

Date: 15 November 2021  
Our Ref: Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft

**Local Plan, Planning Policy and Programmes**

Warrington Borough Council  
New Town House  
Buttermarket Street  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/Madam,

**WARRINGTON UPDATED PROPOSED SUBMISSION LOCAL PLAN 2021-2038  
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)**

This representation has been prepared Bellway Homes Manchester (“Bellway”) to respond to the Warrington Local Plan Updated Proposed Submission Version (“WLPSV”) (2021) which runs from Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October and closes at 5pm on Monday 15 November 2021, in relation to Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft (“the site”). A Site Location Plan is enclosed at Appendix 1. Bellway’s previous representation to the 2019 consultation (including a Development Statement for the site, Transport Note and Illustrative Layout) can be found at Appendix 2 for context.

Bellway’s representations build on the previously submitted information; make comment on the relevant updated strategic policies, site specific policies and the evidence base which underpins the emerging Local Plan document. They demonstrate that the site at Heathcroft Stud is available, suitable and achievable and therefore deliverable as a site for housing and outline the specific benefits that the allocation of the site for housing will bring to the local area.

Warrington Borough Council’s (WBC) own assessment of the site through its updated August 2021 Green Belt Assessment identifies that the site makes a weak contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt. Further it outlines development of the site would not represent encroachment into the countryside as the majority of the site is currently in use as Heathcroft Stud (equestrian use) therefore the removal of the site from the Green Belt will not harm the overall function and integrity of the Green Belt around Croft. Bellway strongly supports this overall conclusion and WBC’s decision to include the site for Green Belt release and a housing allocation in the emerging Local Plan. It has also been demonstrated there are no known technical or environmental constraints that will preclude the delivery of housing on this site.

Bellway have raised concerns within other representations to this consultation, with some of the development management policies included with the WLPSV (notably draft policies DEV2 and ENV7), however such concerns are not repeated within this site-specific representation to avoid unnecessary repetition.



Bellway is proud to be supporting Cancer Research UK as their charity of the year.

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## Policy DEV 1

Bellway strongly supports the sustainable growth of Warrington. The draft Local Plan proposes to deliver 14,688 new dwellings between 2021 and 2038, which has been calculated using Central Government's revised 'standard methodology'. Bellway are fully supportive of the standard methodology but emphasise that the methodology identifies a minimum figure. In order to meet this target, WBC will need to release Green Belt land for housing. The WLPSV has demonstrated that in order to meet its development needs, exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release exist.

In addition to large strategic allocations identified in Policy DEV 1, the emerging Plan makes a number of more modest allocations, which are immediately deliverable and do not require any significant infrastructure investment to facilitate their delivery, including 'Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft'. Bellway strongly supports the proposed Green Belt release at Croft for a minimum of 75 homes in draft Policy DEV1 at point 4b. It is necessary for the Council to ensure that a range of sites are allocated. These should include a realistic number of small and medium sized sites which are well connected to existing services and amenities and are therefore deliverable in the short term.

This approach is in line with Paragraph 69 of the NPPF, which recognises that 'small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly. Local Authorities should therefore ensure their Local Plans allocate a sufficient number of small and medium sites, such as Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft to safeguard the Borough's five-year housing land supply.

## Policy OS1

The site is proposed for housing allocation under Policy OS1 in the WLPSV, which is strongly supported by Bellway. The NPPF and the Government's growth agenda seek to ensure that sufficient land is available in the most appropriate locations to increase housing supply, support growth and boost home ownership. The site is available, suitable and achievable and is ideally positioned to deliver housing. The site should be released for housing, as it will positively contribute towards meeting Warrington's open market and affordable housing needs.

Bellway makes the following specific comments on the requirements:

### New Homes

- Firstly, in relation to point 2 of the Policy, whilst Bellway does deliver housing to meet everyone's requirements, provision and extent of such should be assessed and agreed on a site-by-site basis between the Council and the developer, having regard to local needs, the Council's latest evidence base and viability at the time of any planning application. A suitable caveat should be included within the wording of point 2. Bellway have separately submitted representations raising concern with draft policy DEV2 'Meeting Housing Needs'.
- Secondly, in relation to point 4 of the draft policy and the requirement for provision of self-build / custom build plots on the site, the Council should base this requirement on the evidence base. It is understood that the Council's self-build register shows a need for self-build plots, which is very limited and does not justify provision being



sought on all allocated housing sites. There is a need for the smaller housing sites such as Croft to deliver housing quickly so that the Council can demonstrate a 5-year supply because the larger strategic sites will rely on the delivery of infrastructure, which means housing delivery will be slower. It is therefore proposed that sites that are under control of major housebuilders such as Bellway are not requested to deliver self-build / custom build provision and that more appropriate sites are selected. It is therefore requested that point 4 is removed or amended so that flexibility is applied.

#### Open Space and Recreation

- Thirdly, on points 8 and 9 of the draft Policy 'Open Space and Recreation'. Whilst Bellway does not object to the principle of the requirement, Bellway will reserve the right to comment on any methodology established in relation to financial contributions for playing pitches and indoor facilities and would not support a policy requirement for playing pitches and leisure facilities; if this threatened the viability and/or deliverability of the site.

#### Natural Environment

- Fourthly, in relation to point 11 (biodiversity net gain), the policy should seek to encourage biodiversity net gain to be incorporated into the overall design concept but any mandatory requirement for a net gain to be achieved via the metric calculator should be deleted (the metric calculator being only one way to calculate net gain).

#### Green Belt

- Fifthly, point 13 of the draft policy requires a scheme of compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of land remaining in the Green Belt. The PPG states that authorities should set out policies for compensatory improvements informed by supporting evidence and opportunities could include new or enhanced green infrastructure, woodland planting, landscape and visual enhancements and new walking routes. The PPG goes on to say that there should be early engagement with all interest groups to consider matters such as the scope of works required. The Council has not set out any indication that such early engagement has taken place and there is no evidence to support its requirement for compensatory measures. There is no indication as to what such measures would consist of or what the implications may be for viability. It is unclear as to how an applicant, and the decision-maker, may interpret and respond to this policy requirement and we would suggest that this requirement is deleted or clarified.

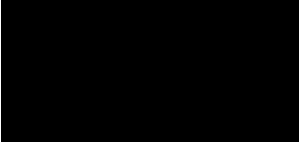
In summary Bellway strongly supports the allocation of the site and its proposed release from the Green Belt. The site represents a fully deliverable site, capable of being delivered in the first 5 years of the plan period to help meet housing and affordable housing need. Bellway has made some suggested changes to the wording of the draft policy, which it requests are made in the next version of the Local Plan.

#### Conclusions

Overall, Bellway are supportive of the principle of Policy OS1, subject to the comments and suggestions above which it is submitted would improve the effectiveness and therefore soundness of the policy. Bellway would like to participate in the hearing session for the proposals at Croft, during the Local Plan Examination.

Should you have any queries in relation to these representations or should the Council wish to prepare a Statement of Common Ground in relation to the allocation in advance of the examination hearings, please do not hesitate to contact me.

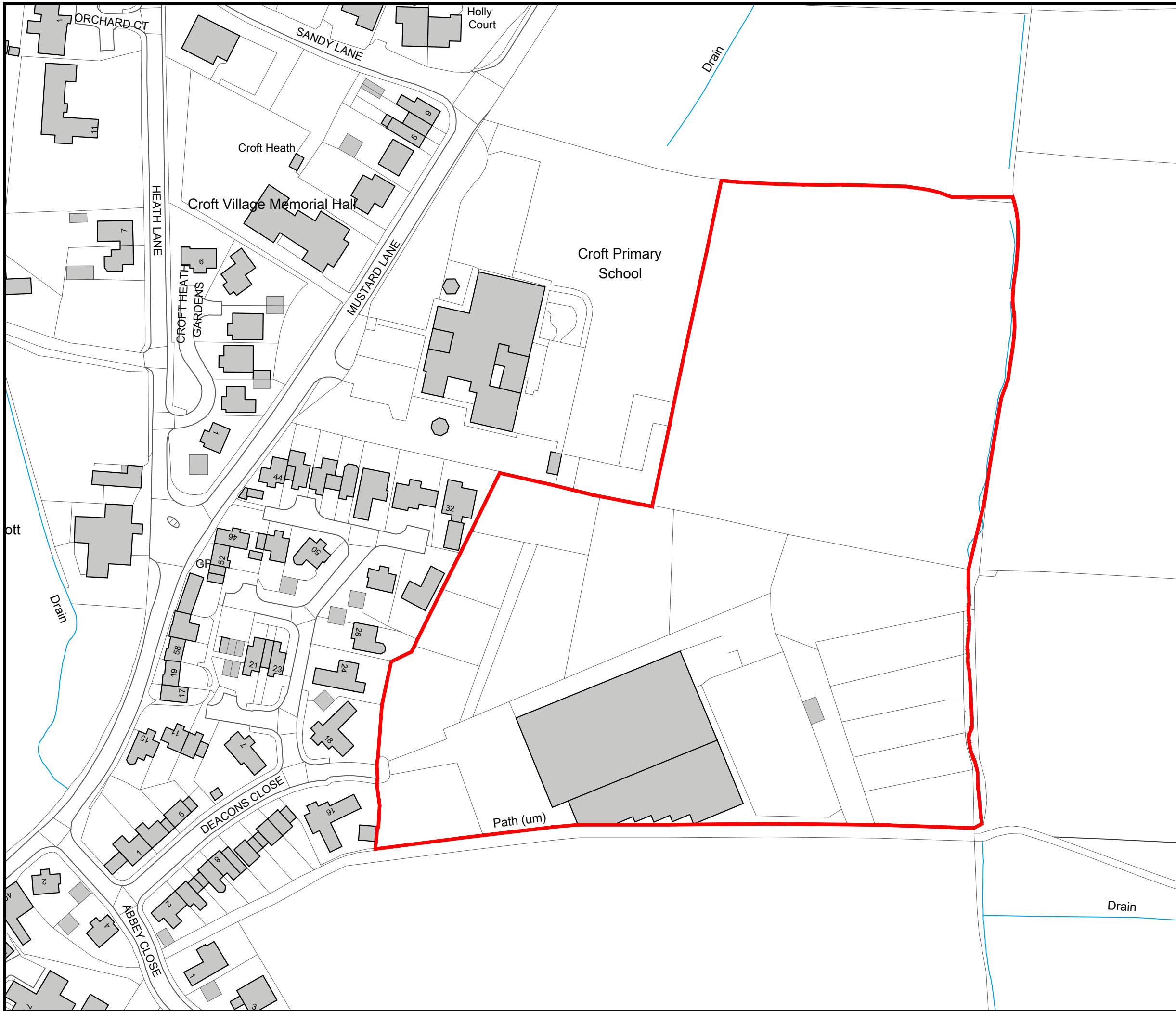
Yours sincerely



**Jonathan Penrose**



# Appendix 1



(Manchester)

(a member of Bellway Plc Group of Companies)

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 Warrington, WA3 6XG  
 Tel: 01925 846700 Fax: 01925 846718

Project  
**DEACON CROFT**

Subject  
**LOCATION PLAN**  
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 -

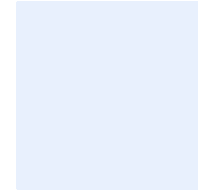
Scale 1:1250	Date 24-05-2019	Drawn MP	Checked RH
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Drawing No.  
**BHM140/LP01**

Note  
 All specifications, materials and workmanship to be in accordance with current NHBC and Building Regulations. Main drainage to comply with Sewers for Adoption current edition. Highways to be in accordance with Local Authority specification. Do not scale from this drawing. All dimensions to be verified with the drawing office.

Original Sheet Size A3 Do Not Scale From This Drawing

## Appendix 2



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# **Representations to Warrington Borough Council's Proposed Submission Version Local Plan**

## **Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft**

**On behalf of Bellway Homes**

June 2019

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## Appendices

Appendix I Site Location Plan

Appendix II Updated Development Statement

Appendix III Transport Note prepared by Croft

Appendix IV Illustrative Masterplan

**Prepared By: Stephen Gill**

**Status:**

**Date: June 2019**

**For and on behalf of GVA Grimley Limited t/a Avison Young**

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Avison Young ("AY") is instructed by Bellway Homes ("Bellway") to submit representations to the Warrington Local Plan Submission Version ("WLPSV") (2019) which runs from Monday 15 April until 5pm on Monday 17 June 2019, in relation to Land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft ("the site"). A Site Location Plan is enclosed at **Appendix I**.
- 1.2 Bellway's representations build on the previously submitted information; make comment on the relevant strategic policies, site specific policies and the evidence base which underpins the emerging Local Plan document. They demonstrate that the site at Heath Croft Stud is available, suitable and achievable and therefore deliverable as a site for housing and outline the specific benefits that the allocation of the site for housing will bring to the local area.

## Background

- 1.3 Following the High Court ruling in February 2015 which quashed the housing target in the adopted Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), WBC sought to update its housing policies. It became clear that the Borough's needs going forward could not be met without a full review of the adopted Plan.
- 1.4 In October 2016, the Council's Executive Board agreed to commence the process of reviewing the existing Warrington Local Plan. Consultation on the Preferred Development Option ("PDO") was undertaken between July and September 2017. Approximately 4,500 responses were received to the PDO consultation, a significant proportion of which related to the scale and location of development proposed and Green Belt release.
- 1.5 Since the PDO consultation, WBC has prepared a number of evidence base studies to demonstrate that:
- (i) the emerging Local Plan is based on the most up to date assessment of Warrington's development needs;
  - (ii) all options for meeting these needs have been appropriately considered; and
  - (iii) the infrastructure requirements to support new development are understood and can be deliverable.
- 1.6 The WLPSV has been published for a nine-week consultation period between Monday 15 April and Monday 17 June 2019. The Council will then review all of the representations made during the consultation prior to submitting the Plan for 'Examination in Public' ("EiP") to be carried out by an independent Inspector. It is anticipated that the earliest date for the EiP will be early 2020.

Bellway has been promoting land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft through the emerging Local Plan process for residential development and has submitted the following representations to WBC:

- WBC Call for Sites exercise in December 2016; and



- WBC Preferred Options document in September 2017.

1.7 Both representations were supported by a Development Statement which:

- (i) set out the case for the removal of the site from the Green Belt;
- (ii) demonstrated that the site is a sustainable and accessible location; and
- (iii) demonstrated that the site is deliverable and that there are no technical constraints that preclude the site from being developed for housing.

## 2. Meeting Housing Needs and Green Belt Release

### Meeting Housing Needs

- 2.1 The Planning Practice Guidance ("PPG") in relation to Housing Need Assessment was revised in July 2018, again in September 2018 and most recently in February 2019. The revised PPG (paragraph 4) sets out the standard methodology for assessing housing need. Paragraph 214 of the National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") (2019) states that any plans submitted after the 24 January 2019 should be based on the 2019 version of the NPPF including the standard methodology. WBC will be submitting their Local Plan for examination later in 2020 and therefore the revised framework applies.
- 2.2 At a national level, the NPPF supports the Government's objective to significantly boost housing supply and seeks to ensure that all Local Planning Authorities ("LPA") plan positively for their objectively assessed needs ("OAN") (paragraph 11). To support this objective, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without delay.
- 2.3 Paragraph 2 of the PPG states that *'the standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for'*. Paragraph 10 advises that there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether actual housing need is higher than the standard method indicates.
- 2.4 **Draft Objective W1** and **Draft Policy DEV1** of the WLPSV set out a clear, immediate and critical need for housing in Warrington and identify a net minimum requirement for **18,900** new dwellings over a 20-year delivery period (2017 – 2037), equivalent to 945 dwellings per annum. **Draft Policy DEV1** ('Housing Delivery') sets out the trajectory as to how the housing requirement will be delivered:
- 2017 – 2021 (first 5 years) – 847 homes per annum; and
  - 2022 – 2037 (following 15 years) – 978 homes per annum.
- 2.5 The target of 945 homes per annum over the Plan period has been established through the LPA's Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019) and is approximately 4% higher than the minimum requirement set by the Government's Standard Housing Methodology (using the 2014 based household projections). This approach is based upon WBC's commitment to work with the Local Enterprise Partnership ("LEP") to deliver the Strategic Economic Plan which constitutes a growth strategy.
- 2.6 A large proportion of all homes to be delivered within the Plan period are proposed within the large sustainable extension sites, such as the Warrington Garden Suburb (5,100 homes), Waterfront (2,000 homes) and South West Extension (1,600 homes). Although some short-term delivery can be expected, these larger sites tend to take several years to begin delivering significant numbers due to the infrastructure required to facilitate such development. In addition, Policy MD2 – Warrington Garden Suburb will require developers to:
- (i) jointly prepare a Development Framework for the Garden Suburb as a whole; and

- (ii) carry out individual Masterplans for each of the three villages and Neighbourhood Centre. Our experience of such exercises is that there is a 1-2-year time lag for the preparation of such complex documents.
- 2.7 Bellway strongly supports the sustainable growth of Warrington. The draft Local Plan proposes to deliver 18,900 new dwellings between 2017 and 2037, which has been calculated using Central Government's revised 'standard methodology' (using the 2014 based household projections). Bellway are fully supportive of the standard methodology but emphasise that the methodology identifies a minimum figure.
- 2.8 The Plan does, however, also make a small number of more modest allocations, which are immediately deliverable and do not require any significant infrastructure investment to facilitate their delivery. These allocated sites are listed under Draft Policy DEV1 at point 4 which identifies that a minimum of 1,085 homes will be delivered on allocated sites to be removed from the Green Belt adjacent to the following outlying settlements:
- (i) Burtonwood – minimum of 160 homes;
  - (ii) Croft – minimum of 75 homes;
  - (iii) Culcheth – minimum of 200 homes;
  - (iv) Hollins Green – minimum of 90 homes;
  - (v) Lymm – minimum of 430 homes;
  - (vi) Winwick – minimum of 130 homes.
- 2.9 Bellway strongly supports the proposed Green Belt release at Croft for a minimum of 75 homes in draft Policy DEV1 at point 4b. It is necessary for the Council to ensure that a range of sites are allocated. These should include a realistic number of small and medium sized sites which are well connected to existing services and amenities and are therefore deliverable in the short term. This approach is in line with Paragraph 68 of the NPPF, which recognises that 'small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area and are often built-out relatively quickly'. Local Authorities should therefore ensure their Local Plans allocate a sufficient number of small and medium sites to safeguard the Borough's five-year housing land supply.
- 2.10 **Policy DEV 2** of the WLSPV sets out the Borough's housing requirements in order to meet the identified need over the plan period. Policy DEV 2 requires residential developments to provide 30% affordable housing outside of inner Warrington, 10% of which should be for affordable home ownership. The balance of affordable housing should then be provided for either affordable rent or social rent. Policy DEV 2 seeks to provide a mix of house sizes and types and also states that 20% of provision must be made to accommodate the needs of older people. The policy also makes provision for self-build and custom build housing.
- 2.11 Bellway does not object to the principle of Policy DEV 2, but would like to make the following comments:

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<sup>1</sup> NPPF, February 2019, Paragraph 68

- (i) Firstly, the affordable housing requirement is in line with the need set out in the Local Housing Need Assessment 2019 and Bellway has no objection to the calculation for the projected need over the plan period;
- (ii) Secondly, Bellway is committed to delivering a wide range of house types and has no objection to delivering the specific type and the tenure of housing required locally as part of delivering development on the Heathcroft Stud site; and
- (iii) Thirdly, in relation to the requirement that 20% of provision must be made to accommodate the needs of older people, the explanatory text in the WLPSV Local Plan under Paragraph 4.1.54 states:

*"The LHNA identifies the need for around 20% of new homes in Warrington to be provided to accommodate older persons and for an additional 1,579 bed spaces within extra care facilities" (LHNA Table 48)*

- 2.12 The above requirement is not consistent with what the Warrington Local Housing Needs Assessment 2019 ("LHNA") states. Reference to bed spaces for older persons is not made in Table 48, but instead Tables 41 and 56 respectively. In addition, the need is identified as being 1,597 as opposed to 1,579 over the plan period: The LHNA makes the following reference in relation to provision for older persons:

*"The economic led population growth would result in a net need for 1,597 C2 bedspaces for older persons in the HMA over the 2017-37 period (80 per annum). The assessment, however, should be treated as indicative and does not seek to set policies for how older persons with care needs should be accommodated. <sup>2</sup>*

*GL Hearn recommends that councils should give consideration to how best to deliver the identified specialist housing need, including, for instance, the potential to identify sites in accessible locations for specialist housing or to require the provision of specialist housing for older people as part of larger strategic development schemes"*

- 2.13 The LHNA recommends that Councils should give consideration to how best to deliver housing for older persons but does not recommend specifically that around 20% of new homes should accommodate the needs of older persons. Whilst Bellway acknowledge the increase in demand and support the provision for older person's needs, the rate of provision specified (20%) for every development over 10 dwellings is not sound and is not based upon the Council's evidence base. This requirement should be considered on a site-by-site basis, with consideration given to the need of the individual area in question, as this may differ by location. Therefore, the wording of Policy DEV 2 (point 11) should be amended as follows:

11. In residential development over 10 dwellings or more ~~20% provision~~ **consideration** must be made to accommodate the needs of older people. The ~~rate~~ **rate and nature of the provision** will be determined on a site-by-site basis depending on demand in a particular area and the appropriate type of provision for the site and/or scheme.

## Green Belt Release

- 2.14 The history of the Warrington Green Belt is set out in detail in the Arup Green Belt Assessment (GBA), dated 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016. The Green Belt around Warrington was first formally introduced in the Cheshire Structure Plan (adopted in 1979) with the extent broadly defined on the Key Diagram. Later alterations of the Structure Plan did not change the extent of the Green Belt.
- 2.15 The Unitary Development Plan ("UDP") (2006) was the first single comprehensive statutory development plan for the Borough and was the first Local Plan to formally define the Green Belt. The UDP made minor changes to the Green Belt introduced in 1979 in the Cheshire Structure Plan.
- 2.16 The Local Plan Core Strategy was based on a 'regeneration first' approach which was required to be consistent with the now revoked North West Regional Spatial Strategy ("RSS"), which identified no strategic change to Green Belt boundaries in Warrington before 2021.
- 2.17 In summary, Warrington's Green Belt was designated in 1979 and largely remains the same today, save for minor changes introduced by the UDP. The Green Belt shrink wraps the urban area because it was based upon out of date maximum housing requirements which were required at the time the Green Belt designation was made. In accordance with national planning policy, housing requirements are now minimum requirements and as Warrington's Green Belt boundary has seen only minor amendments since it was first established in 1979, there is a clear need to review the Green Belt boundaries in the emerging Local Plan to ensure that Warrington's maximum housing requirements can be delivered in full.
- 2.18 Chapter 13 of the NPPF on Green Belt states that *'once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans'* (paragraph 136).
- 2.19 Paragraph 137 states that *'before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph (136), and whether the strategy:*
- a) Makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;*
- I. WBC has undertaken extensive masterplanning work to try to unlock significant additional urban capacity over and above that identified in the Council's Brownfield Register and SHLAA. An Urban Capacity Study was prepared by WBC in 2016, updated in 2017 and 2019. In identifying land to meet Warrington's need for housing and employment, the Council has sought to maximise the capacity of the existing area to accommodate new development, in order to demonstrate that all reasonable options have been identified for meeting development requirements before releasing Green Belt.
  - II. The urban capacity figure is a product of the updated SHLAA (2018) figure and the updated masterplanning work undertaken in partnership with Warrington & Co. The assessment identifies an urban capacity for 13,726 dwellings.

*b) Optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of the Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport;*

- I. WBC has reviewed its density assumptions for the Town Centre and Inner Warrington and is reviewing residential parking standards, recognising the potential for high density development in these locations. The Council is proposing minimum density requirements for the Town Centre, together with minimum requirements for all site allocations. It is clear from the Council's evidence base that through the review of the density requirements that Green Belt release is required to meet the Council's OAN in full.

*c) Has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.*

2.20 WBC has confirmed that no neighbouring authorities are able to meet any of Warrington's housing development needs, which is evidenced in the Council's Duty to Cooperate Statement (March 2019). It is also apparent that all of Warrington's neighbouring authorities are having to release Green Belt themselves to meet their own development needs. Furthermore, the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework ("GMSF") is stalling, generating additional pressure on Warrington.

2.21 WBC has therefore demonstrated that in order to meet its development needs, exceptional circumstances exist for Green Belt release. Bellway strongly agrees with WBC that exceptional circumstances exist to justify the release of Green Belt land for development, in line with paragraph 136 of the NPPF.

## **Location of Green Belt Release**

2.22 Draft Policy GB1 sets out the Council's strategy for the retention and release of Green Belt land for development. The draft policy sets out (i) general principles, (ii) land removed from the Green Belt, (iii) inset settlements, (iv) Green Belt settlements; and (v) policy for development proposals in the Green Belt.

2.23 The draft policy at point 3 identifies Bellway's site at Croft to be removed from the Green Belt and Figure 6 shows the amended Green Belt boundaries. Bellway strongly supports the proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt at draft Policy GB1 and Figure 6. The removal of the site from the Green Belt will facilitate the development of an appropriate and sustainably located site, which is capable of delivering a minimum of 75 dwellings to meet the requirements of draft Policy DEV1.

2.24 The release of the Croft site from the Green Belt fully aligns with Objective 2 of the WLPSV, which is to ensure Warrington's revised Green Belt boundaries maintain the permanence of the Green Belt in the long term.

2.25 As noted in Section 3 of these representations, the Croft site is considered to make an overall 'weak' contribution to the Green Belt.

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## Summary

- 2.26 The WSVLP (Draft Policy OBJ1 and DEV1) sets out a net minimum requirement for 18,900 new dwellings over a 20-year delivery period (2017-2037), 4% higher than the minimum requirement set by the Government's Standard Housing Methodology. In order to meet this target, WBC will need to release Green Belt land for housing. The WSVLP has demonstrated that in order to meet its development needs, exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release exist.
- 2.27 Bellway supports the sustainable growth of Warrington and strongly supports the Council's aspirations to release land from the Green Belt in order to meet the minimum requirements of draft objective OBJ1 and draft Policy DEV1. Bellway strongly agrees that exceptional circumstances exist for land to be released from the Green Belt to enable the Council to meet its minimum housing requirements in full.
- 2.28 Bellway strongly supports the proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt at draft Policy GB1 and the amendment to the Green Belt boundary shown on Figure 6. The Council's 2018 Green Belt Assessment concludes that the site makes an overall moderate contribution to the Green Belt.

### 3. Land at Heathcroft Stud

- 3.1 The site comprises part brownfield, part greenfield land. Heathcroft Stud Equestrian Centre is located at the south of the site and currently operates as a commercial livery (with 56 stables) and stud farm. Show jumping training and clinics by two veterinary surgeons also take place at the site.
- 3.2 The northern site boundary comprises the boundary of Croft Primary School as well as undeveloped land. The eastern and southern boundaries comprise undeveloped land. A brook adjoins the eastern boundary of the site and a public right of way route adjoins the southern boundary of the site. The western boundary comprises the rear of residential properties on Deacons Close.
- 3.3 Beyond the western and southern boundaries of the site is the main residential area of Croft. This is typically characterised by two storey semi-detached and detached properties with rear and front gardens.
- 3.4 The site does not contain any designated heritage assets such as scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or Conservation Areas. A Grade II listed building, known as Christ's Church, is located 0.5km to the east of the site (reference: 1329750). Eaves Brown Farmhouse is Grade II listed (reference: 1139385) and is located roughly 0.7km to the south of the site and both St Lewis Presbytery (reference: 1329751) and Church of St Lewis (reference: 1139383) are located to north of the site, approximately 0.7km away. The proposed residential development at the site will not affect the setting of any of these listed buildings.
- 3.5 Regular and frequent HGV and tractor movements are generated by the existing equestrian use of the site, with stables needing to be mucked out, horses hacked out, veterinary clinics, and show jumping events. The proposed development of the site for housing would remove the significant HGV traffic generated by the existing use from the local highway network, resulting in less of an impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

### Green Belt Assessment

- 3.6 WBC commissioned Arup to prepare a Green Belt Assessment (GBA) for the Borough in 2016. It then prepared a further Green Belt Assessment in July 2017 (Additional Site Assessments) which considered the Call for Sites responses and SHLAA Green Belt sites (GBA 2017). WBC then prepared a further Green Belt Assessment again assessing further sites in May 2018, which included additional site assessments. These documents form a key part of the evidence base for the preparation of the Local Plan. The site at Heathcroft appeared in both the 2016 and 2017 GBA document. The GBAs divide the Borough up into parcels and assess each against the 5 purposes of the Green Belt, as set out at Paragraph 134 of the NPPF, namely:
- 1) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - 2) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
  - 3) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - 4) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and



5) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

3.7 The site at Heathcroft Stud is identified in the 2017 GBA under site reference R18/095. The site is considered to make a 'weak' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt in the 2017 GBA and this states that (with Avison Young emphasis in bold):

***"The site makes a moderate contribution to two purposes, a weak contribution to one, and no contribution to two. In line with the methodology, the site has been judged to make a weak overall contribution. The site supports a moderate-weak degree of openness due to the built form however it has non-durable boundaries and therefore makes a moderate contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The site makes a moderate contribution to assisting in urban regeneration and a weak contribution to preventing towns form merging***

3.8 In principle, Bellway strongly supports the conclusions of the 2017 GBA which states that overall the site makes an overall weak contribution to the Green Belt.

3.9 Bellway supports the Council's overall conclusions for assessing the contribution the site makes to the Green Belt and has undertaken its own assessment of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF. The following table summarises both the Council's and Bellway's Green Belt Assessment.

Green Belt Purpose	GBA 2017 Contribution to GB	Bellway Contribution to GB
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	<p>The site is not adjacent to the Warrington urban area and therefore does not contribute to this purpose.</p> <p><b>No contribution</b></p>	<p>The site is not directly adjacent to the Warrington urban area and therefore will not lead to the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. Furthermore, the site is surrounded on its western boundary by existing residential development and therefore forms a logical extension to the existing area. As such, the site will not result in unrestricted sprawl and will have no contribution to this purpose.</p> <p><b>No Contribution</b></p>
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	<p>The site forms a less essential gap between the Warrington urban area and Lowton whereby development of the site would slightly reduce the</p>	<p>The functions, separation and context of the wider Green Belt in Warrington will be maintained, without diminishing the distance</p>

	<p>actual gap but not the perceived gap between the towns and it would not result in them merging. Overall, the site makes a weak contribution to preventing towns from merging.</p> <p><b>No Contribution</b></p>	<p>between the settlement of Culcheth to the north east of the site and Croft. As such, the site will not result in the merging of neighbouring towns and will have a weak contribution to this purpose.</p> <p><b>Weak Contribution</b></p>
<p>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p>	<p>The boundaries between the site and the settlement to the west are non-durable consisting of the rear gardens of residential properties on Deacon Close with fences/hedges and a tree lined boundary with the playing field at Croft Primary School to the west. The boundaries between the site and the countryside are of mixed durability, the southern boundary is a hedge lined made footpath which is durable, the northern boundary is a field boundary with intermittent tree line which is not durable and the eastern boundary is an unmarked field boundary which is not durable. These non-durable boundaries are not able to prevent encroachment beyond the site if the site were developed. The existing land use is in part open countryside, with a section of the site in use by Heathcroft Stud which is an equestrian centre. This also provides beneficial uses in terms of outdoor sports and recreation. The site is flat, with low levels of vegetation however has between 20 and 30% built form with low line views in some places albeit restricted in others by the built form. Thus the site supports a moderate-weak degree of</p>	<p>The boundaries between the larger parcel of land which includes the site and the countryside consist of Mustard Lane to the north and Lady Lane to the east which are durable boundaries which could prevent encroachment beyond the parcel if it were developed. The development of the site would create a new strengthened long-term Green Belt boundary and would align with the established residential area of Croft. The site will therefore make a weak contribution to this purpose.</p> <p>It can be acknowledged that by virtue of there being a housing development on a Green Belt site, there is encroachment into the countryside. However, the same is true of <u>any</u> of the proposed sites to be released from the Green Belt.</p> <p><b>Weak Contribution</b></p>

	<p>openness. Overall, the site makes a moderate contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment as it has a moderate-weak degree of openness however has nondurable boundaries and therefore has a moderate role in safeguarding the countryside.</p> <p><b>Moderate Consideration</b></p>	
<p>To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</p>	<p>The site is not adjacent to a historic town. The site does not cross an important viewpoint of the Parish Church.</p> <p><b>No Contribution</b></p>	<p>Croft is not an historic town and the site is not within a Conservation Area. The development of the site would also not impact upon the character of any listed buildings. Therefore, the site makes no contribution to this purpose.</p> <p><b>No Contribution</b></p>
<p>To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</p>	<p>The Mid Mersey Housing Market Area has 2.08% brownfield urban capacity for potential development; therefore, the site makes a moderate contribution to this purpose.</p> <p><b>Moderate Contribution</b></p>	<p>WBC's Local Plan evidence base confirms that the supply of deliverable brownfield sites is becoming exhausted and, consequently, Green Belt release will be required over the life of the Plan Period to meet the Borough's housing needs. Warrington's urban capacity is not sufficient to meet the Borough's housing need and therefore Green Belt release is required in addition to the urban sites coming forward for housing. The site will not prevent urban regeneration and as such it has a weak contribution to this purpose.</p> <p><b>Weak Contribution</b></p>
<p><b>Overall</b></p>	<p><b>Weak Contribution</b></p>	<p><b>Weak Contribution</b></p>

## A Deliverable Site

3.10 The June 2017 Development Statement (Appendix II) demonstrates that the site is deliverable. An assessment of the site's deliverability has been undertaken against the definition of 'Deliverable' as set out in the glossary of the NPPF (2019). For a site to be considered as deliverable it should:

### Be Available

3.11 A site is considered available where there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems. The site is within the control of a major house builder as Bellway has secured legal agreements with the site's landowners. If the site were to be released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing, Bellway Homes' aspiration is to develop the site immediately, to deliver sufficient homes to meet WBC's minimum housing requirement in Croft in full. This in turn would contribute considerably to the Borough's 5- year housing land supply and deliver highly anticipated new homes early in the Plan period. This commitment to delivery is demonstrated by Bellway' track record of the efficient delivery of high-quality housing schemes across Warrington and the North West.

### Be Suitable

3.12 A site is considered suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities; The site is suitable for housing development because it:

- (i) Offers a suitable location for development and can be brought forward immediately following any allocation;
- (ii) Would form a natural extension to the established Croft residential areas on a site which has been assessed by WBC and Bellway as having an overall weak contribution to the Green Belt;
- (iii) Could utilise existing infrastructure surrounding the site. There are also no utilities, drainage, or infrastructure constraints preventing the site coming forward for development;
- (iv) Has no identified environmental constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for residential development;
- (v) Can deliver satisfactory vehicular access from Deacons Close. In addition, existing bus stops are located close to the site on Mustard Lane. Furthermore, the local highway network has the capacity to accommodate the development;
- (vi) Will deliver new open space for use by residents and the local community which could link with existing recreation networks and informal open space in the surrounding area; and
- (vii) Is part brownfield, part greenfield and is sustainably located and is close to local services and facilities.

The site is therefore considered to be suitable in accordance with NPPF

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### Be Achievable

- 3.13 A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site within five years. This is a judgement about the economic viability of a site and the capacity of the developer to compete and sell housing over a certain period taking into account market factors, cost factors and delivery factors.
- 3.14 The delivery of new homes at the site would make a positive contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough. A full assessment of the site constraints has been undertaken which illustrates that delivery of the entire site is achievable and deliverable. In addition, a professional team of technical experts has been appointed to underpin this assessment and support the delivery of the site. Where any potential constraints are identified, Bellway has considered the necessary mitigation measures and required investment to overcome any deliverability barriers. The following summarises the results of the technical assessments which have been undertaken:

### **Transport and Access**

- 3.15 To further demonstrate the site's deliverability, Bellway instructed Croft to carry out work to demonstrate that the site can accommodate the necessary highway infrastructure associated with the development. The Highway Note is enclosed at Appendix III and has been reviewed by WBC Highways Development Control Team. No fundamental objections were raised to the principles set out in the Note and Bellway is aware that a detailed Transport Assessment would be required as part of any future planning application.
- 3.16 In summary, the updated Transport Note concludes that the site is situated in a sustainable location, within walking or bus journey distance of a range of day-to-day amenities.
- 3.17 In terms of vehicular access to the site, the Note concludes that this can be achieved via an extension to Deacons Close and would utilise the existing access to the stud, which would be improved to ensure this was up to adoptable standards. The Note confirms that the site is likely to be able to accommodate 100 units and as such only one formal vehicular access point would be required. The main access can accommodate a formal 5.5m wide carriageway and footways on both sides of 2m wide. The access can be accommodated within the site boundary or within the current limits of the adopted highway, which is shown in drawing number 1677-F01 Rev A at Appendix II.
- 3.18 The existing use of the site generates traffic throughout the day and also during the weekend. The site is currently operating as a commercial livery and stud farm that regularly hosts show-jumping events. Regular and frequent HGV movements are generated by the existing use of the site and these will be removed from the highway network with the proposed residential development of the site. This will result in a substantial benefit for those residents living close by on Deacons Close.
- 3.19 In considering off-site impact, Croft undertook an interrogation of the TRICS database, as this provides an indication of the likely levels of traffic the proposed development would generate. The TRICS output is provided within Appendix III and, applying the trip rates to the potential provision of 100 dwellings, the proposals are likely to generate in the region of 40-45 vehicular trips in the two busiest hours of the day, which are likely to be between 0800 and 0900 hours and 1700 to 1800 hours. There are numerous routes for traffic to be dispersed onto the local highway network.

- 3.20 Vehicles travelling towards Culcheth and Leigh will do so to/from the north and utilise Lord Street and Mustard Lane. Those vehicles travelling towards Warrington are likely to travel south to/from the site along either Smithy Lane, towards Winwick and the town centre, or New Lane, towards the Risley employment area of the town.
- 3.21 In summary, following a more detailed review of the highway's impacts, there are no capacity constraints to the local highway network which would prevent the proposed development. Rather, the proposed development would remove the HGV vehicle movements associated with the existing use of the site, which would be a benefit to local residents. A comprehensive Transport Assessment would be submitted with any planning application, which would further consider the local highway network.

### **Landscape and Visual Assessment**

- 3.22 The site lies within the Landscape Character Type 'Undulating Enclosed Farmland' and within sub-areas 'Croft' and 'Winwick, Culcheth, Glazebrook and Rixton'. Furthermore, the site sits within the National Character Area 'Mersey Valley'. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal concludes that the overall landscape effect of the proposals as negligible upon the Mersey Valley NCA.
- 3.23 The site is not prominent within the wider landscape and there are a number of landscape features which could assist with the successful integration into the settlement edge character. A sensitively well-designed scheme would not harm the wider rural landscape, as it will not be highly visible or result in a significant change to key elements of the landscape characteristics. The proposed residential development would offer a visual improvement when compared to the existing buildings on the site.
- 3.24 There are no significant landscape or visual constraints that would preclude the development of the site, subject to appropriate massing, design, layout and design measures at the planning application stage.

### **Ecology and Trees**

- 3.25 The site is not located within any designated ecological areas. A site of importance for nature conservation, known as Croft Grassland is located approximately 0.2km to the south of the site however given the existing structure of Heathcroft Stud stables already at the site and the hedgerows along the southern boundary of the site, it is not considered that Croft Grassland will be adversely affected by the proposals.
- 3.26 The site comprises pastureland, which is flat in topography and rectangular in shape. It is bound by minimal vegetation of limited trees and hedgerows. Some hedgerows and trees also bisect the site. There are no Tree Preservation Orders that affect the site or nearby surrounding area. A future planning application would be supported by a Phase 1 Ecological Assessment and any relevant protected species surveys. Furthermore, all ecological features would be protected by suitable standoff distances and enhancement measures as necessary.
- 3.27 Subject to further surveys and the implementation of best practice mitigation measures, it is not considered that any ecological constraints would prevent the proposed development coming forward.

### **Ground Conditions**

- 3.28 There are no active or historic landfills located on the site, according to the Environment Agency's Landfill Map. In line with the Coal Authority's mapping service, there are no records of mining activity or previously worked areas on the site. Croft is located within a Coal Mining Reporting Area which is used to determine whether a coal mining report is required for property transactions and the conveyance process. The site is currently developed in the southern parcel which comprises Heathcroft Stud stables and undeveloped land across the remaining site having historically been used for agricultural purposes. As such, there are limited potential sources of contamination. It is not considered that there are any significant contamination constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for development.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 3.29 The Environment Agency Flood Map indicates the site lies within Flood Zones 1, which means there is less than a 0.1% (1 in 1000) chance of flooding occurring each year. Therefore, the site is classified as being at the lowest risk of flooding.
- 3.30 The site is considered suitable for residential development in flood risk terms and appropriate sustainable drainage measures will be implemented to maintain existing runoff rates and suitably mitigate the flood risk on the site. A Flood Risk Assessment will be submitted with any future planning application and it is not considered that the site would give rise to any increase in flood risk elsewhere.

### **Air Quality**

- 3.31 WBC has declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) although the site is not located within or in close proximity to these.
- 3.32 The construction and future occupation of the site will consider the impacts of the proposals on the local air quality in the Borough; however, it is not considered that air quality impacts would preclude the development of the site.

### **Noise**

- 3.33 The main source of existing noise would be that emanating from the nearby highways network and from the residential properties surrounding the site. Subject to appropriate building envelope design and layout of the development, it is not envisaged the existing noise environment would preclude the proposed development coming forward. Suitable mitigation measures could be implemented during the construction phase to minimise noise impacts on the surrounding sensitive receptors.

### **Summary**

- 3.34 Overall, WBC's own assessment of the site through its 2017 GBA identifies that the site makes a weak contribution to the five purposes of the Green Belt and Bellway strongly supports this overall conclusion and WBC's decision to include the site for Green Belt release and a draft housing allocation in the WLPSV. It has also been demonstrated that the site is deliverable, available, suitable and achievable. There are no known technical or environmental constraints that will preclude the delivery of housing on this site

## 4. Draft Policy OS2: Croft

4.1 The site is proposed for housing allocation under Policy OS2 in the WLPSV, which is strongly supported by Bellway. Draft Policy OS2 states:

*1. Land to the north east of Croft (inset settlement) will be removed from the Green Belt and allocated for residential development.*

### *New Homes*

*2. A range of housing tenures, types and sizes will be required in order to ensure development contributes to meeting the Borough's general and specialist housing needs, including family homes with gardens, specific provision for older people and for people looking to purchase their first home with gardens, specific provision for older people and for younger people looking to purchase their first home.*

*3. A minimum of 30% homes should be for affordable in accordance with Policy DEV 2*

*4. Specific provision should be made for self-build / custom build plots, subject to local demand as demonstrated by the Council's self-build register.*

*5. To reflect the sites adjacent to the open countryside the development will be constructed to an average minimum density of 30dph*

### *Community Facilities*

*6. The development will be required to make a contribution towards the provision of additional primary and secondary school places to meet the need for school places that will be generated by the development.*

*7. Development will be expected to make a contribution towards the provision of additional primary care capacity*

### *Open Space and Recreation*

*8. In accordance with the Council's open space standards the overall provision of open space for the new residential development should include as a minimum:*

*a) Public open space – Delivery of a minimum of 0.38 of open space, comprising 0.1ha of informal play space and 0.28ha of parks and gardens on the application site together with details of management and maintenance arrangements.*

*b) Equipped play – Delivery of provision equating to 0.04ha (aligned to LEAP) on the site together with details of the management and maintenance arrangements*

*9. Proposals will be required to make a contribution to expanding and enhancing existing or planned built leisure facilities and playing pitches that will serve residents of the development.*



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*Natural Environment*

10. The layout of the development should take account of existing landscape features, including watercourses and significant hedgerows and ensure the site contributes to the wider objectives of the Northern Forest.

*Green Belt*

11. The north western and north eastern boundaries of the site define the Green Belt boundary. Development will be required to reinforce these Green Belt boundaries, particularly the hedgerow along the north eastern boundary.

*Transport and accessibility*

12. A package of transport improvements will be required to support the development. Required improvements will include:

A. Ensuring appropriate access arrangements for the site

B. Provision of cycling and walking routes within the site which connect into the wider existing footway network to the south and provide connectivity with the existing community

C. Other necessary network improvements as identified by an appropriate Transport Assessment.

13. Good accessibility to public transport services should be provided by ensuring that the bus stop routes and bus stops on Smithy Brow, Lord Street and Mustard Lane are accessible by pedestrians.

*Utilities and Environmental Protection*

14. The development will be required to make a contribution towards the delivery of improved cycle links to employment opportunities at Omega/North Warrington.

15. A site-wide surface water strategy is required, incorporating appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) and flood alleviation measures.

16. Improvements to the water supply and sewerage network will be required, ensuring that surface water drainage is not combined with foul discharge.

17. The development should be designed to mitigate the impacts of climate change; be as energy efficient as possible and seek to meet a proportion of its energy needs from renewable or low carbon sources in accordance with Policy ENV7.

- 4.2 Bellway **strongly supports** the allocation of the site for housing under draft Policy OS2. The NPPF and the Government's growth agenda seek to ensure that sufficient land is available in the most appropriate locations to increase housing supply, support growth and boost home ownership. The site is available, suitable and achievable and is ideally positioned to deliver housing. The site should be released for

housing, as it will positively contribute towards meeting Warrington's open market and affordable housing housing needs.

4.3 Bellway makes the following specific comments on the requirements:

4.4 Firstly, in relation to point 2 of the Policy, and provision for older persons, please see comments provided for Policy DEV 2.. Whilst Bellway does deliver housing to meet everyone's requirements, provision and extent of such should be assessed and agreed on a site-by-site basis between the Council and the developer.

4.5 Secondly, in relation to point 4 of the draft policy and the requirement for provision of self-build / custom build plots on the site, the Council should base this requirement on the evidence base. It is understood that the Council's self-build register shows a need for self-build plots, which is very limited and does not justify provision being sought on all allocated housing sites. There is a need for the smaller housing sites such as Croft to deliver housing quickly so that the Council can demonstrate a 5-year supply because the larger strategic sites will rely on the delivery of infrastructure, which means housing delivery will be slower. It is therefore proposed that sites that are under control of major housebuilders such as Bellway are not requested to deliver self-build / custom build provision and that more appropriate sites are selected. It is therefore requested that point 4 is removed or amended so that flexibility is applied.

4.6 Thirdly, on point 8 of the draft Policy 'Open Space and Recreation', WBC's Playing Pitch Assessment (PPS) and assessment of indoor/non-pitch sports facilities are currently being finalised and a developer contributions methodology is yet to be finalised to establish appropriate levels of contributions. Whilst Bellway does not object to the principle of the requirement, Bellway will reserve the right to comment on any methodology established in relation to financial contributions for playing pitches and indoor facilities and would not support a policy requirement for playing pitches and leisure facilities; If this threatened the viability and/or deliverability of the site.

4.7 Fourthly, point 14 of the draft policy this sets out that surface water strategy is required to incorporate SuDs and flood alleviation measures. The site is considered to be in Flood Zone 1 and has a very low risk of flooding (less than a 0.1% chance (1 in 1000)). An appropriate site-specific flood risk assessment would be submitted that considers surface water and overland flow routes and therefore 'flood alleviation methods' is not an appropriate term given that flooding is a low risk on this site. Therefore, Bellway suggests the following amendment to the wording for Point 14:

*14. A site-wide surface water strategy is required, incorporating appropriate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) ~~and flood alleviation measures~~*

4.8 Finally, point 15 of the draft policy states that improvements to the water supply and sewerage network **will be** required. Whilst Bellway does not object to the principle of improvements **if** they are required, it is our understanding that there are no utilities constraints at the site. Therefore, Bellway would suggest alterations to the wording as follows:

*15. Improvements to the water supply and sewerage network will be ~~required~~ **considered** to ensure that surface water drainage is not combined with foul discharge*

## Summary

- 4.9 In summary Bellway **strongly supports** the allocation of the site and its proposed release from the Green Belt. The site represents a fully deliverable site, capable of being delivered in the first 5 years of the plan period to help meet housing and affordable housing need. Bellway has made some suggested changes to the wording of the draft policy, which it requests are made in the next version of the Local Plan.

## 5. Other Policies

5.1 This section of the report considers other draft policies of the WLPSV and offers comments that should be considered and where appropriate incorporated into the next stage of the Local Plan process.

WSVLP Policy	Bellway comment
<p>Policy INF1 – Sustainable Travel and Transport</p> <p>Policy DC 1- Warrington Places</p> <p>Policy DC 3 – Green Infrastructure Network</p>	<p>Bellway does not object to the principles of these draft policies. However, Bellway would not support any policy requirements if it threatened the viability and/or deliverability development.</p>
<p>Policy INF5 - Delivering Infrastructure</p>	<p>Bellway generally supports the policy which requires development to provide or contribute towards the provision of the infrastructure needed to support it and agree that the Council should consider viability at the planning application stage where appropriate.</p>
<p>Policy DC 5 - Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation</p>	<p>In relation to draft Policy DC5, Bellway generally supports the approach of the policy. However, WBC's Playing Pitch Assessment (PPS) and assessment of indoor/non-pitch sports facilities are currently being finalised and a developer contributions methodology is yet to be finalised to establish appropriate levels of contributions. This impacts points 5 and 6 of Policy DC 5, which sets out context for Playing Pitches and Indoor and Recreation Facilities respectively. Therefore, Bellway will reserve the right to comment on any methodology established in relation to financial contributions for playing pitches and indoor facilities.</p> <p>Bellway would not support a policy requirement for playing pitches and indoor sport and green infrastructure if this threatened the viability and/or deliverability of the site.</p>
<p>Policy DC6 – Quality of Place</p>	<p>Bellway has a history of delivering high quality development and therefore, generally have objection the criteria set out in draft Policy DC6, however, would like to make the following</p>

	<p>comments on Point 7 of the policy, which sets out the following:</p> <p><i>“Developers will be expected to adhere to any additional guidance produced by the Council relating to public realm in their development proposals”</i></p> <p>The explanatory text explains that the Council intend to produce and publish a framework for treatment of the public realm to ensure consistency throughout the borough.</p> <p>Bellway reserves the right to comment on this document when this is published. Bellway would not support a policy requirement that threatened the viability or deliverability of development.</p>
<p>Policy ENV7 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development</p>	<p>In relation to draft Policy ENV7, Bellway generally supports the approach of the policy. However, in some circumstances, it will not be possible for development to connect to or provide its own decentralised energy network or alternatively provide the requirements set out in 6a and 6b.</p> <p>Bellway would not support a policy requirement if this threatened the viability and/or deliverability of the site. To avoid over-restrictive policy requirements, Bellway suggest the following amendments to Policy ENV7:</p> <p><i>“In these locations all development will be required to establish, or connect to an existing, decentralised energy network <b>or alternatively</b> unless this is shown not to be feasible or viable, in which case development will be required to;</i></p> <p><i>a. make provision to enable future connectivity in terms of site layout, heating design and site-wide infrastructure design; and</i></p> <p><i>b. to ensure that at least 10% of their energy needs can be met from renewable and/or other low carbon energy source(s).”</i></p>

## 6. Conclusions

- 6.1 These representations have been prepared by AY on behalf of Bellway. The site at Heathcroft Stud is allocated for residential development under Policy OS2 of the WLPSV. AY has also prepared an updated Development Statement to accompany these representations at Appendix II. The Development Statement confirms Bellway's commitment to bringing the site forward for residential development in line with the objectives of Draft Policy OS2 and includes summaries from technical assessments which have been prepared to demonstrate that the site is suitable to accommodate the minimum number of dwellings required by the policy.

### Meeting Housing Needs and Green Belt Release

- 6.2 The WSVLP at draft objective OBV1 and draft Policy DEV1 sets out a minimum net requirement of 18,900 new dwellings over a 20-year period (2017-2037), 4% higher than the minimum requirement set by the Government's Standard Housing Methodology. In order to meet this target, WBC will need to release Green Belt land for housing. The WPSVLP has demonstrated that in order to meet its development needs, exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release exist.
- 6.3 Bellway supports the sustainable growth of Warrington and strongly support the Council's aspirations to release land from the Green Belt in order to meet the minimum requirements of draft objective OBJ1 and draft Policy DEV1. Bellway strongly agrees that exceptional circumstances exist for land to be released from the Green Belt to enable the Council to meet its minimum housing requirements in full.
- 6.4 Bellway strongly supports the proposed removal of the site from the Green Belt at draft Policy GB1 and the amendment to the Green Belt boundary shown on Figure 6. The Council's 2018 Green Belt Assessment concludes that the site makes an overall moderate contribution to the Green Belt.

### A Deliverable Site

- 6.5 Section 4 of these representations has demonstrated that the site is suitable, available and achievable and can deliver residential development within the first five years of the Plan period. It has also been demonstrated that there are a series of compelling social, economic and environmental benefits which would be secured through the development of the site for housing. These benefits would be enjoyed by both future residents of the development and existing members of the wider community.

### Draft Policy OS2: Croft

- 6.6 Bellway is strongly supportive of draft Policy OS2 of the WPSVLP, which proposes the site for a housing allocation. Section 4 of these representations confirms that Bellway are fully committed to achieving the Council's key development objectives for Croft to make the site an attractive and safe place for future residents and the local community. The Development Statement demonstrates Bellway's further commitment to this by providing an Illustrative Masterplan which shows how the site could be developed in order to meet the objectives of Draft Policy OS2.

6.7 Bellway is fully supportive of the policy, however, have proposed some amendments to the policy text to ensure the site remains deliverable in the strongest possible terms.

## Overall Summary

- 6.8 In summary, these representations and the enclosed Development Statement have demonstrated that:
- The site represents a logical and wholly appropriate extension to the existing urban area of Croft;
  - The site does not meet the five purposes that the Green Belt serves and has been identified in the Warrington Green Belt Assessment (Additional Sites Assessments – Settlements) (May 2018) as making a weak contribution;
  - The site is located in a sustainable location within close proximity to existing services and facilities in Croft and employment opportunities at Warrington;
  - The site can accommodate a high-quality residential development that integrates successfully with the existing built and natural environment;
  - The development of the site will allow for the provision of good quality cycling and walking routes within the site to connect the site to the wider footway network, promoting connectivity with the existing community;
  - The site is suitable, achievable and available for residential development in accordance with national planning policy;
  - The site will deliver a range of housing tenures, types and sizes, including a mix of market and affordable housing to meet local needs; and,
  - There are no identified technical or environmental constraints that would prevent the delivery of housing on the site.

# Appendix I

## Site Location Plan





Appendix II

Updated Development Statement





**Bellway**

## **Heathcroft Stud, Croft**

Development Statement

Addendum – June 2019





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# Heathcroft Stud, Croft

## Development Statement

Addendum – June 2019

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# 1.0

## Introduction

This Development Statement has been prepared to continue the promotion of land at Heathcroft Stud, Croft (the 'site') for residential development by Bellway Homes. It seeks to reiterate the suitability and deliverability of the site in the context of the draft allocation within Warrington's Submission Version Local Plan which proposes the removal of the site Heathcroft Stud from the Green Belt and its allocation for housing. Bellway fully supports the draft allocation of the site in Warrington Local Plan Submission Version. With that considered, this Statement will reinforce the case for the site's removal from the Green Belt and will demonstrate that site would make a positive contribution towards the Borough's housing land supply and would deliver significant material benefits whilst still protecting the purpose and functions of the Green Belt. The site constitutes part brownfield / greenfield land and provides a logical extension to the existing settlement of Croft and is a sustainable location to deliver residential development with access to a range of existing services and facilities.







## This Statement assesses the site in terms of its contribution to the Green Belt and provides:

- A description of the site and its surroundings including a review of the site's existing use;
- An overview of planning policy and guidance;
- The case for the release of the site from the Green Belt. In particular, this Statement demonstrates that the site does not perform the purposes and functions of the Green Belt as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). An outline of the proposed alteration to the Green Belt is also provided;
- An analysis of the economic, social and environmental benefits that the proposed housing scheme will deliver including a review of key technical considerations;
- An assessment of the site's deliverability including transport considerations; and
- A Vision for the development including Bellway Homes' masterplan proposals for the site.

Bellway Homes has grown from a small, family owned firm to the fourth largest housebuilder in the country, having completed over 10,000 units in the 2017/18 year. Bellway Homes has an excellent track record of delivering high quality housing and has worked positively with Local Authorities across the north-west in securing planning to deliver 565 new homes in the year 2017-18. Bellway Homes has entered into a legal agreement with the landowners to promote and deliver housing at Heathcroft Stud in Croft.

In summary, the site is in a sustainable location that offers an opportunity for sensitive land release from the Green Belt and allocation for housing development as part of the Warrington Local Plan. Bellway Homes will work closely with WBC, key stakeholders and the local community throughout the planning process to ensure that a high quality and sensitive residential development is delivered.





# 2.0

## The Site

The site extends to 3.3 hectares and comprises a well-contained, undeveloped parcel of land adjoining the eastern edge of the settlement of Croft. The site comprises part brownfield / part greenfield land, in the Green Belt. It is flat in topography and rectangular in shape and the boundaries of the site are made up of trees and hedgerows.



## Site Description

The site comprises part brownfield, part greenfield land. Heathcroft Stud Equestrian Centre is located at the south of the site and currently operates as a commercial livery (with 56 stables) and stud farm. Show jumping training and clinics by two veterinary surgeons also take place at the site.

The northern site boundary comprises the boundary of Croft Primary School as well as undeveloped land. The eastern and southern boundaries comprise undeveloped land. A brook adjoins the eastern boundary of the site and a public right of way route adjoins the southern boundary of the site. The western boundary comprises the rear of residential properties on Deacons Close.

Beyond the western and southern boundaries of the site is the main residential area of Croft. This is typically characterised by two storey semi-detached and detached properties with rear and front gardens.

The site does not contain any designated heritage assets such as scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or Conservation Areas. A Grade II listed building, known as Christ's Church is located 0.5km to the east of the site (reference: 1329750). Eaves Brown Farmhouse is Grade II listed (reference: 1139385) and is located roughly 0.7km to the south of the site and both St Lewis Presbytery (reference: 1329751) and Church of St Lewis (reference: 1139383) are located to north of the site, approximately 0.7km away. The proposed residential development at the site will not affect the setting of any of these listed buildings.

Regular and frequent HGV and tractor movements are generated by the existing equestrian use of the site, with stables needing to be mucked out, horses hacked out, veterinary clinics, and show jumping events. The proposed development of the site for housing would remove the significant traffic generated by the existing use from the local highway network, resulting in less of an impact on the amenity of neighbouring residents.

## A Sustainable and Accessible Location

The site is located in the administrative area of WBC, within the settlement of Croft which is approximately 9km north of Warrington Town Centre.

Croft is identified as a sustainable location and as an area for future housing growth by WBC in its Local Plan Review "Spatial Distribution".

The settlement of Croft has a range of services including: churches, primary schools, public houses, a playing field, youth centre, golf club, bowling green and a hairdresser.

There are two primary schools within the vicinity of the site to the north, including St Lewis Roman Catholic Primary school (1km) and Croft Primary School, (400m). Furthermore, Croft Early Years and Croft Village Preschool is within walking distance

of the site. The closest secondary school is Birchwood Community High School, 5.5km south of the site.

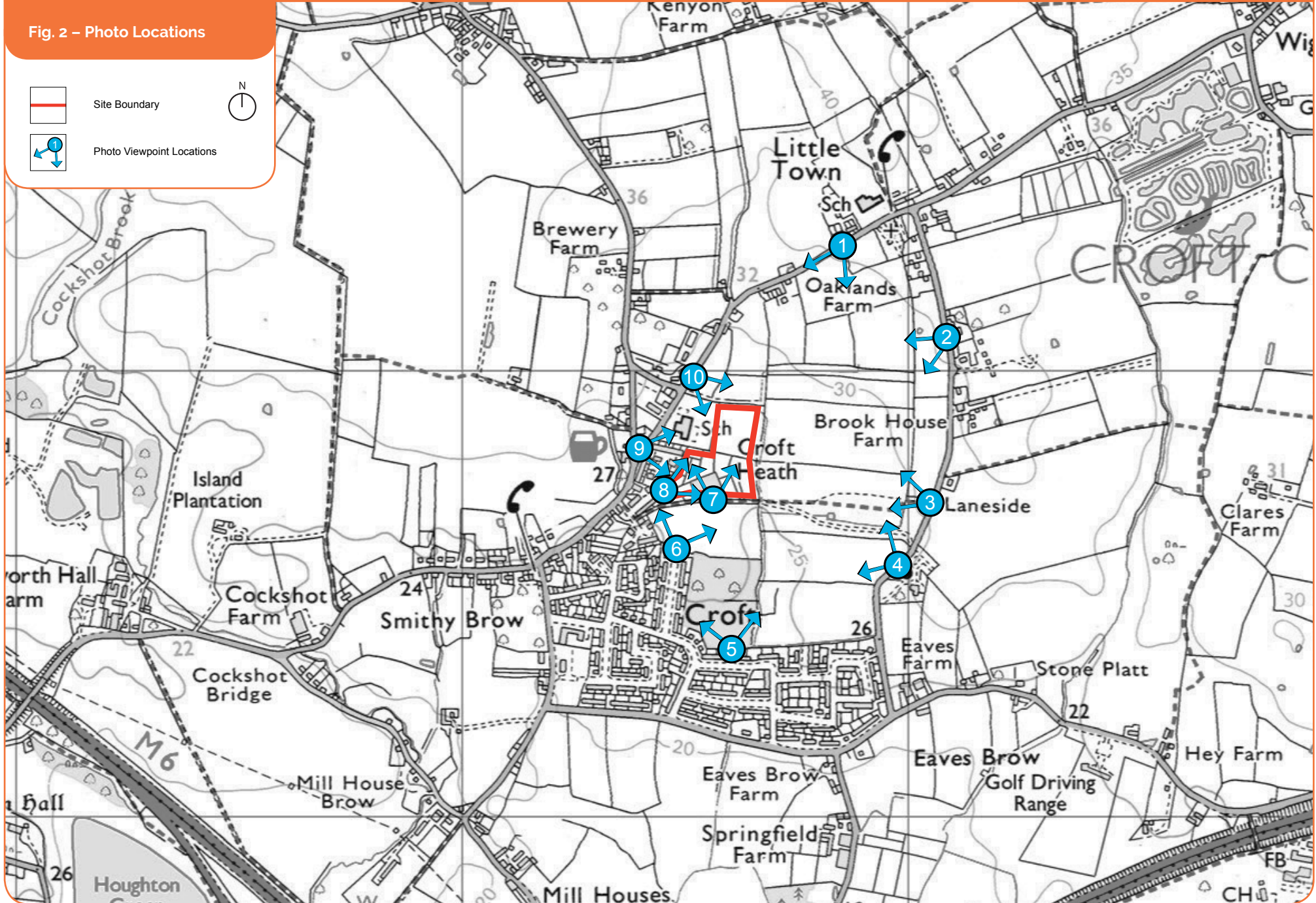
Bus stops are located approximately 175 metres north east of the site along Mustard Lane, which provide hourly services to Leigh and Warrington and other services to Glazebury. The bus journey to Warrington takes about 26 minutes and provides access to a range of services and facilities.

Access to the strategic highway network is available via Lord Street, Heath Lane and Stone Pit Lane, which connect to the A579 and provide a direct link to junction 22 of the M6 and onward travel to the north and south of England.

The site is accessible by train from Birchwood, Warrington Central and Warrington Bank Quay.

**In summary, the site is situated in a sustainable location surrounded by established housing to the west and south. It is part brownfield, part greenfield and is well connected to the strategic road network, being accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport.**

Fig. 2 – Photo Locations









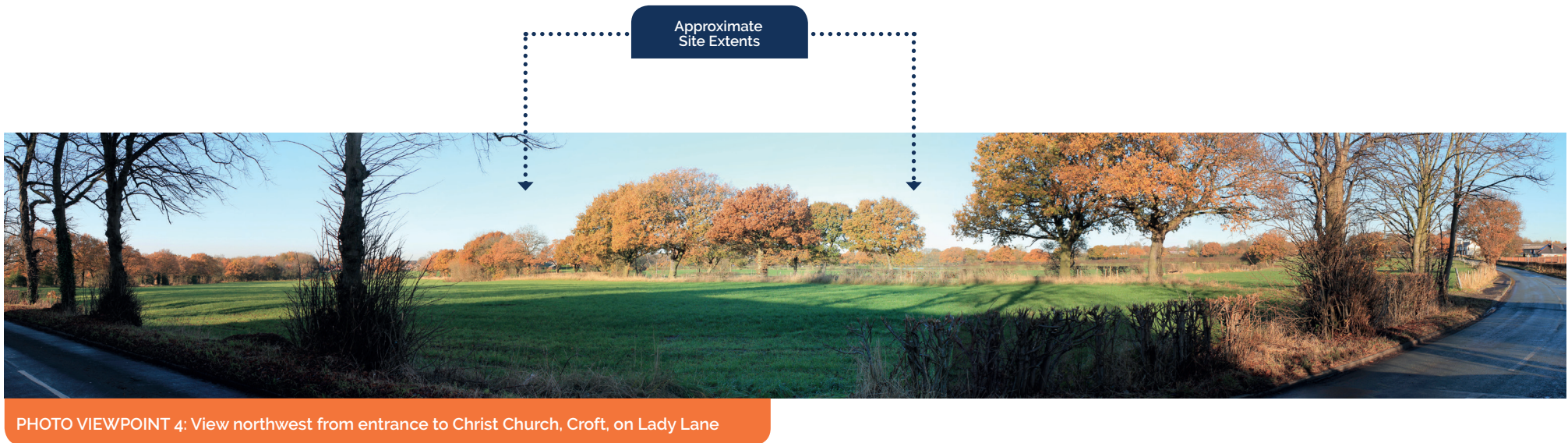
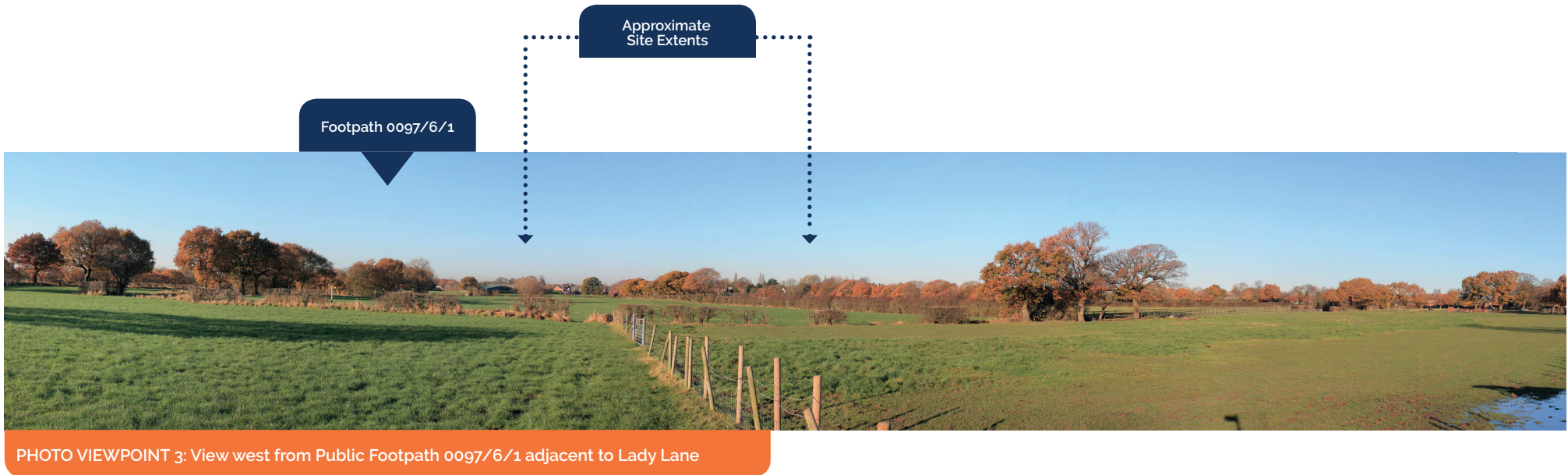






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 5: View north from Eaves Brow Road

Approximate  
Site Extents



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6: View north from Betsyfield Drive



Equestrian Centre



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 7: View north from Footpath 0097/6/1

Approximate Site Extents

Equestrian Centre



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 8: View east from Deacons Close





PHOTO VIEWPOINT 9: View east from Deacons Drive



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 10: View southeast from Mustard Lane





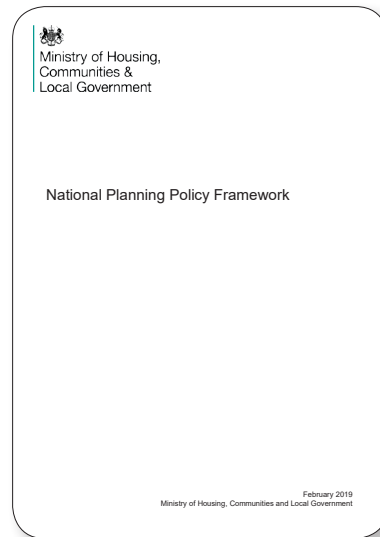
# 3.0

## Planning Policy and Guidance

This Section demonstrates that the proposed release of the land at Heathcroft Stud and draft allocation for housing in proposed Submission Version of Warrington's Local Plan complies with relevant national and local planning policies.



## National Planning Guidance



The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was amended in February 2019 and is a key part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible. It vastly simplifies the number of planning policy pages previously found in Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance and replaces the previous NPPF which was published in 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The overall emphasis of the NPPF is to reiterate the Government's key objectives of facilitating economic growth, securing sustainable development and boosting housing delivery.

Central to the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is the golden thread for both plan making and decision taking.

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF highlights that there are three overarching objectives to enable the planning system to achieve 'sustainable development':

- **Economic** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity;
- **Social** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and,
- **Environmental** – continuing to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment.

The NPPF is clear that these objectives should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives taking local circumstances into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

Releasing Heathcroft Stud ("the site") from the Green Belt to facilitate new housing development would accord with the guidance contained in the NPPF because:

- Paragraph 8 - It would help to meet the economic, social and environmental objectives of sustainable development which are set out in Chapter 5 of this Statement;
- Paragraph 11 - It would be entirely consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development;
- Paragraph 108-111 – The site is situated in a sustainable location on the edge of Croft, which is accessible by a range of sustainable modes of transport and has access to a range of services and facilities. It would boost the supply of housing and provide a deliverable housing site that is available, suitable, achievable and viable as demonstrated in Chapter 6 of this Statement;
- Paragraph 135 & 136 - There are exceptional circumstances which justify alteration to the Green Belt in accordance with Chapter 13 of the NPPF. These exceptional circumstances are set out in Chapter 4 of this Statement; and
- Paragraph 170 - It does not entail the development of more valued and important landscapes in accordance with the NPPF.

## Development Plan

WBC adopted its Local Plan Core Strategy on 21 July 2014. The document sets out the overarching strategic policies for guiding the location and level of development in the Borough up to 2027. It sets an overall housing target of 10,500 net new homes between 2006 and 2027 which equates to an annual housing target of 500 dwellings between 2006 and 2027.

Upon adoption of the Local Plan Core Strategy, a High Court Challenge was made against the adoption of parts of the Core Strategy. The challenge was heard on 3 and 4 February 2015 with a judgement given on 19 February 2015. Mr Justice Stewart ruled that parts of the Core Strategy relating to the housing target of 10,500 new homes between 2006 and 2007 as well as reference to 1,100 homes at the Omega Strategy Proposal should be overturned.

WBC subsequently commenced a review of the Local Plan Core Strategy in order to set a new and up-to-date housing requirement for the number of new homes that will need to be delivered in Borough over the Plan period between 2014 and 2037. This review was underpinned by an evidence base which formed the basis for understanding the future needs of the Borough, including various analyses of the Borough's housing land supply.

WBC through its own Local Plan Review, acknowledge that they have a significant housing need and not enough urban capacity to accommodate the housing need and this would result in the undelivery of homes for Warrington.

## Evidence Base Documents

### Housing Needs in WBC

Housing need in Warrington has been established through the Council's Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019). This identifies a minimum housing need of 18,900 new homes over the 20-year plan period 2017-2037. This equates to an average annual requirement of 945 dwellings per annum, which is considerably higher than the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy target of 500 dwellings per year 2006-2027.

The target has been set to ensure that there are sufficient homes to meet the Council's economic growth aspirations and to address affordability problems experienced by Warrington's younger residents.

### Housing Supply in WBC

The Urban Capacity Assessment Update published in 2019 confirms a total urban capacity for 13,729 homes, based upon the findings from the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) published in 2018.

Whilst WBC has identified an urban capacity of 13,729 dwellings, this is not sufficient to meet the WBC's minimum housing need of 18,900 dwellings as identified in the Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019). Furthermore, a review of some of the SHLAA sites brings into question the deliverability of those which have been deemed 'suitable'. Due to environmental matters and land assembly issues some sites in WBC's urban capacity figure are not deliverable and as such will not come forward for development. This includes issues surrounding contamination, ownership disputes, hazardous installations, access or ecological issues. As such it is likely that Warrington's urban capacity is overstated as a result of potential deliverability issues, which further reinforces the need for Green Belt release and in particular this site's immediate release from the Green Belt.

Despite maximising the capacity of the existing urban area, it is apparent that if Warrington is to meet the minimum development needs arising from its growth aspirations, it can only do so through the release of Green Belt land.

### Warrington's Urban Capacity

As part of the Local Plan Review, Mickledore was commissioned to review alternative forecasts for housing and employment land and also review historical housing completions. The 'Review of Economic Forecasts and Housing Numbers' prepared by Mickledore (October 2016) highlights that DCLG recorded an average number of housing completions in Warrington of 627 units per annum between 2003-2016. This is in contrast to WBC's own record which highlights average housing completions of 840 units per annum over the same period due to different data sources.

WBC's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) 2018 provides an update on key performance indicators in Warrington during the period 1 April 2017 to the 31 March 2018. The report indicates that 359 net new homes were completed in Warrington, which is considerably less than reported in the previous monitoring period. Furthermore, the AMR indicates that WBC cannot demonstrate a five-year land supply.

### Green Belt Assessment

Warrington Council commissioned Arup to prepare a Green Belt Assessment (GBA) for the Borough in 2016. Warrington Council then prepared a further Green Belt Assessment in July 2017 (Additional Site Assessments), this considered the Call for Sites responses and SHLAA Green Belt sites (GBA 2017). Warrington Council then prepared a further Green Belt Assessment again assessing further sites in May 2018, which included additional site assessments. These documents form a key part of the evidence base for the preparation of the Local Plan. The site at Heathcroft appeared in both the 2016 and 2017 GBA documents. The GBA's divide the Borough up in to parcels and assesses each against the 5 purposes of the Green Belt, as set out at Paragraph 134 of the NPPF, namely:

1. to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
4. to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
5. to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The site at Heathcroft Stud is identified in the 2017 GBA under site reference R18/095. The site is considered to make a 'weak' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt in the 2017 GBA and this states that with Avison Young emphasis in bold:

*"The site makes a moderate contribution to two purposes, a weak contribution to one, and no contribution to two. In line with the methodology, the site has been judged to make a weak overall contribution. The site supports a moderate-weak degree of openness due to the built form however it has non-durable boundaries and therefore makes a moderate contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. The site makes a moderate contribution to assisting in urban regeneration and a weak contribution to preventing towns form merging."*

In principle, Bellway strongly support the conclusions of the 2017 GBA, which states that overall the site makes an overall weak contribution to the Green Belt.

This Chapter assesses WBC's evidence base and concludes there is an average annual housing need of 945 dwellings per annum and that WBC is not able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. Despite maximising the capacity of the existing urban area, it is clear that if Warrington is to meet the development needs arising from its growth aspirations, it can only do so through the release of Green Belt land to provide 7,064 homes, and Bellway fully supports WBC in identifying sites in Green Belt for potential release including Heathcroft Stud.

The Council has identified Croft as a sustainable location and as an area for future housing growth, which Bellway fully supports. The site constitutes part brownfield, part greenfield land and has been assessed by the Council as making a weak contribution to the Green Belt. It is therefore well placed to make a positive contribution to Croft and the Borough's housing requirements early on in the plan period.





# 4.0

## The Case for the Removal of the Site from the Green Belt

As demonstrated previously, there are exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release in Warrington. To assist the Council in meeting its housing requirement, there is also a detailed case in support of the removal of Land at Heathcroft Stud from the Green Belt and allocation for housing.

## Demonstrating Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt Release

There are exceptional circumstances which support an alteration to Warrington's Green Belt through WBC's Local Plan Review and the Council supports this view with the inclusion of this site for potential Green Belt release. Bellway strongly supports WBC's approach and summary of the exceptional circumstances that exist is provided opposite:

### Warrington's Housing Need

The adopted Core Strategy provided a housing target of 500 dwellings per year. The evidence base for the Local Plan Review identifies a housing target of 945 dwellings per annum, which equates to a minimum 18,900 dwellings over the Plan Period 2017-2037. This target is substantially larger than the Core Strategy target and is based upon an economic growth scenario.

### Affordable Housing Need.

The need to deliver 377 affordable homes per annum in the Borough between 2017 and 2037 is established in Warrington's Local Housing Needs Assessment (2019). The 2018 AMR indicates that there is a chronic lack of new affordable homes, with just 86 affordable housing completions in the 2017/2018 monitoring period. The represents a shortfall of 291 dwellings against the requirement of 377 affordable homes per annum. The delivery of sites which are available, suitable and achievable such as the site at Heathcroft Stud, can significantly contribute to the identified affordable housing needs of the Borough.

### Warrington's Urban Capacity

WBC cannot currently demonstrate a five-year land supply. Furthermore, WBC has identified that despite maximising the capacity of the existing urban area, it is apparent that if Warrington is to meet the minimum development needs arising from its growth aspirations, it can only do so through the release of Green Belt land to provide 7,064 homes. However, the 7,064 dwelling figure does not consider that some of the sites identified in the SHLAA will not come forward for development due to lack of deliverability.

Through its Local Plan Review and associated evidence, WBC has acknowledged that it will need to release land from the Green Belt because its urban capacity falls significantly short of its housing requirement.





## The Five Purposes of the Green Belt

It is clear, that there are exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release in Warrington in order to ensure that the minimum amount of new homes required are delivered across the Plan period. Bellway Homes and its professional team has assessed the site against the purposes of the Green Belt.

The site represents a logical and appropriate option for Green Belt release to meet the future housing needs of the Borough. In accordance with Paragraph 134 of the NPPF the site:



### 1. Will not result in unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

The site is not directly adjacent to the Warrington urban area and therefore will not lead to the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. Furthermore, the site is surrounded on its western boundary by existing residential development and therefore forms a logical extension to the existing area. As such, the site will not result in unrestricted sprawl and will have no contribution to this purpose.

### 2. Will not cause the merger of neighbouring towns

The functions, separation and context of the wider Green Belt in Warrington will be maintained, without diminishing the distance between the settlement of Culcheth to the north east of the site and Croft. As such, the site will not result in the merging of neighbouring towns and will have a weak contribution to this purpose.

### 3. Will not create unacceptable encroachment into the countryside

The boundaries between the larger parcel of land which includes the site and the countryside consist of Mustard Lane to the north and Lady Lane to the east which are durable boundaries which could prevent encroachment beyond the parcel if it were developed. The development of the site would create a new strengthened long-term Green Belt boundary and would align with the established residential area of Croft. The site will therefore make a weak contribution to this purpose.

### 4. Will not impact on the special character of historic towns

Croft is not an historic town and the site is not within a Conservation Area. The development of the site would also not impact upon the character of any listed buildings. Therefore, the site makes no contribution to this purpose.

### 5. Will not discourage urban regeneration

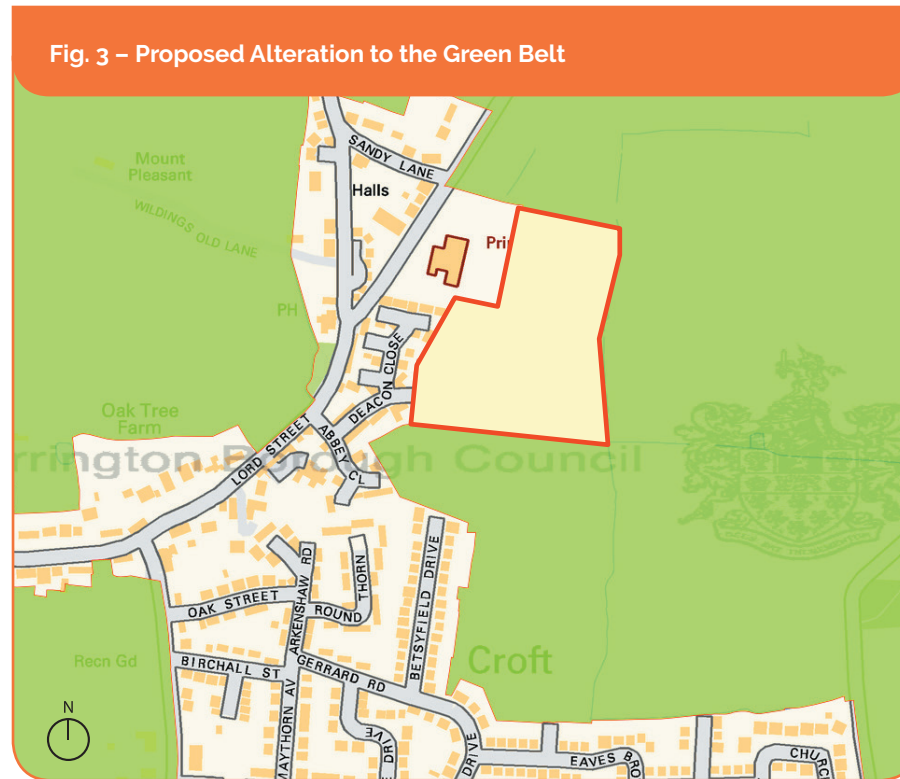
WBC's Local Plan evidence base confirms that the supply of deliverable brownfield sites is becoming exhausted and, consequently, Green Belt release will be required over the life of the Plan Period to meet the Borough's housing needs. Warrington's urban capacity is not sufficient to meet the Borough's housing need and therefore Green Belt release is required in addition to the urban sites coming forward for housing. The site will not prevent urban regeneration and as such it has a weak contribution to this purpose.

## Proposed Alteration of the Green Belt

This Statement has highlighted that there is a large deficiency of housing land supply in the Borough of Warrington. The site at Heathcroft Stud presents a highly sustainable solution which would make a positive contribution to the Borough's housing needs in line with Government guidance and the NPPF. The site will perform a positive economic, social and environmental role in accordance with the overarching pillars of sustainable development, and could deliver the type, quality and quantity of new homes that will support the growth of Warrington over this Plan Period. The site has no ownership, covenant or lease constraints and is wholly available, suitable and deliverable in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

In terms of the purposes of the Green Belt, it has been demonstrated that the site represents a logical and appropriate option for Green Belt release which would make a positive contribution towards the future housing needs of the Borough and the draft allocation is fully supported.

Fig. 3 – Proposed Alteration to the Green Belt



This Section continues to demonstrate that there are exceptional circumstances to alter the Green Belt through this Plan making process. It also sets out an assessment of the site's contribution to the Green Belt against Paragraph 134 of the NPPF and the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt. In summary, the assessment concludes that the site:

- Will not result in unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas – no contribution;
- Will not cause the merging of neighbouring towns – weak contribution;
- Will not create unacceptable encroachment into the countryside – weak contribution;
- Will not impact on the special character of historic towns – no contribution; and
- Will not discourage urban regeneration – weak contribution.

Overall, the site makes a weak contribution to the Green Belt and as such is a sustainable and logical option for removal from the Green Belt and should be maintained as an allocated site in the WBC Local Plan.



# 5.0

## Transport and Accessibility

A key objective of the NPPF is to promote sustainable transport. Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals and 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.

The NPPF at Paragraph 108 states that in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and

congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.

A Transport Statement (June 2019) has been prepared by Croft Transport. The Transport Statement, summarised below, demonstrates that the site is very well located in proximity to local facilities, can be satisfactorily accessed and will generate a modest number of additional vehicular trips onto the local highway network.



## Sustainability

The nearest medical facilities are located in Culcheth to the north of the site. This can be reached by bus using the number 19 service from the nearby bus stops on Mustard Lane. Warrington Hospital is within a short bus journey of the site using the service number 19 which passes along Mustard Lane close to the site.

There are local retail facilities within the vicinity of the site. The closest is Elliot's General Store located on Heath Lane less than a 5-minute walk from the site. In addition, the centre of Culcheth is located is less than a 10 -minute bus journey from the site.

A range of local amenities are located within the centre of Culcheth, such as a Sainsbury's foodstore, a number of conveniences stores, other retail outlets and health facilities (including Culcheth Medical Centre).

The area has a number of locations for sport and recreation. Culcheth (within a short bus journey) includes a number of leisure and sports facilities, such as Culcheth Sports Centre, Culcheth Library and opportunities for evening and weekend sports at Culcheth High School.

## Public Transport Accessibility

The site is highly accessible by public transport with the nearest bus stops to the site located along Mustard Lane, less than a 5-minute walk from the site.

Up to 2 buses per hour travel past the site during weekdays and Saturdays providing direct access to a number of destinations between Culcheth, Leigh and Warrington. The services also provide access into Warrington Town Centre where two rail

stations are located, including Bank Quay station which provides services to London, Preston and Glasgow.

The bus services start before 7am and finish around 7:30pm and therefore provide the opportunity for commuting trips by bus from the site to areas with significant employment opportunities including Warrington and Leigh. Many nearby villages are also accessible by a short bus journey such as Culcheth, Glazebury and Winwick.

## Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to the site can be achieved via an extension to Deacons Close. The access will utilise the existing access to the stud but will be improved to ensure that it will form an adoptable highway access into the site. As the site is likely to be able to accommodate around 100 residential dwellings, only one formal vehicular access point would be required.

The main vehicular access can accommodate a formal 5.5 metres wide carriageway and footways on both sides of 2 metres wide. This can be accommodated either within the site boundary or within the current limits of adopted highway.

## Trip Generation

The existing use of the site as a commercial livery and stud farm generates traffic throughout the day and during the weekend including regular and frequent HGV movements. These will be removed from the network by the proposed residential development of the site, resulting in a substantial benefit for those residents living close by on Deacons Close.

In considering offsite impact, an interrogation of the TRICS database provides an indication of the likely levels of traffic the proposed development would generate. The TRICS output indicates that the proposals are likely to generate in the region of 4045 vehicular trips in the two busiest hours of the day, which are likely to be between 0800 and 0900 hours and 1700 to 1800 hours. There are numerous routes for traffic to be dispersed onto the local highway network.

Vehicles travelling towards Culcheth and Leigh will do so to/from the north and utilise Lord Street and Mustard Lane. Those vehicles travelling towards Warrington are likely to travel south to/from the site along either Smithy Lane, towards Winwick and the town centre, or New Lane, towards the Risley employment area of the town.

The proposed development would generate a modest number of additional vehicular trips and would remove the HGV movements associated with the existing use of the site which would be a substantial benefit to local residents on Deacons Close. It has been demonstrated that there are no identified capacity constraints to the local highway network that would preclude the development of the site. The transport impacts would be demonstrated in further detail within a Transport Assessment that would accompany any formal planning application for residential development on this site.

This Section has demonstrated that the site is in a highly sustainable location in proximity to the amenities and services with the village of Croft and is within a very short bus journey of a wider range of shops, employment opportunities, education provision and other facilities. The site can be satisfactorily accessed via an extension to Deacons Close and the development of the site for new homes will generate a modest number of additional vehicular trips onto the local highway network.



# 6.0

## A Sustainable Development

The overarching policy objective of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The NPPF at Paragraph 8 indicates that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. An assessment of the site against the three dimensions of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF is provided opposite.

## Economic Benefits

Development at the site will contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. In particular, the delivery of new homes will bring:



A significant amount of new investment into the local area through the construction process;



**Circa £140,361** of Council Tax per annum in perpetuity following the scheme's completion;



Significant additional spending annually in the local economy from the site's new residents. This could support full time and part time jobs locally;



It is anticipated the proposed development will take around 2-3 years to be constructed (assuming a development rate of 35 units per year);



The potential to provide apprenticeships and training opportunities with Bellway Homes and its suppliers for residents in the local area;



**Circa £801,133** through the Government's New Homes Bonus scheme over 3 years, to be spent by WBC at its discretion; and



Contribution to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy via the provision of much needed additional open market and affordable homes in the Borough.



## Social Benefits

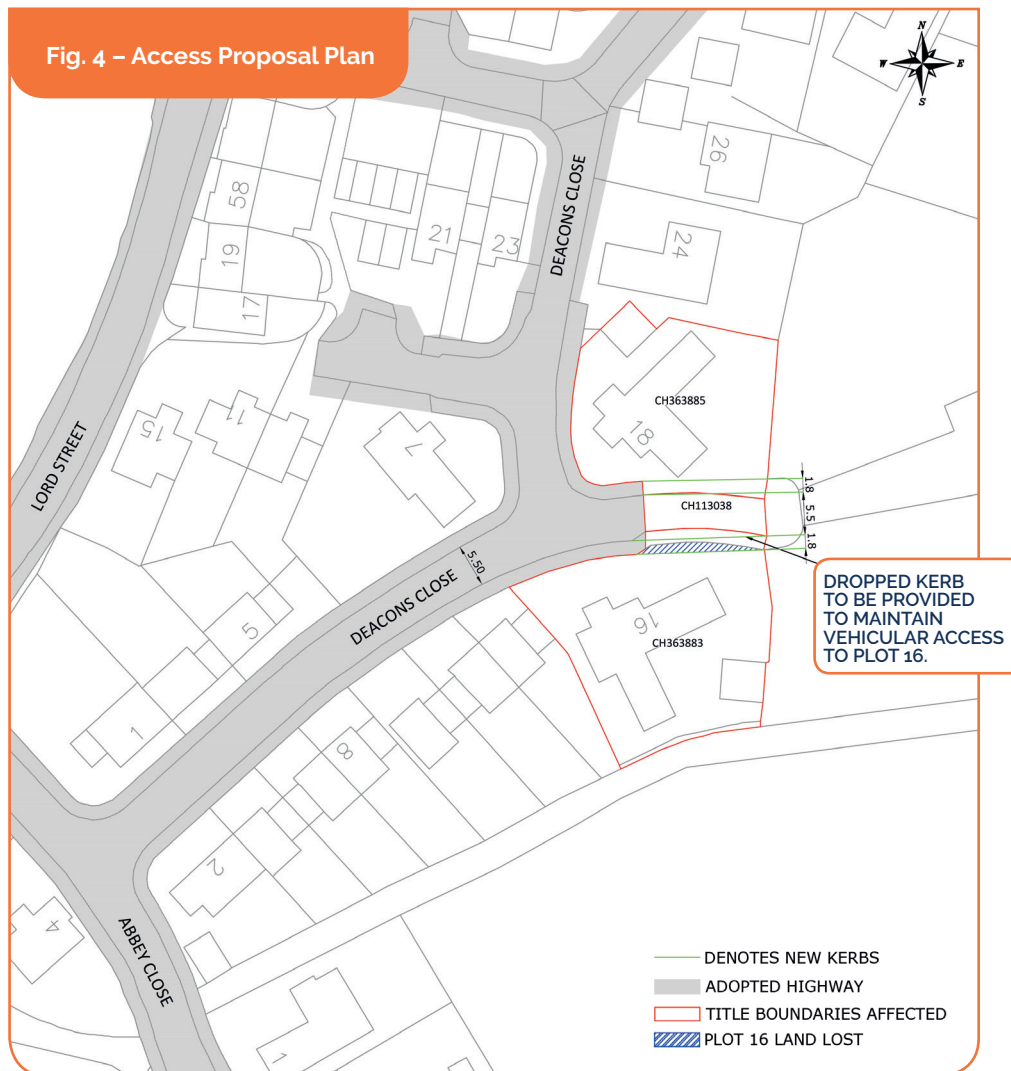
A key objective of the social role of sustainable development is to support a strong, vibrant and healthy community. The allocation of the site for housing and the development of new dwellings will provide:

- A sustainable development with good access to shops, services and transport links;
- New residents who could enhance the skills base available to employers in the local area and potentially benefit local business productivity;
- A range of open market housing comprising various types to meet the needs of Croft;
- Affordable housing of the range and type to meet the identified need, as required by the Borough's 2018 SHMA, which identified a lack of new affordable homes across the Borough as a whole; and
- Landscape enhancements and public open space that integrates with the wider Green Belt to the north and east of the site.

Specifically, delivering housing at the site would contribute to WBC's housing land supply. In line with paragraph 59 of the NPPF, the Local Authority should seek to 'boost significantly the supply of housing'. The site has a weak contribution to the Green Belt as WBC have conceded and provides an opportunity to develop a sustainably located site which will contribute to meeting the Borough's housing land supply, particularly over the next five years.

As demonstrated above, there are significant social benefits that will be delivered by the proposed housing development in accordance with the social objective of sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.





## Environmental Benefits and Considerations

Initial assessments of the key environmental and technical considerations have been undertaken by a team of professional consultants to underpin the deliverability of the site moving forward. If Officers would like to see these assessments, they can be sent upon request. More detailed assessments will be undertaken if the site is formally removed from the Green Belt and prior to the submission of a detailed planning application. The key considerations are as follows:

### Transport and Access

As demonstrated in detail in Section 5 of this Statement, the site is very well located in proximity to local facilities, can be satisfactorily accessed and will generate a modest number of additional vehicular trips onto the local highway network. As such, it is not considered that there are any highways constraints that would prevent the proposed development coming forward.

### Landscape and Visual Assessment

The site lies within the Landscape Character Type 'Undulating Enclosed Farmland' and within sub-areas 'Croft' and 'Winwick, Culcheth, Glazebrook and Rixton'. Furthermore, the site sits within the National Character Area 'Mersey Valley'. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has underpinned this Development Statement which assesses the overall landscape effect of the proposals as negligible upon the Mersey Valley NCA.

The site is not prominent within the wider landscape and there are a number of landscape features which could assist with the successful integration into the settlement edge character. A sensitively well-designed scheme would not harm the wider rural landscape as it will not be highly visible or result in a significant change to key elements of the landscape characteristics.

There are no significant landscape or visual constraints that would preclude the development of the site, subject to appropriate massing, design, layout and design measures at the planning application stage.



## Ecology and Trees

The site is not located within any designated ecological areas. A site of importance for nature conservation, known as Croft Grassland is located approximately 0.2km to the south of the site however given the existing structure of Heathcroft Stud stables already at the site and the hedgerows along the southern boundary of the site, it is not considered that Croft Grassland will be adversely affected by the proposals.

The site comprises pastureland, which is flat in topography and rectangular in shape. It is bound by minimal vegetation of limited trees and hedgerows. Some hedgerows and trees also bisect the site. There are no Tree Preservation Orders that affect the site or nearby surrounding area. A future planning application would be supported by a Phase 1 Ecological Assessment and any relevant protected species surveys. Furthermore, all ecological features would be protected by suitable standoff distances and enhancement measures as necessary.

Further surveys will be undertaken to establish the extent and level of mitigation recommended to accommodate any future development.

Subject to further surveys and the implementation of best practice mitigation measures, it is not considered that any ecological constraints would prevent the proposed development coming forward.

## Ground Conditions

There are no active or historic landfills located on the site, according to the Environment Agency's Landfill Map. In line with the Coal Authority's mapping service, there are no records of mining activity or previously worked areas on the site. Croft is located within a Coal Mining Reporting Area which is used to determine whether a coal mining report is required for property transactions and the conveyance process. The site is currently developed in the southern parcel which comprises Heathcroft Stud stables and undeveloped land across the remaining site having historically been used for agricultural purposes. As such, there are limited potential sources of contamination. It is not considered that there are any significant contamination constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for development.

## Flood Risk and Drainage

The Environment Agency Flood Map indicates the site lies within Flood Zones 1 which means there is less than a 0.1% (1 in 1000) chance of flooding occurring each year. Furthermore, a brook is located along the eastern boundary of the site.

The site is considered suitable for residential development in flood risk terms and appropriate sustainable drainage measures could be implemented to maintain existing runoff rates and suitably mitigate the flood risk on the site. A Flood Risk Assessment would be submitted with any further planning application and it is not considered that the site would give rise to any increase in flood risk elsewhere.



### Air Quality

WBC has declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) although the site is not located within or in close proximity to these.

The construction and future occupation of the site will consider the impacts of the proposals on the local air quality in the Borough; however it is not considered that air quality impacts would preclude the development of the site.

### Noise

The main source of existing noise would be that emanating from the nearby highways network and from the residential properties surrounding the site. Subject to appropriate building envelope design and layout of the development, the existing noise environment would not preclude the proposed development coming forward. Suitable mitigation measures could be implemented during the construction phase to minimise noise impacts on the surrounding sensitive receptors.

In summary, development of the site for housing would constitute sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF when taken as a whole. Housing development at the site would deliver significant and positive economic, social and environmental benefits which should be afforded significant weight in considering the site for removal from the Green Belt and allocation for housing. Importantly, the development at the site will deliver the type, quality and quantity of new homes that will support the growth of Warrington Borough over the Plan Period and is suitably and sustainably located to access public transport and local facilities.

The delivery of new homes at Heathcroft Stud would make a positive contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough. A professional team of technical experts has been appointed to underpin the relevant assessments and support the delivery of the site moving forward.







# 7.0

## A Deliverable Housing Site

The NPPF aims to deliver a wide choice of high-quality homes and boost significantly the supply of housing. It requires Local Planning Authorities to use their evidence base to ensure that the Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the market area. It is essential that Local Authorities identify deliverable sites in the right location to ensure that they meet their identified housing targets. An assessment of the site's deliverability has been undertaken against the definition of 'Deliverable' set out in the glossary of the NPPF.



## To be considered deliverable, sites should:

### Be Available

A site is considered available where there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems. The site is within the control of a major house builder as Bellway Homes has secured legal agreements with the site's landowners. If the site were to be released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing, Bellway Homes' aspiration is to develop the site immediately to deliver sufficient homes to meet the WBC's aspirations for Croft in full. This in turn would contribute considerably to the Borough's 5- year housing land supply and deliver highly anticipated new homes early in the Plan period. This commitment to delivery is demonstrated by Bellway Homes' track record of the efficient delivery of high-quality housing schemes across Warrington and the North West.



### Be Suitable

A site is considered suitable for housing development if it offers a suitable location for development and would contribute to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities; and

The site is suitable for housing development because it:

- Offers a suitable location for development and can be brought forward immediately following any allocation;
- Would form a natural extension to the established Croft residential area;
- Could utilise existing infrastructure surrounding the site. There are also no utilities, drainage, or infrastructure constraints preventing the site coming forward for development;
- Has no identified environmental constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for residential development;
- Can deliver satisfactory vehicular access from Deacons Close. In addition, existing bus stops are located close to the site on Mustard Lane;
- Is situated within a local highway network that has the capacity to accommodate the development;
- Will deliver new open space for use by residents and the local community which could link with existing recreation networks and informal open space in the surrounding area; and
- Is part brownfield, part greenfield and is sustainably located and is close to local services and facilities.

The site is therefore considered to be suitable in accordance with NPPF requirements.

### Be Achievable

A site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site within five years. This is a judgement about the economic viability of a site and the capacity of the developer to compete and sell housing over a certain period taking into account market factors, cost factors and delivery factors.

The delivery of new homes at the site would make a positive contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough. A full assessment of the site constraints has been undertaken which illustrates that delivery of the entire site is achievable and deliverable. In addition, a professional team of technical experts has been appointed to underpin this assessment and support the delivery of the site. Where any potential constraints are identified, Bellway Homes has considered the necessary mitigation measures and required investment to overcome any deliverability barriers.

This Section has demonstrated that the site is deliverable, available, suitable and achievable for development and that is under the control of an experienced house builder who can demonstrate an excellent track record in delivering new housing across the Warrington and the North West. Bellway Homes is fully committed to bringing forward the site for residential development.



# 8.0

## A High Quality Development

The site at Heathcroft Stud will deliver an attractive housing development with a distinctive character that offers a choice of high-quality new homes to meet the Borough's needs.



## Vision

Bellway Homes' vision of the site seeks to achieve the following goals:



- Delivery of quality new family homes which make best use of the land;
- Create a choice of housing with a mix of house types, tenures and sizes to meet identified local needs;
- Respect the character of the site and the setting adjacent to the Green Belt;
- Provide high quality, accessible, green space for the benefit of existing and future residents;
- Facilitate cycle and pedestrian links to community facilities and green spaces;
- Invest in the community with the creation of additional direct and indirect employment both during construction and after the development;
- Enhance the ecological value and biodiversity of the existing vegetation within the site and along the site boundaries;
- Create a safe and desirable place to live with a safe and attractive environment that builds upon the strength of the local community;
- Provide high quality design which will complement and enhance the existing environment and create a good standard of amenity and living environment; and
- Protect existing residential amenity.

Bellway Homes has developed a masterplan vision for the site which meets the key goals for the site and carefully considers transport infrastructure. It demonstrates how the design and form of development will respond sensitively to the characteristics of the site and the wider area. It is intended that these ideas will evolve further in consultation with the local community and key stakeholders at the appropriate time.





Fig. 5 – Site Masterplan



## Site Considerations and Opportunities

The development vision derives from a careful analysis of the site's characteristics, its context and the opportunities and considerations which arise and have been outlined earlier in this Statement.

The site has an existing access point off Deacons Close on the eastern boundary which is considered to provide suitable vehicle access to the site from the main street running through Croft.

An existing public right of way adjoins the southern boundary of the site, travelling west to east providing an opportunity to extend the existing pedestrian and cycle network to the site.

The brook and distinct hedgerows along the eastern boundary have the potential to become a clearly defined, defensible Green Belt boundary between Croft and the wider countryside whilst also including the site as part of the residential area of Croft. The same applies to the northern and southern boundary of the site which comprise a clear hedgerow and tree border.

A robust site analysis has been carried out to determine the principle considerations and opportunities that will underpin the development vision. The key considerations and opportunities presented by the site include:

- The need to complement the character of the surrounding area through appropriate development densities, street scenes and housing types;

- The requirement to demonstrate that the existing highway network and proposed infrastructure is able to accommodate the increased demand;
- Safeguarding the existing landscape structure and connecting the established vegetation with new on site green corridors with multifunctional use;
- The need to provide an attractive infill to the residential area of Croft and an appropriate Green Belt boundary to the wider area;
- Enhance the connectivity between the site and its surroundings in order to promote sustainable local movement networks for both pedestrians and cyclists; and
- Furthermore, the need to retain the public right of way to the south of the site.

There is the potential to develop a high quality, characterful residential scheme with a coherent landscape structure which conserves the natural assets as well as creating a framework for recreation and extending the existing pedestrian and cycle network.

This masterplan illustrates how the site could be developed to ensure that the objectives illustrated by the key concepts can be met.

This proposed Masterplan is set out at Figure 5.



A high quality residential scheme is proposed which could deliver the following key features:

- Delivery of sufficient market and affordable housing to meet WBC's aspirations for Croft in full;
- Provision of a high quality, centralised public open space;
- Enhanced landscaping within the site, especially along the site's boundaries;
- Retention of the existing public right of way to the south of the site;

- New pedestrian and cycle links to connect the proposed green spaces with the wider footpath network within the site and the surrounding area; and
- Retention of views into and out of the site.

The masterplan demonstrates that the site is capable of delivering a high-quality scheme which will complement its setting and deliver a range of attractive benefits.



# 9.0

## Summary

Bellway full supports the draft allocation of the site for residential development. WBC is not able to demonstrate a five-year supply of housing land and it is therefore evident through both our assessment and WBC's own assessment, that WBC needs to formally release land from the Green Belt in order to meet housing need over the Plan period and to produce a Plan that is flexible in accordance with the NPPF.



## Summary

The site at Heathcroft Stud presents an exceptional opportunity to contribute towards meeting the future housing needs in Warrington Borough. Bellway fully supports the principle of releasing appropriate land in the Green Belt to meet housing need including Heathcroft Stud and respectfully requests this site is retained for release from the Green Belt. The development of the site could deliver new homes of the type, quantity and quality of open market and affordable housing that will contribute to meeting the future growth needs of the Borough, without undermining the core purposes of the Green Belt.



In summary, this Development Statement has illustrated that the site at Heathcroft Stud would:

- Positively contribute to the increase in identified need for new housing in the Borough over the life of the Plan Period, based on WBC's Local Plan Review evidence base and any subsequent uplift in this figure to account for affordability issues;
- Create a range and mix of housing types that will make a positive contribution to the Borough's housing requirements by providing a mix of types and tenures of dwellings, including new affordable homes;
- Be available, suitable, achievable and viable for housing development in accordance with national planning policy;
- The site can accommodate the necessary highway infrastructure to ensure that the existing highway network is not detrimentally impacted upon;
- Generate growth and provide significant benefits to the local economy including the creation of new jobs, construction spend, and investment generated by new residents;
- Deliver an overall development vision for the site that provides a well-designed and sympathetic development in a sustainable location in Croft; and
- Sensitively integrate with its surrounding landscape features, delivering a strengthened Green Belt boundary to the north, east and south of the site.

The site at Heathcroft Stud would support WBC in planning for its future development needs and achieving long term sustainable development. The site should continue forward as an allocated site for residential development and should be released from the Green Belt for the reasons set out in this Development Statement. The site is well-contained, has physical and defensible boundaries and will not impact on the core purposes of the Green Belt. The site forms a logical extension to the residential area and this Statement demonstrates the exceptional circumstances that exist to justify an alteration to the Green Belt in the Borough. Bellway have undertaken its own assessment of the site's contribution to the Green Belt and can conclude that it makes a weak contribution as it:

1. Will not result in unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas – no contribution;
2. Will not cause the merger of neighbouring towns – weak contribution;
3. Will not create unacceptable encroachment into the countryside – weak contribution;
4. Will not impact on the special character of historic towns – no contribution; and
5. Will not discourage urban regeneration – weak contribution.

Bellway welcomes the draft allocation set out in the Local Plan. This Development Statement establishes and reinforces the need to release viable sites including Heathcroft Stud from the Green Belt. The site can deliver housing within the next 5 years and should be formally released now in line with its proposed draft allocation in the Submission Version of the Warrington Local Plan.

Bellway Homes is committed to working collaboratively with WBC and key stakeholders to ensure the Borough's housing need is met in a sensitive and sustainable manner; and fully supports the alteration to Warrington's Green Belt and allocation of the site for high quality and new housing.





# Bellway

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## Heathcroft Stud, Croft

Development Statement Addendum – June 2019

[www.bellway.co.uk](http://www.bellway.co.uk)

# Appendix III

Transport Note prepared by Croft





**PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, HEATHCROFT STUD, CROFT (1677)  
TRANSPORT ISSUES NOTE – JUNE 2019**

**Location and Accessibility**

The site is located within the centre of the village of Croft. The site is bordered to the north by Croft Primary School, to the east and south by agricultural land and to the west by existing residential development.

As we will demonstrate later in this note, the site is located in an accessible location with regular and frequent bus services running in close proximity. There is also strong potential to connect to nearby existing footway and cycle networks.

This note will demonstrate that the site is in a sustainable location with access to local facilities, and should therefore be allocated for residential development in the emerging Local Plan.

**Education**

Specific guidance on the distances that children will walk to school is found in the July 2014 document published by the Department for Education (DfE) entitled 'Home to School Travel and Transport' statutory guidance document. This suggests that the maximum walking distance to schools is 2 miles (3.2 kilometres) for children under 8 and 3 miles (4.8 kilometres) for children over the age of 8.

Croft Primary School is located within 400 metres of the site less than a 5 minute walk, from the site off Mustard Lane. Access to the school can be achieved directly utilising the existing footways along Deacons Close and Mustard Lane.

Footways exist along both sides of Deacons Close and Mustard Lane, to the north and west of the site.



The nearest secondary school to the site is Culcheth High School around 4 kilometres to the north of the site. Whilst this is within the 4.8km maximum walking distance identified by DfE, it is also located less than a 10 minute bus journey, using the number 19 service as will be demonstrated later in this note, using the nearby bus stops on Mustard Lane less than a 5 minute walk of the site.

Buses depart from the bus stops close to the site at around 7.58am and 8.05am and would arrive in Culcheth in less than 10 minutes in time for the 8.30am school start time. Similar services run in the afternoon with one leaving Culcheth at 3.56pm and the next one at 4.34pm.

### **Healthcare**

The nearest medical facilities are located in Culcheth to the north of the site. This can be reached by bus using the number 19 service from the nearby bus stops on Mustard Lane.

Warrington Hospital is within a short bus journey of the site using the service number 19 which passes along Mustard Lane close to the site. This travels into Warrington town centre and from there the Hospital is a short walk or further very short bus journey.

### **Employment**

Although major employment opportunities may be limited within the vicinity of the site, with the exception of some small businesses, there are a number of large employment opportunities close by in Culcheth, Leigh and Warrington located within a short bus journey of the site.

For example, buses leave for Warrington at 7.08am and arrive in the town centre at around 7.34am. The last service back in the evening from Warrington leaves the town centre at around 6.40pm. Services to and from Leigh leave the village at 6.14am and return after 7.30pm.

### **Retail**

There are local retail facilities within the vicinity of the site. The closest is Elliot's General Store located on Heath Lane less than a 5 minute walk of the site. In addition, the centre of Culcheth is located less than a 10 minute bus journey of the site.



A range of local amenities are located within the centre of Culcheth, such as a Sainsbury's foodstore, a number of conveniences stores, other retail outlets and health facilities (including Culcheth Medical Centre).

### **Sports and Recreation**

The area has a number of locations for sport and recreation. Whilst Croft is limited for these types of uses, nearby Culcheth (within a short bus journey) includes a number of leisure and sports facilities, such as Culcheth Sports Centre, Culcheth Library, opportunities for evening and weekend sports at Culcheth High School and a number of food & drink outlets.

### **Sustainability Summary**

This section clearly demonstrates that the site is within a reasonable walking or bus journey distance of a range of day-to-day amenities.

There is the scope for a range of improvements to sustainable transport connectivity. These could be in the form of potential improvements to footway and cycleway facilities in the area that could be promoted as part of the site or improvements to the nearest bus stops.

### **Vehicular Access**

Vehicular access to the site can be achieved via an extension to Deacons Close. The access will utilise the existing access to the stud but will be improved to ensure that it will form an adoptable highway access into the site.

At this stage the site is likely to be able to accommodate around 100 residential dwellings. As such, it is likely that only one formal vehicular access point would be required.

The main vehicular access can accommodate a formal 5.5 metres wide carriageway and footways on both sides of 2 metres wide. All of this geometry can be accommodated within either the site boundary or within the current limits of adopted highway.





This junction has been shown on Drawing Number 1677-Fo1 Rev E and demonstrates that the proposed vehicular access can be adequately accommodated.

The existing use of the site generates traffic throughout the day and also during the weekend. The site is currently operating as a commercial livery and stud farm that regularly hosts show-jumping events. Regular and frequent HGV movements are generated by the existing use of the site and these will be removed from the network with the proposed residential development of the site. This will ensure a substantial benefit for those residents living close by on Deacons Close.

In considering off-site impact, an interrogation of the TRICS database provides an indication of the likely levels of traffic the proposed development would generate. The TRICS output is provided at Appendix 1 and, applying the trip rates to the potential provision of 100 dwellings, the proposals are likely to generate in the region of 40-45 vehicular trips in the two busiest hours of the day, which are likely to be between 0800 and 0900 hours and 1700 to 1800 hours. There are numerous routes for traffic to be dispersed onto the local highway network.

Vehicles travelling towards Culcheth and Leigh will do so to/from the north and utilise Lord Street and Mustard Lane. Those vehicles travelling towards Warrington are likely to travel south to/from the site along either Smithy Lane, towards Winwick and the town centre, or New Lane, towards the Risley employment area of the town.

There are no capacity constraints to the local highway network, which would provide an issue for this additional traffic generation (and there would, of course, also be some netting out of trips to account for the existing use on the site), though this would need to be demonstrated in detail within a Transport Assessment that would accompany any formal submission on this site.

## **Transportation**

The nearest bus stops to the site are located along Mustard Lane less than a 5 minute walk of the site.

Table 1, below, summarises the bus services that operate in the vicinity of the site together with their frequencies per hour.



Service No	Route	Monday – Friday Frequency per hour				Sat	Sun
		AM Peak	Midday	PM Peak	Eve		
19	Warrington - Leigh	2	1	2	1	1	1

**Table 1 - Existing Bus Services Operating Past the Site**

The table shows that up to 2 buses per hour travel past to the site during weekdays and Saturdays. These provide direct access to a number of destinations between Culcheth, Leigh and Warrington.

The services also provide access into Warrington town centre where two rail stations are located, including Bank Quay station on the West Coast main line and provides services to London, Preston and Glasgow.

As detailed earlier, these services start before 7am and finish around 7:30pm and therefore provide the opportunity for commuting trips by bus from the site to Warrington and Leigh, for example. Both Leigh and Warrington town centres are around a 30 minute bus journey from the site.

Many nearby villages are also accessible by a short bus journey such as Culcheth, Glazebury and Winwick.

These services would provide the opportunity to access numerous destinations in and around the site. As such, the site can be seen as accessible by public transport.





## Conclusions

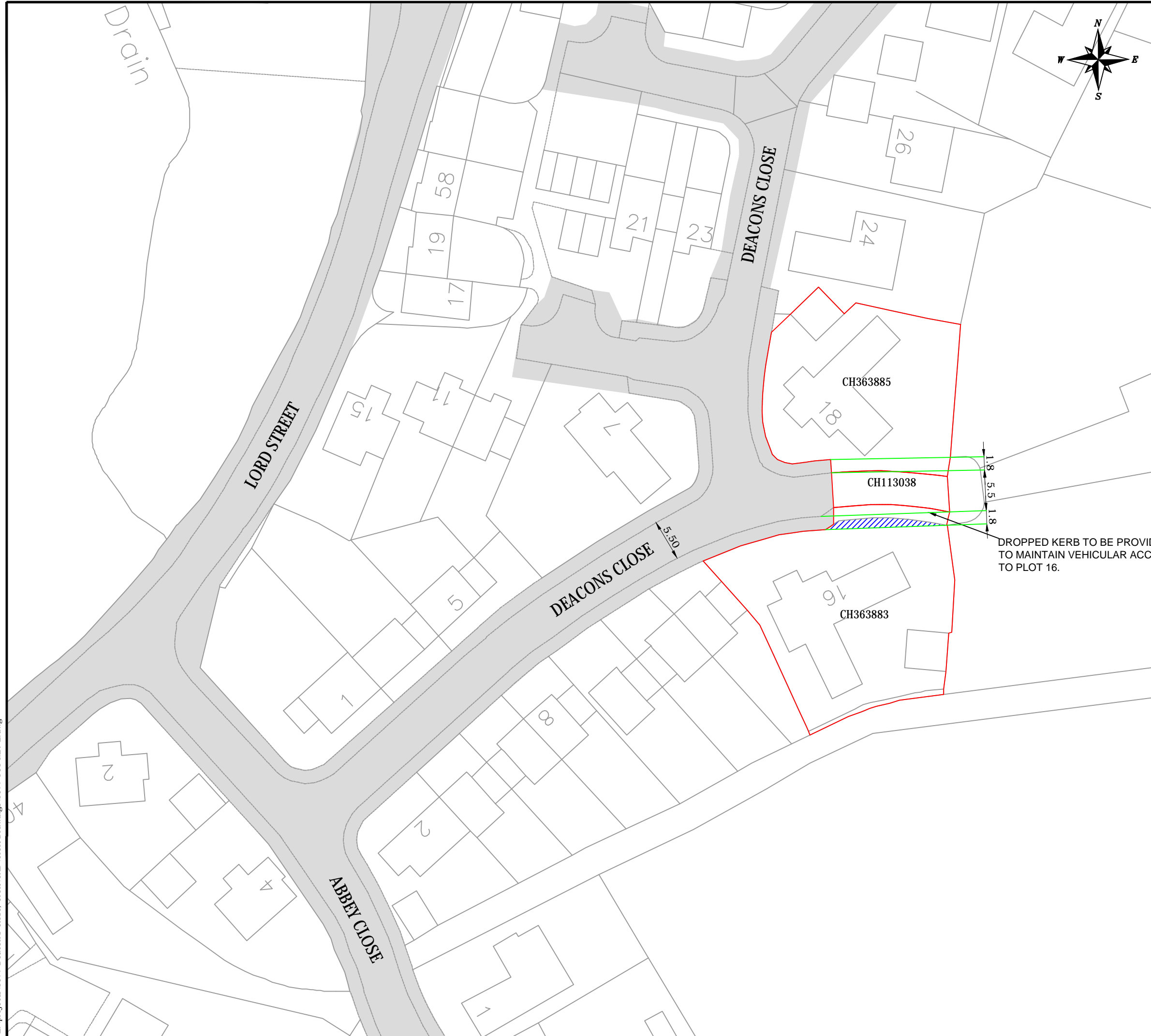
In summary, this note clearly demonstrates that the Heathcroft Stud site in Croft is very well located for new residential development. The site is in close proximity to the amenities and services with the village of Croft and is within a very short bus journey of a wider range of shops, employment opportunities, education provision and other facilities and services within Culcheth, Warrington and Leigh.

The site can be satisfactorily accessed and will generate a modest number of additional vehicular trips onto the local highway network.

This note has therefore demonstrated that the site can be developed sustainably and should therefore be allocated for residential development in the emerging Local Plan.



# PLANS



- NOTES**
- DENOTES NEW KERBS
  - ADOPTED HIGHWAY
  - TITLE BOUNDARIES AFFECTED
  - PLOT 16 LAND LOST

REV.	DETAILS	DRAWN	CHECKED	DATE

CLIENT:  
**BELLWAY HOMES**

PROJECT:  
**DEACONS CLOSE, CROFT**

DRAWING TITLE:  
**POTENTIAL CONTINUATION OF DEACONS CLOSE TO PROVIDE VEHICULAR ACCESS ROUTE**

SCALES:  
**1:500 @ A3**

DRAWN: **LB**      CHECKED: **JC**      DATE: **MAR 19**

9 Jordan Street,  
Manchester,  
M15 4PY

**croft**  
Transport Solutions

Email: [info@crofts.co.uk](mailto:info@crofts.co.uk)  
Tel: 0161 667 3746  
Web: [www.crofts.co.uk](http://www.crofts.co.uk)

DRAWING NUMBER: **1677-F01**      REVISION: **E**

Z:\projects\1677 Deacon's Close, Croft\CAD\Croft Drawings\1677-F01 REV E.dwg

## APPENDICES



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **TRICS Output**

Calculation Reference: AUDIT-851401-190603-0649

TRIP RATE CALCULATION SELECTION PARAMETERS:

Land Use : 03 - RESIDENTIAL  
 Category : A - HOUSES PRIVATELY OWNED  
 MULTI-MODAL VEHICLES

Selected regions and areas:

02	SOUTH EAST	
	ES EAST SUSSEX	1 days
	HC HAMPSHIRE	1 days
	KC KENT	2 days
	SC SURREY	1 days
	WS WEST SUSSEX	1 days
03	SOUTH WEST	
	DV DEVON	2 days
04	EAST ANGLIA	
	NF NORFOLK	1 days
06	WEST MIDLANDS	
	SH SHROPSHIRE	1 days
	WO WORCESTERSHIRE	1 days
07	YORKSHIRE & NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE	
	NY NORTH YORKSHIRE	3 days
	SY SOUTH YORKSHIRE	1 days
09	NORTH	
	DH DURHAM	1 days

*This section displays the number of survey days per TRICS® sub-region in the selected set*

Secondary Filtering selection:

*This data displays the chosen trip rate parameter and its selected range. Only sites that fall within the parameter range are included in the trip rate calculation.*

Parameter: Number of dwellings  
 Actual Range: 50 to 146 (units: )  
 Range Selected by User: 50 to 150 (units: )

Parking Spaces Range: All Surveys Included

Percentage of dwellings privately owned: All Surveys Included

Public Transport Provision:

Selection by: Include all surveys

Date Range: 01/01/11 to 20/11/18

*This data displays the range of survey dates selected. Only surveys that were conducted within this date range are included in the trip rate calculation.*

Selected survey days:

Monday	3 days
Tuesday	4 days
Wednesday	2 days
Thursday	3 days
Friday	4 days

*This data displays the number of selected surveys by day of the week.*

Selected survey types:

Manual count	16 days
Directional ATC Count	0 days

*This data displays the number of manual classified surveys and the number of unclassified ATC surveys, the total adding up to the overall number of surveys in the selected set. Manual surveys are undertaken using staff, whilst ATC surveys are undertaken using machines.*

Selected Locations:

Suburban Area (PPS6 Out of Centre)	10
Edge of Town	6

*This data displays the number of surveys per main location category within the selected set. The main location categories consist of Free Standing, Edge of Town, Suburban Area, Neighbourhood Centre, Edge of Town Centre, Town Centre and Not Known.*

Selected Location Sub Categories:

Residential Zone	15
No Sub Category	1

*This data displays the number of surveys per location sub-category within the selected set. The location sub-categories consist of Commercial Zone, Industrial Zone, Development Zone, Residential Zone, Retail Zone, Built-Up Zone, Village,*

Secondary Filtering selection:

Use Class:

C3 16 days

*This data displays the number of surveys per Use Class classification within the selected set. The Use Classes Order 2005 has been used for this purpose, which can be found within the Library module of TRICS®.*

Population within 1 mile:

1,000 or Less	1 days
1,001 to 5,000	3 days
5,001 to 10,000	5 days
10,001 to 15,000	3 days
15,001 to 20,000	4 days

*This data displays the number of selected surveys within stated 1-mile radii of population.*

Population within 5 miles:

5,001 to 25,000	4 days
25,001 to 50,000	2 days
75,001 to 100,000	5 days
100,001 to 125,000	1 days
125,001 to 250,000	3 days
250,001 to 500,000	1 days

*This data displays the number of selected surveys within stated 5-mile radii of population.*

Car ownership within 5 miles:

0.6 to 1.0	2 days
1.1 to 1.5	14 days

*This data displays the number of selected surveys within stated ranges of average cars owned per residential dwelling, within a radius of 5-miles of selected survey sites.*

Travel Plan:

Yes	2 days
No	14 days

*This data displays the number of surveys within the selected set that were undertaken at sites with Travel Plans in place, and the number of surveys that were undertaken at sites without Travel Plans.*

PTAL Rating:

No PTAL Present	16 days
-----------------	---------

*This data displays the number of selected surveys with PTAL Ratings.*



TRIP RATE for Land Use 03 - RESIDENTIAL/A - HOUSES PRIVATELY OWNED

MULTI-MODAL VEHICLES

Calculation factor: 1 DWELLS

BOLD print indicates peak (busiest) period

Time Range	ARRIVALS			DEPARTURES			TOTALS		
	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate
00:00 - 01:00									
01:00 - 02:00									
02:00 - 03:00									
03:00 - 04:00									
04:00 - 05:00									
05:00 - 06:00									
06:00 - 07:00									
07:00 - 08:00	16	83	0.060	16	83	0.232	16	83	0.292
08:00 - 09:00	16	83	0.101	16	83	0.314	16	83	0.415
09:00 - 10:00	16	83	0.129	16	83	0.148	16	83	0.277
10:00 - 11:00	16	83	0.119	16	83	0.161	16	83	0.280
11:00 - 12:00	16	83	0.124	16	83	0.128	16	83	0.252
12:00 - 13:00	16	83	0.145	16	83	0.126	16	83	0.271
13:00 - 14:00	16	83	0.158	16	83	0.153	16	83	0.311
14:00 - 15:00	16	83	0.131	16	83	0.149	16	83	0.280
15:00 - 16:00	16	83	0.217	16	83	0.136	16	83	0.353
16:00 - 17:00	16	83	0.231	16	83	0.147	16	83	0.378
17:00 - 18:00	16	83	0.284	16	83	0.122	16	83	0.406
18:00 - 19:00	16	83	0.207	16	83	0.127	16	83	0.334
19:00 - 20:00									
20:00 - 21:00									
21:00 - 22:00									
22:00 - 23:00									
23:00 - 24:00									
<b>Total Rates:</b>			1.906			1.943			3.849

This section displays the trip rate results based on the selected set of surveys and the selected count type (shown just above the table). It is split by three main columns, representing arrivals trips, departures trips, and total trips (arrivals plus departures). Within each of these main columns are three sub-columns. These display the number of survey days where count data is included (per time period), the average value of the selected trip rate calculation parameter (per time period), and the trip rate result (per time period). Total trip rates (the sum of the column) are also displayed at the foot of the table.

To obtain a trip rate, the average (mean) trip rate parameter value (TRP) is first calculated for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. The average (mean) number of arrivals, departures or totals (whichever applies) is also calculated (COUNT) for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. Then, the average count is divided by the average trip rate parameter value, and multiplied by the stated calculation factor (shown just above the table and abbreviated here as FACT). So, the method is:  $COUNT/TRP*FACT$ . Trip rates are then rounded to 3 decimal places.

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#### Parameter summary

Trip rate parameter range selected:	50 - 146 (units: )
Survey date date range:	01/01/11 - 20/11/18
Number of weekdays (Monday-Friday):	16
Number of Saturdays:	0
Number of Sundays:	0
Surveys automatically removed from selection:	2
Surveys manually removed from selection:	0

*This section displays a quick summary of some of the data filtering selections made by the TRICS® user. The trip rate calculation parameter range of all selected surveys is displayed first, followed by the range of minimum and maximum survey dates selected by the user. Then, the total number of selected weekdays and weekend days in the selected set of surveys are shown. Finally, the number of survey days that have been manually removed from the selected set outside of the standard filtering procedure are displayed.*

TRIP RATE for Land Use 03 - RESIDENTIAL/A - HOUSES PRIVATELY OWNED  
 MULTI-MODAL CYCLISTS  
 Calculation factor: 1 DWELLS  
 BOLD print indicates peak (busiest) period

Time Range	ARRIVALS			DEPARTURES			TOTALS		
	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate
00:00 - 01:00									
01:00 - 02:00									
02:00 - 03:00									
03:00 - 04:00									
04:00 - 05:00									
05:00 - 06:00									
06:00 - 07:00									
07:00 - 08:00	16	83	0.007	16	83	0.014	16	83	0.021
08:00 - 09:00	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.019	16	83	0.027
09:00 - 10:00	16	83	0.001	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.009
10:00 - 11:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.013
11:00 - 12:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.010
12:00 - 13:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.010
13:00 - 14:00	16	83	0.006	16	83	0.002	16	83	0.008
14:00 - 15:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.004	16	83	0.009
15:00 - 16:00	16	83	0.012	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.020
16:00 - 17:00	16	83	0.014	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.022
17:00 - 18:00	16	83	0.019	16	83	0.007	16	83	0.026
18:00 - 19:00	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.013
19:00 - 20:00									
20:00 - 21:00									
21:00 - 22:00									
22:00 - 23:00									
23:00 - 24:00									
<b>Total Rates:</b>			0.095			0.093			0.188

*This section displays the trip rate results based on the selected set of surveys and the selected count type (shown just above the table). It is split by three main columns, representing arrivals trips, departures trips, and total trips (arrivals plus departures). Within each of these main columns are three sub-columns. These display the number of survey days where count data is included (per time period), the average value of the selected trip rate calculation parameter (per time period), and the trip rate result (per time period). Total trip rates (the sum of the column) are also displayed at the foot of the table.*

*To obtain a trip rate, the average (mean) trip rate parameter value (TRP) is first calculated for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. The average (mean) number of arrivals, departures or totals (whichever applies) is also calculated (COUNT) for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. Then, the average count is divided by the average trip rate parameter value, and multiplied by the stated calculation factor (shown just above the table and abbreviated here as FACT). So, the method is: COUNT/TRP\*FACT. Trip rates are then rounded to 3 decimal places.*



TRIP RATE for Land Use 03 - RESIDENTIAL/A - HOUSES PRIVATELY OWNED  
 MULTI-MODAL PEDESTRIANS  
 Calculation factor: 1 DWELLS  
 BOLD print indicates peak (busiest) period

Time Range	ARRIVALS			DEPARTURES			TOTALS		
	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate
00:00 - 01:00									
01:00 - 02:00									
02:00 - 03:00									
03:00 - 04:00									
04:00 - 05:00									
05:00 - 06:00									
06:00 - 07:00									
07:00 - 08:00	16	83	0.020	16	83	0.060	16	83	0.080
08:00 - 09:00	16	83	0.056	16	83	0.154	16	83	0.210
09:00 - 10:00	16	83	0.063	16	83	0.074	16	83	0.137
10:00 - 11:00	16	83	0.063	16	83	0.074	16	83	0.137
11:00 - 12:00	16	83	0.050	16	83	0.049	16	83	0.099
12:00 - 13:00	16	83	0.060	16	83	0.052	16	83	0.112
13:00 - 14:00	16	83	0.047	16	83	0.047	16	83	0.094
14:00 - 15:00	16	83	0.044	16	83	0.054	16	83	0.098
15:00 - 16:00	16	83	0.136	16	83	0.087	16	83	0.223
16:00 - 17:00	16	83	0.112	16	83	0.071	16	83	0.183
17:00 - 18:00	16	83	0.099	16	83	0.043	16	83	0.142
18:00 - 19:00	16	83	0.050	16	83	0.038	16	83	0.088
19:00 - 20:00									
20:00 - 21:00									
21:00 - 22:00									
22:00 - 23:00									
23:00 - 24:00									
<b>Total Rates:</b>			0.800			0.803			1.603

*This section displays the trip rate results based on the selected set of surveys and the selected count type (shown just above the table). It is split by three main columns, representing arrivals trips, departures trips, and total trips (arrivals plus departures). Within each of these main columns are three sub-columns. These display the number of survey days where count data is included (per time period), the average value of the selected trip rate calculation parameter (per time period), and the trip rate result (per time period). Total trip rates (the sum of the column) are also displayed at the foot of the table.*

*To obtain a trip rate, the average (mean) trip rate parameter value (TRP) is first calculated for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. The average (mean) number of arrivals, departures or totals (whichever applies) is also calculated (COUNT) for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. Then, the average count is divided by the average trip rate parameter value, and multiplied by the stated calculation factor (shown just above the table and abbreviated here as FACT). So, the method is: COUNT/TRP\*FACT. Trip rates are then rounded to 3 decimal places.*

TRIP RATE for Land Use 03 - RESIDENTIAL/A - HOUSES PRIVATELY OWNED

MULTI-MODAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS

Calculation factor: 1 DWELLS

BOLD print indicates peak (busiest) period

Time Range	ARRIVALS			DEPARTURES			TOTALS		
	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate	No. Days	Ave. DWELLS	Trip Rate
00:00 - 01:00									
01:00 - 02:00									
02:00 - 03:00									
03:00 - 04:00									
04:00 - 05:00									
05:00 - 06:00									
06:00 - 07:00									
07:00 - 08:00	16	83	0.001	16	83	0.023	16	83	0.024
08:00 - 09:00	16	83	0.002	16	83	0.039	16	83	0.041
09:00 - 10:00	16	83	0.002	16	83	0.010	16	83	0.012
10:00 - 11:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.007	16	83	0.012
11:00 - 12:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.007	16	83	0.012
12:00 - 13:00	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.009	16	83	0.014
13:00 - 14:00	16	83	0.004	16	83	0.002	16	83	0.006
14:00 - 15:00	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.008	16	83	0.016
15:00 - 16:00	16	83	0.020	16	83	0.010	16	83	0.030
16:00 - 17:00	16	83	0.028	16	83	0.010	16	83	0.038
17:00 - 18:00	16	83	0.017	16	83	0.005	16	83	0.022
18:00 - 19:00	16	83	0.018	16	83	0.002	16	83	0.020
19:00 - 20:00									
20:00 - 21:00									
21:00 - 22:00									
22:00 - 23:00									
23:00 - 24:00									
<b>Total Rates:</b>			0.115			0.132			0.247

*This section displays the trip rate results based on the selected set of surveys and the selected count type (shown just above the table). It is split by three main columns, representing arrivals trips, departures trips, and total trips (arrivals plus departures). Within each of these main columns are three sub-columns. These display the number of survey days where count data is included (per time period), the average value of the selected trip rate calculation parameter (per time period), and the trip rate result (per time period). Total trip rates (the sum of the column) are also displayed at the foot of the table.*

*To obtain a trip rate, the average (mean) trip rate parameter value (TRP) is first calculated for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. The average (mean) number of arrivals, departures or totals (whichever applies) is also calculated (COUNT) for all selected survey days that have count data available for the stated time period. Then, the average count is divided by the average trip rate parameter value, and multiplied by the stated calculation factor (shown just above the table and abbreviated here as FACT). So, the method is: COUNT/TRP\*FACT. Trip rates are then rounded to 3 decimal places.*

# Appendix IV

## Illustrative Masterplan



# DEACONS CLOSE, CROFT



MARDALE CRESCENT

ILLUSTRATIVE COLOURED SKETCH  
1:500@A1