

South East Warrington Urban Extension

A Deliverable Allocation

Homes England & Miller Homes

15th November 2021

millershomes



Homes
England

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1. The Vision

1.1 A Vision for South East Warrington

The South East Warrington Urban Extension ('SEWUE') will be a healthy and sociable new community which is deep rooted in good design principles and well connected to its surroundings.

The following core values should help to form a sustainable and welcoming neighbourhood for the SEWUE:

1. Accessibility for All
2. Healthy Living Environment
3. Sustainably Designed
4. Integrating with South East Warrington
5. Living and Working Community
6. Reconnecting with Nature

The core values are detailed in Section 1.2 of the document.

The SEWUE will be knitted into the urban form of Warrington providing benefits for new and existing residents, and could accommodate:

-  A minimum of 4,200 new homes (of which at least 2,400 in plan period) which will include a range of tenures, types, sizes, and affordable homes
-  2 new primary schools and 1 new secondary school
-  3 new local centres, including shops, a supermarket and other local amenities
-  A new community and wellbeing hub with leisure facilities and a new healthcare facility
-  Enhanced pedestrian and cycle linkages to existing neighbourhoods
-  Creation of strategic landscape corridors, sport pitches and new areas of formal and informal open space
-  Compensatory green belt improvements and ecological mitigation and enhancement to increase biodiversity
-  Flood mitigation and drainage including sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
-  A comprehensive package of on and off-site transport improvements



Figure 01 . Illustrative Framework Diagram

1.2 Core Values

These core values have informed the structuring principles and will help inform the Development Framework.

As the project evolves these core values will remain a main driver in the development of the SEWUE and will help achieve a sustainable and welcoming neighbourhood:



Accessibility for All

Streets and path networks in the development will aim to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists by offering more sustainable movement choices for all ages and abilities, reducing dependency on car travel



Healthy Living Environment

New development will provide access to new open space, sports provision, play areas, and promote active travel. It will follow Building for Life and Healthy New Town principles, to help boost the mental and physical health of the local community



Sustainably Designed

Development will promote a low carbon lifestyle. This will include the consideration of the environmental performance of buildings through the design and delivery process, reducing the need to travel by car through active travel



Integrating with South East Warrington

Development will be outward facing and will integrate with the existing fabric of south Warrington. This will be achieved visually through building a character of place as well as physically tying in through strategic links and walking and cycling routes



Living and Working Community

Living and working priorities are rapidly changing. South East Warrington will offer a range of homes and local centres that are adaptable, foster a strong community and support, daily needs whilst also connecting to surrounding employment locations



Reconnecting with Nature

New development in South East Warrington creates opportunities to protect and enhance existing natural features of the rich landscape and increase biodiversity through the inclusion of new planting, natural green spaces and planned habitat creation



2. The Site

2.1 Introduction

Homes England and Miller Homes are committed to working in partnership to deliver the strategic allocation in South East Warrington (Policy MD2).

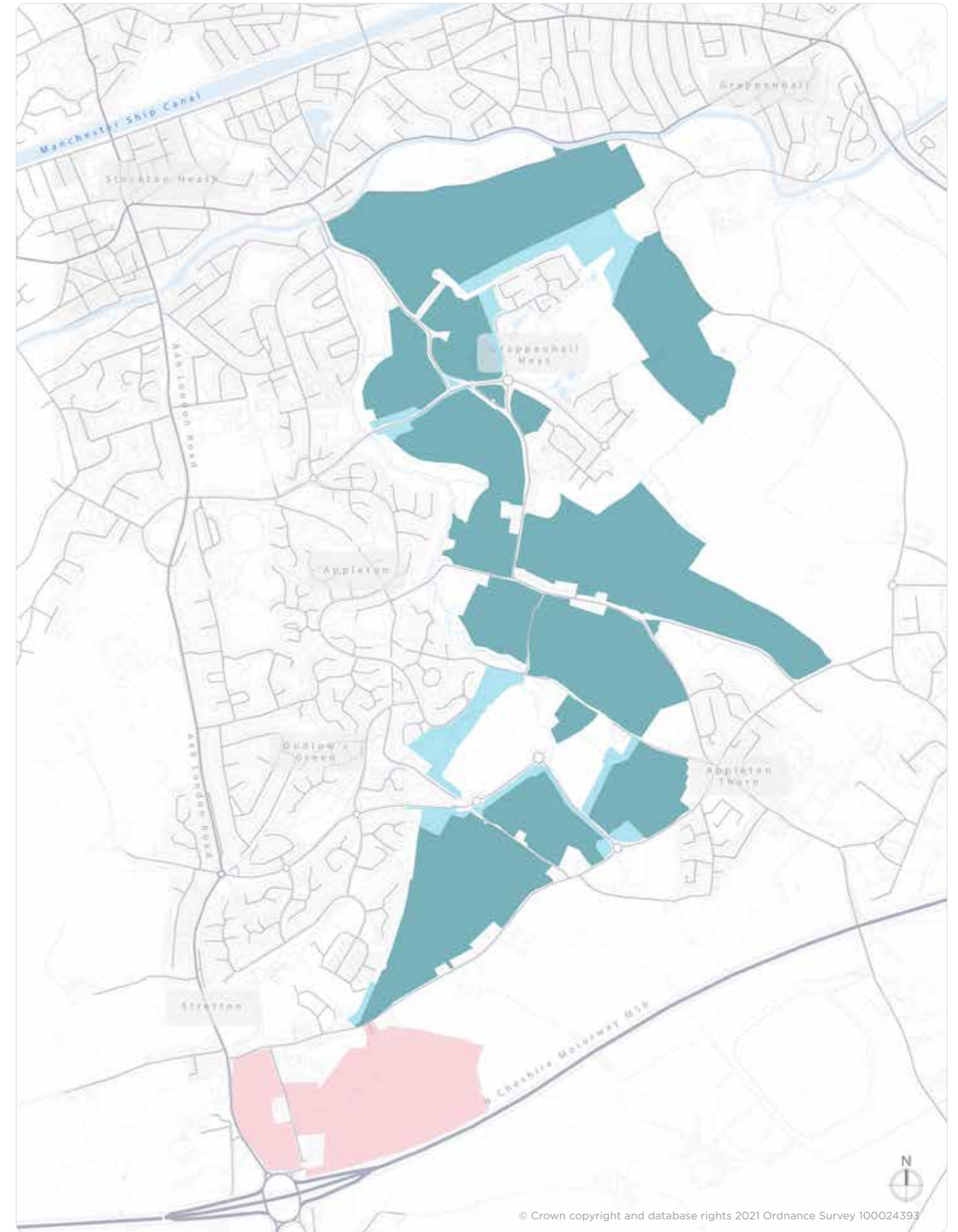
The SEWUE will be a new sustainable neighbourhood providing new homes and supporting physical, social and environmental infrastructure to meet Warrington's growth ambitions in the plan period and beyond.

This document has been prepared by Homes England and Miller Homes, the principal landowners¹ of the SEWUE, as part of their response to the Regulation 19 consultation of the Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021-2038 (UPSVP) (September 2021). This Deliverable Allocation document should be read alongside the separate representation report on draft Policy MD2.



Aerial photo of site looking west from Grappenhall

¹Homes England own the land freehold. Miller Homes are acting on behalf of a number of individual freehold interests.



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Figure 03. Principal Landownership Boundaries

- Homes England Ownership
- Homes England Ownership, Gifted to Land Trust
- Land Under Miller Homes Control

2.2 The Site in Context

The site is nestled alongside the south east urban fringe of Warrington and extends to 239.62ha. There are three key attributes which make the SEWUE an attractive allocation, namely:

1. Proximity to existing communities

The communities of Appleton, Stockton Heath, Stretton, Pewterspear and Dudlow's Green, part of the Warrington conurbation, form the western boundary of the site; with Grappenhall lying to the north east and Appleton Thorn to the south east.

A range of local facilities and services are within the local centres of Dudlow's Green, Appleton and Grappenhall. The nearest primary, junior and high schools are located in Appleton and Stretton, within walking distance of the site

The District Centre of Stockton Heath provides enhanced retail provision, community facilities and easy access to several local bus services, providing routes across Warrington and to neighbouring settlements.

To the south east lies the well-established Barleycastle Trading Estate employment area.

2. Good connections

The urban extension is bounded by the A49 to the west, the A56 to the North (with the Bridgewater canal separating the site from this boundary), the A50 corridor the east and Stretton Road B5356 to the south. Beyond this, the M6 and M56 provide connections to the motorway network via junctions 20 and 10, respectively.

The site includes several public rights of way which connect the site and nearby communities to each other, and which form part of the wider network of routes.

3. Green Infrastructure and Environment

The majority of the site is currently in agricultural use with field boundaries marked by hedgerows and tree belts. The site is largely open, but also includes a small number of agricultural buildings.

Part of the site is bordered by an existing watercourse known as Dingle Brook which traverses to the western edge of the site from north to south. The immediate land surrounding the Brook is classified as Flood Zone 3, however, this falls outside of SEWUE which is classified as Flood Zone 1.

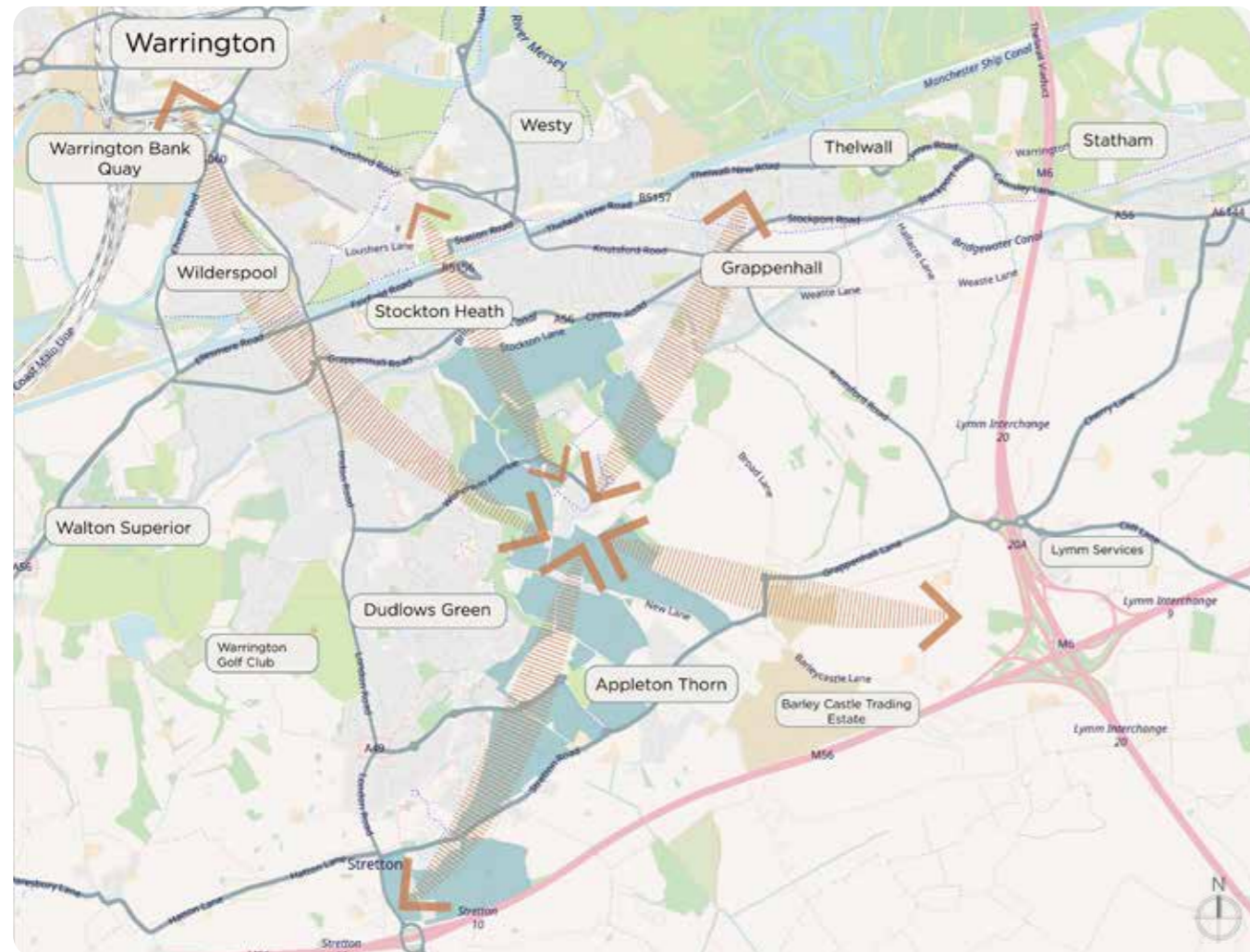


Figure 04. Strategic Location



Bridgewater Canal located close to the site



Characterful district centre at Stockton Heath



Agricultural use close to Grappenhall

2.3 Aerial View



Aerial View of site south west from Grappenhall

2.4 Site Features

The site sits in close proximity to a number of residential areas, and in some areas incorporates, a range of recent and popular residential developments. These include Pewterspear Green and Appleton Cross as well as the ongoing development at Grappenhall Heys by Rowland Homes and Urban Splash.

The area also benefits from a range of characterful landscape features including the walled garden at Grappenhall Heys, Pewterspear Green in the South and Dingle Brook which runs the western edge of the area.



Stockton Heath



Public walk route through Grappenhall Heys



Bridgewater Canal bridge at Lumb Brook Road



Pewterspear Green



Bridgewater Canal tow path

Beyond this immediate context the site also has a range of characterful built form influences from the attractive Victorian and Edwardian housing stock of Stockton Heath and Grappenhall and the Bridgewater and Manchester Ship Canals.



Stansfield Drive



Stockton Lane



3. Development Principles

3.1 Structuring Principles

Through the development of the Illustrative Framework diagram the team have explored a number of principles that will help inform the structure and delivery of SEWUE pursuant to the requirements of a future Development Framework and in line with Emerging Policy MD2.



A Sequence of Distinctive Villages

- Creating a number of new villages, with varied character and densities.
- Villages knitted together via a low level traffic corridor (the 'community connector').
- Local centres providing retail and non retail space as well as a community hub and healthcare facility.



A Network Of Local Centres To Support Existing And Proposed Communities

- The SEWUE will seamlessly knit into the existing form of Warrington.
- This strength of connection ensures that the SEWUE will deliver tangible benefits to existing communities in the Borough - with better cycle, pedestrian linkages, access to schools, shops and community facilities; delivering on physical, social and environmental infrastructure needs.



A Strong Green Infrastructure Framework

- Enhancing existing natural features and green links to the western edge of the site.
- Retaining a strong green buffer around Appleton Thorn to prevent coalescence.
- Providing a network of green links that promote sustainable travel routes.



A Well Connected Place

- Creating a strategic highway network connecting to the A49 London Road.
- Creating a community connector which prioritises pedestrians and active travel.
- Retaining flexibility in the Framework for future mass transit corridor.



4. Proposed Allocation

4.1. The Proposed Allocation

The SEWUE will deliver in excess of 4,200 new homes with 30% affordable housing provision.

The SEWUE will have placemaking and design at the heart of its development principles; and will create a new sustainable community with strong links into the existing urban area and town centre.

There will be variety, interest and character in the SEWUE. The approach to layout and the community connector running north-south helps to create a series of character areas focused around local centres and amenities with a clear identity.

The strength of connection to Warrington and surrounding settlements will ensure that the SEWUE will deliver tangible benefits to existing communities in the Borough. It will provide better cycle and pedestrian linkages, access to schools, shops and community facilities, delivering on everyone's physical, social and environmental infrastructure needs within the totality of the principal landownership.

The development is a logical sustainable urban expansion of Warrington, rounding off and extending the existing settlement profile; whilst avoiding coalescence with Appleton Thorn.

The SEWUE will create a new urban-rural fringe with a strong defensible Green Belt boundary. Compensatory improvements can be secured to the remaining Green Belt within the principal landowners' control.

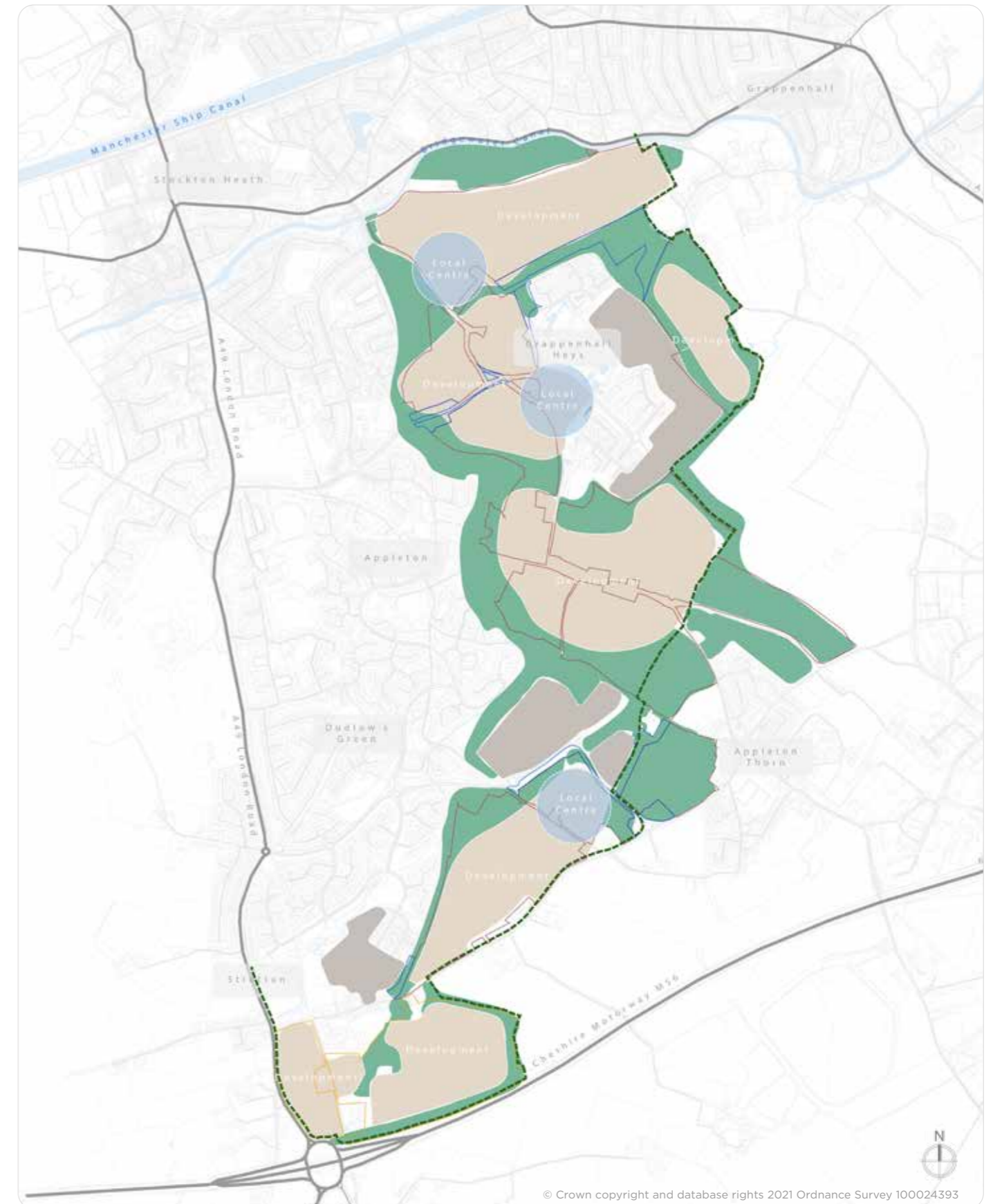
The consented Homes England schemes have been considered within the wider indicative SEWUE proposal to ensure that the extension to Warrington is comprehensive.



Homes England, Whittingham





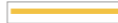





OPEN, Countesswells



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Figure 05. Allocation Boundary

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Homes England Ownership |  Indicative Green Infrastructure |
|  Homes England Ownership, Gifted to Land Trust |  Indicative Development |
|  Land Under Miller Homes Control |  Indicative Local Centres |
|  Revised Green Belt Boundary |  Consented Development Schemes |



5. Indicative Development Framework

5.1 Indicative Development Framework

The proposed 'Development Framework', required by Local Plan Policy MD2, will be the main vehicle to advance detailed masterplan proposals for the site and for agreeing the extent, timing and delivery of the housing and required supporting infrastructure.

The following parameters will form the basis of the Indicative Development Framework:

- Development areas (reflecting a mix of land uses including residential, retail and community e.g. schools);
- Density profile and capacity;
- Transport and accessibility; and
- Strategic green infrastructure and the environment.

As set out in Policy MD2, it will be important for the Development Framework to be sufficiently flexible and kept under review throughout the delivery of the SEWUE, to react to changing circumstances where necessary.

In this chapter, we further outline the aspirations for the SEWUE.



Development will promote a low carbon lifestyle through the consideration of the environmental performance of buildings. (Miller Image)



New development will provide access to new open space, sports provision and play areas



New development in South East Warrington creates opportunities to protect and enhance existing natural features of the rich landscape



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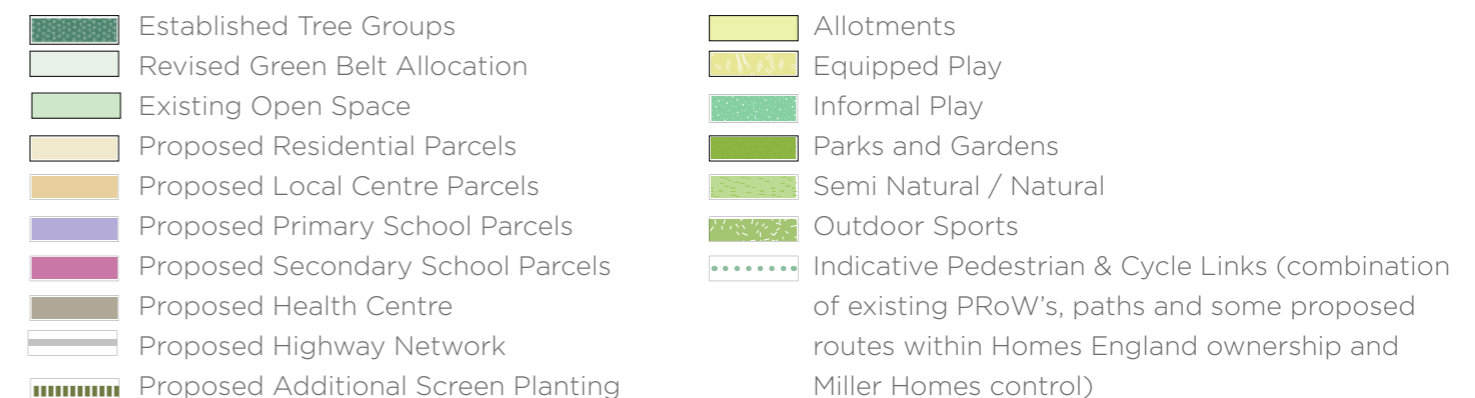


Figure 06. SEWUE Indicative Development Framework



Figure 07: Sketch example of multi functional open space at the heart of a new residential community, providing opportunities for play, water management and habitat creation - Crabb Hill, Wantage, OPEN

5.2 Sustainable Placemaking

This Framework sets the foundations for future development to apply the 20 minute Neighbourhood principles within SEWUE. The core principles of a 20-minute neighbourhood is somewhere that:

- Residents of every neighbourhood have easy access to goods and services, particularly groceries, fresh food and healthcare;
- Every neighbourhood has a variety of housing types, of different sizes and levels of affordability, to accommodate many types of households and enable more people to live closer to where they work;
- More people can work close to home or remotely, thanks to the presence of smaller-scale offices, retail and hospitality, and co-working spaces.

The underlying principle that underpins this 20 minute neighbourhood concept to development



Sustainably designed homes



Outdoor activities for active lifestyles

within the area is to ensure that it makes the most of land availability, encourages living at a comfortable scale and density, provides a variety of open spaces as well as safe, legible and sustainable links to surrounding social infrastructure.

The existing assets and physical location of the SEWUE as well as its ability to draw on the varied environments around it, mean it is perfectly placed to meet these principles.



Walkability of the neighbourhood

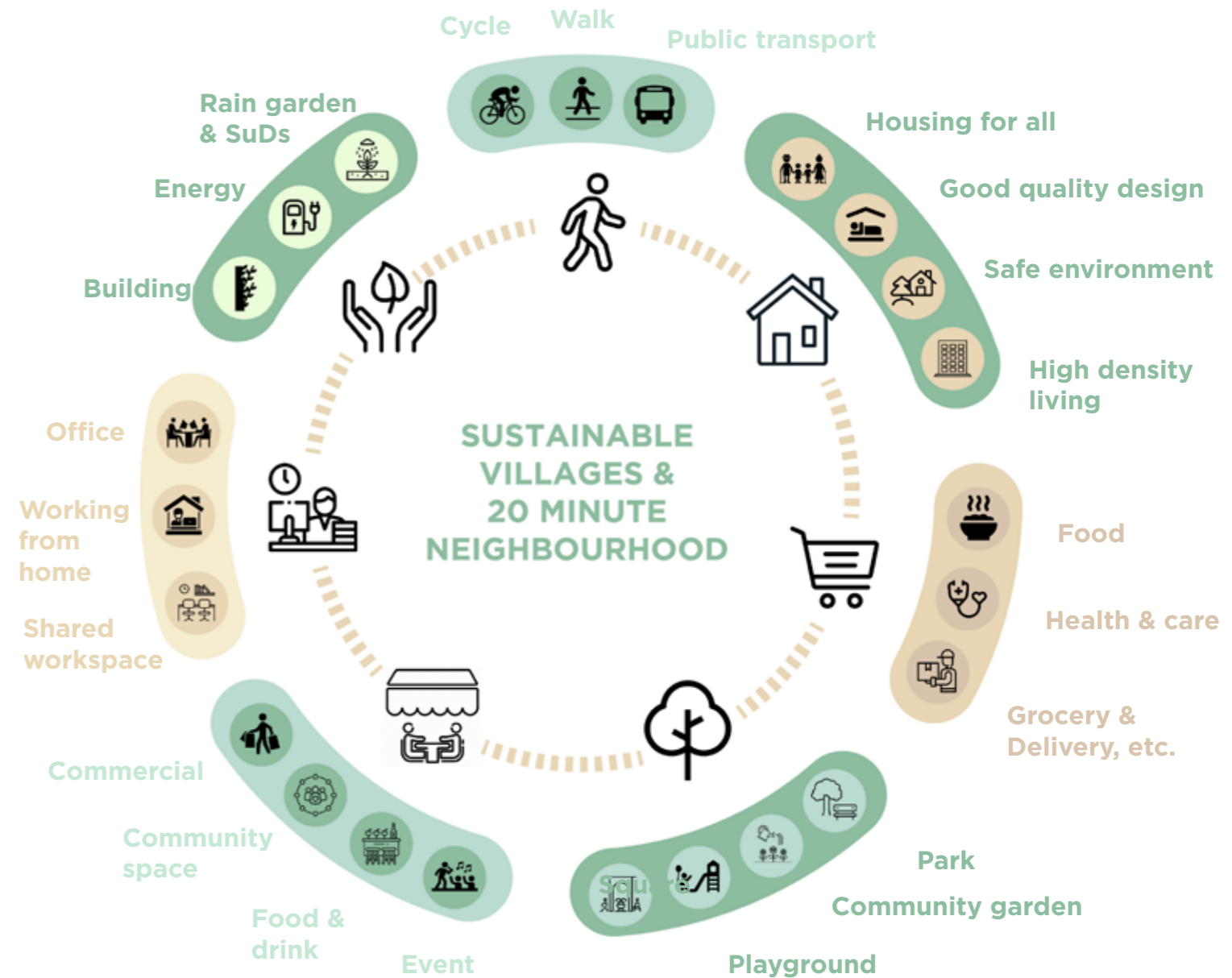


Figure 08. 20 minute neighbourhood concept diagram

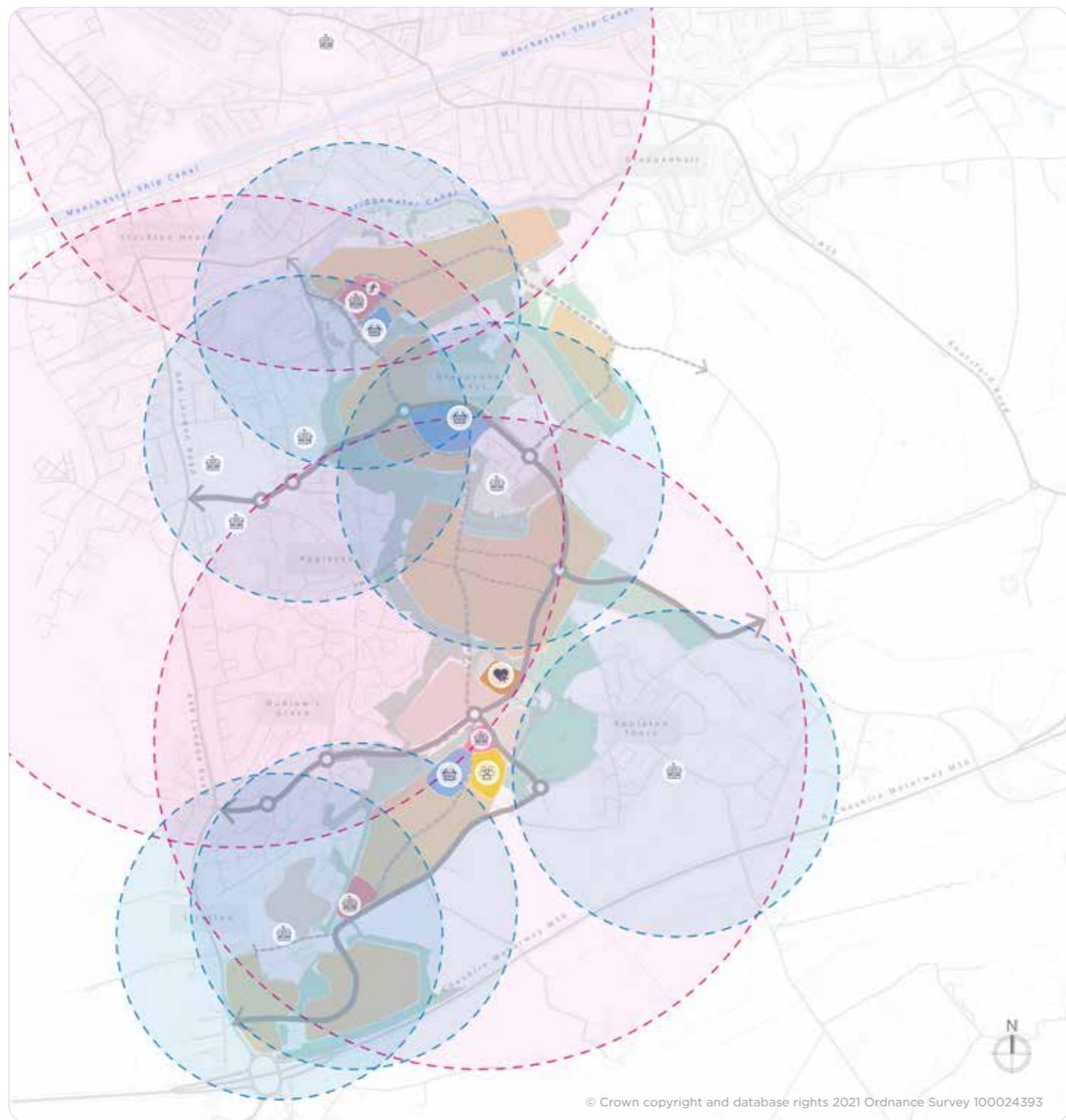




Figure 09. Indicative school locations throughout the development with associated walking radii, which demonstrate the principles of the 20 minute neighbourhood

Walking Catchment

-  20 minute walk from indicative secondary school location
-  10 minute walk from indicative primary school location

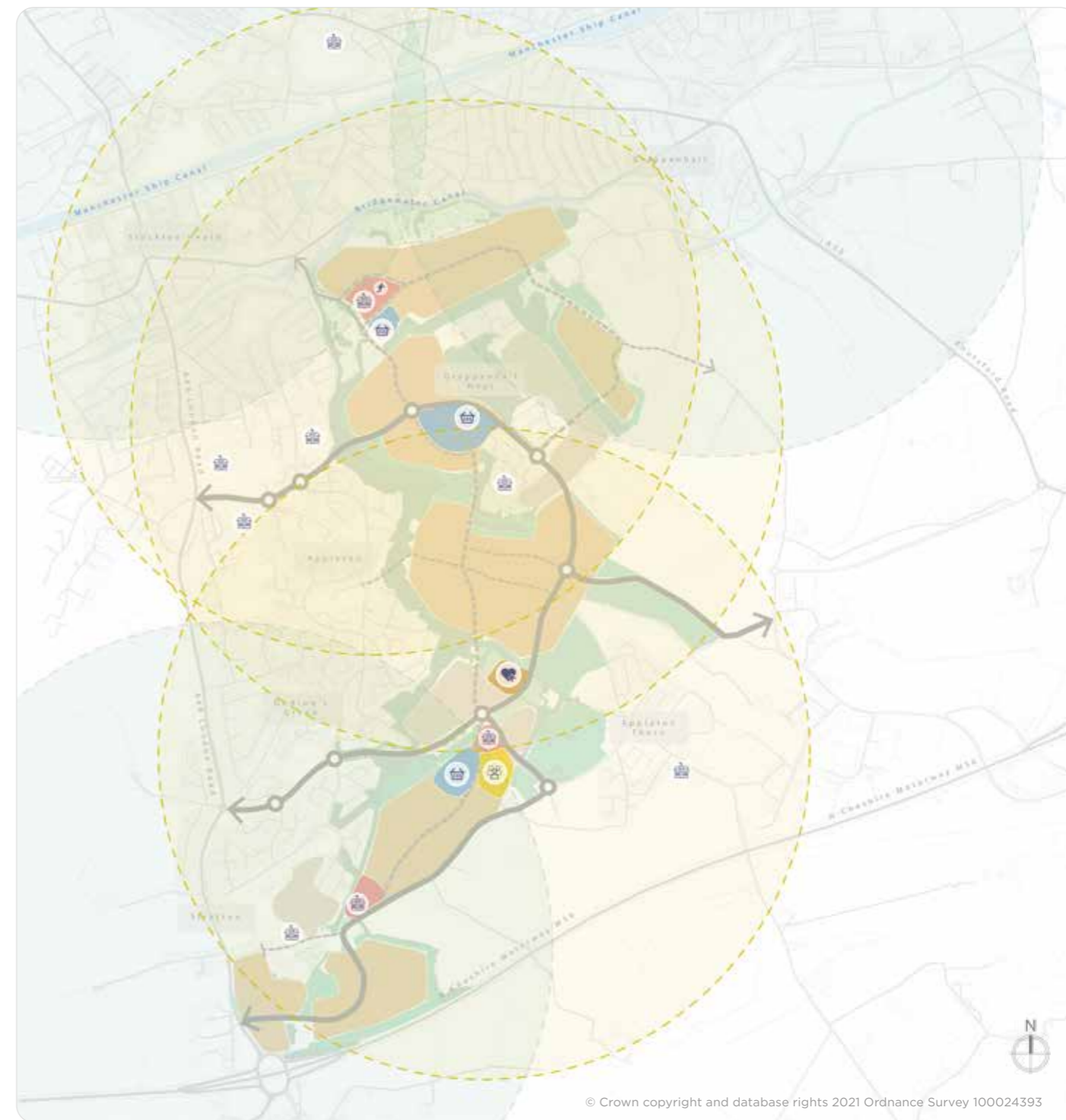




Figure 10. Indicative local centre locations throughout the proposed development with associated walking radii, which demonstrate the principles of the 20 minute neighbourhood

Walking Catchment

-  20 minute walk from indicative local centres
-  20 minute walk from existing local centres

5.3 Land Use & Social Infrastructure

Land Use & Social Infrastructure

The SEWUE indicative development framework (Figure 06) looks to create a series of central / community uses along the north-south 'Community Connector' route, providing linkages into Warrington. This can provide a pedestrian and cycle focused link between a range of social infrastructure and commercial spaces that will help to create a sense of place and identify for the SEWUE.

The supporting infrastructure that could be accommodated includes:

- **Lumb Brook Green** - potential new primary school and small convenience retail offering of circa. 500sqm.
- **Grappenhall Heys** - up to 1,000sqm of commercial/non-residential space and potential for extra care or later life housing.
- **Appleton Cross** - providing the primary centre close to the proposed allocation of health provision at Appleton Cross with a mixed use plot with supermarket or larger retail units offering up to 2,500sqm. A further mixed use plot can provide an additional 500sqm of retail / non-residential space in smaller format. A potential Secondary School and combined leisure / health facility, including leisure facilities (approximately 3ha), are also in this location.
- **Stretton Road** - a potential new primary school.

Land use	Approximate Gross (ha)	Approximate Gross (Ac)
Residential & Mixed Use	112.79	278.70
Healthcare	1.57	3.89
Community Hub	2.91	7.19
Education (*)	12.32	30.44
Green Infrastructure (**)	67.67	167.21
Highways & other non-developable	54.95	135.79
Total	252.21	623.22

Table 2. Indicative mix of land uses (approximate)

(*) Includes all associated playing fields for Primary and Secondary Schools.

(**) Excludes playing fields associated with education uses.

(***) The figures provided are indicative and demonstrate what could be accommodated in SEWUE - form of development will be further developed through the Development Framework.

Figure 11 opposite details the indicative land use scenario for future development at the SEWUE. Infrastructure such as new local centres, healthcare and schools have been located at key points along the strategic highways network and along the community connector to provide ease of access for new and existing communities.

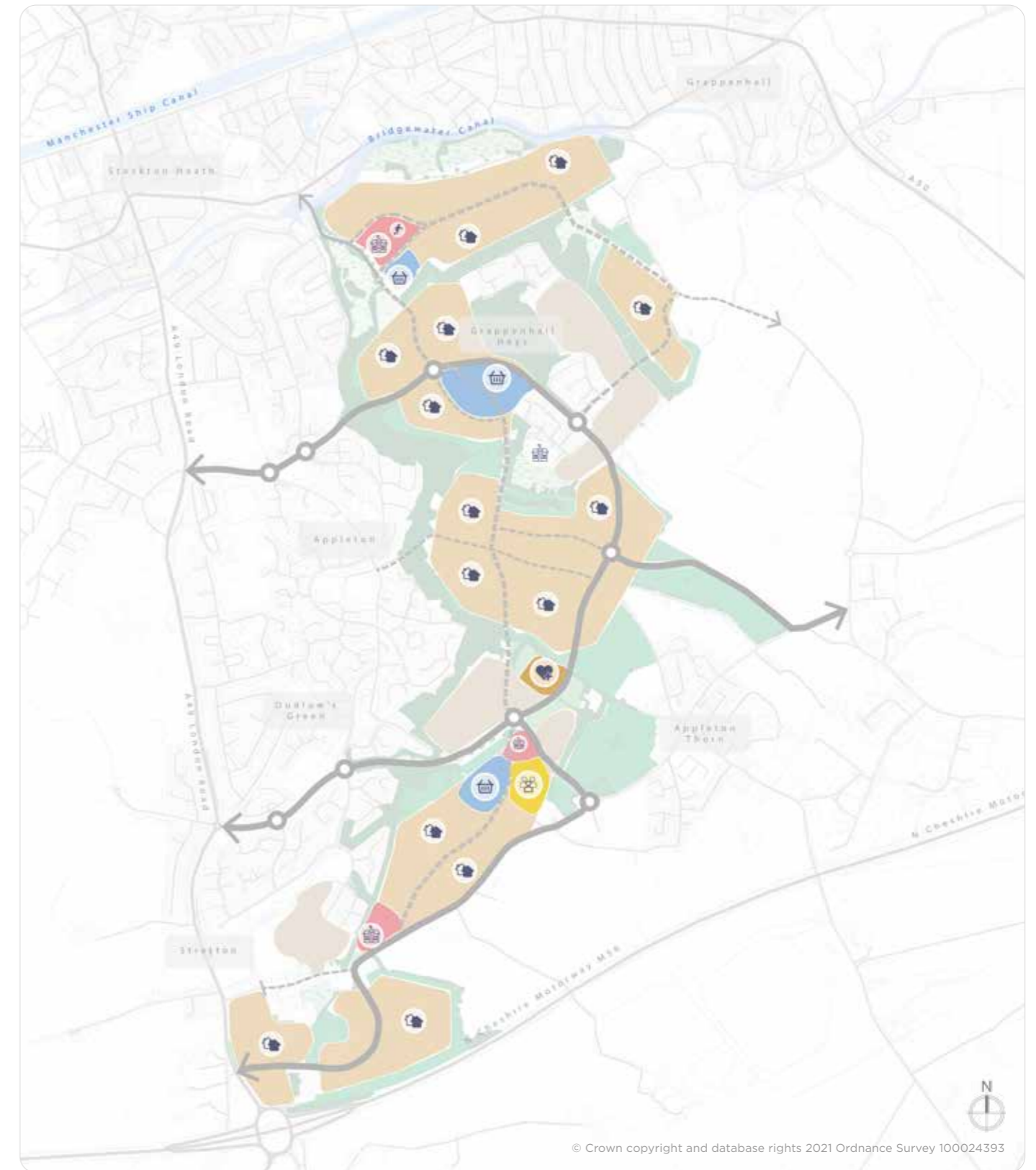


Figure 11. Indicative Development Land uses

- Indicative Residential Development
- Indicative Local Centres
- Indicative Education
- Indicative Healthcare
- Indicative Community Hub

5.4 Density & Capacity

Density Profile & Capacity

The SEWUE will have placemaking and design at the heart of its approach; and will create a new sustainable community with strong links into Warrington town centre. The development will be seen as part of the logical expansion of Warrington-rounding off, and modestly extending the existing settlement profile.

With that in mind, low (25 dwellings per hectare (dph), medium (30 dph) and high densities (up to 60 dph) will be distributed across the site to create various character areas and build upon a sense of place around local centres. The minimum average net density will be 35 dph, as per the allocation requirement.

The variation in density allows for a mix of homes from apartments for smaller households and first time buyers, to larger family housing and elderly persons / extra care, all of which will contribute to the creation of new communities throughout the SEWUE.

Total minimum new homes estimated through local policy	4,200
Total minimum new homes estimated to be delivered in plan period	2,400
Site wide residential coverage (principal ownership)	45%
Average net density (dph)	36.7

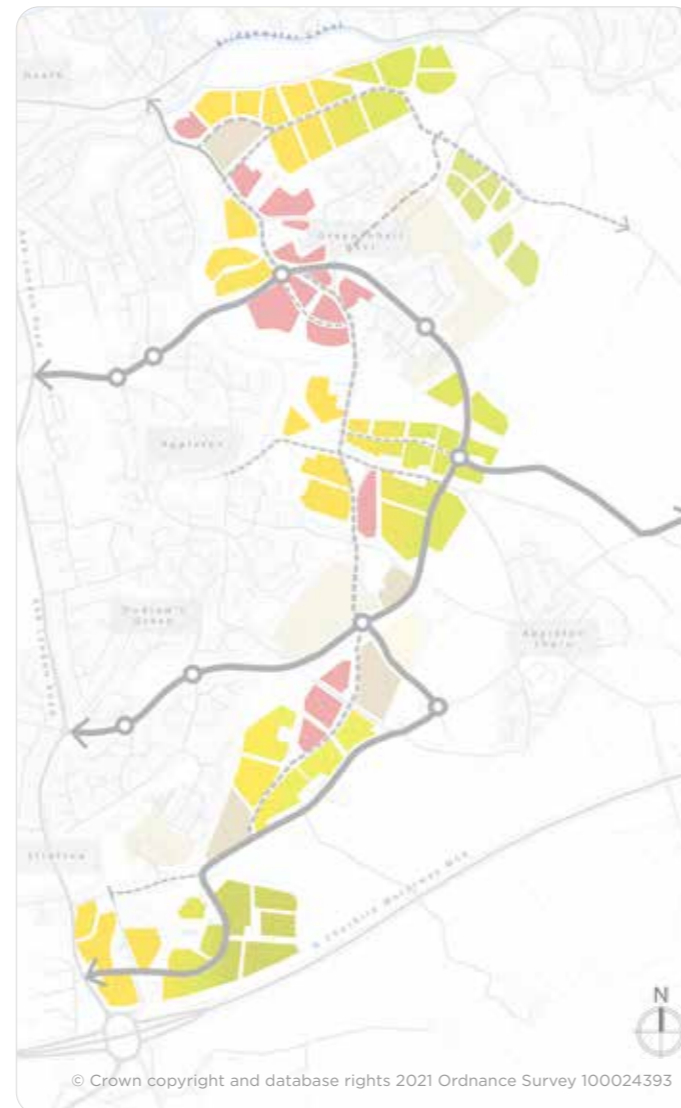


Figure 12. Indicative Density Plan

Indicative Density Profiles

- Local Centre Residential / High Density
- Medium - 30 dph to Low - 25 dph



Figure 13. Sketch example of a mixed local centre with a range of housing types, good quality green space and community and commercial facilities - Crabb Hill Wantage, OPEN

5.5 Strategic Green Infrastructure

The SEWUE will be set within a mature landscape setting. The relatively contained nature of development will limit impact on existing properties, adjacent agricultural land and the natural environment. In addition, many of the existing natural green infrastructure linkages and spaces will be retained and a new permanent green buffer to Appleton Thorn will be created. Figure 14 opposite identifies the potential layout of green infrastructure across the site.

There are also significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through:

- Reinforcing the wildlife corridors along Dingle Brook;
- Creation of strategic landscape corridors and new areas of informal open space;
- Support existing habitats through additional natural green spaces around mature tree groups and defining green links to open countryside; and
- Planting of new hedgerows and landscape buffers to strengthen the new Green Belt boundary.



Residential SUDs pond, Miller

The SEWUE will be set within a network of linked Green Infrastructure. The following indicative breakdown of green infrastructure is deliverable on land within the principal landowners control and is in excess of policy requirements:

Typology	Approximate Area (ha)
Parks and Gardens	18.85
Natural / semi-natural green space	26.60
Outdoor sports (*)	19.51
Equipped play	3.96
Informal play	5.76
Mass Transit Green Infrastructure	1.99
Allotments	0.93
Total	77.60

(* Includes playing fields associated with education uses)

Table 3. Indicative proposed Green infrastructure - open space typologies (gross ha)

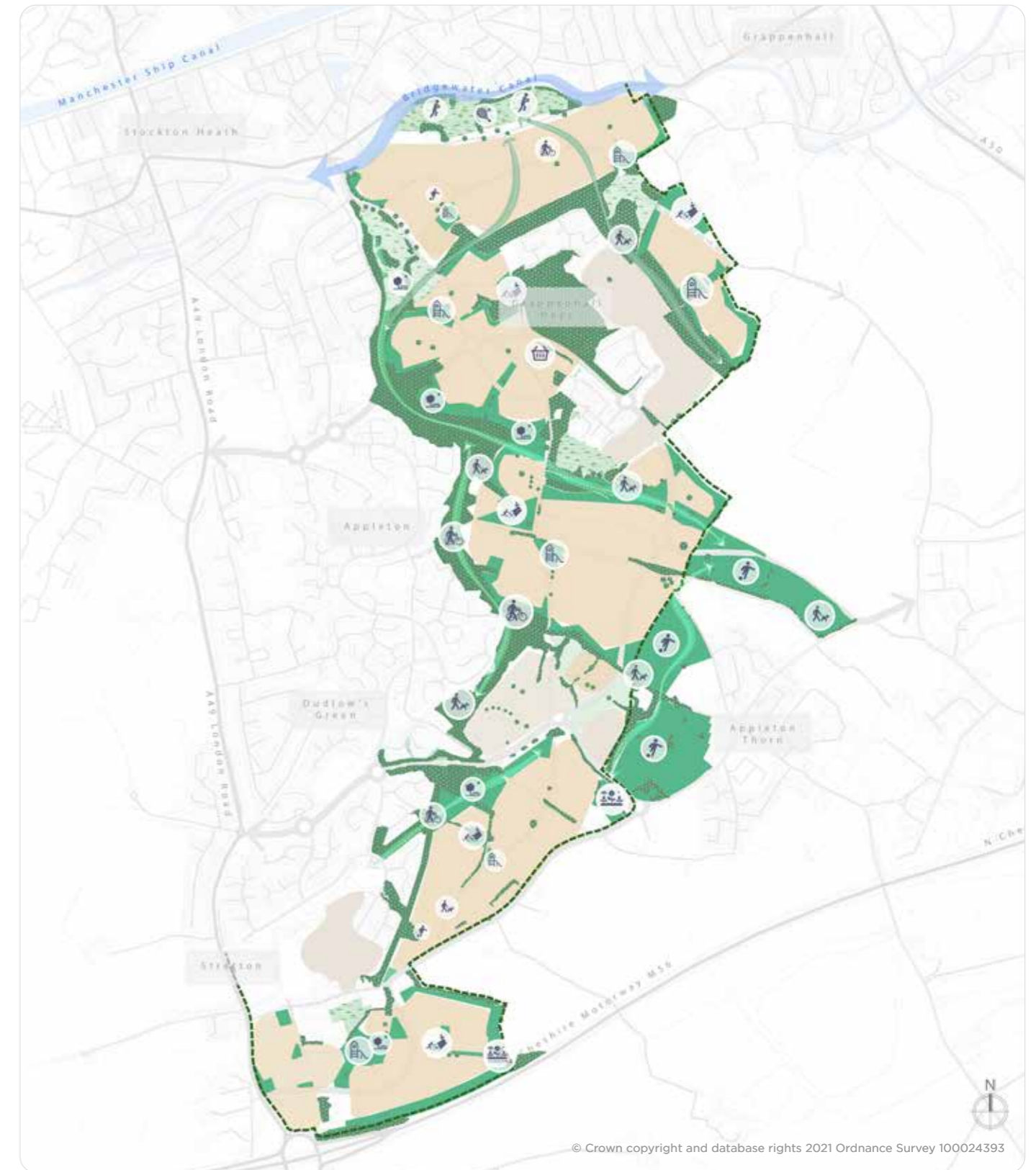


Figure 14. Indicative Green Infrastructure Framework

- Established Tree Groups
- Existing Open Space
- Indicative Green Infrastructure
- Indicative Development Parcels
- Approved Development Parcels
- Revised Green Belt Boundary
- Proposed Green Links

5.6 Compensatory Green Belt Improvements

Green Belt Boundary

The Green Belt boundary is detailed on the Policies Map which has been published for consultation as part of the Warrington Local Plan Proposed Submission Version (2021).

The indicative development framework demonstrates:

- The majority of the SEWUE boundary is formed by strong existing features such as roads and woodland belts
- Where the boundary is defined by a field it can be strengthened to create a new recognisable and permanent Green Belt boundary;
- Development at the south west edge of the allocation will respect the Green Belt boundary and the character of the washed over Green Belt settlement of Stretton to the west of the A49; and
- The eastern boundary can be reinforced by strong buffer planting.



View from public walkway at Grappenhall Heys

Compensatory Measures

Land within the principal landowners' ownership and remaining in the Green Belt will support the delivery of compensatory improvements. The extent of ownership is such that circa. 27.64ha of controlled land will be retained within the Green Belt boundary (equal to 13% of total land ownership).

A number of potential compensatory improvements could be achieved, including:

- Improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision;
- New or enhanced green infrastructure;
- Woodland planting;
- Landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);
- Improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital; and
- New or enhanced walking and cycle routes.



Whittington, Homes England



SUDs at Crabb Hill, OPEN



Establishing new habitats at Countesswells, OPEN



Tree planting at Countesswells, OPEN



Figure 15. Sketch sample of naturalistic open space overlooked by new homes which could include sports provision and play space. Drumshoreland, Edinburgh, OPEN

5.7 Transport & Accessibility

The SEWUE maximises the use of existing assets and minimising the need for new road infrastructure (thereby lessening impacts on the environment).

The transport strategy could:

- Reinforce established connectivity with existing communities;
- Create a 'community connector' route providing safe and convenient connection between key community amenities, primarily for sustainable travel modes;
- Maximise the potential for walkable neighbourhoods, with a legible hierarchy of routes, providing new footpaths and cycleways that link to existing networks beyond the site;
- Result in good accessibility to public transport services, including linking to existing bus routes and flexibility retained in landholding for future connection to a mass transit corridor; and
- Support provision of new highway links to further improve access between the SEWUE and existing urban area. There could also be contributions to other off site highways improvements, where justified.



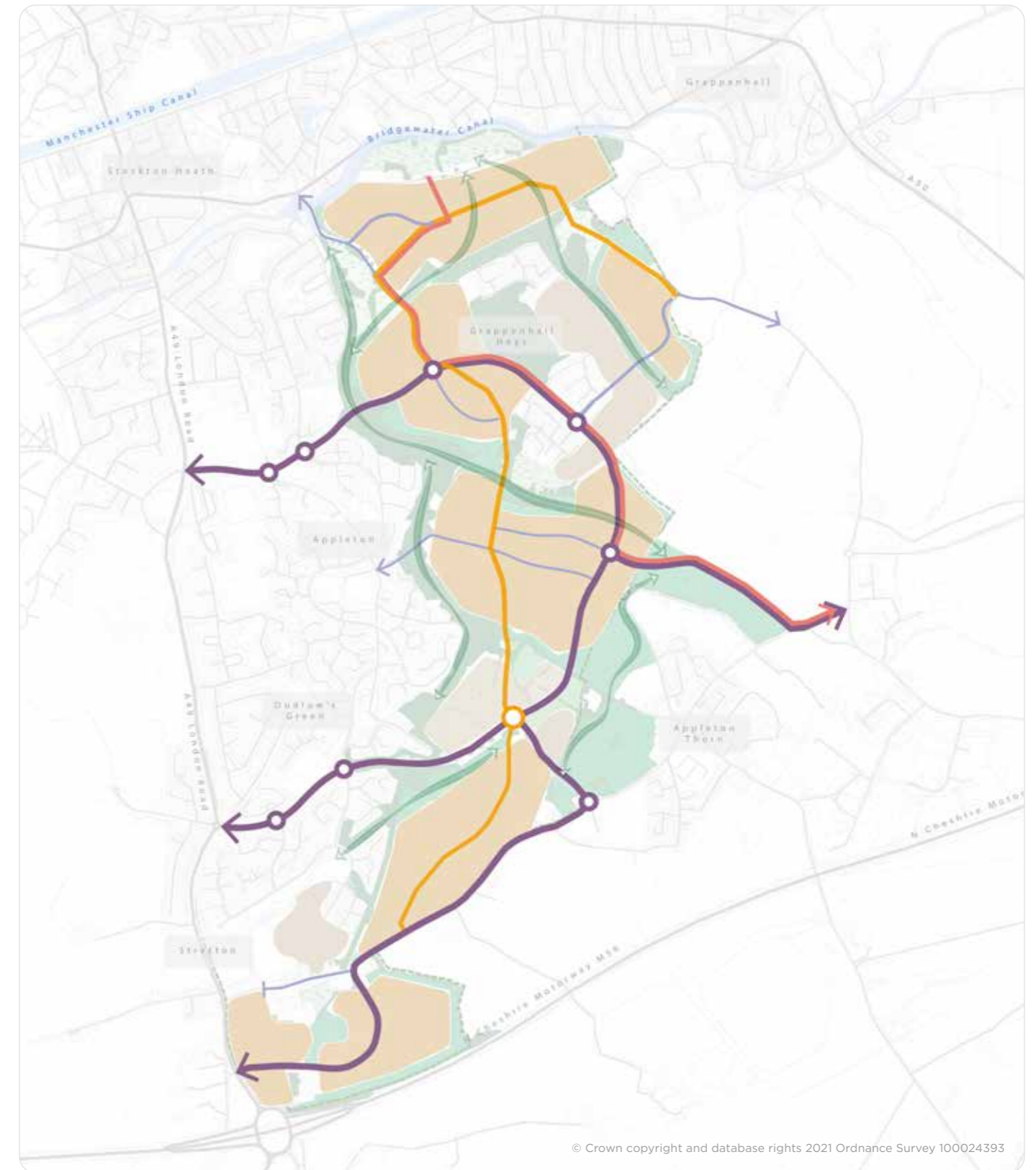
Cycle links prioritised along the community connector to promote active lifestyles



Off road pedestrian and cycle routes to connect through existing areas of green space



New highways links to connect new local centres with both residential areas within the SEWUE and existing urban areas



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Figure 16. Indicative Movement Framework

- Indicative Strategic Highway Network
- Indicative Mass Transit Safeguarded Corridor
- Indicative Low Traffic Community Connector
- Local Links
- Proposed removal of through route on Stretton Road
- Green Links (to include active travel)



6. Site Viability

6.1 Deliverability & Viability

All new residential development in the SEWUE will be wholly on land under the ownership of Homes England and under the control of Miller Homes which ensures that the principal landowners can manage and deliver the proposals.

It is important that infrastructure is delivered when it is needed, in particular highway infrastructure, to address the different phases of development.

To achieve this, some residential land parcels will need to be released early in the construction programme. This will ensure that the SEWUE begins to deliver on its infrastructure and housing needs as soon as possible, to the benefit of the wider site.

We welcome the conclusions of the Council's Local Plan viability work that confirms that the SEWUE is viable. The delivery strategy and phasing will be further explored through the Development Framework.



SUDs within a local centre at Countesswells, OPEN



7. Conclusion

7. Conclusion

The SEWUE will have good placemaking and design at the heart of its development principles - creating a new sustainable and healthy community.

The strength of connection to Warrington and surrounding settlements ensures that the SEWUE will deliver tangible benefits to existing communities in the Borough - with better cycle and pedestrian linkages, access to schools, shops and community facilities; delivering on physical, social and environmental infrastructure needs within the totality of the principal landownership.

The detailed Development Framework (as per the requirement set out in Policy MD2) will be prepared and approved prior to any planning applications coming forward; and we look forward to engaging with stakeholders and the community on more detailed plans in due course.

The principal landowners are committed to working together, and with the Council to deliver this viable scheme.



Figure 17. Illustrative Framework Diagram

