied environment. As attractive, interesting or visually dominant buildings, the Council will encourage their retention and require that any changes over which there is planning control, including replacement or additional signage, respect their existing character.</p> <p>In addition to the properties listed in TC 8, the Council will protect the eight listed buildings in the Town Centre (see Para. 9.5) in accordance with Government legislation and the policies contained in the Plan.</p>

St. Mary's Presbytery, Lowe Street/ Crab Street;
Former TAVR Building, Mill Street;
North Road (36-38);
YMCA Building, North Road;
Imperial Buildings, Ormskirk Street;
United Reformed Church, Ormskirk Street;
Williams & Glyn's Bank, Ormskirk Street;
Wolverhampton House, Parr Street;
19-27 Shaw Street;
Providence Hospital (original part), Tolver Street;

TC 9 The Council will seek to retain the characteristic scale, as defined by height and unit frontage width, of the following streets:

- (i) Duke Street;**
- (ii) Westfield Street;**
- (iii) Corporation Street (between College Street and Birchley Street); and**
- (iv) Claughton Street**

These are streets of terraced shops, many of which have been modernised in a way which detracts from the original form of the Victoria terraces. The policy does not preclude amalgamations but the Council will seek to persuade developers to respect the traditional character of these streets.

TC 10 The Council will implement the following traffic management measures:

- (i) Following closure of Chalon Way re-use of the highway areas for alternative uses, which could include:**
 - (a) provision of car parking;**
 - (b) improved pedestrian links between Church Street and development to the south of Chalon Way;**
 - (c) access and parking for disabled people;**
 - (d) indoor and open-air market;**
 - (e) secondary bus terminal; and**
 - (f) amenity/open space.**
- (ii) Removal of through traffic from Westfield Street, parts of Bridge and Ormskirk Streets by encouraging the use of the existing Ring Road;**
- (iii) Pedestrianisation of:**
 - (a) Westfield Street (part);**
 - (b) Ormskirk Street;**

It will be possible to implement most of the overall traffic management plan prior to the construction of an eastern link of the Ring Road. The most significant opportunities relate to Chalon Way, further pedestrianisation and the Hardshaw Street area.

The closure of Chalon Way offers enormous potential to put this area to other uses and ensure greater integration of developments to the south of Chalon Way with the shopping centre. Although the exact mix of alternative uses has to be decided, it is considered that the main elements are listed in TC 10.

The pedestrianisation that has been carried out already in the Town Centre has been very successful in improving the amenity of St. Helens for shoppers and strengthening the trading position of the town. The UDP represents an opportunity to extend pedestrianisation proposals to other parts of the Town Centre. The proposals contained in the Plan represent a logical progression which builds on the schemes implemented so far.

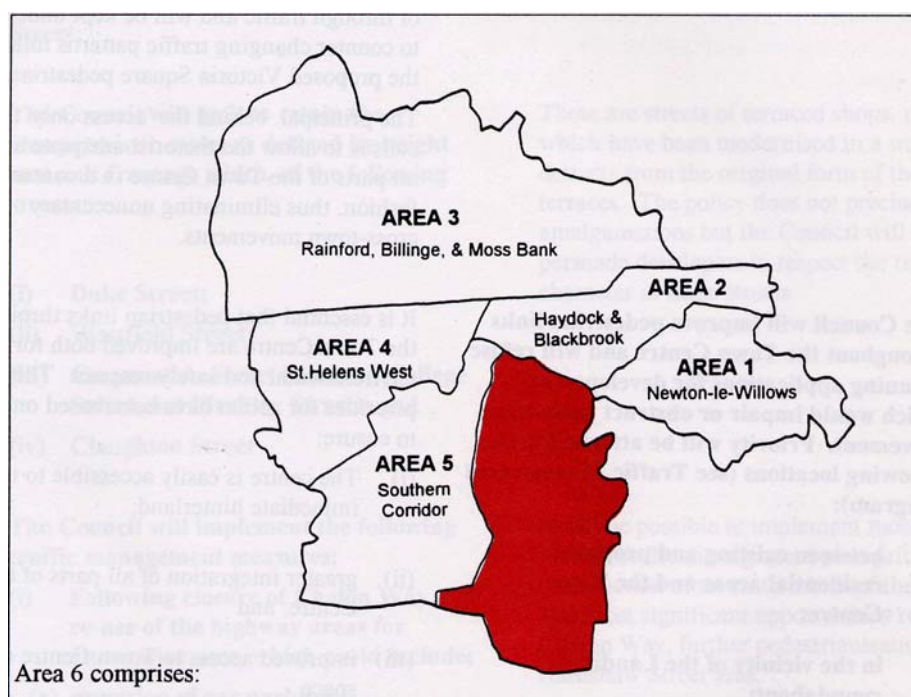
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (c) Bridge Street (part); and (d) Victoria Square (following construction of an eastern link of the Ring Road) (iv) Improvements to College Street and Standish Street; (v) Preparation of a Hardshaw Street traffic management plan (to be reviewed following construction of an eastern link of the Ring Road); and (vi) Creation of a system of access-only 'cells'. 	<p>It shall be the intention that the schemes proposed in the Plan will be partial pedestrianisation only, in that buses, taxis and cycles will be permitted through access.</p> <p>The Hardshaw Street area is the largest single residential neighbourhood in the Town Centre.</p> <p>The amenity of this area has long been detrimentally effected by through-traffic ("rat-running") and non-residential on-street parking. A residents car parking scheme is in operation, which has improved the situation but the issue of through-traffic remains. A traffic management plan will mitigate the worst effect of through traffic and will be kept under review to counter changing traffic patterns following the proposed Victoria Square pedestrianisation.</p> <p>The principal behind the 'access only' traffic cells is to allow the motorist adequate access to all parts of the Town Centre in a controlled fashion, thus eliminating unnecessary cross-town movements.</p>
<p>TC 11 The Council will improve pedestrian links throughout the Town Centre and will refuse planning applications for development which would impair or obstruct pedestrian movement. Priority will be attached to the following locations (see Traffic Management Diagram):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) between existing and proposed residential areas and the Town Centre; (ii) in the vicinity of the Landings roundabout; (iii) across Standish Street; (iv) between the Technology Campus, St. Helens Central Station and Bickerstaffe Street Bus Station; and (v) between the area to the south of Chalon Way and Church Street 	<p>It is essential that pedestrian links throughout the Town Centre are improved both for environmental and safety reasons. The priorities for action have been based on the need to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The centre is easily accessible to its immediate hinterland; (ii) greater integration of all parts of the Town Centre; and (iii) improved access to Town Centre open space
<p>TC 12 The Council will improve access to the Town Centre for those with special needs. Proposals will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) providing disabled parking on Chalon Way (following its closure); and (ii) making parking provision within existing and proposed pedestrianisation schemes, especially Victoria Square, to ensure access to central facilities. 	<p>The Plan is committed to equal opportunities and a high priority is given to providing maximum accessibility to the Town Centre for the disabled. Provision at present consists of disabled spaces in public car parks, the 'orange badge' concessions and a car park for use solely by the disabled at the eastern end of Church Street. It is considered that implementation of TC 12 will achieve needed improvement in the provision of facilities.</p>

AREA 6 - PARR, SUTTON AND BOLD

1. *Area Context*

1.1 The main issues affecting the Area are as follows:

- (i) rationalisation of mixed-use areas;
- (ii) environmental enhancement, including opportunities arising from the Mersey Forest;
- (iii) Hays Chemicals plant;
- (iv) the Green Belt;
- (v) the former Bold Power Station;
- (vi) transport



- (i) the residential areas of Broad Oak, Sutton, Parr, Feasley Cross, Sutton Leach, Parr Stocks, Derbyshire Hill, Pocket Nook (part) and Clock Face (part).
- (ii) industrial areas at Moorfoot Road, Delta Road, Sutton Road, Jackson Street, Parr, Abbotsfield Road and Reginald Road;
- (iii) St. Helens Hospital;
- (iv) the former Bold Power Station, ex-Bold Colliery and associated tips;
- (v) Fingerpost Shopping Centre;
- (vi) Sutton Village;
- (vii) Green Belt (7,779 ha - 65% of the Sub-Area).

2. *Rationalisation of Mixed-Use Areas*

This Area contains a number of mixed industrial/residential areas, particularly in Sutton. The closeness of housing and factories means that many residents in the area are badly affected by industrial pollution and the impact of heavy traffic. The Plan objectives will therefore be to:

- (i) reduce the impact of industrial development on residential areas;
- (ii) encourage new residential development;
- (iii) promote general environmental enhancement.

- 2.2 Whilst construction of the spur road to the Link Road means that road access will be improved, it is not intended to significantly increase the area of land allocated for industrial purposes and, in places, it is proposed to delete existing industrial allocations, as follows:

Site Name	Area (ha)
(i) Worsley Brow	3.19
(ii) West of Morris Street/South of Helsby Street	0.26
(iii) East of Sutton Road/west of Morris Street	0.27
(iv) Bentinck Street	0.58
(v) East of Morris Street	0.26

- 2.3 The proposed deletions of previous industrial allocations will have particular impact in the Bentinck Street and Morris Street areas and will protect the amenity of the remaining residential properties.

- 2.4 In addition to these proposed de-allocations, it is also proposed to restrict a number of sites which previously had an industrial allocation in the Sutton Local Plan to B1 use only, ie. light industrial/business which will also contribute to protecting residential amenity.

Sites affected are as follows:

Site Name	Area (ha)
(i) Nook Lane	1.49
(ii) Rolling Mill Lane	2.00
(iii) North of Reginald Road	1.57

3. *Environmental Enhancement*

- 3.1 The environment of much of the area is severely degraded and has been identified as a priority for landscape renewal (ENV 20). Opportunity will therefore be taken to promote Boroughwide policies, such as the Wasteland to Woodland Initiative and Policy for Nature, and to implement the Sutton Greenway.
- 3.2 Extensive woodland planting as part of the Mersey Forest will take place on the following sites and opportunities for public access explored (ENV 10).
- (i) ex-Bold Colliery;
 - (ii) Bold Moss Tip;
 - (iii) Clock Face Colliery;
 - (iv) former Sidac car park and filter-beds.
- 3.3 Bold Moss Tip will be an area of major activity as the project has secured extensive funding including National Lottery monies. The project is managed by the Groundwork Trust and will be a significant improvement to the environment of this area.
- 3.4 The Plan affords protection to Sites of Community Wildlife Interest (ENV 5). There are 16 such sites within Area 6 and these are shown on the Proposals Map.
- 3.5 The Plan proposes the establishment of a Boroughwide network of Greenways including a number of significant sites within this Area (ENV 3).

4. *Hays Chemicals Plant*

- 4.1 Area 6 contains the Hays Chemicals Plant, located off Lancots Lane, which is a notifiable installation under the terms of the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982 (NIHHS).
- 4.2 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has produced development control guidance which seeks to influence the type of development permitted within consultation zones around the plant. The boundary of the outer zone is shown in Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 4. The Council has an obligation to consider the advice of the HSE as a material planning consideration.

- 4.3 The objective of the HSE is to minimise the people who might be at risk in the event of an accident at the plant. In practice, this means restricting certain types of development within the consultation zone around the plant. It is considered that strict adherence to HSE guidance in all cases is not compatible with the aims of urban regeneration and the Sutton Village Initiative. (see Sutton Village Inset Map).
- 4.4 The Council proposes a balanced approach towards developments in the consultation zones which would generally accept HSE advice to minimise risks to local residents but consider favourably residential development restricted to cleared sites (ie. where housing previously existed), in the interests of urban regeneration.

5. *Green Belt*

There are a number of minor amendments to the Green Belt as well as two more substantial changes, at Berrys Lane and off Moorfoot Road.

6. *Former Bold Power Station*

- 6.1 Bold Power Station is now closed. It is considered that the site represents a development opportunity combined with substantial woodland planting. The Council would consider favourably residential development in the context of the site being substantially afforested and making a contribution to the Mersey Forest in association with adjoining sites. It is not considered that the site should be promoted for any form of general industrial and/or commercial development (AP 6.3).

7. *Transport*

Whilst the existing railway line between Central and Junction Stations is not currently operational, it is considered that the restoration of this line is of long-term strategic importance, in order to provide a better link to the Inter-City network. The Council will therefore resist any development which would inhibit its restoration (TRA 6).

AREA POLICIES

AP 6.1 The Council will not allow development at the Hays Chemical Plant which would increase the overall level of risk of pollution by emissions or hazardous substances to local residents and, in addition, will seek, wherever possible, improvements contributing to a reduction in the overall level of risk to local residents.

The existence of the Hays Chemical Plant has restricted the development opportunities within the surrounding area. Whilst the Council would like to see the eventual relocation of the Plant, the policy is intended to ensure that there is no increase in the overall level of risk to local residents. In addition, there will be circumstances, for example, changing production processes or redevelopment of storage facilities where opportunities would exist to secure an overall reduction in the pollution and hazard risks associated with the site. Where it is within the remit of planning control, the Council will be keen to pursue opportunities and secure a reduction in the overall risk to local residents.

AP 6.2 In the event of the closure, the relocation or the denotification of the Hays Plant during the Plan Period, or the reassessment of the consultation zones by the HSE, the Council will reassess existing allocations with the aim of reintroducing residential development on appropriate sites.

If the Hays Chemical Plant were closed, relocated or denotified, then there would be an opportunity to re-examine suitable uses for sites in the proximity of the works. Reintroduction of residential uses would be consistent with the overall objective of regenerating uses would be consistent with the overall objective of regenerating the Sutton area.

AP 6.3 When considering proposals for Bold Power Station the Council will:

- (i) require a comprehensive scheme for redevelopment;**
- (ii) seek environmental enhancement of the site as a contribution to the Mersey Forest;**
- (iii) within the context of an environmentally enhanced site, favourably consider the provision of a limited amount of residential development;**

The former power station is a large and important site on the fringe of the Green Belt. It is considered important, therefore, that the redundant buildings are removed as soon as possible, in order to limit any detrimental impact on the amenity of the area. The site adjoins Bold Moss tip (ENV 10(xii)), where the Groundwork Trust are implementing a restoration programme and the ex-Bold Colliery (ENV 10(xiii)) also undergoing restoration to woodland. 'Greening up' of the site would therefore complement these initiatives.

Given the surplus of industrial land in the Borough, the proposed reduced role of this Area in providing a supply of industrial land and the site's poor accessibility, industrial redevelopment would be inappropriate. However, the site could make a useful long-term contribution to the Borough's residential land supply. In view of its location adjacent to Sutton Village, it is considered that a proportion of the dwellings to be provided should be affordable, ie. social housing or low cost private housing. However, in view of the area involved and its location, piecemeal development will not be acceptable.

Land at Worsley Brow and Watery Lane

AP 6.4 Land shown on the proposals map at Worsley Brow and Watery Lane shall be safeguarded to include a significant element of residential development until:

- (a) the Plan is reviewed in 2001 or,**
- (b) at an earlier date on the notification to the Council by the HSE of any changes to the consultation zones relating to the nearby Notifiable Installation.**

On receipt of revised guidance from the HSE, the Council will grant planning permission for development which:

- (a) is consistent with the guidance of the HSE;**
- (b) is consistent with the Plan's other policies; and**
- (c) demonstrates how the site shown on the Proposals Map can be developed in a comprehensive manner**

The Council would prefer this site to be redeveloped for residential purposes which could include complementary small scale uses, for example, of a recreational or leisure nature.

This would assist in the regeneration of the Sutton area; assist in contributing to the longer term residential land supply, and reduce the impact of industrial development in this area of St. Helens

At the current time the opportunity for residential development is constrained by advice from the HSE relating to development within the Consultation zones surrounding the Notifiable Installation at Hays Chemical Plant.

However, far reaching improvements are to be undertaken at the Plant over the period 1998/99. It is likely that these improvements could result in the HSE reconsidering the extent of the Consultation Zones and greater flexibility over acceptable types of development on land at Worsley Brow and Watery Lane.

The Council does not wish to prevent appropriate development on this site. Equally it does not wish to prejudice an opportunity of redefining its development strategy for Sutton

and securing a significant new area of residential development.

It is the expectation that revised guidance will be issued before the review of the UDP in which case appropriate development can be considered.

In the event that no revised guidance is received then the future use of the site will be determined in the UDP review based on the HSE advice pertaining at that time.

SUTTON VILLAGE - INSET MAP

1. *Introduction*

- 1.1 Sutton Village is one of the oldest areas of St. Helens. It has a variety of social, economic and physical problems. It is therefore considered necessary to consider the Village in greater detail than the remainder of Area 6.

2. *Summary of problems*

- 2.1 The key problems in the Village are as follows:
- (i) a number of vacant and poorly kept sites;
 - (ii) vacant residential and commercial premises;
 - (iii) the poor physical condition of housing stock and shopping premises;
 - (iv) the shortage of amenity space, and shortage of community facilities, particularly for the young and elderly.
- 2.2 Overall, the Village reflects typical characteristics of an area in decline. There is a need for a considerable degree of environmental enhancement. However, despite these problems, it is an area which has a genuine community spirit and a strong 'sense of place'.

3. *Sutton Village Initiative*

- 3.1 Following a detailed study of the issues, the Council decided that the depth and extent of the problems required a comprehensive and far-reaching strategy involving the community, the Council and the public and private sectors. In 1989, it therefore resolved to pursue a package of measures to tackle the problem, known as the Sutton Village Initiative.
- 3.2 The key to the package has been the improvement of private sector housing by the declaration of a Housing Renewal Area (HRA) within which powers are available to the Council to secure and promote improvement.
- 3.3 Other elements of the Initiative include:
- (i) land acquisition;
 - (ii) buying out of non-conforming uses in residential areas;
 - (iii) operation of a Commercial Improvement Area centred on Junction Lane/Peckershill Road;
 - (iv) provision of parking facilities in Junction Lane;
 - (v) provision of play facilities;
 - (vi) environmental improvements
- 3.4 The funding for the Initiative was a combination of Council spending, Housing Investment Programme, Urban Programme, Derelict Land Grant, European Funding and private sector investment. The majority of the activity has now taken place and it is unlikely that there will be further major spend after 1996, although the HRA has a statutory life of ten years.

4. *Residential Uses*

- 4.1 The overall objective in the Village is to secure maximum regeneration by use of vacant sites for residential purposes (RES 1). A number of mainly small sites will be retained, however, for amenity purposes, in conjunction with the two main open spaces at Percy Street and Alice Street.
- 4.2 Whilst the Council has a statutory duty to clear unfit housing, it is not the intention to pursue wholesale demolition. Clearly, the rate of take-up of improvement grants will be a major factor in determining the need for future clearance.

5. *Economic Use*

- 5.1 There are two existing industrial areas within the Village, south of Station Road and centred on Normans Road. In addition, there are a number of industrial uses occupying former allotments of Hoghton Road. These existing industrial areas contain numbers of 'bad-neighbour' uses which either have the benefit of planning permission or are lawfully established. Whilst there are planning powers which could be used to remove some of these uses, the financial implications mean that such action is not practicable. The Council will, however, carefully consider the potential impact of proposed development in those locations to ensure that the amenity of residents is protected.

6. *Car Parking*

- 6.1 The problem of the lack of off-street parking facilities in the Village is a long-standing one which was addressed in the Sutton Local Plan. Following clearance, car parking areas have been provided by the Council in Junction Lane, although there remains a problem in Peckers Hill Road.

7. *Commercial Improvement Area*

- 7.1 A Commercial Improvement Area was declared in 1991. The purpose of the declaration is to secure property improvements to shops and business in Junction Lane and Peckershill Road by making grants available to owners and occupiers. Grants are offered for external improvements on the basis of improving of the areas and for internal improvements on the basis of jobs created.

INSET POLICIES

SV 1 The following areas are allocated for public open space:

- (i) **Land in Herbert Street;**
- (ii) **Land in Peckers Hill Road;**

These are cleared housing sites which have been temporarily treated in the past. It is proposed to retain them for permanent open space in order to ensure that the village environment is enhanced.

SV 2 Development Sites

The following sites are allocated for development and are shown on the Inset Map.

Ref. No.	Site Name	Area (ha)	Acceptable Uses
1.	Land at St. Helens Junction, Station Road	0.66	B1, B8
2.	Land west of Peckershill Road/ south of Smith Street	0.27	Housing
3.	Land west of Peckershill Road/ south of Fisher Street	0.54	Housing
4.	Land adjacent to 30 Hoghton Road	0.07	Housing
5.	Land at Powell Street	0.18	Housing

The following sites have the benefit of planning permission and are also shown on the Inset Map.

6.	Land at junction of Helena Road/ Normans Road	0.09	Car Park, Office
7.	Land at Lionel Street	0.14	Housing

For those sites being allocated for development, it is considered that planning policies must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that advantage is taken of opportunities which arise. Where more than one use is proposed, a mixed-use scheme involving all or some of the uses will usually be acceptable. Proposed uses not specified will be considered in accordance with the Policies contained within the Plan.

In the event of the existing permission lapsing, development proposals on these sites will be treated with the Policies contained within the Plan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: DEVELOPMENT PLANS SUPERSEDED BY THE UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(i) Pre-1974 Inherited Statutory Development Plans

- St. Helens County Borough Development Plan 1953
- Amendment No. 1 (First Review) 1965
- Amendment No. 2 (C.D.A. No. 1) 1969
- Lancashire County Council Development Plan 1956
- Rainford Town Map 1967
- Widnes Town Map 1964
- Ashton-in-Makerfield Town Map 1966
- East Merseyside Town Map 1965

(ii) Post 1974 Statutory Development Plans

- Merseyside Structure Plan 1980
- Merseyside Green Belt Local Plan 1983
- Newton-le-Willows District Plan 1982
- Sutton Local Plan 1983
- St. Helens Town Centre Local Plan 1984

(iii) Post 1974 Draft Statutory Development Plans

- Draft Haydock Local Plan 1984
- Draft Ravenhead Local Plan 1986

APPENDIX 2: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affordable Housing - housing for sale or rent which people on relatively low incomes can afford.

Aggregates - a mass of minerals formed into one rock eg. sandstone.

Agricultural Development and Advisory Service (ADAS) - an independent executive agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods (MAFF). It provides professional, scientific and technical expertise to promote the profitability of the agricultural industry, backed by research and development.

Amenity - pleasantness of place, quality of life (of an area).

Arboriculturist - a specialist on tree matters.

Bad Neighbour Development - any form of development which, by the way or manner in which it operates, would be detrimental to residential amenity.

Built Environment - surroundings which are urban and 'hard' in character as opposed to 'natural' or 'green' environment.

Business Park - prestigious, low-density, landscaped industrial area predominantly occupied by light industrial, research and development, and office uses, ie. B1 uses.

Business Areas - parts of St. Helens town centre which predominantly consist of offices and other commercial uses.

Capital partnerships - Government funds which are bid for competitively for schemes which combine private sector monies and Council capital receipts.

Care in the Community Programme - the provision of a range of services to help people with disabilities or health problems live as independently as possible in the community.

Census - a Government survey of population and other socio-economic information which takes place every ten years.

City Challenge - a competition of Central Government funding to deal with urban problems which took place in 1991 and 1992. St. Helens submitted bids on both occasions and was unsuccessful.

City Grants - Government grant available to the private sector to redevelop inner city areas.

Commercial Improvement Area (CIA) - part, or all of a shopping street within which grants are available to property owners and occupiers to carry out property improvement and thereby facilitate the safeguarding and creation of jobs.

Community Areas - devised to allow analysis of open space at the local level. They are defined using criteria such as settlement patterns, major road/rail barriers and watercourses.

Community Forest Initiative - an initiative of central Government, acting through its agencies the Countryside Commission and the Forestry Commission. There are currently 12 Community Forests established throughout England, the local example is the Mersey Forest.

Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) - legal procedure of compulsorily acquiring land or buildings through Planning or Housing Acts.

Conservation Area - area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.

Contaminated Land - land which is harmfully polluted with toxic or noxious substances.

Controlled Waste - household, commercial or industrial waste.

Countryside Commission - the official body for countryside conservation and recreation in England. Promotes the provision and improvement of facilities in the countryside for informal recreation, as well as providing advice and grants.

Curtilage - land attached to a property.

Departure from the Development Plan - where a proposal does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area (in future, the UDP), there are obligations to carry out statutory publicity and, in the case of certain larger developments (150 dwellings; 10,000 m² of shopping), where Council land is involved or the proposal would significantly prejudice the development plan to give the Secretary of State an opportunity to call the application in for his consideration ie. usually, to hold a public inquiry). The formal arrangements are currently set out in Circular 19/92.

Deregulation - the process whereby private transport operators are allowed to operate services in competition with each other.

Derelict Land - land so damaged by past industrial or other development that it is incapable of beneficial use without treatment.

Derelict Land Grant (DLG) - grant from the Government for funding the reclamation of derelict land.

Development - defined in Section 44 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as:- "The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations, in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land."

Development Brief - a document containing guidance to a developer on Council requirements for a site.

Development Plan - the statutory land-use plan in operation for any given area.

Drift Mining - extraction of minerals by following the exposed seam into a hillside.

Ecological Value - having biological importance.

Elevation - drawing of the front-side-rear of a building.

Encroachment - development which extends onto neighbouring property or land.

English Nature - the government's advisory body on nature conservation (replaced the nature Conservancy Council).

Environmental Assessment (EA) - a submission which may be required by the Local Planning Authority from developers, setting out the environmental effects that a significant new development would have on a development site and the surrounding area. Current government guidance is set out in Circular 15/88.

Estate Action Schemes - programmes to improve run-down council housing estates, which are primarily funded by Central Government.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) - European Community funding for infrastructure and job creating investment.

European Social Fund (ESF) - European community funding for vocational training and retraining.

Footprint - the aggregate ground floor area of a building, or complex of buildings.

Full Planning Permission - a detailed approval for a development.

General Development Order (GDO) - sets out those categories of development which may be carried out without the need to apply for planning permission, ie. 'permitted development'.

General Improvement Area (GIA) - introduced in the 1969 Housing Act to enable the renovation, rather than demolition of areas of older housing in poor condition. Improvement grants were made available to property owners in the area. Abolished under 1989 Local Government and Housing Act.

Greenway - a network of physically or visually linked open spaces including both formal and informal open space.

Green Belt - area of land protected from development in order to check urban sprawl, safeguard the countryside from encroachment, prevent towns from merging, preserve the historic towns and assist in urban regeneration. Prior to the UDP, the Green Belt in St. Helens was defined by the Merseyside Green Belt Local Plan.

'Hard After Use' - built development on land previously open and/or derelict.

Hazardous Installations - installations which involve hazardous substances in excess of the quantities requiring notification to the Health and Safety Executive.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - Government body which enforces a series of statutory provisions relating to health and safety at work, and the effects that industry may have on the public.

Heritage Landscape - a landscape of historical, cultural or aesthetic significance.

House Builders Federation (HBF) - an organisation which represents the interests of the house building industry.

Housing Action Area (HAA) - introduced in the 1974 Housing Act to extend the GIA policy by raising the level of grants available. Abolished under Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Housing Association - non-profit making organisations which provide housing for sale or for rent. Most of their funding comes from Central government and they usually work together with Councils to provide accommodation for those in housing need.

Housing Investment Programme (HIP) - an annual bid made by the Council to Central Government to secure funding approval and grant to invest in the housing stock in their area.

Housing Renewal Area (HRA) - replaced GIAs and HAAs in the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act. Owners of substantial properties are now entitled to improvement grants subject to a means test. Other grants are available to improve whole blocks of property in a Renewal Area.

Industrial Archaeology - remains, structures and buildings which are important in explaining the industrial past or history of an area.

Informal Recreation - recreation not requiring the provision of formal facilities, eg. walking.

Infrastructure - the provision of roads, drainage and the availability of power supplies at the most basic level, through to social infrastructure such as schools and community centres which can encourage investment in new housing and industry.

Inner Area/Inner Urban Area - selected authorities such as St. Helens have special status under the Inner Urban Areas Act 1978, which enables them to direct funding through the Urban Programme into older built-up areas as a priority. The funding is directed to improving the social, economic and environmental conditions of these areas. This funding ceased after the financial year 1994/95.

Inset Map - a detailed map, which is part of the UDP for certain parts of the borough, eg. Town Centre Inset Map.

Joint Countryside Advisory Service (JCAS) - an agency funded by Sefton, Knowsley and St. Helens Borough Councils to provide a specialist advice on environmental and countryside matters.

Listed Building Consent - consent for extending or altering a Listed Building either internally or externally.

Local Planning Authority (LPA) - as a unitary authority, St. Helens MBC is also the Local Planning Authority when using its planning powers.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR) - sites of local nature conservation significance designated by the Local Authority.

Local Shopping Centre - centres providing basic shopping facilities of importance for those who live locally.

Main-line Budget - Council expenditure, as opposed to Government programmes, such as Derelict Land Grant.

Mersey Basin Campaign - a coalition of local authorities, industry, other statutory bodies and voluntary groups seeking to improve water quality in the River Mersey and its tributaries and to regenerate the urban areas along its banks.

Mersey Forest - a partnership of local authorities supported by the Countryside Commission and Forestry Authority to significantly increase woodland in the Mersey area. It aims to provide employment, new wildlife habitats and areas for public recreation.

Merseyside Integrated Transport Study (MERITS) - a study sponsored by the five Merseyside districts, published in 1993 containing proposals for the development of the area's transport network.

Merseyside Integrated Development Operation (MIDO) - a European Community Programme which aims to achieve an improvement in Merseyside's fabric through certain co-ordinated major projects.

Merseyside Planning conference - a conference of all Merseyside Districts and the Department of the Environment which helped to produce Strategic Guidance for Merseyside.

Merseyside Strategic Sites and Premises Study - a study commissioned by the Merseyside Districts and English Estates in 1991 to advise on the development of a programme of strategic sites and premises capable of attracting inward investment.

Merseytravel - the trading name of the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority (MPTA).

Metropolitan Boundary Review - Boundary Commission proposals for local government boundary changes. Current proposals are effective in St. Helens from 1st April 1994.

Mineral Planning Guidance (MPG) - statements of the Government's minerals planning policy.

National Playing Fields Association (NPPA) - a registered charity whose aim is to acquire, protect and improve playing fields and other recreational space for the community, particularly young people and people with special needs. Also provides technical advice and information on outdoor recreational facilities.

Nature Conservation - the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

Neglected Land - land which is unsightly, uncared for and detrimental to the environment but which is not sufficiently damaged to be classified as Derelict Land by the Government.

Non-Conforming Use - an existing use which would today not be considered suitable for its present location. It is not necessarily a use which causes actual nuisance to neighbours.

North West Regional Association (NWRA) - consortium of all local authorities in the North West, established in January 1992 with aim of promoting the image and influencing the future prosperity of the region.

Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982 (NIHHS) - Regulations governing plants handling hazardous substances. There are 4 such plants in St. Helens, the major one of which is the Hays Chemical plant.

Objective One - status accorded to regions in EC which are currently under-developed or lagging behind. The EC has given Merseyside Objective 1 status for the period 1994 - 1999 recognising the region's high levels of long term unemployment, population decline and decline in Gross Domestic product relative to EC averages.

Office of Population Census and Surveys (OPCS) - Government Department responsible for National Census and formulation of population projections and estimates.

'On Deposit' - the stage at which the UDP is formally available for objections, which may then be subject to Public Inquiry.

Opencast Mining - the extraction of minerals by removal of surface soils and overburden.

Outline Planning Permission - a planning permission which permits a development in principle. Further details of the development are required to be submitted subsequently ('reserved matters').

Pedestrianisation - priority in a street given to pedestrians rather than vehicles. May be partial pedestrianisation and allow passage of buses and/or servicing within specified hours.

Permitted Development Rights - development for which planning permission is required, but is deemed to have been granted by the General Development Order.

Planning brief - a document containing general or broad guidance to a developer on the Council's planning requirements for a site.

Planning Conditions/Agreements - legal means of regulating the development or use of land or the carrying out of works on any such land in connection with the granting of planning permission.

Plan Period - length of time for which a plan is legally operative. The Plan Period of the UDP is until 2001, although certain policies, such as Green Belt, will have a longer lifespan.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) - statements of the Government's planning policy.

Prime Shopping Areas - the central parts of St. Helens and Earlestown town centres where shopping is the key activity and where certain non-retail uses will be restricted.

Priority Areas - acknowledged areas within the Borough where levels of deprivation are significantly above the average, to which resources can be targeted.

Priority Homeless - people assessed as homeless and judged to be vulnerable.

Proposals Map - an Ordnance Survey-based plan which illustrates the policies of the UDP. All UDPs are required to be accompanied by a Proposals Map.

Public Open Space (POS) - council-owned outdoor areas used for formal/informal recreation to which the public have the right of access.

Ravenhead Greenway - proposals for the Ravenhead canal and surrounding area, seeking to achieve both environmental and economic benefits.

Ravenhead Renaissance - a private limited company established in 1987 to provide a co-ordinated mechanism to secure the regeneration of the Ravenhead area for the wider benefit of the Borough as a whole and to promote public/private partnership. Members include the Council and private companies.

Strategic Planning Guidance - issued in 1988 for Merseyside to guide the preparation of Development Plans until 2001. (PPG 11). Superseded by Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG 13) issued in 1996.

Structure Plan - a land use plan produced by a County Council which deals with the major planning issues for an area and sets out broad policies and proposals.

Sustainable Development - development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Sutton Village Initiative - comprehensive targeting of resources to upgrade the environment in the Sutton area.

Telecommunications Apparatus - any equipment designed or adapted for use in connection with the running of a telecommunications system.

'This Common Inheritance' - the Government's Environment White Paper, published in September 1990. It sets out the Government's environmental strategy for Britain and the general principles within which the planning system is to operate. Further developed in Sustainable Development, The UK Strategy published in 1994.

Traffic Calming - measures which reduce motor vehicles speeds and reduce their intrusive effects.

Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) - a statement of the Council's policies and programmes for all transport capital spending on local roads, which is submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport for approval.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) - order made under Section 198 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to ensure the preservation of specified trees, groups of trees or woodlands.

Unfit Housing - substandard housing as defined by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP) - introduced by the Local Government Act 1985 in metropolitan areas, a UDP is primarily a land use plan for the development or other use of land. A UDP combines the strategic and local planning policies previously divided between the metropolitan County and District Councils.

Urban Deprivation - acute social and economic problems, such as poverty found in the poorer parts of towns and cities.

Urban Programme (UP) - a Central Government programme of funding for inner city and urban areas, aiming to encourage enterprise and new business, improve job prospects and make inner cities more attractive and safe. The programme ceased after the financial year 1994/95 and was replaced by the Single Regeneration Budget.

Urban Renewal - the process of redevelopment, refurbishment and renovation which replaces unfit housing and substandard industrial and retail property.

Use Classes Order (UCO) - this Order specifies various classes of use for buildings on land. Within each class the use for another purpose of the same class does not need planning permission. The 1987 Use Classes Order is the current document and defines the following classes.

Class	A1	Shops of all types
	A2	Financial and Professional Services
	A3	Food and Drink
	B1	Business Use (other than A2)
	B2	General Industrial
	B4-B7	Special Industrial
	B8	Storage and Distribution
	C1	Hotels and Hostels
	C2	Residential Institutions
	C3	Dwelling Houses
	D1	Non-Residential Institutions
	D2	Assembly and Leisure
	Sui Generis	Not falling with any defined Class.

Waste Disposal Plan - statutory approved statement of policies and intentions for the control and disposal of waste in Merseyside up to the year 1997.

Wasteland to Woodland Initiative - a public-private project with aims to transform unsightly and under-used land in St. Helens into woodlands. The project forms part of the wider Mersey Community Forest Initiative.

Wheelchair Housing - housing for people who are permanently dependent on wheelchairs for mobility.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

DOE	Department of the Environment
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
MPTE	Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive
MWDA	Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority
NRA	National Rivers Authority
NWAWP	North West Aggregate Working Party
NWWA	North West Water Authority
SAMSA	Silica and Mouldings Sands Association
TCPA (1990)	Town and Country Planning Act 1990