



**Proof of Evidence  
Of Alison Gough MTCP (Hons), MBA, MRTPI**

Proposed single carriageway link road between A49 Winwick Road (WA12 8EF) and A573 Parkside Road; at each location a signalised junction will be formed. The road then utilises the existing A573 Parkside Road to cross the M6 (via existing overbridge) before realigning Parkside Road to a new roundabout before heading east to A579 Winwick Lane to a newly formed roundabout. The section of carriageway from the new Winwick Lane roundabout and the M6 Junction 22 will be a dual carriageway. The A573 and A579 will be realigned to the new roundabouts

Land between A49 Winwick Road to A573 Parkside Road, including a proportion of the former Parkside Colliery with land, from A573 Parkside Road to A579 Winwick Lane connecting to M6 Junction 22, WA2 8ST

Warrington Borough Council Reference:2018/32514

Appeal Reference: APP/M0655/V/20/3253232

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Anyone wishing to inspect the application documents can do so on the Council's website ([www.warrington.gov.uk](http://www.warrington.gov.uk))



## **Part 1: Summary**

1. My name is Alison Gough and I am a chartered town planner employed as a Principal Planning Officer at Warrington Borough Council.
2. This proof of evidence has been prepared following the Secretary of State's (SoS) decision in May 2020 to call in the planning application for the Parkside Link Road (PLR) for his own determination, following a resolution of the Council's Development Management Committee (DMC) in December 2019 to grant planning permission for the proposed development. The application is due to be considered at an inquiry commencing in January 2021 alongside the application for the stretch of the link road within St Helens' borough and an application for employment development on land the former Parkside Colliery in St Helens (known as Parkside Phase 1).
3. My proof deals with the matters set out by the Secretary of State and the Inspector, concentrating on the application for planning permission for the PLR made to Warrington Borough Council (WBC). It seeks to assist the Inspector and the SoS with identifying the relevant policies of the Warrington development plan, identifying and assessing the impacts that are specific to Warrington and providing Warrington's assessment of the planning balance that applies in relation to the application that has been made for the part of the scheme within its boundaries.
4. WBC has not produced evidence in relation to the Parkside Phase 1 development as that application falls within the administrative boundary of St Helens and St Helens Council was the determining authority in respect of that application. WBC does not intend to play an active role in that part of the inquiry as it has no objections to that scheme on the understanding that conditions relating to highway mitigation relating to impacts in Warrington will be taken into account. WBC may therefore wish to be involved in the conditions session of this part of the inquiry.
5. My proof covers the following matters:
  - The proposed development, the site and planning history and other relevant proposals
  - The planning policy framework;
  - Planning assessment including the effect on and harm to the Green Belt in Warrington as a result of the proposed development and any other harm, the benefits of the proposed development and the planning balance
  - Conclusion; and
  - Conditions and S106 obligation
6. The Development Plan for Warrington is the Local Plan Core Strategy adopted in 2014. The NPPG and PPG are important material considerations and are referred to where pertinent in this proof of evidence.
7. The Council's position in respect of the PLR is closely aligned to the positions of



the applicant and St Helens Council as Local Planning Authority (LPA). It is common ground that planning permission should be granted for the scheme. In view of the significant alignment between the main parties, WBC has not provided evidence on technical matters to the inquiry, apart from that relating to highways matters which is the subject of a separate proof of evidence. WBC is content for the Inspector to base his recommendation on the evidence contained within its two proofs, the evidence on technical matters supplied by the applicant and evidence supplied by St Helens LPA which is referred to and relied upon in this proof.

8. The proposal is inappropriate development. There would be harm to the openness of the Green Belt which is considered to be spatial, visual and permanent. There would be no conflict with four of the five purposes of including land within the Green Belt, with the only conflict relating to encroachment, although it is considered that, due to the nature of the scheme, this would be minimal. It is however common ground that, in accordance with the NPPF, any harm to the Green Belt should be given substantial weight.
9. The proposed development is required to facilitate future employment and infrastructure development at Parkside Phase 2 and the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI), both within St Helens. The need for the additional employment land and the importance of the SRFI, as well as the absence of alternative sites for such development, is evidenced by Mr Meulman of BE Group on behalf of St Helens as LPA and I accept and rely on that evidence as part of my consideration of the application. The applicant supplied information relating to the contribution the proposed development would make to the economy directly including through the creation of jobs during the construction of the road itself and indirectly as a result of a significant number of jobs from the construction and operation of Phase 2 and the SRFI. I accept the applicant's figures and consider that the proposal would make a substantial contribution to building a strong, competitive economy, in accordance with Government policy.
10. In terms of other harm relating to Warrington, there would be negligible harmful impacts relating to air quality, some short term ecology impacts, minor increases in noise, slight adverse impacts on landscape, adverse residual effects on views (ranging from slight adverse to neutral to large adverse to moderate) after 15 years of operation of the PLR and loss of agricultural land which is considered to be minor. I am of the view that this other harm should only be afforded a minor amount of weight in the planning balance given its limited nature and effects. There would also be impacts on three designated heritage assets, which are considered to be less than substantial and at the lower end of the scale in terms of harm, and negligible harm to an undesignated heritage asset.
11. The PLR would facilitate development at Parkside Phase 2 and the SRFI by providing essential infrastructure to link the Parkside site to junction 22 of the M6. It is also considered that development of Phase 2 and the SRFI could not come forward without the PLR due to constraints on the existing highway network. Public



funding for the PLR has been secured from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority's Single Investment Fund. This recognises the need for the road, its importance in facilitating the delivery of the strategic employment development and the fact that public sector funding is required as the costs associated with this infrastructure have been considered too high to be borne by the private sector. It is also an expression of confidence in the development of this area. Granting planning permission for the scheme is now necessary to ensure that the PLR can be delivered.

- 12.** There is an absence of alternative locations for the employment development and the SRFI, as set out in Mr Meulman's evidence and there is an absence of alternative routes for the PLR that would not require Green Belt land. In addition to these important factors, there are a number of significant benefits of the proposed development:
- The PLR would help to meet an evidenced economic need in St Helens by unlocking Phase 2 and the SRFI for development
  - The PLR would deliver significant direct and indirect socio-economic benefits which would have positive impacts on parts of St Helens and Warrington boroughs that are disadvantaged. Training and employment opportunities for Warrington residents would be secured through a local employment scheme condition
  - An SRFI would secure a modal shift away from road to rail and help to reduce road congestion and the emission of greenhouse gases
  - Highways benefits in Warrington, namely a reduction in movements along the A49 corridor from M62 junction 9, through Winwick Island up Newton Road to Parkside, as set out in Mr Taylor's proof.
  - An improvement to the setting of St Oswald's Well listed building and scheduled ancient monument.
  - Environmental improvements including on air quality, noise, ecology and landscape.
- 13.** I consider that cumulatively, the benefits of the scheme, as outlined above, should be given substantial weight in the planning balance.
- 14.** Having regard to the NPPF, the harm to the undesignated heritage asset is considered to be minimal. I acknowledge that considerable importance and weight that should be given to any harm to designated heritage assets in the planning balance. I believe that the weight of the public benefits (outlined above) outweighs the less than substantial harm to the designated heritage assets within Warrington whilst having special regard to the preservation of listed buildings and their settings.
- 15.** I am of the view that the benefits are sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, to which I have attributed substantial harm, and the other minor harm which would be caused by the proposal. They are therefore considered to constitute very special circumstances which justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The application therefore accords with Local Plan policies CS1,



CS2 and CS5 and the NPPF. The application also accords with other relevant development plan and government policies relating to the highway network, the economy, air quality, ecology, noise, landscaping, flood risk, climate change, agricultural land and heritage.

- 16.** It is concluded that the proposal is acceptable and in compliance with the development plan for Warrington and that there are no material considerations which outweigh this finding, subject to conditions and a S106 obligation. It also follows that the application should be approved in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11c) which states that proposals that are in accordance with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay. The Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to recommend that the Secretary of State grants planning permission for the proposed development, subject to conditions and following the completion of a satisfactory S106 obligation.



**1.0 Qualifications and Experience**

- 1.1** My name is Alison Gough and I am employed as a Principal Planning Officer at Warrington Borough Council. I hold master's degrees in Town and Country Planning and Business Administration and have been a full member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 2003.
- 1.2** I have previously held positions at Preston, Manchester and Salford City councils as well as GVA and PWA Planning. I have considerable experience of dealing with and overseeing major planning applications.
- 1.3** I have been the case officer for the planning application for the Parkside Link Road (PLR) since I commenced employment at the Council in February 2019 and I have visited the site. I also prepared the report to the Council's Development Management Committee, in accordance with which Members resolved to approve the application.
- 1.4** The evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal reference APP/M0655/V/20/3253232 in this proof of evidence is true and I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.



## **2.0 Introduction and parameters**

- 2.1** This proof of evidence has been prepared following the Secretary of State's (SoS) decision in May 2020 to call in the planning application for the PLR for his own determination, following a resolution of the Council's Development Management Committee (DMC) in December 2019 to grant planning permission for the proposed development.
- 2.2** The SoS also called in a number of other applications in May 2020, including an application for employment development on the former Parkside Colliery in St Helens (known as Parkside Phase 1) and an application for the elements of the PLR that are within St Helens, as well as schemes for employment development in Wigan and Bolton. It was originally the intention that all the proposed developments would be considered at the same local inquiry as the PLR; however the decision has since been taken to hold separate inquiries. The two PLR applications and Parkside Phase 1 will be considered at one inquiry commencing in January 2021 with the other applications considered at inquiries in November (west of Wingates Industrial Estate, Bolton) and December 2020 (Symmetry Park, Wigan). WBC has not produced evidence in relation to the Parkside Phase 1 development and does not intend to play an active role in that part of the inquiry. It has no objections to the Phase 1 application on the understanding that the proposed conditions relating to highways mitigation measures on the A49 will be included in any decision, being necessary and reasonable to mitigate the impact of traffic arising from the development in Warrington, and that the principles associated with all of the previous conditions suggested by WBC continue to be taken into account. It is understood there are no changes to those conditions and as a result WBC does not intend to appear in relation to Parkside Phase 1. WBC may wish to be involved in the conditions session of that part of the inquiry.
- 2.3** This proof will expand upon matters included in the Council's Statement of Case (**CD/5.59**) and the various statements of common ground. It will address the matters the SoS wishes to be informed about as set out in his letter advising of the call-in in May 2020 and the main issues identified by the Inspector insofar as they are relevant to the PLR scheme in Warrington. This proof seeks to assist the Inspector and the SoS with identifying the relevant policies of the Warrington development plan, identifying and assessing the impacts that are specific to Warrington and providing Warrington's assessment of the planning balance that applies in relation to the application that has been made for the part of the scheme within its boundaries. St Helens Council (as Local Planning Authority) has carried out an equivalent exercise in relation to the planning application made in respect of the part of the scheme within its boundaries. Mr Nicholls, on behalf of St Helens Council, has carried out an assessment of the planning balance having regard to the impacts and benefits of the scheme as a whole, which is not repeated in this proof but which I have seen and agree with.
- 2.4** The remainder of my proof of evidence comprises the following sections:



- The proposed development, the site and planning history and other relevant proposals
- The planning policy framework;
- Planning assessment including the effect on and harm to the Green Belt in Warrington as a result of the proposed development and any other harm, the benefits of the proposed development and the planning balance
- Conclusion; and
- Conditions and S106 obligation.



**3.0 The proposed development, the site, planning history and other relevant proposals**

- 3.1** Agreed descriptions of the proposed development and the application site and surroundings are provided within the SoCG between the applicant, St Helens Council and WBC from July 2020 (**CD/5.72**). The application site within Warrington is in two main sections; it includes fields to the south and west of the M6 (to the west of Parkside Road) and part of Parkside Road, to the north of Woodhead Farm and Woodhead Barn; and the eastern part of the M6 junction 22 roundabout and the southern side of the A579 Winwick Lane. An illustrative drawing showing the application site and the local authority boundaries is included at Appendix 10 of this proof.
- 3.2** There are no previous planning applications submitted to the Council which relate to this site and which are directly relevant to this application. The two applications submitted to St Helens Council which are also to be considered at the same local inquiry are of relevance:
- Application P/2018/0249/FUL for the formation of a new link road between A49 Winwick Road and M6 Junction 22 including the re-alignment of Parkside Road.
  - Application P/2018/0048/OUP for employment floorspace (Phase 1 of former Parkside Colliery development) at Newton Le Willows.



#### **4.0 The Planning Policy Framework**

- 4.1** The policies of the development plan for Warrington (Local Plan Core Strategy 2014; referred to as the Local Plan in the remainder of this proof, **CD/2.7**) which are considered relevant to the determination of this application are set out within the initial SoCG (**CD/5.72**) and they are not therefore repeated here. The relevant parts of these policies are summarised within the respective sections of the planning assessment section of this proof.
- 4.2** It is considered that the development plan policies relevant to the application are consistent with the overarching purposes and intentions of national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (**CD/1.1**). It is also considered that the development plan policies are up to date and therefore the tilted balance as set out in paragraph 11d) of the NPPF does not apply. The application scheme is considered to be in compliance with the development plan as a whole for the reasons set out in subsequent sections of this proof and therefore, in accordance with paragraph 11c) of the NPPF, should be approved without delay and benefits from the statutory presumption set out in S36(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 4.3** Chapters/paragraphs of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (**CD/3.6-3.9**) are dealt with in specific sections of this proof.
- 4.4** Warrington's Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (PSVLP) (**CD/2.9**) Regulation 19 consultation closed in June 2019 and in the region of 3,500 representations were received. Work on the Local Plan has now been paused in response to the impact of COVID-19 along with the Government's proposed planning reforms and new housing calculation methodology. It is anticipated that the Council will be in a position to progress with the Local Plan in summer 2021. In view of the current stage reached by of the PSVLP, it can be afforded only very limited weight in the decision making process and it is not referred to any further within this proof.



## **5.0 Planning Assessment**

### Introduction

- 5.1** Prior to this planning application being called-in by the SoS, the Council had resolved to grant planning permission, subject to conditions and a S106 obligation, as set out in the Council's Committee report (**CD/5.46**). St Helens Council also resolved to grant planning permission for the part of the PLR development within its borough, subject to conditions, as set out in its Planning Committee report (**CD/5.45**).
- 5.2** The Council's position at this inquiry in respect of the PLR is closely aligned to the positions of the applicant and St Helens Council as Local Planning Authority. It is common ground that planning permission should be granted for the scheme.
- 5.3** The close alignment between the main parties is evidenced through the Statements of Common Ground (SoCG). As outlined in WBC's committee report (**CD/5.46**), having sought advice from relevant consultees, the Council assessed the technical information provided in support of the application and this was accepted to the extent set out in the respective SoCGs. The further environmental and highways information submitted by the applicant in October 2020 has also been assessed by consultees and their positions remain unchanged. The advice of consultees in respect of technical matters is relied upon in carrying out the planning balance exercise set out in this proof.
- 5.4** In view of the advice from consultees and the significant alignment between the main parties, WBC will not provide evidence on technical matters to the inquiry, apart from that relating to highways matters which is the subject of a separate proof of evidence. WBC is content for the Inspector, and ultimately the SoS, to base a decision on the evidence contained within its two proofs, including technical information provided by its consultees contained within the appendices to this proof, and the evidence on technical matters supplied by the applicant.
- 5.5** This section of my proof builds on the Statement of Case (**CD/5.69**) submitted by the Council in July 2020. It considers the issues set out by the Inspector in his note relating to the second case management conference (**CD/5.77**) and provides an assessment of the harm caused by the proposed development in relation to the effect on the Green Belt and any other harm, the benefits of the scheme and how these weigh in the planning balance and whether Very Special Circumstances (VSC) exist.

### **a) The acceptability of the PLR in principle**

- 5.6** Local Plan Policy CS1, Delivering Sustainable Development, states that development proposals that are sustainable will be welcome and approved without delay and that to be sustainable, development must accord with national



and local planning policy frameworks, taking into account other material considerations and must have regard to a number of factors including the priority afforded to the protection of the Green Belt and the character of the countryside, the need to make the best use of existing transport, utility, social and environmental infrastructure within existing settlements and ensure additional provision where needed to support development, the need to address the causes of and be resilient to the effects of climate change, the need to sustain and enhance the borough's built heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity and the need to safeguard environmental standards, public safety and residential amenity.

- 5.7** Local Plan Policy CS2, Quantity and Distribution of Development, outlines a number of principles which will determine the detailed distribution of development through the plan period including that within the Green Belt development will only be allowed where it is considered to be appropriate in accordance with national policy. It also states that major warehousing and distribution developments will be located away from areas sensitive to heavy vehicle movements with direct access to the primary road network and where possible with access to rail.
- 5.8** Local Plan Policy CS5, Green Belt, states that development proposals within the Green Belt will be approved where they accord with relevant national policy.
- 5.9** The NPPF states, at paragraph 133, that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts and that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Paragraph 134 further outlines that the Green Belt serves five purposes, which are listed and discussed in subsequent paragraphs of this proof. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (VSC). Paragraph 144 outlines that substantial weight should be given to any harm to the Green Belt and that VSC will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposals, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 5.10** In view of the wording of Local Plan Policy CS5, if circumstances exist that clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt such that they can be considered to constitute VSCs resulting in the proposal being found to be in accordance with national policy relating to the Green Belt, it will also comply with Policy CS5.
- 5.11** It is a matter of agreement that the proposal is inappropriate (**draft Planning SoCG para 48, CD/5.156 5.158**). Inappropriate development is, as set out in NPPF paragraph 143, harmful to the Green Belt. Other harm to the Green Belt is considered in the following paragraphs with reference to the current position and the harm likely to be caused by the proposed development. The following assessment focuses on issues Warrington, with Mr Nicholls' proof focusing on



St Helens. I have had regard to the evidence produced on behalf of St Helens in this regard as part of my consideration of whether there is compliance with national policy in relation to the Green Belt and conclude on this at the end of my assessment.

*i) Openness*

- 5.12** Paragraph 133 of the NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence
- 5.13** The Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722, revised 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019) outlines a number of factors which might be relevant when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt. These include spatial and visual aspects, the duration of the development and its remediability and the degree of activity likely to be generated.
- 5.14** The application site within Warrington is characterised by open fields (to the north of Wood Head Farm and east of Parkside Road), part of the existing carriageways of the A573 Parkside Road and the A579 Winwick Lane and part of the M6 junction 22 roundabout. The application site currently contributes to the spatial dimension of openness due to the absence of built development. The surrounding area within Warrington supports a strong degree of openness with a low level of built form and low levels of vegetation. It also contributes to the visual dimension due to the views that are afforded between and through existing vegetation across the open fields to the west of Parkside Road and to the south of Winwick Lane, between and beyond the sporadic properties along this stretch of Winwick Lane. There is limited activity within the application site; such activity is mainly in the form of traffic travelling along the stretches of Parkside Road, Winwick Lane and the M6 J22 roundabout within the application site in Warrington's boundary.
- 5.15** The proposed development would result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt with reference to the factors outlined in the NPPG. The harm would be spatial due to the introduction of hardstanding to form the PLR carriageway, from the St Helens boundary in the west to Parkside Road in the east which would be in the region of 380m long. The width of the carriageway would gradually increase from 7.3m in the west to approximately 30m at the junction with Parkside Road in order to accommodate right and left turn lanes, a toucan crossing and traffic islands at the junction. The carriageway would then return to 7.3m in width on the north and south stretches of Parkside Road. There would be a 4.5m wide shared foot/cycle way to the north of the carriageway between the boundary with St Helens to the junction of Parkside Road; at the junction it would reduce to 2.5m wide on the west side of Parkside Road travelling north and 2.5m wide reducing further to a 2m footway on the west side of Parkside



Road travelling south.

- 5.16** Turning to the other part of the application site within Warrington, Winwick Lane would be retained as a shared space to provide access to existing properties to the south (within Warrington) and a cycle/foot way; this would not require the creation of new hardstanding.
- 5.17** 10m high lighting columns would be installed and there would be a 2.5m high acoustic barrier to the south of the proposed carriageway north of Winwick Lane, approximately 50m of which would be in Warrington (the remainder of the acoustic barrier, approximately 240m, would be in St Helens). The impact of the barrier would however be lessened by the introduction of landscaping including a hedgerow to the northern side and climbing plants to both sides of the barrier (in Warrington), particularly as the landscaping matures over time. This would help to reduce the visual impact of the barrier and thereby reduce its impact on openness, in visual terms, although it is accepted that there would still be an impact on the spatial dimension of openness, particularly in the short term. There would also be a 1.2m high fence to the south of the stretch of carriageway between the St Helens boundary and the Parkside Road junction; however, given the relatively low height of the fence, its impact is considered to be minimal.
- 5.18** In terms of the impact on the spatial dimension overall, the majority of the application site in Warrington would remain as open land and the development that would take place would largely be at ground level in the form of hardstanding. The impact of other associated elements of the scheme, such as fencing and lighting, on the spatial aspect of Green Belt openness, is also considered to be limited.
- 5.19** There would be an effect on the visual dimension of openness as the proposed development would alter views into the application site from stretches of Winwick Lane and Parkside Road in Warrington as the acoustic barrier, fencing, and lighting columns in particular would be visible; however the impact of these would be lessened as the proposed landscaping matures. The effect from these is therefore considered to be minimal. The new hardstanding for the carriageway and cycle/foot way would also be visible. This would particularly be the case around the junction of the PLR with Parkside Road, where the new hardstanding would be visible when looking west, towards the boundary with St Helens and it would be a new feature in the area. As above, the impact would lessen over time due to the effects of the landscaping but there would be a moderate adverse impact in this location. The visual impact would be experienced in the daytime as well as at night due to lighting from the proposed lighting columns and vehicle lights.
- 5.20** The road would be permanent and, following construction, it would not be the intention to return the land to its original or an equivalent state of openness. In relation to the degree of activity, there would be traffic on the road and therefore



a level of activity associated with the proposed development. This would have an impact on the visual aspect of openness as the traffic itself would be visible from areas within Warrington as well as vehicle lights at night.

- 5.21** In conclusion, it is acknowledged that there would be a moderate adverse impact on the visual aspect of openness associated with the new carriageway between St Helens' boundary and Parkside Road and there would be other limited impacts as identified above. However, these impacts need to be balanced against the fact that the majority of the application site within Warrington would be retained as open land (the land to the north of the carriageway between St Helens' boundary and Parkside Road and to the south of the M6). It is therefore concluded that there would be harm to the openness of the Green Belt in Warrington but that overall this harm is limited. The draft Planning Matters SoCG (**CD/5.156 5.158, para 49**) confirms that in St Helens, the impact on openness within the Parkside Colliery would be limited and that to the east of the M6 the impact would be significant. It is a matter of agreement that the overall impact on the openness of the Green Belt for the whole scheme would be moderate (draft Planning Matters SoCG para 49, **CD/5.156**).

*The impact on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt*

- 5.22** Consideration of the impact of the proposed development on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt as set out in paragraph 134 of the NPPF is made having regard to the Council's 2016 Green Belt Assessment (GBA) dated 2016 (**CD/3.14**). The GBA forms part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan and although it was produced in 2016 it remains relevant to the consideration of this application. There have been no significant changes to the areas within and surrounding the application site in Warrington that alter the assessments made in the GBA insofar as they are relevant to the application site. The majority of the application site in Warrington is within General Area (GA) 20, which covers the part of the application site to the west of the M6, with a very small part (on the southeast side of Winwick Lane) in GA1. A map of the GAs is shown on page 23 of the GBA. Some of the general areas were divided into parcels as part of the GBA and a very small part of the application site, to the east of Parkside Road where the existing road would be altered to accommodate the new junction with the PLR, falls within parcel WI7, as shown on page 4 of Appendix F to the GBA. Parcel WI7 is within GA20 and covers land between Parkside Road and the M6. Maps showing the application site in Warrington relative to the GAs and parcel WI7 are provided at Appendix 2 of this proof for ease of reference.

*i) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas*

- 5.23** In considering the impact of the proposed development on this purpose, the main factor to consider is whether the application site is adjacent to the Warrington urban area, which excludes inset settlements such as Winwick. GA20 and parcel WI7 are identified as making no contribution to this purpose given that they are not adjacent to the Warrington urban area. GA1 is identified as making a



moderate contribution to this purpose but the application site is at the very northern part of this area and more distant from the Warrington urban area than the southern part of the area and the comments within the GBA which led to this conclusion relate to the middle and southern parts of GA1.

- 5.24** The application site in Warrington is physically distant from the Warrington urban area. The proposed development does not include buildings and within Warrington is comprises harstanding to form the carriageway and foot/cycle way along with associated features such as lighting columns, fencing and an acoustic barrier. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not result in unrestricted sprawl and would not therefore conflict with this purpose of including land within the Green Belt.

*ii) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another*

- 5.25** GA20 is identified as making a weak contribution to this purpose, forming a 'less than essential gap' between the Warrington urban area and Newton-le-Willows and highlighting that although a reduction in the gap would reduce the actual distance between towns, merging would not occur given the separation created by the M62. WI7 is identified as making a moderate contribution with the parcel forming a largely essential gap between the Warrington urban area and Newton-le-Willows, whereby the development of the parcel would reduce the actual and perceived gap between the towns, although it would not result in the merging if settlements. The GBA identifies GA1 as making a strong contribution to this purpose by forming an essential gap between the Warrington urban area and Culcheth, which is in the region of 3 miles to the east of the site, beyond the M6. It states that the northern section (which covers the application site) could be developed without resulting in the merging of towns.

- 5.26** In assessing whether harm would be caused to this purpose, consideration is given to whether the proposed development would result in a reduction in the gap between towns, whether this would result in the actual or perceived merging of towns and if so whether such a reduction would compromise the openness of the Green Belt. Given that the proposal involves the construction of a road and associated works and not built development, it would not lead to neighbouring towns merging in terms of either a reduction in the gap between built development or actual or perceived distances between the towns. It is concluded that the proposed development would not conflict with this purpose of including land within the Green Belt. This is common ground (**initial SoCG, CD/5.72**).

*iii) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*

- 5.27** GA20 and parcel WI7 are identified as making a strong contribution to this purpose. In respect of GA20, the M6 is noted as forming a durable boundary between the GA and the countryside to the east. The GBA highlights that the northern boundary between GA20 and the countryside comprises an administrative boundary (with St Helens) following field boundaries and a small brook which are noted as not being durable boundaries which could prevent



encroachment beyond the GA if the GA were developed. The boundaries between parcel WI7 and the countryside, including Parkside Road and the M6, are highlighted as being durable and would prevent encroachment beyond the parcel if the parcel were developed. The GBA states that the parcel is well connected to the countryside along three of its boundaries, is flat with less than 10% built form and there are long line views due to minimal vegetation. The parcel is therefore identified as supporting a strong degree of openness. GA1 is identified as making a moderate contribution to this purpose with the GBA highlighting that Winwick Lane forms a durable boundary which could prevent encroachment.

- 5.28** In view of the above and the site's location within the GBA General Areas, it is considered that there would be encroachment into the countryside due to hardstanding which would form the carriageway and foot/cycleway along the stretch of the PLR between the boundary with St Helens and Parkside Road, in addition to lighting columns and the acoustic barrier south of the Winwick Lane stretch. As previously mentioned however, the proposal does not involve built development and the carriageway would be at ground level and therefore the level of encroachment would be minimal. Furthermore, the majority of the land within the application site within Warrington would remain as open land, which includes the majority of the application site within GA20, and this would not cause encroachment and would support the GA continuing to make a strong contribution to this purpose. Overall, the harm caused to this purpose is considered to be minimal.

*iv) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*

- 5.29** Both general areas and parcel WI7 are identified as making no contribution to this purpose as there are no historic towns that would be affected. It is therefore concluded that there would be no harm to this purpose. This is common ground (**initial SoCG/CD/5.72**).

*v) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land*

- 5.30** Both general areas and parcel WI7 are identified as making a moderate contribution to this purpose. The proposed development would not harm the areas'/parcel's ability to assist in this regard and there would therefore be no conflict with this purpose. The potential benefits of future developments which would be facilitated by the PLR and would assist in urban regeneration are dealt with in a subsequent section of this proof.

*Conclusion on the impact on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt*

- 5.31** The proposal is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, would result in limited harm to the openness of the Green Belt in Warrington and would result in minimal encroachment into the countryside in Warrington. The harm, by reason of inappropriateness, on openness and by reason of encroachment is given substantial weight both individually and cumulatively. Mr Nicholls' proof states



that in St Helens the PLR would harm the openness of the Green Belt and would lead to encroachment. This is confirmed in the draft Planning SoCG (**CD/5.156 5.158, para 50**). It is agreed that substantial weight should be given to that harm in the overall planning balance.

- 5.32** Whether the proposed development complies or is in conflict with Warrington's development plan and national policies governing development in the Green Belt is dependent on whether the potential harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations and therefore whether VSC exist. Other harm and the potential benefits of the scheme are discussed in subsequent paragraphs of this proof. Whether the proposal would comply or conflict with Warrington development plan and national policies governing development in the Green Belt is therefore considered at the end of this section of the proof.

**b) The extent to which the PLR would be consistent with Government policies for building a strong, competitive economy**

- 5.33** Local Plan Policy PV3 states that the Council will support developments which assist in strengthening the Borough's workforce.
- 5.34** Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives one of which is an economic objective which relates to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure. Paragraph 80 states that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Paragraph 82 states that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors which includes making provision for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations.
- 5.35** The PPG states that the logistics industry plays a critical role in enabling an efficient, sustainable and effective supply of goods for consumers and businesses, as well as contributing to local employment opportunities, and has distinct locational requirements. It further states that strategic facilities serving national or regional markets are likely to require good access to strategic transport networks (paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 2a-031-20190722).
- 5.36** As set out in its Statement of Case, WBC has not prepared technical evidence on this matter. Anthony Meulman of BE Group is providing evidence on behalf of St Helens (LPA) on need issues. I have had sight of the need case as set out



in that evidence which makes the following points:

- The employment land requirement in the St Helens Core Strategy (**CD/2.2**) of 37ha over 15 years to 2027 is no longer appropriate to meet current market needs or the likely needs in coming years.
- The draft St Helens Local Plan's minimum target of 219.2 ha of employment land between 2018 and 2035 better reflects current market dynamics and is consistent with the calculated objectively assessed need (OAN) for employment land in the Employment Land Needs Study (ELNS) Addendum Report (**CD/5.81**). The OAN calculation is consistent with the NPPG and PPG.
- The residual requirement is 159.34ha (219.2ha minus land take up 2018-20 and available allocated sites).
- No other significant consents are in place that could help to meet this residual employment requirement
- The proposals at Parkside could provide a significant share of the residual requirement for employment land in St Helens: Parkside West (Phase 2) – 43ha and Parkside East – 64.55ha.
- Parkside Phase 2 and Parkside East would provide a consolidated hub of employment uses at this location.
- The Parkside East site is the only opportunity for the delivery of the SRFI.
- A significant component of the Parkside East site, if developed as anticipated for the SRFI, would be consumed by the rail transport infrastructure itself (such as track, platforms etc) and therefore it should not be assumed that the full Parkside East site would be available for employment development. Although the Parkside sites in total comprise 155.45ha, in view of the above in respect of Parkside East, this should not be interpreted as satisfying the full residual requirement and the employment land target is a minimum one.
- None of the sites considered as part of an alternative sites assessment provides the capacity to develop the SRFI and adequately provide the strategic, intermodal logistics facility envisaged for Parkside.
- There is a strong need for the PLR proposal to form part of the supply to meet the overall St Helens OAN to 2037 for the following reasons:
  - The PLR is critical for the development of the remainder of the Parkside site (after Phase 1), including further warehouse/distribution sites and the SRFI
  - There is a strong, buoyant market for large scale warehouse uses in this corridor and this market appears to have longer term strength necessitating more than just Parkside Phase 1
  - The site is attractive for large-scale warehouse uses, being close to two motorway junctions, centrally located between Manchester and Liverpool and is very large. Critically the site is in close proximity to the major north/south motorway for the North West, the M6 and the two key link roads between Liverpool and Manchester; the M62 and the A580. The location is particularly attractive to warehousing and logistics enterprises as they can easily access large markets. The large, flat, relatively regularly shaped site means that it can be developed for very large units (eg.



+50,000sqm) which is rare

- There are no alternative sites in urban settlements of St Helens of a comparable scale to Parkside East
- The PLR is required to help deliver the SRFI, thereby contributing to the network of SRFIs throughout the country, for which the Government has identified a compelling need
- There are no alternatives that can provide the rail infrastructure to secure the SRFI
- Other allocated sites within the adopted Core Strategies of Wigan and Warrington are either inferior (in the case of Wigan's site) or coming to the end of its development life (in the case of Omega Warrington)
- The Parkside proposal means that St Helens can have a broader and higher profile role in the regional logistics market that is growing due to the growth of Liverpool2. This would be particularly enhanced with the development of the SRFI, which can only be delivered with the PLR
- The Parkside East site can be an important component in addressing the forecast shortfall for large-scale warehousing sites as identified in the Liverpool City Region Assessment of the Supply of Large Scale B8 sites
- The Parkside East site can provide further sites once Parkside Phase 1 is exhausted for sites, ensuring continuity of supply in this locality. This can only be delivered with the PLR.

**5.37** Mr Meulman concludes that there is a strong demand and need for large-scale employment sites that provide warehousing uses in the Parkside locality. The two Parkside sites can play a critical role in St Helens' economy, providing high profile, strategic sites for businesses and linking with the regions' freight transport network. The successful delivery of this project would provide economic growth for St Helens and employment opportunities for its residents. It is Mr Meulman's opinion that there is a strong need for the PLR in order to deliver Phase 2 on Parkside West and to open up Parkside East including enabling the SRFI. The SRFI cannot be delivered without the PLR and not delivering the SRFI would have a significant opportunity cost for St Helens and the North West region.

**5.38** I accept the assessment and conclusions made by Mr Meulman in his proof, in particular the requirement for employment land in St Helens and the critical nature of the PLR to provide access to the sites for Parkside Phase 2 and the SRFI. It is also important to note the agreement in the draft Planning SoCG (**CD/5.156 5.158, para. 36**) that the need for economic development in St Helens Borough is substantial. There is also significant demand and a lack of suitable sites in St Helens to accommodate the need and demand.

**5.39** In addition to the above, the applicant provided information relating to the economic impact of the PLR in its planning statement (**CD/5.12 – figure 5**). The economic impact is as a direct result of the PLR alone and as a result of the development of the wider Parkside area, facilitated by the PLR. In relation to the



impacts directly associated with the PLR, the applicant asserts that there would be a total construction investment of £31.5m with direct construction jobs equivalent to 400 years of employment with a further 140 years of employment supported by the supply chain and employee spend.

**5.40** In relation to those associated with the development of Parkside phases 2 and 3 facilitated by the PLR, these include:

- A total of £329m estimated construction investment including 3,000 direct years of employment and 1,050 years of employment supported by supply chain and employee spend;
- 6,590 gross on-site jobs with 790 of these taken up by residents of Warrington; and
- An additional £417m GVA (net) per annum during the operational phases

**5.41** I have no reason to dispute the above figures. However, even if they are optimistic, as suggested by PAG, the proposal would still make a substantial contribution to building a strong, competitive economy through the provision of jobs and investment directly associated with the PLR and jobs and additional GVA resulting from Phases 2 and 3 which would be facilitated by the PLR and for which there is a need as set out by Mr Meulman. In addition, one of the suggested conditions requires the applicant to provide a local employment scheme which would help to secure training and employment opportunities for residents of Warrington. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Warrington wards of Orford and Poplars and Hulme which are within the top 10% in England in terms of multiple deprivation (as set out in Mr Nicholls' proof) and which are approximately 3.5km to the south of Parkside.

**5.42** In view of all of the above, I consider the scheme would facilitate a substantial contribution to the economy. As agreed in the draft Planning SoCG (**CD/5.156 5.158, paras 37 and 39**) the PLR benefits from policy support from NPPF, which, as summarised above, states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity and that there should be recognition of the specific locational requirements of different sectors. It is also consistent with the PPG paragraph 31. It is therefore considered that the proposal complies with Policy PV3 and is consistent with Government policies and guidance.

### **c) The effects of the PLR on the local and strategic road network**

**5.43** Local Plan Policy CS4 states that the Council will support improvements to the transport network that integrate with transport networks both within and outside Warrington to enhance the sustainability of cross boundary travel.

**5.44** Local Plan Policy MP1 states that the Council will support proposals where they consider demand management measures including the effective reallocation of road space in favour of public transport, pedestrians and cyclists.



- 5.45** Local Plan Policy MP3 outlines the high priority given to the needs and safety of cyclists and pedestrians in new development which should include appropriate segregation of users and appropriate priority given to users at junctions.
- 5.46** Local Plan Policy MP7 states that the Council will require all developments to demonstrate that they will not significantly harm highway safety, identify where there are any significant effects on Warrington's transport network and ensure appropriate mitigation measures are in place before the development is used.
- 5.47** Paragraph 108 of the NPPF states that in assessing specific applications for development it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be or have been taken up and that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network or on highway safety can be cost-effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree. Paragraph 109 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. Paragraph 110 states that within this context, priority should be given to pedestrian and cycle movements.
- 5.48** Mr Taylor has prepared a separate proof relating to transportation matters, which takes into account the applicant's updated transport information submitted in October 2020 (**CD/5.48-52**), which was produced to address changes that have arisen since the ES Addendum was produced and since the application was considered by WBC's Development Management Committee. Those changes are:
- A later opening date for the PLR than previously envisaged due to the application having been called-in for consideration by the SoS (now 2024 instead of 2021);
  - The imposition of a Traffic Regulation Order by Wigan Council on part of Winwick Lane; and
  - Updates to Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) guidance.
- 5.49** Mr Taylor's proof explains that the PLR alone provides a benefit over the existing traffic situation on the existing network through Warrington with a reduction in movements along the A49 corridor from M62 junction 9, through Winwick Island up Newton Road to Parkside. It is understood that this benefit would be temporary until such time that Phase 2 and the SRFI are developed. Mr Taylor also states that there would be a significant increase in movement along the A579 Winwick Lane north of the M6 junction 22 but that this would be the subject of an agreed mitigation scheme, required by one of the suggested conditions listed at Appendix 1 of this proof. Mr Taylor highlights that with the exception of the M6 J22/A49 Winwick Link Road/A579 Winwick Lane, all of the existing junctions within Warrington assessed within the applicant's Operational Assessment Report (OAR, **CD/5.51**) show either no significant impact or a benefit in the Do Something (with the PLR) scenarios which would be facilitated



by the redistribution of traffic through the PLR and towards the M6 J22. The assessments also highlight that the new junctions within Warrington created by the PLR would operate within capacity in all scenarios, including full build out of all phases of development at Parkside. Lastly Mr Taylor states that he considers that the link road offers a benefit in reducing the impact of future development on the Warrington network and that Phase 2 and the SRFI could not come forward without the PLR due to constraints on the existing highway network.

**5.50** WBC's committee report (**CD/5.46**) summarises comments from Highways England (HE) on the proposed scheme and confirms that HE was satisfied that the development would not lead to a severe impact on the strategic road network, subject to the implementation of improvements to the M6 J22, which would be secured by condition. HE is considering the updated transport information submitted in October 2020 (**CD/5.48-52**). WBC has not received further advice from HE following the submission of the further information but to date there is no identified impact on the strategic highway network and HE has not changed its formal position of no objection. If any particular issues relating to this matter arise following the submission of this proof an update to the inquiry will be provided.

**5.51** In view of the conclusions of the Council's highways witness and the absence of concerns from Highways England, I am satisfied that the proposed development would not have a severe impact on the highway network, and indeed there would be some benefits as outlined above. The proposed development accords with the above policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF.

**d) The effects of the PLR on air quality, in particular within AQMAs**

**5.52** Local Plan Policy CS4 states that the Council will support improvements to Warrington's Transport Network that reduce the impact of traffic on air quality.

**5.53** Local Plan Policy QE6 states that the Council will only support development which would not lead to an adverse impact on the environment or amenity of those currently occupying adjoining or nearby properties or does not have an unacceptable impact on the surrounding area taking into account matters including air quality.

**5.54** Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia, preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of air pollution. Paragraph 181 states that decisions should also sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

**5.55** The Planning Practice Guidance sets out the issues that may need to be



considered when assessing air quality impacts including whether the development would lead to changes in vehicle-related emissions, expose people to harmful concentrations of air pollutants or give rise to potentially unacceptable impacts during construction (paragraph 006 Reference ID 32-006-20191101).

- 5.56** The Environmental Protection SPD (**CD/3.12, p. 19**) states that the fact that an AQMA has been declared does not mean that there will be an absolute restriction of new development in the area but that greater weight and consideration will be given to air quality issues and measures to reduce pollution. In determining a planning application, weight will be attached to air quality impacts, but will also need to be balanced against other planning considerations. It outlines that the Council will also look closely at applications for new developments that are not within an AQMA if it is likely that the new development will increase pollution to unacceptable levels or introduce new exposure where people were not previously exposed. It explains that whilst the primary concern is exceedences of the annual NO<sub>2</sub> objective, there is also growing concern of particulate levels and their impact on health. It also states that the impact of the construction phase of a development on air quality should be considered (p. 29).
- 5.57** Part of the application site is within Warrington AQMA No. 1, which is a continuous strip along the M6, M62 and M56 motorway corridors due to potential exceedences of the annual nitrogen dioxide objective. A map of the AQMA is attached at Appendix 3. Only two very small parts of the application site within Warrington fall within the AQMA; one on the south east side of junction 22 of the M6 and the other on Parkside Road adjacent to the M6.
- 5.58** WBC has not produced technical evidence in relation to this matter. Its position on the Environmental Statement (**CD/5.1 & 5.2**) and ES Addendum (**CD/5.9 & 5.10**) is set out in its committee report (**CD/5.46**), which concluded that there would be no significant impacts in current AQMAs in Warrington and that outside of AQMAs, the air quality impacts would not be to an extent that would cause any existing areas to exceed the national objectives. There is therefore no evidence that air quality impacts from the scheme would have adverse health impacts. It was also concluded that with appropriate mitigation in place (a Construction Environmental Management Plan) construction impacts relating to dust would be negligible. This The Council's Environmental Protection (EP) team has also considered the Further Environmental Information (FEI) submitted by the applicant in October 2020 (**CD/5.47**), which includes an updated air quality assessment following updates to the traffic data following weight restriction on Winwick Lane and later assessment years (2024 and 2034 instead of 2021 and 2031 respectively), as mentioned in the previous section of this proof.
- 5.59** The draft SoCG on air quality (**CD/5.159 5.161**) outlines the agreement of the assessment method provided in section 5.3 of the ES and section A5.5 of the ES Addendum and that it is consistent with national and international guidelines. The AQMAs, as shown in Figure 4.3 of the FEI, are agreed, as are the baseline



conditions, set out in section 4.6 of the Further Information. The SoCG also confirms the agreement that within Warrington, the effects of the predicted changes in NO<sub>2</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> would be negligible and there would be no significant impact on AQMAs. It is further agreed that there would be beneficial air quality impacts at five receptors in Warrington (~~CD/5.159~~ **5.161 para 16**), although these benefits are considered to be negligible. The dust control measures outlined in section 5.6.1 of the ES are agreed to be appropriate to control dust emissions and that these will be covered by a condition requiring a Construction Environmental Management Plan, which is included in the list of suggested conditions attached at Appendix 1 of this proof. It is agreed that with these mitigation measures in place the impacts of construction dust would be negligible. The Council's Environmental Protection Team's acceptance of the further information and its conclusions is provided at Appendix 4 of this proof.

- 5.60** I note that the Parkside Action Group (PAG) has raised a number of concerns relating to air quality in its updated Statement of Case (**CD/5.71**). Mr Nicholls' evidence deals with criticisms with the assessments, the loss of amenity and impact on health in his proof concluding that the assessment has been undertaken by specialists on behalf of the applicant, the ES has been audited by specialists and the Council's consideration has been based on professional advice following a thorough appraisal of the issue. These statements apply equally to Warrington. I concur with Mr Nicholls that concerns about the harm caused to health are not well-founded. In relation to PAG's concerns about a lack of assessment of air quality impacts resulting from the development of sites facilitated by the PLR in its updated Statement of Case (**CD/5.571**). The sites are not the subject of current planning applications and there are therefore no air quality assessments for those sites. It would be for those schemes to consider any impacts on air quality at the appropriate time.
- 5.61** In view of the beneficial and negligible adverse air quality impacts, I consider that the proposed development would not conflict with Local Plan Policy CS4 and would comply with Local Plan Policy QE6 and the relevant provisions of the NPPF and the Environmental Protection SPD.
- 5.62** It is understood that the applicant will produce technical evidence on air quality and WBC is content for the Inspector to base his recommendation on that evidence.

**e) The effects of the PLR on ecology/biodiversity taking account of mitigation measures and potential net gain**

- 5.63** Local Plan Policy CS1 requires development to have regard to a number of factors including the need to sustain and enhance the borough's biodiversity.
- 5.64** Local Plan Policy QE5 states that proposals for development which may



adversely affect the integrity or continuity of protected or priority species or other species of importance or key habitats or other habitats of local importance will only be permitted if it can be shown that the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the need to retain the habitats or species affected and that mitigating measures can be provided which would reinstate the habitats or provide equally viable alternative refuge for the species affected.

- 5.65** Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. In respect of habitats and biodiversity, paragraph 175 states that when determining applications, a number of principles should be applied including mitigation if significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided.
- 5.66** The PPG highlights the duty placed on public authorities in England and Wales to have regard, in the exercise of their functions to the purpose of conserving biodiversity as set out in S40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (paragraph 009 Reference ID 8-009-20190721). It further sets out that planning authorities need to consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to conserve and enhance biodiversity (paragraph 010 Reference ID 8-010-20190721). It outlines that planning authorities need to consider the potential impacts of development on protected and priority species and the scope to avoid or mitigate any impacts when considering planning applications (paragraph 016 Reference ID 8-016-20190721). In applying policy to avoid, mitigate or compensate for significant harm to biodiversity it states that a number of questions are relevant including where significant harm cannot be wholly or partially avoided, can it be minimised by design or by the use of effective mitigation measures which could be secured by conditions or planning obligations and where, despite mitigation, there would still be significant residual harm, can this be properly compensated by measures to provide for an equivalent or greater value of biodiversity (paragraph 019 Reference ID 8-019-20190721).
- 5.67** WBC has not produced technical evidence in relation to ecology/biodiversity as its position on the Environmental Statement (**CD/5.1 & 5.2**) and ES Addendum (**CD/5.9 & 5.10**) is set out in its committee report (**CD/5.46**) and the draft ecology SoCG (**CD/5.162 5.164**). The draft SoCG outlines the parties' agreement to the Assessment Method provided in section 8.2 of the ES and section A8.5 of the Addendum and that it is considered to be consistent with national and international guidelines, as set out in 8.1 of the ES and has been applied appropriately. The baseline conditions set out in section 8.3 of the ES and section 8.6 of the ES Addendum have also been agreed. The effects in Warrington, in absence of mitigation, are agreed and include:

Construction phase

- Hedgerows – loss of - significant at the local level



- Running water – Cockshot Brook – significant at the local level in the short term
- Amphibians – killing/injuring, habitat loss (short term) and habitat loss/fragmentation (long term) – significant at the local level
- Bats – loss of foraging habitat – significant at the local level
- Water vole – short term displacement – significant at the local level
- Hedgehog – injury or death – significant at the local level

#### Operational phase

- Hedgerows – lack of management – significant at the local level
- Running water – Cockshot Brook, surface water run off – significant at the local level
- Bats – effect of light spillage – significant at the local level
- Water vole – effects of run-off – significant at the local level
- Barn owl – potential killing and injury due to collisions with vehicles whilst foraging – significant at the local level

**5.68** Mitigation is set out and agreed in the draft SoCG and in Warrington includes a Construction Environmental Management Plan, the implementation of a landscaping scheme, the implementation of an ecological management plan and further precautionary surveys relating to bats, badgers and water vole. These conditions are included in the suggested list attached at Appendix 1 of this proof. Mitigation for great crested newt would be in the form of a financial contribution to WBC for off-site habitat creation and management. Further details are provided below.

**5.69** The SoCG confirms the residual significant effects, which are described at section 8.6 of the ES and are agreed. In Warrington, these are:

#### Construction phase

- Broadleaved deciduous woodland and broadleaved plantation woodland – habitat loss significant at the local level in the short to medium term changing to beneficial significant at the local level in the long term as new planting matures
- Hedgerows – habitat loss - significant at the local level in the short term, changing to beneficial significant at local level in the medium term as new hedgerows mature
- Hedgerows – loss and severance – significant at the local level in the short term, changing to beneficial significant at the local level in the medium term as new hedgerows mature
- Bats – loss of foraging – commuting and potential roosting habitat – significant at the local level in the short to medium term, changing to beneficial significant at the local level in the long term as new planting matures

#### Operational phase

- Barn owl – potential killing and injury – significant at the local level in the short



to medium term changing to beneficial significant at the local level in the long term as new tree planting and habitats for prey matures.

- 5.70** The Committee report confirmed that there were no objections from Natural England or the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU; the Council's ecology advisors) (**CD/5.46 section 7**) and this position remains unchanged.
- 5.71** The off-site contribution relating to newt mitigation would be secured by a S106 obligation and was requested by GMEU on the basis that previous records showed a small population of newts on the site and a precautionary approach should be taken to provide compensation for the fragmentation of the newt terrestrial habitats caused by the scheme, as if newts are still present the already threatened population would be further harmed by the scheme. Off-site compensation was considered to be more beneficial because on-site habitat provision would likely be compromised by the proposed development and off-site compensation in locations where newt populations are best placed to expand could also be regarded as a net gain. GMEU's advice is attached at Appendix 5 of this proof. The contribution would be used at the Rixton Clay Pits nature reserve, approximately 6 miles to the south-east of the application site, which is under WBC's management.
- 5.72** There would be no long term significant residual ecological effects in Warrington, with some medium and long term beneficial significant effects following the maturation of new planting and habitats. PAG's concerns that the specific and unique habitat, greenery and biodiversity have not been recognised adequately or addressed sufficiently in the proposals are not well-founded given that the applicant's documents were prepared by specialists and the Council has sought expert advice on these matters from its ecological advisors, GMEU, who have no objections. Any ecological impacts as a result of future developments would be assessed at such time that planning applications are submitted for those developments. It is concluded that the proposal would be acceptable with regards to ecology and complies with the above policies of the Local Plan and the NPPF.
- 5.73** The applicant intends to produce technical evidence on ecology/biodiversity and the Council is therefore content for the Inspector to base his recommendation on the applicant's evidence at the inquiry.

**f) Any other environmental and amenity effects**

- 5.74** The Inspector has listed the following matters under this heading:
- i) Noise and disturbance;
  - ii) Design, visual appearance and landscaping;
  - iii) Best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV);
  - iv) Climate change;



- v) Flood risk and drainage; and
- vi) Heritage assets.

***j) Noise and disturbance***

- 5.75** Local Plan Policy QE6 states that the Council will only support development which would not lead to an adverse impact on the amenity of those occupying adjoining or nearby properties taking noise and vibration levels into account and the times when such disturbances are likely to occur.
- 5.76** Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects of pollution on living conditions and in doing so they should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts on health and the quality of life.
- 5.77** The PPG states that noise needs to be considered when development may create additional noise (paragraph 001 Reference ID 30-001-20190721). It also highlights that in line with the Explanatory note of the noise policy statement for England, consideration of whether a significant adverse or adverse effect would be likely to occur and whether a good standard or amenity could be achieved would include identifying whether the overall effect of the noise exposure would be above or below the significant observed adverse effect level (the level of noise exposure above which significant effects on health and quality of life occur) (paragraph 003 Reference ID 30-003-20190721).
- 5.78** The Environmental Protection SPD (**CD/3.12**) confirms that noise is a material planning consideration for a new potentially noisy development which may adversely impact upon existing land uses surrounding the site. It states that development proposals should consider the ambient noise levels already present in the area. It recognises that noise from construction works can be intrusive or disruptive and such activities should be restricted to daytime periods and have finite start and finish times.
- 5.79** The Council's EP team considered the ES (**CD/5.1 & 5.2**) and ES Addendum (**CD/5.9 & 5.10**) and their advice is summarised in the WBC committee report (**CD/5.46**). The EP team concluded that the method for identifying sensitive receptors is acceptable, as are the proposed construction hours. The advice relating to operational traffic noise impacts was provided with reference to links (stretches of road) and concluded that the noise impacts of the proposed development on the amenity of neighbouring residents were considered to be acceptable, subject to conditions requiring the erection of a noise barrier and a CEMP.
- 5.80** The applicant submitted further noise information in October 2020 within its FEI (**CD/5.47**) which has also been reviewed by the Council's EP team. The position relating to noise is also covered in a draft SoCG (**CD/5.1645.163**) which



confirms:

- The Assessment Method and selection of significance criteria in section 10.2 of the ES and 5.5 of the FEI is appropriate and consistent with national and international guidelines
- The assessment area is appropriate for the consideration of likely important noise and vibration effects
- The baseline conditions in section 10.3 of the ES and A10.6 of the ES addendum are agreed
- The potential significant effects as set out in 10.4 of the ES and A10.7 of the ES Addendum are agreed
- The revised operational noise effects presented in section 5 of the FEI are agreed
- During the construction phase there would be a temporary significant noise effect at residential properties along Winwick Lane but they are considered acceptable as they would be short term associated with demolition at Rough Farm and Rough Cottage (north side of Winwick Lane; in St Helens)
- There would not be significant noise effects in respect of properties on Winwick Lane during the operational phase as set out in paragraphs 5.8.2 and 5.8.3 of the FEI (increase in noise of less than 3dB)
- Mitigation in Warrington would comprise a 2.5m high noise barrier along the stretch of the PLR adjacent to Winwick Lane, as set out in section 10.5 of the ES and section 5.9 of the FEI.
- The residual effects in Warrington would be as detailed in section 10.6 of the ES and relate to short term noise effects during the demolition works at Rough Farm and Rough Cottage. The predicted noise effects would only exceed the adopted criterion marginally
- It is agreed that subject to the implementation of a noise barrier, there would be no significant residual effects ie. Increase in noise of more than 3dB in the short term or 5dB in the long term during the operational phase at the nearest residential properties, as per section 5.10 of the FEI
- It is agreed that with the proposed mitigation there would be a minor beneficial effect during the operational phase at properties on Winwick Lane between junction 22 of the M6 and the junction with the PLR East. Noise levels are expected to reduce by up to 3dB.

**5.81** The EP teams' advice on the FEI, along with a plan showing the links referred to below, is provided at Appendix 6 of this proof. In relation to traffic noise, Environmental Protection confirm the following, which refer to the same links as listed in the committee report:

- Link 21 (Winwick Link Road) – a slight increase of between 1-3dB at one property (Highfield Lodge) which is not considered to be significant.
- Link 23 (Winwick Lane (south)) – a reduction in noise at properties shielded by the acoustic barrier of between 1-3dB in both the short and long term.
- Link 24 (Winwick Lane (north)) – a slight increase of between 1-3dB at Oven Back Farm and Oven Back Cottage both the short and long term, which is



not considered to be significant.

- Link 26 (Parkside Road north) – no short or long term changes in noise levels with decreases along link 33 (south of link 26) by around 1-3dB.
- Link 27 (from A49 to Parkside Road) – no detrimental impacts affecting Warrington.

**5.82** Any noise resulting from future developments that may be facilitated by the PLR would be assessed as part of planning applications for those schemes. It is concluded that overall the noise impacts of the scheme in Warrington would not be significant, subject to the conditions referred to above, and the application accords with Local Plan Policy QE6 and the NPPF.

*ii) Design, visual appearance and landscaping*

**5.83** Local Plan Policy CC2 states that development proposals in the countryside which accord with Green Belt policies will be supported subject to a number of factors including that they respect local landscape character.

**5.84** Local Plan Policy QE7 states that the Council will look positively upon proposals that are designed to maintain and respect the landscape character and, where appropriate, distinctiveness of the surrounding countryside.

**5.85** Paragraph 127 of the NPPF states that decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character including landscape setting. Paragraph 141 states that once Green Belts have been defined, LPAs should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use such as looking at opportunities to retain and enhance landscapes. Paragraph 170 states that decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

**5.86** The Council's Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) (**CD/3.15**) was prepared in 2007 and formed part of the evidence base for the adopted Local Plan. Despite its age, the LCA is still considered relevant as baseline information for the assessment of the proposed development. The application site is located within the undulating farmland landscape character area (Winwick, Culcheth, Glazebrook and Rixton, LCA 1C – plan of the area including the application site boundary attached at Appendix 7 (within the undulating enclosed farmland landscape character type). The Committee report (**CD/5.46**) provides a summary of the key relevant points within the LCA at paragraph 11.74, highlighting that key characteristics include sweeping views from east to south and mainly medium to often large-scale arable fields and sparsity of hedgerow trees.

**5.87** Paragraph 11.75 of the Committee report discusses the landscape character of the application site and surrounding area in Warrington, with land within the application site rising southwards from the M6 to localised high ground at and surrounding Woodhead Farm. The land falls southwards towards St Oswald's Brook and from Hermitage Green Lane the land rises southwards towards an



area of high ground between Hermitage Green and Winwick. Within the south-eastern part of the site, the land is lower lying and extends to the west of Winwick Lane along Cockshot Brook. The landscape in the study area is identified as being bisected by the M6 and dissected by the Winwick Link Road and Winwick Lane.

- 5.88** The design of the proposed development in highway terms is covered in the Council's separate highways proof of evidence. The PLR would be fairly typical of a new road comprising a carriageway, foot/cycle way and associated infrastructure including lighting columns. It is acknowledged that the visual appearance of the proposed scheme would be different during the night-time to that during the day due to the light from the lighting columns and lighting from traffic using the proposed road. There are however a number of significant lighting sources in the vicinity of the site in Warrington in particular along the M6 corridor and at J22 as well as along parts of Parkside Road and Winwick Lane. Light from vehicles using those routes is already visible at night-time. When considered against this backdrop the night-time appearance of the road with associated traffic is considered to be greater than in the daytime but acceptable nonetheless and would have a minimal impact.
- 5.89** The Council's position in relation to landscaping and visual impact is contained within the committee report and the overall conclusions remain unchanged. WBC has not therefore provided technical evidence on these matters to the inquiry. The committee report, at paragraphs 11.95-11.97, outlines the advice received from Aecom, who the Council commissioned to review the applicant's submission in relation to landscape and visual impacts. Their full report is provided at Appendix 8 of this proof. Their advice confirmed that the applicant's assessment within the ES chapter 7 (**CD/5.1 & 5.2**) and ES Addendum Chapter A7 (**CD/5.9 & 5.10**) was carried out with an approved method of assessment and with due regard to current planning policy.
- 5.90** The draft landscape SoCG (**CD/5.1605.162**) confirms the Council's agreement with the significant landscape effects as set out in the ES and ES Addendum and the summary of the residual landscape effects. The application site in Warrington is within Local Landscape Character Area (LLCA) 3 – undulating and generally enclosed arable farmland – where the landscape sensitivity is agreed as low-moderate with the significance of effect at year 1 identified as moderate to slight adverse) and slight beneficial across the proposed ecological area which is within Warrington) during operation year 1 and slight adverse (and slight beneficial across the proposed ecological area) during operation year 15.
- 5.91** The proposed type and level of landscaping is considered to be acceptable and would be controlled through one of the suggested conditions included at Appendix 1 of this proof.
- 5.92** In relation to visual effects in Warrington, the applicant's residual visual effects



summary at Table 7.9 of the ES, which summarises the detailed descriptions of the anticipated visual effects on each visual receptor after 15 years (provided at Appendix 7.3 of the ES **(CD/5.2))** have been referred to, alongside Chapter A7 of the ES Addendum **(CD/5.9)**. These confirm the significance of the residual effects (operation at 15 years) are as follows:

- Public receptors within 0.5km - Persons of Public Rights of Way
  - F3 – PROW F1n running north-west of Junction 22 of M6 – slight adverse to neutral
- Public receptors within 0.5km - Road users
  - R2 – Hermitage Green Lane – slight adverse to neutral
  - R4 – A579 Winwick Lane – slight adverse
- Private receptors within 0.5m - Residents
  - H5 – Hermitage Farm on the north side of Hermitage Green Lane – slight adverse to neutral
  - H6 – properties within Hermitage Green adjacent to the east and south of Parkside Road – slight adverse
  - H7 – Pipers Hall on the northern edge of Hermitage Green – slight adverse
  - H8 – The Orchard on the northern edge of Hermitage Green
  - H9 – Rose Mount Farm, The Cottage and Piper's Hole Cottage at the northern edge of Hermitage Green – slight adverse
  - H10 – Wood Head Farm on the west side of Parkside Road – slight adverse
  - H11 – Sycamore Lodge and Monk House, Parkside Road – moderate to slight adverse
  - H14 – Hilbre and Hill Crest on the east side of Winwick Lane – large adverse to moderate adverse
  - H15 – Hollowdene on the east side of Winwick Lane – moderate adverse
  - H16 – Sherbrooke on the east side of Winwick Lane – large adverse to moderate adverse
  - H17 – Oven Back Farm on the east side of Winwick Lane – moderate to slight adverse (altered from moderate adverse in the ES Addendum)
  - H18 – Oven Back Cottage on the east side of Winwick Lane – slight adverse
- Workers and visitors to local businesses
  - B1 – Hermitage Stud Farm on the north side of Hermitage Green Lane – slight adverse to neutral
  - B2 – Bibbys Commerical Ltd on the east side of Winwick Lane – slight adverse
  - Mucky Paws dog grooming business at Oven Back Farm on the east side of Winwick Lane – slight adverse to neutral
- Representative viewpoints between 0.5km and 2km
  - RV1 – road users on the A573 Parkside Road between Winwick and Hermitage Green – slight adverse to neutral
  - RV2 – Users of the PROW north of Winwick and the northern residential edge of Winwick – slight adverse



- RV3 – residents at Cop Halt Farm and road users on a section of the A49 Winwick Road – slight adverse

**5.93** Overall, the residual visual effects in Warrington are considered to be limited, due largely to the nature of the scheme which would be viewed in the context of existing infrastructure in the area and the overriding views of the surrounding countryside which would remain. The adverse effects highlighted above are not considered sufficient to warrant the refusal of the application and it is not considered that there would be unacceptable harm to residential amenity. The proposed development is considered to be compliant with relevant policies in this regard. The effects are however weighed in the planning balance section of this proof, along with the beneficial effect also highlighted above. The Council is content for the Inspector to base his recommendation on the applicant's information provided as part of the application and the evidence it will produce for the inquiry.

*iii) Best and most versatile agricultural land*

**5.94** Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character of the countryside and the wider benefits from natural capital including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. The footnote to paragraph 171 states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of higher quality. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the best and most versatile agricultural land as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

**5.95** The PPG states that planning decisions should take account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

**5.96** It is accepted that the proposed development would result in the permanent loss of some best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV). In Warrington this would amount to 9.62ha, the majority of which would be used for environmental enhancement and mitigation within the northern portion of the application site. This amounts to approximately 25% of the application site area (across both boroughs) and would affect one farm business within Warrington (Wood Head Farm) which is expected to experience a significant reduction in its enterprise. This would have an adverse impact but it is considered that the loss of agricultural land in Warrington would not have an unacceptable impact on the availability of the BMV within the borough as this loss would only represent approximately 4.8% of the total BMV in Warrington. It should be noted that Natural England did not object to the planning application following consultation as part of the application process, as mentioned in WBC's report to its Development Management Committee. The proposed development would not conflict with the NPPF in this regard and the loss of agricultural land will be weighed in the planning balance in later paragraphs of this proof.



*iv) Climate change*

- 5.97** Local Plan Policy CS1 outlines support for sustainable development and that to be sustainable, development must have regard to a number of considerations including the need to address the causes of and be resilient to the effects of climate change.
- 5.98** Paragraph 149 of the NPPF states that new development should be planned for in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change.
- 5.99** Climate change is considered in the applicant's FEI submitted in October 2020 (**CD/5.47**). The update to the DMRB guidance included LA114 Climate. That was produced in 2019 and was not therefore taken into account in either the ES or ES Addendum. The applicant's FEI updates the assessment in line with the current DMRB guidance.
- 5.100** The FEI confirms the following (chapter 7):
- Climate change was assessed in the ES and ES Addendum (chapters 14 and A14 respectively) and the key issues noted in that assessment were:
    - In-combination climate change impact assessment – it is not considered that climate change would have an additive adverse effect on effects identified in other topics within the ES
    - Climate change risk assessment – the implementation of the relevant design standards and specifications for the proposed scheme outlined within the 2018 ES chapter 14 table 4.1 are considered sufficient to address any potential risks to the proposed scheme that might arise as a result of future vulnerabilities to climate change
    - Greenhouse gas assessment – a quantitative assessment was not undertaken but it was not anticipated that the proposed scheme would result in substantive emissions of greenhouse gases
  - No significant residual effects were noted in either the ES or ES Addendum
  - Cumulative effects were assessed as part of the ES and reviewed in the ES Addendum and no significant cumulative effects on climate change were found
  - The key findings, set out in table 7.9 of the FEI are:
    - Climate change risk assessment – the implementation of the relevant design standards and specifications for the proposed scheme outlined in Appendix 7.1 of the FEI are considered sufficient to address any potential risks to the proposed scheme that might arise as a result of future vulnerabilities to climate changes
    - Greenhouse gas assessment – the emissions associated with the proposed scheme would not have a material impact on the ability of the Government to meet its carbon reduction targets and therefore there is no significant effect associated with carbon emissions. Savings over the 60-year assessment period are estimated to be in the order of 75,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>.



In light of this saving, an estimated carbon pay-back period of six years may be achieved. In relation to the expected operational life of the proposed scheme, this is a short pay-back period.

**5.101** The FEI advises that the DMRB does not require an assessment of in-combination climate change impacts and the applicants have not therefore undertaken an updated assessment. The committee report provides a summary of the residual in-combination climate change effects as follows:

- Road drainage and the water environment – neutral
- Cultural heritage – low adverse
- Landscape and visual – slight beneficial to moderate adverse depending on the location at year 15 of operation in respect of effects on landscape character areas and neutral to large adverse depending on location at year 1 of operation in respect of effects on visual receptors
- Geology, soils and contaminated land – neutral in respect of effects on ground conditions and groundwater during operational activities, exposure of ground maintenance workers or local residents to contaminated land during excavations, exposure of ground maintenance workers to ground gas in confined spaces and direct contact with unexploded ordnance and slight adverse in relation to damage to buried structures and services from aggressive ground conditions and potential risk of contaminants entering the infiltration pond
- Ecology and nature conservation – not significant or negligible with the exception of the effect of the unsuccessful establishment of new hedgerows, the residual effect taking account of climate change is predicted to be significant at the local level

**5.102** It is acknowledged that WBC declared a climate emergency in 2019 and the Council's priorities are to achieve sustainability in all its operations, reduce fuel poverty, improve security of energy supply and generate income to fund green investments. None of these is directly relevant to the proposed development and the scheme would not conflict with these priorities.

**5.103** The applicant's information on climate change provided in the ES, ES Addendum and Further Environmental Information is accepted and the proposed development would not conflict with the above policies. The Council is content for the Inspector to base his recommendation on the applicant's submissions on this matter.

v) *Flood risk and drainage*

**5.104** Local Plan Policy QE4 states that the Council will only support development proposals where the risk of flooding has been fully assessed and justified by an agreed Flood Risk Assessment. In relation to surface water, it should also be demonstrated that development is not at risk from existing drainage systems or overland flows, will make a positive contribution to managing or mitigating flood risk and will not adversely affect existing flooding conditions.



- 5.105** Local Plan Policy QE6 states that development will only be supported where it would not lead to an adverse impact on the environment or the surrounding area taking into account the quality of water bodies and groundwater resources.
- 5.106** Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and development from contribution to unacceptable levels of water pollution and that development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as water quality.
- 5.107** The Council's position on flood risk and drainage is set out in the committee report (**CD/5.46**) and this position remains unchanged. The summary of predicted effects, based on the findings in chapters 12 and A12 of the ES **CD/5.1 & 5.2**) and ES Addendum (**CD/5.9 & 5.10**) respectively, is as follows:

Construction phase

- Cockshot Brook – neutral significance of effect in relation to pollutants; minor adverse in relation to surface water flood risk; slight adverse in relation to downstream receptors – risks to people and property
- Cockshot Brook tributary B1 (runs under Winwick Lane in a pipe culvert between the rears of Sherbrooke and Glendale and then south east to Cockshot Brook) – slight adverse in relation to pollutants; neutral in relation to surface water flood risk; slight adverse in relation to construction processes; slight adverse in relation to downstream receptors – risks to people and property
- St Oswald's Brook – slight adverse in relation to pollutants; slight adverse in relation to surface water runoff
- St Oswald's Brook tributary A1 – neutral in relation to pollutants; slight adverse in relation to surface water runoff
- Construction workers and pollutants – slight adverse

Operational phase

- Cockshot Brook and St Oswald's Brook – risk of pollutants – neutral
  - Cockshot Brook, St Oswald's Brook and tributaries B1 and A1 – increase in peak surface water flows – neutral
  - Downstream receptors – increase in peak surface water flows to both brooks' catchments – neutral
- 5.108** The ES identifies the site to be at low risk of flooding from rivers and the sea and states that the proposal would not increase flood risk either within the site or to downstream receptors. No flood risk mitigation measures are therefore proposed. A CEMP (which would be controlled by condition and is included in the suggested list attached at Appendix 1 of this proof) would manage construction phase effects and a drainage strategy would include adequate storage for surface water runoff. The submission, implementation and



management of a surface water drainage strategy would also be controlled by condition and is included in the suggested list. The ES concludes that there would be no significant residual effects during either the construction or operational phases of the development.

- 5.109** The committee report confirms that none of the Council's advisors (Environment Agency, United Utilities and the Council's flood risk team) objects to the proposed development subject to the conditions mentioned above (**CD/5.46/section 7**). The EA and UU also recommended a hydrogeological risk assessment as the site is within a groundwater safeguard zone; that assessment is also included in the list of suggested conditions. In view of the above and the suggested conditions, the application is considered to accord with the above policies and the Council is content for the Inspector to make his recommendation based on this assessment and the information supplied by the applicant as part of the application.

*vi) Heritage assets*

- 5.110** Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (LBCA) states that in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- 5.111** Local Plan Policy CS1 requires development to have regard to the need to sustain and enhance the borough's built heritage.
- 5.112** Local Plan Policy QE8 states that the Council will ensure that the fabric and setting of heritage assets are appropriately protected and enhanced and that development of proposals which affect the character and setting of all heritage assets will be required to provide supporting information proportionate to the designation of the asset.
- 5.113** Paragraph 190 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimize any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 5.114** Paragraph 192 sets out a number of factors which local planning authorities should take into account including the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significant of heritage assets, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to



local character and distinctiveness.

- 5.115** Paragraph 193 advises that great weight should be given to a designated heritage asset's conservation. Paragraph 196 states that where a development proposal will lead to lead that substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 197 states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining an application.
- 5.116** The PPG states that what matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset and that where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm in order to identify which policies in the NPPF apply. It further states that within each category of harm, the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated (Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 18a-018-20190723).
- 5.117** In accordance with S66 of the LBCA, considerable weight should be given to any harm to designated heritage assets and there is a strong presumption against the grant of planning permission where any harm is caused.
- 5.118** There are a number of heritage assets within Warrington in the vicinity of the application site as follows:
- Woodhead Farm, Parkside Road (Grade II listed)
  - Woodhead Barn, Parkside Road (Grade II listed)
  - St Oswald's Well, Parkside Road (Grade II listed and Scheduled Ancient Monument)
  - Battle of Winwick Registered Battlefield (Scheduled Ancient Monument)
  - Monk House, Parkside Road (locally listed)
  - Oven Back Cottage, Winwick Lane (locally listed) (NB. Previous reference was to Oven Back Farm but this has been incorrectly included on the Council's local list. It is in fact Oven Back Cottage, to the north of Oven Back Farm on Winwick Lane and more distant from the application site, which is locally listed).
- 5.119** The applicant provided information on heritage assets as part of the application within the cultural heritage chapter of the Environmental Statement and Addendum and associated appendices. In addition to this, the Council's Conservation Officer has prepared an assessment of the significance of the designated and non-designated heritage assets in Warrington and the impact of the proposed development on each. This is provided at Appendix 9 and if required the Council's Conservation Officer can be available for a round table discussion regarding heritage. A summary of the harm and the significance of each heritage asset is set out below (in the order considered by the Conservation Officer):



- Oven Back Cottage (undesigned heritage asset) – there would be a neutral effect and therefore no impact on the asset's significance. The proposal would preserve the significance of the asset.
- Monk House (undesigned heritage asset) – there would be less than substantial harm with the impact being negligible. The significance of the asset is considered to be low.
- Battle of Winwick Battlefield (Scheduled Ancient Monument) – in Warrington there would be less than substantial harm with the impact being negligible. The significance of the asset is considered to be very high.
- St Oswald's Well (Grade II listed and scheduled monument) – neutral effect on the asset and its setting during construction, therefore there would be no impact on the asset's significance during that phase of the development and the significance of the asset would be preserved. The impact during the operational phase is considered to be moderate beneficial as a result of changes in traffic flows on Parkside Road. The significance of the asset is considered to be high.
- Woodhead Farm and Barn (both Grade II listed) – There would be less than substantial harm to both assets with the impact considered to be minor adverse. The significance of both assets is considered to be high.

**5.120** It is acknowledged that considerable importance and weight should be given to any harm to designated heritage assets in the planning balance and that there is a statutory duty in favour of preservation contained within S66 of the LBCA. Harm has been identified in respect of three designated heritage assets in Warrington (the battlefield, Woodhead Farm and Woodhead Barn), as summarised above. The balance of this harm against the benefits of this scheme is considered in the planning balance section of this proof. There would also be a benefit to one undesigned heritage asset and the weight to be attached to that benefit will also be considered in the planning balance. I have carried out a balanced assessment in respect of the harm to Monk House, pursuant to paragraph 197 of the NPPF, and this is also taken into account in the planning balance.

**5.121** A judgement as to the proposal's compliance with Local Plan policies and the above paragraphs of the NPPF is formed in a subsequent section of this proof following consideration of the benefits of the scheme and whether these can be considered public benefits which outweigh the harm to the designated heritage assets whilst acknowledging the strong presumption against the grant of planning permission set out in the LBCA where any harm would be caused.

**5.122** St Helens carried out a full appraisal of the impact of the proposed development on the registered battlefield in its committee report and the Council concurs with that assessment. WBC's Conservation Officer has also considered the impact on the battlefield in her assessment attached at Appendix 9 and she is also in agreement with St Helens. Consultation with the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Service (APAS) and agreement with the applicant's heritage impact report has



also been noted by the Council's Conservation Officer. St Helens also considered the impact of the proposed development on the other heritage assets within its boundary and will deal those impacts in its evidence. The impacts of any future developments facilitated by the PLR on heritage assets would be considered as part of the assessment and determination of those planning applications and are not considered in this proof.

**g) Whether the PLR would give rise to socio-economic and/or environmental benefits to be weighed in the planning balance**

**5.123** It is accepted that the main purpose of the PLR is to facilitate development at Parkside Phase 2 and the SRFI by providing essential infrastructure to link the Parkside site to junction 22 of the M6. It is also considered that development of Phase 2 and the SRFI could not come forward without the PLR due to constraints on the existing highway network. Mr Taylor has considered the applicant's information in this regard and agrees with that information.

**5.124** The PLR is dependent on public funding which, as evidenced at **CD/5.157 5.159**, has been secured from the LCRCA through the Single Investment Fund. As highlighted by the applicant in the Planning Statement (**CD/5.12, para. 1.8**) the funding has been secured due to the PLR's strategic importance to the North West and the potential to create significant investment and employment space. The applicant further states, at paragraph 7.34 of the Planning Statement, that a staged approach to bringing forward the Parkside scheme is the fundamental justification for bringing forward the PLR now, while there are funding opportunities, as a precursor to Phase 2 and the SRFI being delivered. Also within the applicant's Planning Statement, and as summarised in the WBC Committee report (**CD/5.46, para 11.197**) it is noted that Parkside is identified as a key piece of port and logistics infrastructure in the Liverpool City Region Growth Strategy (**CD/5.56**). The Committee report also highlights that the granting of funding from the LCRCA is an important indicator of recognition of for the need for the road, its importance in facilitating the delivery of the strategic employment development and the fact that public sector funding is required as the costs associated with this infrastructure have been considered too high to be borne by the private sector. The granting of funding can be seen as an expression of confidence in the development of this area. Granting planning permission for the scheme is now necessary to ensure that the PLR can be delivered.

**5.125** Delivering the PLR and unlocking the wider Parkside site for employment development and an SRFI will result in significant benefits as follows:

Promoting economic growth

**5.126** The policy support for economic growth at the local and regional level is set out in Mr Nicholls' proof. I accept that evidence and do not repeat it here, although I note the key points, as set out in the draft Planning Matters SoCG (**CD/5.156**), that the development of an SRFI at Parkside is a longstanding policy objective



that was identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy and in the current St Helens development plan. I also note that the site is promoted through the emerging St Helens Local Plan, although I acknowledge that the emerging plan can only be afforded minimal weight. I note Mr Nicholls' evidence that the evidence base for the emerging St Helens Local Plan is highly relevant as it identifies a requirement for employment development, and in particular logistics development, substantially greater than planned for in the adopted St Helens development plan. WBC's Committee report (para 11.194) cites the St Helens Economic Evidence Base Paper (**CD/5.78**), as referred to by the applicant in the Planning Statement, as it highlights the importance of economic growth and the importance of the SRFI in meeting St Helens' aspirations. It highlights the former colliery site and surroundings remains the single largest potential economic development site in the [St Helens] borough providing the greatest opportunity to meet the economic development aspirations of the borough, being on a prime location for an SRFI. Within the Planning Statement, the applicant also points to the St Helens Employment Land Needs Study Addendum (**CD/5.81**), which is summarised at paragraph 11.95 of the Committee report, citing the analysis within the document of the potential employment capacities at emerging St Helens Local Plan employment sites and identifies Parkside East as having potential capacity for 2,737 jobs, Parkside West 2,251 jobs and the rail terminal potential to create 40 rail use jobs.

- 5.127** In addition to regional and St Helens policy support, the scheme is supported in Warrington Means Business (2020) (**CD/5.58**). This is Warrington's economic growth and regeneration programme which, alongside the WBC Local Plan and Local Transport Plan, outlines the Council's strategic direction for development and growth. It outlines several priorities including a number of connected business locations which includes Parkside. It recognises the proposal to develop a new business park on the former colliery site and that Warrington Council will work with St Helens Council and the LCRCA to deliver this important project and its associated supporting new transportation infrastructure. I also note the support for economic growth and the need to place significant weight on the need to support such growth as set out in the NPPF (paragraphs 8 and 80). I believe that significant weight can be afforded to the promotion of economic growth.

Meeting evidenced economic needs

- 5.128** Mr Meulman has provided evidence on behalf of St Helens in relation to this matter and I accept the assessment and conclusions he makes. I note in particular Mr Meulman's evidence that the requirement for logistics development has increased significantly in the North West region and St Helens Borough in particular. As set out in Mr Meulman's evidence, there are no other significant consents that could help to meet the residual employment requirement in St Helens and that Parkside could provide a significant share of that requirement.
- 5.129** The need for the PLR was considered in WBC's committee report (**CD/5.46, paras 11.202-11.204**), at which time, it was considered appropriate to attach moderate weight to this benefit. However, given the additional evidence prepared



on behalf of St Helens in this regard, as mentioned above, I believe that the need case is now even more compelling and should be afforded significant weight.

Delivering significant socio-economic benefits

**5.130** The PLR will deliver direct and indirect socio-economic benefits. The applicant provides details of the economic impacts in Figure 5 of the Planning Statement (**CD/5.12**) as follows:

- Direct (PLR construction impacts):
  - A total construction investment of £31.5m with direct construction jobs equivalent to 400 years of employment with a further 140 years of employment supported by the supply chain and employee spend.
- Indirect (Parkside phases 2 and 3):
  - A total of £329m estimated construction investment including 3,000 direct years of employment and 1,050 years of employment supported by supply chain and employee spend;
  - 6,590 gross on-site jobs with 790 of these taken up by residents of Warrington; and
  - An additional £417m GVA (net) per annum during the operational phases

**5.131** These significant economic benefits would have the potential to have a positive impact on some of the most deprived areas, with parts of Orford and Poplars and Hulme wards in Warrington borough, about 3.5km to the south of Parkside, within the top 10% in England in terms of multiple deprivation, as highlighted in Mr Nicholls' proof. The creation of jobs in close proximity to these areas would help to tackle areas of local deprivation. Training and employment opportunities for Warrington residents would be secured through a local employment scheme condition. I attach significant weight to the delivery of socio-economic benefits.

Facilitating a shift towards sustainable transport solutions by enabling an SRFI

**5.132** Chapter 9 of the NPPF focuses on promoting sustainable transport, outlining that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth and that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes (paragraph 103). As set out in Mr Nicholls' proof, the Department of Transport National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPS; **CD/3.10**) outlines the compelling need to develop SRFIs to support economic growth and support a shift towards more sustainable transport options. As highlighted by Mr Nicholls, the NPS states that SRFIs are important in facilitating the transfer of freight from road to rail, thereby reducing trip mileage of freight movements on both the national and road networks. He further highlights the Government's vision for transport is for a low carbon sustainable transport system that is an engine for economic growth and that the transfer of freight from road to rail would contribute towards a move to a low carbon economy and help address climate change. Both the NPPF and the NPS are therefore important in lending support to the development of an SRFI as a shift towards a more sustainable transport solution. I attach significant weight to this benefit.



The absence of alternative locations for employment development and the SRFI

- 5.133** Mr Meulman's evidence highlights that none of the sites considered as part of an alternative sites assessment provides the capacity to develop the SRFI and adequately provide the strategic, intermodal logistics facility envisaged for Parkside. He further states that there are no alternative sites in urban settlements of St Helens of a comparable scale to Parkside East and that there are no alternatives that can provide the rail infrastructure to secure the SRFI. I accept Mr Meulman's evidence in this regard and recognise that without such development, the significant economic benefits outlined above would not be realised. Within the Planning Statement, and as summarised in WBC's Committee report (**CD/5.46, para 11.209**), the applicant asserted that the Parkside Strategic Site is a unique location for an SRFI due to its links to two railway lines accessing both north-south and east-west and, with reference to the Parkside Logistics Study (**CD/5.54**), that in comparison to other current and potential sites, the Parkside site scores highly on all the attractiveness metrics and that no other sites in the catchment area have the potential to receive trains from all directions. The absence of alternatives was afforded moderate weight in the WBC committee report (para 11.210). However, in view of the additional evidence of Mr Meulman, as summarised above, I believe that this should now be afforded significant weight.

The absence of an alternative route for the PLR that would not require Green Belt land

- 5.134** The applicant provided information on the alternative routes considered within Chapter 3 of the ES (**CD/5.1**). That information is summarised, alongside the Council's consideration of it, in the WBC committee report (para 11.206-210). A total of six routes, including the route proposed as part of the application, were considered and it was accepted there was no alternative route that would not require land within the Green Belt (albeit one of the routes would not involve Green Belt land in Warrington). The applicant's information in this regard is still accepted. Linked to the consideration of this matter is one of the points highlighted above relating to the fact that the Parkside site is a unique location for an SRFI and Mr Meulman's evidence that there are no alternative sites in urban settlements of St Helens of a comparable scale to Parkside East and no alternatives that can provide the rail infrastructure to secure the SRFI. I have already stated that the absence of alternatives for the SRFI should be afforded significant weight and I am of the view that this gives further weight to the fact that there is an absence of alternatives for the PLR outside of the Green Belt. I accept that, in order to deliver the benefits set out above, Green Belt release is necessary and I am of the view that the absence of alternative routes for the PLR should now also be afforded significant weight.
- 5.135** As I have previously outlined, the harm to the Green Belt in Warrington is considered to be limited, although I recognise the need to attach substantial weight to any harm. I consider that cumulatively, the benefits of the scheme, as



outlined above, should be given substantial weight in the planning balance.

*Traffic and transport benefits*

- 5.136** There would be some highway benefits in Warrington as a result of the proposed development including a reduction in movements along the A49 corridor from M62 J9, through Winwick Island up Newton Road to Parkside and reductions in traffic through Hermitage Green and Winwick village. It is however recognised that future development at Parkside phases 2 and 3, facilitated by the PLR, would impact on Warrington's highway network and therefore improvements may only be temporary until such time that development at Parkside phases 2 and 3 takes place, albeit the proposed link road would lessen the impact. That impact, and any necessary mitigation, would be assessed as part of any future planning applications for those developments. Given the temporary nature of the traffic and transport benefits, I consider that they should be afforded moderate weight in the planning balance.

*Other benefits*

- 5.137** As set out in previous paragraphs, there would be a number of other benefits specific to Warrington:

- Improved air quality at five receptors in Warrington which is considered to be a negligible benefit
- Reductions in traffic noise for residents along Winwick Lane (south) (link 23) and Golborne Road (link 33). Given the relatively slight nature of these reductions (between 1 and 3dB) this benefit is considered to be limited.
- Slight beneficial landscape effects within the ecological mitigation area.
- Medium and long term ecological benefits relating to broadleaved deciduous woodland and broadleaved plantation woodland, hedgerows and relating to habitats, bats and barn owl. These are considered to be significant benefits once the vegetation and habitats have matured.
- A positive impact on St Oswald's Well; a designated heritage asset of high significance. This is considered to be a moderate benefit.

Given that some of the above benefits would take time to realise and that some would be limited in nature I consider that these benefits should, collectively, be afforded moderate weight.

Balance relating to heritage assets

- 5.138** In accordance with S66 of the LBCA, considerable weight is given to the harm to designated heritage assets, as outlined in earlier paragraphs of this proof. Less than substantial harm has been identified to three designated heritage assets as a result of the proposed development (the battlefield, Woodhead Farm and Woodhead Barn). On the spectrum of less than substantial harm, the effect on the Battlefield (a designated heritage asset of very high significance) is considered to be negligible and the effect on Woodhead Farm and Barn (both designated heritage assets of high significance) is considered to be minor adverse. The harm is therefore at the lowest end of the scale of harm, but



considerable weight is given to this harm.

**5.139** Paragraph 196 of the NPPF requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (in both St Helens and Warrington boroughs).

- The PLR would enable the development of an SRFI and future employment development in St Helens
- The PLR would help to meet an evidenced economic need in St Helens by unlocking Phase 2 and the SRFI for development
- The PLR would deliver significant direct and indirect socio-economic benefits which would have positive impacts on parts of St Helens and Warrington boroughs that are disadvantaged. Training and employment opportunities for Warrington residents would be secured through a local employment scheme condition
- An SRFI would secure a modal shift away from road to rail and help to reduce road congestion and the emission of greenhouse gases
- Highways benefits in Warrington, namely a reduction in movements along the A49 corridor from M62 junction 9, through Winwick Island up Newton Road to Parkside, as set out in Mr Taylor's proof.
- An improvement to the setting of St Oswald's Well listed building and scheduled ancient monument.
- Environmental improvements including on air quality, noise, ecology and landscape.

**5.140** The weight of the above benefits is considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the designated heritage assets within Warrington, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 196.

**5.141** Having regard to paragraph 197 of the NPPF, the effect of the application on the significance of Monk House, an undesignated heritage asset in Warrington, is considered to be negligible. This assessment recognises the low significance of the heritage asset and the negligible scale of the harm caused.

**5.142** On the above basis, the application is considered to accord with Local Plan policies CS1 and QE8 and the NPPF with regard to heritage assets and it is considered that refusal of the proposed development would not be justified on the basis of harm to heritage assets in Warrington. The harm identified is however weighed in the planning balance below.

**h) If inappropriate whether any factors in favour of the PLR amount to VSC to outweigh policy harm and any other harm to justify allowing the development in the Green Belt**

**5.143** As mentioned previously in this proof, the proposed development is inappropriate in the Green Belt. In accordance with paragraph 144 of the NPPF, the harm to



the Green Belt (encompassing definitional harm, limited harm to openness and minimal harm from encroachment) carries substantial weight. Other harm caused by the proposal includes:

- Negligible harmful impacts relating to air quality;
- Some short term ecology impacts, although it should be noted that these become beneficial impacts in the medium/long term;
- Increases in noise, which are considered to be minor in nature;
- Slight adverse impacts on landscape and slight to large adverse residual effects on views at a number of receptors in Warrington 15 years after operation;
- Loss of agricultural land, which is considered to be minor;
- Impacts on three designated heritage assets (the battlefield, Woodhead Barn and Woodhead Farm) and negligible harm to an undesignated heritage asset.

**5.144** I have already set out that I believe the weight of the public benefits is considered to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the designated heritage assets within Warrington, whilst having special regard to the preservation of listed buildings and their settings. I am of the view that the other harm listed above should only be afforded a minor amount of weight in the planning balance given its limited nature and effects.

**5.145** The PLR is necessary to unlock the economic potential of the whole of the Parkside site and, as outlined by Mr Meulman, there is a compelling need for the development of SRFIs to support economic growth and a shift towards more sustainable transport options. There are no other locations that can satisfy the requirement for an SRFI with north, south, east and west road and rail access and the PLR is essential to secure the delivery of the SRFI and further employment developments beyond the current application for Phase 1.

**5.146** There would be significant socio-economic benefits arising from the creation of employment opportunities provided and facilitated by the PLR in an area where there is particular need due to deprivation.

**5.147** I note that Mr Nicholls asserts that the necessity for the PLR, the strong policy support at national, regional and local level, the role of the road in unlocking potential and socio-economic benefits are formidable factors weighing in favour of the development and I agree with that assertion and consider that they should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance.

**5.148** The other benefits of the scheme, including improved air quality, reductions in traffic, noise, medium and long term ecological benefits, employment and training opportunities secured through a local employment scheme, beneficial landscape impacts in the proposed ecological area and a positive impact on St Oswald's Well designated heritage asset are also important considerations which should be afforded moderate weight.



- 5.149** I am of the view that the benefits are sufficient to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and the other minor harm which would be caused by the proposal. Very special circumstances therefore exist to justify the development in the Green Belt. I note that Mr Nicholls is also of the view that the benefits, taken as a whole, clearly outweigh the harm likely to arise and that there are very special circumstances to justify the development of this Green Belt site. I conclude that the application accords with Local Plan policies CS1, CS2 and CS5 and the NPPF.

Other matters

- 5.150** PAG raise the issue of the cumulative impacts arising from development at Parkside. Mr Nicholls has addressed this issue in his proof, explaining that when applications come forward for further development they would be expected to mitigate for their own impact and that refusing the PLR on grounds of the cumulative impacts arising from the PLR combined with prospective development which has yet to be the subject of planning applications would be unreasonable and unsupportable. He confirms that the issue has nonetheless been considered as part of the EIA as required and a lawful consent can be granted. I agree with Mr Nicholl's comments in respect of this matter.



## **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.1** Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act states that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan for the purposes of this application is the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy adopted in 2004.
- 5.2** The proposed development would be inappropriate in the Green Belt and would result in definitional harm, harm to openness and harm to one of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt (encroachment). This harm has been afforded substantial weight in the planning balance, with other harm resulting from the proposal carrying a minor amount of weight.
- 5.3** I have taken account of the impact of the proposal on designated heritage assets and have concluded that the public benefits of the scheme would outweigh the harm, which is afforded significant weight in accordance with the statutory requirement. The benefits of the scheme are also considered to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and other minor harm. Very special circumstances therefore exist to justify the development in the Green Belt.
- 5.4** It is concluded that the proposal is acceptable and in compliance with the development plan for Warrington and that there are no material considerations which outweigh this finding, subject to conditions and a S106 obligation. It also follows that the application should be approved in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11c) which states that proposals that are in accordance with an up to date development plan should be approved without delay. The Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to recommend that the Secretary of State grants planning permission for the proposed development, subject to conditions and following the completion of a satisfactory S106 obligation.



**6.0 Conditions and S106 obligation**

- 6.1** Suggested conditions, along with reasons for them including references to policy support, are set out in Appendix 1. The applicant agreed to all of the conditions, including those which are pre-commencement, prior to the application being reported to WBC's committee meeting in December 2019. There has been no change to this agreement. The conditions are considered to meet the relevant tests.
- 6.2** The Council expects the applicant to submit an executed planning obligation in due course relating to a financial contribution towards off-site newt mitigation. The Council will prepare a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) compliance statement to outline how it considers the obligation meets the tests of Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Suggested Conditions**



1. The development hereby approved shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the Local Planning Authority retains the right to review unimplemented permissions and to comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

2. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans:
  - Scheme location plan sheet 1 of 2 'PD-RAM-00-DR-Z-0100 P03'
  - Scheme location plan sheet 2 of 2 'PD-RAM-00-DR-Z-0100 P04'
  - General Arrangement Sheet 1 of 2 'PD-RAM-01-DR-C-004 P09'
  - General Arrangement Sheet 2 of 2 'PD-RAM-01-DR-C-005 P09'
  - Parkside Link Road Parkside Road Footway/Cycleway 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C-0012 P05'
  - Parkside Link Road West A49 Junction Layout 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C-0013 P04'
  - Parkside Link Road West A573 Junction Layout 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C-0014 P04'
  - Highway Alignment Layout 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C-0050 P03'
  - Highway Alignment Long Sections 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C-0051 P03'

Reason: To define the permission, to ensure that the proposals deliver appropriate and satisfactory development.

3. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a hydrogeological risk assessment and management plan demonstrating that the risks posed to groundwater from the development can be satisfactorily managed and including an assessment of the discernibility of hazardous substances shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved assessment and management plan.

Reason: To prevent the pollution of groundwater in accordance with Policy QE6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. This information is required prior to commencement due to the nature of the potential risks and to ensure that these can be managed as necessary at an appropriate stage in the development.

4. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, and notwithstanding the details submitted as part of the application, a surface water drainage scheme, based on the hierarchy of drainage options in the National Planning Practice Guidance with evidence of an assessment of the site conditions, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The surface water drainage scheme shall be in accordance with the Non-Statutory Technical Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems (March 2015) or any subsequent replacement national standards and unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no surface water shall discharge to the public sewerage system either directly or indirectly. The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details.



Reason: To promote sustainable development, secure proper drainage and to manage the risk of flooding and pollution in accordance with Policy QE4 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. The drainage details will need to be installed and understood at an early stage in the development process and therefore it is appropriate to require this detail prior to commencement of development.

5. Prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use a sustainable drainage management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such plan shall include as a minimum:
  - a. Arrangements for adoption by an appropriate public body or statutory undertaker, or, management and maintenance by a management company; and
  - b. Arrangements for inspection and ongoing maintenance of all elements of the sustainable drainage system to secure the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime.

The development shall subsequently be completed, maintained and managed in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To ensure that management arrangements are in place for the sustainable drainage system in order to manage the risk of flooding and pollution during the lifetime of the development in accordance with Policy QE4 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

6. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, a remediation strategy that includes the following components to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority:
  1. A site investigation scheme, based on the desk study already submitted, to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
  2. The results of the site investigation and the detailed risk assessment referred to in (1) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
  3. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy in (2) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.

Any changes to these components require the express written consent of the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: For the ongoing protection of the water environment from risks arising from land contamination in accordance with Policy QE6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. These details are required prior to the commencement of the development because there is the potential for harm to the water environment and from land contamination if development were to commence prior to these details being considered by the LPA.



7. Prior to the development hereby approved being first brought into use a verification report demonstrating completion of works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a "long-term monitoring and maintenance plan") for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan. The long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be implemented as approved.

Reason: For the future protection of the water environment from risks arising from land contamination in accordance with Policy QE6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

8. All tree work shall be to BS3998 (2010) with any tree or hedgerow removal being in accordance with the details submitted within the "Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Ref 6354.06.001 Version 2 Vol 2, Part 4, Appendix 8.10 of the Environmental Statement" submitted with this application. All tree work shall also be supervised by the arboricultural supervisor for the site.

Reason: To protect trees on the site and conserve the natural environment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

9. Temporary measures to provide physical protection of all trees, hedges and shrubs shown to be retained shall be in accordance with the "Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Ref 6354.06.001 Version 2 Vol 2, Part 4, Appendix 8.10 of the ES Statement and Tree Protection Plans detailed in ES Addendum Technical Appendix A7.3:

- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 1 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3041 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 2 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3042 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 3 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3043 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 4 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3044 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 5 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3045 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 6 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3046 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 7 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3047 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 8 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3048 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 9 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3049 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 10 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3050 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 11 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3051 rev P02'
- Tree Protection Plan Sheet 12 of 12 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3052 rev P02'
- Temporary Tree Protection Fencing Specification 'PD-RAM-01-00-DR-EN-3053 Rev P02'

submitted with this application. The provision of total exclusion zones shall be achieved by the erection of protective fencing as specified in the submitted plans which shall not be to a standard less than that specified in BS5837 (2012). The areas so defined shall be kept free of machinery, stored materials of all kinds and any form of ground disturbance not specifically catered for in the agreed measures, for the duration of site, demolition and building works.



Reason: To protect trees on the site and conserve the natural environment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework

10. Arboricultural Supervision shall be provided by a qualified Arboricultural Consultant of all tree work, and tree protection measures, including supervision of no dig surfacing construction shall be both delivered and maintained in accordance with the "Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Ref 6354.06.001 Version 2 Vol 2, Part 4, Appendix 8.10 of the ES" submitted with this application and Tree Protection Plans detailed in ES Addendum Technical Appendix A7.3, submitted with this application. Details of the level of supervision, reporting mechanisms to the Council and frequency of site visits and reporting, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any work commencing on site.

Reason: To protect trees on the site and conserve the natural environment in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework. The information is required prior to commencement due to the need to install tree protection measures and protect trees from the outset of the construction process.

11. Notwithstanding the details shown on the landscape masterplan, full landscaping details including but not limited to locations of new tree, shrub and hedge planting, species, planting densities and sizes of trees shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to any landscaping works being undertaken on the site.

Any trees, shrubs and plants and meadow areas planted / sown, which within a period of 5 years from the date of planting / sowing die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased, shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size, species and quality unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to the variation. The landscaping and ecological features shown on the landscaping plans shall be managed in accordance with the Landscape and Habitat Creation Management Plan (PD-RAM-01-00-SP-EN-3007 Rev 3) following their implementation.

Reason: To secure the satisfactory landscaping of the site in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy QE7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

12. Piling or any other foundation designs using penetrative methods shall not be permitted other than with the express written consent of the local planning authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to groundwater. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: For the future protection of the Water Environment from risks arising from land contamination in accordance with Policy QE6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.



13. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the details contained within the Ecological Management Plan prepared by TEP (report ref: 7066.001 January 2019), or any subsequent amendment/update to the Plan as may be made in relation to condition 14 of this permission.

Reason: In the interests of protected species in accordance with Policy QE5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

14. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, further precautionary surveys relating to bats, badgers and water voles shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Should these species be found during the re-surveys, the Ecological Management Plan referred to in condition 13 of this permission shall be updated accordingly. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the updated Plan.

Reason: In the interests of protected species in accordance with Policy QE5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. This information is required prior to commencement because species are mobile in their habits and there is the potential for harm to such species if development were to commence prior to this information being considered by the LPA.

15. No works shall commence at the junction of M6 Junction 22/Winwick Lane until a scheme for the design and construction of highway improvement works at M6 Junction 22 including timetable for implementation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For avoidance of doubt, the works shall include:
- i. The full signalisation of the M6 Junction 22 roundabout to the principles of Balfour Beatty Drawing No. PD-RAM-01-00-SK-C-0056/I01.
  - ii. Installation of CCTV monitoring system.
  - iii. Resurfacing of footway and carriageways of the approach roads contiguous with the improvement scheme to provide a continuous palette of material and surface treatment appropriate to the detailed design.
  - iv. Replacement/upgrade of street lighting necessary as part of the detailed design.
  - v. Drainage works necessary to facilitate the highway works.
- The approved scheme shall include Road Safety Audit and subsequently be implemented prior to the opening to general traffic of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure that the sufficient measures are taken such that the highway network can accommodate the development and that the traffic generated does not exacerbate unsatisfactory highway or transportation conditions in accordance with Policy MP7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

16. No works shall commence at the junction of M6 Junction 22/A579 Winwick Lane until a scheme for the design and implementation of freight traffic signage including timetable for implementation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For avoidance of doubt, the freight traffic signage shall highlight that the recommended route for goods vehicles to and from the motorway network is M62 J9 along A49 Newton Road to A49 Winwick Link Road to A579 Winwick Lane. The approved



scheme shall be implemented prior to the opening to general traffic of the development hereby approved.

Reason: To ensure that the sufficient measures are taken such that the highway network can accommodate the development and that the traffic generated does not exacerbate unsatisfactory highway or transportation conditions in accordance with Policy MP7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

17. Prior to the commencement of any works on site, the developer shall provide in writing a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to the Local Planning Authority for written approval. The CEMP shall review all demolition and construction operations proposed on site including logistics. It shall cover as a minimum the following areas of work on a phase by phase basis, identifying appropriate mitigation measures as necessary:

A. Highway and Traffic

Access to the site.

Entrance/exit from the site for visitors/contractors/deliveries.

Temporary roads/areas of hard standing.

Schedule for large vehicles delivering/exporting materials to and from site and details of manoeuvring arrangements. *For the avoidance of doubt all construction vehicles shall load/unload within the confines of the site and not on the highway.*

Details of street sweeping/street cleansing/wheel wash facilities.

B Site layout and Storage

Proposed locations of Site Compound Areas.

Siting of temporary containers.

Location of directional signage within the site.

Parking for contractors, site operatives and visitors.

Identification of working space and extent of areas to be temporarily enclosed and secured during each phase of demolition/construction.

Storage of materials and large/heavy vehicles/machinery on site.

C Environmental Controls

Proposed construction hours, proposed delivery hours to site, phasing of works including start/finish dates.

Acoustic mitigation measures, including vibration, dust and air quality measures.

Details for the recycling/storage/disposal of waste resulting from the site.

Consideration for joining a Considerate Contractors Scheme.

Contact details of the principal contractor

Once approved in writing, all identified measures within the CEMP shall be implemented in accordance with the requirements therein and shall be reviewed on a regular basis and in case of receipt of any justified complaint. Any changes to the identified CEMP mitigation measures from either the regular review process or following receipt of a complaint shall be forwarded to the Local Planning Authority within 24hrs of a change being agreed or implemented. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that adequate on-site provision is made for construction traffic, including allowance for the safe circulation, manoeuvring, loading and unloading of vehicles, as well as parking, and to reduce impact on residential amenity and the general amenity of surrounding occupiers in accordance with policies QE6 and MP7 of the Local



Plan Core Strategy.. These details are required prior to the commencement of the development because there is the potential for material harm to be brought about to highway and pedestrian safety if development were to commence prior to these details being considered by the LPA and/or implemented

18. Except for site clearance and remediation no development shall commence until a Road Phasing and Completion Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Road Phasing and Completion Plan shall set out the development phases and the standards to which roads serving each phase of the development will be completed. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

Reason: To ensure that roads serving the development are completed and thereafter maintained to an acceptable standard in the interests of safety; to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the highway infrastructure serving the development; and to safeguard the visual amenities of the locality and users of the highway in accordance with Policy MP7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.. These details are required prior to the commencement of the development because there is the potential for material harm to be brought about to highway and pedestrian safety if development were to commence prior to these details being considered by the LPA and/or implemented

19. Except for site clearance and remediation no development shall commence until full engineering, drainage, street lighting and construction details of the roads proposed for adoption have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. For the avoidance of doubt this shall include the thin surface road, for the purpose of noise mitigation, as set out in the approved documents. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety; to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the highway infrastructure serving the approved development; and to safeguard the visual amenities of the locality and users of the highway in accordance with Policy MP7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.. These details are required prior to the commencement of the development because there is the potential for material harm to be brought about to highway and pedestrian safety if development were to commence prior to these details being considered by the LPA and/or implemented

20. Prior to the commencement of the development, a Local Employment Scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted Scheme shall include but not be limited to:
  - a) Details of how the initial staff/employment opportunities at the development will be advertised and how liaison with the Council and other bodies will take place in relation to maximising the access of the local workforce to information about employment opportunities;
  - b) Details of how sustainable training opportunities will be provided for those recruited to fulfil staff/employment requirements including the provision of apprenticeships or an agreed alternative;
  - c) A procedure setting out criteria for employment, and for matching of candidates to the vacancies;
  - d) Measures to be taken to offer and provide college and/or work placement opportunities at the development to students within the locality;
  - e) Details of the promotion of the Local Employment Scheme and liaison with contractors



engaged in the construction of the development to ensure that they also apply the Local Employment Scheme so far as practicable having due regard to the need and availability for specialist skills and trades and the programme for constructing the development;

f) A procedure for monitoring the Local Employment Scheme and reporting the results of such monitoring to the Local Planning Authority including details of the origins qualifications numbers and other details of candidates; and,

g) A timetable for the implementation of the Local Employment Scheme.

The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Scheme.

Reason: To facilitate the socio-economic benefits to the local workforce in accordance with Policy PV3 of the Local Plan Core Strategy. This condition is required to be pre-commencement as it relates to the construction phase of development.

21. Works proposed at Junction 22 of the M6 shall not commence unless and until full design and construction details of the required improvements to Junction 22 of the M6, as shown in outline in Drawing PD-RAM-01-1200-SK-C-001 prepared Ramboll), have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority,. The details to be submitted shall include:

- How the scheme interfaces with the existing highways alignment, details of the carriageway marking and lane destinations.
- Full signing and lighting requirements.
- Confirmation of full compliance with current Departmental Standards (DMRB) and Policies (or approved relaxations/departures from standards).
- An independent Stage 2 Road Safety Audit (taking account of any Stage 1 Road Safety Audit recommendations) carried out in accordance with current Departmental Standards (DMRB) and Advice Notes.

The approved improvements shall be implemented in full prior to the opening to general traffic of the development hereby approved.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policy MP7 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

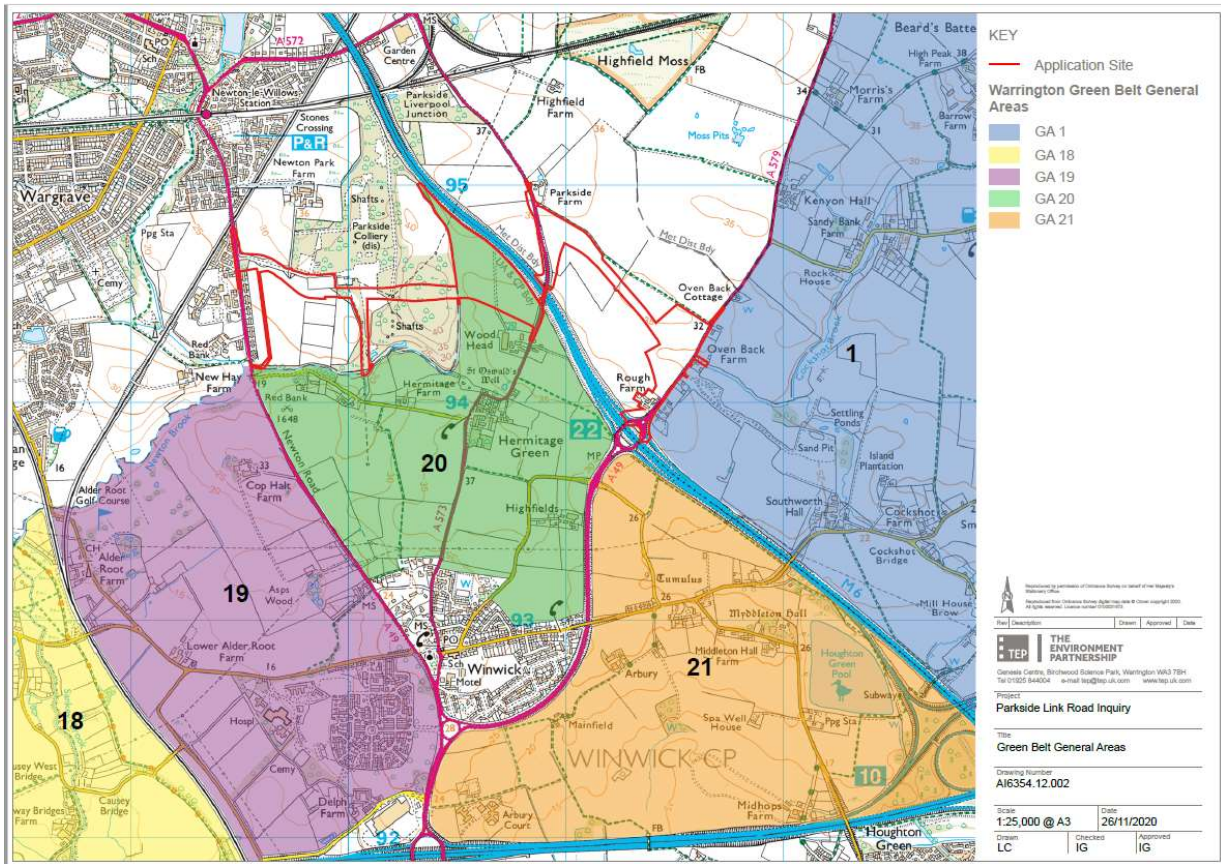
22. Prior to the development hereby approved being first open for use by general traffic, an acoustic barrier along Winwick Lane shall be installed as shown drawing PD-RAM-01-00-DR-C- 0308, or any amendment to such drawing as may have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The barrier shall remain in place and maintained as such thereafter at all times the road is in use.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity in accordance with Policy QE6 of the Local Plan Core Strategy.

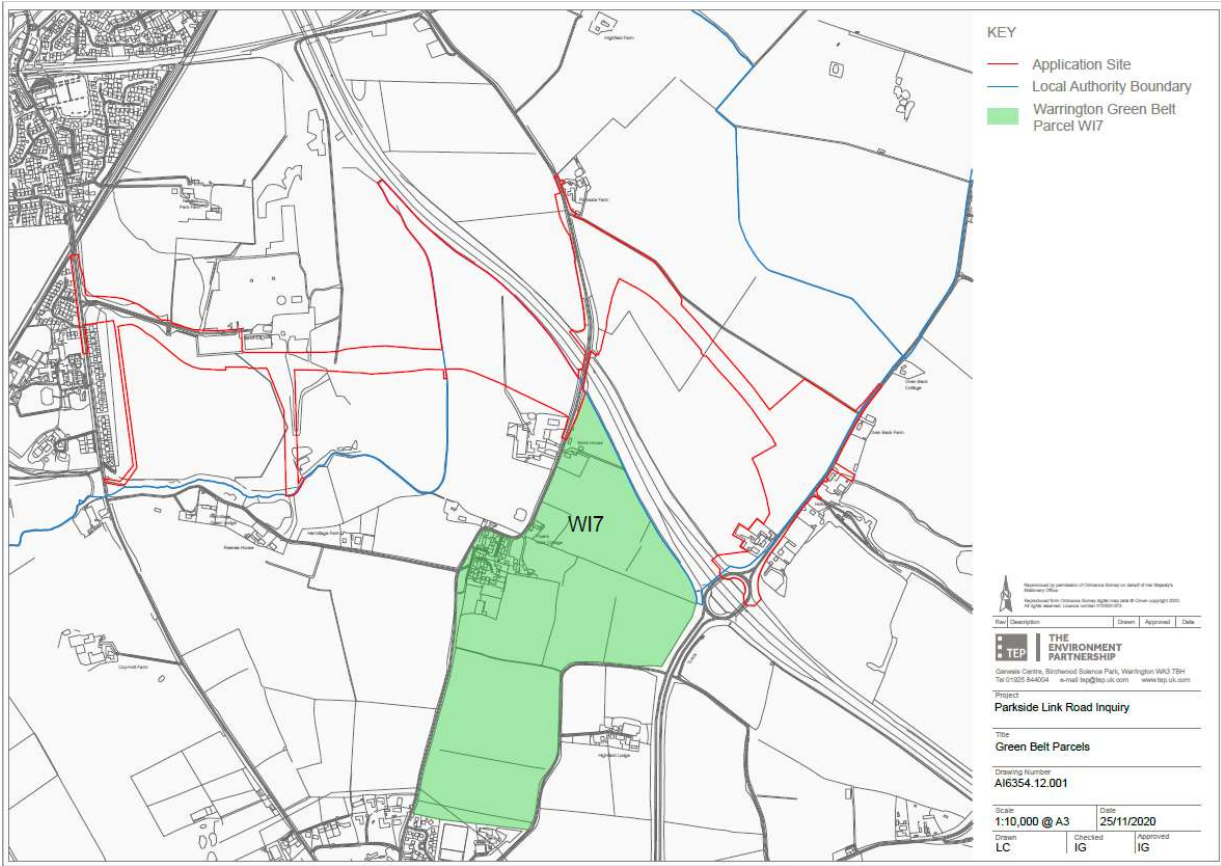


**APPENDIX 2**  
**Planning application site shown in relation to Green**  
**Belt Assessment General Areas and Parcel WI7**











**APPENDIX 3**  
**Warrington Motorway AQMA (shown shaded pink)**







**APPENDIX 4**  
**Correspondence from the Council's Environmental**  
**Protection Team regarding air quality**



**Families and Wellbeing Directorate – Public Protection**  
**Internal Memorandum**



**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

<b>TO:</b>	<b>Development Management</b>	<b>FROM:</b>	<b>Public Protection Services Manager Environment &amp; Public Protection</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER:</b>	<b>Mrs Alison Gough</b>	<b>OFFICER:</b>	<b>Mr Richard Moore x2596</b>
<b>CL SITE NO</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	<b>21 October 2010</b>
<b>PLANNING REF:</b>	<b>2018/32514</b>	<b>MY REF:</b>	<b>EP/228125</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>			
<b>LAND BETWEEN A49 WINWICK ROAD TO A573 PARKSIDE ROAD</b>			

An updated Air Quality Assessment has been provided in the Parkside Link Road Further Environmental Information (October 2020, Ramboll). This is to take into account the updated traffic data and any changes to national guidance. The methodology used for the assessment is acceptable. A verification process has been carried out to assess model performance. The data has been corrected in accordance to national guidance and the model performance is acceptable.

The assessment concludes that any air quality impacts in Warrington due to the traffic associated with the scheme, will be negligible.

I agree with these findings and therefore I have no objections to the scheme on air quality grounds.  
No air quality conditions or informatives would be required.

This is though, based on the assumption that the revised traffic data is agreed.

**Mr Richard Moore**  
**Environmental Protection Officer (Air)**  
**Environmental Protection**



**APPENDIX 5**  
**Correspondence from the Greater Manchester**  
**Ecology Unit regarding newt mitigation**



**From:** Derek Richardson [mailto:derek.richardson@tameside.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 11 November 2020 10:22  
**To:** Gough, Alison <alison.gough@warrington.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Parkside Link Road - First Draft Statements of Common Ground

Dear Alison

Overall I am happy with the SoCG regarding Ecology

Re the newts, I did not fully accept the view that great crested newts are now absent from the site and will not be affected by the scheme – previous records showed them to be present but that the population was small. Small, remnant populations can be difficult to detect and often repeated surveys are needed to conclusively demonstrate absence in places where the species was known to be present. My view is therefore that a precautionary approach should be taken and that the applicant should provide compensation for the fragmentation of newt terrestrial habitats which the scheme will cause, since if newts are still present the already threatened population would be further harmed by the scheme. Off-site compensation would be more beneficial because on-site habitat provision would be compromised by the large-scale development; off-site compensation in places where newts are best placed to expand populations could also be regarded as a net gain for biodiversity as is strongly encouraged in the NPPF.

Regards  
Derek

**Derek Richardson**  
**Principal Ecologist**  
Planning  
Planning and Transport  
Growth

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**APPENDIX 6**  
**Correspondence from the Council's Environmental**  
**Protection Team regarding noise**



**Families and Wellbeing Directorate – Public Protection**  
**Internal Memorandum**



**WARRINGTON**  
Borough Council

<b>TO:</b>	<b>Development Management</b>	<b>FROM:</b>	<b>Public Protection Services Manager Environment &amp; Public Protection</b>
<b>CASE OFFICER:</b>	<b>Mrs Alison Gough</b>	<b>OFFICER:</b>	<b>Mr Steve Smith x2589</b>
<b>CL SITE NO</b>		<b>DATE:</b>	<b>16 November 2020</b>
<b>PLANNING REF:</b>	<b>2018/32514</b>	<b>MY REF:</b>	<b>EP/228125</b>

**SUBJECT: FULL PLANNING (MAJOR) - PROPOSED SINGLE CARRIAGEWAY LINK ROAD BETWEEN A49 WINWICK ROAD (WA12 8EF) AND A573 PARKSIDE ROAD, AT EACH LOCATION A SIGNALISED JUNCTION WILL BE FORMED. THE ROAD THEN UTILISES THE EXISTING A573 PARKSIDE ROAD TO CROSS THE M6 (VIA EXISTING OVERBRIDGE) BEFORE REALIGNING PARKSIDE ROAD TO A NEW ROUNDABOUT BEFORE HEADING EAST TO A579 WINWICK LANE TO A NEWLY FORMED ROUNDABOUT. THE SECTION OF CARRIAGEWAY FROM THE NEW WINWICK LANE ROUNDABOUT AND THE M6 JUNCTION 22 WILL BE A DUAL CARRIAGEWAY. THE A573 AND A579 WILL BE REALIGNED TO THE NEW ROUNDABOUTS.**

**LAND BETWEEN A49 WINWICK ROAD TO A573 PARKSIDE ROAD**

Further to the receipt of the updated report dated October 2020 and titled PARKSIDE LINK ROAD, FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION, I have now reviewed the report and specifically have reviewed the noise elements for comparison against earlier reports for this proposal.

My original response was referenced as per the application number and was dated 21 November 2019. This noise review looked in detail at specific link roads identified within the provided information and commented upon changes to noise level detailed at specific link stages. Detailed information was provided followed by a short summary.

The further environmental information report has built upon the original ES and provided different graphical representations of noise around the site but additionally now clearly identifies the effect of mitigation proposed at the key receptors in Warrington, namely residential properties along Winwick Lane South (link 23) along with realignment of the road and introduction of a roundabout, along with the imposition of an acoustic barrier to protect those properties.

Overall the changes are beneficial to the majority of Warrington Dwellings along the proposed route and new road arrangements, although 2-3 dwellings are noted to have slight uplift in noise compared to the earlier reporting. Conversely, significant improvements to a cluster of dwellings along Winwick Lane South (link 23) are noted by the realignment of the road across Rough Farm and the inclusion of the acoustic barrier in this area.

The following page shows the original unedited 'Links Map' provided with the 2018 ES. A

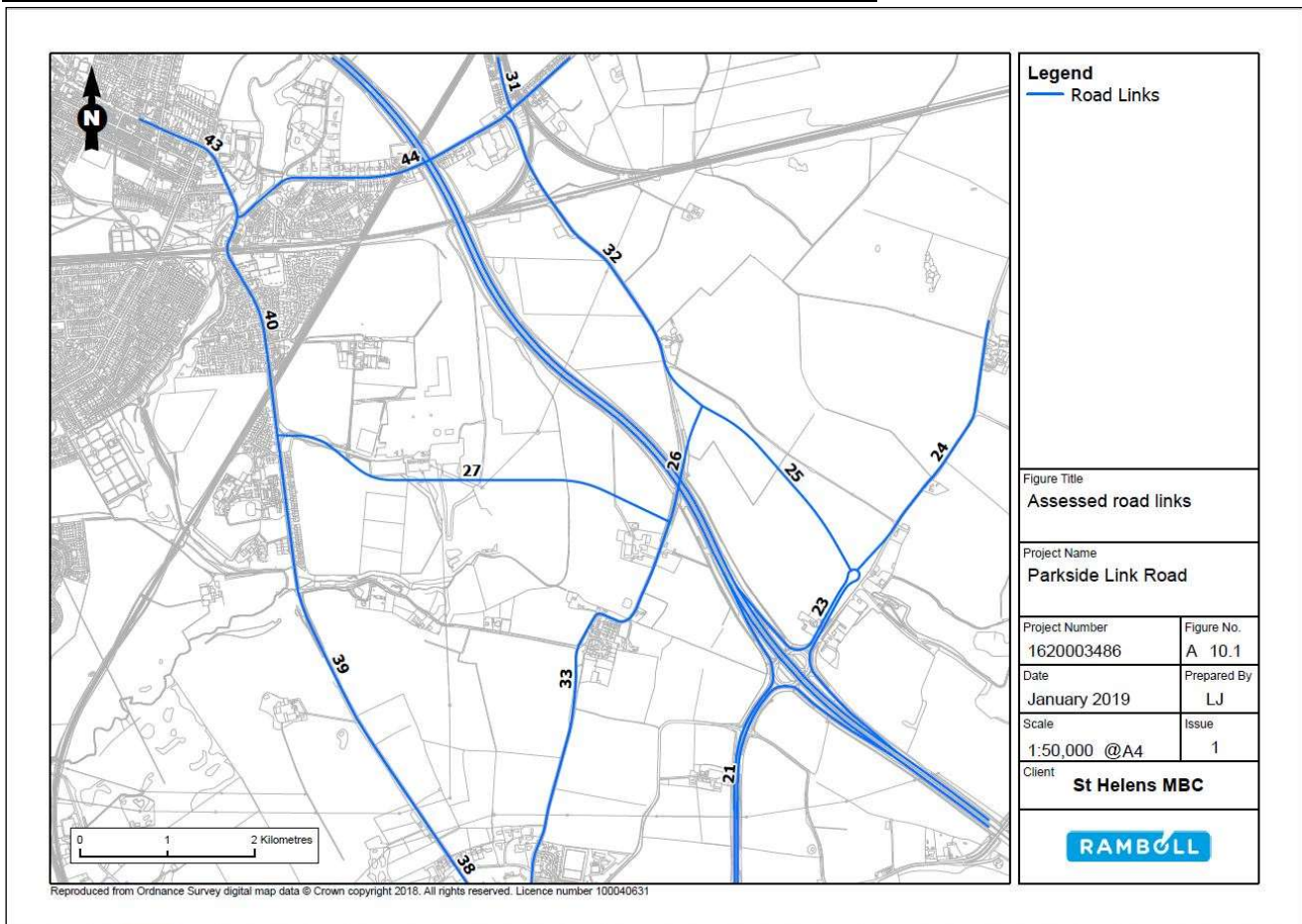


further summary of the newer ‘noise contour maps’ are shown after the review of link information.

I have referred to Warrington Links in this latest review which comprises of links 21, 23, 24, 26, 27 & 33. Changes within the St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council are have not been reviewed in this Warrington Borough Council update.

It should be noted that noise modelling for this updated environmental information only maps a radius of 600m from the new roads or modified road networks.

*Figure A.10.1 demonstrating Link Numbers around the development*



### **Link 21 - Winwick Link Road**

Previously road traffic calculations had indicated a drop in noise levels of 0.4dB along this route.

The updated information now shows one property – Highfield Lodge, as having a slight uplift in noise levels from between 1-3dB. This is a noted change from the earlier calculations, however, the level of change is slight overall and is not considered to pose any significant detriment to residents although the level of increase may just be perceptible to the human ear – however, over the length of the build process (years), this level of change is not likely to be noted by occupants at this location.



### **Link 23 – Winwick Lane South**

Previously a 4.5dB uplift in noise levels was calculated, although the provision of the acoustic barrier would reduce noise by 4dB – consequently a 0.5dB uplift resulted.

Following minor changes to the scheme, noise levels have been recalculated and the effect of the barrier has been re-assessed. This revision now presents a positive and beneficial net result for a number of occupiers along this stretch. Noise calculations demonstrate a reduction in noise by circa 1-3dB at the dwelling facades. Again the change is relatively minor but overall is a positive impact from the proposals in both the long and short term periods.

### **Link 24 – Winwick Lane North**

Previously a slight increase of 0.3dB was calculated which was considered of negligible impacts.

The current revisions now show greater noise increases than the earlier predictions. Oven Back Farm and Oven Back Cottage now indicate increases in noise levels of between 1 and 3dB for both short and long term periods. As with Link 21, this is a noted change from the earlier calculations, however, the level of change is still slight overall and is not considered to pose any significant detriment to residents, although the level of increase may just be perceptible to the human ear. However, over the length of the build process (years), this level of change is not likely to be noted by occupants at this location.

### **Link 26 – Parkside Road North of the new junction and north of Wood Head Farm**

No changes are reported in so far as the noise levels crossing the motorway up to the new road junction leading to the Parkside Development.

As noted previously, Link 33 leads to Wood Head Farm, Monk House and Sycamore Lodge, however the updated noise modelling indicates that reductions in noise are likely to be present at Monk House and Sycamore Lodge to around a 1-3dB reduction in noise levels. Wood Head Farm may see similar reductions but the majority of the built land at that address remains unaffected by these changes.

### **Link 27 – New Access Road to Parkside Development**

Previously no affirmed noise levels were presented along this section as it was a new road rather than showing absolute increases based on traffic level differences.

No dwellings are however close to this road apart from perhaps Wood Head Farm.

Calculations of noise arising from this new link road are now presented and it has demonstrated that no adverse impacts from noise exist at any Warrington dwellings arising from the use of this new road.

The main hamlet of Hermitage Green is significantly beyond a distance where impacts would result.



Figure 5.6 showing short term noise level change at ground floor level.

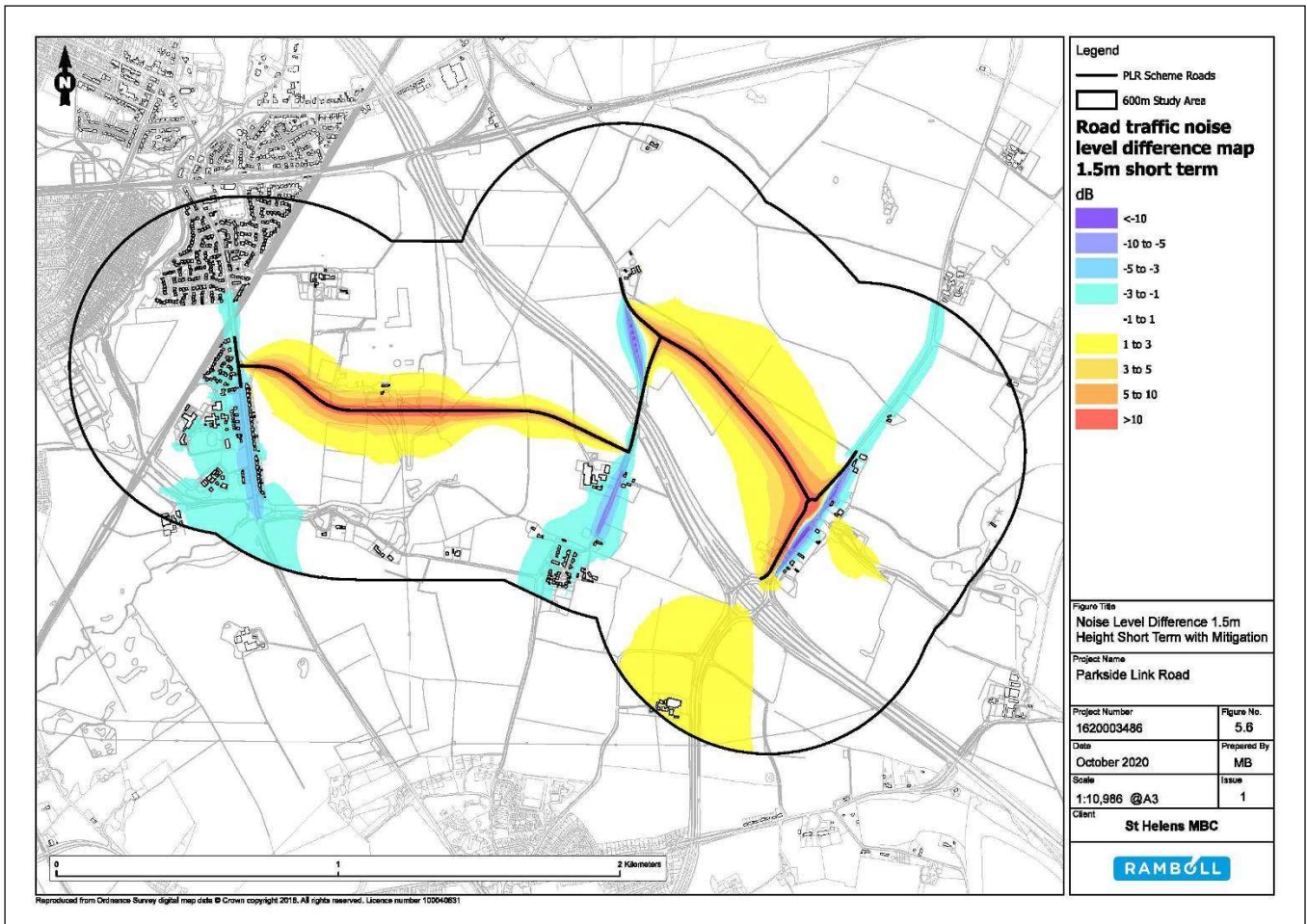
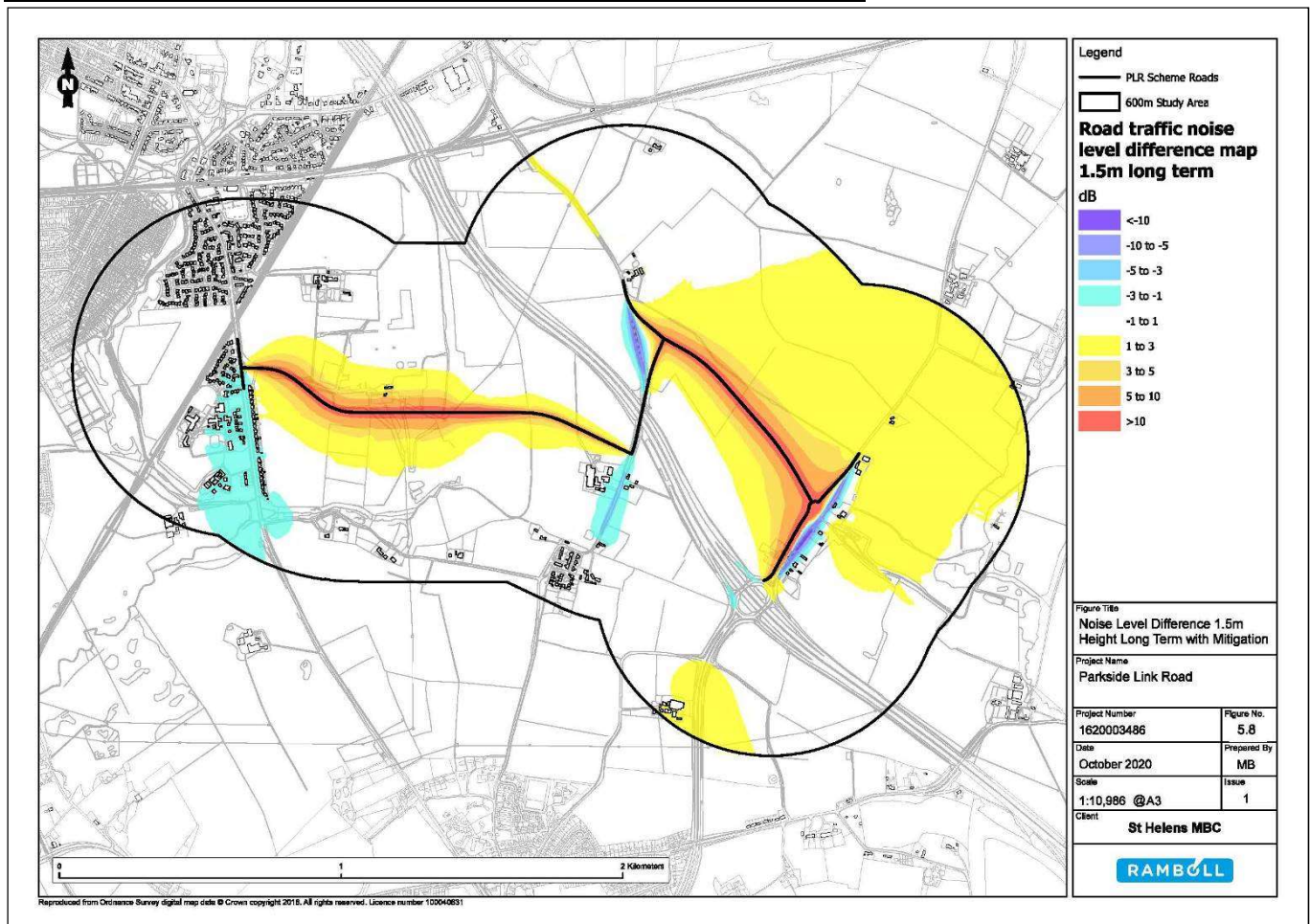




Figure 5.8 showing long term noise level change at ground floor level.



### **Summary of Changes**

Overall the changes are not considered to be of great significance based upon what has been shown. Obviously the impacts may go further than the long and short term figures demonstrate based upon the limit of 600m radius that has been used for new / modified road connections as a result of this proposal, but these noise levels will only reduce as the distance from the junctions increases.

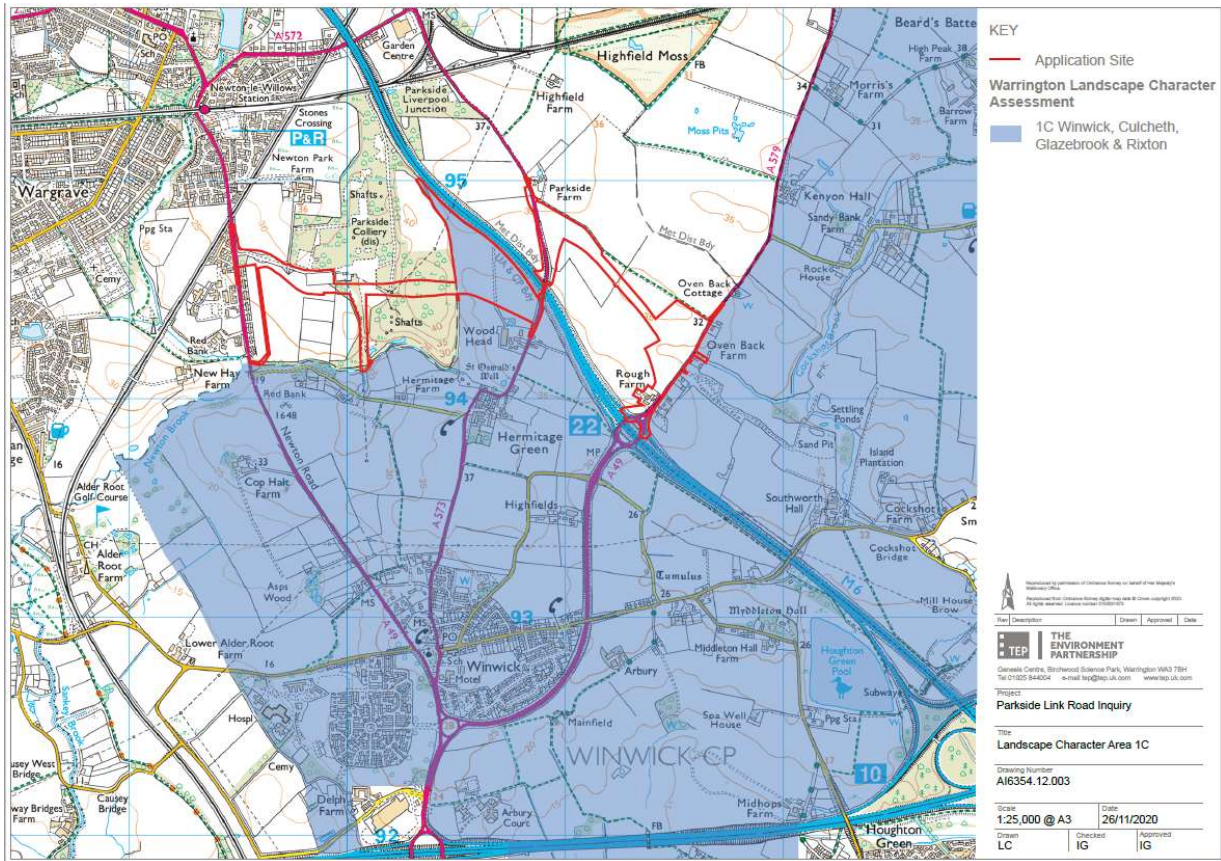
Demonstrated impacts are roughly in accordance with what was previously predicted, although Highfield Lodge, Oven Back Farm and Oven Back Cottage have seen marginal increases in noise levels whilst Hillbre, Hillcrest, Hollow Dene and Sherbrook along link 23 show marginally greater reductions in overall noise levels compared to the previous submission.

**Mr Steve Smith**  
**Environmental Protection**



**APPENDIX 7**  
**Planning application site shown in relation to**  
**landscape character area 1C within the**  
**WBC Landscape Character Assessment**







**APPENDIX 8**  
**Advice from Aecom relating to landscape and visual  
impacts**



## Parkside Link Road

The provision of landscape and visual impact advice in connection of the Parkside Link Road (PLR) planning application submitted to Warrington Borough Council.

Client: Warrington B.C  
under the Transportation & Public Realm Consultancy  
Services 2017 Framework Agreement

AECOM Project no. 60611938

Planning application ref: P/2018/32514/FUL

October 2019



Parkside Link Road

### Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Jane Ash Principal Landscape Architect		

### Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1 FINAL	09/10/19	Client comments	Jane Ash AECOM	Principal Landscape Architecture



Parkside Link Road

Prepared for:

Warrington Borough Council

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and objectives

The proposed development is for a new link road between the A49, Parkside Road and Winwick Lane, known as the Parkside Link Road (PLR). The PLR is partly (mainly) in St Helens and partly in Warrington. Planning applications have been submitted to both authorities to determine the aspects of the development within the respective boroughs. The application was submitted in 2018 and was accompanied by an Environment Statement (ES) prepared by Ramboll. Following feedback from the two councils and statutory consultees, an addendum ES was prepared and subsequently submitted in March 2019. The Council is currently in the processes of considering the updated submission.

### 1.2 Scope

- Review the landscape-related documents (including the landscape chapter in the original ES (March 2018) and addendum ES (March 2019) along with appendices, landscape strategy, plans etc
- Advice on the appropriateness of the assessment and conclusions in the ES and addendum
- Advice on the acceptability of the proposed landscaping strategy
- Advice on the acceptability of mitigation and recommendations for any additional mitigation if necessary
- Consideration of the landscape element of the cumulative impact assessment of the original ES and addendum
- Summary of the landscape assessment/issues as set out in the ES for incorporation into the Council's Planning Committee report
- Advice on any conditions/S106 contributions that may be necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development

### 1.3 Methodology

AECOM commenced the commission on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2019, with an inception meeting to run through the proposed scope and obtain a full brief from the client including availability and latest status of documents and plans for review. This was a telephone call between the client contact, Alison Gough (Principal Planning Officer) and the proposed AECOM PM, Jane Ash (Principal Landscape Architect).

All existing documents relating to the application had been made available through links to the St. Helens' website, to allow us to cross reference the LVIA chapter to the rest of the ES, including all the existing local plan information and any supplementary planning documents that have a bearing on the project.

A review of the Proposed Scheme was carried out, and no significant missing information relating to design, materials, mitigation etc. was found.

A site visit was carried out by Jane Ash, on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2019, in clear, dry conditions, which enabled an overview of the landscape and visual baseline in order to inform the professional advice on the LVIA chapter, relevant appendices and plans, landscape mitigation strategy and cumulative impact to be provided. This took the form of a walkover from publicly accessible parts of the site and study area, including Public Rights of Way (PROW).



A desk study was carried out in early August 2019, which included a statutory designations search (using Magic map) and review of published landscape character assessments (both national and local).

Both site visit and desk study enabled us to review all landscape-related documents (including the landscape chapter in the original ES (March 2018) and addendum ES (March 2019) along with appendices, landscape strategy, plans etc, with the knowledge of the site context ensuring that anything missed or inappropriately reported or assessed could be identified.

## **2. Advice on the appropriateness of the assessment and conclusions in the ES and addendum**

### **2.1 Original ES (March 2018)**

Chapter 7 Landscape and Views  
Method of Assessment (Technical Appendix 7)  
Figures 7.1 to 7.19

The review relates specifically to ES Volume 1 Chapter 7 Landscape and Views, along with consideration of relating chapters, namely Chapter 1 Introduction and Chapter 2 Project Description. Chapter 15 Cumulative Impacts is considered within Section 5 of this report. Figures associated with Chapter 7, namely Figures 7.1 to 7.19 were reviewed along with relevant Technical Appendices (Method of Assessment, Technical Appendix 7).

#### *2.1.1 Method*

The methodology of the assessment is considered appropriate to the proposed development with reference to both Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Interim Advice Note (IAN) 135/10 'Landscape and Visual Effects Assessment' and general guidance has been taken from 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment, Third Edition' (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

#### *2.1.2 Consultation*

There is a comprehensive review of an appropriate consultation process, including agreement of a high level of night time assessment along with selection of visual receptors and representative and photomontage viewpoints. (However, it is noted that some year data is missing)

#### *2.1.3 Planning Policy*

National Planning Policy Framework is well set out section including that Planning Practice Guidance and it is noted that relevant elements have been considered when designing and assessing the scheme, which is welcomed.

Of relevance is the position of the scheme in Green Belt, and how any mitigation and landscape strategy can help to preserve the five purposes of Green Belt designation with appropriate development.

Reference to SHMBC preparing a new Local Plan, which was expected to be adopted in 2019. Assessment, even the addendum, is prior to this happening and is therefore based on current local planning policy provided by the Core Strategy and saved policies from St Helens UDP which is considered appropriate based on programme of the application.

The Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy is the overarching strategic policy document in the Local Planning Framework. Good summary is provided of relevant policies and their relation to the development.

Consideration also given to the fact that the study area falls within Wigan BC with a summary of policies from the Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy concluding this section.

#### *2.1.4 Landscape Baseline.*



The landscape baseline runs through the relevant national, county and local scale landscape character assessments – with specific character notes and recommendations of relevance to the PLR project brought out in the text. There is good use of photographs to illustrate the character across the site. I agree with the baseline findings that the Proposed Scheme area and surrounding landscape is representative of the published landscape character areas within which they exist. The definition and description of the four Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCAs) to be considered within the assessment is good.

Landscape value – there are no designations within Proposed Scheme area or wider landscape study area. LLCA 1 isn't mentioned under landscape quality considerations, LLCA 2 are described as poor to fair, with LLCA 3 and LLCA 4 is judged as good. Other considerations have been appropriately discussed as per GLVIA3 identification of valued landscapes. I'm in agreement with the summary text giving the Proposed Scheme area and surrounding landscape **community value**.

Consideration of future landscape baseline considers major development proposals in the area, tree and plant diseases, farming trends and climate change. It is worth noting that landscape effects base case dates are no longer correct based on programme, however I would still anticipate it being no different to the baseline environment.

#### Notes on Figures:

7.4 site context – difficult to view, very dark aerial background. Maybe a scan/pdf/printing limitation.

7.5 LLCAs some of colours difficult to distinguish between on the key – particularly the block colours (may be similar issue to that above) Perhaps don't need to show with published landscape character areas as this is already illustrated on fig 7.2.2.

#### 2.1.5 Visual baseline

There is a comprehensive identification of visual receptors – split into within 0.5km, and between 0.5 and 2km. It's been noted previously that the eight representative viewpoints were agreed with Local Authorities during pre-planning consultation and having been to the site Study Area they seem appropriate to discuss views within the wider study area.

-Within 0.5km

Lists out public views from PROWs and Roads, along with private views from residential and business properties. With clear, legible, visual receptor plans and clearly annotated photographs of existing views. (however, print quality is on the dark side, as previous mentioned). Perhaps the photograph references i.e. P1 could be added to the lists to enable easier cross referencing with the photos.

-between 0.5km and 2km

RPV1-8 on fig 7.14 and RV1-8 in the text, perhaps correct this slight discrepancy to ensure its easy to cross reference between the two.

The ZVI methodology is well thought through and appropriate and proportionate to the scale of assessment. 'On the ground' visibility in both summer and winter is noted and useful to 'ground truth' the modelling. There are good descriptions of views separated out into north, east, south and west – with appropriate cross references to receptors and photograph viewpoints. This all makes for easy reading of what is a somewhat lengthy section of the assessment. The sensitivity of visual receptors relating to value of views (susceptibility to Change) is well considered.

Future Visual baseline - as described under landscape, again visual effects base case programme dates are incorrect but still not anticipated to be different to the baseline environment.

#### 2.1.6 Potential Significant Landscape Effects (Section 7.5)

##### *Effects on Landscape Character*

Concentrates, correctly, on 'susceptibility to change of the landscape' within the four identified LLCAs. With LLCA3 and LLCA4 (agricultural landscape with urban influences) assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. Agree with the assessment that the landscape potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme has a low to medium susceptibility to change overall.



Low sensitivity for LLCAs 1 and 2 and low to moderate sensitivity for LLCAs 3 and 4, so overall the assessment takes landscape sensitivity to the Proposed Scheme throughout the assessment as **low to moderate**.

Sources of effect include operational traffic, construction (works, traffic and lighting), operational lighting. Includes: An estimated 3.9ha of tree cover and 1km of hedgerow would require removal to accommodate the construction works.

-During construction:

LLCA1 minor adverse, low sensitivity = **neutral to slight adverse**

LLCA2 moderate adverse (although minor adverse is mentioned in para 7.5.61 – is this just relating to tree cover?), low sensitivity = **slight adverse**

LLCA3 moderate adverse, low to moderate sensitivity = **moderate to slight adverse**

LLCA4 moderate adverse, low to moderate sensitivity = **moderate to slight adverse**

-During Operation yr 1 significance of effects as follows

LLCA1 **neutral to slight adverse** (very localised to the junction with A49 Winwick Road)

LLCA2 **neutral to slight adverse**

LLCA3 **slight to moderate adverse** (see below comment, be consistent with other paragraphs and the table and change to 'moderate to slight')

*N.B. 'with slight beneficial significance of effect on local landscape character due to the proposed Ecological Area to the immediate north of the Parkside Link Road West within LLCA3'* Should this not be considered in the overall assessment of significance of effect on landscape character rather than specified separately? The result of this part of assessment is somewhat confusing.

LLCA4 **moderate to slight adverse** this is the same as LLCA 3 but written differently? The text should be consistent for ease of reading.

Overall effect – again mentions the specific benefits to the northern most part of the LLCA 3, I would prefer to see this benefit described but ultimately the assessment for the LLCA being given as one resulting significance of effect.

Agree with the assessment in para 7.5.125 and 7.5.126 that the Proposed Scheme would have a greater influence on this night-time landscape (than the daytime).

Why is table 7.6 and 7.7 showing different 'significance of effect' as from my understanding of the text they both relate to residual landscape effects, with embedded mitigation, at year 15 of operation?

## 2.1.7 Potential Significant Visual Effects (Section 7.8)

### Effects on Views

Mitigation measures during construction of hoarding, screen fencing, seeding storage mounds etc. and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) are all mentioned and considered as embedded in the scheme, however this has not been available to consider at this time.

The judgements of effects during construction are summarised in Table 7.8 below and receptors would experience visual effects between very large adverse and neutral significance. Sensible that the detailed description of the anticipated changes to the views for each receptor, given that there are so many, are contained within the Technical Appendix. The summary tables provided are clear and legible along with the information contained graphically on figures 7.18 and 7.19, however noted that both figs 7.18 and 7.19 have similar (same?) colours for Moderate/Large Adverse and Slight Adverse significance of effect judgement. (may be a print quality issue, as noted before).

Photomontage views (7.17.1 to 7.17.14) are shown on a location plan 7.16, however this is not referred to in the text. Could the receptor references closest relating to the photomontage viewpoints be put on the figures anywhere? Makes the cross referencing quite difficult?

I agree that the most impact on public views would be large adverse in Year 1 for F1, and for private views large adverse Year 1 for closest residential properties, H14, H15 and H16.



Consideration of change in views due to decreases, and increases, in traffic is welcome as an important part of this section of the assessment along with night time visual effects described in 7.8.26 to 7.8.52.

Embedded mitigation is described and assessed rather than additional mitigation. Any comments on the submitted Environmental Masterplans can be found in Section 2.0.

#### 2.1.8 Conclusions

##### *Effects on Landscape Character*

I agree with the conclusions of the assessment relating to the magnitude of effect on landscape character against a baseline low to moderate sensitivity of the landscape potentially affected by the Proposed Scheme. During construction the significance of effect would be **slight adverse** in LLCAs 1 and 2 and **moderate to slight adverse** to LLCAs 3 and 4.

During operation, the significance of effect on landscape as a result of the proposed Parkside Link Road West, on the eastern most part of LLCA 1 and across LLCA 2 would be **neutral to slight adverse** overall.

It is noted that there is a slight beneficial significance of effect on landscape character anticipated within the northern most part of LLCA 3 as a result of new landscape features within the proposed Ecological Area, in the context of the new road, however my advice would be that this is taken into account in the assessment of significance of effect on the overall landscape character.

The significance of effect on landscape as a result of the proposed Parkside Link Road West and Parkside Link Road East within LLCAs 3 and 4 would be **moderate to slight adverse**, during operation.

The significance of effect would reduce by operation year 15 with a residual effect on landscape ranging from **slight beneficial to neutral** within LLCA2 to **moderate to slight adverse** within LLCA4.

##### *Effects on Views*

Visual receptors, with both public and private views, have been considered within 0.5km of the Proposed Scheme. Additionally, representative viewpoints, as agreed with the Local Authorities, have been considered between 0.5km and 2km of the Proposed Scheme. These are illustrated on the relevant figures and the significance of effects at construction and operation Year 1 and Year 15 are graphically shown on Figures 7.18 and 7.19. The photomontage viewpoints show existing views against those of the Proposed Scheme, with embedded mitigation, at Winter Year 1 and Summer year 15.

I agree with the conclusions of the assessment relating to the magnitude of effect on views against the sensitivity of the receptor type:

During construction, visual effects range from **large adverse** to **neutral** for public receptors; **very large adverse** and **slight adverse** for private receptors; and **moderate adverse** to **slight adverse** to **neutral** for visual receptors beyond 0.5km (representative viewpoints).

Visual effects for public receptors on completion of the Proposed Scheme (during operation at Year 1) range between **large adverse** where there would be near open views of the Proposed Scheme, and **neutral** for public receptors (people using the local roads and footpaths).

Visual effect for private visual receptors on completion of the Proposed Scheme (during operation at Year 1) ranges from **large adverse** (receptors H14, H15 and H16) and **slight adverse to neutral**. The greatest effects are experienced by residents in properties that immediately border the Proposed Scheme.



Visual effects for visual receptors beyond 0.5km (representative viewpoints) during operation at Year 1 ranges from **moderate adverse to slight adverse to neutral**.

After 15 years residual visual effects are reduced for both public receptors, ranges from **moderate adverse to neutral** and for private receptors from **large adverse to neutral**. For visual receptors beyond 0.5km (representative viewpoints) residual visual effects are again reduced and range from **slight adverse to slight adverse to neutral**. Tree planting would have become established to provide a greater degree of filtering and screening to the Proposed Scheme.

## 2.2 Addendum ES (March 2019)

Following feedback from the two councils and statutory consultees, an addendum ES was prepared and subsequently submitted in March 2019. The review of this addendum ES has therefore considered Chapter A2: List of Requests for Additional Information of this ES Addendum. In addition, since the submission of the application the Proposed Scheme has been amended, with an amended red line, extending further eastwards along A579 Winwick Lane. Again, any changes that this amendment would mean to the assessment have been reviewed.

### 2.2.1 Planning Policy

Since submission of the March 2018 ES, the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2018) has been published and has been taken into consideration for the amended Proposed Scheme.

### 2.2.2 Requests for Additional Information.

It is noted that requested additional information, that has been provided, includes the Habitat Creation and Landscape Management Plan and detailed Landscape and Ecology and Planting Plans, which are comprehensive and appropriate to the site and the Proposed Scheme, in accordance with informal discussions with officers.

The comments have been addressed relating to removing *Cornus sanguinea* (dog wood) from the native woodland mix, removing *Populus alba* (white poplar) trees in grassland areas and the proposal for a *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn) dominated hedgerow mix. It is acknowledged that changes to the landscape scheme to reduce the impact of the acoustic barrier along the east side of Winwick Lane South, now that it has been realigned, have been approved by the officers who had original commented.

### 2.2.3 Consultation

Additional consultation is recorded in accordance with the comments and additional documents, as noted above.

### 2.2.4 A7 Landscape and Visual Assessment

The design developments have been reviewed to consider whether these are likely to result in significant adverse effects on landscape and views. The original ES baseline information is still considered to be valid. It is noted that further detailed assessment has only been carried out where the potential for greater effects was identified.

It is agreed that in relation to landscape effects, the design developments represent small changes in discrete locations, or very small changes to the overall Proposed Scheme, which would not alter the landscape effects reported in the March 2018 ES. In my opinion it is therefore appropriate that no further consideration is given to the effect of the design developments (or updated traffic flows) on landscape character in this addendum.

It is also agreed that in relation to visual effects, the design developments represent small or very small changes to the overall Proposed Scheme. There would be some anticipated changes in view during construction and operation, when considering each visual receptor and representative



viewpoint, from that reported in the March 2018 ES. The further assessment of the Eastern end of the Proposed Scheme is therefore considered in Chapter A7 of the Addendum ES and has been reviewed.

As a result of the design developments at the eastern end of the amended Proposed Scheme at the proposed roundabout on the A573 Winwick Lane, there is a potential change to the significance of effect on views reported for visual receptor H17 (Oven Back Farm). The realignment of Winwick Lane North at the eastern end of the amended Proposed Scheme would provide space for mitigation hedgerow and tree planting adjacent to visual receptor H17 (Oven Back Farm), where previously no space for mitigation planting was available. The addition of mitigation planting would not alter the visual effects reported in the March 2018 ES during construction, or during operation in Winter at Year 1 as planting would not be established. However, in the long-term (after 15 years) the residual magnitude of impact and significance of effect would reduce from the moderate adverse effect reported in the March 2018 ES to minor adverse.

Given the high sensitivity of the residents at this property and the minor adverse magnitude of impact in the long-term, overall the residual significance of effect would be reduced to moderate to slight adverse.

### **3. Advice on the acceptability of the proposed landscaping strategy**

#### **3.1 Landscape Strategy (February 2018)**

The Landscape Strategy and Environmental Masterplans show a comprehensive consideration of the landscape scheme that can be achieved with the development of the Proposed Scheme. The baseline landscape character along with recommendations of published landscape character assessments have been considered.

#### **3.2 Addendum ES**

Within Design Developments detailed in the Addendum ES the landscape strategy has been developed to show details of landscape design including ponds etc. There has been production of Landscape Masterplan and Detailed Planting Plans along with Landscape and Ecology Details. These have been reviewed and are approved as fully considered and acceptable, including species within woodland mixes, scattered trees and hedgerows.

### **4. Advice on the acceptability of mitigation and recommendations for any additional mitigation if necessary**

#### **4.1 Mitigation**

The embedded mitigation in relation to landscape and views has reduced the significance of residual effects of the scheme. Appropriate monitoring of implementation and establishment maintenance of the landscape proposals will be required, as stated in section 7 of this report.



## **5. Consideration of the landscape element of the cumulative impact assessment of the original ES and addendum**

### **5.1 Original ES Chapter 15**

Other proposed developments within the study area of the assessment have been identified and assessed.

The following consideration of cumulative landscape and visual impact was noted within the original ES:

- Potential significant cumulative effects on landscape character of Highfield Moss Landscape Character Area (LCA AM4), and on local landscape character area (LLCA) 2: Former Parkside Colliery Site were predicted as a result of Phase 1 of the proposed Parkside Regeneration Scheme in combination with the Proposed Scheme during construction and operation at Year 1. In general, the greater source of effect on landscape character within LLCA 2, during construction and operation, would be the proposed Parkside Phase 1 Regeneration Scheme.
- Potential significant cumulative effects were anticipated in some visual receptor views during construction and operation as a result of the proposed Phase 1 Parkside Regeneration Scheme. However, the significance of cumulative visual effects during construction and operation were not considered to be any greater than the significance of effects reported in views from this locality for the proposed Phase 1 Parkside Regeneration Scheme in isolation.
- It was noted that significant potential cumulative effects on LLCA 2 and LLCA4 could arise as a result of Phases 1 and 2 of the proposed Parkside Regeneration Scheme and the SRFI in combination with the Proposed Scheme, on completion of these schemes and during operation.
- Potential significant cumulative effects were anticipated in some visual receptor views as a result of the proposed Parkside Regeneration Scheme Phases 1 and 2 and the SRFI in combination with Parkside Link Road, and where in general the SRFI would form a large component of the view.

### **5.2 Addendum ES A15 Cumulative Effects Assessment**

It is agreed that in the main, the cumulative effects reported in the March 2018 ES remain valid, notwithstanding the changes reported in the Addendum. Consideration has been duly made to: Parkside Phase 1; proposed development at the northwest edge of Haydock Lane Industrial Estate; and the proposed development at Omega South.

## **6. Summary of the landscape assessment/issues as set out in the ES for incorporation into the Council's Planning Committee report**

The landscape and visual impact assessment within the original ES and as updated in the Addendum ES, was carried out with an approved method of assessment, appropriate level of consultation and reference and due regard of current planning policy.



The baseline landscape was assessed as being of community value with a well-considered and comprehensive visual baseline described, including identification of some high sensitivity residential and recreational receptors, including near the scheme.

Landscape and views were covered in the March 2018 ES and the key outcomes that were noted comprised:

- The potential for significant landscape and visual effects as a result of the Proposed Scheme, and the construction of sections of new highway, and associated junctions, traffic, lighting and embankments, across the former colliery and farmland; and
- The requirement for a landscape mitigation scheme, including new woodland, hedgerow and other tree planting, to assist in screening and softening the appearance of the Proposed Scheme over time.

The following significant residual effects (that is effects of moderate adverse significance or greater) were noted in the March 2018 ES:

- Significant residual effects on views during construction were identified for users of the Public Rights of Way (PROW) Barrow Lane (Reference F1), residents at properties on the west side of the A49 Winwick Road at Newton-le-Willows (Reference H3), Sycamore Lodge and Monk House (Reference H11), Parkside Farm, Barrowcliffe Cottage and The Stables (Reference H12), and at properties along Winwick Lane (References H14 to H17); and
- Significant residual effects on views during operation (at year 15) were identified for users of the PROW Barrow Lane (Reference F1) and residents at properties along Winwick Lane (References H14 to H17).
- The residual significance of effects for local landscape character areas during construction and operation was assessed as no greater than moderate to slight adverse.

The design developments considered within the Addendum ES, March 2019, would not alter the landscape effects reported in the March 2018 ES, however there was the requirement to reassess the visual impacts of the eastern end of the Proposed Scheme within the Addendum ES.

This Addendum reports the following change to visual effects:

- a reduced magnitude of impact on visual receptor H17 (Over Back Farm), in the long-term (after 15 years) from the moderate adverse effect reported in the March 2018 ES to minor adverse. Given the high sensitivity of the residents at this property and the minor adverse magnitude of impact in the long-term, overall the residual significance of effect would be reduced to moderate to slight adverse. It is considered therefore to no longer be a significant residual effect. (that is effects of moderate adverse significance or greater).

The technical appendix of the Addendum ES now includes Landscape Masterplan and Detailed Planting Plans along with Landscape and Ecology Details, with this embedded scheme mitigation appropriately considered within the assessment of residual effects (Summer Year 15).

## **7. Advice on any conditions/S106 contributions that may be necessary to mitigate the impacts of the development**

Often a Detailed Landscape Scheme, is subject to planning condition. However, particularly with the additional information requests which gave rise to the Addendum in March 2019, a Habitat Creation and Landscape Management Plan and detailed Landscape and Ecology and Planting Plans are already provided.

I have not specifically reviewed any Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) at this time but note that it is referred to in the Landscape and Visual Assessment and should therefore be subject to planning condition if not already submitted and approved as part of the planning application.



It may be worth conditioning that new tree and woodland planting is covered by replacements for a 10year period as a condition. This may depend on available legal agreements, landownership and maintenance responsibilities; however, I would recommend a minimum of 5 years. Achievement of the appropriate level of embedded mitigation and the key to the success of the landscape strategy would be appropriate establishment maintenance.

Provenance of stock to be used needs careful consideration to ensure no biosecurity risk and sustainable sourcing of materials i.e. timber should also be conditioned.



**APPENDIX 9**  
**Note from the Council's Conservation Officer on**  
**heritage assets**



**Land between A49 Winwick Road to A573 Parkside Road, including a proportion of the former Parkside Colliery with land, from A573 Parkside Road to A579 Winwick Lane connecting to M6 Junction 22, WA2 8ST**

**Proposed single carriageway link road between A49 Winwick Road (WA12 8EF) and A573 Parkside Road; at each location a signalised junction will be formed. The road then utilises the existing A573 Parkside Road to cross the M6 (via existing overbridge) before realigning Parkside Road to a new roundabout before heading east to A579 Winwick Lane to a newly formed roundabout. The section of carriageway from the new Winwick Lane roundabout and the M6 Junction 22 will be a dual carriageway. The A573 and A579 will be realigned to the new roundabout.**

**Warrington Borough Council Reference: 2018/32514**

**Appeal Reference: APP/M0655/V/20/3253232**

### **Heritage Impact Assessment**

An assessment has been undertaken of the importance of the heritage assets in the local area that might be affected by the development and the extent to which the significance of individual assets would be affected by the proposed scheme. The following assets are considered;

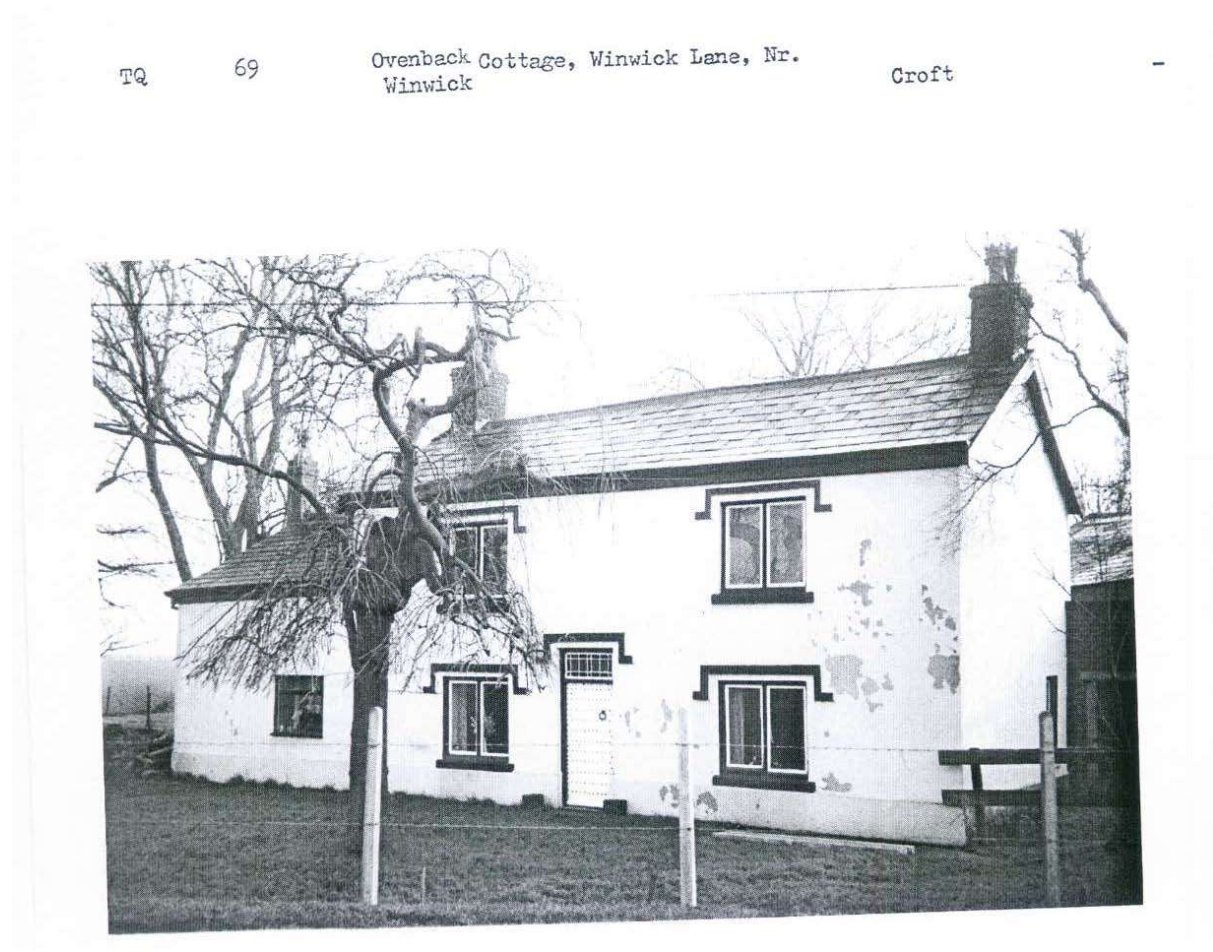
- Registered Historic Battlefield of Winwick 1684.
- Wood Head Farmhouse, Parkside Road – Grade II
- Wood Head Barn, Parkside Road – Grade II
- St.Oswald's Well – Grade II and a Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Monk House, Parkside Road – Locally Listed Building
- Oven Back Cottage, Winwick Lane – Locally Listed Building

It should be noted that reference has previously been made to Oven Back Farm as being a Locally Listed Building, this is incorrect. Oven Back Cottage was confirmed as being 'retained' on the 'List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures of Architectural or Historic Interest' in January 2006; the original List have being compiled in 1982. Oven Back Farm is not on the Council's List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures of Architectural or Historic Interest.

Oven Back Cottage



**Photograph circa 1982**

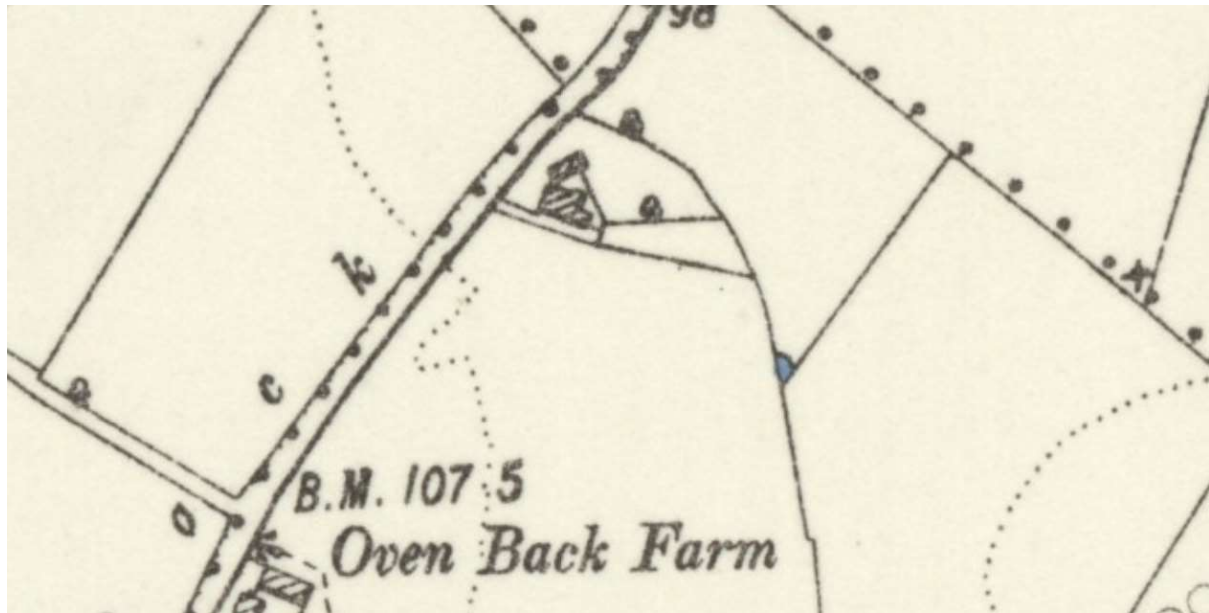


Current Photograph of Oven Back Cottage





Tithe Map 1891 – Oven Back Cottage and Associated Outbuilding to the north of Oven Back Farm



Oven Back Cottage is located approximately 180 metres to the north of Oven Bank Farm, on Winwick Lane, and approximately 36 metres north of the boundary of the application site. The cottage, including an outbuilding, is visible on the Tithe Map of 1891, having a similar footprint to the buildings that are currently on the site. The cottage retains its distinctive rectangular hood mouldings on a rendered masonry structure; brick chimneys and decorative door fanlight. The cottage is partially screened from view from Winwick Lane by established mature trees and the masonry outbuilding [to the south of the cottage]. The cottage would appear to retain some architectural and historic interest which would merit its protection as a building of local architectural and historic merit.

The cottage would not be directly affected by either the Construction or Operational Phases of the Parkside Road scheme. The proposed scheme would have no physical effects on the building. The views between the development and the local listed building, in both directions, would not be affected by the proposed scheme in view of the separation distance; topography; established vegetation and location of a large outbuilding. The outbuilding is a brick, partially rendered structure of utilitarian appearance. The setting of the cottage and how the asset is experienced would remain unchanged as a result of the development. The proposed development would not compete with nor distract from the significance of the asset.

The scheme has been assessed in accordance with para 197 of the NPPF and it is concluded that during the construction and operational phases of the scheme, there would be a neutral impact on the heritage asset and its setting, i.e. it would have no effect on the significance of the heritage asset and would not therefore be harmful to the asset and its setting.



## **Monk House**

Monk House is located on Parkside Road and to the east of Woodhead Farmhouse and Woodhead Barn. The property appears on the Council's list of Locally Important Buildings and Structures of Architectural or Historic Interest; it was added to the list in 2006.

**Aerial View of Monk House [top right – white rendered building] with Woodhead Farm and Barn [bottom left].**



Monk House is a former farmhouse dating from the early-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, although it has been extended and altered most notably the six pane sash windows and eight pane sliding windows, have been replaced with unsympathetic modern replacement windows.

## **Monk House at time of Local Listing**



Planning permission was granted in 2011 for the demolition of the building and its replacement with a replacement two storey dwelling. A Heritage Statement was submitted with the application.



The Statement recognised the following points of significance;

- The building is a good example of a small double-depth farmhouse of the early-mid 18th century;
- Historically, as its existence is verified from 1745 on Yoxall's map, and for its connections with the extensive Legh of Lyme estate.
- In terms of its group value and setting as part of a nucleated farming community of which the other element is the substantial adjoining farmstead of Woodhead.

The Statement also considered that modernisation and poor condition had rendered a negative impact upon its local significance architecturally, and upon its group value/setting.

The building was confirmed as having the following notable features;

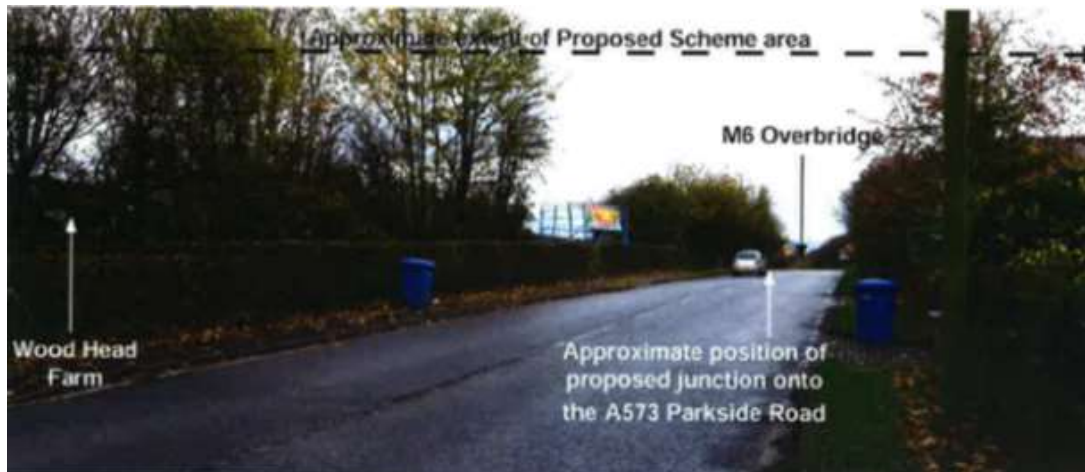
- Chamfered beams in main section of the house and parlour original features, circa 1720-1745 2.
- Staircase - original feature but altered; balusters may remain beneath boarding.
- Roof construction - use of purlins/load-bearing walls, an advanced 18th century construction technique associated with double-depth planning.

The building has not been demolished by virtue of the 2011 consent however, alterations have taken place, including the erection of an outbuilding for use a double garage and grass cutting machine garage and store. The new outbuilding replaces a former outbuilding of similar footprint and scale and in this regard, there has been negligible impact on the setting of the locally listed building as a result of the erection of the outbuilding.

The wider setting of this heritage asset is essentially rural/agricultural in character although the M6 motorway is approximately 128 metres to the east of the property, but is screened by mature landscaping. The house is set behind a grass verge with native species tree and hedge planting straddling the open timber fence which forms the boundary of the property with Parkside Road. The verge and tree/hedge planting extends northwards, on both sides of the road, as far as the motorway bridge, and southwards as far as the area around St.Oswald's Well.

## **Views to the North of Monk House**





It is considered that the building does retain some architectural and historic significance which warrants its inclusion on the local list however, in view of previous alterations to the property, it is considered that this locally listed heritage asset is of low heritage significance.

In accordance with para 197 of the NPPF, the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining an application.

In terms of the impact of the scheme on the significance of the heritage asset, there would be no physical effects on the building during the operational phase however, it is considered that, during the construction phase of the scheme, there would be a moderate adverse impact on the heritage asset as a result of the groundworks phase of development. Taking into account the low significance of the asset; the predicted low adverse magnitude of impact on that significance that would result from the proposed scheme, the determined overall significance of effect would be negligible and the level of harm to the asset would be considered to be less than substantial.

During the operational phase there are likely to be direct impacts on the setting of the heritage asset, particularly views to the north. The location and density of the existing planting means that views towards the proposed signal control junction with the A573, would be partially screened. There will be some loss of landscaping in order to create the new junction however, it is noted that it is proposed to undertake ecological mitigation measures which would include new field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees which will help to mitigate any adverse impact on the views from the rear of Monk House and the new road at the junction with the A573.

Taking into account the low significance of the asset; the predicted low adverse magnitude of impact on significance that would result from the proposed scheme, [subject to the implementation of the landscape strategy], the overall level of harm would be less than substantial and the impact on the asset would be negligible.

## **Battlefield**

The Battlefield is a designated heritage asset of high significance. The full designation record identifies the heritage values of the battlefield and its setting.



Reason for Designation [abbreviated];

The Battle of Winwick (also known as the Battle of Winwick Pass and the Battle of Red Bank), fought in 1648, is included on the Register of Historic Battlefields for the following principal reasons:

\* Historic importance: for its national historical significance as the last battle of the Second English Civil War, securing the advantages gained at Preston two days previously and resulting in the complete disbanding of the royalist infantry; \* Topographical integrity: retaining substantial integrity despite some later development, with the defensive and attacking positions of the opposing armies and the majority of the topographical character pertinent to the course of the battle still clearly legible in the landscape; \* Archaeological potential: possessing substantial overall archaeological potential as the only English battlefield of the Second Civil War which remains in a good state of preservation.

The Heritage Impact Statement submitted by the applicant has concluded that the Registered Historic Battlefield [Battle of Winwick 1648] was found to be potentially affected by groundworks as part of the construction phase of the development; the battlefield has high heritage value in terms of landscape views, topography and potential for archaeological deposits. However it was noted that the area has previously been disturbed particularly that part which formed part of the colliery and the potential for archaeology/ landscape views and topography associated with the battle have been lost. It was concluded that, the proposed scheme would have a minor to adverse impact on the asset before mitigation. It has identified that the adverse effects can be reduced or avoided through design considerations. The proposal includes mitigation in the form of screening at the sides of the new road and it is considered that the mitigation measures would reduce the visual impact of the scheme on the setting of the asset.

The Battlefield site is categorised as being an asset of very high significance. The magnitude of impact on that significance is considered to be minor to moderate adverse, prior to any mitigation. Following mitigation, the effect on the significance of the asset would be negligible and considered not to have a significant effect. The proposal would therefore result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Registered Battle field.

It is acknowledged that the significance of the asset is derived mainly from its historical and evidential values and that in association with the mitigation measures proposed, the undertaking of a programme of archaeological work and recording of the assets [including potentially as yet unknown assets] and an assessment of the relationship between the assets, will contribute to a greater understanding of the site and its significance. In this regard, the proposal would accord with para 193 of the NPPF in that the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the Battlefield has been assessed and great weight has been given to the assets conservation.

These comments are based on the understanding that part of the application site which falls within the Battlefield Site and within the boundary of Warrington would not be affected by any physical works associated with this proposal.

I am also advised that the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service [APAS]; the Council's advisors on archaeological matters, have reviewed the proposal and concluded that no further archaeological mitigation is required in addition to that already undertaken. It is noted that St.Helens Council have carried out a full appraisal of the impact of the proposed development on the Battlefield Site, which is referenced in their Committee



Report.

The assessment of the Battlefield Site contained in the Heritage Impact Statement, including its conclusions and recommendations are considered to be appropriate and I would consider that the landscape reinstatement which is proposed, is undertaken in order to mitigate any adverse effects of the scheme. This would also include the adoption of a Conservation Management Plan to cover the Battlefield a programme of archaeological works and the provision of an archive record of the site; this would be beneficial to the future management and maintenance of the area and the future conservation of the asset.

### **St.Oswald's Well**

St Oswald's Well is located in fields to the south of Woodhead Farmhouse. The well is a Grade II listed structure and a Scheduled Ancient Monument [SAM] and is described as;

*Well. Date unknown, with pre-Reformation stone lining. One stone inscribed "IHS MH". Referred to by Bede, A.D. 642.*

The SAM is a designated heritage asset of high significance. The asset consists of a stone well chamber which is located in agricultural land. The setting makes a positive contribution to the assets significance.

The scheme has been assessed in accordance with para 193 of the NPPF and it is concluded that during the construction phase of the scheme, there would be a neutral impact on the heritage asset and its setting, due to the nature of the construction of the well and its location relative to the development site and access roads, i.e. it would have no effect on the significance of the heritage asset and would not therefore be harmful to the asset and its setting.

The impact of the scheme on the SAM during the operational phase of the development is considered to be moderate beneficial, this is as a result of the changes in traffic flows on Parkside Road and south of the Parkside Link Road and the A573 Golborne Road. The reduction of traffic on the A573, passing the SAM, would be beneficial in securing its future protection.

### **Woodhead Farmhouse and Woodhead Barn**

Listing Description- Woodhead Farm

G.V. II

Farmhouse. Probably late C18. Brick with stone dressings with slate roof. 3 storeys, 4 bays, end bay recessed and of 2 storeys with flag roof. Stone base and quoins. Windows have chamfered mullions and transoms. Ground floor windows of 3 lights and transoms. 3;2;3-light 1st floor windows with transoms; end bay has 3-light window. 2nd floor 3;2;3-light windows. Elliptical-headed entrance to 2nd bay has Gibbs surround and C20 timber and glass porch. Brick end stacks. Scattered fenestration to rear. Interior has C18 stair; 2nd floor wide-boarded doors; chamfered beams. Said to have initials "M B" and date 1774 (not found). Some fire places to 1st floor now boarded.

Listing Description – Wood Head Barn



## G.V. II

Barn. Probably C18. Brick with stone dressings, slate roof.

Later wing to south of east side. 5 bays. Diamond-pattern ventilation holes. Elliptical-headed entrances have cheeks and timber doors. Interior has cow house and loft to south end. Internal buttresses, those flanking entrances are triangular. Kingpost roof trusses with curved braces, the timbers chamfered. Brick arch to south of threshing floor.

The above assets are considered to be designated heritage assets of high significance. The proposed scheme would have no physical effects on the Listed Buildings but does have the potential to adversely affect the setting of both buildings.

Wood Head Farm and its Barn are located approximately 170m south of the proposed scheme. The group of farm buildings, including the associated listed barn, and its rural location, make a positive contribution to the heritage significance of the asset. The farmhouse has its principal elevation facing south, and is visible from Parkside Road, most clearly when the road bends west around the site of St.Oswald's Well. The farmstead is also visible from Parkside Road where it crosses the M6 motorway, here it is viewed in the context of the wider agricultural landscape. The two listed buildings are read in the immediate context of the farmstead within its wider rural setting. This setting makes a positive contribution to the significance of both assets.

The proposal would during the operational phase, directly impact the views north of the farmstead, which currently includes the M6 motorway and a number of modern outbuildings and to the west, the former Parkside Colliery. Both assets are categorised as being of high significance. Overall, the following the completion of the scheme, including the landscape strategy, the harm to these assets is considered to be less than substantial being minor adverse.



**APPENDIX 10**  
**Illustrative drawing showing the application site and**  
**local authority boundaries**



