



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

DRAFT LOCAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL VALUE

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

2025

Contents

1. Introduction	3
Purpose of this document	3
Corporate Priorities and Overview of St Helens.....	4
Economic / Planning Policy Overview.....	6
What is Social Value?	6
2. Policy and Wider Economic Development and Social Value Context	8
National Planning Policy and Guidance	8
Local Planning Policy	9
Local Economic Development Context	11
Wider Economic Development Context	13
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	13
Social Value and the Planning System	14
3. Clarification of Planning Policy	17
Local Plan Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy	17
Proposals to develop or re-develop allocated sites.....	18
Preventing the loss of former employment buildings and/or land.....	20
The re-use, re-configuration or re-development for E(g), B2 or B8 uses of land or buildings.....	22
Proposals for Class E town centre uses outside a defined centre	23
Rural Economy Diversification	23
Tourism, Cultural and Visitor Resources, Facilities and Attractions	26
Use of Local Suppliers, Training and Education	28
Employment and Skills Statement	28
Travel Plans	31
4. Support and Advice Available for Local Businesses (including relevant contacts)	32
Pre-Application Advice.....	32
Building Control.....	32
Ways to Work.....	33
Appendix A: Existing Employment Areas	35
Appendix B: Training Providers.....	38
Appendix C: Information for Viability Assessments	41
Appendix D: Local Employment and Skills Statement Template.....	43

1. Introduction

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are documents that build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies contained in an adopted Local Plan. SPDs cannot introduce new planning policies, nor can they add unnecessary financial burdens on development. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Development Plan. The requirements for producing SPDs are set out at the current time, in Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.2 This SPD sits alongside the St Helens Borough Local Plan up to 2037 (2022) (the 'Local Plan'), which was adopted in July 2022. The purpose of this Local Economy and Social Value SPD is to set out, to developers and applicants, St Helens Borough Council's (the Council) approach to encouraging economic growth within the Borough alongside the Council's aspirations to secure additional outcomes (known as social value) for local residents, communities and businesses e.g., through education, employment, training and other development opportunities such as housing. This involves increasing employment opportunities by helping local businesses to improve, grow and take on more staff, helping businesses to find suitable staff and suppliers, especially local ones, and improving the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the resulting employment opportunities.
- 1.3 It further provides guidance for applicants in relation to the interpretation and implementation of policies in the Local Plan, in particular, **Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy** and **Policy LPA03.1: Strategic Employment Sites** and will:
 - Make businesses applying for planning permission aware of the advice and practical support available in the Borough for economic development and pre-application advice.
 - Help applicants understand the marketing and impact assessment information required for certain applications, and so enable timely processing of applications.
 - Inform developers and business of possible sources of funding and grants.

- Encourage the occupiers of new or expanded premises where new jobs are being created to use recruitment methods that will increase the likelihood of recruiting local residents.
- Encourage the use of local organisations to source and help train local residents to work at new or expanded premises, especially through apprenticeships.
- Encourage applicants to seek information on where to find local construction firms, local construction goods suppliers and local general business to business goods suppliers.
- Improve the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the resulting employment opportunities.
- Prioritise employment and skills opportunities for young people, long-term unemployed, people with disabilities and those with a limiting long-term illness, care leavers and others deemed vulnerable.
- Enhance the reputation of the developer and create opportunities for future business growth.
- Link developers and end-use employers to economic development support services in St Helens.

Corporate Priorities and Overview of St Helens

- 1.4 The SPD works towards achieving the Council's corporate priority of supporting a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy, especially in driving social value in processes relating to new development.
- 1.5 Improving long term economic resilience and addressing long-standing issues such as poverty and unemployment remain a priority. The Borough has a strong identity and sense of pride that is rooted in its history and heritage, and there is a confidence in the future, reflected by increasing business investment, more jobs and opportunities.
- 1.6 The economy of the Borough has many strengths and opportunities, and recent years have seen the creation of new or improved employment floorspace, for example alongside the A570 James Roby Way, the extension of Haydock Industrial Estate along the A580 East Lancashire Road and new employment units in a key location along the M62 corridor adjacent to the thriving Omega site. Due to its prime location and excellent transport connectivity the Borough has great potential to increase its economic competitiveness. The Local Plan allocates 213.53 hectares (ha) of

employment land to meet the anticipated development needs within the E(g), B2 and B8 use classes¹ during the Plan period.

- 1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires the Council to plan for and accommodate all foreseeable types of economic growth. Policy LPA03 of the Local Plan therefore identifies a range of locations, types, and sizes of employment sites to meet the needs of specific sectors of the business community and to protect existing areas where employment continues to be the most appropriate use.

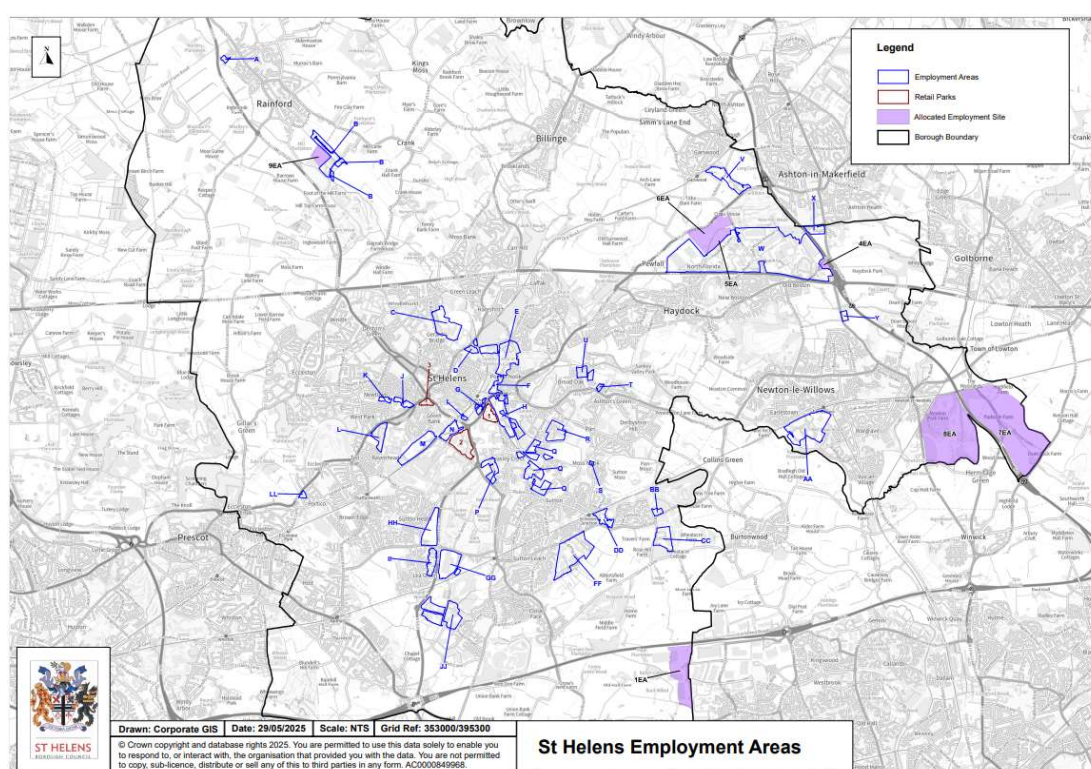


Figure 1.1: Key Employment Areas (available at Appendix A in a larger format)

- 1.8 Notwithstanding these opportunities, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on every aspect of society, not least the local economy. St Helens Borough is ranked the 36th most deprived out of 326 local authorities in England. Deprivation levels in some parts of the Borough have also worsened relative to others. The proportion of children in low-income families is higher than those in the United Kingdom². As of November 2021, 16.8% of working age residents in the Borough were on Universal Credit, which is higher than the regional (15.9%) and national average (13.9%), but below the city region level (17.2%). In combination with low workplace earnings and there being almost 3

¹ Use Class Order: [The Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) Order 1987](#)

² <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67dc2c58c5528de3aa6711f9/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2024.ods>

in 10 jobs earning below the Real Living Wage, this is indicative of in-work poverty³.

- 1.9 To address inequalities and deliver inclusive growth the Council will focus on developing and supporting our business ecosystem, people and skills and invest in place and a green recovery to drive growth and transformation. This will include the transformation of the former Parkside colliery site into a major logistics hub and employment site and the delivery of our Town Investment Plan to develop a town centre that matches the potential of the Borough. The Council will also maximise opportunities presented by flagship programmes such as Glass Futures, a world-class research and development sustainable, low carbon glass manufacturing facility.

Economic / Planning Policy Overview

- 1.10 The vision for St Helens is set out in the Local Plan. In summary it states that by 2037 St Helens will provide:
- Through the balanced regeneration and sustainable growth of its built-up areas, a range of attractive, healthy, safe, inclusive, and accessible places in which to live, work, visit and invest.
 - A range of high-quality new employment development will have taken place, making use of the Borough's excellent transport links and its location between Liverpool and Greater Manchester.
- 1.11 The Local Plan provides sufficient employment land on a variety of sites to meet the needs of modern businesses, encouraging inward investment, allow businesses to expand, retain and create jobs, and increase employment rates. It will also enable St Helens Borough's residents to work closer to home and so reduce the currently extensive numbers of people who need to commute to other locations or move away to find work. The Local Plan's approach accords with that of the Liverpool City Region's Plan for Prosperity⁴.

What is Social Value?

- 1.12 Social Value is the 'catch-all' term used to describe the difference an organisation or project can make to the community or communities they are operating in. It goes beyond financial value and considers how proposed development can increase equality, improve wellbeing, and develop environmental sustainability; it is about maximising the local benefit that we create – be it social, economic, or environmental well-being. A focus on social value can help us to change how we address many of the Borough's

³ St Helens State of the Borough - Economic and Skills Baseline Assessment (April 2022)

⁴ <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/plan-for-prosperity>

challenges and can shape the decisions the Council make about where to invest resources and how to maximise our opportunities.

- 1.13 It describes the difference an organisation, project or procurement can make to the local area and communities within it. The planning system is fundamentally about the planning and regulation of land to secure the houses and workplaces a society requires. Social value operates for the wider public good rather than the private individual and as such the generation of social value is already at its heart and helps support the Council's aspirations related to community wealth building and inclusive growth.
- 1.14 Examples of social value are outlined below. This list is not exhaustive, and each case is considered and assessed on its own merits.
- **Local employment and training opportunities**, through the provision of direct opportunities and setting expectations on suppliers and partners to do the same, while also developing the employability of young people;
 - **Local procurement and the use of local supply chains**, by setting expectations on suppliers and partners, while introducing opportunities to directly work with local organisations;
 - **Active engagement** and support of local partners as well as the voluntary, community and social enterprises, while providing opportunities directly or through suppliers to increase their involvement in the local market; and
 - **Being a green and sustainable organisation** with a commitment to protecting the environment, minimising waste and energy consumption and using other resources efficiently, while expecting these commitments across the whole supply chain.
- 1.15 By seeking to capture social value from developments, when such schemes are at the planning stage, the Council can achieve significant added value benefits for the residents of the Borough, particularly in the area of employment and skills. One way that this can be achieved is requiring applicants and developers to consider how their proposals can increase opportunities relating to local employment and provision of skills via the production and implementation of an Employment and Skills Statement. Embedding social value in the planning process will enable developers to identify how they can make a positive impact on residents and communities in St Helens.

2. Policy and Wider Economic Development and Social Value Context

- 2.1 Taken as a whole, it can be argued that the commitment to delivering social value is already at the heart of planning. The planning system is largely a process and balancing act on what can be built and where, thereby regulating land use to secure the homes and workplaces that society requires. Accordingly, it is answerable to the wider public good rather than that of a private individual or organisation.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development via three overarching objectives (economic, social, and environmental), which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways that are virtually synonymous with the ambition to deliver social value:
- **Economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - **Social objective** – to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - **Environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 2.3 Chapter 6 of the NPPF outlines the over-arching objectives of the planning system towards achieving a strong and competitive economy. Paragraph 85 states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”

- 2.4 A national shortage in appropriately skilled construction workforce is one such challenge.
- 2.5 The NPPF is also supported by more detailed planning guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which is regularly updated. However, there is no specific guidance on economic development or social value contained within the PPG.

Local Planning Policy

St Helens Borough Local Plan up to 2037, July 2022

- 2.6 The Employment Land Needs Study 2015 (ELNS) concluded that St Helens has an assessed need for employment land of 214 hectares (ha) from 2012 up to 2037, and that due to its key location on the M6 and M62 motorways it is ideally positioned in the North West to provide a critical role in the large-scale logistics sector.
- 2.7 Therefore, to strengthen the local economy, St Helens needs to build on those sectors where the Borough enjoys a competitive advantage. As identified above, one such sector is logistics and distribution, where the Borough's location in relation to the M6 and M62 motorways and the rail network makes it particularly attractive for development. Market needs for the large-scale distribution sector (units of above 9,000m²) generally focus on sites of 5ha or above and this has been reflected in the size of sites selected for release from the Green Belt and allocation for employment use in the Local Plan (see Section 3 for more details).
- 2.8 Relevant Local Plan policies include:
- **Policy LPA01: Spatial Strategy** – provides a strategic overview and sets out where substantial new employment development will take place, as the Borough is well placed to provide new employment, including helping to address the sub-regional need for large scale logistics development, due to its location close to the M6, M62 and A580 and to major north-south and trans-Pennine rail routes. There is also a unique opportunity to develop land at Parkside for rail-enabled and other employment development.

- **Policy LPA02: Development Principles** – sets out what new development will be required to provide to support the residents' economic well-being, including a contribution to the creation and retention of a range of employment and training opportunities that are readily accessible by non-car modes of transport to the Borough's residents, including local unemployed and disadvantaged people.
- **Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy** – identifies a range of locations, types, and sizes of employment sites to meet the anticipated needs of specific sectors of the business community and also protects existing areas where employment continues to be the most appropriate use and important role in accommodating employment development during the Plan period.
- **Policy LPA03.1: Strategic Employment Sites** – sets out the strategic sites covered by Policy LPA03. It is anticipated that these sites will deliver most of the new employment land required to meet need. To ensure that the sites are developed to their full potential it is essential that development proposals within them are informed by a comprehensive and suitable masterplan for the site as a whole. The masterplan must identify any new, expanded, or enhanced infrastructure that is needed to serve the development as a whole.
- **Policy LPA06: Transport and Travel** – sets out how an effective transport network is needed to support a strong economy and a strong community. Quality environments that are conducive to walking and cycling can contribute to a healthier lifestyle. The measures and priorities identified in Policy LPA06 should help support economic growth, improve access to employment and services and support a healthier lifestyle.
- **Policy LPA07: Infrastructure Delivery and Funding** – seeks satisfactory provision of all forms of infrastructure required to serve the needs of the local community. It sets out how decision makers will pay due regard to any impact developer contributions towards infrastructure provision or other policy requirements may have in the economic viability of new development.
- **Policy LPA09: Parkside East** – refers to allocation 7EA (the Parkside East site), which is considered suitable in principle for development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and sets out the requirements development for this site must adhere to.
- **Policy LPA10: Parkside West** – refers to allocation 8EA (the Parkside West site), which is considered suitable for B2 and B8 uses, and sets out the requirements development for this site must adhere to.

Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (AAP), July 2017

- 2.9 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (AAP) is a document that forms part of the Council's development plan. The AAP sets out the detailed policies and actions needed to develop and sustain the Forest Park, which include a network of open spaces and routes accessible to connect the wider countryside with our local communities. Key aims and objectives of the AAP are to *"Create new economic opportunities through sustainable development within Bold Forest Park"* and *"Create opportunities for tourism and leisure related business, supported by the natural economy."*
- 2.10 The Government has set its priority as being economic growth and wishes to see rural areas contributing to and benefitting from it. Paragraph 88 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, including rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as shops, meeting places etc. The wards in and around the Forest Park suffer from levels of unemployment higher than the national and Borough averages. Therefore, the use of local recruitment services, employment of local apprentices and findings local suppliers of goods and services in the construction phase is expected from applicants of development over a certain size threshold.
- 2.11 Chapter 9 of the AAP sets out the policy requirements for developing the Forest Park's economy. APP **Policy BFP ECON1: Supporting Economic Growth** favours proposals that support the Forest Park's economy or enhance the range and quality of economic opportunities or facilities. However, proposals that would reduce the range and quality of businesses or tourism attractions and facilities will be resisted, unless no adverse impacts upon the local economy or quality of visitors' experience can be demonstrated.
- 2.12 Furthermore, AAP **Policy BFP ECON2: Addressing Worklessness** sets out how the Council and other appropriate partners will establish land-based training schemes linked to the development and management of the Forest Park infrastructure, with developers being encouraged to participate in land-based training schemes.

Local Economic Development Context

St Helens Inclusive Growth Strategy (2023-2028)

- 2.13 The St Helens Inclusive Growth Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for the economy right across the Borough and brings together the activity that

businesses, the Council, further education and training providers, and other organisations working across the Liverpool City Region are undertaking to help the Borough's economy thrive. The strategy sets out new and additional actions needed over the next five years which will help to achieve the vision of delivering a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy over three main themes, which are:

- **Regeneration, development, and inward investment** – Deliver land and regeneration investments in a way that maximises economic, social and health outcomes in the Borough, including higher value inward investment.
- **Local Business growth and new enterprise** – Increase the number of local businesses that grow and stay in St Helens Borough, and support innovation, low carbon transition, and productivity gains
- **Public and private sector key worker jobs** – Ensure everyone has a fair experience of work and is able to access opportunities for progression and higher pay if they want to, and maximise the economic and social potential of these sectors.

St Helens Borough Strategy 2021-2030

- 2.14 The St Helens Borough Strategy 2021-2030 commits St Helens to using their *“place leadership role to help businesses survive and grow”* and encouraging inward investment. With a commitment that *“the right green, transport or digital infrastructure is provided to support economic prosperity”* is ensured.
- 2.15 Priority Two of the strategy is to *“promote good health independence and care across our communities.”* Improving residents' skills and access to jobs is also recognised as an outcome of achieving a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy.
- 2.16 Priority Five of the strategy focuses on creating green and vibrant places that reflect St Helens' heritage and culture.

Social Value Policy

- 2.17 The Social Value Policy (November 2022) sets out how the council, working alongside partners, will harness its various roles; as a major local employer, a provider of services, a buyer of goods and services, and an investor in localities and regeneration, to support communities, the environment, and the local economy.

Wider Economic Development Context

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

- 2.18 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) is made up of the six local authorities of the city region – Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. It plays a central role in the economic development of our Borough. Giving local people the opportunity and responsibility to develop new and existing skills, ensuring that they are equipped to take advantage of the growth currently coming forward.

The LCRCA Corporate Plan 2024-2028

- 2.19 The Liverpool City Region's (LCR) first Devolution Agreement in November 2015 secured £900 million of funding over 30 years, with a second deal following in 2016.
- 2.20 Since the Mayoral Combined Authority was established in 2017, hundreds of millions of pounds of additional funding have been secured to invest in the region. The LCRCA has been focused on delivering the strategic decisions, investments, projects and services that grow the economy and create a prosperous in every community, within each of the city region's six local authority areas.
- 2.21 It has invested heavily in equipping residents with the skills they need for employment, through programmes like its award winning 'Be More' platform, 'Households into Work', and the 'Adult Education Budget', which support over 30,000 learners each year. Since 2017, there have been over 50,000 apprenticeship starts in the city region; the number of jobs in the LCR has grown by 44,000 (7%); there are now 60,000 (10%) more LCR residents in employment. This is faster growth than the national average (5%) and the second fastest of all combined authority areas during this time, and the number of businesses has grown by 1,000 – at a faster rate than national averages. This is supported by the high business birth rate, which in 2023 was the third highest rate of all combined authorities.
- 2.22 Over the next four years, the LCRCA will work with the Government to deliver on its strategic priorities and deliver a comprehensive programme of activity to grow the city region's economy, focusing on delivering for its people, the region as a place, on its transport system and on digital infrastructure.

LCRCA - Strategic Investment Fund Investment Strategy 2023

- 2.23 To manage the LCR's devolved funding, the LCRCA established the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). The SIF's purpose is to invest in economic growth

which supports our ambitions, as set out in the 'Combined Authority's 2022 Plan for Prosperity'.

- 2.24 Since the previous SIF Investment Strategy was launched in 2020, the majority of the current tranche of Gainshare funding (2021-2026) has been allocated. Significant investments made by the LCRCA for St Helens include Glass Futures – a £9m grant to support an industry-led global centre for research and development, innovation, and training in St Helens. The project has created the world's first openly accessible test and trial furnace facility, which will be used to deliver industry and government backed research and development projects focused on decarbonising glass production.

LCRCA – Local Growth Plan (Emerging)

- 2.25 The LGP will set the blueprint for realising a long-term vision to transform LCR's economy, maximise its contribution to UK growth, and unlock global potential.

Alongside driving growth and improving productivity, the LGP will simultaneously advance three broader ambitions to create a virtuous cycle of growth, as proposed:

- Inclusive Growth – focused on good quality jobs and fair wages, equitable access, and creating opportunities for local enterprise – ensuring economic benefits are widely distributed across communities and demographics.
- AI for Good – leveraging the City Region's nationally important assets for the good of economy and society, LCR being a leader in responsible AI – enhancing public services, stimulating innovation, and adopting a human-centred approach to solving societal challenges.
- Net Zero by 2035 – investing in clean energy and energy efficiency, maximising our industrial and natural assets, developing low carbon industries and skills.

Social Value and the Planning System

Why is Social Value Important?

- 2.26 The Council has a legal duty to consider social value in service contracts, as well as goods or works contracts where there is a service element, above a prescribed financial threshold. However, the Council can implement an approach to social value as wide as is practicable in order to optimise outcomes from procurement and commissioning activities.

- 2.76 Social value has the potential to release millions of pounds of public money for community benefit and encourage smarter spending to not only deliver a proposed service but also address social, economic and environmental issues in the local community.
- 2.28 The outcomes from social value can provide longer-term benefits, for example, by helping people into employment we can reduce the cost of benefits while improving their quality of life and wellbeing. In addition, it has been proven that increasing employment can reduce criminal and anti-social behaviour while also reducing the burden on health and care services, as well as strengthening community cohesion and resilience.
- 2.29 St Helens is facing a period of unprecedented opportunity, and it is important that local residents are able to access the jobs created by growth. Doing so will help to address existing barriers to employment, as reflected by the proportion of St Helens residents claiming out of work benefits, which is notably higher than the regional and national averages.
- 2.30 There is a high proportion of residents claiming Universal Credit at almost 17% of working age residents, which is significantly above the national average of 14%⁵.
- 2.31 The comparatively high level of worklessness is compounded by low levels of educational attainment in St Helens. A breakdown of the number and proportion of residents with various levels of qualifications is shown in Table 2.1 below. This compares educational attainment levels in St Helens with that of the North West and England.

Level of qualification	St Helens (%)	North West (%)	United Kingdom (%)
People with no qualifications or NVQ1	17.3%	18.1%	16.2%
NVQ 2	19.5%	17.0%	15.5%
NVQ 3	18.9%	17.9%	16.9%
NVQ 4	36.5%	38.7%	43.0%
Other qualifications	7.7%	8.3%	8.4%

Table 2.1: Percentage of working age population with different levels of qualifications in St Helens (St Helens State of the Borough - Economic and Skills Baseline Assessment (April 2022))

⁵ St Helens State of the Borough - Economic and Skills Baseline Assessment (April 2022)

- 2.32 Failure to address the low skills base would inevitably slow the growth of the local economy and, as such, there is an increasing urgency to maximise the development of skills and to thereby improve the employment prospects of local residents.
- 2.33 As there is a significant jobs growth predicted in St Helens, there is an opportunity to raise local levels of educational attainment, subject to developer contributions. The intent is that the process for all planning applications involving major development, as per the thresholds set out at Table 3.2 below, would require applicants to agree a Social Value Strategy in the form of an Employment and Skills Statement with the Council secured either via a Planning Obligation (under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), or by condition where no financial contribution is required, and then deliver on its requirements.
- 2.34 The requirement for applicants for major developments to agree to an Employment and Skills Statement will ensure that the major development contributes towards addressing St Helens current skills shortages and it will ensure that there is a better, appropriately skilled local workforce, which can provide a pool of talent for both developers and end occupiers.
- 2.35 Social value can also enable alternative providers, such as voluntary organisations, community groups, and social enterprises, to compete against larger organisations to bid for and deliver council services or local projects. Encouraging a greater breadth of providers, we can benefit from improved value for money, business partnerships, and innovative ideas.

3. Clarification of Planning Policy

- 3.1 This section provides further guidance on how Local Plan policies should be interpreted and implemented and will be considered as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications received by the Council. It includes the circumstances in which social value opportunities will be sought.

Local Plan Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy

- 3.2 Policy LPA03 of the Local Plan allocates the following sites for employment development:

Site Reference number	Site Name	Indicative Site Area (hectares)	Appropriate Uses
1EA	Omega South Western Extension, Land north of Finches Plantation, Bold (to meet employment land needs arising in Warrington)	31.22	B2, B8
4EA	Land South of Penny Lane, Haydock	2.16	B2, B8
5EA	Land to the West of Haydock Industrial Estate, Haydock	7.75	B2, B8
6EA	Land west of Millfield Lane, south of Liverpool Road and north of Clipsley Brook, Haydock	20.58	B2, B8
7EA	Parkside East, Newton-le-Willows	64.55	Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI), B2, B8
8EA	Parkside West, Newton-le-Willows	79.57	B2, B8
9EA	Land to the West of Sandwash Close, Rainford	7.70	E(g), B2, B8

Table 3.1: Local Plan Allocated Employment Sites

Proposals to develop or re-develop allocated sites

- 3.3 Part 4 of Policy LPA03 states that the Council will refuse planning proposals to develop or re-develop any of the above allocated sites for uses not listed in Table 3.1, unless the following can be demonstrated:

Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy (Part 4)

- a) the site is no longer both suitable and viable for an employment use identified in the table before; and*
- b) the site has been offered for employment use on the open market at a reasonable price in a manner and for a period agreed with the Council; and*
- c) the results of the marketing exercise have been transparently shared with the Council; and*
- d) no employment use can be delivered as part of a mixed-use scheme on the site.*

- 3.4 Land has been specifically removed from the Green Belt to meet the identified employment needs of the Borough and strengthen the local economy and achieve the economic aspirations of the Council. Therefore, to ensure the development of the proposed employment allocations is used for the identified employment uses it is important that this land is protected from alternative uses. Accordingly, all four criteria as set out in Part 4 must be met.
- 3.5 All applications for alternative uses must be accompanied by a viability assessment that sets out why the site is no-longer suitable nor viable. This viability assessment will then be verified by an independent professional, the cost of which will be met by the applicant.
- 3.6 Any application for an alternative use would need to demonstrate to the Council that the site has been actively marketed for the proposed employment use as stated in Table 3.1 on the open market for a minimum period of 18 months. It is considered essential that an effective marketing exercise is undertaken before alternative uses are considered. The Council consider the following is necessary when undertaking active marketing of the site:
- It is marketed at a reasonable market price for the uses set out in Table 3.1, based on more than one estimate of value by a suitable qualified chartered surveyor;
 - It is marketed without any undue restrictions on its proposed uses for employment purposes;

- Good quality information about the property is made available, with sizes, photographs, planning status, services, asking price, any restrictions, conditions or covenants, and any other information that may reasonably be expected to be provided in a typical marketing exercise for similar properties;
 - Clearly visible for development signs are placed at the site;
 - At least one local agent is engaged who specialises in employment land and premises, who will actively market the site, including the use of nationally available websites for the entire 18-month period;
 - The Council's Economic Development Team is notified of the availability of the site, so it can be placed on the Council property database at the start of the period; and
 - A record of all expressions of interests and offers received due to the marketing activity should be kept.
- 3.7 This evidence (i.e. a complete record of the above marketing exercise) should then be submitted to the Council as part of any planning application, in order for the Council to verify that this element of the policy requirement has been undertaken appropriately.
- 3.8 To accept a mixed-use development would ultimately reduce the overall residual employment needs of the Borough. However, it would still provide an element of the use the site was initially removed from the Green Belt for. Therefore, any viability assessment should factor in the consideration of mixed-used schemes.
- 3.9 When determining the proportion of the overall site to be developed for the related employment uses, the Council will assess the individual merits of each case, but in doing so will take account of the employment resource being lost and the potential level of employment that can be achieved within the mixed use development. The Council will also seek to ensure that the new employment element would not cause harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 3.10 If a mixed-use scheme is pursued, then any planning permission granted, (subject to other material considerations and those items detailed in this SPD) will be conditional on the delivery of the employment uses on the site. It will normally be expected that the employment element will be constructed in advance of the higher value uses. This will be controlled either through a Section 106 Agreement or by planning condition.

- 3.11 Only after this period, and subject to no interest being received for the identified employment uses (including a mixed-use), will an application for an alternative use be considered further.
- 3.12 The above applies not only to all employment site allocations within the Local Plan but also those sites contributing to meeting identified employment needs over the Local Plan period, including but not limited to land at Florida Farm North, land north of Penny Lane, land at Lea Green Farm West and Gerards Park, College Street.
- 3.13 Additionally, should an application be submitted that includes additional uses alongside those stated in Table 3.1 e.g., Use Class E(g) in addition to B2 and B8 use classes, then the applicant will need to justify the reason why these uses have been incorporated within the scheme. As these sites were removed from the Green Belt for those specific use classes, following evidence at that time, any departure from the purposes for which they were removed will need to be fully justified by clear evidence. As a rule, should additional uses be considered appropriate they should not exceed 20% of the overall site.

Preventing the loss of former employment buildings and/or land

- 3.14 Existing employment sites in urban areas still have an important role to play in accommodating employment development during the Local Plan period. Therefore, Local Plan Policy LPA03, Part 5 seeks to protect the employment role of such sites. It states that sites and buildings that are currently or were last used for employment use (or for sui generis use generating employment typically found on employment/industrial estates, such as builders' merchants, builder's yards, scrap yards and waste transfer sites etc.), including those listed in employment areas (see Appendix A), will be protected from changes to other uses, unless justified, providing the following can be demonstrated:

Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy (Part 4)

- a) the land or building (or any part of it) is no longer suitable and economically viable for light industrial, offices and research and development, B2 or B8 uses; or*
- b) the land use planning benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the benefits of retaining the site or building in its existing use (including vacant buildings and sites).*

- 3.15 Pressure on industrial land from other uses, particularly relating to residential and commercial developments, have in recent years resulted in a significant

loss of employment/industrial land within the Borough. However, during the Local Plan period some older employment areas may become no longer suitable for employment use or may have an altered economic role.

- 3.16 Alternative uses on existing or former employment sites may be acceptable where continued employment use would be unacceptable on environmental grounds, or where the site is not well located in relation to the transport network or surrounding land uses, or where the community benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the potential loss of employment on the site caused by ceasing an existing use. The community benefits of a scheme could be wide-ranging, and it is the responsibility of the applicant to clearly set out these benefits to support their proposal. The Council will determine the significance of community benefits of proposals on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.17 Alternative uses may also be appropriate where there is no current or likely future market demand for employment uses on the site and / or its reuse, reconfiguration or redevelopment for such purposes would not be viable currently or in the long term. Applications for change to employment generating uses that do not prevent the ability of the premise to easily revert to E(g), B2 or B8 uses may be considered more favourably than those that would make reversion difficult or costly.
- 3.18 Prior to the Council's agreement to such a change of use, a viability assessment should be submitted, containing the evidence as set out in Appendix C. The assessment will need to consider the differences between the value of the site based on its current use, the viability of re-using, reconfiguring or redeveloping the site for E(g), B2 or B8 uses and also for other employment generating uses typically found on employment/industrial estates, (i.e., the difference between the cost of doing this and the end value) and the viability of redeveloping the site for the applicant's preferred use.
- 3.19 In advance of preparing such an assessment, the applicant should discuss with the Council what information will be required, and what uses should be considered in the assessment. The Council is committed to ensuring that the planning process, including viability negotiations, are as transparent as possible, with opportunity for residents and other interested parties to access, review and comment on the process, in accordance with national policy. An indication of the likely information is set out in Appendix C. The Council's retained economic viability consultants will review any assessment submitted. All costs incurred in the reviewing of viability information will be met by the applicant.

- 3.20 Further to the above, evidence of marketing of the site for reuse, reconfiguration, and redevelopment for E(g), B2 or B8 uses, or for other employment generating uses will also need to be submitted.
- 3.21 It is appreciated that each site is different, however, typically an existing employment/industrial site should be actively marketed for a minimum of 12 months and have adhered to the following:
- It is marketed at a reasonable market price for the existing or last known use of the site, based on more than one estimate of value by a suitable qualified chartered surveyor;
 - It is marketed without any undue restrictions on its proposed uses for employment purposes;
 - Good quality information about the property is made available, with sizes, photographs, planning status, services, asking price, any restrictions, conditions or covenants, and any other information that may reasonably be expected to be provided in a typical marketing exercise for similar properties;
 - Clearly visible for development signs are placed at the site;
 - At least one local agent is engaged who specialises in employment land and premises, who will actively market the site, including the use of nationally available websites for the entire 12-month period;
 - The Council's Economic Development Team is notified of the availability of the site, so it can be placed on the Council property database at the start of the period; and
 - A record of all expressions of interests and offers received due to the marketing activity should be kept.

The re-use, re-configuration or re-development for E(g), B2 or B8 uses of land or buildings

- 3.22 There may be instances where an applicant can demonstrate that there is no demand for an employment site in its present condition and/or that the site's buildings are of a state that they would be unsuitable for continued employment use. In such cases, it is important to recognise that the value offered by such sites does not arise solely from the existing buildings, but from the potential the site offers for future employment uses. The Council will therefore support proposals for the re-use, re-configuration or re-development for E(g) uses (including light industrial, offices and research and development), providing they provide suitable highway access and do not result in a detrimental impact on neighbouring uses.

- 3.23 Therefore, should a suitable highway access and egress not be achievable or there would be unacceptable impact on neighbours, then the proposed re-use, re-configuration or re-development for E(g), B2 or B8 uses will not be supported.

Proposals for Class E town centre uses outside a defined centre

- 3.24 Part 7 of Policy LPA03 of the Local Plan prohibits proposals for Class E town centre uses in locations outside a defined centre. A condition to restrict town centre uses (as defined in the glossary of the NPPF) on applications for employment use will be imposed unless the requirements of Policy LPC04 of the Local Plan are satisfied.

Rural Economy Diversification

- 3.25 Approximately half of St Helens Borough is countryside, and this land is designated as Green Belt. The Council wants to facilitate an economically productive countryside that complements the urban area, is compatible with its Green Belt designation and the character of the countryside, promotes environmentally sustainable growth and respects key environmental assets such as Sites of Scientific Special Interest. Employment and industrial areas in the urban area are generally more accessible to the majority of the population of St Helens, and all of the Green Belt is within a few kilometres of an employment or industrial area. However, there are several types of economic development that are appropriate in the countryside and Green Belt, and the following guidance seeks to illustrate what is likely to be acceptable in terms of Part 8 of Local Plan Policy LPA03.
- 3.26 It is important to note that all proposals for rural economic diversification and development must be consistent with national and local Green Belt policy. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 3.27 Chapter 13 of the NPPF clearly sets out the Government's intention of protecting Green Belt land and paragraph 153 states that:
- 'Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.'*

3.28 Paragraph 154 of the NPPF states that the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is inappropriate development, however, lists exceptions to this as follows:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;*
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;*
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;*
- e) limited infilling in villages;*
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and*
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.*
- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:*
 - i. mineral extraction;*
 - ii. engineering operations;*
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;*
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;*
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and*
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.*

3.29 Paragraph 155 of the NPPF adds that the development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;*
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed;*
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework; and*
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157.*

3.30 Accordingly, the Council considers that suitable rural economic diversification will primarily consist of the re-use of existing buildings with or without limited extensions, or built on ‘grey belt’, where it meets the appropriate criteria. Development may also include appropriate facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, and the limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land.

3.31 When determining whether economic diversification is suitable and (for the re-use of existing buildings) compatible with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, the Council will consider factors including whether the use is suited to a rural location as opposed to an urban location and the accessibility of the location to the likely workforce.

3.32 Examples of suitable rural economic diversification include:

- Farm shops selling produce from the farm and local farms and a limited amount of ancillary goods;
- Small businesses that are ancillary to the running of the farm;
- Agricultural services;
- Equestrian uses (tuition, livery, all weather ménages, trails and events, and ancillary sales of clothing and equipment);
- Small scale (under 500 square metres) rural offices within Use Class E(g);
- Provision of F(g) i) office, ii) the research and development of products or processes or iii) any industrial processes (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area), especially for knowledge based businesses, agriculture and countryside related businesses, artists and crafts;

- Rural tourism uses that will offer a ‘rural experience’, with ancillary shopping and food service facilities;
- Value added food processing (e.g. ice cream, cheese, preserves and olive oil production) and ancillary sales;
- Small scale (under 500 square metres) training and conference facilities;
- Holiday accommodation in bed and breakfast, self-catering, camping and glamping facilities, including small scale lodges.

Tourism, Cultural and Visitor Resources, Facilities and Attractions

3.33 Local Plan Policy LPA03, Parts 9 and 10 state that:

Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy (Part 9)

The Council will support the protection, creation, enhancement and expansion of tourism, cultural and visitor resources, facilities, and attractions by favourably considering proposals that are appropriate to the local character and appearance of the area and that will:

- i) increase the range and quality of the accommodation offer in the Borough; or*
- ii) enhance an existing tourist or visitor attraction; or*
- iii) attract investment to the Borough and create or safeguard jobs; or*
- iv) enable the economic or physical regeneration of a site or area; or*
- v) improve the quality and diversity of the Borough’s visitor offer; or*
- vi) help to maintain existing natural, historical, or cultural assets.*

Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy (Part 10)

The Council will prevent the unjustified loss of existing tourism, cultural and visitor resources and assets.

3.34 Policy LPA03 directs new tourism and leisure facilities to locations where new development can be easily integrated within existing settlements, or outside settlements where they form part of a rural diversification scheme or the conversion of an existing rural building. Within these locations, proposals such as bed and breakfast accommodation, the conversion of existing rural buildings to holiday accommodation, farm stay holidays, camp or glamping sites are encouraged where they are likely to have a limited visual impact on

the countryside and require little in the way of ancillary infrastructure in line with national and local Green Belt policy.

- 3.35 It is important that new tourism and leisure development is appropriate and sympathetic in nature and scale to the local environment and to the needs of both visitors and the local community. Proposals for new tourism and leisure development will be assessed in accordance with the relevant Local Plan policies together with any relevant material planning considerations as set out below. However, it should be noted that the following list is not exhaustive and planning applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

- **Access / Highway Impact** – All new development proposals should provide safe highway access to the appropriate highway standards as set out in the adopted Transport and Travel SPD (April 2024). The Council is keen to encourage the increased use of sustainable modes of transport. Where possible, proposals for new tourism and leisure developments should be accessible by sustainable modes of transport including public transport, cycling, and walking. Where new parking provision is to be provided, this will need to be sensitively integrated into the scheme to ensure that the visual impact is kept to a minimum and in line with Green Belt policy.
- **Agricultural Land Quality** – The Borough has a significant amount of the best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. It is unlikely that new low impact rural tourism and leisure proposals (e.g., camp or glamping sites) would result in the permanent sterilisation of BMV agricultural land. However, there may be instances where such proposals seek to include more permanent elements such as access roads or amenity buildings etc. Where such ancillary infrastructure is required, applicants should seek to protect the BMV agricultural land by utilising existing or temporary buildings or providing temporary forms of access tracks.
- **Amenity** – Changes in the use of land can have significant impacts on the amenity of local residents and any existing adjoining uses, particularly in rural areas. New tourism and leisure related developments should therefore be designed in such a way so that they are in harmony with the local natural and built environment.
- **Biodiversity** – Development should protect and enhance the quality of the Borough's natural resources including biodiversity in line with Local Plan policies LPA02: Development Principles and LPC06: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation. Biodiversity Net Gain became mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (added by the Environment Act 2021) for planning applications submitted after February

2024. Further information can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance⁶.

- **Flood Risk** – Tourism and leisure developments could include camp and glamping sites, barn conversions for holiday lets, wedding venues with overnight accommodation etc., which are considered to be highly vulnerable development. Therefore, new development should be directed away from those areas which are at high risk of flooding.
- **Heritage** – St Helens has a rich and diverse cultural heritage which is widely spread throughout the Borough. Any development should adhere to Local Plan Policy LPC11: Historic Environment.
- **Landscape** – The landscape impact of new development proposals should form an early part of design considerations and include elements such as location, scale, orientation as well as new and existing landscaping. Proposals should seek to complement and enhance key landscape features including long views and open spaces.
- **Local Character** – New tourism and leisure proposals should be sympathetic to the local character and contribute to maintaining a strong sense of place.

Use of Local Suppliers, Training and Education

- 3.36 The St Helens Inclusive Growth Strategy⁷ aims to increase economic activity. The Council will seek to achieve this by helping applicants and the end users of suitable development schemes, for example by directing them to local recruitment services and apprenticeship schemes, and to sources of information on local suppliers of goods and services. Part 11 of Local Plan Policy LPA03 states:

Policy LPA03: A Strong and Sustainable Economy (Part 11)

The Council will support the use of local suppliers of goods and services and the creation of apprenticeships and training opportunities for local people in accordance with the requirements of the Local Economy Supplementary Planning Document.

Employment and Skills Statement

- 3.37 A Local Employment and Skills Statement will be required to be submitted in association with certain types of development. The thresholds are set out below in Table 3.2. If, for example, the company developing already has an

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain>

⁷ <https://sthelens.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s145928/Appendix%20B.pdf>

appropriate training regime in place, supporting information to demonstrate the company's existing regime will need to be submitted.

3.38 The thresholds are as follows:

- Commercial floorspace – 1,000m² and over or a site area of 1 hectare (ha) or more.
- Residential developments – 30 units and over.

Use Class	Development	Threshold for Local Employment and Skills Statement	Scope of Local Employment and Skills Statement
C3 C4	Residential – including new build houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and co-living developments	30+ dwellings	Construction phase
B2 B8 C1 C2 C2a E(g)	Commercial (General industry & storage and distribution) Hotels Residential institutions Secure residential institutions i) office ii) the research and development of products or processes or iii) any industrial process, (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area) Learning and non-residential institutions	Building(s) of 1,000m ² or more or Site area of 1ha or more	Construction phase and end use occupation

Use Class	Development	Threshold for Local Employment and Skills Statement	Scope of Local Employment and Skills Statement
F1	Local Community Uses		
F2	Such as cinemas, theatres etc.		
Sui Generis			

Table 3.2: Thresholds for a Local Employment and Skills Statement requirement

- 3.39 Applicants are recommended to engage in pre-application discussions with the Council in order to determine the individual requirements for, and the content of, an Employment and Skills Statement.

Content of Local Employment and Skills Statements

- 3.40 The requirement for the statement will be included on the Council's validation checklist when it is next revised. Applicants must also complete the template in Appendix D and submit this with their application. This provides all the key background factual information associated with the development. The statement should take account of all sub-contractors and suppliers that are part of the development and be a means of monitoring the impact of each development on residents and local business.
- 3.41 The scope of the statement and measures proposed should be proportionate to the scale of the development and be individually tailored to ensure that the skills and employment opportunities are provided at the right time to benefit both the developer and local residents. Early engagement with the Council's Employment and Skills Team is recommended. The statement should include a reporting schedule and detail meetings to be undertaken with the Council, where necessary, with the frequency of such meetings dependant on the duration of the development.

How will it be implemented?

- 3.42 As much as possible, social value should be delivered through direct interventions rather than providing a financial contribution. This is because

financial contributions are more likely to divert investment or contributions from elsewhere.

- 3.43 Social value commitments should be relevant to the development and community in question. Responsible business practices which are not directly relevant to the development should not form part of responses.
- 3.44 The Local Employment and Skills Statement should be submitted with the planning application. Once the content of the statement has been agreed as part of the consideration of the planning application, it will usually be possible to control its implementation via a planning condition or a planning obligation under a Section 106 Agreement, the signing of which will coincide with the grant of planning permission.

Travel Plans

- 3.45 Part 4 of Policy LPA06: Transport and Travel of the Local Plan states:

Policy LPA06: Transport and Travel (Part 4)

To minimise air and noise pollution and carbon emissions, non-residential forms of development that would generate a significant amount of transport movement by employees or visitors must be supported by suitably formulated Travel Plans. Conditions and/or legal agreements will be used to ensure that Travel Plans submitted in such cases are fully implemented and monitored.

- 3.46 A travel plan is a package of practical measures aimed at effectively managing the long-term transport and travel needs of a site or organisation with the specific aim of improving access to the site by all modes of travel. A successful travel plan will improve travel choice, reduce the impacts of transport on the local environment and increase the overall accessibility of the site. A travel plan can address journeys to and from work and also business travel, fleet management, visitor's arrangements and deliveries. Each travel plan is tailored to the specific needs and characteristics of the site and/or organisation.
- 3.47 The Council can provide further advice on travel plan, including advising on appropriate actions and how to monitor the implementation and success of the travel plan. For further information, contact the Case Officer and visit: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/4390/Transport-development-management>.

4. Support and Advice Available for Local Businesses (including relevant contacts)

Pre-Application Advice

- 4.1 It is advised that applicants engage in pre-application enquiries with the Council's Development Control department to determine what requirements a potential planning application would require as early as possible, including the requirement for a Local Employment and Skills Statement. As part of this process, an applicant could request a meeting, discussion, site visit and letter (dependant on the scale of proposed development). Internal consultation will be carried out with the Council's relevant departments to establish what information and details would be required to ensure a policy compliant acceptable development.
- 4.2 Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. For further details a pre-application form and relevant charging schedule can be found on the Council's website here: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/3481/Your-guide-to-planning-building-Control>.

Building Control

- 4.3 For any construction project, the Council's Building Control team will be happy to advise you on what is required and what to do if an application is needed, based on a wealth of plan checking and site experience. The team of fully qualified Building Control Surveyors have a wealth of local knowledge and can advise on any type of application.
- 4.4 A dedicated Technical Support Team can offer advice on whether the work you are thinking of carrying out requires permission, the fees that may be involved or any other aspect of Building Control.
- 4.5 Further information about St Helens Borough Council's Building Control team can be found on the following web page: <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/buildingcontrol> and they can be contacted by calling: 01744 676 240 or 01744 676 242.

Ways to Work

- 4.6 Ways to Work is the Borough's largest employment support programme, delivered across the Liverpool City Region since 2016, with the St Helens Borough element delivered by the Council.
- 4.7 It is a successful employment and skills programme that looks to secure job and training opportunities for some of the hardest to reach groups of adults in the Borough. Ways to Work can act as a single point of contact for the employer allowing for seamless, joined up working across local and Liverpool City Region partners.
- 4.8 It is currently funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and has registered and worked with over 3,000 residents since its inception in 2016, helping over 1,200 people into employment, training and education.
- 4.9 The Ways to Work Centres in St Helens and Earlestown enable the co-location of Council staff with key strategic local partners, in highly visible and accessible locations, allowing staff from the Council's Ways to Work programme to work alongside career coaches from Career Connect and Jobcentre Plus advisers to offer mentoring, coaching, advice and guidance, and job search support. Ways to Work should be the first point of contact for all recruitment and training discussions in any submitted employment plan.
- 4.10 For more information on what the Ways to Work Team can provide and offer you, whether you are a business, employer, or potential employee, along with various funding streams and available grants, please visit <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/waystowork> for more information. Further information on potential training providers and education facilities are provided in Appendix B.
- 4.11 It is also encouraged that the Unite Construction Charter is adhered to on all major sites in order to achieve the highest standards in respect of direct employment status, health and safety, standards of work, apprenticeship training and the implementation of appropriate nationally agreed terms and conditions of employment.

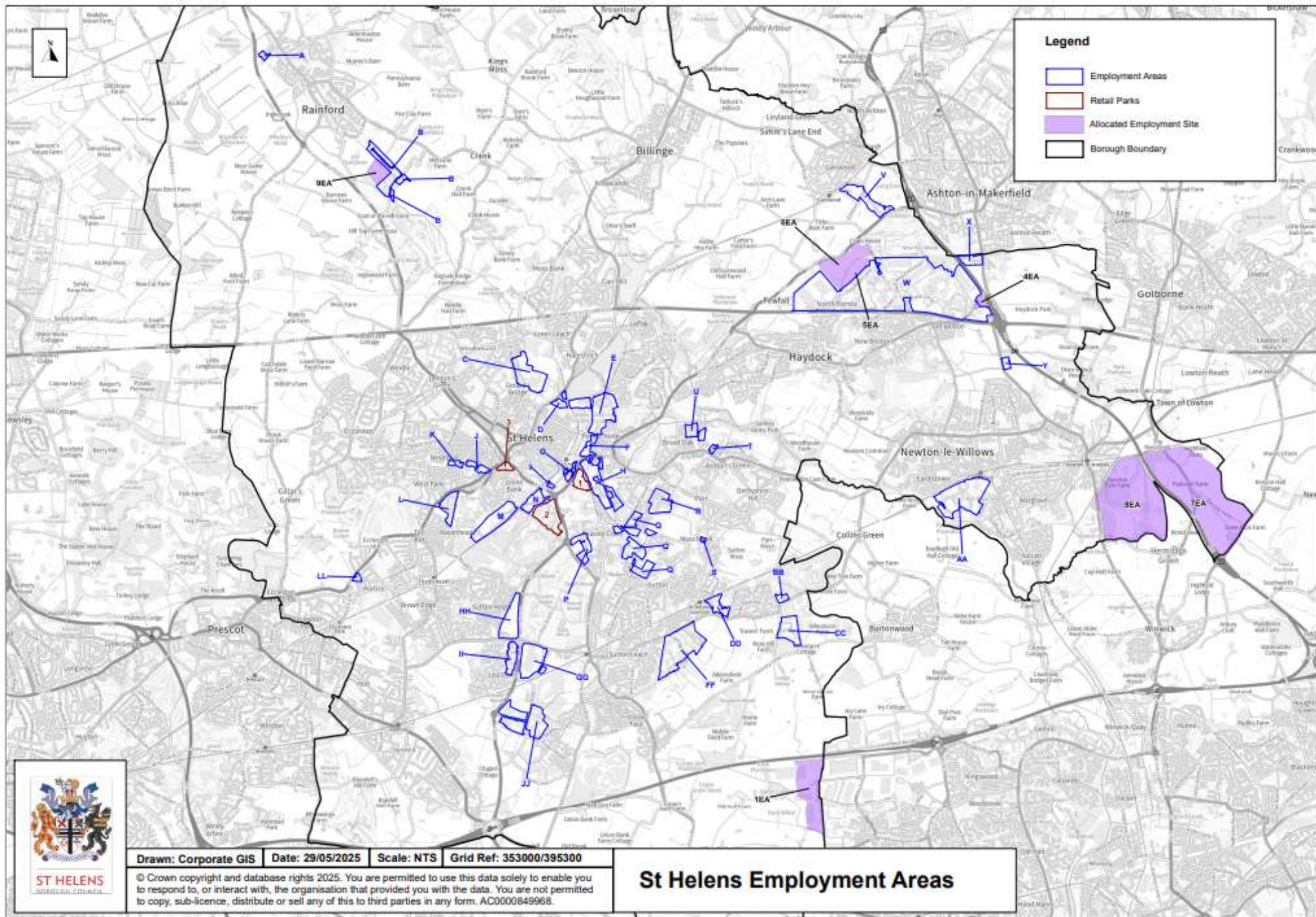
Appendix A: Existing Employment Areas

This list shows existing employment areas as referred to in Policy LPA03 'A Strong and Sustainable Economy' of the Local Plan and Figure 1.1 (which is duplicated below in a larger format).

It should be noted that there are also other existing employment areas within the borough and any scheme for the re-development, re-use or change of use of these sites / buildings would also need to take account of Policy LPA03 of the Local Plan.

Employment Area	Reference
Lords Fold Industrial Estate	A
Millbrook Business Centre	B
Mill Lane Industrial Estate	B
Rainford Industrial Estate	B
Pilkington Works, Cowley Hill	C
Gerard's Park	D
Pocket Nook	E
Site at Corporation Street	F
Site at Parr Street / Corporation Street	G
Westside Industrial Estate / Kellerer Court	H
Chalon Way Industrial Estate	I
Eccleston Street Industrial Estate	J
Knowsley Road Industrial Park	K
Alexandra Business Park	L
Ravenhead Road Industrial Estate	M
Ravenhead Works	N
Sherdley Road Industrial Estate and Business Park	P
Baxters Lane Industrial Estate	Q
Sutton Oak Drive Industrial Estate	Q
Sutton Road Industrial Area	Q
Parr Industrial Estate	R
Site at Nook Lane	S
Moorfoot Road Industrial Estate	T
Delta Road Industrial Estate	U
Garswood Industrial Estate	V
Haydock Industrial Estate	W
The Parks	X
Woodlands Industrial Estate	Y
Sankey Valley Industrial Estate	AA

Bold Business Centre	BB
Bold Industrial Estate	CC
Normans Road Industrial Estate	DD
Reginald Road Industrial Park / Abbotsfield Road Industrial Park	FF
Co-op Distribution Centre	GG
Linkway Distribution Centre	HH
Mere Grange	II
Lea Green Business Park / Industrial Estate	JJ
St Helens Road	LL



Appendix B: Training Providers

Training Providers

Company	Training	Contact	Other Information
Adult Community Learning (ACL)	Maths, English, Digital Skills, Personal Development, Childcare, First Aid, Positive Life workshops	Tel: 01744 677671 / 01744 677328 / 07702 959814 Email: adultlearning@sthelens.gov.uk	All courses are free. However, there may be a waiting list
Princes Trust	Confidence building, residential and day courses. Online courses Graphic Design, media, music etc	Caroline Murphy Tel: 07842027756 Phil Seddon Tel: 07719056242 Email: carolinemurphy@merseyfire.gov.uk Email: explore.enquiriesliverpool@princes-trust.org.uk	Courses are offered up to age of 25 years. These are based In Prescot, bursaries for lunch and travel are available.
St Helens Wellbeing service	Volunteering, healthy eating, social wellbeing, keeping active, stop smoking, Mental health	Tel: 01744 371111 Email: chcp.sthelens@nhs.net	A referral form needs to be completed for this training.
Starting Point	Various short courses, employability, mental health, and sector specific	Tel: 01744 698800 Email: info@thestartingpoint.org	Provides free and impartial advice and guidance.
Torus Foundation	Employability skills, Volunteering, Basic skills	Tel: 03001235809 Email: info@torusfoundation.org.uk	For Torus residents

Groundworks	Traineeships	Sophie Paton 07801970212 Email: Sophie.Paton@groundwork.org.uk Laura Swindell 07715629928 Laura.swindell@groundwork.org.uk	Free 16-week programme for 16-18 years
The Learning Foundry	Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Short Courses	Yaz Milne Tel: 07814910985 Email: Yaz.Milne@thelearningfoundry.co.uk	Short courses age 19+ Apprenticeships age 16+
Waterside Training	Mechanical and Electrical engineering apprenticeships Technical Training	Tel: 01744 616837 Email: info@waterside-training.co.uk	From 24-48 months depending on the course.
Back to Work	Construction, (CSCS) Contact Centres, Digital skills, LGV Driver, Warehouse, Customer Service	Sam Freakes Tel: 07970 391421 Email: sam.freakes@b2wcompletetraining.com Web: www.b2wcompletetraining.com	Age 19+
The Growth Company (Skills company)	Various work-based courses and apprenticeships	Annie Rice Tel: 01744 750467 Email: ann.rice@gceducationandskills.ac.uk	Age 16-18 or up to age 25 with an EHCP
Career Connect	Employment, education, and training support for young people who are NEET	Ste Bedson Tel: 07805 750069 Email: st.helens@careerconnect.org.uk	Age 16-19 or up to age 25 with an EHCP

Total Futures Ltd	Retrofit Assessor, Fibre Engineer	Garry Brown Email: garry.brown@totalfutures.co.uk Starr Cromwell Email Starr.cromwell@kickstart2employment.co.uk Tel: 01744 733711	Fully funded courses, 4-week programmes
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Education Facilities

Carmel College		Tel: 01744 452 200 Fax: 01744 452 300 Email: info@carmel.ac.uk	Large amount of course 16-18
St Helens College	Employment, education and training support for young people, including STEM	St Helens College Water Street WA10 1PP Paula Haigh - Paula Haigh PHaigh@sthelens.ac.uk Switchboard: 01744 733766	Large amount of courses, including construction and STEM 16-18

Appendix C: Information for Viability Assessments

Viability assessments should follow the Government's recommended approach to assessing viability as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance. They should consist of the following:

Stage 1 - Valuation of Site Based on Current Use

- Current site layout plan
- Site Area
- Floor areas by building and use (including vacant accommodation)
- Area of any surplus land
- Details of any current leases (floor areas, rents, term etc)
- Valuation report of the site and buildings based on the current use prepared by a suitably qualified practitioner
- Evidence of attempts to market/sell/let the site (as set out in paragraph 3.6)
- Period vacant

Stage 2 - Viability Appraisal Based on Redevelopment for Employment Uses

- Proposed site layout plan
- Breakdown of floor space by use
- Specification considered
- Valuation report for completed units including comparable evidence and details of incentives
- Current build costs
- Abnormal development costs and breakdown
- Site investigation report with summary recommendations and costs
- Copy of financial appraisal in summary and detail including a projection of the resulting income from the development and its anticipated profit margin

Stage 3 - Viability Appraisal Based on Planning Permission Being Sought

- Proposed site layout plan
- Breakdown of commercial floor space by use
- If for residential – number of dwellings with schedule of housing mix and type

- Valuation report for completed units including comparable evidence and details of incentives - residential and commercial
- Current build costs - breakdown between uses
- Abnormal development costs and breakdown
- Site investigation report with summary recommendations and costs
- Copy of financial appraisal in summary and detail including a projection of the resulting income from the development and its anticipated profit margin
- Statement confirming that all reasonable avenues to provide a policy compliant development have been exhausted

Insufficient or poorly evidenced viability information will not be accepted by the Council. As a minimum, this is likely to slow down the discussion process and reduce the quality of the advice that the Council's officers can provide. If a submitted viability assessment does not have the required outputs or sections required, the application may not be validated until the requested information is provided to the Council.

Appendix D: Local Employment and Skills Statement Template

This template needs to be completed by the applicant and submitted with the Planning Application:

St Helens Borough Council – Local Employment and Skills Statement	
Site:	
Landowner/developer:	
Proposal:	
Gross Development Value of Scheme:	
Opportunities at Construction Phase:	The number of jobs (including the labour forecasting tool if available): Type of jobs: Phasing and Timescale:
Opportunities at Occupation Phase:	The number of jobs (including the labour forecasting tool if available): Type of jobs: Phasing and Timescale:
Contact Details:	
Please tick if you are happy that this Statement can be shared with Jobcentre Plus.	
FUTURE WORKFORCE (young people)	Indicative Commitment
Working Days committed from business volunteers to support careers education and information and/curriculum development in schools and colleges in St Helens per year.	
Number of work experience placements (14-16 years, 17-19years and 19years +) based on a placement being one week at St Helens schools and colleges.	
Number of graduate internships per year for graduates living in St Helens.	

INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE	
Number of employment opportunities offered to St Helens residents that are unemployed or at a disadvantage (e.g., ex-offenders).	
Number of work placements or trails offered to unemployed St Helens residents.	
Working days committed from business volunteers to mentor NEET (not in education, employment, or training) young people 16–18-year-olds.	
SKILLED AND PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE	
Number of apprenticeships	
Commitment to workforce planning and investment in training of employees	
Investment in Leadership Skills	
COMMUNITY BENEFITS	
Projects driven by local communities	
Procurement and commissioning of local small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises/third sector organisations	
Construction Skills Certificate Schemes	
Support with transport, childcare and work equipment	
OTHER BENEFITS	
Estimated number of jobs in the wider economy (i.e., beyond the construction and end use of the scheme) as a direct or indirect consequence of the proposal including broad sectors in which jobs would be created.	
Estimated amount of income from the proposed scheme from Council Tax and Business Rates.	
Estimated value of local supply opportunities for local businesses because of the development. Include details of the sectors that these opportunities support.	
Details of accreditation with any employment and business charter (such as Good Business Charter) that demonstrates that the developer and/or end occupant are good employers.	