

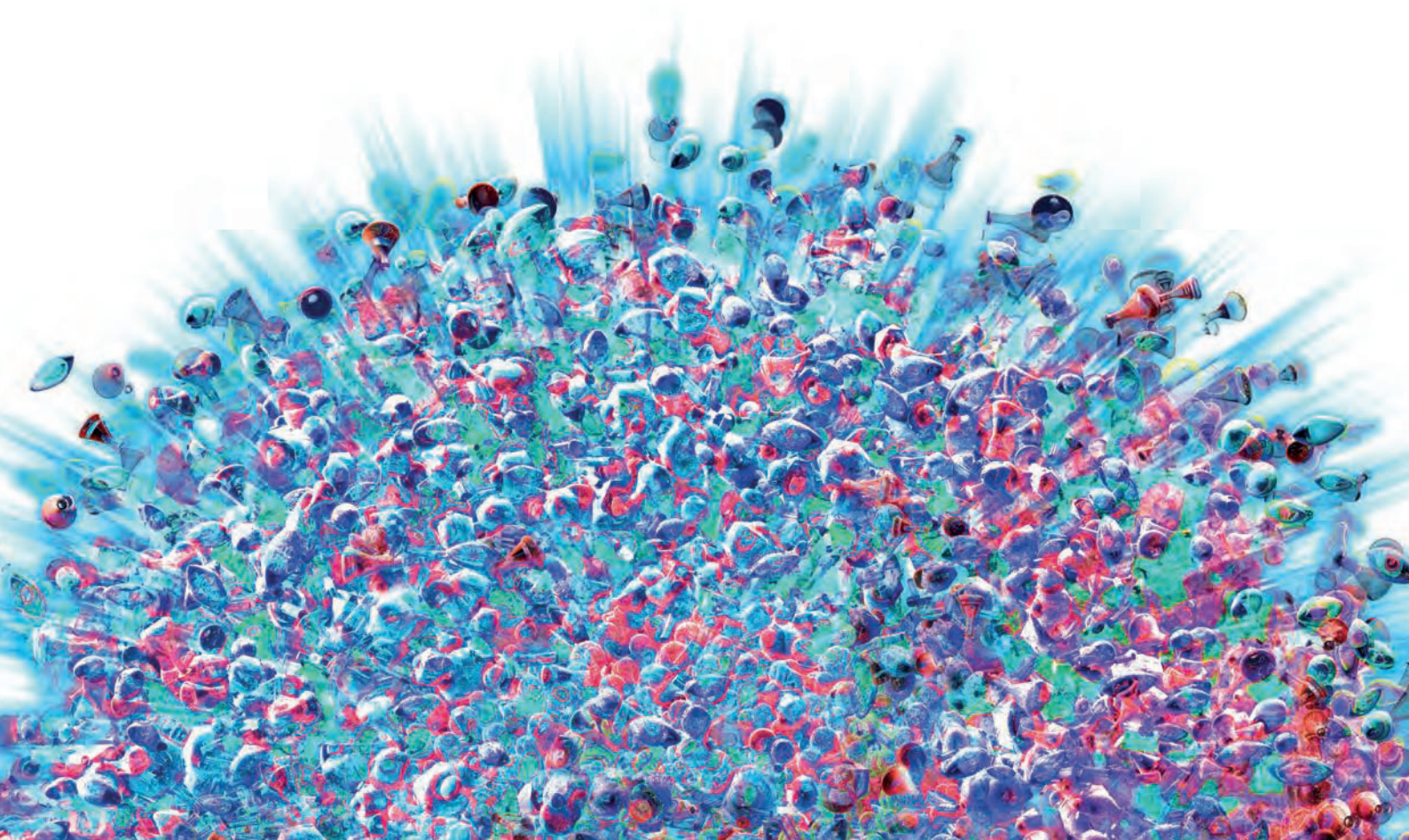


St. Helens
Council

ST HELENS BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN 2020 – 2035

**GREEN BELT REVIEW
DECEMBER 2018**

**A BALANCED PLAN FOR
A BETTER FUTURE**



ABBREVIATIONS LIST

AC	Anomaly Correction
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BC	Borough Council
CC	Consequential Change
Defra	The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DPH	Dwellings per hectare
EiP	Examination in Public
ELNS	Employment Land Needs Study
EVA	Economic Viability Assessment
GBP	Green Belt Parcel
GIS	Geographical Information System
HA	Hectare
HGV	Heavy goods vehicle
KM	Kilometre
HE	Highways England
HIA	Historic Impact Assessment
HSE	Health and safety Executive
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority
LPPO	Local Plan Preferred Options
LPSD	Local Plan Submission Draft
LWS	Local Wildlife Sites
M	Metre
MAGIC	Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside
MEAS	Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service
NDA	Net Developable Area
NDC	Net Developable Capacity
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PAS	Planning Advisory Service
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
SA	Sustainability Assessment
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SHELMA	Strategic Housing & Employment Land Mark Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SRFI	Strategic Rail Freight Interchange
SSSI	Sites of Specific Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
UU	United Utilities

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4. RESULTS AT STAGES 1A, 1B, 2A & 2B

STAGE 1A – IDENTIFICATION OF GREEN BELT PARCELS AND SUB-PARCELS

- 4.1 In accordance with the methodology set out in Chapter 2, 99 parcels were initially identified and numbered GBP_001 to GBP_099. Six of these parcels were then merged (due to the location and small size of GBP_003, GBP_061 and GBP_073) as follows:

- GBP_003 with GBP_001;
- GBP_061 with GBP_062; and
- GBP_073 with GBP_074.

Due to differences of character within them, 34 of the parcels were subsequently split into sub-parcels. A total of 161 parcels and sub-parcels were thus identified.

STAGE 1B – ASSESSMENT OF PARCELS AND SUB-PARCELS AGAINST GREEN BELT PURPOSES

- 4.2 The scoring of the parcels and sub-parcels at Stage 1B is set out in appendices B and C. Appendix B identifies specifically those parcels and sub-parcels that were discounted from subsequent stages because they scored a 'high+' or 'high' at Stage 1B.
- 4.3 Appendix C sets out a detailed proforma for each parcel and sub-parcel, which shows its score against each of the Green Belt purposes, a detailed justification for each score and a justification for the overall scoring of the parcel/sub-parcel at Stage 1B. Of the 161 parcels and sub-parcels:
- 41 were considered to make a 'low' contribution in overall terms to the Green Belt;
 - 51 were considered to make a 'medium' contribution in overall terms to the Green Belt ;
 - 22 were considered to make a 'high' contribution in overall terms to the Green Belt; and
 - 47 were considered to make a 'high+' contribution in overall terms to the Green Belt.
- 4.4 Of the 69 parcels and sub-parcels which scored 'high' or 'high+', the majority were excluded from consideration at subsequent stages of the study. The only exceptions to this were parcels GBP_033, GBP_036 and GBP_039 which were kept in the study notwithstanding their 'high' or 'high+' scores for reasons which are set out below.
- 4.5 Parcels GBP_033 (land to the east of the M6, Junction 23) and GBP_036 (Land south of A580 East Lancashire Road and south east of M6 Junction 23) are located on the east side of the M6. Due to their contribution to the

strategic gap between settlements they score a 'high' at Stage 1B. However, they are fairly well contained. There is also strong evidence of developer interest in providing employment uses on these parcels, including the sub-regional demand for logistic uses (for which a current shortage of market-attractive sites has been identified). A strategic aim of the emerging Local Plan is to provide sufficient land to meet local employment land needs in full, by focusing new employment development on large sites in close proximity to the strategic road network of the M6 and M62. Having regard to a combination of these factors, parcels GBP_033 and GBP_036 were carried forward to Stage 2 notwithstanding their 'high' score at Stage 1B.

- 4.6 Known as 'Parkside East' and 'Parkside West', parcels GBP_039 (land east of M6 and north of A579 Winwick Lane) along with parcel GBP_041, form part of a wider site straddling the M6. This area is uniquely placed for the potential future development of rail enabled employment uses, having potential direct access to both the West Coast Mainline and the Chat Moss east-west rail lines and to the M6 close to its junction with the M62. There is a long standing history of developer interest in bringing parcels GBP_039 and GBP_041 - the former Parkside Colliery forward for development and the area was highlighted as a potential location for an inter-modal freight terminal in the now revoked North West Regional Spatial Strategy. Policy CAS3.2 of the St.Helens Core Strategy (adopted in 2012) identifies the site as a 'strategic location' for a SRFI. In 2016 the Parkside Logistics and Rail Freight Interchange Study identified Parkside as a site of national and regional significance in relation to relevant policy, market demand and need for the delivery of new and improved SRFIs. The Study found that the opportunities for rail access from the site are second to none in the North West. Consequently, whilst it is acknowledged that there would be a high impact on the Green Belt if Parcel GBP_039 were to be developed, taking into consideration all the above factors, there are exceptional circumstances to justify carrying the parcel forward to the Stage 2 assessment.

Table 4.1: All Parcels and sub-parcels discounted at Stage 1B

Parcel/Sub-parcel Reference	Location	Stage 1B Score
GBP_004	Land to the east of News Lane north of railway line, Rainford Junction	High+
GBP_006a	Land east of News Lane west of Junction Road, Rainford	High
GBP_007a	Land east of News Lane south of railway line, Rainford Junction	High+
GBP_007b	Land east of News Lane south of railway line, Rainford Junction	High
GBP_008	Siding Lane/Land west of Rainford Road north of railway line, Rainford	High
GBP_009	Land west of Rainford By-Pass/Mossborough Road/Blindfoot Road	High+
GBP_013a	North West National Golf Club / Land between Rainford By-Pass and Rainford Brook south of Pasture Lane	High+
GBP_014a	Land west of Moss Bank, north of the A580 and east of the A570	High+
GBP_014b	Land west of Moss Bank, north of the A580 and east of the A570	High

5. RANKING AND REFINEMENT OF RESULTS AT STAGE 3A AND 3B

- 5.1 At Stage 3, the 69 parcels and sub-parcels that were not discounted at earlier stages were initially ranked using the scoring system set out in paragraphs 2.54 to 2.56 of the methodology. Employment and housing uses were considered separately to ensure that all development needs could be met (having regard to the preferred uses identified at Stage 2B for each parcel/sub-parcel).

INITIAL RANKING - EMPLOYMENT USES

- 5.2 13 parcels and sub-parcels that were not discounted at Stages 1 or 2 were considered for potential employment uses. Their overall score is set out in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Parcels/sub-parcels – overall score at Stage 3 for employment use

Parcel/Sub-parcel Ref.	Location	Stage 1B Score	Stage 2B Score	Overall Score	Notional capacity (hectares)
GBP_031a	Florida Farm North, Slag Lane, Haydock	Medium	Good	5	36.67ha
GBP_031b	Land west of Millfield Lane, south of Liverpool Road and north of Clipsley Brook, Haydock	Medium	Good	5	20.58ha
GBP_031c	Land to the west of Haydock Industrial Estate, Haydock	Medium	Good	5	7.75ha
GBP_032	Land to the east of Haydock Industrial Estate and to the west of M6 (north and south of Penny Lane), Haydock	Medium	Good	5	13.21ha
GBP_033	Land to the east of M6 Junction 23, Haydock	High	Good	3	55.90
GBP_036	Land south of A580 East Lancashire Road and south east of M6 Junction 23, Haydock	High	Limited	1	73.4ha
GBP_039	Parkside East, Newton-le-Willows	High+	Good	3	64.55ha
GBP_040	Land west of M6 and south of A572 Southworth Road, Newton-le-Willows	Low	Limited	4	4.3ha
GBP_041	Parkside West, Newton-le-Willows	Medium	Good	5	79.57ha
GBP_075d	Land north of M62 and south of Gorsey Lane, Bold	Medium	Limited	3	32.21ha

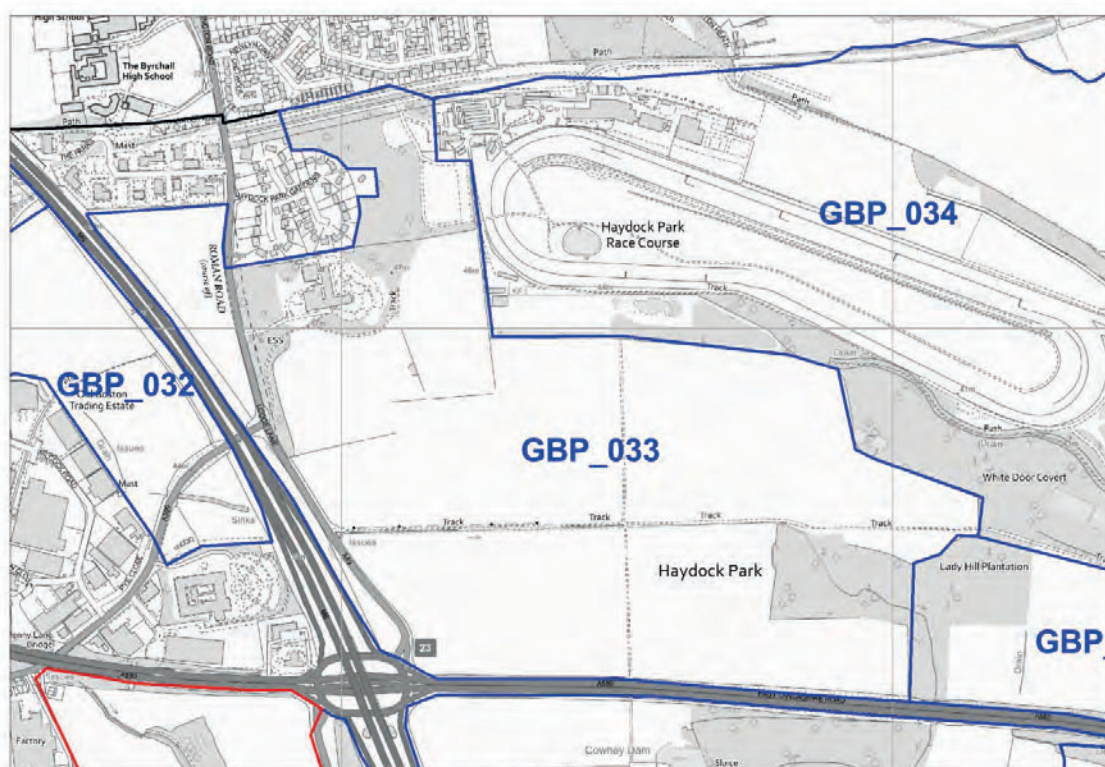
Parcel/Sub-parcel Ref. and location	Notional capacity (hectares)	Allocate, safeguard or discount	Comments on decision
Haydock			<p>estate.</p> <p>The 2018 SA concluded that development of the parcel is unlikely to have significant effects for the achievement of the majority of the SA objectives. As it is located within 1km of an area that falls within the 20% most deprived population in the UK, its development for employment use would help to reduce poverty and social exclusion. Such development would also reduce the need to travel, by making the best use of existing transport infrastructure due to its location close to a high frequency bus service.</p>
GBP_033 Land to the east of M6 Junction 23, Haydock	85.7ha	Safeguard (in part only, covering 55.9ha)	<p>Although this parcel was proposed to be allocated for employment use at LPPO stage, there are issues that jeopardise its potential for satisfactory delivery within this Plan period. The parcel lies to the east of the M6 and to the south of Haydock Park Racecourse. It was identified at Stage 1B as making a 'High' contribution to the Green Belt, but was not discounted at that stage to enable its potential to help meet the long-term needs for logistics development within the Borough to be considered further. Part of the parcel is subject to a current (as of December 2018) planning application (Ref: P/2017/0254/OUP) for employment development.</p> <p>Development within the parcel is likely to have a substantial impact on highway capacity at Junction 23 of the M6 that immediately adjoins the parcel and currently suffers from significant capacity and congestion issues. These issues are likely to worsen as the Plan period progresses unless substantial improvements are made to this Junction. Junction 23 is a strategically important junction on the highway network, linking the M6 and A49 with the A580 (that provides a major route between Liverpool and Manchester). A study has been</p>

Parcel/Sub-parcel Ref. and location	Notional capacity (hectares)	Allocate, safeguard or discount	Comments on decision
			<p>commissioned by the Council to identify the nature and potential land take of any improvements that are required to the junction, which may include land within this parcel.</p> <p>The 2018 SA concluded that development of the parcel would have a mixed impact on the achievement of SA objectives. The development of the parcel would be likely to have a negative effect on biodiversity. It would also be likely to impact on air quality, particularly as it is located only 27m from an AQMA and the development of the site for employment use would generate more HGV vehicular movements. However, development of the parcel would potentially have positive effects on the local economy due to its location within 1km of an area within the 20% most deprived population in the UK, and development here would help to reduce poverty and social exclusion.</p> <p>Substantial landscape buffers would be required to mitigate the visual effects of any employment development, including alongside the neighbouring Haydock Park Racecourse that is a nationally important tourist attraction.</p> <p>The Council can meet its needs for employment development up to 2035 elsewhere within the Borough without this parcel being allocated. Due to the need to address the severe capacity issues at J23, and the need to avoid constraining the ability to design an appropriate junction layout, the parcel is only suitable for safeguarding to meet potential employment development needs after 2035 (as opposed to allocation for development before 2035).</p>

GBP_033 – Summary Sheet

Sub-parcel	GBP_033	LPPO Ref:	EA4	Ward	Haydock	
Location	Land to the east of M6 Junction 23					
Plan						
Summary						
Stage 1b (Purposes of Green Belt)	Stage 2b (Developability Assessment)	Agricultural Land Classification	Overall Scores	Preferred Use	Residential Density (dph)	Net Developable Capacity (NDC)
High	Good	Grade 3	3	Employment	N/A	55.90ha
Consequential Changes		Yes – CC14				
Reason for Consequential Changes		CC14 – Section of the M6 motorway and land east and west of Lodge Lane, the Holiday Inn hotel and Haydock Park Gardens (residential). Land to the south east, east and west of this area has been recommended for removal from the Green Belt to accommodate new development. If this area was not released it would create an isolated ‘island’ of Green Belt. It would serve no Green Belt purpose to leave it in the Green Belt.				
Designation		Safeguard				

Parcel Ref	GBP_033
Name	Land to the east of M6 Junction 23
Ward	Haydock
Sub-Parcels within Parcel	N/A
Size (hectares)	GBP_033: 85.7ha
Description	Very large parcel lying to the east of M6 Junction 23, north of the A580 East Lancashire Road and south of Haydock Park Racecourse. Apart from a hotel located in the north-west corner of the parcel, there is limited development within the parcel, with the parcel consisting of agricultural land and woodland belts.



STAGE 1B ASSESSMENT AGAINST GREEN BELT PURPOSES

Purpose 1 To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas		
Green Belt Parcel or Sub-Parcel	Findings	Green Belt Purpose 1 Score
GBP_033	<p>The parcel is bounded to the south by the A580 East Lancashire Road, to the north by woodland, Haydock Park Racecourse and in-part residential development at Haydock Park Gardens, to the west by the A49 Lodge Lane and M6 motorway and to the east by protected woodland and agricultural land leading to Golborne. Therefore the parcel as a whole has strong boundaries to the north, south, east and west is well contained.</p> <p>In-part the parcel is dislocated from the urban area. The western boundary of the parcel is separated from the large built-up area of Haydock (specifically Haydock Industrial Estate) by the A49 and the M6 and agricultural land and grassland north and south of Penny Lane (11.05ha of land north of Penny Lane has an extant planning permission for employment development). The north and east of the parcel are separated from the large built-up area of Golborne by woodland, Haydock Park Racecourse and agricultural land. The north western boundary of the parcel adjoins residential development at Haydock Park Gardens, and lies directly south of residential properties at Chetwode Avenue and Newlyn Drive which form the southern boundary of the large built-up area of Ashton-in-Makerfield. Therefore the parcel plays an important role in checking the outward expansion of the large built-up areas of Haydock and Ashton-in-Makerfield into the countryside.</p> <p>Despite the parcel being well contained as a whole, because the parcel in-part is dislocated from the urban area, is large and irregular in size and form, and lacks strong boundaries within it, it is considered that development of the parcel would likely lead to unrestricted sprawl.</p>	Medium

Purpose 2 To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another		
Green Belt Parcel or Sub-Parcel	Findings	Green Belt Purpose 2 Score
GBP_033	The parcel forms part of a wider strategic gap between Haydock and Golborne and Haydock and Ashton-in-Makerfield that includes parcels GBP_033, GBP_034 and GBP_035. Development of the parcel would lead to the physical merging of Haydock and Ashton-in-Makerfield and would significantly reduce the scale and integrity of the gap between Haydock and Golborne.	High

Purpose 3 To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment		
Green Belt Parcel or Sub-Parcel	Findings	Green Belt Purpose 3 Score

GBP_033	<p>The parcel currently contains very little inappropriate development, and given its size it does retain some open views to the north. However, openness to the south and east is compromised by the M6 and A580.</p> <p>The parcel as a whole has strong boundaries to the north, south, east and west is therefore well contained.</p>	Low
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Overall significance of contribution to Green Belt Purposes	Comments	Score
GBP_033	The parcel is well contained. The parcel forms part of a wider strategic gap between Haydock and Golborne and Haydock and Ashton-in-Makerfield. Development of the parcel would lead to the physical merging of Haydock and Ashton-in-Makerfield and would significantly reduce the scale and integrity of the gap between Haydock and Golborne.	High

Carry forward to Stage 2 Assessment?	<p>Parcel GBP_033 continues to make a strong contribution to the purposes of Green Belt land. Given the high overall parcel scoring, ordinarily the recommendation would be for this parcel not to be carried forward to the Stage 2 assessment.</p> <p>However, a strategic aim of the emerging Local Plan is to provide sufficient land to meet local employment land needs in full, in order to ensure a strong and sustainable local economy. It is recognised in the Local Plan's emerging spatial strategy, that in order to meet employment land needs, land will need to be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for employment development. In light of market evidence, the proposed spatial strategy is to largely focus new employment development on large sites capable of accommodating large scale employment opportunities, in close proximity to the strategic road network of the M6 and M62.</p> <p>Consequently, whilst it is acknowledged that there could be a high impact on the Green Belt if parcel GBP_033 were to be developed. Given the high level of importance given to providing sufficient employment land to meet employment land needs in full in the emerging Local Plan, coupled with the potential of the parcel to meet the size and locational requirements of the market, there are considered to be exceptional circumstances to justify carrying the parcel forward to the Stage 2 assessment.</p>
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