

# Land adjacent Laffak Road and Carr Mill Road, St. Helens Development Brief

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# LAND ADJACENT LAFFAK ROAD AND CARR MILL ROAD, ST HELENS

## DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Prepared by

**St Helens Council**

Town Hall  
Corporation Street  
St Helens  
Merseyside  
WA10 1HP

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# **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The site is located approximately 2km north east of St Helens Town Centre within the Haresfinch and Laffak neighbourhoods of the town (see Figure 1.1).

## **Purpose of the Development Brief**

- 1.2 The development brief, herein referred to as 'the brief', establishes development principles for the site, providing clear guidance to potential developers on how the site should be comprehensively developed. It adds to the more general policies of St Helens Council Unitary Development Plan (adopted July 1998), supplementary planning documents, as well as regional and national planning policy. The brief is based on a comprehensive analysis of the site's planning context and an appraisal of the site's constraints and opportunities.

## **Historical Development**

- 1.3 Appendix A provides some historical survey plans showing development within and around the site. In 1908 Carr Mill Station is shown at the junction of the railway line and Woodlands Road. The rest of the area remains mainly undeveloped countryside. The original alignment of Laffak Road is shown to the north of the site.
- 1.4 By 1937 the East Lancashire Road has been built which severs Laffak Road. The land to the west of the site has been developed. The railway station has gone but sidings have been introduced in the site. By 1960 the site starts to resemble its current layout.
- 1.5 The site has a varied planning history which is outlined in Appendix B.

## **Site Ownership**

- 1.6 It is understood the site is in multiple ownership including two private interests and land owned by St Helens Council. The extent of these ownerships is shown on Figure 1.2. Areas A and B are in two different private ownerships. St Helens Council owns area C. The original alignment of Laffak Road is unregistered.

## **Residents Survey**

- 1.7 As part of the production of this development brief the Council carried out an initial public consultation with local residents. This took the form of a questionnaire survey, which was distributed to approximately 200 residents in February 2008. 119 responses were received. A report was produced on the responses, which is provided in full at Appendix C.
- 1.8 Over 90% of residents supported the redevelopment of the site. The most popular options for its redevelopment included building a new train station, improve Laffak Road, provide open space and build new housing.
- 1.9 A number of residents provided further comment. Most of the comments supported the redevelopment of the site but there was a varied opinion on how it should be redeveloped.

## **Public Consultation**

- 1.10 In May 2009, an eight-week public consultation exercise was undertaken on the draft brief. The brief was publicised by a number of methods including
- A staffed exhibition over two evenings;
  - Brief and questionnaires available on the Council's web site
  - Five A3 posters displayed across the local area;
  - A presentation to Moss Bank Ward Committee;
  - Brief available in all local libraries;
  - Brief and questionnaires available in planning reception in the Town Hall;
  - And a public notice in both the St Helens and Warrington Reporter.

- 1.11 As a result of publicity, 61 completed questionnaires have been received, plus 6 individual comments. The consultation exercise established that consultation responses are broadly in line with the draft development brief. The questionnaire and a summary of responses are available in Appendix F.

#### **Development Opportunities**

- 1.12 The Council considers that this site in its current state is having a negative impact on the Borough. The site was identified as a 'Grot Spot' site within the Council's City Growth Strategy. It is located along a key transport corridor within the Borough and is effectively a gateway site into St Helens town centre from the north east.
- 1.13 The Council considers that the most appropriate use of the site is a mixed use residential led development along with an element of employment development and a railway station. There is a clear need within any development scenario that the land required for the railway station should be delivered as part of any development proposal.



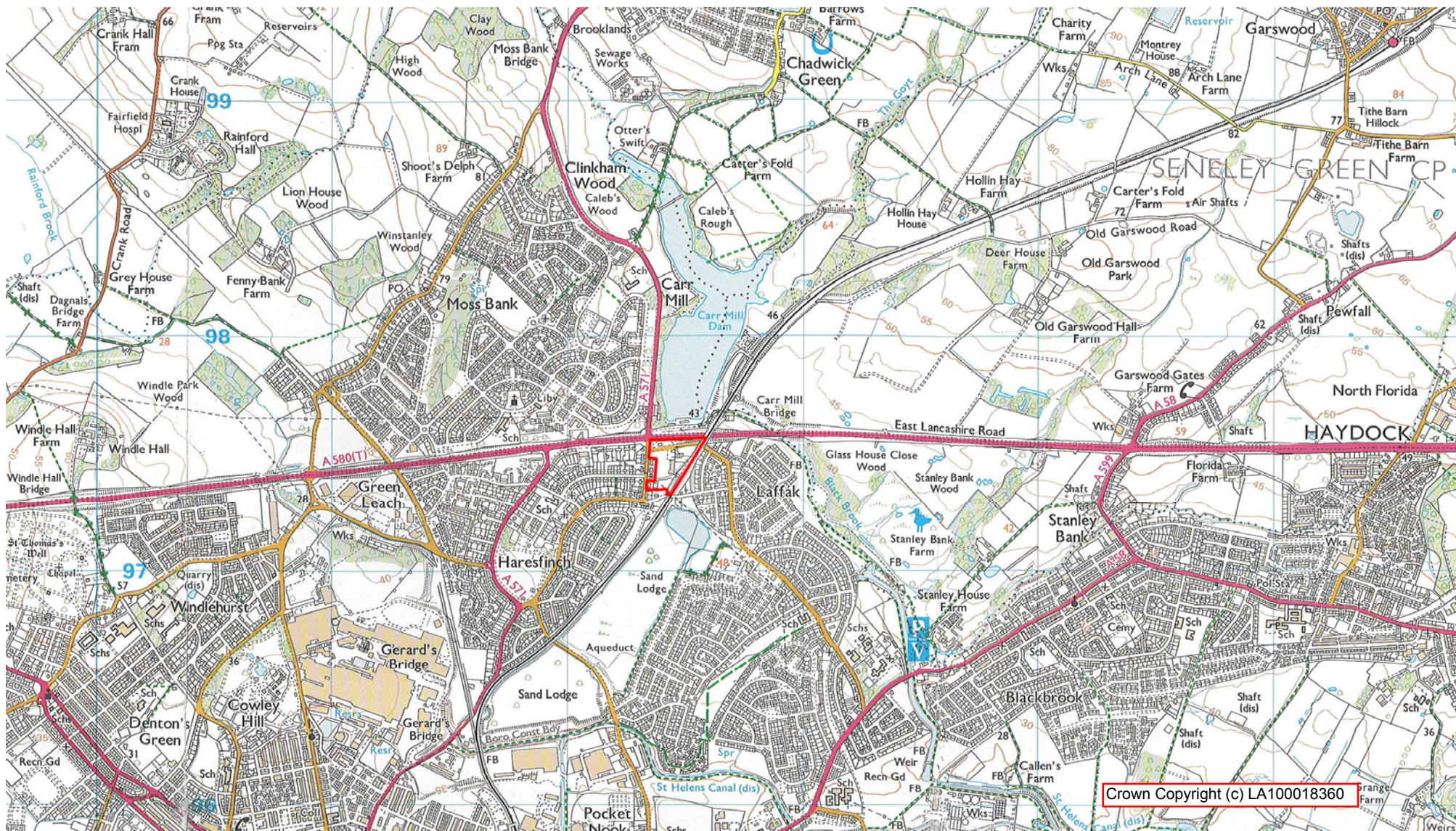


Figure 1.1 : Site Location Plan





Figure 1.2 : Ownership Plan

## 2 Vision and Objectives

2.1 The Council's overall vision for the redevelopment of the site is:

*'To bring forward the Carr Mill rail station within a mixed use residential and employment environment, based upon the principles of sustainability and high quality urban design, which integrates, compliments and enhances the existing Laffak neighbourhood and this gateway site in St Helens.'*

2.2 The list of key objectives could be simplified and condensed with each key objective covering a specific area i.e.:

KO1 Provision of a new railway station

KO2 Element of high quality sustainable housing

KO3 Element of commercial / employment

KO4 Highways – accessibility / linkages to all road users - including pedestrian / vehicular / cyclist

KO5 Landscaping / environmental improvements

KO6 Reduce, Reuse, Recycling including on site water management and site waste management

KO7 Public art.

### 3 Site and its Surroundings

- 3.1 The site is approximately 3.28ha (8.11 acres) and is triangular in shape. It is bounded by Carr Mill Road to the west, the A580 East Lancashire Road to the north, the Liverpool-Wigan railway line to the east and Woodlands Road to the south (see Figure 3.1).



Figure 3.1 : Detailed Location Plan



3.2 There are five distinct areas to the site (see Figure 3.2):

- i) Area A - The main part of the site measuring 1.12ha (2.78 acres) is on its western side. The principal use is a car auction business which includes the office building along with brick built buildings and shipping containers which enclose the business premises. There is also a pallet storage area adjacent to the car auction premises. There are also two telecommunications masts located to the south of this area adjacent to the buildings. The buildings are various sizes, heights and ages but are clearly commercial in character (see Photograph 3.1)
- ii) Area B – The southern element measuring 0.40ha (0.98 acres) contains a former petrol filling station adjacent to Carr Mill Road (see Photograph 3.2) and a shoe shop (United Footwear) which was previously a car showroom and garage associated with the petrol filling station (see Photograph 3.3). The area to the rear of this building is hard standing.
- iii) Area C – The northern element measuring 0.78ha (1.88 acres) contains a redundant café building and associated hard standing along with the highway verge to the A580 (see Photograph 3.4) and Laffak Road (see Photograph 3.5) which provides vehicular, pedestrian and cyclist access off Carr Mill Road to the residential estate east of the railway line.
- iv) Area D - The central area includes a farmhouse and two stables within an agricultural small holding (see Photograph 3.6). This area measures 0.65 ha (1.61 acres).
- v) Area E - The eastern element runs alongside the railway and measures 0.35ha (0.87acres). It principally includes the railway embankment and associated land.

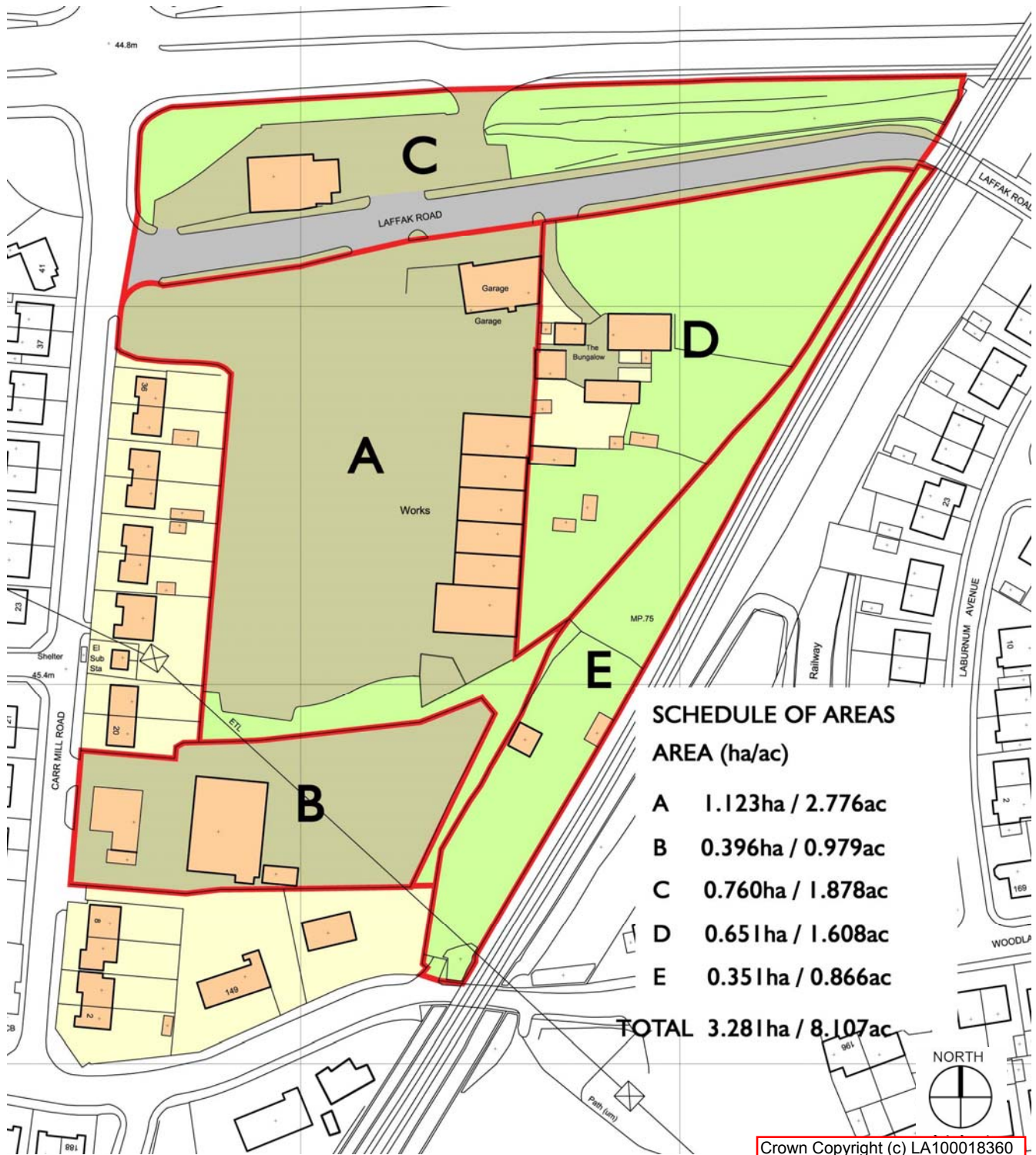


Figure 3.2 : Site Sub Areas



**Photograph 3.1 : Area A – Car auction office and light industrial buildings**



**Photograph 3.2 : Area B – Former Filling Petrol Station**



**Photograph 3.3 : Area B – Former Filling Petrol Station**



**Photograph 3.4 : Area C – A580 Frontage**



**Photograph 3.5 : Area C – Laffak Road**



**Photograph 3.6 : Area D – Agricultural small holding**



3.3 There are a number of vehicular access points to the site:

- Area A is accessed off Laffak Road.
- Area B is accessed off Carr Mill Road.
- Area C is accessed off both Carr Mill Road and the A580.
- Area D is accessed off Laffak Road.
- Area E is accessed off Woodlands Road.

Figure 3.3 shows the existing access points.



Figure 3.3 : Existing vehicular access points

3.4 The site is bounded by residential properties to the west (Carr Mill Road) and to the south (Woodlands Road). These are predominantly semi-detached and detached properties with their rear gardens abutting the site.

- 3.5 The A580 forms the northern boundary. This is a strategic highway within the Borough and has some five lanes at the junction with Carr Mill Road. Beyond the A580 is the Waterside Pub / Hotel which sits at the southern end of Carr Mill Dam.
- 3.6 The Liverpool-Wigan railway line forms the eastern boundary and sits on an embankment above the site. Beyond the railway line is a housing estate of semi-detached properties located off Laburnum Avenue and Orchard Close.
- 3.7 As outlined above, the site and immediate surroundings are principally residential areas that form the Laffak and Haresfinch neighbourhood. Beyond the immediate surroundings of Laffak Road development site are the neighbourhoods of Moss Bank to the north west, Carr Mill to the west and Blackbrook to the south east. These areas consist predominantly of post-war semi-detached housing with front and rear gardens. There are some distinct features adjoining the residential areas, in the vicinity of Laffak Road. The main features are Carr Mill Dam, Islands Brow burgy, Stanley Bank Wood and Sankey Valley Linear Park.
- 3.8 Carr Mill Dam is located approximately 200 metres north of Laffak Road beyond the A580 (East Lancashire Road). Carr Mill Dam is a large water body that was developed in the early 1800s in order to top up the canal system. The site has developed into a local nature attraction with adjacent grass land and woodland. The dam is popular with anglers and dog walkers and hosts a number of water sports activities.
- 3.9 Islands Brow burgy is privately owned and is located immediately east of Laffak Road and Chain Lane. It consists of areas of grassland and a small water body that is mainly utilised by local dog owners. Beyond this area is dense woodland that is located west of Hinckley Road.
- 3.10 Stanley Bank Wood and Sankey Valley Linear Park are located approximately 300 metres to the east of Laffak Road. Stanley Bank Wood surrounds a number of agricultural fields to the south of the A580 (East Lancashire Road). Sankey Valley Linear Park is located directly south of Stanley Bank Wood and runs in a linear fashion over approximately 7 miles. The park contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), nature reserve, visitors centre and many footpaths and cycle ways.
- 3.11 Figure 3.4 shows the location of facilities and services close to the site. As illustrated there are schools, retail facilities, a surgery and a community centre within close proximity of the site.



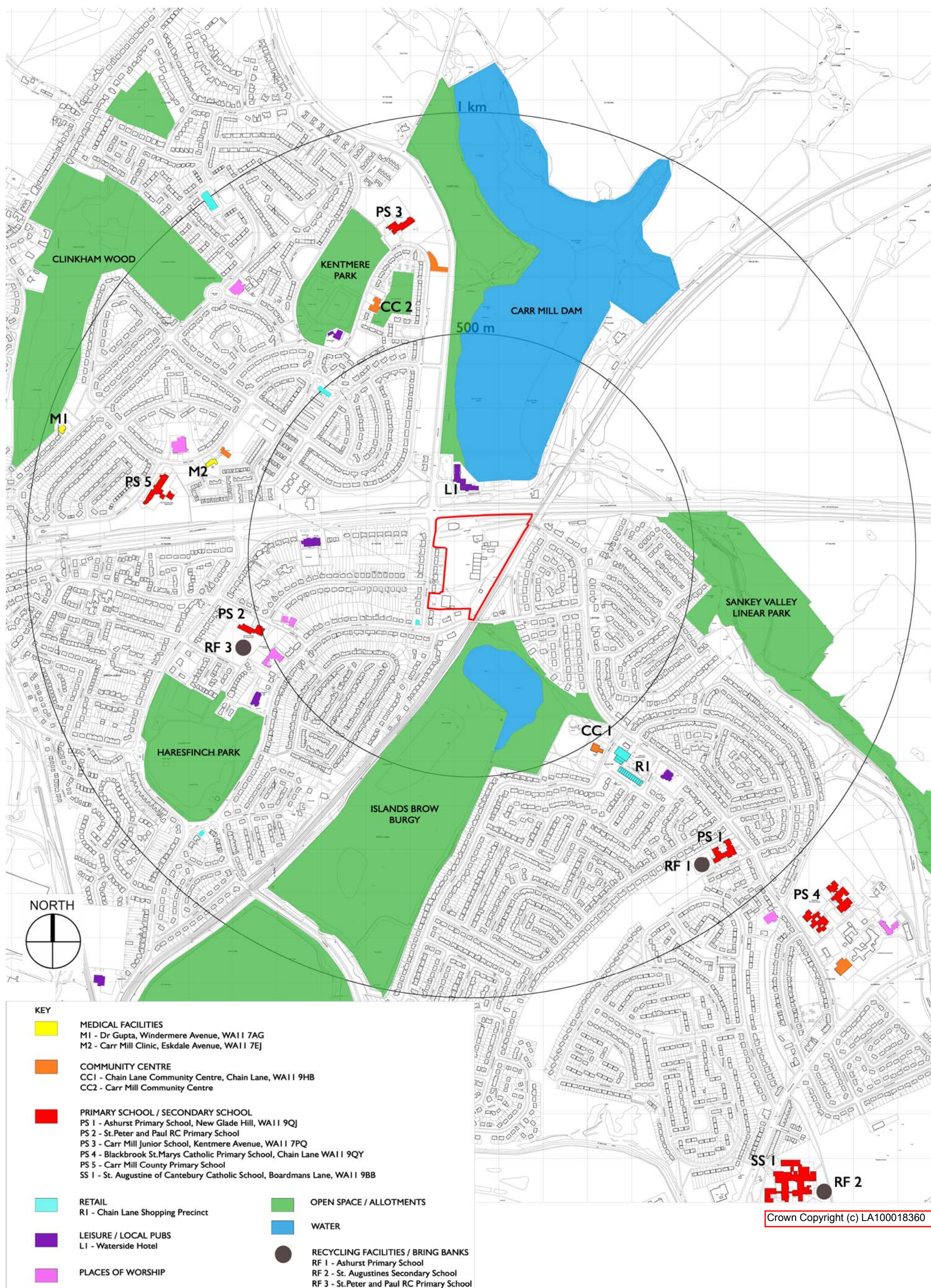


Figure 3.4 : Local Services



## 4 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Any development proposals for the site need to be appraised in the context of the relevant national, regional and local planning policy. The planning policy context for the site is provided by:

- Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG's) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS's)
- North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021
- St Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Supplementary Planning Documents.

### National Planning Policy

#### *PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development*

4.2 PPS1 sets out the Government's objectives for planning. The key theme of the document is the need to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development by ensuring that new development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities that have good access to jobs and key services.

#### *PPS3: Housing*

4.3 PPS3 sets out the Government's objectives in relation to housing. It places an emphasis on the efficient use of previously developed land, on promoting higher quality design and on sustainable and environmentally friendly forms of new housing, family housing and meeting the needs of children.

4.4 In support of PPS3, the Government has released a separate document entitled 'Delivering Affordable Housing'. The main aims of this document are to support the delivery of more high quality affordable housing within mixed sustainable communities, to widen the opportunities for home ownership and to offer greater quality, flexibility and choice to those who rent.

#### *PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control*

4.5 PPS23 sets out the Governments objectives Contamination of land may threaten public health and safety, the natural environment, the built environment and economic activities, through its impacts on the users of the land, and on neighbouring users. Land contamination, or the possibility of it, is therefore a material planning consideration for individual planning applications. It remains the responsibility of the landowner/developer to identify land affected by contamination and to ensure that remediation is undertaken to secure a safe development.

#### *PPS25: Development and Flood Risk*

4.6 PPS25 sets out the Governments objectives for all forms of flooding and their impact on the natural and built environment. Flood risk is a material planning consideration to ensure that it is taken into account at all stages in the planning process, avoiding inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk. New developments should consider potential increase in surface water run off and how these impacts can be dealt with at source.

#### *PPG9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation*

4.7 PPG9 sets out the Governments objectives for protection of biodiversity and geological conservation, promoting sustainable development whilst conserving, enhancing and restoring the diversity of local wildlife and geology.

#### *PPG14: Development on Unstable Land*

4.8 PPG14 sets out the Governments objective to encourage the full and effective use of land in an environmentally acceptable manner. It is to ensure that development is suitable and that potential physical constraints on the land are taken into account at all stages of planning. Given proper safeguards land that has been damaged or is naturally unstable can often be put to appropriate use and contribute to the Government's broad objectives for economy and efficiency in the use of land and the protection of the environment.

### *PPG13: Transport*

- 4.9 The principal objective of PPG13 is to integrate planning and transport at all spatial levels and locate development in sustainable locations in order to reduce the growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, reduce reliance on the private car and to encourage alternative, sustainable forms of travel such as public transport, walking and cycling.

### **Development Plan**

- 4.10 The Development Plan for St Helens comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West and the St Helens UDP

### **Regional Planning Policy**

#### *Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West*

- 4.11 The North West of England Plan is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the region. It was published on 30 September 2008 and provides a framework for development in the region up to 2021.

### **Local Planning Policy**

- 4.12 The St Helens UDP (1998) forms the statutory land use plan for the Borough. In accordance with Schedule 8 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, the majority of the UDP policies were 'saved' for a period of three years from 2007 pending the introduction of a new Local Development Framework (LDF). Within the UDP the majority of the site has no specific land use or policy designation. However, the Green Belt boundary forms the northern edge of the site including the A580 highway verge. The A580 and the railway line are both environmental improvement corridors and the proposed railway station is highlighted on the proposals map. Figure 4.1 shows an extract from the UDP Proposals Map. As identified in Section 3, it is a site in employment, retail and agricultural uses located within a primarily residential area on the urban/rural fringe.
- 4.13 The St Helens Employment Land Review (2005) identified that St Helens has a limited supply of employment land. The site currently contributes towards the available economic land in the borough. However, it is recognised that the site is in need of investment, and redevelopment of the site for a mix of housing and employment uses would deliver regeneration benefits for the borough and the local area.
- 4.14 The Council is concerned that the increase in sites coming forward, which are or have been in employment use, could undermine the Council's employment land supply and have an adverse effect on economic development in the Borough. This is a concern that gains support from the conclusions of the St Helens Employment Land Review (2005), which identified that St Helens has a limited supply of employment land. As a consequence, the council will seek an element of employment development as part of a mixed use scheme for the site.
- 4.15 Appendix D contains details of the other specific RSS, UDP policies and supplementary planning documents that will influence development proposals.

### **Relevant Reference Documents**

- 4.16 The following documents should be referred to by designers when producing detailed proposals for the site:
- Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (St Helens Council)
  - Manual for Streets (DfT)
  - Home Zone Design Guidelines (IHIE)
  - St Helens Street Design Guide Highways for Adoption 2008
  - Merseyside Code of Practice on Access and Mobility.



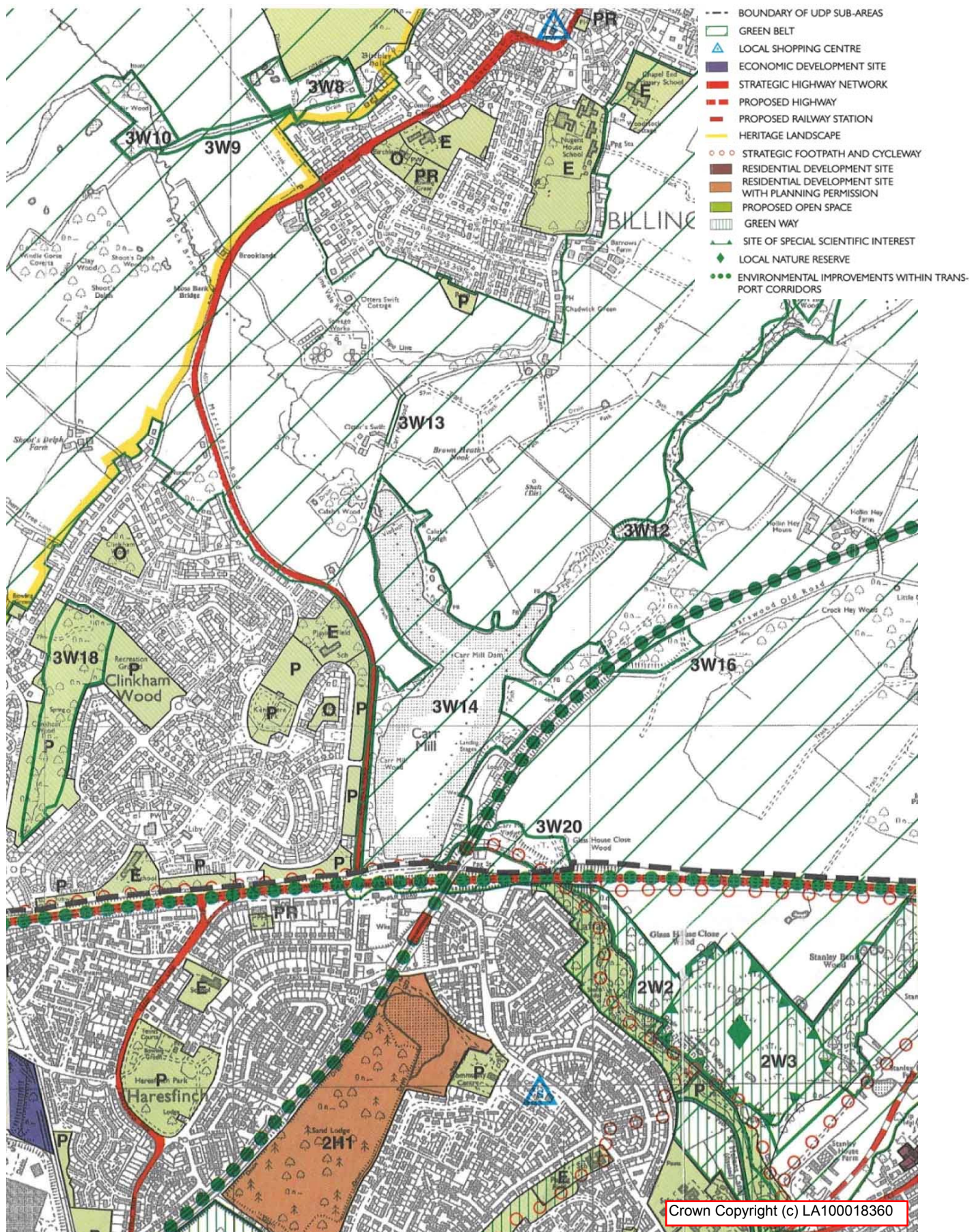


Figure 4.1 : UDP Proposals Map

## National and Local Transport Policy Framework and Guidance



4.17 The site masterplan will need to be developed in accordance with the following national and local planning policy and design guidance:

- Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 13 Transport
- Department for Transport (DfT) Manual for Streets (2007)
- The North West of England Plan
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005
- St Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and emerging documents forming the Local Development Framework (LDF)
- St Helens Street Design Guide Highways for Adoption 2008
- St Helens Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) 9 : Cycle Parking Provision
- St Helens Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) 7 : Garaging, Parking and Servicing.

4.18 In addition, the supporting TA will need to be undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:

- DfT Guidance on Transport Assessments (March 2007)
- Local Transport Plan for Merseyside 2006 – 2011 with the supporting documents including the:
  - Merseyside Rail Strategy
  - Merseyside Cycling Strategy
  - Merseyside Pedestrian Strategy
  - St Helens Access Plan

## 5 Development and Design Principles

### Key Objectives being met: KO1 – KO7

- 5.1 Sustainable development is a key cross cutting principle underpinning national, regional and local planning policy. As such, it should form an important consideration in any development proposal through; regard to development patterns and building designs that make the most efficient use of land, reducing the need to travel (particularly by private car), conserving and reducing demands for energy, reducing waste and minimising adverse impacts upon the environment.
- 5.2 A key output is the delivery of the land for the proposed railway station to Merseytravel as a prerequisite in promoting a sustainable residential environment for the remainder of the site
- 5.3 Opportunities which the Council strongly recommend potential developers to consider, include:
- Improved access to, and quality of, public transport infrastructure
  - The sustainable management of construction and demolition waste including the re-use of demolition materials as aggregate where possible, and the retention and treatment of contaminated materials on site
  - Provision of sufficient internal and external waste storage space on a plot by plot basis to enable segregation of waste for recycling, and the provision of a neighbourhood recycling bank.
  - Reduction of transport related energy use through a permeable urban form that facilitates and encourages walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
  - The provision of cycle storage facilities, signage and designated cycle routes.
  - The creation of a wildlife-rich living and working environment which protects existing wildlife but also enhances biodiversity.
  - High quality design with reference to the Council's adopted Design Guide.
- 5.4 The following principles are intended as a guide for development likely to be encouraged by St Helens Council. They are based upon a thorough analysis and appraisal of the key characteristics, constraints and opportunities of the site and surroundings.

### Site Characteristics

- 5.5 The land generally falls from south to north. The southern part of the site is around 46 – 47 AoD falling to 40 – 41 AoD in the north-eastern corner adjacent to the A580 and the railway line.
- 5.6 There is little in the way of planting within the site with the majority contained along the railway embankment and the eastern section of the A580 frontage.
- 5.7 The quality of environment is visually poor contributed by the vacant and derelict nature of some of the buildings, the industrial / commercial nature of the principal business on the site and the underused nature of the other parts of the site.
- 5.8 The majority of the site includes aesthetically poor quality buildings that have been in many cases neglected and hardstanding areas. There is an area of grazing land which includes some farm buildings which again have a neglected appearance.
- 5.9 The photographs in Section 3 shows the appearance of the site.
- 5.10 There is no specific local architectural character or distinctiveness in any of the existing development around the site. As illustrated in photographs 6.1 – 6.4 houses in the area are a mix of detached and semi-detached bungalows and two storey properties. All properties have front and rear gardens.

## Site Constraints

5.11 As illustrated in Figure 5.1 the site is subject to a number of potential constraints.

- A combined foul and surface water public sewer runs the length of Laffak Road. Further information is available from United Utilities
- 132KV overhead Electricity Transmission line crosses the southern section. Manweb should be consulted on any proposals at a pre-application stage
- There is a geological fault and coal outcrop exists in the southern part of the site and therefore the Coal Authority should be consulted
- The potential noise from the existing railway line and A580 will need to be assessed within a PPG24 compliant study. Discussions on the scope of the assessment should be undertaken with the Council's Environmental Protection Department
- The proximity of the Laffak Road / Carr Mill Road junction to the A580 / Carr Mill Road crossroads is unacceptable
- The vehicular access off the A580 to Laffak Road is unacceptable
- The Green Belt boundary which encompasses part of the frontage
- Road links east-west are constrained by the railway line and the reduced carriageway
- Potential contamination from the petrol station and railway sidings.





## Development Objectives

- 5.12 Figure 5.2 illustrates the existing site features that present positive opportunities for development
- The location of Carr Mill Dam to the north and Islands Brow burgly to the south provide attractive open space features that can be used to enhance the setting of the development and provide a link to recreational opportunities
  - The provision of the rail station to improve opportunities for transport other than by car
  - An improvement, through built development and landscape, to the A580 corridor
  - The provision of a prominent high quality building at the corner of the A580 and Carr Mill Road to act as a signpost into St Helens
  - Frontage development to Carr Mill Road to provide enclosure to the site
  - Improve the appearance of a highly visible site along two key transport corridors in the Borough
  - Provide and connect with existing cycle routes and footpaths
  - Ensure an efficient and effective use of a previously developed site that is currently underused and unattractive.
- 5.13 Figure 5.3 articulates graphically the strategy for developing the site and responds positively to the constraints and opportunities of the site. It is based on the following key principles :
- Provision of land for the proposed rail station and associated parking facilities
  - Realign Laffak Road eliminating existing highway problems whilst providing a landscaped spine through the site
  - Opportunity for a landmark building at the north-western corner of the site and taller buildings along the western element of the A580 frontage and adjacent to the railway line
  - Enhancement of existing landscape features along the railway embankment and the A580
  - Integrating the development, through cycle and pedestrian routes, to adjacent greenspace
  - Ensuring frontage development with front gardens adjacent to the road network
  - Utilise views of key assets in the area such as Carr Mill Dam
  - The provision of small amenity open spaces as part of the landscape framework.
- 5.14 Within the site a network of roads forms permeable routes along the principal spine road. Detailed design of the roads should follow the principles of good design recommended in 'Manual for Streets' (along with the St Helens Street Design Guide Highways for Adoption, St Helens Design Guide and the Merseyside Code of Practice on Access and Mobility) with the aim of reducing traffic speeds and reducing the dominance of the motor vehicle. Providing high quality pedestrian and cycle linkages to the wider area should be regarded as a key element of the access strategy.
- 5.15 There is scope to utilise a variety in scale, massing and design of buildings. Particular attention should be given to the design of buildings located on corners and at the ends of vistas to maximise impact and take advantage of these prominent locations. Wherever possible, buildings should face towards roads and footpaths to create an interesting street scene and provide passive supervision. Scale and style should be varied along the street to create a stimulating environment.
- 5.16 The lack of specific local architectural character around the site provides a degree of freedom and flexibility in the design of new buildings. Designers will be expected to adopt a contemporary style.
- 5.17 Should it be required that an electricity sub-station be provided on site, this should be sympathetically designed into the scheme.
- 5.19 There is an opportunity to produce a benchmark development on this site and the developers will work closely with the Council to achieve this goal.



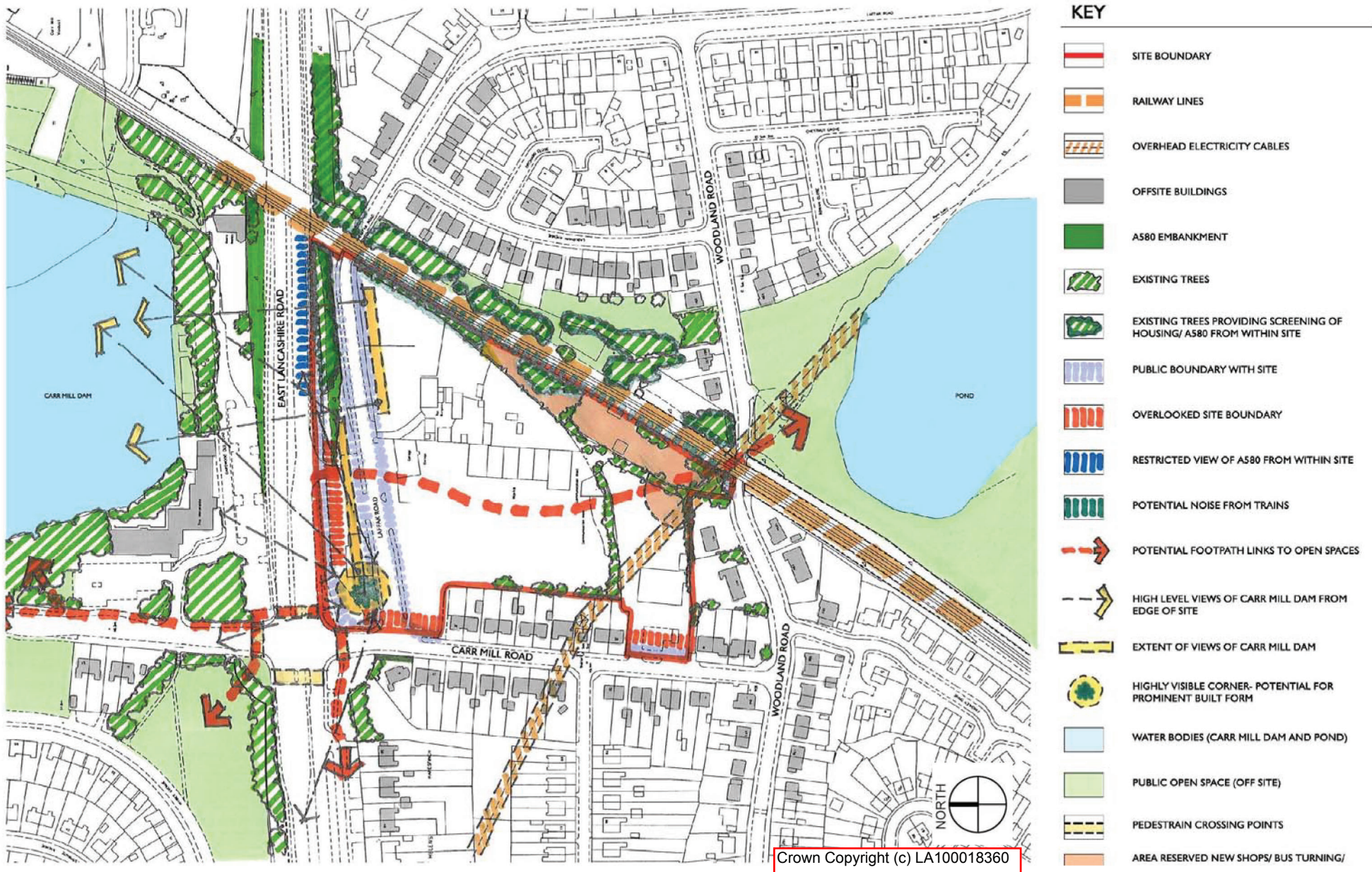


Figure 5.2 : Potential Development Constraints





Figure 5.3 : Potential Development Opportunities

## 6 Landscape Principles, Open Space and Recreation

**Key Objectives being met : KO5 and KO7**

### **The Landscape Context**

- 6.1 St Helens Council has issued a Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for the Borough as a whole. This serves to safeguard the character of the landscape and guide new development proposals. The site is located in the Mossbank Character Area which principally includes the residential suburb of Mossbank to the north of the A580 but also includes Haresfinch to the south of the A580.
- 6.2 The landscape analysis recognises the impact the A580 has had in fragmenting the townscape and the negative effect the pylon lines have on residential character. The landscape strategy for the area is recommended for 'Conserving and Enhancing' which involves :
- Maintaining the settlement character
  - Reinforcing the distinctive which has been partially lost through fragmentation by infrastructure
  - Management of the existing woodland structure to encourage a varied age structure and appropriate species mix.
- 6.3 The LCA recognises that there are limited opportunities for new large scale residential development. However, where they do exist development should seek to maintain the wooded townscape structure and provide more robust edges to the urban fringe.
- 6.4 The A580 is identified within the Town in Forest (part of the City Growth Strategy) as a corridor for landscape improvements.

### **The Landscape Framework**

- 6.5 The structure and environmental quality of the development will be influenced by the strength of the landscape. There are a number of landscape principles which are important drivers. These should respond to the evaluation and conclusions in the Landscape Character Assessment.
- 6.6 Key features of the landscape framework to be adhered to in any layout are as follows :
- The creation of a landscape spine along the realigned Laffak Road. This will provide a continuous linear landscape features to give a coherent character to the new development
  - The landscape spine will function as a movement corridor for vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians and also as a receptor for pockets of informal amenity open space and refuge areas for relaxation
  - The retention and enhancement of planting along the railway embankment which will provide a landscaped backdrop to the site particularly when viewed from the north and west
  - The retention and enhancement of screen planting along the eastern extent of the A580 frontage
  - The provision of front gardens to the principal routes to provide, in time, mature vegetation and the continuation of a 'leafy' suburban area
  - The provision of public art as part of a coherent landscape framework.
- 6.7 Policy GEN6 of the St Helens Unitary Development Plan points to a need on this site to provide high quality useable public open space at the standard of 40m<sup>2</sup> per unit, subject to a minimum of 0.15ha. Should the policy requirement not be provided in full on the site then the Council will seek a financial contribution to enhance accessibility, integration with, and the quality of adjacent open spaces and routes. It is appropriate to concentrate the on-site provision of open space within the landscape spine, part of which should form a children's play area.

- 6.8 The landscape framework for the site will be given strength and character through new tree planting which should be used to enhance movement routes, to frame open space and to facilitate integration between the new development and its surroundings, especially where fronting roads and existing greenspace.
- 6.9 There will be a need for a tree survey to be submitted with any planning application for the redevelopment of the site.
- 6.10 Proposals for public art will need to be included within any planning application for the redevelopment of the site.



## **7 Highways, Sustainable Transport and Accessibility**

### **Key Objectives KO1 and KO4**

#### **Introduction**

- 7.1 A key objective in developing the site is the provision of the proposed Carr Mill Rail Station. The proposed station is identified in the UDP, the Merseyside Transport Plan and in Merseyside Rail Strategy (March 2006). The delivery of the land for the proposed rail station is a key requisite in the redevelopment of the site.
- 7.2 A preliminary investigation of the transport planning and traffic engineering issues in respect of developing the site has been undertaken to inform the brief and the draft masterplan strategy.
- 7.3 A formal Transport Assessment (TA) will be a requirement in support of any planning application for the redevelopment of the site.

#### **Proposed Carr Mill Station**

- 7.4 The St Helens UDP (1998) identifies the proposed Carr Mill Station on the Proposals Map. At Policy TRA3 'New Rail Facilities' the UDP supports the proposed stations by safeguarding these sites from development.
- 7.5 The rail line runs between Liverpool Lime Street and Wigan North Western. Northern Rail operate local services every 30 minutes during weekdays between Liverpool and Wigan. These services currently stop at Eccleston, Thatto Heath, St Helens Central and Garswood within the Borough. The proposed station at Carr Mill will provide a facility at the northern edge of the town.
- 7.6 The proposed station is identified in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) 2006 – 2011 and the supporting Merseyside Rail Strategy. Discussions have taken place with Merseytravel regarding their requirements. As a minimum requirement the station facilities should include the following :
- Fully staffed ticket office
  - Two 150m length platforms
  - Passenger shelters
  - Subway to provide access to the St Helens Central and Liverpool bound trains
  - Bus lay-bys close to the station entrance
  - On-site parking facilities including disabled parking and drop off facilities
  - Secure cycle storage facilities.

- 7.7 The land that would be required for this is approximately 0.3ha (0.75 acres) and is shown on the 'Development Opportunities Plan' at Figure 5.2. Prospective developers are recommended to contact David Jones, Head of Passenger Services at Merseytravel on 0151 330 1108 to obtain further information relating to the proposed rail station.

#### **Bus Provision**

- 7.8 At present Arriva provides a circular half hourly service (weekdays) and an hourly service (weekends) between St Helens bus station and Chain Lane. This service runs along Woodlands Road to the south of the site connecting with Laffak Road to the east of the site.
- 7.9 In order to maximise the potential of the rail station bus facilities should be provided along the spine route through the site and close to the access to the station. There is the opportunity, in conjunction with Merseytravel, to investigate the provision of, or the re-routing of, existing bus services through the site to provide this connection to the station.

- 7.10 Prospective developers are recommended to contact Tony McDonough at Merseytravel on 0151 330 1029 and Mike Watson at Arriva on 01744 744 434 to obtain further information on bus services in the area.

### **Pedestrian and cyclists**

- 7.11 Careful consideration should be given to the provision of facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. The site is well positioned to take advantage of sustainable transport provision, as detailed above, in the adjacent area and the masterplan should aim to make full use of these opportunities.
- 7.12 The site is located adjacent key cycle routes. Parts of the A580 include off-road cycle track. The Council has identified an opportunity associated with the redevelopment of this site to 'plug a gap' in this route. A financial contribution of £20,000 (as of 2008) will be required by the Council towards delivering cycle provision along the length of the site fronting the A580.
- 7.13 There are a number of existing cycle routes to the north of the A580 along Carr Mill Road (in-road cycle lane) and Garswood Old Road (off-road cycle track). There is an opportunity with the existing pedestrian / cyclist crossing to link these to facilities within the site and the proposed rail station.
- 7.14 There is also an opportunity to link the site to existing footpaths such as the footpath running south from Woodlands Road and the north of the site around Carr Mill Reservoir.
- 7.15 A network of safe routes will be provided throughout the site for both pedestrians and cyclists. New footways will connect into existing external footways on Carr Mill Road, Woodlands Road, the A580 and the realigned Laffak Road.
- 7.16 The provision of pedestrian crossing facilities adjacent to the new junction for the realigned Laffak Road and adjacent to the proposed railway station and bus stops should be an important consideration within the overall access strategy.
- 7.17 Pedestrian / cycle routes should be designed to be convenient, safe, well lit, direct and attractive.

### **Accessibility**

- 7.18 All public spaces will need to be fully accessible for disabled people. Requirements can be obtained from the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Merseyside Code of Practice on Access and Mobility.

### **Vehicular Access and Constraints**

- 7.19 At present there are a number of vehicular access points which are considered unsafe and restrict highway capacity and movement. These access points need to be closed off as part of the redevelopment of the site which include (and are shown on Figure 7.1) :
- The vehicular access onto the A580 (see photograph 7.1)
  - The junction of Laffak Road and Carr Mill Road (see photograph 7.2)
  - The vehicular access onto Woodlands Road (see photograph 7.3).

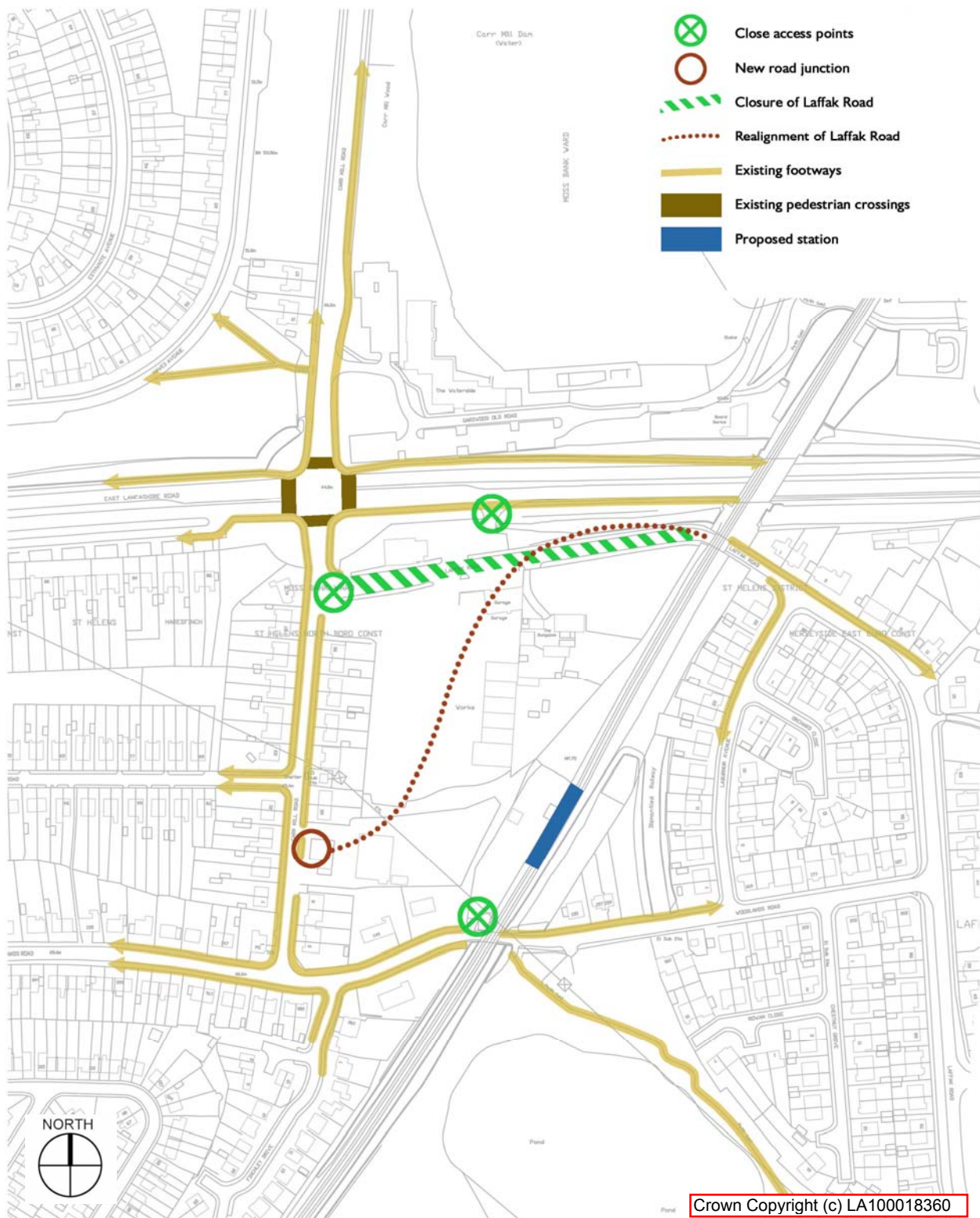


Figure 7.1 : Access Strategy



Photograph 7.1 : Vehicular access onto the A580



Photograph 7.2 : Junction of Laffak Road and Carr Mill Road



Photograph 7.3 : Vehicular access onto Woodlands Road



- 7.20 The Laffak Road / Carr Mill Road junction is considered too close to the A580 signalised junction with Carr Mill Road. It is proposed to close this junction and relocate it with a realigned Laffak Road to the site of the former petrol filling station. The proposed junction should have visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m and 10m junction radii and incorporate crossing facilities in the form of pedestrian refuges across both Carr Mill Road and the north of the new access road. The new access road should be 7.3m wide and have 2m footways on both sides.
- 7.21 The realigned Laffak Road will need to include traffic management and bus friendly traffic calming measures which will be the subject of the proposals associated with any planning application.
- 7.22 The Council have identified highway safety issues on Laffak Road at the point where it passes under the railway line. The Council will request priority measures to reduce the visibility problems associated at this location.
- 7.23 The access to the development will need to be designed in accordance with St Helens Street Design Guide Highways for Adoption and the DfT's 'Manual for Streets'. All access proposals will need to give particular consideration to the ease and safety of movement of pedestrians and cyclists.
- 7.24 A full Transport Assessment (TA) will be required to support any planning application and the analysis will need to present the current, committed and development scenarios.
- 7.25 The network of interest to the TA will comprise the following junctions :
- The A580 East Lancashire Road / Carr Mill Road
  - Laffak Road / Carr Mill Road
  - Woodlands Road / Carr Mill Road
  - Woodlands Road / Laffak Road
  - Traffic signals on Woodlands Road at the railway bridge.

#### **Highways Layout and Design**

- 7.26 The internal layout should be designed and constructed to an adoptable standard. Developers will need to refer to the St Helens Street Design Guide Highways for Adoption and the DfT's 'Manual for Streets'.
- 7.27 In terms of the internal layout the development areas should be served by a network of access roads, off the realigned Laffak Road, which give permeability and legibility to the residential environment.
- 7.28 The realigned Laffak Road will provide an access road into the proposed rail station.
- 7.29 Appropriate and acceptable emergency services provision should be provided to all parts of the development site.
- 7.30 Highways should be designed to ensure pedestrian and cyclist priority and encourage low vehicle speeds.
- 7.31 When considering car parking provision it is essential that on street parking by residents and visitors is kept to an absolute minimum. The Council's SPG 7 'Garaging, Parking and Servicing' will need to be incorporated into the designs and early contact with the Highways and Planning Section is recommended.

## 8 Environmental Issues

### Key Objectives being met : KO5

- 8.1 As part of any proposal developers are required to demonstrate due regard for existing environmental and ecological conditions. Consideration should be given to the potential for the development to generate adverse environmental and ecological impacts, and where necessary, details of an appropriate remediation / mitigation strategy should be provided.

### Noise Assessment

- 8.2 Due to the location of the A580 and the railway line a preliminary noise assessment was carried out in May 2008. This assessment concludes that the site to the south of Laffak Road is within Noise Exposure Category (NEC) B and the land to the north in NEC C (see Figure 8.1).

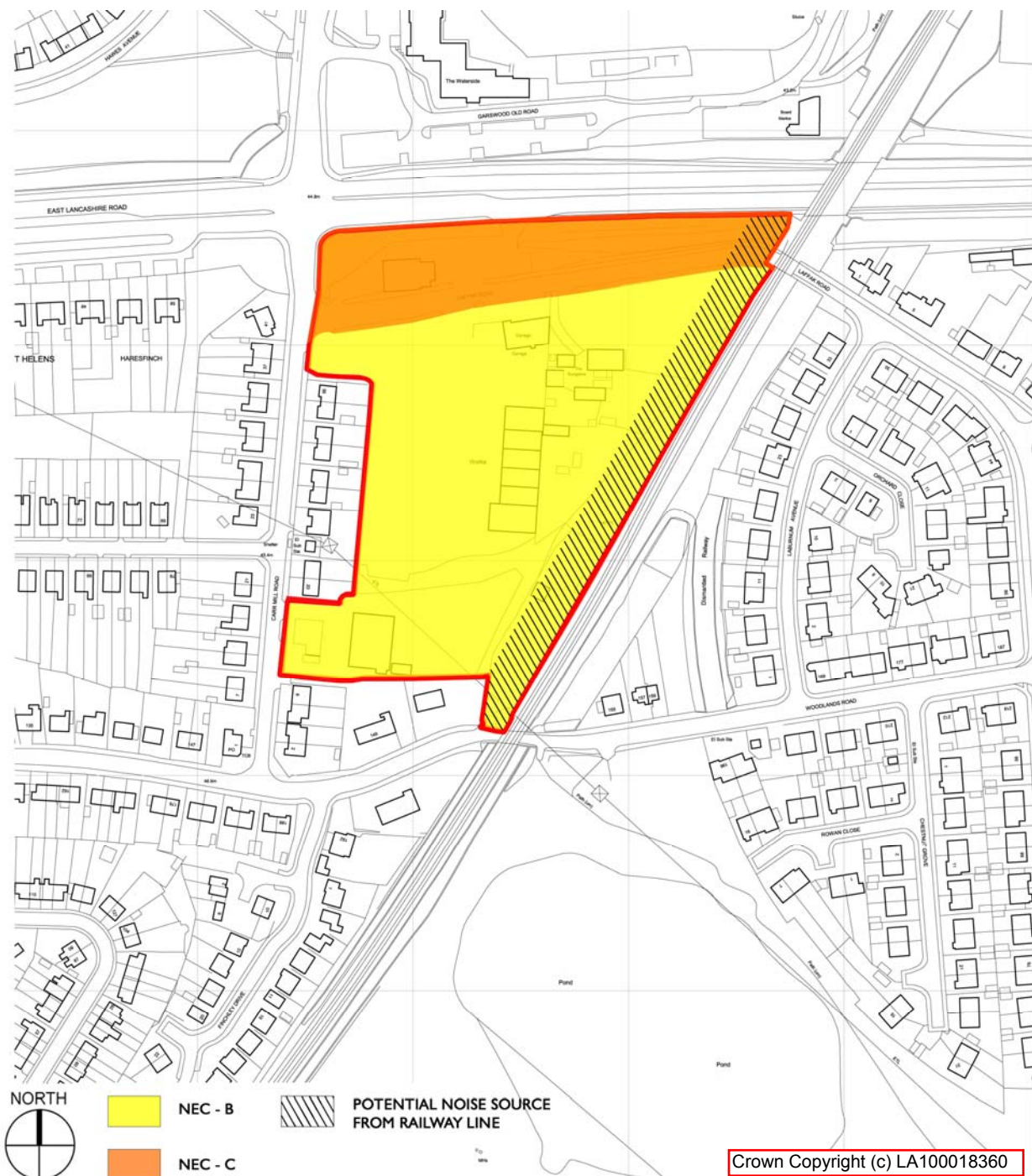


Figure 8.1 : Noise Exposure Categories



8.3 The assessment recommends :

“Habitable rooms with a significant view of either the railway line or A580 will need to be fitted with standard thermal glazing and appropriate ventilation. The exact number of rooms requiring upgraded ventilation (or glazing) and the specification of the glazing / ventilation will depend on the local authority’s view of their criteria, whether it is necessary to construct a perimeter acoustic barrier and the proposed site layout, room sizes, window openings etc.”

8.4 In summary, based on the measurements it is not considered that the noise impact of either the railway or A580 should bar the grant of residential planning consent for the site.

8.5 Detailed noise control recommendations will need to be prepared once proposals for the site have been finalised as part of a detailed noise assessment associated with a planning application.

**Air Quality Assessment**

8.6 A preliminary air quality assessment was carried out in July 2008 to assess the impact on air quality from traffic along the A580 and Laffak Road. The ambient air quality will be acceptable for residential occupants of a residential development on the site and there are no constraints to layout of development on the site with respect to potential air quality impacts.

8.7 A Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) screening model indicates that there will be no significant impact from development proposals for residential and small scale employment uses on the existing receptors.

8.8 A construction dust assessment has been undertaken which indicates that due to the limited scale and type of development and along with an appropriate dust management strategy there should be no significant impacts from the development.

8.9 A detailed air quality assessment will be required as part of the planning application submission.

**Ground Conditions**

8.10 The existing and historical uses of the site indicate that the following issues will need to be taken into account; asbestos surveys and strip of buildings before demolition, removal of underground storage tanks and any associated fuel contamination from the garage and possible contamination from the former railway siding.

8.11 As part of any planning application a preliminary assessment of ground contamination issues should be undertaken. This should involve a desk based study to identify the type and location of potential ground contamination sources at the site.

8.12 Further work will be required including investigation works to refine the risk assessment and scope of remedial works required at the site. On the basis of these findings a detailed remediation action plan should then be submitted to St Helens Council and the Environment Agency for review and comment prior to finalising the scope of remedial works.

8.13 Thereafter, all remedial measures recommended shall be carried out during the course of the development but must first be approved by the Council following completion of the work and satisfactory completion report shall be submitted to and approved by the Council.

**Ecology**

8.14 Although there is no evidence of any protected species being present upon the site the Council will require an ecological survey of the site in order to ensure full compliance with UDP Policy ENV7 and ENV9. Should the presence of protected species be identified, developers should then detail appropriate mitigation measures in compliance with guidance governing protected species.

8.15 Developers, through the Council, will liaise with the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) at an early stage to establish the required scope and content of these surveys. The Council’s

adopted policy for Nature : Biodiversity for St Helens provides guidance on measures that can be taken to protect and enhance wildlife interests. The development will need to embrace positive measure to improve biodiversity.

- 8.16 A method statement detailing how the Japanese Knotweed on the site is to be eradicated should be provided with the planning applications as part of the ecological survey.

#### **Flood Risk**

- 8.17 As the site is over 1ha in area a flood risk assessment, in compliance with PPS25: Development and Flood Risk, will need to be submitted with a planning application for the redevelopment of the site. The Assessment should consider the possibility of flooding from sources other than watercourses, rivers or the sea. In particular, it should consider the implications of a potential increase in surface water run-off and how these adverse impacts can be dealt with at source.

#### **Lighting**

- 8.18 Proposals for lighting at the railway station showing lux contours from the station to adjacent properties will be required at the planning application stage.

#### **Pest Control**

- 8.19 Vermin are likely to be dispersed off site upon commencement of development. The developer should ensure that the pest control team are informed in advance of commencement of any site works. Pro-active treatments for rodents can then be put in place before commencement of and during works on site.

## 9 Affordable Housing

### Key Objectives being met : KO3

- 9.1 The 1998 St Helens UDP Policy RES 2 “Affordable Housing” is the current development plan policy that has been updated by the St Helens Housing Market and Needs Assessment (2006), which is being used to inform new Affordable Housing policies within the Core Strategy (which should be adopted in 2010). The Housing Market Needs and Assessment recommends an affordable housing level target of at least 30 percent of the total of all suitable sites. This target includes both housing for social rent (15%) and intermediate housing (15%) to meet the needs of low income households and those on below average incomes unable to purchase, provided it would be available on a similar basis to subsequent purchasers. The threshold of 30% affordable housing is currently applied to developments of 15 or more dwellings, in line with the national indicative minimum threshold set out in Para 29 of PPS3.
- 9.2 More recently there is evidence of a growing need for affordable housing in St Helens across a wide spectrum of housing types. The 2006 Housing Market and Needs Assessment (HMNA) highlights a significant rise in affordable housing requirements across the Borough. In 2003 the annual shortfall in affordable housing units was 120 per annum. By 2006 the shortfall was standing at 306 units per annum.
- 9.3 The 2006 Survey recommends that, to address the shortfall in delivery of affordable housing, the “baseline” requirement for new housing development (over a threshold of 1.5ha or 15 dwellings) is to integrate affordable housing at a level of 30% by unit number in accordance with the Council's policy. This is to be secured on the basis of an equal division between social rented housing and intermediate housing.
- 9.4 The Council's Housing Strategy Section has stated that there is a considerable amount of social housing in the local area. Therefore, a commuted sum in lieu of the affordable housing provision may be appropriate for this site. Appendix E provides the formula for calculating the affordable housing contributions.



## 10 Bringing Forward Development Proposals

### Key Objectives being met : KO1 – KO7

- 10.1 Prospective developers will be expected to work with the Council in order to progress development proposals in line with the vision, objectives and development principles of the approved Brief.
- 10.2 A key output is the delivery of land for the proposed rail station as a pre-requisite to development on the site.

### Planning Application

- 10.3 The planning application should comprehensively include a proposal for the whole site including the mixed use residential and commercial elements as well as the proposed rail station.
- 10.4 Prospective developers will be expected to undertake public consultation on proposals prior to the submission of a planning application, in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). It is expected that the process and outcome of the consultation exercise will be documented within a 'Consultation Report' and submitted as part of the planning application package.
- 10.5 The planning application should be accompanied with the following information:
- Statement of Community Involvement or Consultation Report
  - Flood Risk Assessment
  - EIA Screening Opinion
  - Transport Assessment
  - Details for Public Art
  - Noise Assessment
  - Contaminated Land
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Air Quality Survey
  - Accessibility Audit
  - Waste Management Strategy
  - Landscape Strategy, including reference to the site frontage along the A580
  - Ecological / Protected Species Survey
  - Light Pollution Assessment
  - Ground Stability Assessment

### Masterplanning

- 10.6 The masterplan should follow the good practice guidelines set out in '*Creating Successful Masterplans*' and in particular, should:
- Show how the streets, squares and open spaces of a neighborhood are to be connected
  - Define the heights, massing and bulk of buildings
  - Set out suggested relationships between buildings and public spaces
  - Determine the distribution of activities/uses that will be allowed

- Identify the network of movement patterns for people moving by foot, cycle, car or public transport, service and refuse vehicles
- Set out the basis for provision of other infrastructure elements such as utilities
- Relate physical form to the socio-economic and cultural context and stakeholder interests
- Allow an understanding of how well the new, urban neighborhood is integrated with the surrounding urban context and natural environment.

### **Planning Obligation**

10.7 Where appropriate, the Council will enter into a Section 106 legal agreement in order to secure the delivery of key aspects of the development and/or financial contributions for works outside of the site.

10.8 The legal agreement may include the following :

- Transfer of the proposed rail station land and appropriate security measures to Merseytravel (i.e. CCTV)
- Commuted sum in lieu of affordable housing provision
- On-site public open space and play area or a commuted sum in lieu of on-site provision
- Sustainable transport commuted sum of £20,000 (as of 2008) for provision of cycleway along the front of the site adjacent to the A580.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)**

10.9 The proposal falls within the criteria identified within Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. Any scheme on the site will be classed as an urban development project including a new railway station on a development site in excess of 0.5 hectares.

10.10 It is advised that prospective developers should request a screening opinion on their proposals from the Council prior to submitting a planning application.

**This document was produced through a Development Team Approach**

#### **Council contacts:**

**DTA Coordinator          John Holden          01744 676 245          dta@sthelens.gov.uk**

**Senior Planning Officer   Angela Forsyth   01744 676 961          angelaforseyth@sthelens.gov.uk**

**Building Control Manager   Roy Benyon   01744 676 235          roybenyon@sthelens.gov.uk**

## **Appendices**

**A Historical Plans**

**B Planning History**

**C Laffak Road Site Residents' Survey**

**D Planning Policy Context**

**E Formula for calculating the affordable housing contributions**

**F Laffak Road Draft Development Brief Consultation Summary**



## **Appendix A**

### **Historical Plans**

Reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office under the Licence No 186287

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A circular compass rose with a vertical line and a horizontal line intersecting at the center. The top half is labeled 'NORTH' and the bottom half is labeled 'SOUTH'. The left half is labeled 'WEST' and the right half is labeled 'EAST'.

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APPENDIX AI  
AUGUST 2008

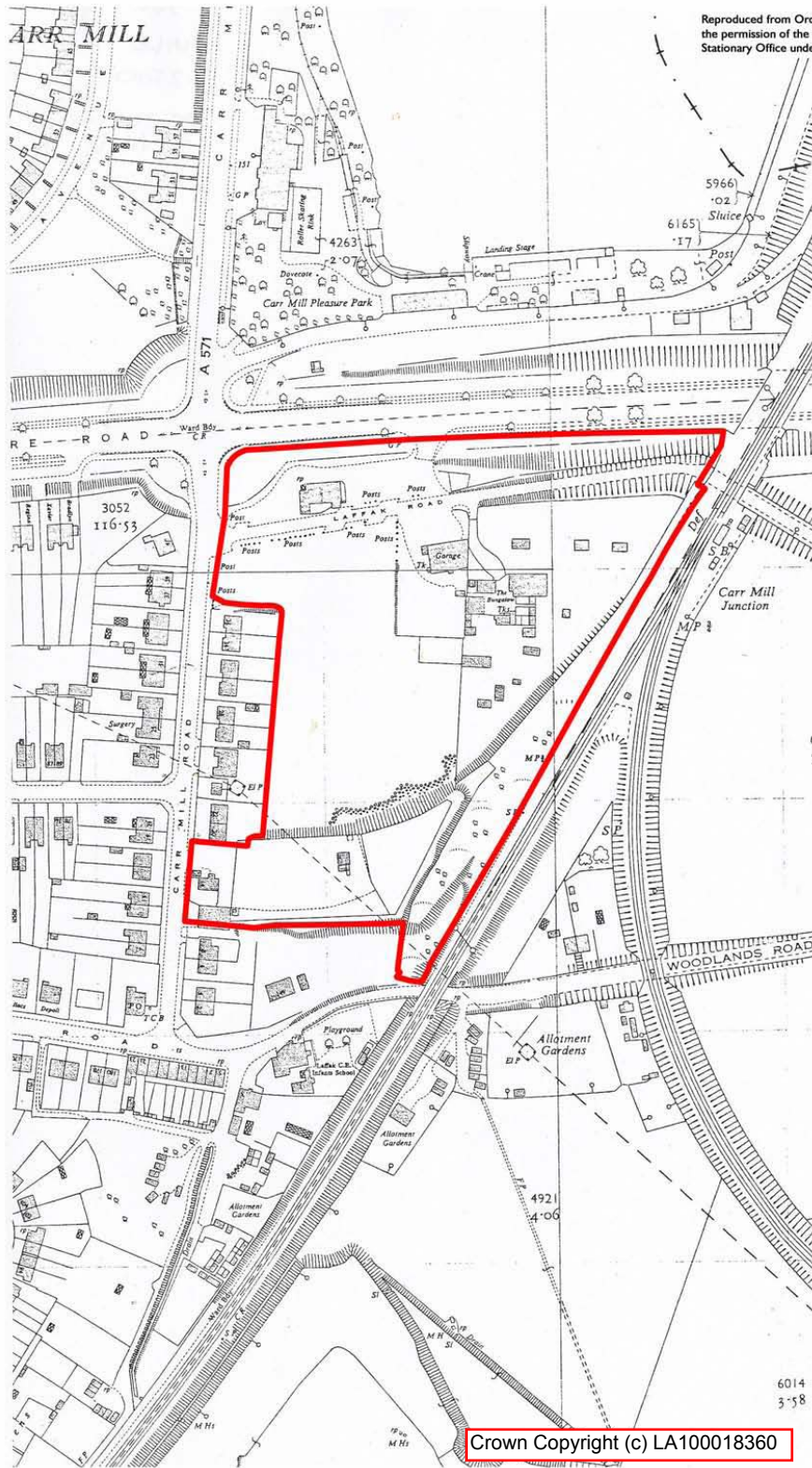
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LAND ADJACENT TO LAFFAK ROAD AND CARR MILL ROAD, ST.HELENS  
HISTORICAL PLAN - 1937

APPENDIX A2  
AUGUST 2008





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# LAND ADJACENT TO LAFFAK ROAD AND CARR MILL ROAD, ST. HELENS HISTORICAL PLAN - 1960

APPENDIX A3  
AUGUST 2008

## **Appendix B**

### **Planning History**

The site has a varied planning history which includes the following:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| H101336      | Change of use of haulage contractors at Laffak Road to Motor Auction Sales<br>Approved 19 May 1975   |
| H102907      | Change of use from commercial garage to Car Auction Sales at Unit 5, Laffak Road<br>Approved 6 July 1976   |
| H112326      | Change of use of Workshop to Car Auction Building and Car Park at Unit 5, Laffak Road<br>Approved 6 October 1981   |
| 0695/061     | Proposed 15m high telecommunications mast, associated antennae and equipment cabin at St Helens Motor Auctions, Laffak Road<br>Permitted Development – Notified 27 July 1995   |
| P/97/0009    | Erection of 20m high telecommunications mast with 3 polar antennae, 2 dish antennae and 2 associated equipment cabinets at St Helens Motor Auctions, Laffak Road<br>Approved 21 February 1997  |
| P/00/0731    | Replacement of 20m high telecommunications mast with 25m high lattice tower and equipment cabin at St Helens Motor Auctions, Laffak Road<br>Approved 25 January 2001.  |
| P/2000/0431  | Erection of freestanding modular restaurant on existing café site with additional car park facilities on the opposite side of Laffak Road.<br>Full Plans Withdrawn 29/03/2001  |
| P/2000/0432  | Erection of freestanding modular restaurant on existing café site with additional car parking facilities on the opposite side of Laffak Road.<br>Full Plans Withdrawn 29/03/2001   |
| P/.200210175 | Prior notification under Part 24 of the Town and Country planning (General permitted Development) Order, for the siting of a 15m high timber monopole telecommunications mast, associated antennas, equipment cabinet and secure compound.<br>Prior Notification Withdrawn 12/06/2002  |
| P/200210548  | Application under Part 24, Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning-(General Permitted Development Order) 1995, as amended for the siting of two heat management units to the rear of existing equipment cabin<br>Prior Notification Grant 12/06/2002   |
| P/2005/0179  | Replacement of 20M monopole with new 20m monopole to accommodate extra antennas (six in total) and 1 0.3m transmission dish with associated radio equipment housing and ancillary development at round level.<br>Prior Notification Telecoms Grant 15/03/2005  |
| P/2005/1066  | To install 3 no. 02 (uk) antennae at 16.3 metres height and 1 no. 02 (uk) transmission dish at 14.6 metres height on an existing 22 metre high column mast proposed 02 (uk) nokia ultrasite nortel iBTS equipment and cabinet; together with ancillary electrical cabling and metre within existing compound.<br>Prior Notification Grant 22/09/2005 |
| P/2006/0480  | Application for consent to retain 1 no. single sided, free standing, internally illuminated advertisement sign.<br>Advert Consent Refuse 17/05/2006  |



## Laffak Road Site Residents' Survey

### Summary of Laffak Road Site Residents Survey

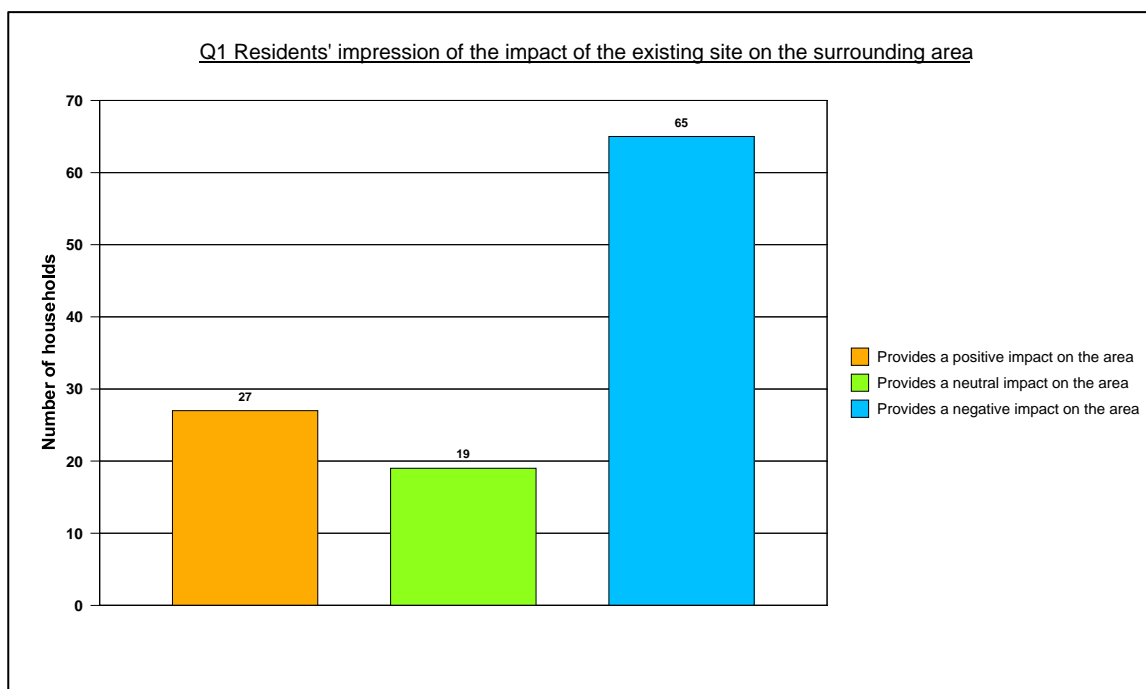
#### Introduction

St Helens Council wished to obtain feedback on residents' views on a piece of land off Laffak Road that had been earmarked for regeneration. In early 2008, a questionnaire survey was sent to approximately 200 households in the Laffak Road area, a small number of copies were also given to Ward Councillors.

119 completed surveys were returned, although responses were not given to every question in some cases. This report provides a summary of the findings.

#### Impression of the site earmarked for regeneration

Almost 59% of households who responded believed that the existing site provided a negative impression on the area.

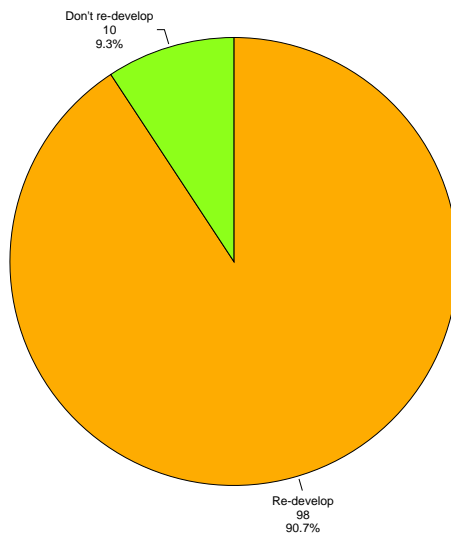


There may have been some confusion caused by the wording of this question, a number of people who indicated that the site had a positive impact on the surrounding area went on to indicate support for re-development of the site. Therefore the general negative impression that residents have of the existing site may be even more marked than indicated in this survey.

### Support for re-development of the site

Over 90% of residents supported the redevelopment of the site.

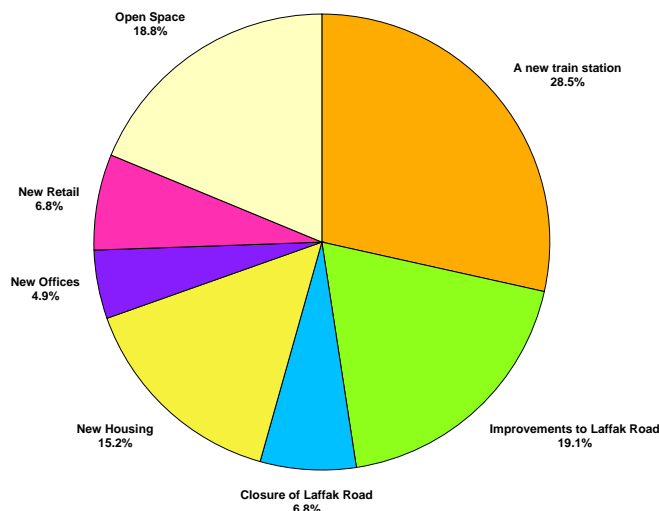
Q2 Residents views on whether the site should be redeveloped



### Projects for inclusion in any redevelopment of the site

Residents were asked to select as many options as they liked from a list of potential redevelopment projects, as well as suggesting their own ideas. The chart below displays the breakdown of responses.

Q3 What should be included in any redevelopment?



The most popular options were to build a new train station, improve Laffak Road, provide open space and build new housing.

### Comments about redevelopment of the site

In conclusion, most of the comments provided by residents supported redevelopment due to the site currently being an eyesore, ideas on how it should be redeveloped varied.



## Laffak Road Site: Residents Survey

The questions relate to the site marked by a bold line on the attached plan (below). Please complete the multiple choice questions on the following page by placing a cross in the relevant boxes.





Q 1 Please indicate your impression of the site on the attached plan? (Please tick one box only)

It provides a positive impact on the area ..... ☐

It provides a neutral impact on the area ..... ☐

It provides a negative impact on the area ..... ☐

Q 2 Do you think that the site should be re-developed?

Yes ..... ☐

No ..... ☐

Q 3 If the site were to be re-developed which of the following would you like to be included (tick all appropriate boxes):

A new train station ..... ☐

Improvements to Laffak Road ..... ☐

Closure of Laffak Road ..... ☐

New Housing ..... ☐

New Offices ..... ☐

New Retail ..... ☐

Open Space ..... ☐

Others (please specify) .....

Q 4 We are interested to hear any other views you have on the site. Please use the space below to provide other comments.

Q 5 If you would like to be kept informed on plans relating to this site, then please tell us your name and how you would like to be contacted below

Name .....

By letter (please specify address) .....

By email (Please specify email address) .....

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey. Your views will be considered in any future development of the site. Please place the form in the enclosed freepost envelope (no stamp required) and send it back to us, or hand it in at the Urban Regeneration reception on the Ground Floor of St. Helens Town Hall, Victoria Square.

## Appendix D

### Planning Policy Context

Source	Policy Reference	Policy Title	Policy Description
<b>North West Regional Spatial Strategy To 2021</b>	DP1	Spatial Principles	
	DP2	Promote Sustainable Communities	Development should enhance the quality of life for residents of the region and not result in a net loss of any key amenities or services unless appropriate means of compensation is sought through planning obligations and conditions.
	DP4	Make the Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure	Priority should be given to the re-use of buildings and previously developed land in sustainable locations.
	DP5	Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility	Development should reduce the need to travel, particularly by car and should be accessible by public transport.
	DP7	Promote Environmental Quality	New development should promote good design, respect its setting and take account of relevant design guidance
	DP9	Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change	New development should reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure new homes are fit for life and eco-friendly.
<b>UDP Policies</b>	ENV5	Sites of Community Wildlife Interest and Local Nature Reserves	Development directly or indirectly affecting sites of local nature conservation interest will only be permitted where the LPA is satisfied that the nature conservation interest can be safeguarded. If necessary this may require appropriate conditions and/or seeking legal agreements.
	ENV7	Nature Conservation within Development Sites	In determining applications for planning permission and when considering its own development schemes and proposals, the Council will ensure that effects upon wildlife and geological features are taken into full account. Where development proposals are acceptable in principle, the developer will be required to include measures to mitigate their effects upon features of nature conservation value.
	ENV9	Species Protection Policy	Development will not be permitted where the Council is satisfied that it would have an adverse effect on wildlife species and their habitats protected by law.
	ENV11	Tree Surveys	Where a proposal affects a site containing existing trees or woodlands, the Council will require applications to be accompanied by a tree survey, to enable the effect of the development on the trees to be properly assessed.
	ENV12	Development Affecting Existing Trees	Proposals affecting existing trees and woodlands will not be permitted if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would result in a significant loss of trees;</li> <li>• Do not incorporate measures for the successful retention of existing trees;</li> <li>• Do not make adequate provision for replacement planting to compensate for any losses as a result of development, at a ratio of at least 2:1.</li> </ul>

	ENV13	New Tree Planting on Development Sites	The Council will normally require the planting of trees on development sites, particularly those adjacent to roads or other public frontages, adjoining amenity areas and open spaces, in or adjacent to the greenbelt, within or adjacent to any environmental improvement area or corridor, or in areas deficient in trees.
	ENV23	Archaeology	In considering development proposals affecting archaeological sites or remains the Council will require developers to take full account of known or anticipated archaeological remains in their proposals.
	ENV25	Listed Buildings	The Council will seek to protect Listed Buildings and their setting from harmful development.
	ENV26	Contaminated Land	On contaminated sites or sites suspected of being either contaminated or affected by contamination, the Council will require developers to carry out investigations to assess the nature and extent of contamination and to prepare programmes or schemes of works to treat or minimise the problems.
	ENV 29	Pollution Control	<p>The Council will not permit development which would introduce or increase pollution to an unacceptable level as a result of emissions or discharge affecting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface water including watercourses, ponds and lakes;</li> <li>• Groundwater;</li> <li>• The air;</li> <li>• Noise levels</li> </ul> <p>All new developments will be required to meet existing standards relating to air, water, groundwater pollution and noise.</p>
	GEN2	Good Environments	This policy seeks to encourage the establishment of pleasant and safe conditions within new development and to safeguard existing good environments from the adverse effect of new built development.
	GEN3	Equal Access Opportunities	Proper consideration should be given to the access and other needs of special groups in the community, such as elderly people, disabled people and adults responsible for small children.
	GEN4	Security and Crime Prevention	New built development should enjoy the benefits of natural surveillance and other strategies that can be designed into layouts to provide a sense of security and well-being, as well as to actively deter criminal activities, including vandalism.
	GEN5	Design and Layout of New Housing	<p>In the design of residential developments best use is to be made of existing site characteristics (climatic and otherwise) and should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for pedestrian priority;</li> <li>• Limit traffic speeds;</li> <li>• Accommodate cyclists and buses;</li> <li>• Recognise the contribution of good layout design to domestic security;</li> <li>• Ensure scale and design of proposals are appropriate to the character of the area;</li> <li>• Meet the access requirements of disabled people;</li> <li>• Ensure separation for light and privacy;</li> <li>• Make appropriate off-street provision for garaging and parking of cars;</li> <li>• Make provision for incidental open space.</li> </ul>



	GEN6	Incidental Open Space	Residential developments of 40 or more dwellings, or on sites of 1.5Ha or more, should provide incidental open space at the rate of 40m <sup>2</sup> per unit, subject to a minimum of 0.15Ha, to be laid out and maintained at the developer's expense.
	GEN9	Parking and Servicing	<p>New development will be required to make suitable provision for car parking or contribute to means to facilitate access to it, such as public transport, cycleways or pedestrian routes. The exact requirement will vary according to specific circumstances and the Council will take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council's parking standards will provide the basis for negotiating provision. As a general rule, operational requirements will be kept to a minimum, and non-operational requirements will be interpreted as a maximum level of provision;</li> <li>• The extent to which the development can be reasonably and adequately served by alternative means of transport.</li> </ul> <p>New developments will also be required to make adequate provision for cycle parking.</p>
	RES2	Affordable Housing	<p>On suitable sites the Council will expect provision to be made for affordable dwellings. In considering whether the site is suitable, the following criteria will be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A site over 1.5Ha or developments of 40 dwellings or more;</li> <li>• Proximity to local services such as schools, shops and medical facilities;</li> <li>• Proximity to public transport;</li> <li>• Market suitability of the site to accommodate an element of high density development;</li> <li>• Evidence of local housing need;</li> <li>• Whether there will be particular costs associated with development of the site and whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site.</li> </ul> <p>The affordable dwellings shall be provided either through a partnership between the developer and a Housing Association for rented or shared ownership or by the construction of low-cost units for sale.</p>
	REC3	Children's Play	New housing developments often generate additional demand for play facilities which place a strain on existing facilities. Reference should be made to GEN6 which requires new open space provision to be made on most large developments.
	REC7	Water Features	The Council will protect the Borough's water areas (rivers, streams, ponds, canals, dams and reservoirs) and seek to promote their recreational use, provided there is no conflict with the recreational value of the area. Development proposals which prejudice existing or potential recreational use will be resisted.
	REC8	Community Facilities	The Council will not grant planning permission for development involving the loss of existing community facilities for which there is an identified need unless a suitable alternative facility is provided.

	TRA2	Traffic Calming	The Council will normally require traffic calming measures to be incorporated into the design of all new residential developments where new road construction is necessary. In addition, where the traffic consequences would include increased risk to safety or loss of amenity, permission may be refused unless developers are prepared to render appropriate financial contributions to implement necessary off-site calming measures.
	TRA7	Cycling	The Council will encourage greater provision for cycling, both for recreation and commuting to work, and improve conditions of safety for cyclists. Measures include the consideration of cyclists in new developments and the design of highway schemes.
<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)</b>	SPG3	Sites of Community Wildlife Interest & Regionally Important Geological/Geomorphological Sites	This guidance note is provided in support of UDP policies ENV4 and ENV5.
	SPG7	Garaging, Parking and Servicing	This guidance provides additional advice to complement policy GEN 9 Parking and Servicing, contained in the Council's Unitary Development Plan.
	SPG9	Cycle Parking Provision	This guidance note provides additional advice to complement policy GEN 9 and TRA 7, which seek to secure cycle parking facilities and highway conditions suitable for cyclists.
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>		St Helens Design Guidance	This guidance is to be used in conjunction with SPG5 (Supplementary Planning Guidance Note on the design and layout of new housing). It sets out a series of principles for good design, a process through which these can be achieved, and then identifies a series of 'performance criteria' against which planning applications will be judged.
<b>Additional Documents</b>		Landscape Character Assessment	This document categorises St Helens by landscape character type and sets out broad landscape principles, which new development proposals should recognise and appreciate.

### Formula for calculating the affordable housing contributions

The formula that the LPA uses in this instance is as follows:

The Housing Needs Study indicates that a contribution of 30% affordable housing will be sought on all suitable sites. As no social rented is required on this site, the cost to a developer in providing shared ownership housing is assumed to be 25% (i.e. units would be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord at 75% of open market value). Therefore, the level of financial contribution required in lieu of on-site provision is 7.5% of open market value (i.e. 25% of 30%) for the whole scheme.



### Laffak Road Draft Development Brief Consultation Summary

In May 2009, an eight-week public consultation exercise was undertaken on the brief. The brief was publicised by a number of methods:

- An exhibition was displayed at Premier Inn on 13th and 22nd May 2009, 3.30pm to 7.30pm. The exhibition was staffed on both evenings. A leaflet publicising the exhibition, together with the availability of information and advice was distributed to residents in close proximity to the site. Copies of the brief and questionnaire were made available at the venue. The staffed exhibitions were very well attended, with approximately 250 visitors over the two evenings;
- The development brief and questionnaire were publicised on the Council's web site and all consultees on the LDF database (with email contact) were notified of its availability.
- An online consultation exercise was set up and available for the eight week period;
- Five A3 posters were displayed in schools, community centres and shopping parades in close proximity to the site;
- A presentation was made to Moss Bank Ward Committee on 1 June 2009
- Display boards were exhibited in an unmanned display in Moss Bank Mission, Moss Bank Road;
- The brief and questionnaire were available in all local libraries together with regeneration reception in the Town Hall.
- A public notice was placed in the St Helens Reporter 6<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and Warrington Reporter 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

2.6 As a result of publicity 61 completed questionnaires have been received, plus 6 individual comments. The responses indicate the following preferences:

- 87% support the provision of a new train station;
- 90% support improved road safety;
- 88% support the provision of new employment opportunities;
- 97% support improved local environment;
- 57% support the provision of new homes;
- 71% confirmed the new train station as very important;
- 93% confirmed removing a prominent 'grot spot' as very important;
- 37% confirmed affordable housing as very important.

2.7 The consultation exercise established that consultation responses are broadly in line with the draft development brief. Some very minor amendments to the brief draws the developer to consult the Coal Authority, clarifies the position of the Environment Agency and Merseytravel and states the position with regard to the potential for retail use of the site.

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Contact Centre  
Wesley House, Corporation Street, St.Helens,  
Merseyside WA10 1HF

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Fax: 01744 456895

Minicom: 01744 671671

Email: [contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:contactcentre@sthelens.gov.uk)

[www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)



## St.Helens Council

Urban Regeneration & Housing  
Development Plans

Town Hall

Victoria Square

St.Helens

Merseyside

WA10 1HP

**Tel:** 01744 676190

**Fax:** 01744 676194

**Email:** [planningpolicy@sthelens.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@sthelens.gov.uk)

[www.sthelens.gov.uk](http://www.sthelens.gov.uk)



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