

**Taylor
Wimpey**

Stocks Lane Penketh

Development Statement



June 2019



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Masterplan in Site Context



Executive Summary

This Development Statement has been prepared on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Limited (“Taylor Wimpey”) to support the release of the land west of Stocks Lane, Penketh (“the site”) to deliver up to 600 new family and affordable homes during the next plan period. The site extends to 30.1 hectares and is located to the west of the Warrington suburb of Penketh, bounded by Farnworth Road to the south and the Warrington to Liverpool railway line to the north.

The case for allocating this site for housing development within Warrington’s Local Plan Review is clearly presented within this Development Statement, including the exceptional circumstances that support the need to amend the Borough’s Green Belt. The allocation of this site for residential development will deliver open market and affordable housing of a type, quantity and quality that will make a significant contribution to the future growth needs of Warrington.

Key Facts

Site Name	Stocks Lane, Penketh
Local Authority	Warrington
Site Area	30.1 Ha
Proposed Dwellings	Up to 600



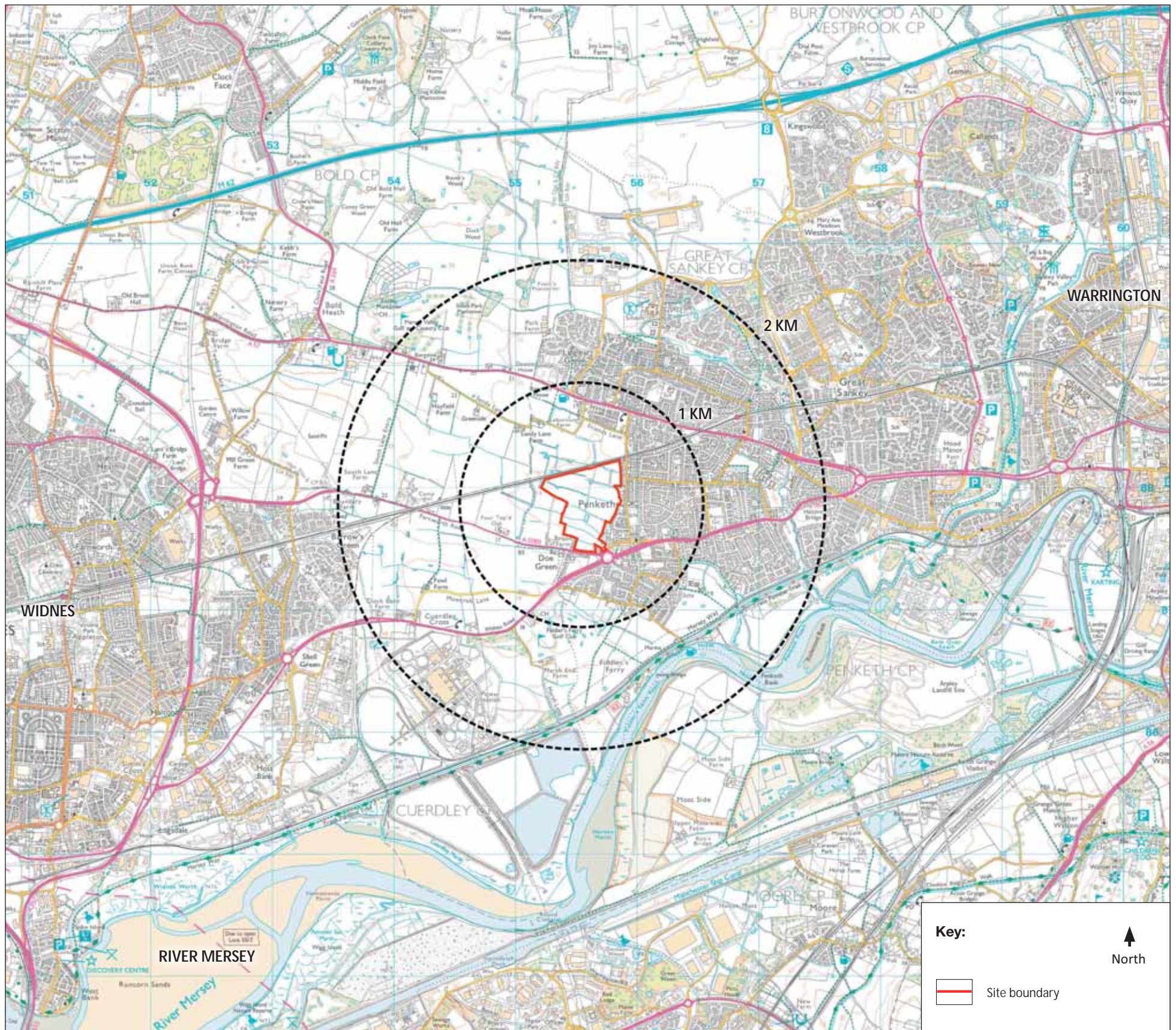


1.0

Introduction



Figure 1: Site Context Plan



1.0 Introduction

Vision

The Stocks Lane site presents an excellent opportunity to release 30.1 hectares of land to deliver a high quality sustainable housing site that will sensitively meet the future housing needs of the Borough. The vision for the site is to develop a landscape led masterplan that complements the surrounding site context, and creates a high quality family and affordable community to meet the needs of the Borough, whilst providing a stronger and more defensible Green Belt boundary to the west of Warrington.

To support the vision, this Development Statement clearly articulates the opportunity presented by the site. In summary, it demonstrates that:

- There are exceptional circumstances that support an alteration to the Green Belt in the Borough; including the absence of a 5-year supply of housing land, a lack of affordable homes and insufficient urban land to meet the housing need during the Plan Period.
- There is a compelling case to remove the site from the Green Belt, when tested against the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”). The site represents a logical extension to west of Penketh which works within existing physical boundaries.
- The site has access to a range of services and facilities at the Warrington Road Local Centre, 1km to the east of the site, with further services located at Honiton Way Neighbourhood Centre, 1.5km to the north east of the site.
- There are no identified technical or environmental constraints that would prevent the site coming forward for development.
- The site is deliverable, achievable and available for housing development in accordance with guidance contained in the NPPF. A vision and masterplan for the site illustrates how the site can deliver a sympathetic, sustainable development that complements its setting.
- A sensitive design-led masterplan for the site will complement, respond to and integrate key landscape features adjacent to the site.
- The site will deliver a landscape and open space solution that relates to the existing urban grain and responds to the key natural features and topography of the site, whilst also providing a parkland setting with circular walking routes for use by future residents and the wider public.
- The proposals will create a range and mix of housing types that will make a positive contribution towards the Borough’s housing requirements; providing both open market and affordable housing, and generate significant social and economic benefits for the local area.





The Case for Green Belt Release

The site no longer fulfils its purpose as Green Belt land as established at paragraph 134 of the 2019 NPPF and, as such, there is a compelling case for its release. Its allocation for future development would:

1. **Not result in unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.** The Warrington to Liverpool railway line and Farnworth Road form strong physical boundaries which restrict sprawl to the north and south. Whilst the site is open to the west, existing development at Doe Green to the south and Lingley Green to the north already extend out westwards making this a logical extension to Penketh, infilling and rounding off at the edge of the urban area.
2. **Not cause the merger of neighbouring towns.** The development of the site would not close the gap between Penketh and Widnes as the closest point between the two is already established by development at Doe Green to the south, and this gap would be maintained by the proposed development.
3. **Not create unacceptable encroachment into the countryside.** The railway line and the main road provide strong boundaries preventing encroachment north and south, and also ensure that the site is not a particularly tranquil location or one with intrinsic beauty. As such, the site currently serves little function within its countryside setting and its loss would not be unacceptable.
4. **Not impact on the special character of historic towns.** The site is over 4km from the Warrington Town Centre Conservation Areas, and the site does not cross an important viewpoint of the Parish Church. The site is also over 4km from the Conservation Area in Widnes. There is a Grade II listed Farm (Brookside Farm) at the south west corner of the site, however, this is heavily screened by trees, and is already flanked by existing residential development, which ensures that development of the site will have minimal impact on its setting.
5. **Not discourage urban regeneration.** As noted, the Council fully accept that there is insufficient land within Warrington's existing urban and greenfield sites to meet its own needs for housing and employment land going forward.

There are also exceptional circumstances which support an alteration to the Green Belt. These include:

- The lack of a sufficient housing supply to support the development needs of the Warrington Borough.
- An acute need for affordable housing and sites that have the capacity and viability to deliver new affordable homes.
- The delivery of development of up to 600 high quality new homes that will deliver significant social and economic benefits accordance with the provisions of the NPPF.
- The site is well located in terms of access to employment opportunities and local services and facilities.

Furthermore, the site has been previously identified for potential safeguarding and release from the Green Belt, within a wider area of search within the Warrington Borough Draft Plan from 1993; suggesting that the Council have considered this location suitable for longer term development.

Summary

The development of the site at Stocks Lane, Warrington provides a highly sustainable opportunity to support the national growth agenda and to assist in providing adequate land to deliver a new Local Plan for the Borough. The site will deliver the quantity, type and quality of homes that is required across the Borough and can demonstrate exceptional circumstances that support an alteration to the existing Green Belt without impacting on its core functions. Taylor Wimpey is committed to working collaboratively with the Council and Key Stakeholders to ensure that the Borough's housing need is met in a sensitive and sustainable manner.



2.0 Site & Surroundings

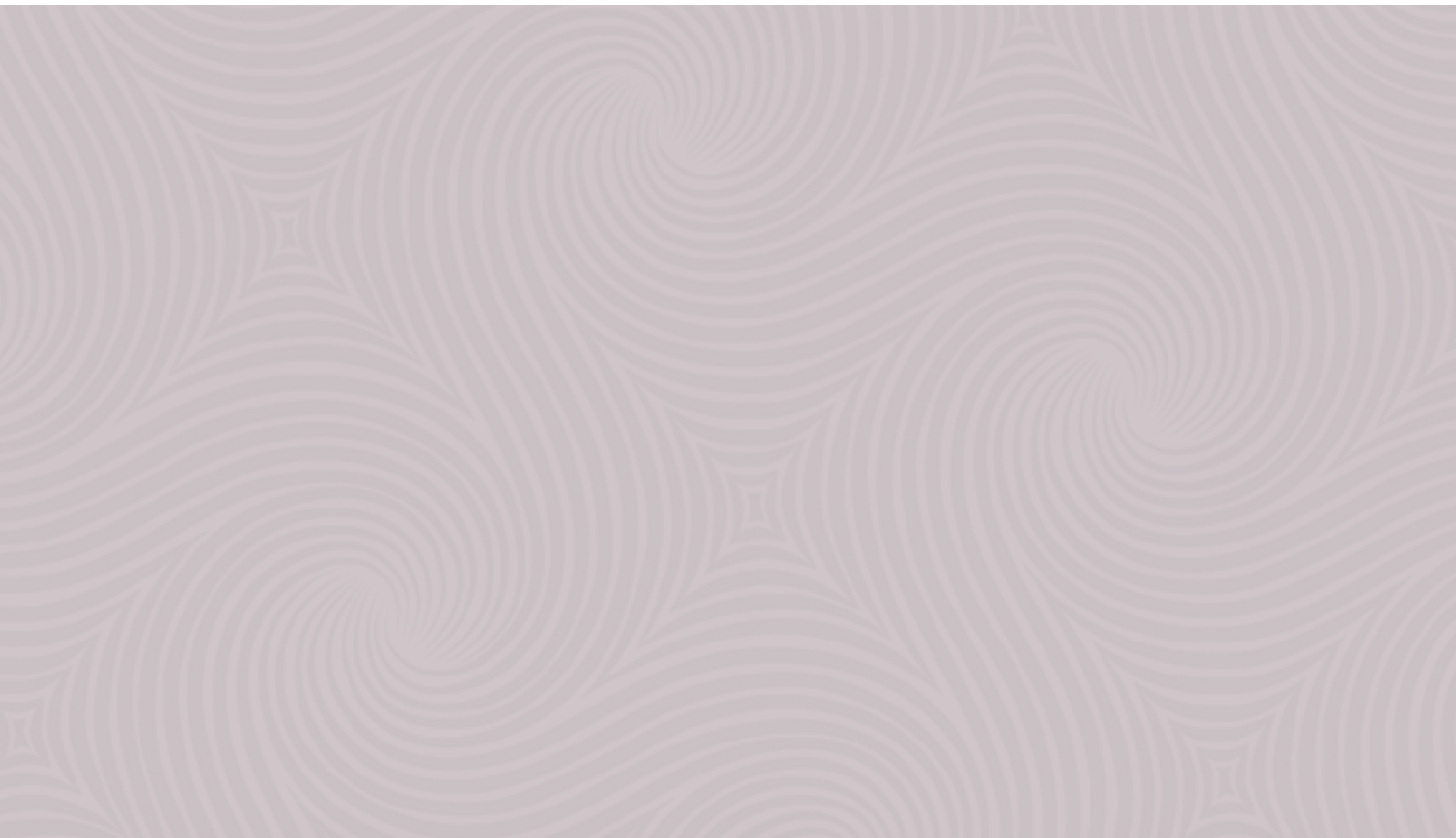


Figure 2: Aerial Photograph Showing Site Context



2.0 Site and Surroundings

The site falls to the west of Penketh, which is a suburb to the west of Warrington. The site is outside the existing urban boundary, but sits alongside an existing residential area and forms a natural and logical extension to Penketh.

The Site

The site comprises 30.1 hectares of agricultural pasture land, with equestrian uses on the south east section, and is largely flat in terms of topography. It is broadly rectangular in shape, widening as it extends northwards along the boundary with the Warrington to Liverpool railway line. The site abuts the urban boundary of the settlement of Penketh.

Penketh Brook runs through the southern part of the site, with the surrounding land (approximately 3 hectares) falling within Flood Zone 3. There are hedgerows and tree planting along the field boundaries, which form robust boundaries around the site and landscape features within the site. There is a denser area of trees just north of Penketh Brook.

The site is in a sustainable location on western edge of Penketh, approximately 1km east of the Local Centre on Warrington Road which provides local shops and facilities. The larger Honiton Way Neighbourhood Centre is 1.5km away and the site is located within 600m of the nearest primary school. There are also bus stops on the southern boundary of the site offering regular services to Warrington town centre, Huyton and Liverpool.

A greater range of shops and facilities can be found in the nearby Town Centre of Warrington which is 5.5 km to the east.

Site Surroundings

The site is bounded by the urban area of Penketh to the east with the rear of residential properties fronting Stocks Lane. Brookside Farm lies in the south-east corner.

The north of the site is bound by the Warrington to Liverpool Railway line. Along this boundary there are sporadic trees and hedgerows. The A5080, Farnworth Road, runs along the southern boundary of the site, which is lined by residential properties and farm buildings. Open agricultural fields lie to the west, along with a methane extraction facility, approximately 150m west of the northern corner of the site.

The urban area is characterised by a mix of semi-detached and detached properties, including some single storey dwellings.

To the east of the site, Farnworth Road links with a large 5-arm roundabout providing access to the A562 and minor local access roads.

There are a wide range of employment sources of local and regional importance within close proximity of the site, including Omega and Lingley Mere, Inner Warrington and the Town Centre, the Waterfront and Arpley Meadows and Port Warrington. The site will interact effectively with these employment locations both in terms of supporting the labour supply and acting as a customer base for local business.

Figure 3: Site Context Plan and Photos



Mature trees restrict views

Housing on Friends Lane

Train on elevated railway line



Photo A - View from within the site looking north towards the elevated railway line

Well vegetated internal field boundaries



Photo B - View from the centre of the site looking north across the site

Garden trees provide screening

Ditch line to rear of existing properties

Houses along Haslemere Drive (off Stocks Lane) back on to site

Mature trees along field boundary filters views to power station

Fiddlers Ferry Power Station



Photo C - View from within the site looking south east towards housing on Haslemere Drive which backs onto the site

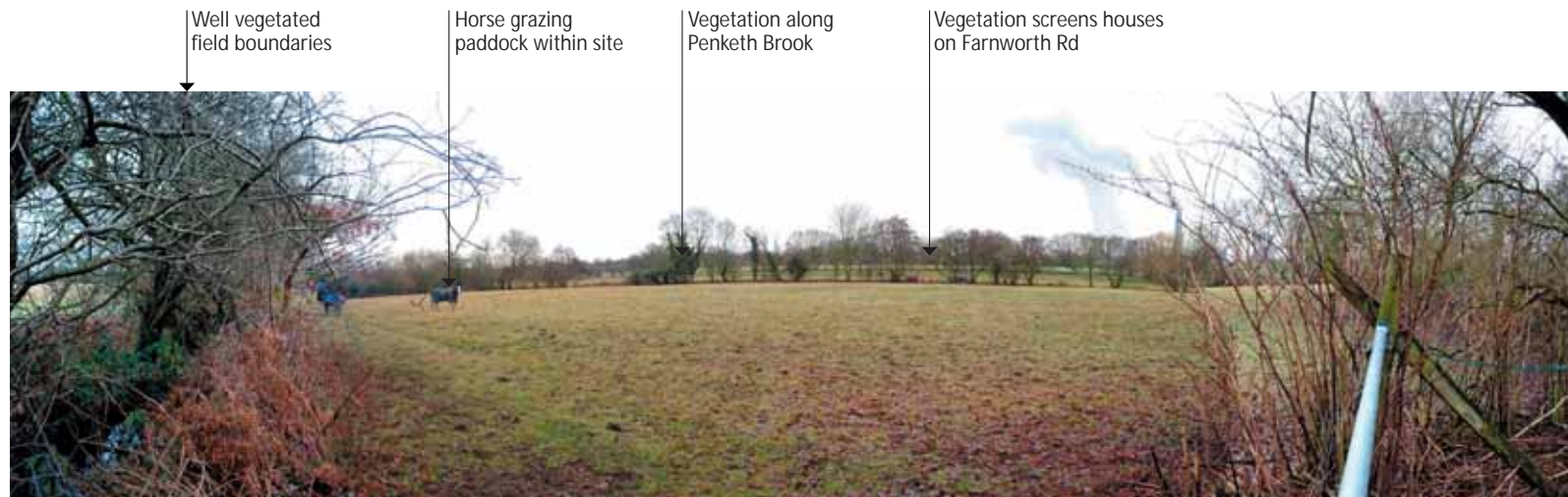


Photo D - View from within the site looking south towards Farnworth Rd

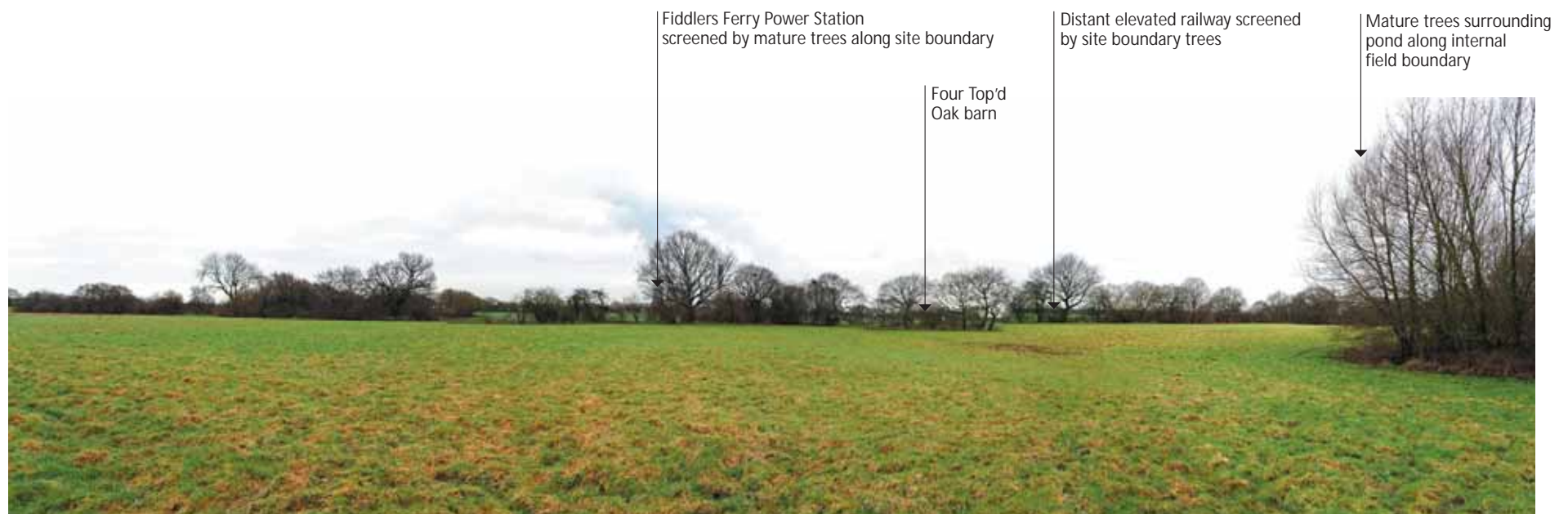


Photo E - View from within the site looking south west towards Widnes

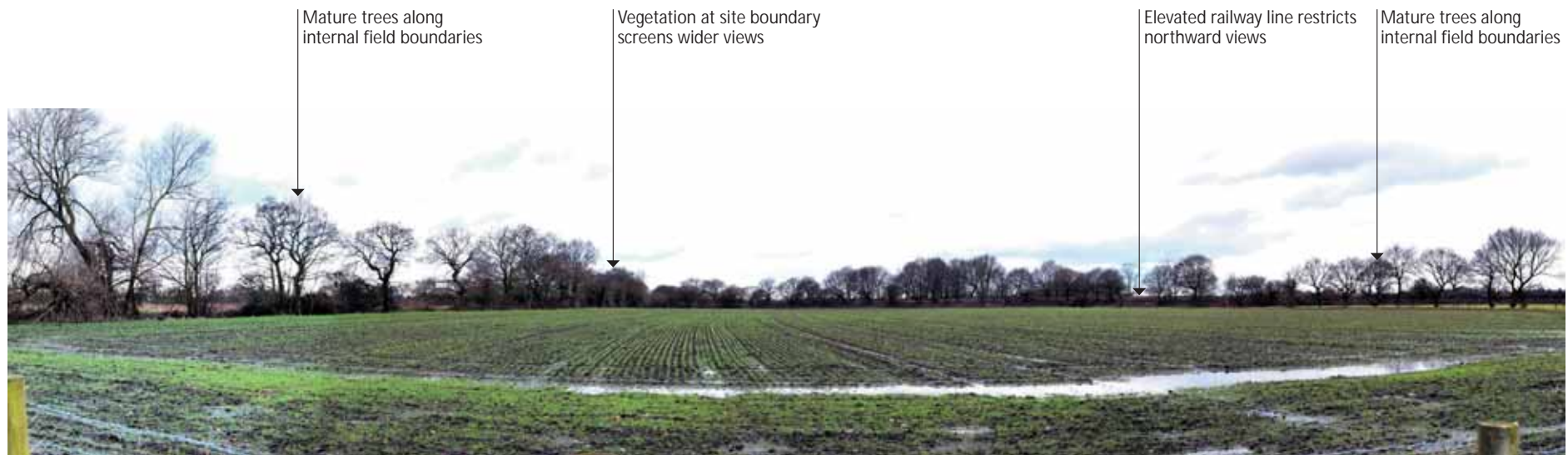


Photo F - View from within the site looking north west towards the north west boundary

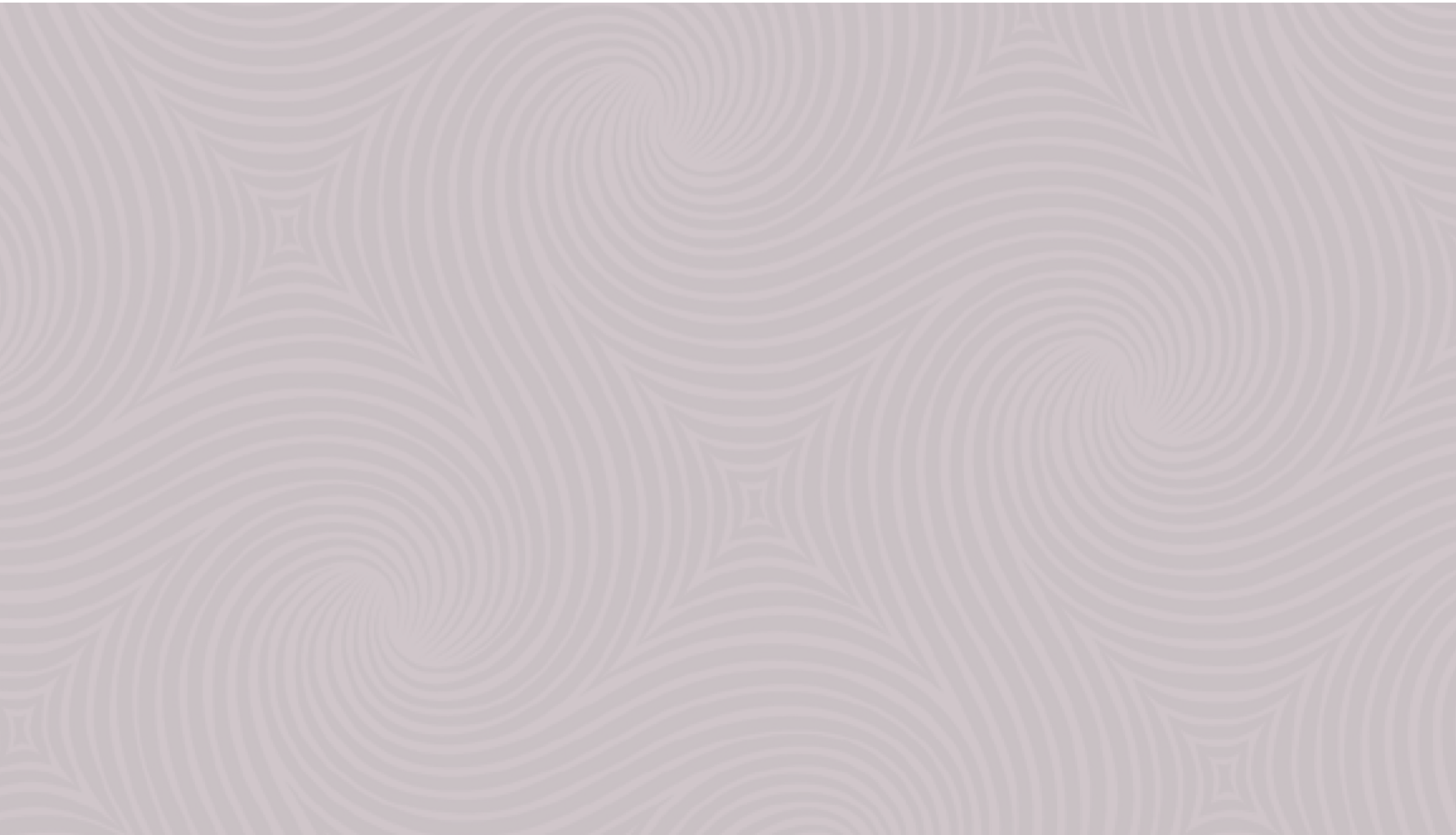


Photo G - View from Farnworth Rd looking north across the site



3.0

The Need for Development in the Green Belt



3.0 The Need for Development in the Green Belt

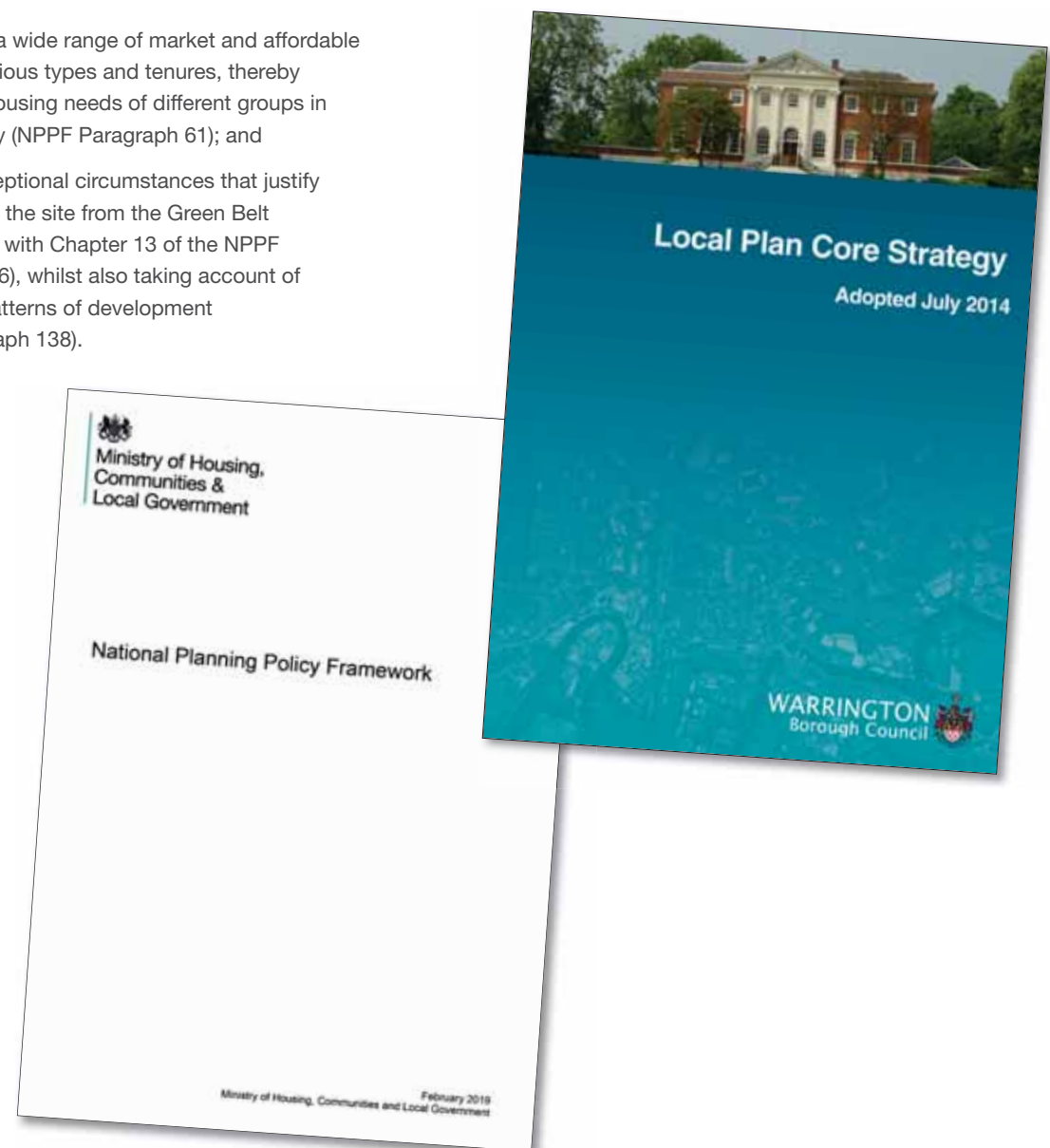
There is a compelling case for removing land west of Stocks Lane, Penketh from Warrington's Green Belt. The need to release the site from the Green Belt is justified by the emerging planning policy and housing supply position, exceptional circumstances that support alterations to the Green Belt and the fact that the site fails to adequately fulfil the Green Belt functions.

National Planning Policy

The Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in February 2019, outlines the Government's core objectives for the planning system, which include the need for local authorities to boost their supply of housing. Releasing the Stocks Lane, Penketh site from the Green Belt to facilitate new housing development would be consistent with the core objectives of the NPPF because:

- It would meet the three pillars of sustainable development by delivering economic, social and environmental benefits (NPPF paragraph 8);
- It would be entirely consistent with the presumption in favour of sustainable development- which is at the very heart of the Planning Framework (NPPF paragraph 10);
- It would offer a sustainable location, in Penketh, which is accessible to a range of sustainable transport modes, and a range of services and facilities (NPPF Paragraph 108). It is also a Green Belt site which is well-served by public transport, which is a new consideration in the 2019 NPPF (NPPF Paragraph 138);
- It would significantly boost the supply of housing and provide a deliverable site that is available, suitably located, achievable and viable (NPPF Paragraphs 59 and 67);

- It will provide a wide range of market and affordable housing of various types and tenures, thereby meeting the housing needs of different groups in the community (NPPF Paragraph 61); and
- There are exceptional circumstances that justify the removal of the site from the Green Belt in accordance with Chapter 13 of the NPPF (Paragraph 136), whilst also taking account of sustainable patterns of development (NPPF Paragraph 138).



Local Planning Context

Warrington Local Core Strategy

The Development Plan comprises the Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy, which was adopted in July 2014, and covers the plan period 2006 to 2027. Core Strategy Policy SN1 set a housing requirement of 10,500 across the period, which equates to an annualised average of 500 per annum, with the majority of this development was to be focused around Inner Warrington, Waterfront and Arpley Meadows. Policy CS2 also set a requirement of 1,100 new homes to be delivered at the Omega Strategic Proposal. However, these elements of the housing requirement were challenged in the High Court in February 2015, which led to them being quashed.

Policy SN2 set an affordable requirement of 30% on greenfield sites of 15 units or more.

Emerging Local Plan

Warrington Council published the Submission Version of their emerging Local Plan in April 2019, which will establish the new housing and employment land requirements of the Borough from 2017-2037. It also provides guidance on the location and distribution of new development over the plan period.

Draft Policy DEV1 (Housing Delivery) outlines a minimum housing requirement of 18,900 new dwellings over the 2017 to 2037 plan period which equates to an annualised requirement of 945 dwellings per annum. The majority of new homes will be delivered within the existing main urban area of Warrington, the existing inset settlements and other sites identified in the SHLAA.

Two sustainable urban extensions to the main urban area of Warrington are proposed; the Garden Suburb (which will deliver a minimum of 6,490 homes, 4,201 of which will be delivered in the plan period) and the South West Extension (which will deliver a minimum capacity of 1,631 homes within the plan period). A minimum of 1,085 homes are planned to be delivered on Green Belt sites in the following outlying settlements; Burtonwood, Croft, Culcheth, Hollins Green, Lymm and Winwick.

The Stocks Lane site is not allocated for development within the Local Plan, however we outline the compelling reasons why it should be throughout this Development Statement.

Figure 4: 1994 Draft Local Plan extract



Warrington Borough Council Draft Local Plan 1994

It should be noted that the site was previously identified within a larger area of search for potential safeguarding/release from the Green Belt in the Warrington Borough Draft Plan from 1994. This designation suggests that this area has previously been considered suitable for longer term development.

Given this previous designation, this site should be considered as a site for future residential development.

Housing Supply

The most recent housing supply figures come from the 2018 Annual Monitoring Report (covering the period 1st April 2017- 31st March 2018) and the 2018 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (with a base date of 1st April 2018). These documents confirm that Warrington are unable to demonstrate a 5-year deliverable supply of housing going forward, with a supply of 3,555 dwellings over the period 2018-2023, equating to 711 dwellings per year, which is significantly lower than the 945 dwellings per annum requirement set out in the Submission Version of the Local Plan (by 25%). It is acknowledged that the Council are proposing a stepped approach to housing delivery with a reduced target of 847 dpa in the first 5 years, however the supply is still well below this requirement (by 10%).

The position is the same with the past delivery, within only 359 net new homes delivered between 2017/2018 and an average of 595 dpa delivered over the past 5 years, significantly lower than the emerging (and stepped) requirement.

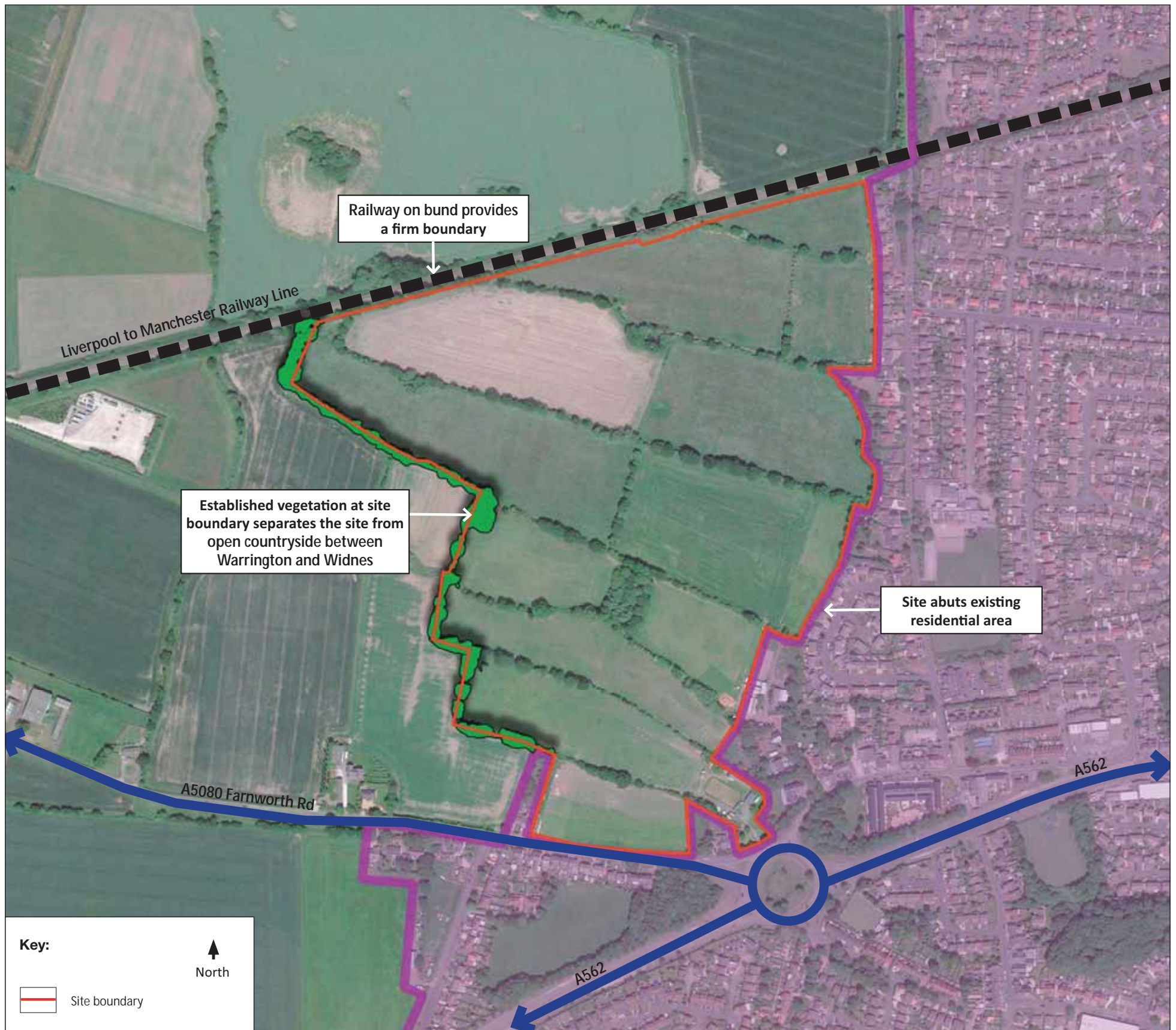
This acute supply shortfall is reinforced by the Housing Delivery Test results published by the government in February 2019 which confirm that Warrington delivered just 55% of its requirement over the last 3 years. The NPPF considers anything under 85% as significant under delivery (paragraph 73) and requires the Council to produce an Action Plan to boost supply, and to apply the 20% buffer to their 5 year supply calculations.

As such, it is clear that the Council cannot demonstrate a 5-year supply going forward, with our calculations suggesting that they are between 2.2 and 3.1 years depending on whether the full or stepped requirement is used, the approach taken to historic shortfall, and whether an allowance is added for windfall supply.

The position is the same across the 15-year period, where Warrington claim a supply of 9,226 dwellings, against an emerging requirement of 14,175, generating a shortfall of 4,949 dwellings.

The proposed residential development of this site will help to address this shortfall over the next 5 years and beyond and this should be considered as a key benefit of the scheme.

Figure 5: Green Belt Analysis: Plan to Demonstrate that the Site is Well Contained



Demonstrating The Exceptional Circumstances for Green Belt Release

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF states that once the extent of a Green Belt has been established, it should only be altered in exceptional circumstances through the Local Plan Process, and the Council have acknowledged that such circumstances exist in Warrington. The exceptional circumstances which support the release of land at Stocks Lane, Penketh are as follows;

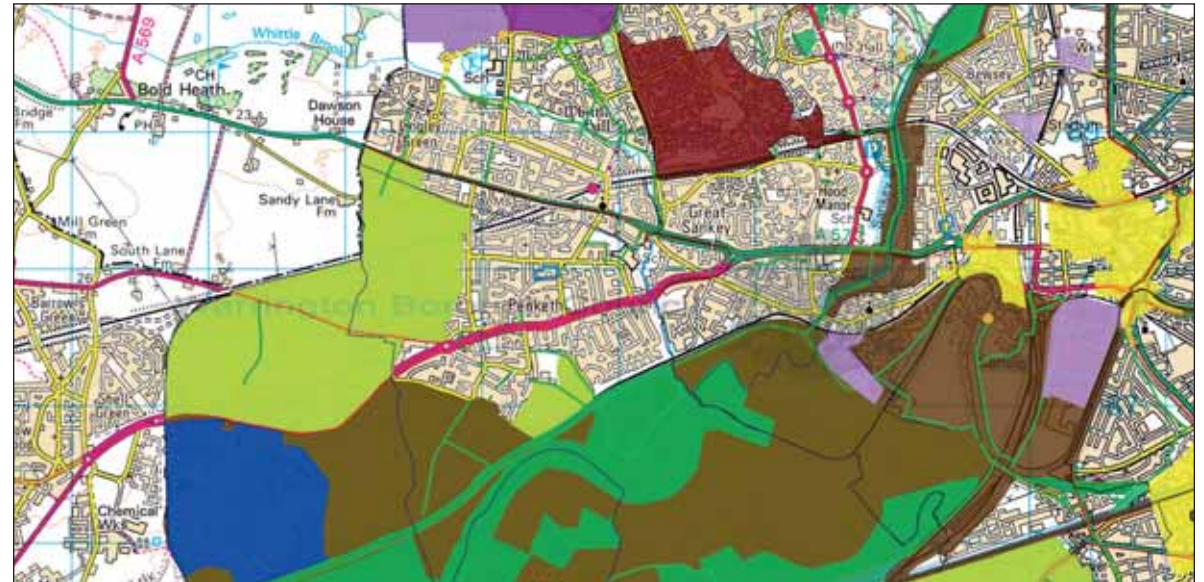
Housing Need

The principal exceptional circumstances relating to the Green Belt land is directly tied to the need to accommodate Borough's projected needs over the plan period up to 2037, and to consider growth patterns in the wider Mid-Mersey housing market area.

A Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the Mid Mersey authorities (Warrington, Halton and St Helens) was produced in January 2016 and updated in May 2017. The updated report concluded that the objectively assessed need (OAN) for Warrington between 2015-2037 is 955 dwellings per annum (dpa). This showed a 14% increase from the 2016 assessment due to an increase in the demographic baseline and an improved economic outlook. Warrington's housing needs were also assessed as one of 8 authorities in the Liverpool City Region Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (SHELMA) in January 2017, which suggested a similar OAN of 949 dpa over the period 2012-2037.

An updated Local Housing Needs Assessment (LHNA) was published in March 2019 as part of the submission plan consultation. This generated a standard methodology figure of 909 dpa over the period 2017-2027, to be applied to the full plan period. However, the LHNA also confirmed that 909 dpa would not support the anticipated jobs growth in the Borough and suggests an uplift to 945 dpa to achieve this. It also suggests a further uplift to 955 dpa to address affordable housing need (a 5% increase on the 909 dpa standard methodology figure).

Figure 6: Extract from proposals map



As demonstrated in the previous section, the Council are unable to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable sites against their emerging target.

The emerging Local Plan must consider the implications of not releasing sufficient land from the Green Belt, and the harm that will occur from failing to meet the identified needs in the Borough; such as slower economic growth, a lack of labour force mobility, affordability issues, disruption to commuting patterns and the delivery of housing choice.

The proposed residential development of this site will help to address this shortfall over the next 5 years and this should be considered as a key benefit of the scheme.

Insufficient Land

It is clear within the available evidence within the Warrington SHLAA and Urban Capacity Study that there is insufficient land within the Warrington's existing urban and greenfield sites to meet its housing and employment land going forward, and this is further evidence of an exceptional circumstance required to release land from the Green Belt.

The Council fully accepts that Green Belt land will need to be released to deliver approximately 7,064 homes and 215 hectares of employment land up to 2037; whilst our calculations suggest that land for up to 10,000 will need to be released, equating to over 50% of the total requirement.

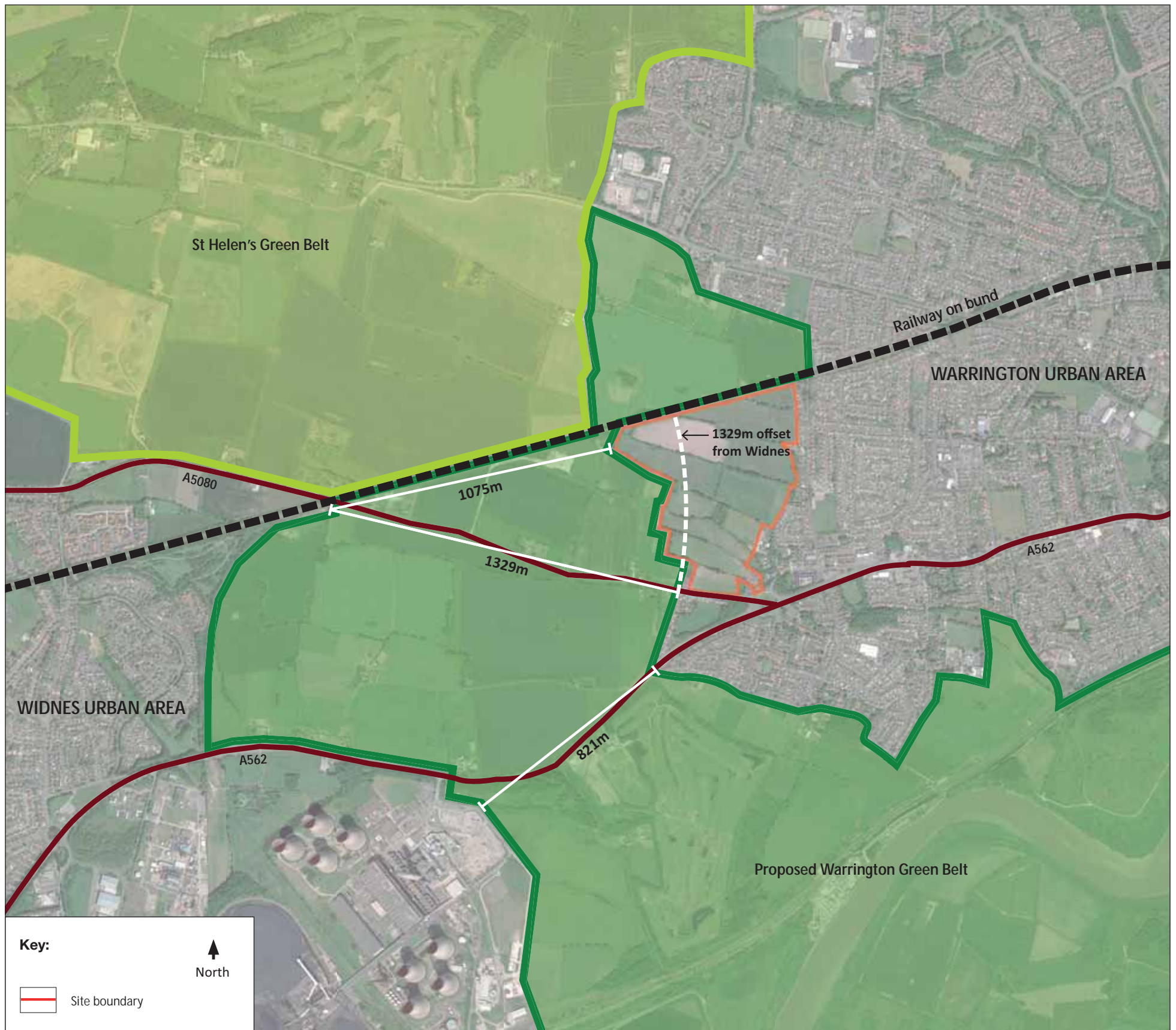
Therefore, it is clear that there is not enough land within Warrington's urban areas to meet the future development requirements of the emerging Local Plan.

Affordable Housing Need

The 2019 Local Housing Needs Assessment identifies a net affordable need of 377 dpa, which has increased by over 70% since the 2016 Mid-Mersey SHMA target of 220 dpa and 120% since the 2014 Core Strategy target of 172 dpa. This suggests that affordable delivery is not keeping pace with demand and is reflected in the 2018 AMR which notes that there were only 82 affordable completions in 2017/18 and 72 affordable completions 2016/17. As such, there is a clear lack of affordable homes within the Borough.

It is evident that the delivery of large sites such as Stocks Lane, Penketh, which are viable, deliverable and available, will make a significant contribution to affordable needs within the borough, and this represents another exceptional circumstance.

Figure 7: Green Belt Analysis: Plan to Demonstrate Prevention of Merging Neighbouring Towns



The Purposes of the Green Belt

To establish whether it would be appropriate to release a site from the Green Belt, it is relevant to examine how its development would impact on the five purposes of the Green Belt which are listed at paragraph 134 of the NPPF:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling.

Arup prepared an initial Green Belt assessment in October 2016 on before of Warrington Council which established Green Belt parcels around each of the settlements in Warrington. The site at Stocks Lane is located within parcel WR82.

An addendum report was published in June 2017 to take account of issues raised during the Regulation 18 consultation, specifically relating to some minor amendments required to certain parcel assessments and also the implications resulting from the updated position of High Speed Rail 2 (HS2). This report did not refer to this parcel.

In July 2017, a further Green Belt Assessment was prepared to assess each site which was submitted to the Call for Sites and assessed how important the site is for Warrington's Green Belt. This site (reference R18/138) was assessed in terms of the five Green Belt purposes and a rating provided. It is clear that the development of this site fails to fulfil these five purposes and below we provide details below, with comparisons to the Council's assessment.

Will not result in unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas

The Warrington to Liverpool Railway Line and Farnworth Road form strong physical boundaries which restrict sprawl to the north and south. Although the site is open to the west, existing development at Doe Green to the south and Lingley Green to the north already extend out westwards making this a logical extension to Penketh, infilling and rounding-off at the edge of an urban area. As acknowledged in the Green Belt assessment, the built-up area to the east of the site is not durable however the development of this site would create a strong and defensible boundary along the western boundary to prevent urban sprawl. The Arup assessment rates this parcel as having a 'strong contribution' to this parcel however given the strong physical boundaries to the north/south and the existing development extending westwards, this parcel is considered to make a 'moderate contribution' to this purpose.

Will not cause neighbouring towns to merging into one another

The development of the site would not close the gap between Penketh and Widnes as the closest point between the two is already established by development at Doe Green to the south (with an off-set of 1.6km), and this gap would be maintained by the proposed development. The Arup Green Belt assessment rates this parcel as having a 'weak contribution' to this purpose and this rating is supported.

Will not cause unacceptable encroachment into the countryside

As with all Green Belt release sites, the development of the site will inevitably result in the loss of some open countryside. However, the railway line and the main road provide strong defensible boundaries preventing encroachment to the north and south and ensure that the site is not particularly tranquil location or one with intrinsic beauty, which is typically associated with the countryside. The presence of dense vegetation within and surrounding the parcel prevents open long line views into the open countryside. The Arup assessment considers this parcel to make a 'strong contribution' to this purpose however as demonstrated above, this parcel serves little function as countryside and its loss would not be unacceptable. This parcel is therefore considered to make a 'moderate/weak' contribution to this purpose.

Will not impact on the special character of historic towns

Warrington is a historic town however the site is located over 4km from the Warrington Town Centre Conservation Areas, and the site does not cross an important viewpoint of the Parish Church. Widnes is also a historic town however similarly the site is located over 4km from its conservation areas. There is a Grade II listed Farm (Brookside Farm) at the south west corner of the site, however, this is heavily screened by trees, and is already flanked by existing residential development, which ensures that development of the site will have minimal impact on its setting. The Arup assessment no contribution to this purpose and this rating is fully supported.

Will not discourage urban regeneration

As noted, the Council fully accept that there is insufficient land within Warrington's existing urban and greenfield sites to meet its own needs for housing and employment land going forward, and therefore no individual Green Belt parcel is making any contribution to urban regeneration. The Arup Green Belt assessment suggests that all parcels make a 'moderate contribution' to this purposes, however it is considered that this should be changed to 'no contribution' throughout, for the reasons set out above.

Conclusion on Green Belt Release

The latest housing evidence set out in this section has demonstrated that there is insufficient land within Warrington's existing urban areas to meet the development needs of the emerging Local Plan. This represents a clear exceptional circumstance for Green Belt release, which the Council fully acknowledge.

Given that the Stocks Lane site does not fulfil the five purposes for including land in the Green Belt and is a sustainable and deliverable site, it is recommended that it be released from the Green Belt through the Local Plan Review process to help meet future housing needs.



4

4.0

Landscape and Visual Analysis



4.0 Landscape and Visual Analysis

Landscape Character Context

The site is situated within Landscape Character Area (LCA) '1F – Penketh & Cuerdley, Type 1: Undulating Enclosed Farmland' in Warrington Borough Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2007). The nearest adjacent LCA to the site is 'FF4 Bold Heath, Floodplain Farmland' (St Helen's Council's Landscape Character Assessment, 2006), which lies to the north west of the site. Despite the close proximity to the site, the presence of the raised railway line between the two LCAs prevents any significant visual or physical relationship between them.

The site has no direct relationship between any other LCA in the vicinity. Appropriate development on the site would not result in any adverse effects upon adjacent Landscape Character Areas.

The Site as part of LCA '1F – Penketh & Cuerdley'

The site is situated on the north eastern edge of LCA '1F Penketh & Cuerdley', immediately adjoining the urban edge of Penketh.

The key characteristics of this LCA are described as:

- Forms a buffer of agricultural open-space between surrounding urban, suburban and industrial development;
- Visually dominant effect of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station;
- Expansive views across the Mersey Valley to the south;
- Predominantly arable land with a medium to large-scale field pattern;
- Absence of cohesive hedgerows and hedgerow trees;

- Golf facilities and horse grazing paddocks to the south of A562;
- Penketh Brook and associated tree lined banks.

Penketh Brook flows through the southern part of the site, however the majority of the key characteristics of area 1F Penketh & Cuerdley are not representative of the site. The site generally has contrasting characteristics to the wider landscape character area.

The site has an urban-fringe identity, being directly surrounded by residential areas to the east and south, and an elevated railway track to the north. There are no views of the Mersey Valley to the south.

The site is comprised of a small scale field pattern, subdivided by a cohesive network of trees and hedgerows. This contrasts with the larger field patterns and reduced presence of vegetation in the wider landscape character area to the west and south. The visual dominance of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station is reduced in comparison to the wider landscape character area due to well vegetated field boundaries which enclose and bisect the site, providing multiple layers of natural screening to filter views.

The LCA describes the key elements of 'landscape sensitivity' as:

- Locally open vistas;
- Pressures from the urban fringe;
- Dominance of Fiddlers Ferry Power Station;
- Power lines and cables.

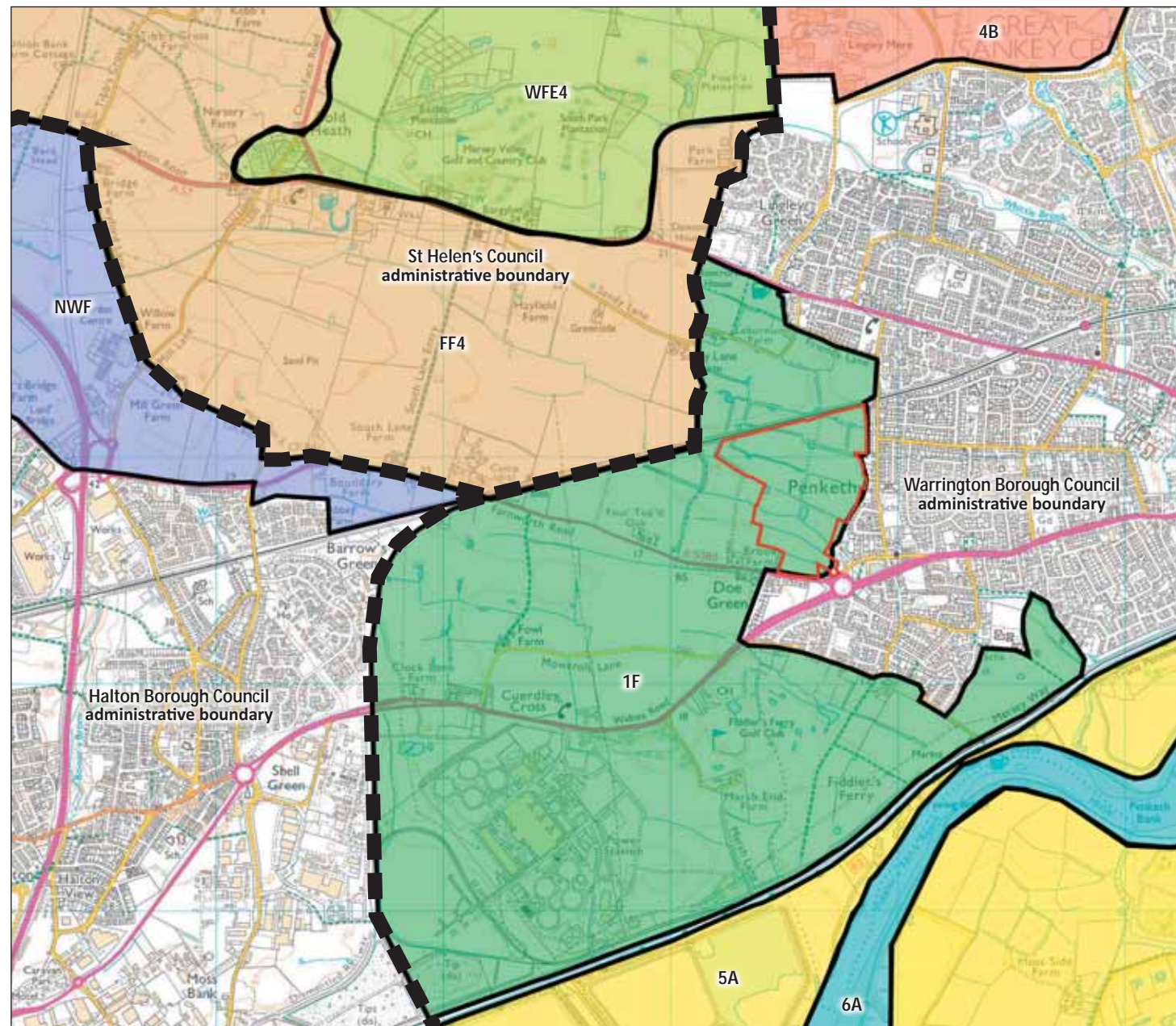
Due to its semi-enclosed nature, the broadly flat landscape, and a lack of existing public access, the site does not form a significant part of any prominent locally open vistas. The site generally has an urban fringe character due to the visual prominence of existing residential properties around the site and the visual detachment from the wider landscape. The vegetation on the site assists in reducing the visual dominance of

Fiddlers Ferry Power Station and there are no power lines passing through the site. The site is therefore considered to be less sensitive to change than the wider landscape character area.



The LCA considers negative changes in the landscape that have occurred and recommends management practices for the future. Appropriate development of the site could help to rectify some negative changes and put recommended management practices in place, to achieve landscape objectives such as:

- Ensure high quality hedgerows and trees are retained and enhanced, with an appropriate planting and management regime;
- Plant native woodland trees at site boundaries to create an attractive edge to development and to assist with filtering views to the power station;
- Re-establish orchard areas as features of the landscape that connect to the past and encourage a healthy lifestyle and a connection with nature, to benefit the present and future communities in the area;
- Improve planting and habitat diversity associated with Penketh Brook;
- Reduce the pressure on the rest of landscape character area for passive recreation and development by providing designated public open space areas within the site.
- Retain the existing minimum distance of open space between Widnes and Penketh.

Figure 8: Landscape Character Context







Key:



-  Site boundary
-  Local authority boundary

Landscape Character Areas

Warrington Borough Council
Landscape Character Assessment 2007

-  Type 1: Undulating Enclosed Farmland
1F - Penketh & Cuerdley
-  Type 5: River Flood Plain
5A - River Mersey/Bollin (West)
-  Type 6: Intertidal Areas & Mud Flats
6A - Victoria Park to Fiddlers Ferry
-  Type 4: Level Areas of Farmland & Former Airfields
4B - Former Burtonwood Airfield

St Helen's Council
Landscape Character Assessment 2006

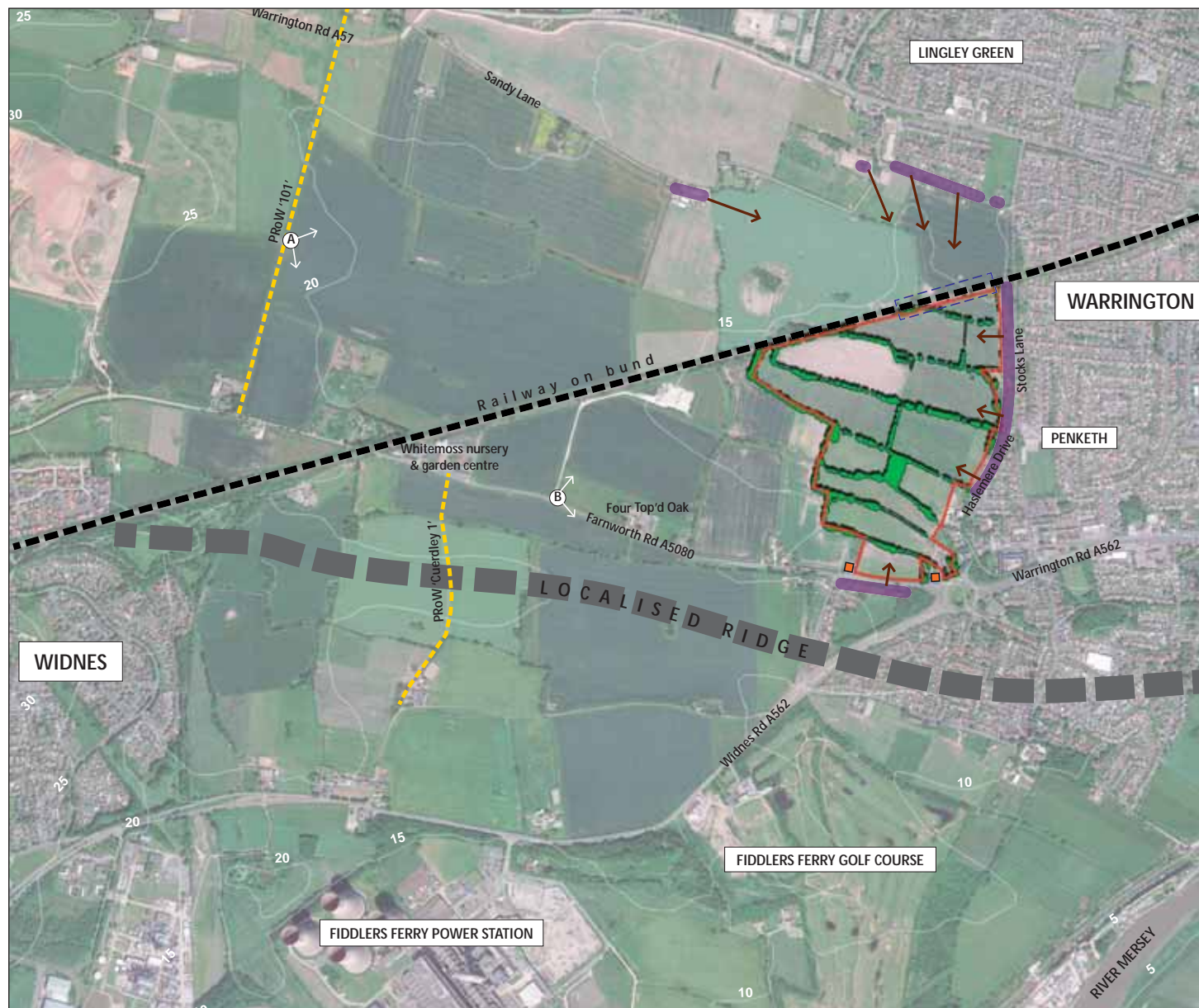
-  Floodplain Farmland (FF)
FF4 Bold Heath
-  Wooded Former Estate (WFE)
WFE4 Bold Hall

Halton Borough Council
Landscape Character Assessment 2009

-  North Widnes Farmland
NWF



Figure 9: Visual Context of the Site



Key:

-  Site boundary
-  Public Right of Way (PROW)
-  Railway on bund restricts views
-  Area of decreased bund height
-  Ridgeline of higher ground prevents long distance views from the south
-  Residential area with views of site
-  Partial views to site
-  Residential properties framing the site
-  5m Contours with annotation
-  Vegetation within the site
-  Viewpoint location



Viewpoint A - View towards the west of the site from South Lane Entry PROW 101

Visual Context of the Site

The site at Stocks Lane has generally limited visibility in the wider landscape due to the relatively flat nature of the land and the existing vegetation within the site, at site boundaries and in the wider landscape.

Views to the site from the north are mostly restricted by the elevated Liverpool-Manchester railway line which is located within an otherwise relatively flat landscape. A slight decrease in bund height at the edge of Warrington allows some views into the northern part of the site from residential properties at the southern edge of Lingley Green. In views from the north, including the view from Public Right of Way '101', tree canopies within the site can be seen above the railway bund. Fiddlers Ferry power station forms a prominent landmark on the horizon. High land at Appleton/Stretton forms a backdrop to the view.

Views to the site from the east are limited to views from 1-2 storey private residential properties on Stocks Lane and Haslemere Drive which back onto the site. Views beyond the site are generally limited due to the mature tree lined field boundaries and the elevated railway. The mature existing vegetation on the site assists in filtering views to Fiddlers Ferry power station from residential properties along Stocks Lane.

From the south there are views into the site from existing properties on Farnworth Road. Views are limited to the southern two fields of the site. Existing trees and hedgerows screen views into the wider site beyond. Existing residential properties on the north side of Farnworth Road frame the view of the site.

An existing Public Right of Way (Cuerdley 1) passes through the open land to the south of Farnworth Road. There are no clear views to the site from the PROW.

The site is screened by trees and hedgerows in the foreground and at the site boundaries. A slight ridgeline in the topography between the railway line and Widnes Road A562, in an otherwise relatively flat landscape, limits the visibility of the site from areas further south.

There are limited views of the site from the west. The area of visual influence is restricted to a triangle of land located between the site, the railway line and Farnworth Road. Visual receptors within this area are limited to an occasional farm, isolated residential and commercial properties. There are no Public Rights of Way through this area. In occasional fleeting views from Farnworth Road, vegetation at the site boundary and within the site can be seen. There are no open views into the site.



Viewpoint B - View towards the west of the site from Farnworth Rd



5.0

Vision for the Site and Masterplan





5.0 Vision for the Site and Masterplan

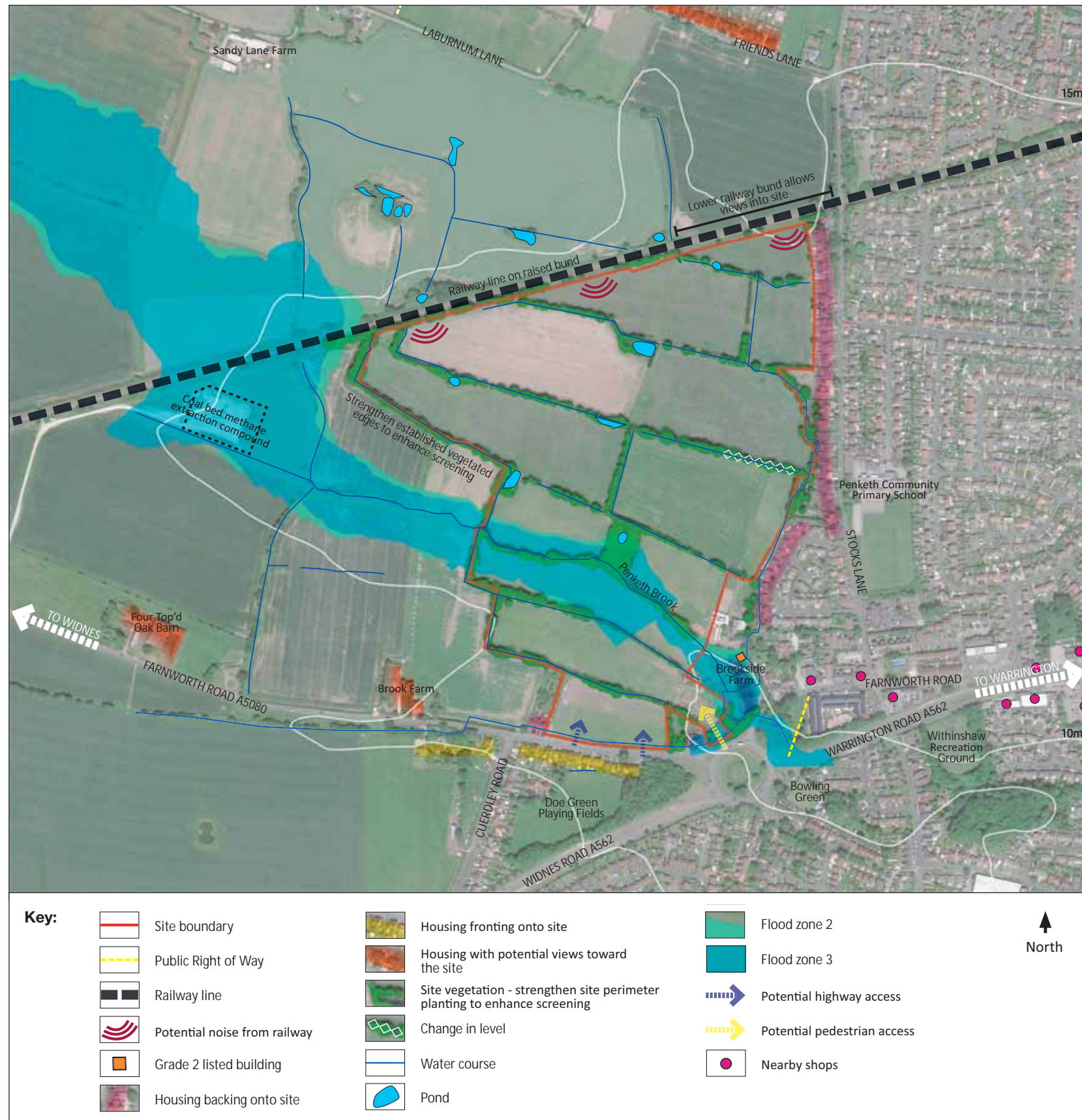
An attractive housing development with distinctive local character offering a choice of high quality new homes to meet local needs.

Taylor Wimpey's vision for the site seeks to meet the following goals:

- Delivery of quality new family homes which make the best use of available land and meet the needs of Warrington Borough Council;
- Achieve 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 its setting;
- Provide high quality, accessible green space for the benefit of existing and future residents;
- Provide pedestrian and cycle connections through the site to enable access to the green infrastructure;
- Invest in the community with the creation of additional direct and indirect employment both during construction and after completion of the development;
- 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 in Penketh and create a good standard of amenity and living environment;
- Protect existing residential amenity; and
- Capitalise on site assets such as ponds, trees and hedgerows.



Figure 10: Site Analysis Plan



Approach

Taylor Wimpey has developed a visionary masterplan for the site which meets these objectives and is presented in this section. It demonstrates how the design and form of development will respond sensitively to the characteristics of the site and the wider area, and explains the contribution that the site could make to Penketh. It is intended that these ideas will evolve further in consultation with the local community and key stakeholders at the appropriate time.

Site Opportunities and Constraints

The vision for the site derives from a careful analysis of the characteristics for the site, its context, and the opportunities and constraints which arise.

The site has a limited visual relationship with the wider landscape, due to the elevated Liverpool-Manchester railway line immediately north of the site boundary, and the cohesive network of internal and boundary trees and hedgerows within the site. The most visible part of the site is the southern site frontage onto Farnworth Rd. This area has potential to provide an attractive frontage to new development.

There are views into the site from some existing nearby residential development. Appropriate masterplanning of the site can ensure that residential amenity of existing nearby residents will be protected.

The western edge of the site is not visually prominent due to existing vegetation at the site boundaries which is comprised of trees and hedgerows. There is potential to strengthen this existing vegetation with additional landscaping to create an appropriate edge to new development and to provide an appropriate and attractive transition between the urban and rural area. Outward facing housing at the eastern edge of the site would create a positive western edge to Penketh.

The largely flat site is currently in agricultural and equine grazing use. Mature tree and hedge lined ditches form strong vegetated boundaries that dissect the fields, frequently adjoined by small ponds surrounded by trees. These features are a prominent characteristic of the 'Penketh & Cuerdley' character area and their retention provides an opportunity to create a development with a strong sense of landscape maturity and a 'green' character. Any vegetation loss required to enable vehicular access through the site would be minimal and could be mitigated by providing new native tree and hedgerow planting throughout the development.

Penketh Brook passes through the site flowing eastwards. The brook has associated flood zones within which residential development should be avoided. There is potential to incorporate the corridor of Penketh Brook into a wider green infrastructure network through the site.

Development should include an appropriate landscape buffer area between the railway line and any new residential properties to minimise any noise impacts upon future residents.

There are no existing underground services within the site. To the west of the site boundary is a 'Coal Bed Methane Extraction Compound', however this does not present any constraint to development.

There is potential to provide two safe highway access points into the site from Farnworth Road to the south, and pedestrian/cycle access from the roundabout on the A562. The pedestrian/cycle access would enable convenient access to existing shops, schools, public transport routes and formal recreation areas which exist in close proximity to the site.

There is currently no public access into the site. Development of the site provides an opportunity to create new publically accessible routes through an attractive greenspace network which will be delivered alongside new residential development. This would enhance accessibility to informal naturalistic open space for existing and future local residents, who currently have restricted access into the countryside due to limited Public Rights of Way in the local vicinity.

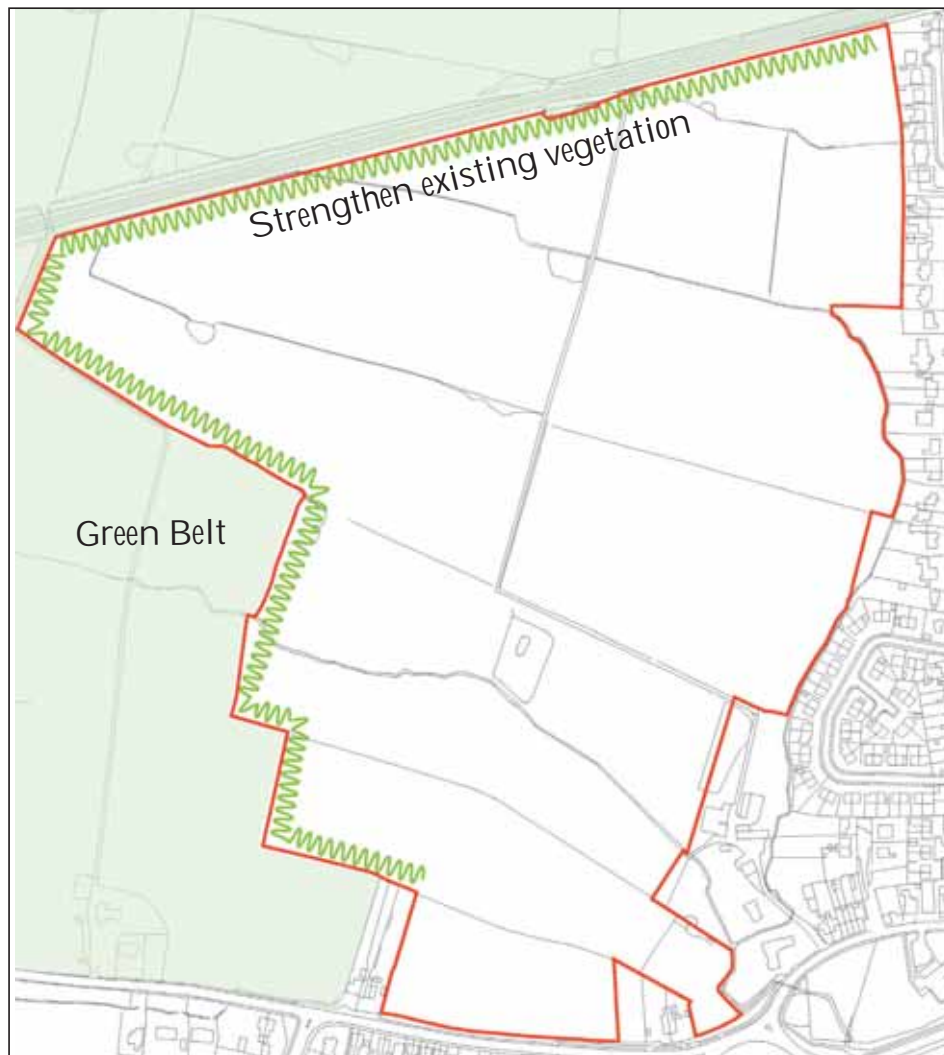
The key principles of development arising from the site opportunities and constraints are:

- Strengthen existing site boundaries and create a positive urban edge;
- Improve the western 'gateway' into Penketh and Warrington;
- Retain and enhance the site's existing character;
- Maximise opportunities for informal recreation, habitat diversity and sustainability associated with Penketh Brook flood zone.

There is potential on the Stocks Lane site to develop a high quality residential scheme with a coherent landscape structure which conserves the natural assets present on the site, as well as improving the recreational facilities and connectivity within Penketh.

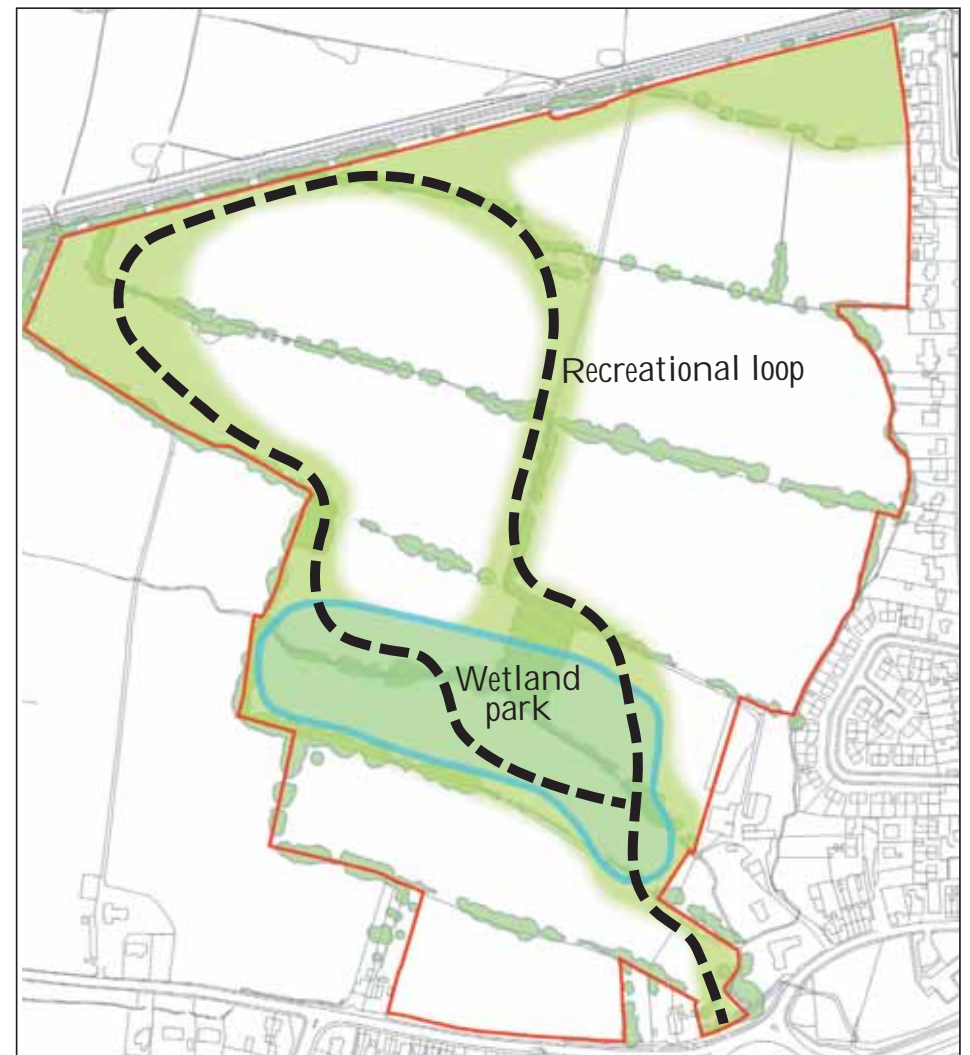
Figure 11: Concept Plans

Development Concepts



Concept 1

Strengthen existing vegetation at western and northern site boundaries to create a new and defensible Green Belt boundary.



Concept 2

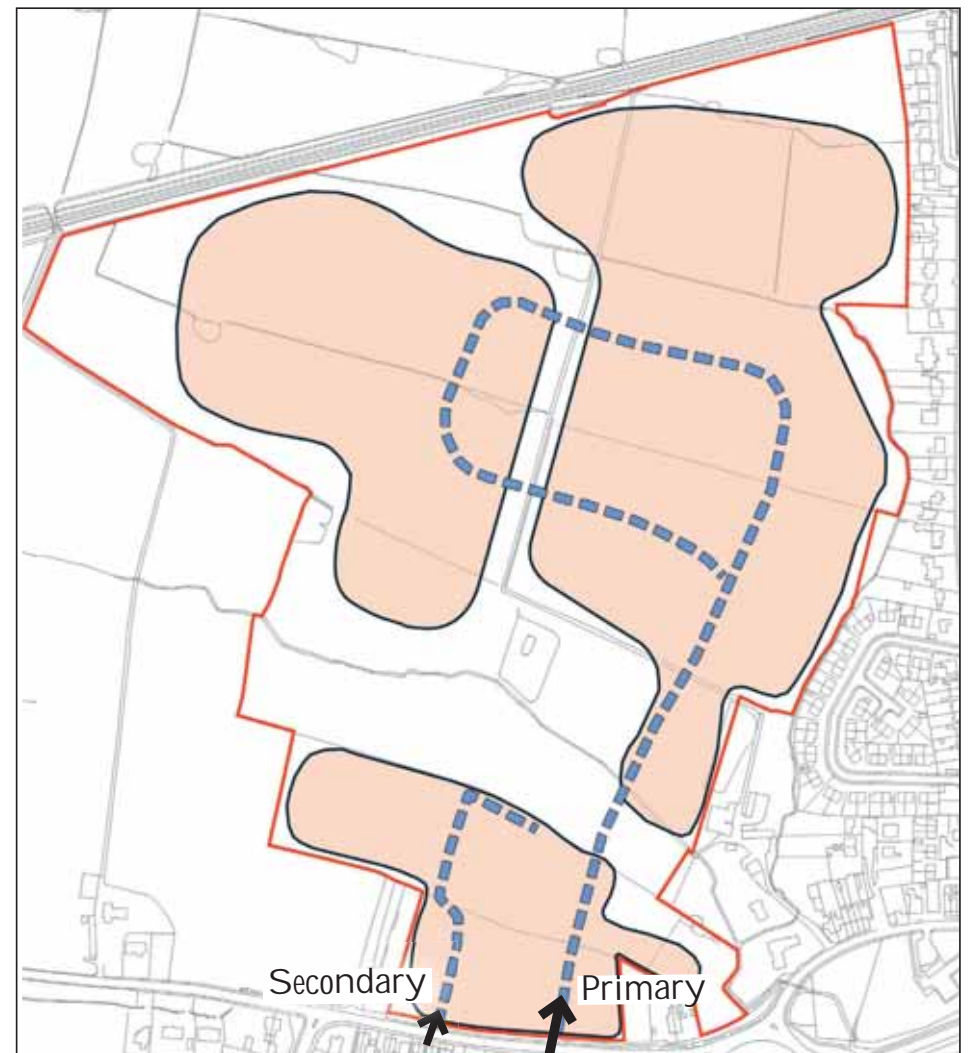
Retain existing valued landscape features and create a naturalistic, publicly accessible recreational loop around the site, including a new wetland park.





Concept 3

Provide high quality, outward facing housing arranged to overlook green spaces and the site entrance; and to create a positive edge to the northern and western edges of the development at the interface with the Green Belt.



Concept 4

Provide two vehicular access points to the site along Farnworth Rd. The primary access to the east will mainly serve development north of Penketh Brook; the secondary access point will serve a smaller development area south of the Brook.

↑
North

Figure 12: Illustrative Masterplan



Illustrative Masterplan

The masterplan illustrates how the site could be laid out to ensure that the objectives illustrated by the key concepts can be met. An attractive residential area which will complement Penketh and Warrington is proposed.

The proposed masterplan is designed to capitalise on the existing field pattern and landscape features of the site. The rectilinear network of trees, hedgerows and ditches will be retained within greenways to provide a mature and attractive setting to the proposed housing areas. This 'green' character of the development will provide an appropriate transition from the existing urban area of Penketh into the more characteristically 'open' landscape to the west of the site.

A network of publically accessible recreational green space is proposed throughout the site with a new landscaped 'wetland park' at its core, based around Penketh Brook. This will provide a naturalistic environment for existing and future local residents to enjoy in an area where public access to naturalistic green space is currently limited, while also enhancing habitat value and biodiversity of the water network and associated hedgerows and trees.

Beyond the wetland park the green space network will provide a recreational loop around the site which will be accessible from a pedestrian/cycle link onto the Farnworth Road roundabout to enable convenient access for all. A 'natural' themed play space, an orchard and retained ponds will add interest to the green spaces throughout the development.

There will be potential to incorporate new ponds and swales as part of a sustainable drainage system into the green space network.

Additional landscape treatment in the form of trees and understorey planting will be provided along the northern and western edges of the site to strengthen the existing 'green' edge of the site which provides a buffer to the more 'open' landscape to the west.

The residential development areas will be served from two highway access points located on Farnworth Rd. The eastern access will form the primary route into the site, serving the majority of

the development, including the residential areas to the north of Penketh Brook. The western access will be a secondary access serving dwellings in the southern part of the development to the south of Penketh Brook. The two accesses will be linked by controlled emergency access routes, which will also provide additional emergency vehicle crossing points over Penketh Brook into the northern part of the site. The emergency routes will provide pedestrian/cycle routes for everyday use.

The internal road network will be comprised of a meandering spine road loop which will link to a series of secondary road loops, cul-de-sacs and private drives. The main entrance into the site from Farnworth Road will be designed to provide an attractive frontage to the site.

The eastern edge of the proposed residential area will front onto existing housing located along Stocks Lane and Haslemere Drive, which backs onto the site. An existing ditch along the eastern edge of the site will be retained within a green space corridor in order to retain the security and residential amenity of the existing properties.

At the western and northern edges of the development perimeter housing will be arranged to face outwards onto the proposed public open spaces which frame the site. This will create a positive outward facing edge to the development.

The high quality residential scheme proposed will deliver the following key features:

- Up to 600 dwelling;
- Approximately 12 hectares of accessible, safe and multi-functional greenspace, providing recreational and environmental benefits;
- Extensive new footpaths and cycleways encouraging sustainable transport and informal recreation.

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

Figure 13: Illustrative Hand Drawn Sketches

Hand Sketch 1

View of proposed development frontage to green space



Existing site photograph



For illustrative purpose only



Hand Sketch 2

View of proposed development fronting existing trees and hedgerow



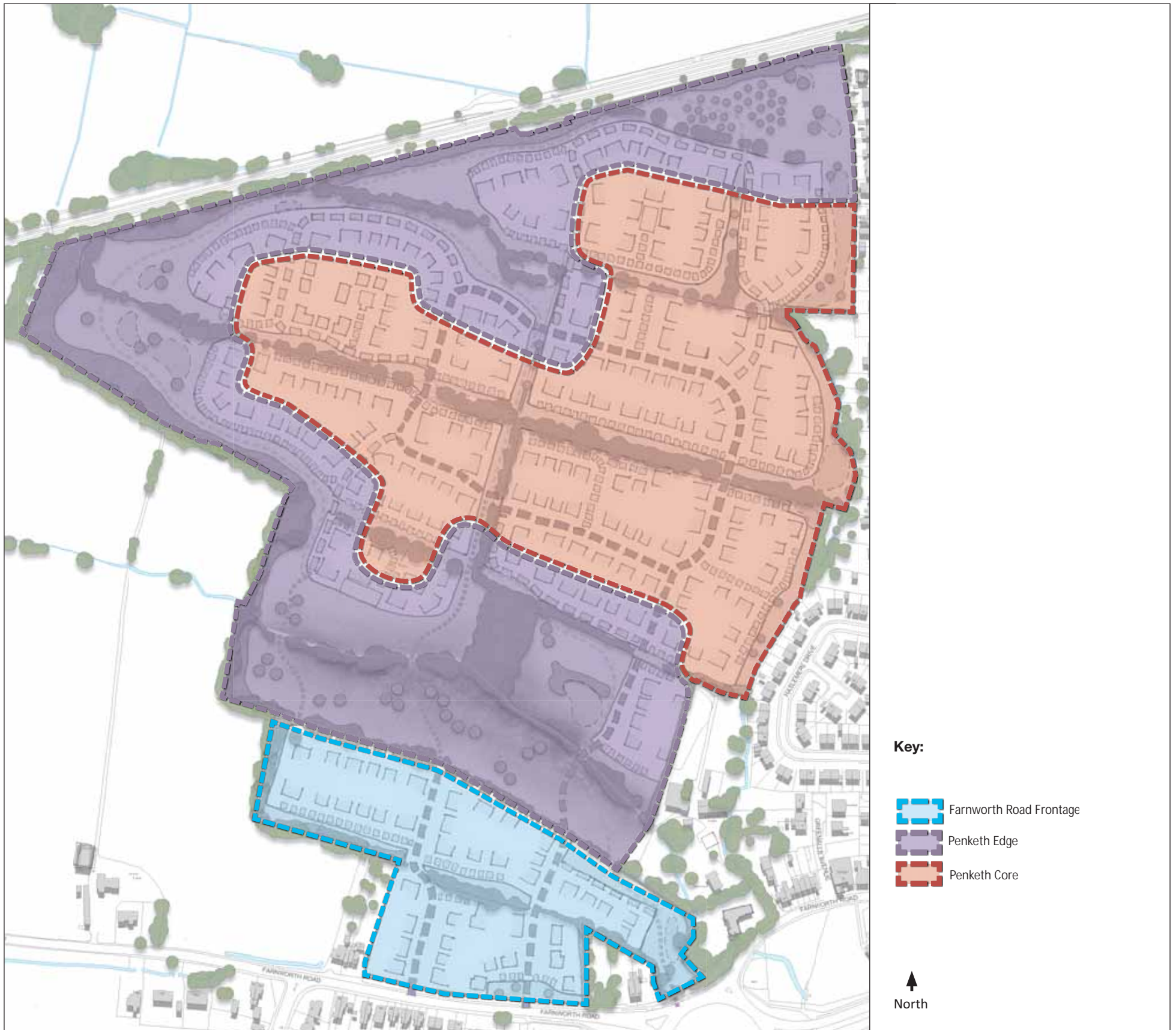
Existing site photograph



For illustrative purpose only



Figure 14: Character Areas



Character Areas

Development character is a function of layout, building style and landscape treatments, which combine to create a sense of place.

Farnworth Road Frontage

The entrance to the development will be designed to create an attractive and high quality residential area which will be developed at densities of approximately 35 dwellings per hectare. This higher development density will provide an indication that the area enables access to the wider development and will make the most of the close proximity to existing public transport routes along Farnworth Road. Built form will be arranged to create a positive frontage to Farnworth Road with properties generally restricted to 2 storeys. Building materials will comprise some red brick with a high proportion of white render to complement existing dwellings in the vicinity. A small focal greenspace and view line along the primary entrance road will provide a glimpsed view towards the new 'wetland park'.

Penketh Edge

This area will be designed to provide a lower density attractive edge of development, developed at approximately 30-32 dwellings per hectare. It will feature a high proportion of semi-detached and detached properties, arranged in an organic form with curved edges to soften the built edge. Housing will generally be restricted to 2 storeys to compliment adjacent informal open green spaces and rural edges. External building materials to the dwellings will consist mainly of red brick, to reflect the current material palette of the existing residential edge of Penketh. The majority of housing will have front gardens with parking to the front or side, served mainly by secondary roads, cul-de sacs and private drives. Vegetated

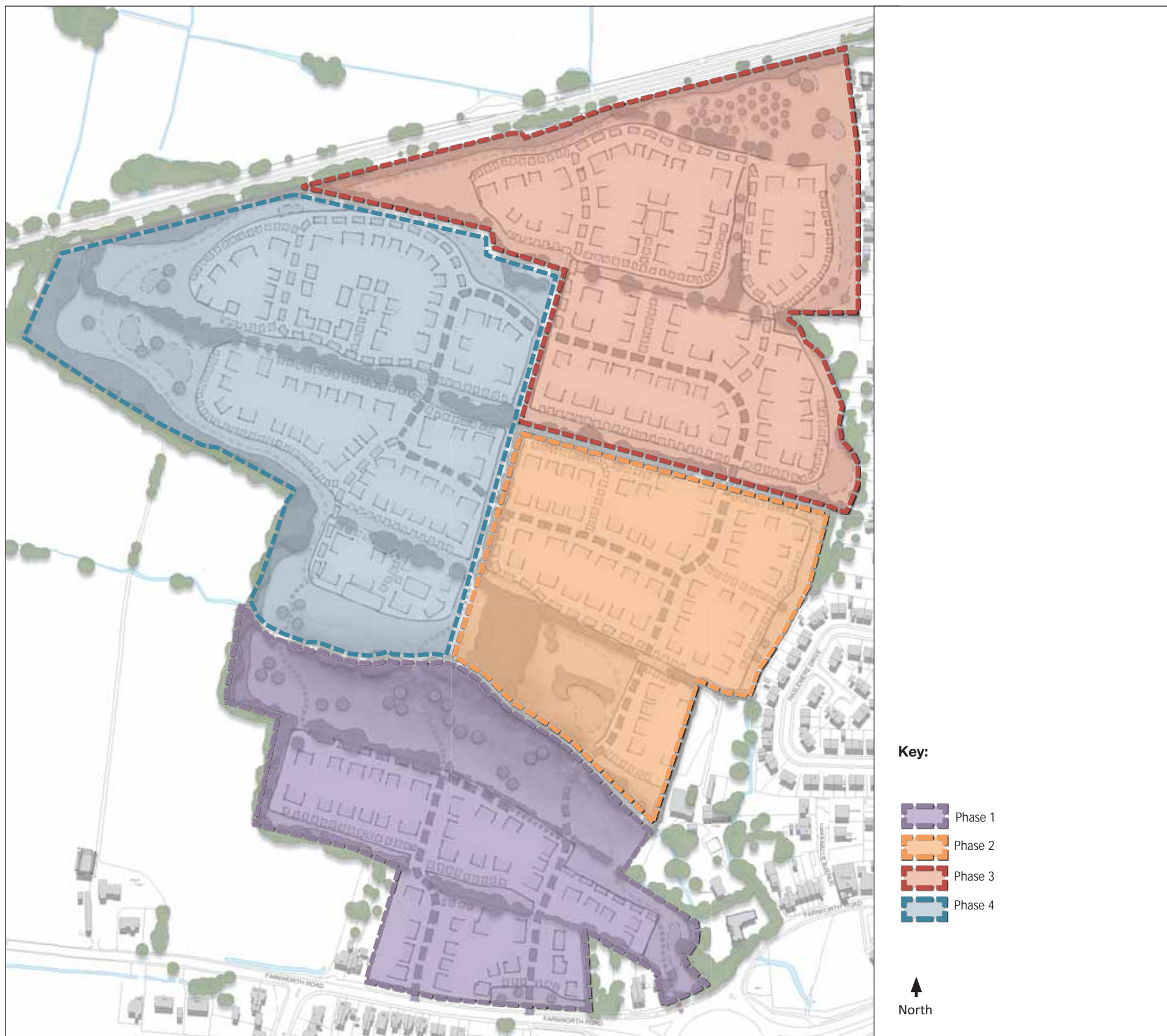
edges to the site will be strengthened with woodland tree belts and informal tree planting will be prominent in open spaces to create a semi-rural character to this part of the development. Pedestrian routes will meander informally around the woodland belts, orchard and green open spaces within the site.

Penketh Core

The inner-eastern part of the site has a limited visual connection with the wider landscape and therefore has greater flexibility regarding its character. This enables slightly higher development densities of approximately 32-35 dwellings per hectare and creates opportunities for some variety within the external building material palette, including rendered facades. In order to retain the existing vegetated field boundaries and reflect a transition in character towards the existing urban area, the housing is envisaged to be in a more standardised, geometric arrangement. A meandering central spine road will feed onto a series of secondary loop roads, cul-de-sacs and private drives, creating a primary closed loop within the eastern core. Housing which fronts onto the vegetated field boundaries and pedestrian/cycle routes will include a higher proportion of detached and semi-detached properties, while the internal streets will provide a wider range of housing styles. Properties will range from 2 to 3 storeys, with housing adjacent to existing bungalows restricted to 2 storeys.

Field boundary vegetation will be enhanced as appropriate and the characteristic ditches and watercourses will be retained wherever possible. Selective hedgerows and occasional tree planting will be introduced to the eastern site boundary, to improve the privacy to dwellings backing on to the site. Within the core lies a proposed central pedestrian/cyclist accessible greenway running north to south, connecting and enhancing existing valued landscape features. This extends to the pedestrian/cycle routes within the Penketh Edge character area to create an interesting loop around the site with varied character.

Figure 15: Phasing Plan





Phasing

It is anticipated that the site could be developed over a 15-18 year period. On this basis, 4 potential phases of development are indicated on the adjacent plan. The proposed development phases would logically and gradually extend development around the existing infrastructure of Farnworth Rd before extending northwards along the existing residential edge of Penketh, finishing with the western rural edge. This proposed phasing of development ensures that the existing residential edge gradually extends from its current alignment.

Phase 1 would include the development of land south of Penketh Brook and adjacent to Farnworth Rd, including the creation of the highway access into the site, leading towards Penketh Brook. This would deliver approximately 110-115 dwellings over 3-4 years.

Phase 2 would extend development north eastwards and would complete the construction of the raised primary road crossing over Penketh Brook. This would deliver approximately 110-120 dwellings over 3-4 years.

Phase 3 would complete the development of the north east part of the site up to the railway line. This would deliver approximately 155-165 dwellings over 4-5 years.

Phase 4 would extend development to the north west of the site and complete the emergency access track and pedestrian/cycle route over Penketh Brook. This would deliver approximately 160-175 dwellings over 5 years.



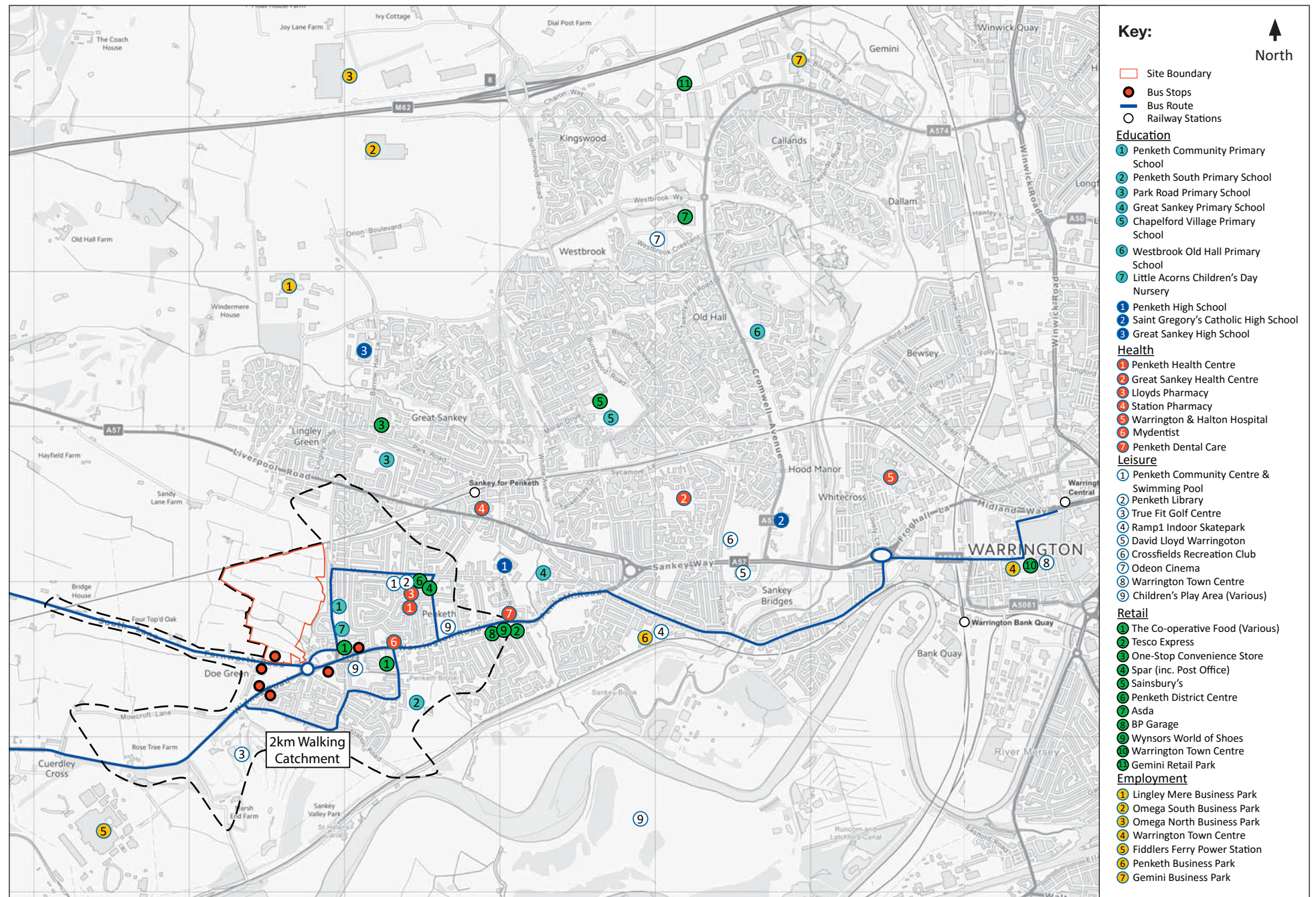
6

6.0

Sustainable Development Principles



Figure 16: Sustainability Plan



6.0 Sustainable Development Principles

The Stocks Lane site represents a highly sustainable solution to the Borough's housing needs which will generate economic, social and environmental benefits in accordance with the three pillars of sustainable development, whilst delivering the type, quality and quantity of new homes to support the growth of Warrington over the Local Plan period.



Location and Accessibility

The proposed development site is located to the west of Penketh, approximately 5.5km west of Warrington town centre. The site lies to the north of the A5080 Farnworth Road, which meets the A562 Warrington Road immediately south-east of the site at a five-arm roundabout. The A562 Warrington Road subsequently meets the A57 Sankey Way, a key radial route into Warrington town centre from the west. To the west of the site, the A5080 Farnworth Road runs westwards towards Widnes and the M62 / M57 interchange beyond.

The site is bounded to the north by the Warrington to Manchester and Liverpool railway line. Farnworth Road lies along the southern boundary of the site and provides highway frontage to the development site.

Figure 16 presents details of the sustainable accessibility of the proposed development site, highlighting its accessibility to a range of key facilities and services. The plan indicates that the site is well connected by existing bus services, providing connections to local facilities and to Warrington town centre, including its two railway stations and the range of employment, retail and leisure opportunities within the centre. There is also a range of local facilities within reasonable walking and cycling distance of the site.

The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Farnworth Road approximately 350m from the centre of the site. These stops provide access to a 30-minute frequency service during the daytime to Warrington and Liverpool. The journey time from Farnworth Road to Warrington town centre is approximately 15-minutes. Additional bus services are provided from the A562, providing additional services to Warrington, Widnes and the surrounding local areas.

Sankey for Penketh railway station is also c.2.5km from the site, which is approximately a 30-minute walk, or an 8-minute cycle. Sankey for Penketh station provides connections to Warrington, Liverpool and Manchester.

The site is also well located to provide access to the town's key road network via the A57 Sankey Way and to the Strategic Road Network via Junction 8 of the M62 which lies approximately 6km north of the site. Local employment opportunities at Omega, Gemini and Birchwood are within 10 - 20 minutes' drive of the site, with Birchwood also being accessible via rail from Sankey for Penketh station.

Community Facilities

Figure 16 illustrates the extensive range of key facilities and services located within the vicinity of the proposed development at Stocks Lane. The figure also highlights a 2km walking catchment around the site - considered an acceptable walking distance to many facilities, equating to a 25-minute walk. This catchment encompasses many local facilities within Penketh, including primary schools, local convenience stores, a health centre, pharmacy and dentist, Penketh district centre and other facilities.

Table Key Facilities sets out details of a selection of these key services, highlighting their location and respective distance from the centre of the site.

The table opposite identifies a number of community facilities within a 2km walking catchment of the site, including a cluster of facilities at the Penketh district centre (post office, bank, library, convenience store) and the adjacent Penketh swimming pool and community centre. These facilities are accessible on foot, by cycle or by bus from the site. In addition, two children's play areas are located along Warrington Road, again within 2km of the site.

Penketh Community Primary School is located close to the site, on Stocks Lane, and Penketh South Primary School is within 2km of the site. Penketh High School is located just over 2km from the site and is a 30-minute walk or 7-minute cycle from the centre of the site, and accessible by bus from the services which run adjacent to the site. Little Acorns Children's day nursery is located on Stocks Lane a short walk from the site.

Penketh Health Centre is located adjacent to Penketh District Centre and is within 2km of the site and include a GP surgery, a pharmacy is located opposite the Health Centre. MyDentist is located on Warrington Road and is within 2km of the site.

Overall it is concluded that the site is well located in terms of its accessibility to key services, minimising the need to travel and maximising the potential use of sustainable travel modes. The site accords with the sustainable development principles set out in the NPPF.

Community Facilities

The site is located in close proximity to a number of community facilities that could be accessed and utilised by residents.

Penketh Community Primary School is 550m north of the site and there are a further two primary schools within 2km of the site. The nearest secondary school is 2km to the east and accessible by bus, including dedicated school buses.

Other community facilities include the Recreation Ground to the south, Penketh Methodist Church which is 800m to the east and Latham Hall Scouts and Guides, 720m to the east of the site.

The site is a sustainably located development opportunity located within easy access of a range of local services, employment opportunities and public transport routes.



Type of Facility	Land Use	Name	Location	Distance
Retail	Foodstore	Sainsbury's	Great Sankey	3.6km
	Convenience	Co-op Food	Penketh	800m
		Spar	Penketh	1.6km
Education	Primary School	Penketh Community Primary School	Penketh	1.2km
		Penketh South Primary School	Penketh	1.4km
		Park Road Primary School	Great Sankey	2.5km
	Secondary School	Penketh High School	Penketh	2.2km
		Great Sankey High School	Great Sankey	3km
Health	Pharmacy	Lloyds Pharmacy	Penketh	1.6km
	GP	Penketh Health Centre	Penketh	1.6km
	Dentist	Mydentist	Penketh	1.1km
Employment	Business Park	Penketh Business Park	Penketh	3.1km
		Lingley Mere Business Park	Great Sankey	3km
	General Employment	Fiddlers Ferry Power Station	Widnes Rd	1.9km
		Warrington Town Centre	Warrington	5.6km
Leisure	Sport Facility	True Fit Golf Centre	Widnes Rd	1.1km
		Ramp1 Indoor Skatepark	Penketh	3km
	Community Facility	Penketh Library	Penketh	1.6km
	Leisure/Fitness Centre	Penketh Swimming Pool and Community Centre	Penketh	1.6km

Table: Key Facilities within the vicinity of the site



The development of the Stocks Lane site will support the local labour market, and will generate the following specific benefits:



Direct construction-related employment:

The proposed development could support around 155 full-time equivalent jobs per annum during the construction phase (circa 12 years), in a mix of direct construction opportunities and jobs supported in the wider supply chain.



Contribution of construction phase to economic output:

The construction of the new homes could contribute an additional £101m of gross value added (GVA) annually to the economy during the 12-year construction period.



Household spend:

Once fully built and occupied, the households are estimated to generate expenditure in the region of £16m per annum.



Increased Council Tax income:

The construction of the new homes could generate around £1.1 million per annum in additional Council Tax revenue, once fully developed and occupied.

Economic Investment

The development of the site will contribute to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. In particular, the development of up to 600 dwellings will secure a number of economic benefits in terms of job creation, tax revenues to the Council and increased expenditure in the local economy.

Housing supply can play a key role in the flexibility of the local labour market which is an important component in local economic competitiveness and maintaining a dynamic economy. This is because a shortage of housing or lack of affordability can act as a barrier to people accessing employment opportunities or result in long distance commuting and associated sustainability impacts.

Community Benefits

The development of the site will also perform a social role by generating the following community benefits:

- Provide a range of open market housing comprising various types to meet the needs of the local community.
- Provide up to 180 affordable homes of a range and type to meet the identified need in the Warrington area.
- Provide over 12 Ha of public open space and outdoors sports provision for future residents and the wider community. The proposals for the site can deliver integrated open space that complements and strengthens links to the existing Recreation Areas to the south.
- Assist in the provision of other facilities where there is an identified need, in accordance with development plan policies.

Taylor Wimpey in the Community

Taylor Wimpey is committed to making a difference in the local community and working with local educational establishments and job seeking agencies to facilitate local apprenticeships and training initiatives, and to ensure that employment generated from the development is sourced from and directly benefits the local area.



Environmental Considerations

Landscape & Visual Impact

As confirmed within the landscape analysis, the site is not subject to any formal landscape designations, other than its location in the Green Belt which is addressed in Chapter 3. The site lies adjacent to the western urban fringe of Warrington, within a character type referred to as 'Undulating Enclosed Farmland'. This landscape character type includes Penketh Brook with its 'narrow band of associated tree-lined banks' and farmland areas with an 'enclosed character'.

In terms of visual impacts, the site is generally well screened by existing field boundary trees and hedgerows and the elevated Liverpool-Manchester railway line, within an otherwise relatively flat landscape.

As such, it is not anticipated that the development of the site will have a significant impact on landscape character or visual amenity.

Ecology and Trees

The site is not within or near to any designated ecological area, and as such is unlikely to have an adverse ecological impact.

The majority of trees and vegetation are found around the perimeter of the site, and between the large fields within the site. The vast majority of these will be retained and incorporated into the layout, whilst significant new planting will be proposed as part of the development, for biodiversity purposes as well as screening and landscaping.

Therefore, there are no ecological or arboricultural constraints preventing the development of the site and appropriate mitigation will be provided where necessary.

There are 3 Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) around the perimeter of the site. These trees will be retained wherever possible and incorporated into the layout and landscaping plans.

Archaeology & Heritage

There are no Conservation Areas or designated archaeological features either within or directly adjacent to the site. Brookside Farmhouse, towards the southern boundary of the site, is designated as a Grade II listed building. This is heavily screened by trees and is already flanked by existing residential development, which ensures that the development of the site will have minimal impact on its setting. There is also a Listed Milestone 380m to the east of the site, which will not be impacted by the proposed development.

A full archaeological assessment will be undertaken at planning application stage to identify if any mitigation measures are required, however at this stage there are no archaeological constraints that would prevent development of this site.

Flooding & Drainage

Penketh Brook runs through the southern part of the site, with approximately 3 hectares of the surrounding land falling within Flood Zone 3. As such the masterplan does not include this land in the developable area and instead sets it aside for green infrastructure and drainage mitigation. This strategy will evolve in response to the findings of the Flood Risk Assessment and the technical studies.

The remainder of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 is therefore suitable for residential development.

Noise

The main source of existing noise comes from the adjacent A5080 and the Liverpool to Warrington Railway line. Initial assessments suggest that the noise impacts of these two sources can be mitigated through strong development buffers to the northern and southern boundary, as reflected in the Illustrative Masterplan, and attenuation features such as bunds and tree cover. As such, there are no noise constraints preventing the development of the site.

Ground Conditions

A desktop assessment suggests that the site has not been subject to intensive development, reflective of its use as agricultural pasture land; albeit there is some potential for contamination due to the existing railway line, and the neighbouring methane extraction site (150m west of the site) which will require further intrusive investigation at planning application stage, although this will not prevent development on the wider site.

Agricultural Land Classification

The North-West Region Agricultural Land Classification indicates that the site falls within Grade 2 Agricultural Land, which is defined as 'very good' and considered best and most versatile. That said, the vast majority of Green Belt land around Warrington (to the north, west and part of the south) falls within this category, and given the need to release significant amounts of such land for development, this is not considered to be sufficient constraint to prevent development on this site.



Highways

It is proposed that access to the site could be delivered via two new accesses onto the A5080 Farnworth Road, along the southern boundary of the site. Farnworth Road is a wide single carriageway, subject to a 30mph speed limit and provides frontage access to existing residential properties along its southern edge, within the vicinity of the proposed development site.

The two accesses will take the form of T-junctions, located to the west of the existing roundabout junction of the A5080 Farnworth Road with the A562 Warrington Road. Both junctions would accommodate right turn ghost-island lanes to provide segregated provision for vehicles turning into the site from the east, without impeding through traffic movements along the A5080.

As outlined earlier in this report, the larger area of residential development would be located to the north of the site, north of the current flood plain, with a smaller residential parcel located to the south of the site, adjacent to Farnworth Road. The northern development area will be served by the main access to the site, with a secondary access serving the smaller southern development area. However, both areas will include a series of looped road networks and will be connected by separate emergency vehicle access routes, as outlined below.

The eastern access will provide access to c.500 dwellings and will take the form of a wider access road of 6.75 metres width, consistent with the requirement for a Local Distributor Road, and will form the principal access into the site.

The western access will provide access to c.100 dwellings and will take the form of a Major Residential Road, a smaller scale access road of c.5.5 metres, suitable to accommodate the lower level of development provided in this southern parcel.

The indicative masterplan shows a series of connections between the major and minor access roads within the southern parcel of the site, with the major access road continuing northwards through the site into the larger northern development area. The masterplan also includes a series of looped roads within the development parcels, ensuring permeability across the site, and offering a choice of routes in case of emergencies.

The capacity of each access has been appraised and the assessments demonstrate that the proposed T-junction access arrangements would have sufficient capacity to accommodate up to c.600 dwellings on the site, taking account of current traffic volumes along Farnworth Road and an element of background traffic growth. The proposed right turn lanes would be of sufficient length to accommodate any forecast queuing vehicles at each access.

Two dedicated Emergency Vehicle Accesses (EVA) will also be provided within the site, which will also provide pedestrian/cycle connections between the parcels. One EVA will be provided from the A562 / A5080 roundabout at the south-eastern corner of the site, offering a separate link to the northern development parcel, in the event that the

major access road becomes blocked. This EVA route will also provide a shorter connection to the facilities and bus stops within Penketh for pedestrians / cyclists. A second EVA will be provided between the southern (c.100 dwellings) area of land and the northern (c.500 dwellings) area, towards the west of the site, again increasing the permeability of the site and offering a choice of routes between the parcels in the event that the main access route becomes blocked.

Wider Highway Network

The A562 is a busy route providing access to local facilities near the site and to Warrington town centre to the east and Widnes town centre to the west. The A5080 Farnworth Road connects into the A562 at an existing five-arm roundabout to the south-east of the site, which provides onward connection to Warrington town centre, western areas of Warrington and the M62 motorway via the A57 Sankey Way / Liverpool Road and to Widnes to the south-west via the A562 Widnes Road.

The majority of the development-generated traffic will pass through this adjacent roundabout, en-route to key employment, education, retail, leisure and other destinations. An initial assessment of the capacity of the roundabout identifies that it would have sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic associated with up to c.600 dwellings on the development site.

It is therefore concluded that the development can provide safe and suitable access to the site for all people. The impacts of the development can be accommodated within the surrounding network and there are no significant transport-related constraints that would affect the delivery of a sustainable residential community in this location.

Utilities

An initial assessment of existing Utilities has confirmed that electricity, gas, water and telecommunications can be provided to the site without adversely impacting on the provision of services to the wider community.

Sustainability Conclusions

There is a compelling need to deliver the development needs of the Warrington Borough in an appropriate way. The future development of the site would deliver a range of sustainability benefits whilst creating no adverse local impacts. The development of this site is a wholly appropriate and sustainable outcome, which in itself delivers a wide range of local benefits, not least an increase in market and affordable housing. Moreover, the development will deliver significant inward investment from the private sector.





7.0 Deliverability



7.0 Deliverability

The site will make a valuable contribution with the delivery of up to 600 dwellings to meet the Borough's housing needs requirements as well as meeting the qualitative need to provide family and affordable housing within the area. It is therefore important that the site is deliverable in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.

Deliverability Criteria

The NPPF and NPPG specify that local planning authorities supply sufficient specific deliverable sites to deliver housing in the first 5 years. As stated in Annex 2 of the NPPF, to be considerable deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years. Paragraph 73 enforces local planning authorities to identify and update annually a supply of deliverable sites to provide a minimum of five years' supply of housing against their housing requirement.

To be considered deliverable, sites should, at the point of adoption of the relevant local development document:

- **Be available:** there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership problems.
- **Be suitable:** offer a suitable location for development and would contribute to the development of sustainable and mixed communities.
- **Be achievable:** there is a reasonable prospect that housing will be developed on the site at a particular point in time.

This is a judgement about the economic viability of a site and the capability of a developer to provide housing within a defined period, taking into account marketing, cost and deliverability factors.





Available

Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd has legal control of the site, and is seeking to develop the site at the earliest opportunity. The site is therefore in the control of a major national housebuilder and could deliver up to 600 new homes that will be critical to meeting housing need during the Plan Period.

If the site were to be released from the Green Belt and allocated for housing, Taylor Wimpey would seek to develop the site immediately, which 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 Taylor Wimpey's track record of the efficient delivery of high quality greenfield housing schemes across the North West.

This is particularly relevant in Warrington, where the Council need to provide the additional dwellings required to support growth in the borough.



Suitable

The site is suitable for housing development because it:

- Offers a suitable location for development and can be developed now;
- Would consolidate and round-off the settlement to the west of Penketh, making use of the existing physical boundaries of the Liverpool to Warrington Railway line and the A5080;
- Can utilise existing infrastructure surrounding the site with no utilities or drainage constraints preventing the site coming forward for development;
- Can accommodate satisfactory vehicular access, existing bus stops are in close proximity and the local highway can accommodate the provision of up to 600 additional dwellings;
- Will deliver generous areas of open space and parkland for use by residents and the local community;
- Is not subject to any ecological or environmental constraints preventing development on the site; and
- Is sustainably located with several local facilities within walking distance of the site boundary, including a primary school, shops, and recreation uses.

The site is therefore suitable in accordance with the NPPF.



Achievable

The delivery of approximately 600 dwellings would make a significant contribution towards meeting the housing needs of the Borough. An assessment of the site constraints has been undertaken which illustrates that delivery of the entire site is achievable and deliverable, and a professional team of technical experts has been appointed to underpin this assessment and support the delivery of the site moving forward. Where any potential constraints are identified, Taylor Wimpey has considered the necessary mitigation measures and required investment in order to overcome any deliverability barriers.

Taylor Wimpey has reviewed the economic viability of the proposal in terms of the land value, attractiveness of the locality, potential market demand and the projected rate of sales in Warrington; as well as the cost factors associated with the site including preparation costs and site constraints. Where potential constraints have been identified; Taylor Wimpey has considered the necessary mitigation measures and will use investment in order to overcome any deliverability barriers.

Taylor Wimpey can, therefore, confirm that the development of the site is economically viable in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG. As a consequence, the company is committed to investing in the site and is confident that residential development can be achieved within 5 years.



8.0 Conclusions





8.0 Conclusions

The Stocks Lane, Penketh site presents an exceptional opportunity to meet the future housing needs of Warrington in a location that would not undermine the purpose and function of the Green Belt. This Development Statement sets out the case for allocating the site for housing development within the emerging plan period, as well as the exceptional circumstances that support the alteration of the Green Belt in the Borough, a position the Council support.

The allocation of this site for residential development will deliver open market and affordable housing of a type, quantity and quality that will make a significant contribution to the future growth needs of Warrington.

Key Benefits

Accordingly, this Development Statement has demonstrated that the Stocks Lane site:

- Is entirely suitable, deliverable and viable for housing development; and will deliver a mix of housing types, including both market and affordable homes;
- Is sustainably located in proximity to a range of amenities, services and facilities;
- Is supported by clear exceptional circumstances for Green Belt release, including an urgent need for new market and affordable homes, and a shortage of available land within existing urban areas;
- Is entirely appropriate for Green Belt release and allocation as a residential development site, as it is well contained by existing physical features and forms a logical extension to the village, without compromising the core purposes of the Green Belt;
- Is not subject to any technical or environmental constraints that would prevent the delivery of housing;
- Can deliver a landscape led masterplan that complements the surrounding site context, and creates a high-quality housing development;
- Will provide a network of high quality open spaces;
- Will create a more appropriate and defensible Green Belt boundary to the west of Penketh; and
- Generates significant socio-economic benefits by providing housing choice, and stimulating job creation and economic investment. Increased consumer spending will also help to support additional shops and services within the Warrington Road Local Centre, which could elevate its role as a service centre.

Summary

The development of the site at Stocks Lane, Penketh provides a highly sustainable opportunity to support the national growth agenda and to assist in providing adequate land to deliver a new Local Plan for the Borough. The site will deliver the quantity, type and quality of homes that is required across the Borough and can demonstrate exceptional circumstances that support an alteration to the existing Green Belt without impacting on its core functions.

Taylor Wimpey is committed to working collaboratively with the Council and Key Stakeholders to ensure that the Borough's housing need is met in a sensitive and sustainable manner.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Taylor Wimpey UK Limited

Appendix 2: Site Sustainability



Appendix 1:

Taylor Wimpey UK Limited

Taylor Wimpey UK Limited is a dedicated homebuilding company with over 126 years' experience, we have an unparalleled record in our industry. We aim to be the homebuilder of choice for our customers, our employees, our shareholders and for the communities in which we operate.

We have expertise in land acquisition, home and community design, urban regeneration and the development of supporting infrastructure which improves our customers' quality of life and adds value to their homes. We draw on our experience as a provider of quality homes but update that, to the expectations of today's buyers and strive to provide the best quality homes, while setting new standards of customer care in the industry. Our 24 regional businesses in the UK give our operations significant scale and truly national geographic coverage.

Each business builds a range of products, from one bedroom apartments and starter homes to large detached family homes for every taste and budget and as a result, our property portfolio displays a surprising diversity. The core business of the company is the development for homes on the open market, although we are strongly committed to the provision of low cost social housing through predominantly partnerships with Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords as well as a variety of Government bodies such as the Homes and Communities Agency.

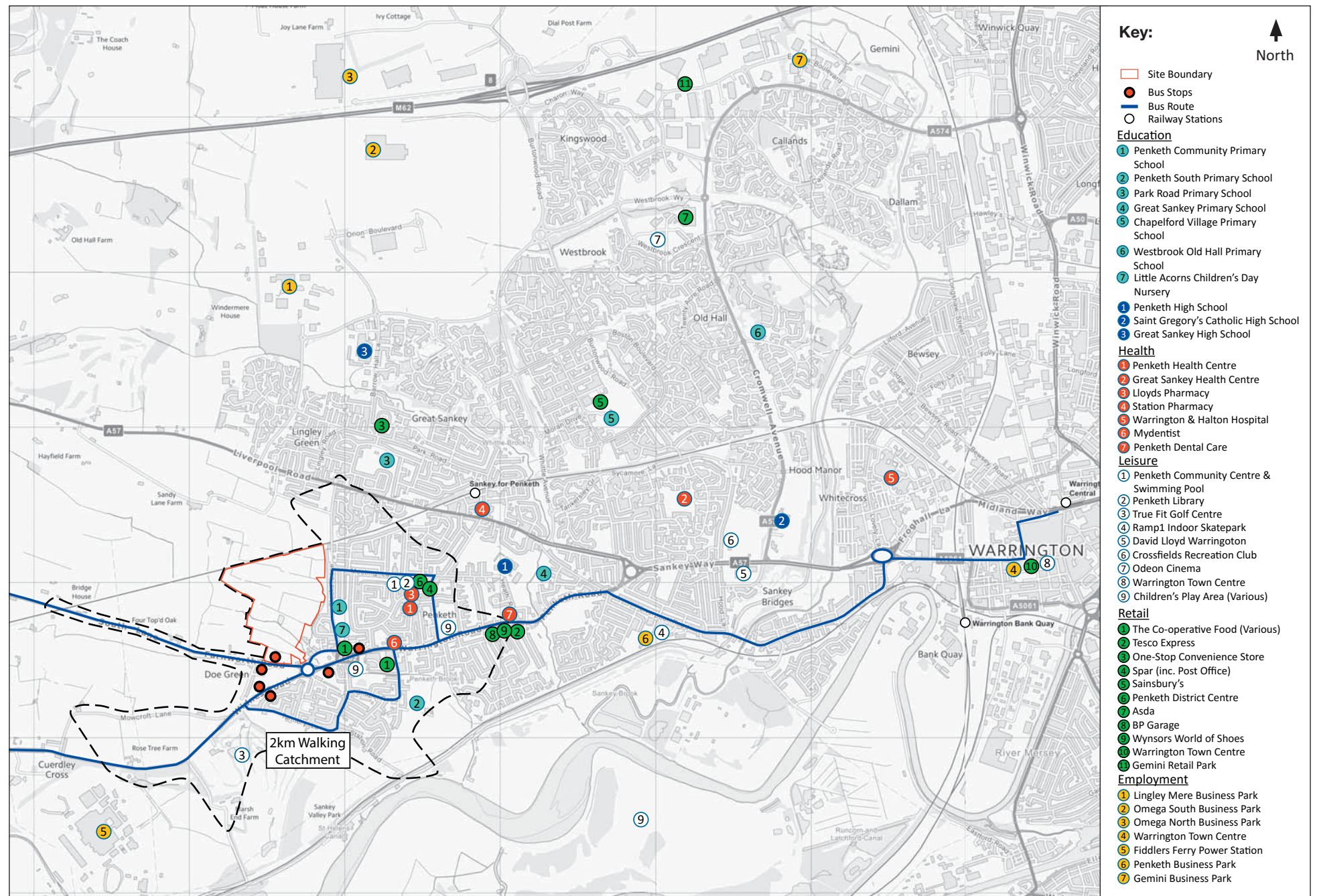
With unrivalled experience of building homes and communities Taylor Wimpey today continues to be a dedicated house building company and is at the forefront of the industry in build quality, design, health and safety, customer service and satisfaction. Taylor Wimpey is committed to creating and delivering value for our customers and shareholders alike. Taylor Wimpey combines the strengths of a national developer with the focus of small local business units. This creates a unique framework of local and national knowledge, supported by the financial strength and highest standards of corporate governance of a major plc.

Taylor Wimpey Strategic Land, a division of the UK business, is responsible for the promotion of future development opportunities, such as this site, through the planning system. The local business unit that will, in conjunction with Strategic Land, carry out housing and related development as part of this is Taylor Wimpey North West based in Warrington.

Appendix 2: Site Sustainability

Sustainability Plan

The Sustainability Plan illustrates the sustainability of the site and the location of key services in the vicinity of the site.



Access to Education Facilities

Education facilities are shown in blue on the Sustainability Plan and described below:

There are two primary schools within a 2km walking distance of the centre of the site comprising: -

- Penketh Community Primary School (1.2km)
- Penketh South Primary School (1.4km)

Penketh secondary school is located approximately 2.3km from the centre of the site, additional high school are located in Great Sanky and Sankey Bridges.

There is one nursery schools within 2km of the site: -

- Little Acorns Children's Day Nursery (1km)

The Stocks Lane site is therefore well located in relation to education facilities and thereby accords with national planning guidance and the emerging LDF on the location of housing development.

Access to Healthcare Facilities

Healthcare facilities in the vicinity of the site are shown in red on the Sustainability Plan and include one Health Centre within 2km comprising: -

- Penketh Health Centre (1.6km)
- Two dental practices are located within 2km of the site:-
- Mydentist (1.1km); and
- Penketh Dental Centre (2km).
- There is one pharmacy located within 2km of the site: -
- Lloyds Pharmacy (1.6km).

Additionally, the closest hospital to the site is Warrington and Halton Hospital (5.1km). The Stocks Lane site is therefore well located in relation to healthcare facilities and thereby accords with national planning guidance and the emerging Local Plan on the location of housing development.

Access to Retail Facilities

The site is located approximately 1.6km from Penketh District Centre which provides a wide range of services and facilities, meeting local shopping and employment requirements for the site. The below listed retail facilities are indicated in Green on the Sustainability Plan.

Neighbourhood convenience stores in the vicinity of the site include: -

- Co-op Food on Farnworth Road (800m) and Warrington Road (1km).
- Spar including Post Office (1.6km)

One supermarket within 2km of the site: -

- Tesco Express Supermarket (2km)
- Two larger food stores are located at Sainsbury's in Great Sankey and ASDA at Westbrook.
- As outlined above Penketh Post Office is located approximately 1.7km from the site within Penketh District Centre.

The Stocks Lane site is therefore well located in relation to local shops and services and thereby accords with national planning guidance and the emerging LDF on the location of housing development.

Access to Sports and Recreation Facilities

Sports and recreation facilities are shown in white on the Sustainability Plan. The site is in close proximity to the following key sports and recreation sites: -

- True Fit Golf Centre (1.1km);
- Penketh Swimming Pool and Community Centre (1.6km)
- Two Children's Play areas on Warrington Road (900m and 1.5km)

The Stocks Lane site is therefore well located in relation to sports and recreation facilities and thereby accords with national planning guidance and the emerging LDF on the location of housing development.

Access to Community Facilities

The community facilities listed below are also shown in white on the Sustainability Plan. The nearest Community facilities include: -

- Penketh Library (1.6km).
- Penketh Swimming Pool and Community Centre (1.6km)

The site is located in close proximity to a number of public houses (not shown on the Sustainability Plan): -

- The Crown and Cushion (750m);
- Sportmans Arms (1.2km)
- The Red Lion (1.2km)

The site is within 2 km of approximately three places of worship (not shown on the Sustainability Plan), consisting of: -

- St Paul's Church of England Church (850m)
- Penketh Methodist Church (1.3km)
- St Joseph's Roman Catholic Church (1.6km)

Additional restaurants and public houses are located within Warrington Town Centre approximately 5km from the site.

The Stocks Lane site is therefore well located in relation to library and community services and thereby accords with national planning guidance and the emerging LDF on the location of housing development.

Taylor
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Stocks Lane **Penketh**

Published by Taylor Wimpey UK Limited