

Eccleston Works, St. Helens Development Brief

October 2008



Reproduced from the 2004 Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. LA100018360



St.Helens Council

ECCLESTON WORKS, ST HELENS
DEVELOPMENT BRIEF

Contents

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Vision and Objectives**
- 3 Site and Surroundings**
- 4 Planning Policy**
- 5 Sustainable Development**
- 6 Design Principles**
- 7 Landscape Principles, Open Space and Recreation**
- 8 Highways, Sustainable Transport and Accessibility**
- 9 Environmental Issues and Ecology**
- 10 Affordable Housing**
- 11 Bringing Forward Development Proposals**

Figures

- 1.1 Site Location**
- 1.2 Eccleston Works, 1937**
- 1.3 Eccleston Works, 1956**
- 1.4 Eccleston Works, 1977 – 2007 (Prior to Demolition)**
- 3.1 Site Map**
- 3.2 Site Features**
- 3.3 Accessibility**
- 3.4 Land Use Character Map**
- 3.5 Sustainability Appraisal**
- 3.6 Open Space Provision**
- 6.1 Site Section from South to North**
- 6.2 Urban Grain Plan**
- 6.3 Key Site Constraints**
- 6.4 Section Through Embankment Between Southern and Main Site Areas**
- 6.5 Section through retaining wall to rear of properties on The Avenue**
- 6.6 Section through embankment to Millfields at north west corner of Main Site**
- 6.7 Existing route of watercourse piped under the site**
- 6.8 Site Opportunities**
- 6.9 Possible utilisation of the embankment as first floor gardens and terraces**
- 6.10 Strategic masterplan**
- 7.1 Landscape Framework**
- 7.2 Conceptual Sketch of Landscape Boulevard**
- 11.1 Compensatory Employment Provision – Cowley Hill**

Images

- 3.1 Internal Embankment**
- 3.2 Millfields Embankment**
- 3.3 Retaining wall to the SW adjoining The Avenue**
- 3.4 Retaining wall to the SW adjoining The Avenue**
- 3.5 Demolished Office Block**
- 3.6 Demolished Factory Buildings**
- 3.7 Demolished Utility/Service Buildings along Northern Boundary**
- 3.8 Eccleston Social Club**
- 3.9 Treed Boundary to the South**
- 3.10 Sculptural Moulded Panel**

- 6.1 View along Holme Road from Millfields towards Home Farm**
- 6.2 Holme Road retaining wall**
- 6.3 Southern Site view to west**
- 6.4 – 6.5 Millfields rises from west to east to finish level with site at Holme Road**
- 6.6 – 6.7 Contemporary use of scale to add visual interest**
- 6.8 – 6.11 Examples of Existing development adjacent to the site**
- 6.12 Examples of contemporary residential development**

Appendices

- A Planning Policy Context**

1 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 The Eccleston Works site lies 3km to the west of St Helens town centre (Figure 1.1). It was developed on agricultural land in 1929/1930, by Pilkington Brothers Limited and the Triplex Safety Glass Company. Figure 1.2 illustrates the extent of its development around 1937. Over the years it was subject to two phases of extension as shown in Figures 1.3 and 1.4. The buildings and structures on site were demolished in early 2008.

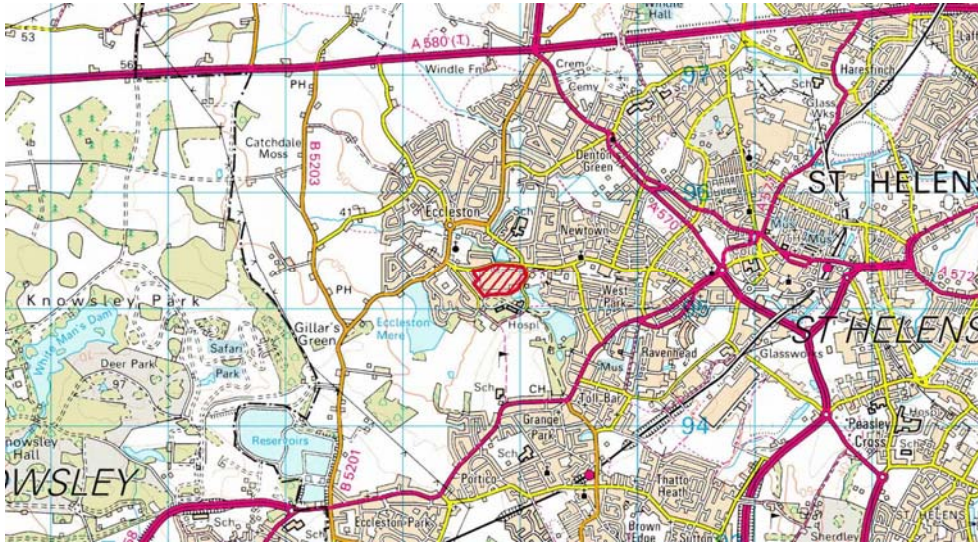


Figure 1.1: Site Location

- 1.2 Aside from a brief period during World War II between 1940 - 1944 when the factory was used for the production of munitions, the site was in constant use for the manufacture of safety glass and a range of assembly operations associated with the automotive industry.
- 1.3 In recent years, the scale and extent of operations at the site gradually declined, as Pilkington Glass Ltd sought to restructure its operations in order to secure the long-term future of the business and its presence within St Helens.

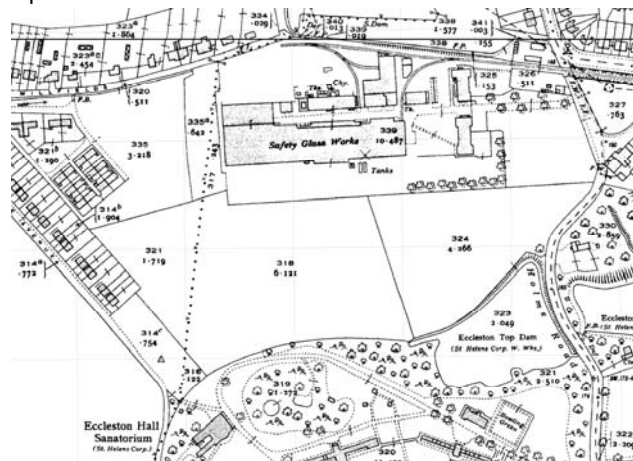


Figure 1.2: Eccleston Works, 1937

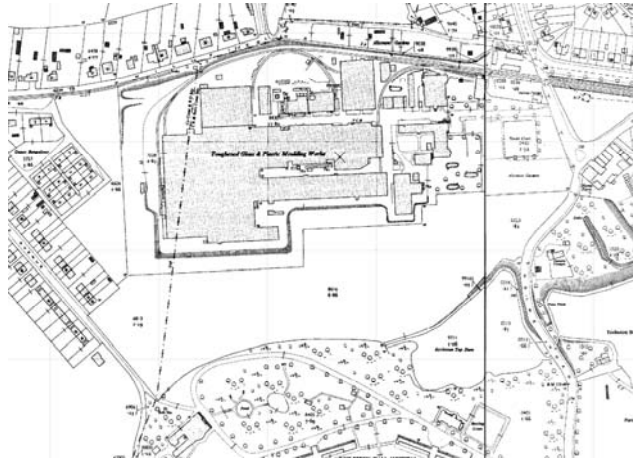


Figure 1.3: Eccleston Works, 1956

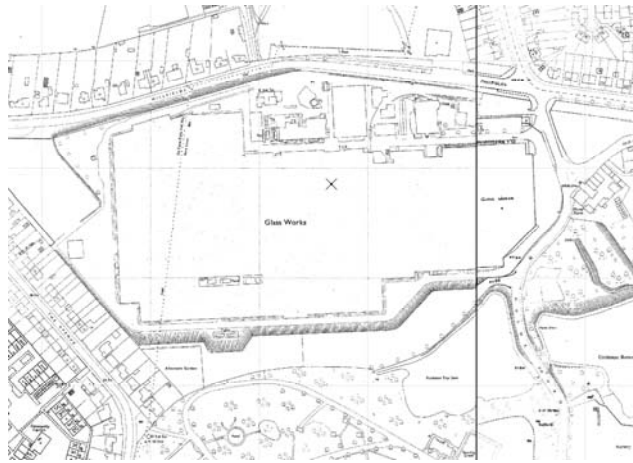


Figure 1.4: Eccleston Works, 1977 – 2007 (Prior to Demolition)

1.4 As part of this restructuring programme, Pilkington Glass Ltd announced cessation of operations at the Eccleston Works site, with remaining activities being consolidated and relocated to alternative locations within St Helens and across the UK. Employees have been redeployed to other Pilkington sites in St Helens. This has presented a development opportunity at the Eccleston Works site.

Development Opportunities

1.5 The most appropriate alternative use for the site is residential development comprising of a mix of housing types, tenures and sizes to diversify and expand the housing offer of the Eccleston ward and the wider borough.

1.6 Provision of the following should be accounted for in the design of the proposal:

- Affordable housing at a level of 35%. Of this 35%, 62.5% will be provided through shared ownership housing and 37.5% through social rented housing, delivered in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL).

- The on-site retention of the Eccleston Social Club facility, which provides valuable leisure and social facilities for the local community
- The option to develop an on-site health care facility comprising a GP surgery and pharmacy, and
- Publicly accessible open space, children’s play facilities and linkages to existing adjacent open space
- A high quality and contemporary form of development that acts as a benchmark for future housing development across the Borough.

1.7 In reaction to the lost employment opportunity, a compensatory employment package at an alternative location at Cowley Hill, St Helens is also a necessity of any development proposal (see Section 11).

Purpose of the Development Brief

1.8 In July 2008 the Council was awarded Growth Point status in partnership with Halton and Warrington. Growth Point will accelerate and increase housing delivery targets between 2008 – 2016. An important requirement of Growth Point status is to ensure that high standards of design and appropriate creative and cultural opportunities are realised. Growth Points are encouraged to be exemplars of sustainable development, ensuring adequate service provision and reducing the carbon footprint of new housing. In order to encourage and facilitate the additional requirement, the Council will promote the preparation of a series of Development Briefs on sites suitable for residential development.

1.9 The purpose of this Development Brief, herein referred to as ‘the Brief’, is to establish development principles for the site, providing clear guidance to potential developers on how the site should be developed, adding to the more general policies of the St Helens Council Unitary Development Plan (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 site constraints and opportunities.

2 Vision

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

'To create a mixed and inclusive residential development, based upon the principles of sustainability and high quality urban design, which integrates with, and complements and enhances the existing neighbourhood of Eccleston without significantly harming the Borough's supply of employment land'

2.2 To deliver this overall vision a number of specific key objectives, which are referred to throughout the Brief, need to be met. Prospective developers are required to demonstrate how their proposals accord with these key objectives. Redevelopment of the site will be successful if it:

KO1 Introduces a mix of housing in terms of size and type, taking account of the Council's 2006 Housing Needs Assessment and the residential objectives of the St Helens City Growth Strategy.

KO2 Leads to the delivery of employment opportunities elsewhere in St Helens.

KO3 Provides new affordable homes for local people as part of an inclusive development.

KO4 Achieves a landscape framework that respects and enhances the character of the surrounding area, as detailed within the St Helens Landscape Character Assessment (2006).

KO5 Secures high quality, contemporary design and ensures that the layout, design and built development reflect the principles of sustainability and energy efficiency.

KO6 Contributes to the Council's Public Art Strategy.

KO7 Maximises connectivity and linkages between the site, the local area and wider services and facilities.

KO8 Makes the site easy to access by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, whilst reducing reliance on the private car.

KO9 Protects and encourages wildlife and creates green corridors through the site.

KO10 Enhances the provision of community facilities through replacement of Eccleston Social Club and inclusion of the option for a health care facility.

KO11 Provides safe, secure and good quality publicly accessible play and amenity spaces.

KO12 Provides a development that seeks to create an attractive and coherent environment when viewed from both within and outside the site.

KO13 Incorporates on-site water management and recycling facilities.

KO14 Seeks to reduce carbon emissions.

3 Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 The site measures 10.1Ha in extent, it is bounded by Millfields Road to the north, Holme Road to the east, the grounds of Eccleston Hall to the south and residential development on Brentwood Close and The Avenue to the west (Figure 3.1).

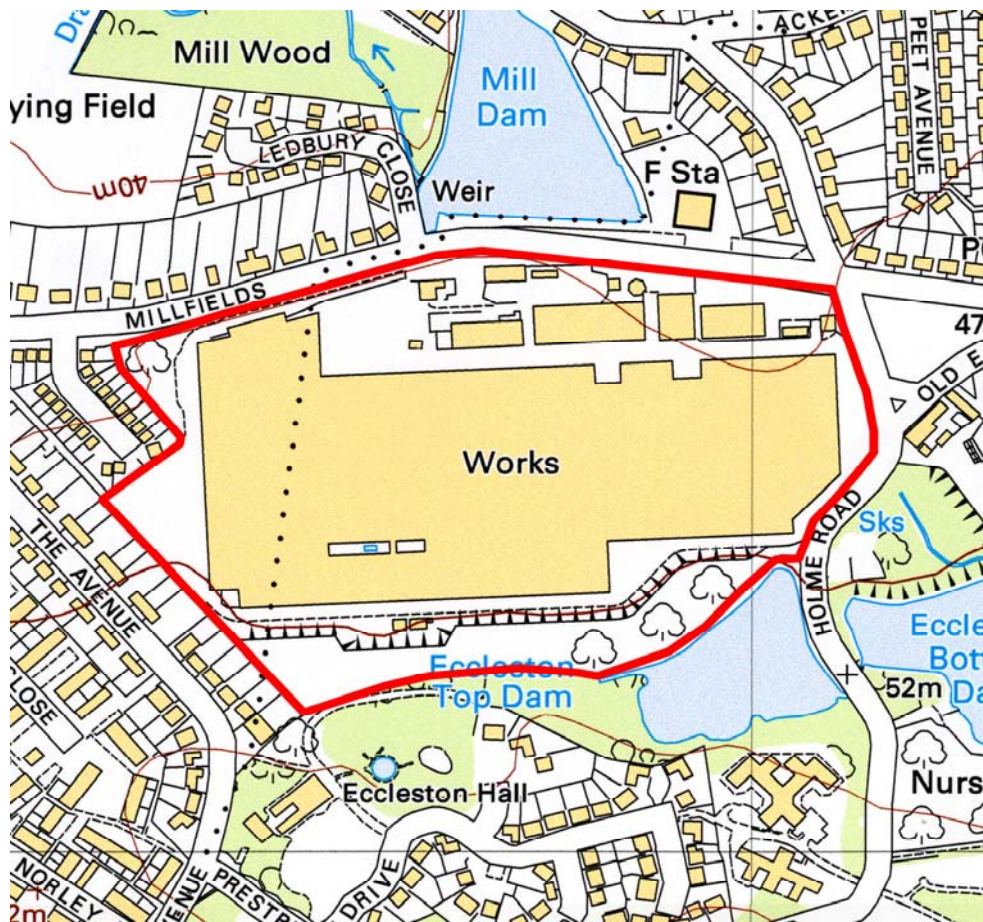


Figure 3.1: Site Plan (Prior to Demolition)

Site Features

Access

- 3.2 There are two access points, both off Holme Road, one to the northeast providing access to the main factory area and one to the southeast providing access to a car park (Figure 3.2). Both access points operate as priority junctions.

Topography

- 3.3 A 5.5m high embankment bisects the site from east to west (Image 3.1). This creates a distinct change in level between the former factory complex platform, which has an area of 9.1Ha, and the upper car park platform, which has an area of 1.0Ha.

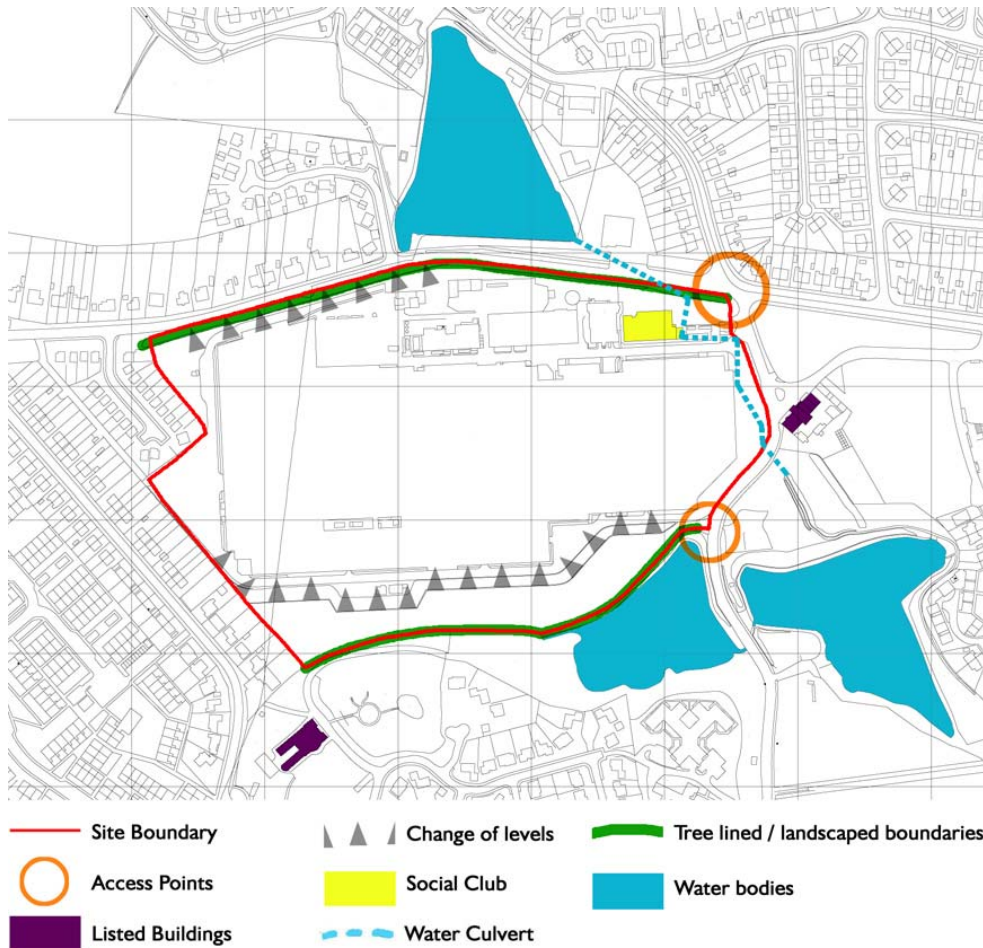


Figure 3.2: Site Features

3.4 Along the frontage of the site onto Millfields Road an embankment stretches from Ledbury Close (on the opposite side of Millfields Road) to Brentwood Close. This embankment rises from approximately 0.5m – 3.0m (Image 3.2).



Image 3.1: Internal Embankment



Image 3.2: Millfields Embankment



Image 3.3 and 3.4: Retaining wall to the south west adjoining The Avenue

- 3.5 A 5m retaining wall on the south west boundary separates the site from residential development on The Avenue (Images 3.3 and 3.4).

Built Environment

- 3.6 Prior to demolition operations, the site comprised of two storey office buildings, three storey factory buildings, single storey utility/storage/service buildings and areas of hard standing and car parking (Images 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7).



Image 3.5: Demolished Office Block



Image 3.6: Demolished Factory Building

- 3.7 The only remaining building is the Eccleston Social Club that stands at the north east corner of the site (Image 3.8).



Image 3.7: Demolished Utility Buildings



Image 3.8: Eccleston Social Club

Contamination

- 3.8 Initial investigations into contamination at the site identified several contamination hotspots. These hotspots have now been removed as part of demolition and remediation works.

Landscape Character

- 3.9 The site has a distinct built character with very few internal areas of open green space or landscaped planting. The steep embankment that splits the site (Image 3.1) provides the only significant area of open green space (0.35Ha). However, the visual and operational impact of the site on the adjacent residential properties and the surrounding area is reduced by established treed boundaries to the north (Image 3.2), south (Image 3.9) and west (Image 3.4) that restrict views into and out of the site.
- 3.10 Most of the trees towards the north of the site have been planted as an amenity feature. The key components in this vicinity comprise a long row of mixed deciduous and evergreen mature tree planting fronting onto Millfields Road, and a row of mature poplars along the internal road. To the south of the site, most of the trees are associated with the edges of the upper car park. In particular, there is a row of mature poplars along the edge of the site by Eccleston Top Dam. The rest of the trees fringing the upper car park are self seeded, young to semi-mature trees of mixed deciduous species. In addition, there is a group of coppiced trees to the west of the site by Brentwood Close and a number of individual trees, or trees within the groups, of particular note. These include two Beech trees to the east of the site by Holme Road, an Oak tree and two Elm trees around the upper car park and a young Oak.
- 3.11 The woodlands to the immediate south of the site are covered by Tree Preservation Order reference 7/12. This woodland is of particular significance in defining the character of the area as it is woodland associated with the historic core of the neighbourhood around the listed Eccleston Hall.



Image 3.9: Treed Boundary to the South

Archaeology and Heritage

- 3.12 None of the buildings on the site are listed or of conservation value. The Merseyside Archaeological Service has indicated that there is no known evidence of archaeology on the site and that the probability of its presence is limited by virtue of agricultural use prior to its development in 1929/30 and the likelihood that surviving archaeology on the site was destroyed during construction of the factory. However, within close proximity of the site, to the south, there are two listed buildings, Home Farm and Eccleston Hall (see Figure 3.2).

- 3.13 A sculptural concrete panel over the main office entrance must be replicated and incorporated into any development proposals as a lasting legacy of the industrial use of the site and its contribution to the Eccleston area and the town of St Helens (Image 3.10).



Image 3.10: Sculptural Moulded Panel

Infrastructure

- 3.14 The site is adequately served by gas, electricity, water, telecoms and drainage infrastructure.
- 3.15 A buried water culvert runs under the site to the northeast corner, linking Eccleston Bottom Dam and Mill Dam (Figure 3.2). This is over 2m deep and rarely experiences water flow.

Site Context

Accessibility

- 3.16 The site is located on Millfields Road, a direct route into St Helens town centre. It also lies within 500m of the B5201, a local distributor road that provides linkages with the strategic road network and the regional conurbations of Liverpool and Manchester, through connections to the A580 (T) which links with the M6 and M57 and the A57 that provides access to Liverpool.
- 3.17 Thatto Heath and St Helens Central train stations are approximately 2km from the site, these lie on the line between Wigan North Western and Liverpool Lime Street, stations that provide connections to the wider rail network. Eccleston Park rail station is also within a reasonable distance to the south west of the site.
- 3.18 Bus stops within 50m of the site on Knowsley Road provide access to St Helens town centre through services 35 and 35A, which operate at a frequency of every 20 minutes.

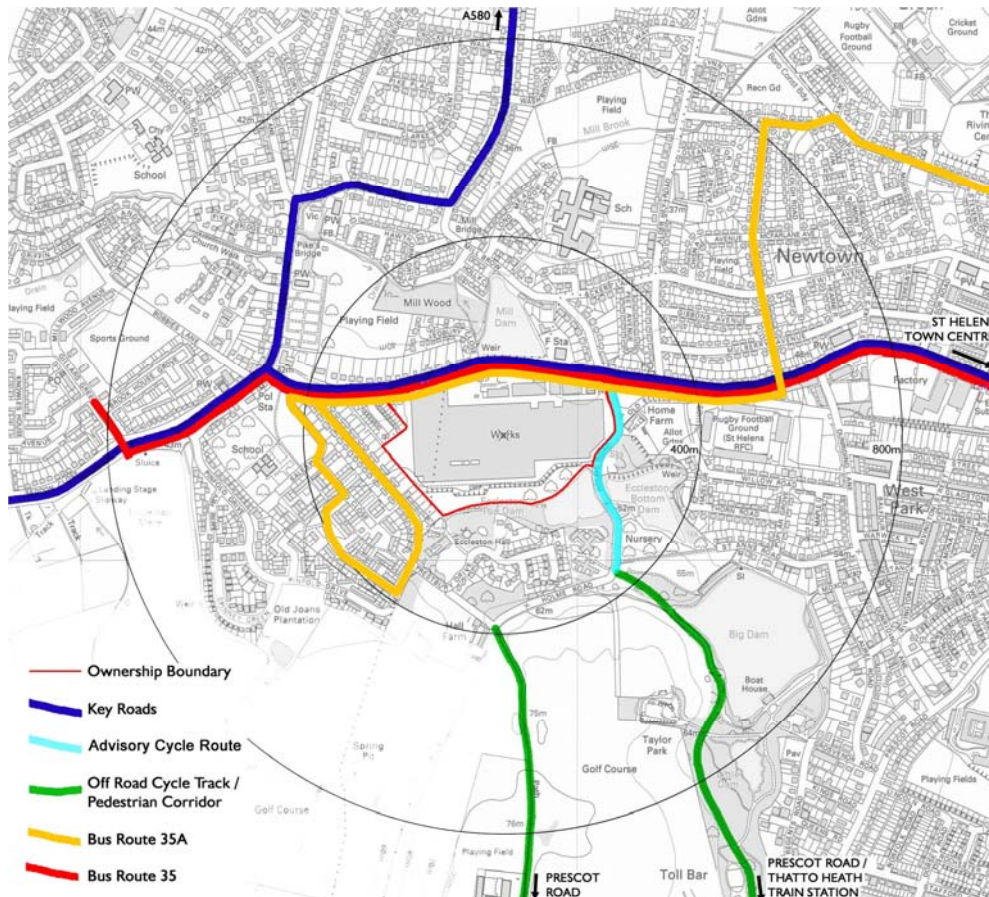


Figure 3.3: Accessibility

3.19 The site and the local area are not connected to the National Cycle Route but are connected to the local cycle network. Holme Road is an advisory cycle route that connects to the off road cycle routes to Prescot Road to the south (from which access to Thatto Heath train station can be gained), and to the north, to the advisory cycle routes to the surrounding residential areas and the town centre.

Surrounding Land Uses and Key Services

3.20 The site is located in a primarily residential area comprising predominantly of low-density, two storey dwellings on the urban/rural fringe. The area is interspersed with amenity open space, including watercourses and water bodies (Figure 3.4).

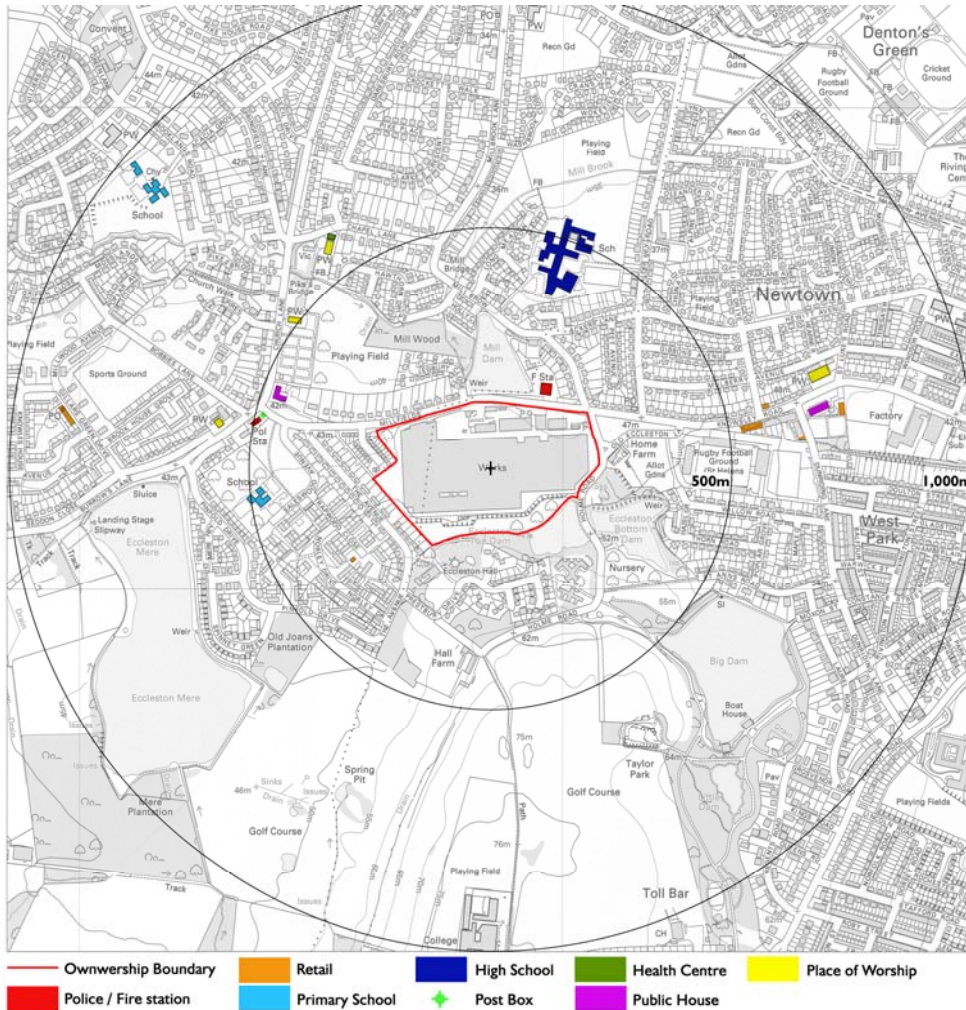


Figure 3.5: Location of Key Services

3.22 This service and facility provision correlates positively with the North West Regional Spatial Strategy sustainability checklist for development; fulfilling all three of the 'good practice' and four out of the five criteria required for 'best practice' categorisation.

Open Space and Natural Resources

3.23 There is a high level of publicly accessible open space and recreational facilities in the near vicinity of the site. These facilities include sports grounds, multi-functional play spaces, woodland areas and parks and water bodies for fishing and boating (Figure 3.6).

3.24 These are complemented by a number of privately accessible open spaces and recreational facilities, including: Eccleston Mere (the home of Pilkington Sailing Club), Bobby's Lane sports ground, a Golf Course and angling on Mill Dam, Eccleston Top Dam and Eccleston Bottom Dam.

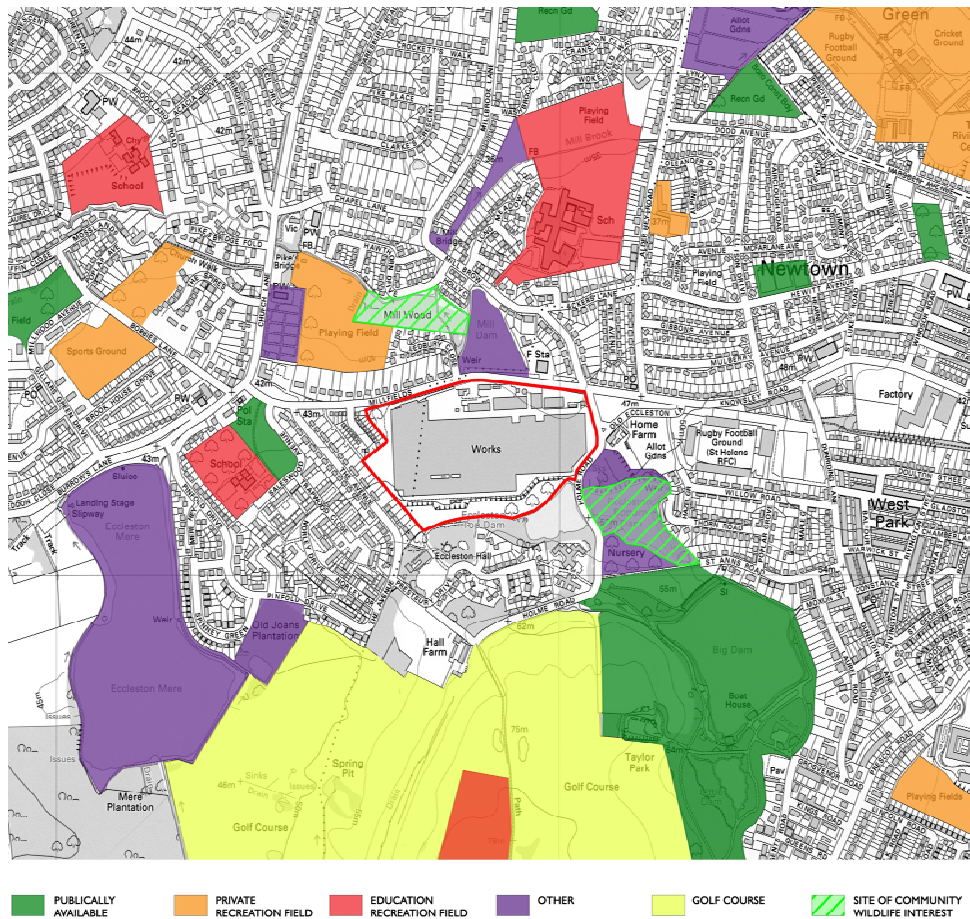


Figure 3.6: Open Space Provision

Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile

- 3.25 At the last census (2001) there were 7,900 people living within an 800m radius of the site. This population is composed of an age structure generally reflecting that of the wider St Helens authority area, but with a slightly lower percentage of people within the 0-29 age range and a slightly higher percentage of people within the 30-90+ age range. The mean age of the population in the area is 38 years.
- 3.26 The social structure of the population aged above 16 years in the area within 800m radius of the site and the wider St Helens authority area comprises of:

Social Grade	Local (within 800m)	St Helens
AB (higher and intermediate managerial / administrative / professional)	25%	17%
C1 (supervisory, clerical / junior managerial / administrative / professional)	30%	26%
C2 (skilled manual workers), 15% grade D (semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers)	13%	16%
D (semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers)	15%	22%
E (on state benefit/unemployed/lowest grade workers)	17%	19%

Source: Office of National Statistics

3.27 The housing stock, in terms of type and tenure, within the 800m radius and the wider St Helens authority area comprises:

Housing Type	Local (within 800m)	St Helens
Detached	23%	13%
Semi-detached	51%	48%
Terraced	19%	32%
Flat/Apartment	7%	7%

Source: Office of National Statistics

Housing Tenure	Local (within 800m)	St Helens
Owner occupied	79%	68%
Social rented	17%	24%
Privately rented	2%	4%
Rented 'other'	2%	4%

Source: Office of National Statistics

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)
- The Regional Spatial Strategy for North West England 2008
- 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.

PPG13: Transport

4.5 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.

PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment

4.6 The guidance in PPG15 requires that in assessing proposals for development in the vicinity of a listed building, local planning authorities will have regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural interest which it possess.

Development Plan

4.7 The Development Plan for St Helens comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy for North West England and the St Helens UDP.

Regional Planning Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for North West England

- 4.8 The RSS for North West England (adopted September 2008) is underpinned by several core development principles. These include a priority for the re-use of previously developed land, good design quality in new developments, management of travel demand and reducing emissions and adapting to climate change.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.9 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 site has no specific land use or policy designation. As identified in Section 3, it is a site in employment use located within a primarily residential area on the urban/rural fringe.
- 4.10 In recent years St Helens has experienced a substantial increase in the number of windfall sites coming forward for residential development, many of which are or have been in employment use.
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 In order to accord with Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (PPS3) Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are required to identify a five year rolling supply of deliverable housing sites as part of a strategy for the delivery of housing over a 15 year time horizon. Deliverable sites are those that are readily available for development in a location that would contribute to the creation of sustainable and mixed communities, upon which housing delivery can be realistically achieved within five years. Eccleston Works is such a deliverable site. It is considered that its redevelopment for residential use contributes to the managed provision of deliverable housing opportunities over the next five years, in accordance with the guidance in PPS3 and the general housing requirements set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 4.13 Furthermore, it is considered that redevelopment of the site for housing would deliver regeneration benefits for the Borough and the local area through contributing to strategic objective C4 of the St Helens City Growth Strategy. This seeks to secure St Helens as a 'residential locality of choice' through diversification of the residential offer of the Borough, with the intention of attracting new residents who will bring with them 'additional spending power, fresh perspectives, aspirations and demands and a new wave of entrepreneurial activity'. Redevelopment of the site would contribute to this objective through the provision of a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, in the highly popular residential environment of Eccleston. In addition, new social club facilities, the opportunity for the development of a doctor's surgery and pharmacy, and the establishment of publicly accessible open space, will all provide valuable new and improved facilities for the local area.
- 4.14 Importantly however, whilst the principle of redevelopment of the site for alternative uses is considered acceptable, the Council are also mindful of the implications associated with the loss of employment land. Consequently, any development proposal is required to include a compensatory employment package at Cowley Hill, St Helens, as outlined in section 11.

- 4.15 Appendix A contains details of the other specific RSS, UDP policies and supplementary planning documents that will influence development proposals.

Emerging Local Development Framework

- 4.16 The Council is currently preparing its publication draft of the Core Strategy, which outlines a planning vision for St Helens until 2025. The document will be available for representations early in 2009. Representations made will be considered before submission of the document to the Government in Summer 2009. Once adopted it will partly replace the current St Helens Unitary Development Plan 1998.

5 Sustainable Development

Key Objectives being met: KO5, KO7, KO8, KO9 and KO14

- 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 Developers will be required to address the following:
- 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
 - Residential development to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 (The Council aspires to 100% of housing at level 3).
 - Utilisation of sustainable design and construction techniques for non-residential development, to meet the requirements of a BREEAM (BRE Environmental Assessment Method) standard of 'very good'.
 - Bio-climatic design, including the need to take advantage of solar heat and light for heating, lighting and ventilation
 - Research the opportunities for use of low carbon equipment to contribute to a reduction in CO2 emissions
 - The management of water on-site through effective building design and water storage measures (such as greywater recycling) and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS). Where SUDS are proposed, which could include measures such as permeable surfaces, water butts and water meters, it is recommended that the developer contact the Council on matters of design and adoption.
 - 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 within the vicinity of the social club or health centre.
 - 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.
 - Improved access to, and quality of, public transport infrastructure
 - The creation of a wildlife-rich living and working environment which protects existing wildlife but also enhances biodiversity.

6 Design Principles

Key Objectives being met: KO1, KO5, KO6, KO7, KO8, KO9, KO10, KO11, KO12 and KO14

- 6.1 The following principles are intended as a guide for development and an indication of a form of development likely to be encouraged by St Helens Council. They are based upon a thorough analysis and appraisal of key characteristics, constraints and opportunities.

Site Characteristics

- 6.2 The site was formed through cutting into sloping ground to create a development platform for the former factory complex. This has resulted in a significant variation in the topography of the site, with the site falling 11m south to north (Figure 6.1).

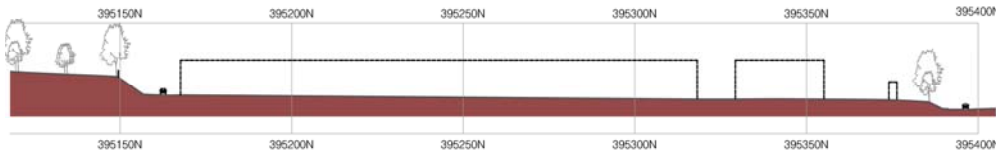


Figure 6.1: Site Section from South to North

- 6.3 The most prominent change in level is marked by an approximately 5.5m high embankment that bisects the site from east to west. This bank, which measures 0.35ha in extent is a major feature of the site, separating it into two distinct platforms: a 1.0ha area to the south which was previously used as a staff car park and a 9.1ha area to the north which formed the former factory complex.
- 6.4 Prior to demolition the building footprint of the factory complex totalled approximately 5.83ha (58% of the site area), the remainder of the site comprised areas of hard standing and car parking (35%) and isolated grassed areas (7%).

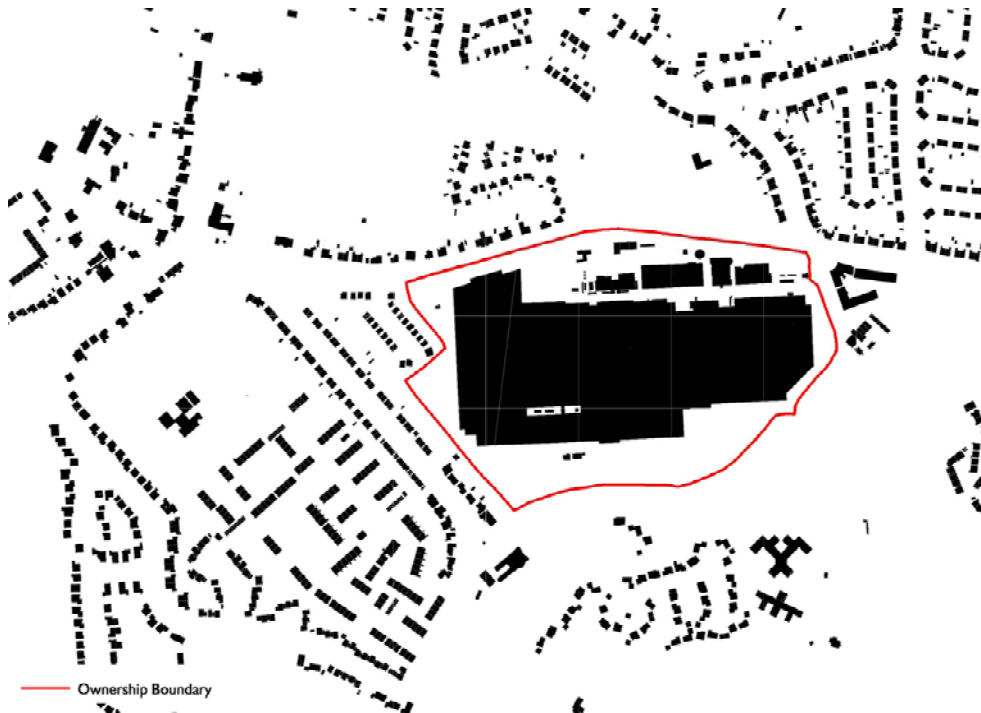


Figure 6.2: Urban Grain Plan

6.5 The vast scale of the factory dominated the relatively low density surrounding residential area, as illustrated in the Urban Grain Plan (Figure 6.2).

Site Constraints

6.6 As illustrated in Figure 6.3 the site is subject to a number of constraints.

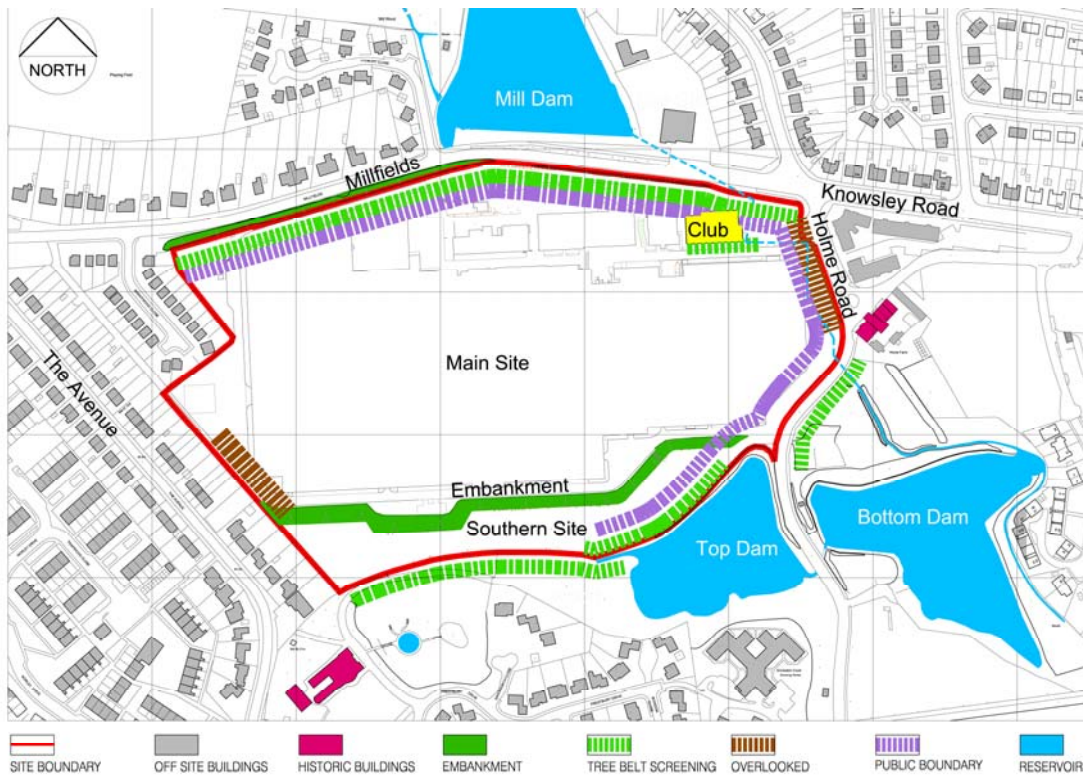


Figure 6.3: Key Site Constraints

6.7 The varying topography of the site has created a number of physical constraints that present particular design challenges. As stated, the most significant of these is the embankment that bisects the site from east to west, the scale of which is illustrated in Figure 6.4.

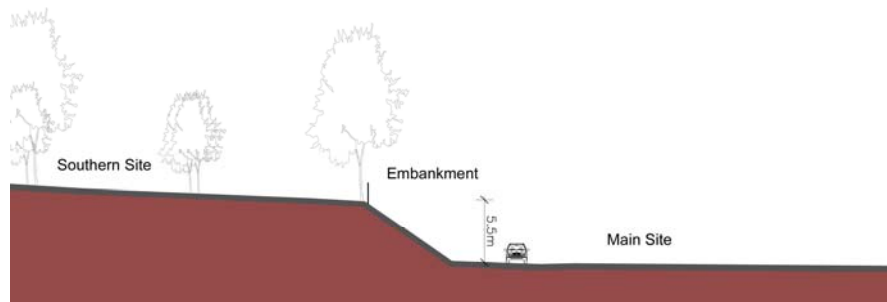


Figure 6.4: Section Through Embankment Between Southern and Main Site Areas

6.8 In addition, the levelling of ground to create the development platform involved cutting at the southwest corner of the site and infilling to the northwest corner. The result of this is that the

site is 5m below adjacent ground in the southwest corner (Figure 6.5) and 3m above adjacent ground in the northwest corner (Figure 6.6).



Figure 6.5: Section through retaining wall to rear of properties on The Avenue

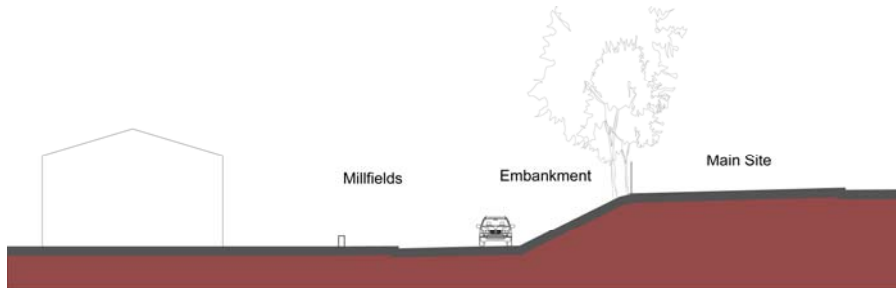


Figure 6.6: Section through embankment to Millfields at north west corner of Main Site

- 6.9 The properties on The Avenue are elevated above the site and overlook the western boundary (Figure 6.5). From the site looking outwards towards The Avenue, the rear fences and sheds of the residential gardens create an unattractive outlook towards the west.
- 6.10 Along the western end of the northern boundary the site is 3m above road level. This restricts the opportunity to create an access from Millfields into the site in this area. Furthermore, as this area of the site is elevated above the residential properties on the opposite side of Millfields, consideration should be given to issues of privacy (Figure 6.6).
- 6.11 The northern edge of the site is dominated by a continuous row of alternating mature deciduous and coniferous trees. These are positioned close together and form a dense visual screen between the factory site and Millfields. This restricts views into and out of the site.
- 6.12 To the east, a recently constructed three-storey apartment block and a Grade II listed building known as 'Home Farm' overlook the site on the opposite side of Holme Road (Image 6.1).



Image 6.1: View along Holme Road from Millfields towards Home Farm



Image 6.2: Holme Road retaining wall



Image 6.3: Southern Site view to west

- 6.13 The eastern site boundary runs at grade with Holme Road as far as Home Farm and then, because the site has been excavated to form a level area, it falls below the level of Holme Road which is retained by a stone wall as it rises up towards Top Dam (Image 6.2).
- 6.14 The southern part of the site, which is accessed from Holme Road, is a gently sloping, narrow plateau approximately 300m in length, elevated approximately 6m above the rest of the site. A small number of semi-mature trees, mostly self-seeded, are spread along the top of the bank between the southern and main part of the site. These should be preserved as part of the development where possible (Image 6.3).
- 6.15 A watercourse connecting Bottom Dam with Mill Dam runs in a deep buried culvert across the northeastern corner of the site. Originally it ran on a direct alignment but over time it has been diverted around new buildings. Building over the pipe is not recommended and therefore future buildings will have to be positioned on site to avoid the pipe or the pipe will have to be diverted (Figure 6.7).

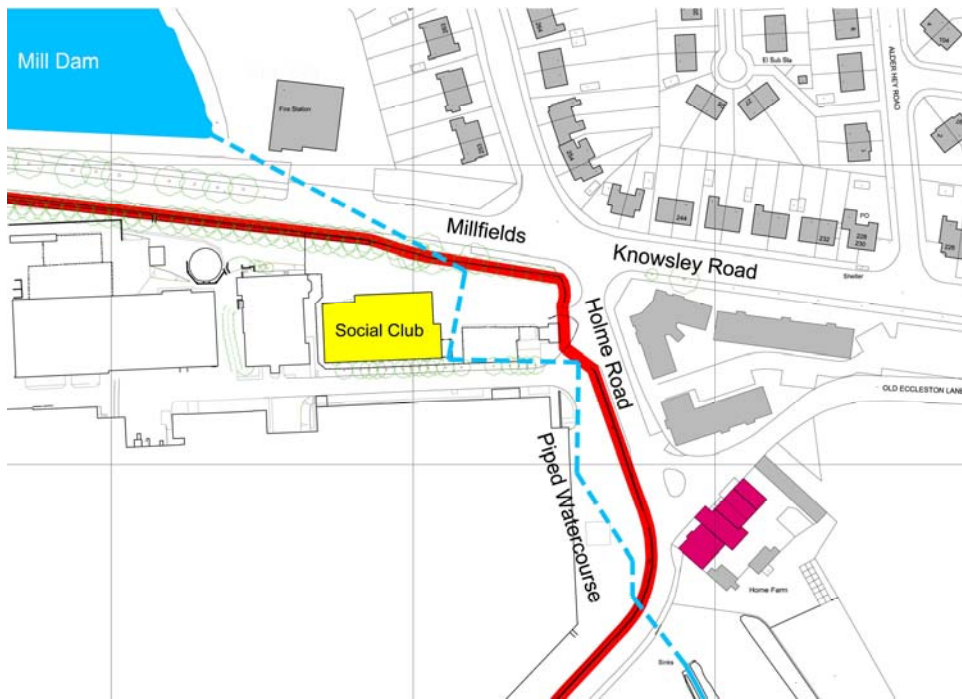


Figure 6.7: Existing route of Water Culvert

- 6.16 The northeast corner of the site is presently leased to Ruskin Leisure who manage a social club for Pilkington employees and local residents. The club has its own car park with approximately 47 spaces and direct access off Holme Road. The social club is a single storey utilitarian building standing on a prime frontage location.
- 6.17 Opposite the sports and social club on Millfields is Eccleston Fire Station. This does not directly constrain development but account has to be taken in the design of points of access of the needs of the fire service to dispatch vehicles safely and speedily onto Millfields in an emergency.
- 6.18 The location of public highways around the site determines that vehicular access is limited to the northern and eastern boundaries.
- 6.19 The topography of the eastern boundary determines that access to the southern area of the site can only be at its eastern end from Holme Road at the location of the current access point. The topography of the northern boundary determines that access to the main part of the site must be towards the northeast corner where the site is at a similar level to that of Millfields.



Image 6.4 and 6.5: Millfields rises from west to east to finish level with site at Holme Road

6.20 To serve an area of 9.1ha a single point of access is not adequate. Two vehicle access points will be required, connected together by a loop road to provide alternative routes for emergency vehicle access or for road maintenance.

Site Opportunities

6.21 Figure 6.8 shows those existing site features that present positive opportunities for development.

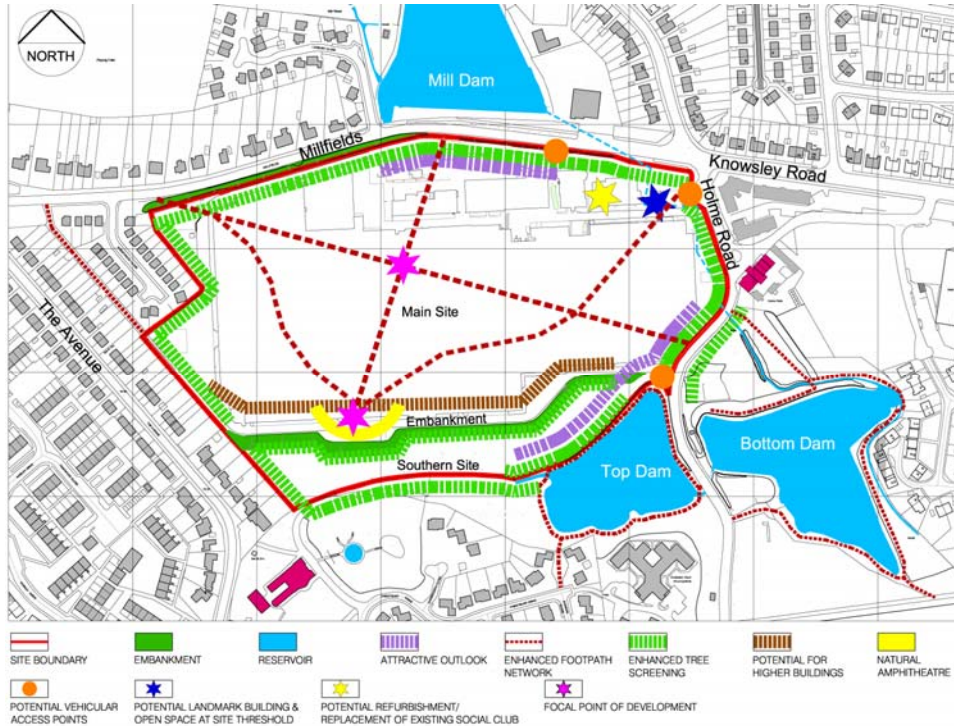


Figure 6.8: Site Opportunities

6.22 The water bodies adjoining the site are attractive features that can be used to enhance the setting of the development. To the south east, dwellings could be orientated to overlook Top Dam. The mature woodland along this boundary serves as an additional natural feature that provides wildlife habitats and solar shading in the summer. To the north, the trees along this boundary form a 'soft' edge, providing screening from adjacent properties and dilution of cold northerly winds and traffic noise. Selective removal of the coniferous trees along this boundary would improve the visual connectivity of the site with the adjoining area and open up views towards Mill Dam.

6.23 In responding to the topographical constraints on site it is considered that the 5m height difference to the south west bordering the houses on The Avenue provides an opportunity to utilise 4 or 5 storey development in this area or to raise the garden levels. With regard to the embankment that bisects the site from east to west, this may provide the opportunity to step development between the upper and lower level, possibly by building close to it and filling behind the building to create a first floor garden (Figure 6.9).

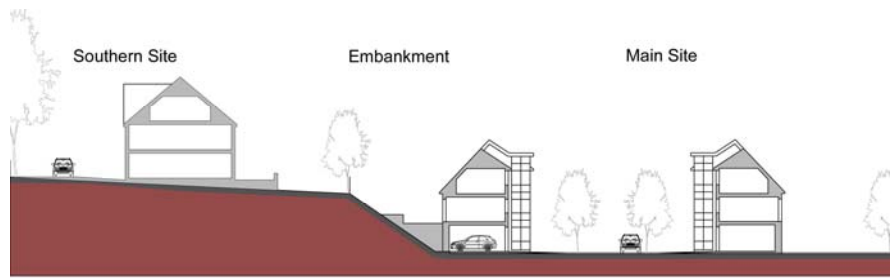


Figure 6.9: Possible utilisation of the embankment as first floor gardens and terraces

- 6.24 The site is located in an accessible location that is well connected to highways and public footpath networks. The development should seek to achieve high levels of connectivity with the surrounding area for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly along Millfields and the attractive environments of Mill Dam, Top Dam and Taylor Park.
- 6.25 To the western end of the embankment there is an indentation in the bank that creates an amphitheatre effect. This forms an ideal location for a key node with pedestrian / cycle links to Millfields and visual connectivity to Mill Dam.
- 6.26 An opportunity exists for a gateway landmark building in a prominent position adjacent to the new site access. This could accommodate a healthcare facility and residential development. The design and layout of the adjacent social club and associated car parking will need to account for the relationship to new housing with a view to minimising the potential for noise nuisance.
- 6.27 Whilst there are established treed boundaries around the site, there is limited internal tree planting or open space provision. The development should seek to address this through a comprehensive landscape framework that responds to the character of the surrounding area. The landscape framework will create greenspaces which are linked to open space at the edge of the site and will include avenues or groups of trees to strengthen the wooded character of the area.
- 6.28 The provision of gardens and landscape areas within the site will reduce the amount of rainwater run-off into the surface water drains by allowing more to infiltrate into the ground and hence will help to reduce the risk of flooding downstream from the site.

Masterplan Strategy

- 6.29 The Masterplan (Figure 6.10) demonstrates graphically the strategy for developing the site.

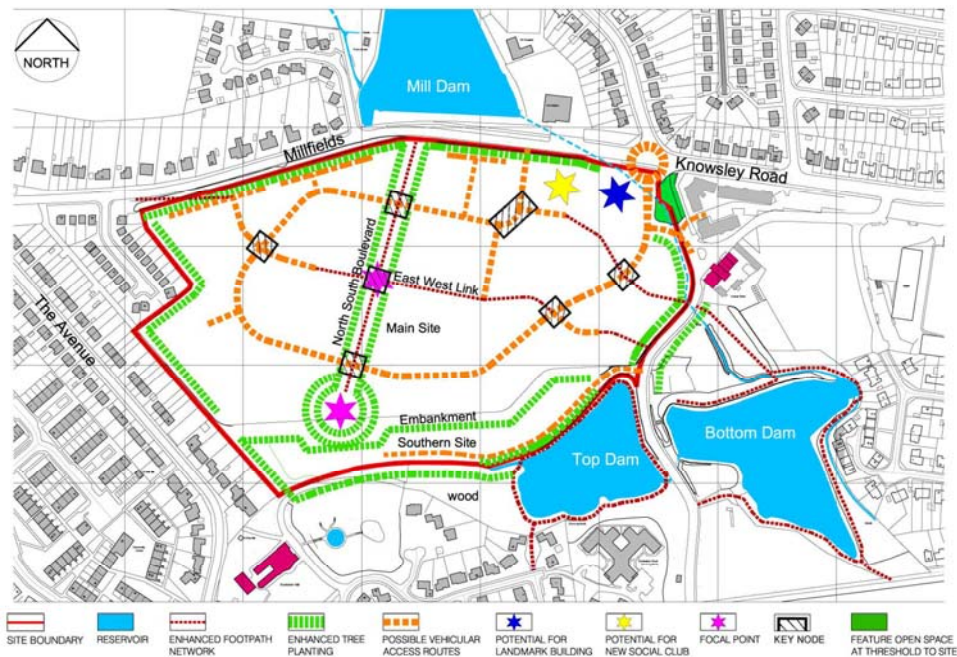


Figure 6.10: Strategic masterplan

6.30 The masterplan responds positively to the constraints and opportunities of the site. It is based upon the following key principles:

- Extensive regrading would be required to eliminate the embankment that divides the site. It should therefore be redeveloped as two distinct areas with separate access arrangements into each.
- Utilisation of existing site features such as the amphitheatre, existing footpath network, treed boundaries and adjoining water bodies to structure the layout of the development and improve its setting.
- Central to this is the proposed landscape boulevard that extends from the amphitheatre towards Mill Dam. This facilitates connectivity between the most remote part of the site and Millfields for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst also enabling the provision of high quality, publicly accessible amenity space and an equipped children's play area. Houses will need to be designed so as to face out onto and along the boulevard in order to ensure high levels of passive surveillance and supervision along the route. Furthermore, particular regard will need to be had to the relationship and treatment of nodal points, both within the development and along the boulevard itself, thereby ensuring passive surveillance and high quality urban design.
- There is considerable potential to enhance and strengthen the links between the site and the surrounding greenspace. In its own right, Holme Road provides a key route to expansive areas of greenspace to the south of the site. The Holme Road corridor should be natural in form with tree planting along the site boundary.
- Access to the southern section of the site is restricted to the existing access on Holme Road. Emergency services access to this part of the site could be required to meet fire safety regulations.

- The topography of the northern boundary dictates that access to the main site is restricted to the eastern extent of this boundary. Due to the volume of traffic passing into and out of the site, two access points are a necessity. In order to comply with highways engineering requirements these should be located opposite the fire station and on the north eastern corner where the existing access is located.
- Within the site a network of roads forms a loop between the two site access points in an indirect manner, reducing traffic speeds through the incorporation of bends and junctions. Detailed design of the roads should follow the principles of good design recommended in 'Manual for Streets' (along with St Helens Street Design – Highways for Adoption October 2008 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.
- There is scope to utilise a variety of housing types, densities and heights. For example, the northern area can accommodate a mix of housing types across varied densities, whilst the southern area of the site is more suitable for lower density development. 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 (Images 6.6 and 6.7).



Images 6.6 and 6.7: Contemporary use of scale to add visual interest

Architectural Style

6.31 There is no specific local architectural character or distinctiveness in any of the existing development around the site. As illustrated in Images 6.8 – 6.11, houses in the area are two storeys high and apartments are three storeys. They are of a traditional suburban mix and style.





Images 6.8 – 6.11: Examples of Existing development adjacent to the site

6.32 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, taking inspiration from recent award winning residential schemes and projects promoted by CABE as good examples of residential design (Image 6.12). ‘Standard’ housing types will not be accepted.



Image 6.12: Examples of contemporary residential development from CABE

6.33 In the interests of environmental sustainability and meeting Growth Point requirements the Council is seeking to ensure that 100% of the housing delivered on the site achieves Code for Sustainable Homes level 3. In addition, 25% of properties should also meet Lifetime Homes requirements.

6.34 Should it be required that an electricity sub-station be provided on site, this should be sympathetically designed into the scheme.

6.35 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.

Relevant Reference Documents

6.36 The following documents should be referred to by designers when producing detailed proposals for the site:

Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (St Helens Council)

By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System: towards better practice (CABE)

Safer Places – The Planning System and Crime Prevention

Manual for Streets (DfT)

Home Zone Design Guidelines (IHIE)

St Helens Street Design – Highways for Adoption October 2008

Merseyside Code of Practice on Access and Mobility.

7 Landscape Principles, Recreation, Open Space and Play Areas

Key Objectives being met: KO4, KO7, KO8, KO11 and KO12

The Landscape Context

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 The Eccleston Works site falls in key Character Type – Residential Valley Infill (Eccleston) which is generally described as a “gently undulating low lying landscape”. Eccleston Hall is highlighted as the historic core within the Area Description. The Hall and nearby woodlands have a particular significance in defining the character of the landscape.
- 7.3 The analysis of the local landscape, which flows from the assessment of landscape character, points to two particular attributes which need to be taken into account when preparing redevelopment proposals for the site:
- (1) The presence of trees within a predominantly residential landscape which creates a maturity of character and a strong green infrastructure
 - (2) The occurrence of open watercourses which penetrate the residential neighbourhoods
- 7.4 The strategy of the LCA for this part of St Helens places a strong emphasis on conserving and, where appropriate, enhancing the strong woodland character of the suburb. In the vicinity of the southern margin of the site the woodland character around Eccleston Hall is of considerable significance. The redevelopment of the site should not harm the setting of Eccleston Hall and the opportunity should be taken to strengthen the woodland framework that already exists. In addition, the layout of development and the design of the landscape framework should function to enhance the setting of Home Farm to the east of the site.
- 7.5 The Woodlands Recommendations section of the LCA highlights that opportunities should be taken to strengthen the positive aspects of landscape character through amenity tree planting within open spaces, individual trees within the streetscape and woodland planting along watercourses. These recommendations should be echoed in development proposals for the Eccleston Works site to give a strong landscape framework which has the effect of enhancing the generally positive character of the neighbourhood.

The Landscape Framework

- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 Key features of the landscape framework to be adhered to in any layout are as follows (Figure 7.1):
- A focal point for the housing and a key route through the site should be formed by the creation of a landscape spine, as illustrated in Figure 7.2. This will provide a continuous linear feature to link the to the core of the site to the northern boundary at Millfields
 - The landscape spine will function as a movement corridor for pedestrians and cyclists but also as a receptor for pockets of recreation open space, including children’s play areas and refuge areas for relaxation

- The axis of the landscape spine is aligned with Mill Dam; views toward Mill Dam should be secured along the length of the landscape spine
- Along Millfields selective removal of conifers will halt the suppression of broadleaf trees and improve visual amenity along this important road frontage
- Eccleston Top Dam along the southern boundary is partially screened from the site by earthworks and poplar trees. Crown thinning and lifting will afford views from the site to the Top Dam and facilitate direct housing frontage along the margin of this water body. Appropriate treatments should be provided at the boundary between the development site and Top Dam to ensure security for the new dwellings. These treatments should not adversely impact upon the views and vistas in and out of the Top Dam.
- Existing woodland at the edge of the high level development plateau along the northern margin of the site provides an important backdrop and setting for future development. Wherever possible this woodland should be retained and enhanced.
- Pedestrian links through the site to the surrounding neighbourhood need to be fostered. The expanse of open greenspace around and beyond the water bodies which lie to the south of the site provides opportunities for formal and informal recreation. Linkage can be achieved to the existing footpath network running through this open space from the eastern margin of the site along Holme Road.

7.8 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 40m² 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.

7.9 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.

7.10 There will be a need for a tree survey and arboricultural method statement. Where access is possible, the survey should capture trees on third party land at the edge of the site.

KEY

- ① Long distance view to Mill Dam
- ② Central landscape boulevard framed by trees and containing earth sculptures and footpaths/cycleways
- ③ Children's play area
- ④ Viewing plaza
- ⑤ Existing tree belt strengthened to provide enclosure
- ⑥ Existing trees retained
- ⑦ Selective tree works/crown pruning to allow views through to eccleston Top Dam
- ⑧ Plaza to extend visual link with adjacent space
- ⑨ New trees to fringe and integrate site with its surroundings
- ⑩ Row of poplar trees removed
- ⑪ Trees removed to allow sight lines at new road junction
- ⑫ Selective tree removal and crown lifting to allow access through to Millfields Road and views through to Mill Dam
- ⑬ Selective thinning to facilitate growth of best trees
- ⑭ Adjacent woodland provides backdrop and shelter to site
- ⑮ Retain boundary wall along Holme Road where appropriate
- ⑯ Public Garden
- ⑰ Graded pedestrian/cycle access into the site

- Existing road
- Proposed road
- Proposed road - paved
- Proposed pedestrian route
- Proposed cycle route
- Key views
- Proposed trees
- Existing trees
- Proposed grass
- Key nodal points for landscape treatment
- Orientation of development



FIGURE 7.1 - LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK PLAN



FIGURE 7.2 - CONCEPTUAL SKETCH OF CENTRAL LANDSCAPE BOULEVARD

8 Highways, Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Key Objectives being met: KO7 and KO8

Introduction

- 8.1 An investigation of the transport planning and traffic engineering issues in respect of the development site has been undertaken to inform this Brief and the draft masterplan for the site.
- 8.2 A formal Transport Assessment (TA) will be a requirement in support of any planning application for the redevelopment of the Eccleston Works site.
- 8.3 As discussed earlier the redevelopment of the site will be successful if it... 'makes the site easy to access by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, whilst reducing reliance on the private car.'

National and Local Transport Policy Framework and Guidance

- 8.4 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 Regional Spatial Strategy for North West England
 - Disability Discrimination Act 2005
 - St Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and emerging documents forming the Local Development Framework (LDF)
 - St Helens Street Design: Highways for Adoption October 2008
 - St Helens Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) 9: Cycle Parking Provision
 - St Helens Supplementary Planning Guidance Note (SPG) 7: Garaging, Parking and Servicing.
- 8.5 In addition, the supporting TA will need to be undertaken in accordance with the following guidance:
 - DfT Guidance on Transport Assessment (March 2007);
 - Local Transport Plan for Merseyside 2006/7 – 2010/11; and
 - Merseyside Walking and Cycling Strategies.

Vehicular Access and Constraints

- 8.6 The suggested vehicular access strategy for the site will comprise three points of access, a new access on Holme Road to the elevated section of the site and a new site estate road running from a reconfigured Millfields / Knowsley Road / Holme Road junction which will link up to a new access junction onto Millfields (west of the existing fire station). This is illustrated schematically in Figure 6.11.
- 8.7 To achieve access from the Millfields/Knowsley Road/Holme Road junction the existing junction will require remodelling. This could be in the form of a roundabout, a revised priority junction arrangement or a traffic signal controlled junction.
- 8.8 A new access further south on Holme Road, in the form of a simple priority controlled junction, will enable vehicular access to the elevated portion of the development site.

- 8.9 The accesses to the development will need to be designed in accordance with St Helens Street Design: Highways for Adoption October 2008 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.
- 8.10 A full TA will be required to support any planning application and the analysis will need to present the current, committed and development scenarios.
- 8.11 The network of interest to the TA will comprise the following junctions:
- A580 East Lancashire Road / Rainford Road
 - Rainford Road / Bleak Hill Road
 - Knowsley Road / Dunriding Lane
 - Knowsley Road / Boundary Road
 - Knowsley Road / Holme Road / Millfields
 - Millbrow / Chapel Lane / Millbrook Lane
 - Millfields / Church Lane
 - Eccleston Street / Westfield Street.

Highways Layout and Design

- 8.13 The internal highway layout should be designed and constructed to an adoptable standard. Developers will need to refer to the St Helens Street Design: Highways for Adoption October 2008 and the DfT's 'Manual for Streets'.
- 8.14 In terms of the internal layout of the Eccleston Works site, it is suggested that the development areas are served by a network of access roads which give permeability and connect to the new access points on to Millfields and at the reconfigured Millfields / Knowsley Road / Holme Road junction. It will also be necessary to ensure that the internal highway layout is accessible to dial-a-ride vehicles in accordance with the Merseyside Access Design Guidance.
- 8.15 Appropriate and acceptable emergency services provision should be provided to all parts of the development site.
- 8.16 Highways should be designed to ensure pedestrian and cyclist priority and encourage low vehicle speeds.
- 8.17 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.

Sustainable Transport

Pedestrians and Cyclists

- 8.18 Careful consideration should be given to the provision of facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. The site is well positioned to take advantage of the sustainable transport provision in the adjacent area and the masterplan should aim to reduce the degree of dependence upon the private car.
- 8.19 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 Millfields and Knowsley Road and Holme Road.

- 8.20 The provision of footways and pedestrian crossing facilities adjacent to the site boundaries on Millfields and Holme Road should be an important consideration within the overall access strategy recognising the physical constraints which currently exist. This should include links to the existing, and any proposed, bus stop facilities adjacent to the site.
- 8.21 Pedestrian / cycle routes should be designed to be convenient, safe, well lit, direct and attractive. Developers will need to incorporate the existing advisory cycle route running along Holme Road into their proposals and provide pedestrian crossings on Millfields.
- 8.22 A Framework Travel Plan for proposed development should be produced to support an outline planning application to enable the Council to secure a commitment to deliver sustainable transport at the implementation phase; a Full Travel Plan should be produced in support of any subsequent reserved matters planning application in accordance with the submitted Framework, or to support a full planning application'

Public Transport

- 8.23 Development of this site will provide an opportunity to encourage journeys by bus and onward links to train stations. Pedestrian routes will need to link with the existing bus stops located east of the development on Knowsley Road and west of the development on Millfields. The provision of new or upgraded shelters / bus stops will be required. The potential for a bus route through the site should also be investigated.

Accessibility

- 8.24 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.

9 Environmental Issues and Ecology

Key Objectives being met: KO9

- 9.1 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.

Environmental Issues

- 9.2 Initial investigations into land contamination at the site identified several contamination hotspots. These have been removed as part of demolition and remediation works.
- 9.3 Developers are required to demonstrate that all remedial measures have been undertaken through the submission of a satisfactory completion report for approval by the Council and statutory consultees.
- 9.4 Developers will be required to prepare a Flood Risk Assessment which also takes into account the impact on adjoining water bodies. The scope of assessment should be agreed in advance with the Environment Agency.
- 9.5 The scheme should achieve the 'good' standard for ambient noise levels (BS8233) without the need for sound insulation or mechanical ventilation, and 'desirable' levels for outdoor amenity areas.

Ecology

- 9.6 Preliminary bat/barn owl and great crested newt surveys were undertaken prior to the demolition of the factory complex to ascertain presence/absence and on-site habitat potential.

Bat/Barn Owl

- 9.7 This survey was undertaken in September 2007. An inspection of all accessible buildings on-site at that time identified that neither bats nor barn owls utilised the buildings for roosting as they did not provide the cover, insulation and access opportunities required. Similarly, building emergence observations returned negative results, despite there being evidence of bats foraging and commuting on site. Now that the site is devoid of structures the likelihood of the presence of roosting bat sites is reduced further. It is therefore considered that there is no requirement at this stage for a licence to disturb or destroy a bat roost.
- 9.8 The survey did not include the trees bordering the site. Should any development proposal require the felling of trees a suitably qualified ecologist should first perform a bat assessment. If any bats are found to be present, appropriate mitigation measures should be undertaken in accordance with protected species legislation.

Great Crested Newts (GCNs)

- 9.9 This survey was undertaken in May 2007. An inspection of the site identified that there was no presence of GCNs and that the suitable potential habitats contained limited value for GCNs and other amphibian species. In contrast, the wider area around the site was identified as containing ideal terrestrial habitat for GCNs and other amphibian species, but the aquatic habitats were considered unsuitable due to the presence of fish. It was concluded that as GCNs require both terrestrial and aquatic habitats to survive, the site and the surrounding area are considered to provide low potential habitat to support this protected species.
- 9.10 Although there is no evidence of any protected species being present upon the site there will be a potentially lengthy period of time between the adoption of this brief and the submission of a formal planning application. The Council require a validation survey to verify the findings of

these preliminary surveys 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.

- 9.11 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. An advisory document (Biodiversity and Development in 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.

10 Affordable Housing

Key Objectives being met: KO3

- 10.1 The St Helens Unitary Development Plan (Policy RES2) requires an approach to affordable housing based on site by site assessment. Under the provisions of this policy, where suitable sites are identified, the Council will negotiate “on the basis of a figure being derived from applying a density of 40 – 50 dwellings per hectare to 25% of the site area, subject to a maximum of 50 per site”. This approach was tailored to a period when the need for affordable housing was relatively low.
- 10.2 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 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.
- 10.3 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 at least 30% by unit number. This is to be secured on the basis of an equal division between social rented housing and intermediate housing.
- 10.4 The 2006 survey emphasises that each site where an affordable housing component is appropriate needs to be assessed individually with planning, economic and sustainability considerations all exerting an influence on the scale and tenure mix. The overall starting target is 30% but there will be instances where local circumstances dictate that a higher or lower figure on any one particular site is justified.
- 10.5 There is a considerable need for affordable family housing across St Helens but this need is particularly pronounced in Eccleston. Currently over 70% of new forming households in St Helens as a whole are unable to buy a home. In addition, there is a strong need to accommodate single person households in St Helens. In Eccleston, suitable housing for single person households is in short supply.
- 10.6 Both demand and need trajectories for affordable housing in Eccleston point to a need to meet requirements of families and single person households. The delivery of both social rented housing and intermediate housing should be targeted at the following range:

5% - 25%	two bed properties
75% - 95%	family housing.
- 10.7 The family housing component should include two bed houses (up to 15% of affordable family housing); three bed houses (60% of affordable family housing) and four bed houses (10% of affordable family housing).
- 10.8 The Eccleston Works site provides a sustainable opportunity for housing in a part of St Helens where demand for both market housing and social rented housing is strong. In this context, St Helens Council will negotiate affordable housing on the basis of a 35% ratio. This is justified on planning grounds by virtue of the fact that the release of the Eccleston Works site for housing represents a windfall whereby an established employment use is displaced. To offset the planning dis-benefits associated with the loss of a major employment site, and in response to the particularly strong need for affordable housing in Eccleston, the Council can justify a higher proportion of affordable housing than the starting threshold of 30%.

- 10.9 The equal division of social rented housing and shared ownership housing will apply to the “baseline” requirement of 30% of units. The balancing 5% should be shared ownership in order to assist those new forming households (including key workers) who show a preference for owner occupation but have incomes which are inadequate to support outright purchase.
- 10.10 For all affordable housing the aim should be to achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 3, 25% of housing should also meet Lifetime Homes requirements. In all cases the layout and design of affordable housing should be conceived with Secure by Design principles in mind.

11 Bringing Forward Development Proposals

Key Objectives being met: KO2

- 11.1 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.

Compensatory Employment Provision

- 11.2 In order to offset the economic dis-benefits associated with the loss of a major employment site the Council requires the identification and procurement of alternative opportunities for economic development in St Helens. The scale and nature of the alternative provision should be discussed and agreed with the Council in the form of a compensatory employment strategy. The Council will require the phased implementation of the agreed strategy in parallel with the development of the Eccleston Works site for housing.
- 11.3 The owners of the Eccleston Works site have identified the potential to release underused land at its Cowley Hill operation on College Street. Land and buildings along the southern margin of this large industrial complex are capable of being severed and used independently to provide employment opportunities. These opportunities will be in the form of the refurbishment and release of existing buildings as studio, office or workshop space or the preparation of serviced employment land for new-build development.
- 11.4 The site plan shown in Figure 11.1 identifies the full extent of land intended to be made available for employment use. The priority is the early creation of opportunities for workspace as well as provision of serviced employment land which can accommodate demand for new build commercial floorspace. In this respect the release of the land identified is considered suitable in order to satisfy this requirement.
- 11.5 On the basis of the above therefore, the Council will require the following to be secured through a S106 legal agreement:
- Initial provision of 2000m² B1 new build office accommodation and 2ha serviced employment land which must be provided prior to the commencement of development on the Eccleston Works site; and
 - Subsequently, provision of a minimum rolling supply of 2ha serviced employment land to be available ready for development.
- 11.6 Overall, the employment land opportunities created at this location will need to take advantage of a distinct environment where established water bodies are prominent. Development should respond in a positive manner to the waterfront setting.

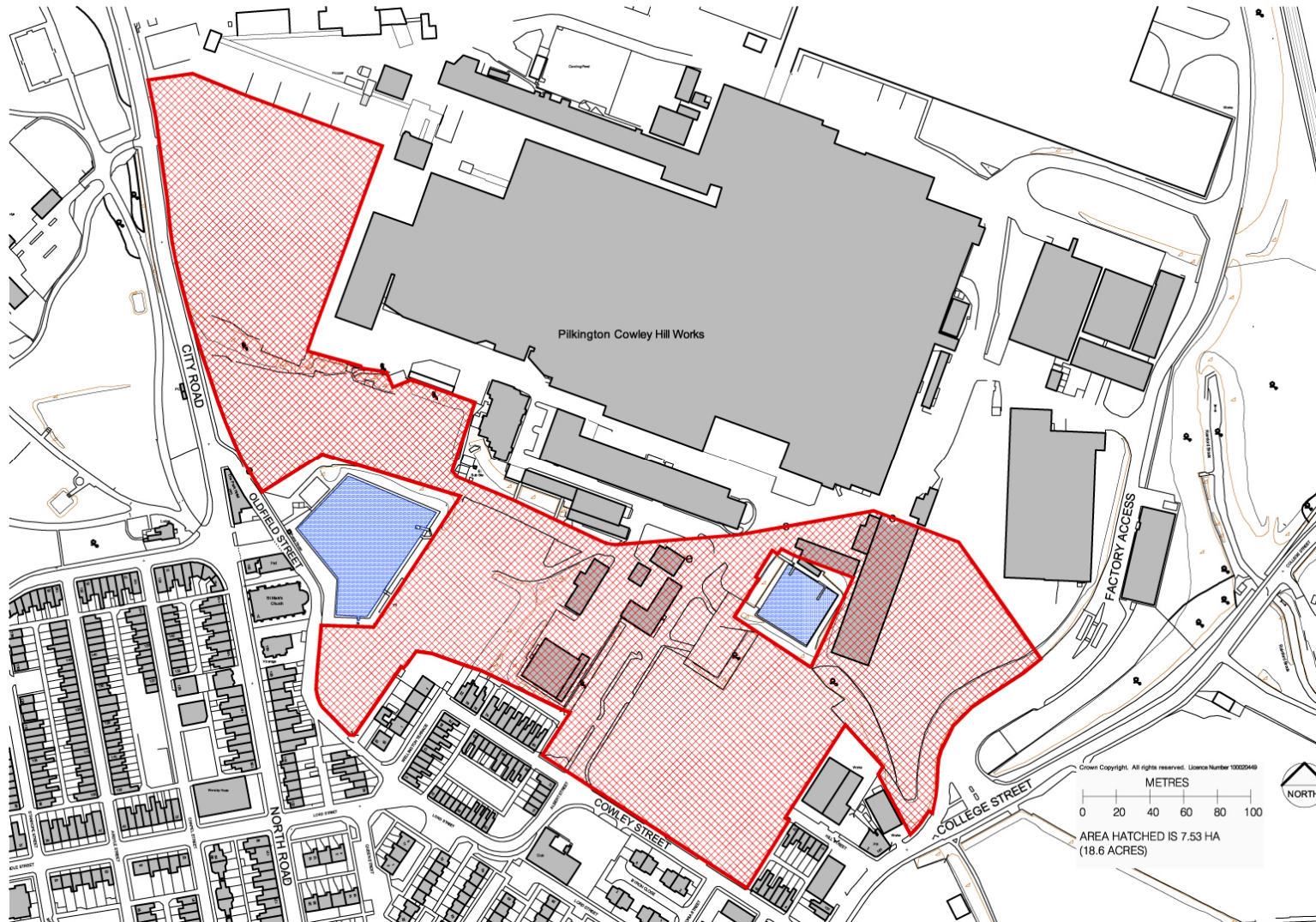


Figure 11.1: Compensatory Employment Provision – Cowley Hill

Public Consultation on Development Proposals

- 11.7 Upon submission of a planning application, prospective developers will be expected to undertake a leaflet drop to notify local residents of the nature of the proposals and the opportunities available to make formal representations.

Masterplanning

- 11.8 Section 6 of the Brief establishes the design principles that provide an outline framework for development proposals. As part of any formal planning application for development a detailed masterplan is required demonstrating how the principles within the Brief have been considered and addressed. This will help to ensure co-ordination and comprehensive delivery of the Council's vision and objectives.
- 11.9 The masterplan should follow the good practice guidelines set out in the 2004 CABE document '*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

- 11.12 Where appropriate, the Council will enter into Section 106 legal agreements in order to secure the delivery of key aspects of the development and / or financial contributions for works outwith the site.

Affordable Housing

- 11.13 Affordable housing must be provided on the site at a level of 35% of this 35%, 62.5% will be provided through shared ownership housing and 37.5% through social rented housing, delivered in partnership with a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). Details of the location, phasing and procurement of affordable housing are required to be submitted and approved before the development is commenced.

Amenity Open Space and Woodland

- 11.14 There is a need to agree detailed design and a programme of construction for amenity open space (including a centralised children's' play area to serve the development as a whole). The ongoing management arrangements for amenity open space and woodland will be either through a direct transfer to the Council (with an agreed commuted sum) or through a properly constituted private management entity. Any shortfall in the provision of amenity open space (including children's play facilities) on the site will be abated through a financial contribution for improvements to existing open space and play facilities in the vicinity.

Transport

- 11.15 Support is to be provided for sustainable transport to include measures such as improved transport infrastructure and a Travel Plan for residents.

Health Care

- 11.16 Provision is to be made within the site for a new healthcare facility (reserved land). Should this facility not be required prior to the completion of development then a financial contribution is to be made towards improvements to primary healthcare services in Eccleston and the reserved land is to be used for an agreed alternative use.

Social Club

- 11.17 The Eccleston Social Club facility provides a valuable resource for the local community. Provision must be made for the on-site replacement of these facilities, with the delivery phased to minimise inconvenience to the local community.

Public Art

- 11.18 In accordance with the Council's Art Strategy, public art shall be provided as a component of new development.

Sustainable Development

- 11.19 A strategy for sustainable development is required as a guiding principle for new development. This should have particular regard to the need to conserve and reduce demands for energy, (particularly fossil fuels), to reduce the need to travel, (particularly by private car) and measures to minimise waste disposal requirements and promote waste recycling.

Employment Opportunities

- 11.20 In parallel with the phased redevelopment of this site for housing there will be a commitment to implementing a programme of works to bring forward serviced employment land at an alternative location at Cowley Hill, St Helens. As an extension to the commitment there could be a need to provide momentum to employment generating development through measures such as building refurbishment (if appropriate) or the early construction of speculative workspace.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 11.21 The Council has undertaken a screening opinion exercise and determined that an EIA is not be required.

Appendices

Appendix A

Planning Policy Context

Source	Policy Reference	Policy Title	Policy Description
Regional Planning Guidance	DP2	Promote Sustainable Communities	Building sustainable communities – places where people want to live and work – is a regional priority. Sustainable communities should meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, promote community cohesion and equality and diversity, be sensitive to the environment, and contribute to a high quality of life.
	DP3	Promote Sustainable Economic Development	Sustainable economic growth should be supported and promoted, and so should reductions of economic, environmental, education, health and other social inequalities between different parts of the North West, within the sub-regions, and at local level.
	DP4	Make Best Use of Existing Resources and Infrastructure	Priority should be given to the re-use of buildings and previously developed land in sustainable locations close to housing, jobs, other services and infrastructure.
	DP5	Manage Travel Demand; Reduce the Need to Travel, and Increase Accessibility	Development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and enable people as far as possible to meet their needs locally.
	DP7	Promote Environmental Quality	Environmental quality should be protected and enhanced. Sustainable development demands that we live within environmental limits, respecting the environment, natural resources and biodiversity.
	DP9	Reduce Emissions and Adapt to Climate Change	Proposals should include measures to reduce emissions, including: increasing urban density; energy efficient, eco-friendly and adaptable buildings; and reducing traffic growth by promoting walking, cycling and public transport.
UDP Policies	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.

Deleted: DP1

Deleted: Economy in the Use of Land and Buildings

	ENV12	Development Affecting Existing Trees	Proposals affecting existing trees and woodlands will not be permitted if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would result in a significant loss of trees; • Do not incorporate measures for the successful retention of existing trees; • 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.
	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	The Council will not permit development which would introduce or increase pollution to an unacceptable level as a result of emissions or discharge affecting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water including watercourses, ponds and lakes; • Groundwater; • The air; • Noise levels All new developments will be required to meet existing standards relating to air, water, groundwater pollution and noise.
	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"> • Provide for pedestrian priority; • Limit traffic speeds; • Accommodate cyclists and buses; • Recognise the contribution of good layout design to domestic security; • Ensure scale and design of proposals are appropriate to the character of the area; • Meet the access requirements of disabled people; • Ensure separation for light and privacy; • Make appropriate off-street provision for garaging and parking of cars; • Make provision for incidental open space.
	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 ² 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"> • 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; • The extent to which the development can be reasonably and adequately served by alternative means of transport. <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"> • A site over 1.5Ha or developments of 40 dwellings or more; • Proximity to local services such as schools, shops and medical facilities; • Proximity to public transport; • Market suitability of the site to accommodate an element of high density development; • Evidence of local housing need; • 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. <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.
	S2	Provision of Land for Economic Development	The Council will ensure that sufficient industrial and commercial land is available to provide a wide choice by size, location and suitability for different uses.
	S7	Sustainable Development	Planning permission will only be granted where it minimises any adverse effect on the environment. Proposals for new development must have regard to the need to conserve and reduce demands for energy and to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car.
	S8	Derelict and Vacant Land	The Council will promote the positive use of vacant and derelict land and, in so doing, will support development proposals which contribute to the residential and industrial land supply, create recreation resources, improve the appearance of the locality, contribute to the requirements of local communities surrounding the site, and remove or safely contain contamination and otherwise improve public safety.
	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.
Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)	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.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)		Design Guidance	This guidance supersedes the existing 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.
Additional Documents		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.