



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# **AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT**

**2021**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## Scope of Authority Monitoring Report

- 1.1 The requirement to produce an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is contained in Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by paragraph 113 of the Localism Act 2011). The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) outlines what should be included within an AMR.
- 1.2 AMRs monitor the effectiveness of plan policies, and therefore provide data in response to the monitoring frameworks set out within the relevant plans. In doing so, they help inform whether there is a need for policies to be updated.
- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities can also use the AMR to provide up-to-date information on any neighbourhood plans that have been brought into force. Within this monitoring period, St Helens does not have any Neighbourhood Plans or Development Orders in progress or made.
- 1.4 Additionally, AMRs must also contain information pursuant to Regulation 62(4) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations. As St Helens Borough Council is not a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging authority, this AMR makes no further reference to this. Developer contributions are collected through Section 106 contributions and can be found within the Council's published Infrastructure Funding Statement.
- 1.5 In summary, this AMR:
  - describes the role of existing and emerging Development Plan documents in St Helens (Chapter 2);
  - appraises the progress of the Council in preparing the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan 2020–2035 and its supporting documents (Chapter 3);
  - assesses the effectiveness of policies in the currently adopted St Helens Local Plan Core Strategy (2012) and the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (2017), and any recommended steps to help achieve the aims of these policies (Chapters 4 and 5);
  - identifies the relationship of this AMR with the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (Chapter 6); and
  - identifies actions taken relating to the 'Duty to Cooperate' with neighbouring local authorities and other public bodies (Chapter 7).
- 1.6 This AMR covers the period **1st April 2020 until 31st March 2021**.

## Indicators and targets

- 1.7 The emerging new St Helens Borough Local Plan (details of which are set out in Chapter 2) will have its own monitoring framework, and future AMRs published and covering the timeframe after the Local Plan is adopted will focus on the delivery of policies within the new Local Plan. In the meantime, the Council will continue to monitor the implementation of the St Helens Local Plan Core Strategy 2012 and the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan 2017.



- 1.8 Following the coronavirus (Covid19) pandemic it has not been possible to collect certain data for all the indicators and targets. This is due to a number of factors including members of staff who were redeployed elsewhere, and a change in working patterns that meant some data was not collated in its usual manner.
- 1.9 Therefore, data not available at this stage will be included in the next (2022) AMR. Similarly, some data contained in this AMR includes data that was not available when producing the 2020 AMR.
- 1.10 The coronavirus (Covid19) pandemic caused many of the datasets to appear as anomalous. This is due to a number of factors, including building sites within the Borough closing down for a short period of time, which impacted on completion rates of new houses; businesses within the Borough closing with staff on furlough, a reduction in new business births compared to previous years, potentially leading to more vacant units (both employment and retail); and lockdown prohibited people from leaving their homes unless for essential trips, so normal patterns of movement including shopping and visiting local attractions will be impacted upon.



## 2 THE 'DEVELOPMENT PLAN' IN ST HELENS

### The Development Plan

2.1 The Development Plan for St Helens comprises the following documents:

- the St Helens Local Plan: Core Strategy (adopted October 2012);
- the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (adopted July 2017);
- the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (adopted July 2013); and
- the "Saved Policies" of the St Helens Unitary Development Plan ("UDP"), adopted in 1998.

2.2 In addition, the Council has adopted a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Development Briefs, which provide additional guidance to interpret and apply policies contained in the adopted Plans. These comprise:

- Affordable Housing SPD (adopted January 2010);
- Biodiversity SPD (adopted June 2011);
- Design and Crime SPD (adopted October 2009);
- Design Guidance SPD (adopted September 2007);
- Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD (adopted June 2010);
- Householder Development SPD (adopted June 2011);
- Hot Food Takeaway SPD (adopted June 2011);
- King Street Design Brief (adopted June 2011);
- List of Locally Important Buildings (adopted June 2011);
- Local Economy SPD (adopted November 2013);
- New Residential Development SPD (adopted June 2011);
- Residential Character Areas SPD (adopted June 2011);
- Shopfronts SPD (adopted June 2011);
- Telecommunications SPD (adopted June 2008);
- Trees and Development SPD (adopted June 2008);
- Eccleston Works Development Brief (adopted October 2008); and
- Land adjacent Laffak Road and Carr Mill Road Development Brief (adopted October 2009).

2.3 None of these documents, or the policies and guidance within them, should be read in isolation. They all need to be read as a whole and in conjunction with the other documents and national policy where relevant.

### St Helens Local Plan: Core Strategy 2012

2.4 The St Helens Local Plan Core Strategy (the "Core Strategy") is the principal document that guides how decisions are made on planning applications within the Borough. It provides an overall strategy detailing how much development is required, where development should be located and how it will be delivered during the period up to 2027. It contains strategic policies for housing, economy and employment, community facilities, quality of life and accessibility, which cover individual areas and the Borough as a whole.



- 2.5 Issues involving the future of the Green Belt, Parkside, re-development of town centres and protecting green spaces are subject to particular consideration in the Core Strategy.

### **Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan 2017**

- 2.6 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan is a statutory planning policy document, which sets out the detailed policies and actions required to develop Bold Forest Park. It covers a series of inter-linked greenspaces, countryside and communities on the south side of St Helens and provides a planning framework for this specific area of opportunity, change and conservation. The Bold Forest Park AAP has the following objectives:

1. Create new economic opportunities through sustainable development within Bold Forest Park;
2. Create opportunities for tourism and leisure related business, supported by the natural economy;
3. Create an easily understood and accessible network of linked open spaces within Bold Forest Park and with surrounding areas;
4. Promote the provision and positive use of green space for the benefit of the local community and visitors; and
5. Enhance the natural environment through targeted delivery of green infrastructure programmes that improve and expand the biodiversity and landscape quality of the Bold Forest Park area.

These can be supplemented by the additional aim of:

6. Create quality outdoor space with opportunities for physical activities and positive use of green space to improve mental health and wellbeing of the local community and visitors.

### **The Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP) 2013**

- 2.7 Planning policy for waste management development in St Helens is contained in the WLP, which was adopted by the local authorities of Merseyside and Halton in July 2013. Upon adoption, the WLP's policies and allocations became part of the development plan of each authority and have to be considered when relevant planning applications are being determined.

- 2.8 The WLP was prepared by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS). It covers the period from 2013 to 2027 and must be regularly reviewed under relevant legislation. It contains 16 Policies and 18 Site Allocations dealing with all aspects of waste management from waste prevention to energy from waste facilities. Further information regarding the WLP is set out in Chapter 6.

### **Saved policies of the St Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1998**

- 2.9 The St Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 1998. As a result of a direction made by the Secretary of State in 2007, some of the UDP policies lapsed whereas others were "saved" i.e., remained extant. Whilst some of the UDP policies saved at that point have been subsequently replaced, mainly by the Core Strategy, others remain "saved" i.e., continue to form part of the adopted development plan at present. The saved UDP



policies mainly focus on detailed matters rather than broad strategy and are therefore not covered further in this AMR.

### The emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan 2020-2035

- 2.10 The Council declared its intention to prepare a new Local Plan for St Helens in its Local Development Scheme of November 2015. To ensure the Plan is soundly prepared the Council has prepared several evidence base studies and undertaken a number of consultations throughout the Local Plan making process.
- 2.11 The Local Plan Scoping Consultation in January 2016 was the first consultation stage. The responses received at that stage were considered by the Council when it prepared the Local Plan Preferred Options (LPPO) document, on which it undertook an 8-week consultation from 5 December 2016 to 30 January 2017. The responses to that (5,365 in total) have subsequently been assessed and the Council has since published (January 2019) the St Helens Borough Local Plan 2020–2035: Submission Draft. Consultation on this document took place between 17 January 2019 and 13 May 2019. The responses to the consultation (1,989) were reviewed and formed part of a suite of documents that were submitted alongside the Local Plan Submission Draft to the Planning Inspectorate to be considered as part of the Local Plan Examination.
- 2.12 The emerging Local Plan covers the whole of St Helens Borough and sets out:
- the vision and objectives for development in the Borough up to 2035;
  - the overall spatial strategy and strategic policies guiding the amount, form and distribution of development;
  - site allocations and preferred locations for new development including housing, employment, retail, leisure, and gypsy and traveller accommodation;
  - areas designated for protection (for example of the built or natural environment) as well as changes to the Green Belt and designated areas where particular policies apply; and
  - more detailed development management policies to be applied when considering planning applications for development.
- 2.13 The emerging Local Plan is built upon the key principles of sustainable development, which require the planning system to perform a number of objectives (NPPF, paragraph 8):
- **an 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;
  - **a 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

- **an 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.

2.14 The emerging Local Plan for St Helens will replace the Core Strategy and remaining saved UDP policies when it is adopted. The Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan and the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan will remain in place after that date.





### 3 PROGRESS IN PREPARING NEW LOCAL PLAN DOCUMENTS

- 3.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the Council must publish and keep under review a timetable for the production of new development plan documents. This timetable is within a document known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS)<sup>1</sup>.

#### 2020 LDS Timetable

- 3.2 The timetable for the preparation of new documents is set out in Appendix A. The St Helens Borough Local Plan (along with relevant submission documents) was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination on the 29 October 2020 as set out in the LDS. Following this, two Planning Inspectors were appointed in early November 2020 with the publication of a provisional hearings programme and examination guidance notes following in December 2020.
- 3.3 The Inspectors' task is to consider the soundness of the submitted plan. The Inspectors will also consider whether the Local Plan meets the requisite legal and procedural requirements. In order to do so, the Inspectors will assess the Local Plan, the evidence base on which it was created, as well as all of the representations submitted during the public consultations.

#### Progress on the St Helens Borough Local Plan

- 3.4 The 2020 LDS sets out a challenging timetable for the Council to progress its Local Plan, and despite the Covid19 pandemic and staffing changes and shortages, the Council successfully kept to the key stages to date.
- 3.5 However, moving forward some of the key stages as set out in the LDS have changed. The dates for the hearing sessions are now scheduled to take place in May and June 2021, (and virtually via Microsoft Teams) instead of the programmed March / April 2021. As this is a slightly later date than originally considered in the LDS, it will have an impact on further key stages within the LDS, including the Main Modifications consultation and eventual adoption. Therefore, although the Council has taken every possible step to ensure the Plan is delivered within its set timetable, forces outside the Council's control have meant a slight slippage is occurring.

#### Evidence Base Updates

- 3.6 As part of the Local Plan process a robust and significant evidence base has been produced. A list of relevant evidence base documents including their dates of completion is set out on the Council website. The webpage is updated regularly with the latest news and relevant documentation relating to the Local Plan Examination.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2020 LDS can be accessed via <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/3774/Plans-under-preparation>



## 4 ST HELENS LOCAL PLAN CORE STRATEGY 2012: POLICY MONITORING

4.1 This Chapter sets out current progress in delivering the policies of the Core Strategy. The Delivery and Monitoring Strategy (DMS) (as set out in Appendix 1 of the Core Strategy) sets out a wide range of Key Delivery items, indicators and targets for each policy. The section below describes progress when measured against these Key Delivery Items, indicators and targets.

### **Policy CSD 1 “National Planning Policy Framework – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development”**

#### **Key Delivery Items**

4.2 Key Delivery Items stated for Policy CSD1 included the determination of planning applications in line with targets (against which progress is set out below). It was also intended to adopt new Development Plan Documents (DPDs), including a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD. This intention was abandoned following a decision taken by the Council in November 2015 to produce a comprehensive new Local Plan for the Borough, which would completely replace the Core Strategy and saved UDP policies. A Local Economy SPD was adopted in 2013. The Council now intends to prepare and adopt further SPDs after the new Local Plan has been adopted.

#### **Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CSD1**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21 <sup>2</sup>
Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (Baseline – 2011/12: 77.42%)	As per latest St Helens Performance Indicator Target	<b>100%</b> of Major Planning Applications have been approved within the statutory 13-week deadline (including applications determined within an agreed timescale).
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks (Baseline – 2011/12: 94.58%)	As per latest St Helens Performance Indicator Target	<b>100%</b> of minor planning applications were determined within the statutory 8-week deadline.
Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks (Baseline – 2011/12: 96.85%)	As per latest St Helens Performance Indicator Target	<b>100%</b> of ‘Other’ Planning Applications were also determined within the statutory 8-week deadline.

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>



Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse planning applications (Baseline – 2011/12: 18%)	As per latest St Helens Performance Indicator Target	<b>Target not met</b> - The Council recorded 19 appeals for this AMR period, of which 6 were allowed, equating to <b>32%</b> of appeals allowed against the Council's decision to refuse.
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### Policy CSS 1 "Overall Spatial Strategy"

#### Key Delivery Items

- 4.3 Key Delivery Items for this policy included the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD, the need for which as stated previously has been superseded by the intention to adopt the currently emerging new Local Plan. The Key Delivery Items also included the intention to undertake sub-regional work to review the Green Belt and discuss and where possible agree with neighbouring authorities an approach to meeting development needs. Extensive joint working has been undertaken with neighbouring authorities on this issue. A Green Belt Review has now been produced for St Helens and supports the emerging new Local Plan. It recommends a number of proposed sites that could be released from the Green Belt in order to meet the employment and housing needs of the Borough for 2020 to 2035, and beyond.

#### Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CSS1

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Distribution of Residential Development up to 2023/24 (Baseline 2009 Annual Monitoring Report)	69% St Helens Core Area	As illustrated in Table 2 below, the distribution of development has differed slightly from what was stated in these targets. In order to address this, the Council intends to review the distribution of development required in its new Local Plan, albeit still with an emphasis on most development being within the main urban areas of the Borough.
	23% Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown	
	4% Haydock and Blackbrook	
	3% Rural St Helens	



**Table 2: Distribution of residential development in St Helens Borough 2010-2020**

Target distribution stated in Core Strategy	Actual distribution achieved (% of units)										
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
69% St Helens Core Area	64%	50%	67%	61%	68%	64%	50%	58%	62%	71%	78%
23% Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown	22%	22%	19%	34%	22%	26%	39%	34%	35%	25%	16%
4% Haydock and Blackbrook	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%
3% Rural St Helens	13%	26%	13%	3%	8%	9%	11%	6%	2%	2%	5%

**Policy CAS 1 “St Helens Core Area”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.4 This policy has no targets or indicators; however, it does have a number of Key Delivery Items, progress against which is set out below.

**Development of Lea Green Urban Village**

4.5 Lea Green Urban Village is almost complete. The site as a whole is in a number of parts:

- The Waterside Village section by Morris Homes for 354 housing units was completed in 2017/2018;
- The Radley Park section by St Modwens Homes for 160 housing units was completed 2020/2021;
- The Waterside Village extension, to the north of the site, for 112 housing units, had completed 80 units by 2020/2021; and
- A planning application by Anwyl Homes for 80 units was given planning approval in March 2019. There have been 40 completed units by 2020/2021.

**Development of Moss Nook Urban Village**

4.6 Following an amended planning consent for 900 units, remediation work initially started on site, but then stalled; however, in January 2020, a leading regenerator of land and property for development and investment, secured a £2.05m grant from Liverpool City Region’s Single Infrastructure Fund (SIF) to accelerate development at Moss Nook. The Council is committed to



facilitating the development of this major brownfield site, which is also a proposed housing allocation in the emerging Local Plan (Ref: site 10HA). Work has now started on bringing forward Phase 1 of the Moss Nook site.

#### Development of Lea Green Farm East and West Economic Sites

- 4.7 Land at Lea Green Farm West is a proposed employment land allocation in the emerging Local Plan as site 10EA. The site is now fully completed. The northern-most part of the development (known as Mere Grange) was completed a number of years ago. Four further units were completed in September 2018, whilst a further two units have been completed in 2019/20.
- 4.8 To the east of the A570 (“St Helens Linkway”) the Wincanton and Co-op Regional Distribution Centre is complete and fully operational.

#### Restore and enhance former quarries and develop a Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan

- 4.9 Substantial restoration works have taken place in the Bold Forest Park area and the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was formally adopted in July 2017. That document provides a planning framework and aims to encourage inward investment via rural entrepreneurship in the visitor economy, whilst providing leisure opportunities for the community.

#### New Railway Station at Carr Mill

- 4.10 This is a long-term Key Delivery Item, one which the Council still wishes to deliver and is building a business case for a new station in this location. The proposed site is identified in the emerging Local Plan.

#### Enhanced Park and Ride Facilities at St Helens Junction Station

- 4.11 The enhanced park and ride facilities have now been completed. The number of spaces in the car park has increased from 66 to 240. The £792,000 scheme was financed through the Government Sustainable Transport Enhanced Package (STEP) and Merseytravel fund.

### **Policy CAS 2 “St Helens Central Spatial Area”**

#### **Key Delivery Items**

- 4.12 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy have been delivered, including the development of the new St Helens Rugby League Stadium that is fully operational, and which has incorporated the relocation of the existing Tesco food store. The £65 million redevelopment of St Helens College has been completed, to provide one of the largest further education and higher education providers in the Northwest, with approximately 8,000 students.



**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CAS2**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
BD4 – Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses (Baseline 2008 = 7,448m <sup>2</sup> )	20,000sq.m. cumulative	<b>Target met</b> –a total of <b>86,824m<sup>2</sup></b> of net gain floorspace in St Helens Town Centre has been achieved.  This incorporates the following categories: convenience, comparison, retail service, leisure service, financial and business service and sui generis uses <sup>3</sup> .
Town Centre ground floor vacancy rates (Baseline 2008 = 10.27%)	Maintain below Great Britain (GB) average	<b>Target has not been met.</b> The target for the indicator states that it should maintain below a GB average. In March 2021, the UK average of vacant number of units in Town Centres was 14.1%, whilst St Helens Town Centre currently has a <b>24.0% ground floor vacancy rate.</b>

**Table 3: Retail units in St Helens Town Centre**

	March 2011	June 2016	March 2021
No. of Units in St Helens Town Centre	439	443	521
No. of Vacant Units in St Helens Town Centre	56	70	125

**Policy CAS 3.1 “Newton-le-Willows and Earlestown Strategy”**

**Key Delivery Items**

- 4.13 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy have been partially delivered, including the development of the Vulcan Urban Village, which is still on-going. A new park and ride facility, subway, stairs, lifts, ticket office and waiting facilities at Newton-le-Willows Station have been completed. Whilst the Earlestown Town Centre Area Action Plan has not been completed, the Council is still committed to developing and implementing a strategy for the regeneration of this town centre. In February 2020, the Council undertook a series of drop-in events for local residents to have their say on the

<sup>3</sup> Please note that previous calculations carried out by White Young Green included vacant units



regeneration plans for Earlestown Town Hall. Building on this consultation the Council will prepare Masterplan Development Frameworks for both Town Centres.

- 4.14 Furthermore, the Council has entered into a formal partnership agreement with the English Cities Fund as the Council's preferred strategic partner to ensure the delivery of a Borough wide regeneration strategy, including economic regeneration and housing. The Council has recognised that a new approach to growing the economy of the Borough is required that seeks to work pro-actively with the private sector and establish a strategic partnership maximising the opportunities presented to deliver significant future growth in St Helens and deliver key priorities including town centre regeneration, social wellbeing and providing appropriate infrastructure to support future development.
- 4.15 In January 2020, the Council successfully received an initial £173,029 in capacity funding as part of the Government's Town Deal initiative established by the Government in 2019. The Council is now seeking to secure significant investment of up to £25 million. This funding will be used to help increase economic growth with a focus on land use and regeneration, improved connectivity (both transport and better broadband connectivity), skills and employment, and heritage, arts and culture for St Helens and Earlestown Town Centres.

### Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CAS3.1

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Proportion of vacant units in Earlestown Centre (Baseline: Earlestown Town centre Health Check July 2009 – 16%)	Reduce Annually	<b>Target has not been met.</b> Earlestown Town Centre currently has a ground floor vacancy rate of <b>17.2%</b> , which is higher than both the baseline and the UK average of 14.1%.

**Table 4: Retail units and floorspace in Earlestown Town Centre**

	March 2011	June 2016	January 2018	March 2021
No. of Units in Earlestown Town Centre	121	127	127	134
Floorspace (sq.m.) in Earlestown Town Centre	20,940	21,296	21,296	Unknown <sup>4</sup>
No. of Vacant Units in Earlestown Town Centre	16	15	15	23

<sup>4</sup> Since the last Health Check Appraisal carried out by consultants 'White Young Green' in January 2018 no further health checks have been undertaken.



### **Policy CAS 3.2 “Development of a Strategic Rail and Freight Interchange at the Former Parkside Colliery”**

#### **Key Delivery Items**

- 4.16 This policy has no targets or indicators, and its Key Delivery Item is the development of a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) at the former Parkside Colliery in Newton-le-Willows.
- 4.17 In 2006, the then owners of the former colliery site submitted a planning application to the Council to develop an SRFI. The application was withdrawn in July 2010 and no SRFI has been developed at the site; however, whilst policy CAS3.2 has therefore yet to be implemented, the Council remains of the view that development of an SRFI or other rail enabled employment uses in the same general location would be both beneficial and deliverable, albeit within a revised policy framework. The details of this revised policy approach are set out in Policies LPA04, LPA04.1 and LPA10 of the emerging Local Plan (Submission Draft).
- 4.18 Within its emerging Local Plan Submission Draft, the Council now proposes that land at Parkside West (covering the former colliery itself and some immediately adjacent land west of the M6) be allocated mostly for general employment uses. The plans for Parkside West were supported by St Helens Planning Committee in December 2019 (planning application P/2018/0048/OUP). The application has since been called in by the Secretary of State and a local inquiry was held in early 2021, the decision for this is expected late 2021.
- 4.19 The Council considers that, as the use of intermodal rail freight is growing substantially and there is insufficient capacity in other existing and planned terminals in the area, the use of the Parkside East site for rail-based logistics would bring major benefits to the local and sub-regional economy. It would also help to meet demands for logistics growth associated with the growth of Liverpool Superport and strongly support the Government’s aims of building a robust northern economy, promoting the use of the national rail infrastructure, and reducing carbon emissions and congestion by limiting freight movement by road. These benefits are enhanced by the unusually convenient access from the site to the strategic rail and motorway systems, linking to the M6 and M62 motorways and immediately alongside the West Coast Main Line and Liverpool-Manchester rail route. The Parkside Logistics and Rail Freight Interchange Study (Aecom and Cushman and Wakefield 2016) confirmed that the Parkside site remains suitable and viable for the development of an SRFI.

### **Policy CAS 4 “Haydock and Blackbrook”**

#### **Key Delivery Items**

- 4.20 This policy has no targets or indicators; however, it has a number of Key Delivery Items, progress in relation to which is set out below.

#### **Support and Enhance Clipsley Lane Local Centre**





- 4.21 Preliminary work was carried out in 2013, regarding the enhancement of Clipsley Lane Local Centre; however, no significant changes have been made since that time.

Identify a site for a PCT LIFT scheme

- 4.22 A site for a new health facility has been identified and the resultant building (Lime Grove Surgery) was opened in April 2017.

Access to employment

- 4.23 Further to the Local Economy Supplementary Planning Document (November 2013), which provides developers and employers opportunities to help businesses within the Borough, a new employment and training support facility has now opened in the centre of St Helens, helping local residents looking for employment or training opportunities. It is the Borough's largest employment support programme and is delivered by the Council and other local partners, and delivers sustainable employment, education and training courses.

Stanley Bank

- 4.24 This Delivery Item has been successfully completed, including archaeology works, new pathways, together with the leaky dams project.

Lyme and Wood Pits Country Park

- 4.25 There has been a slight delay to the full conversion of the former Lyme and Woods Pits to a Country Park due to the extension of tipping on the site. 80% of the site is complete, with just 20% requiring profiling and planting. This is expected to be completed before 2027.

**Policy CAS5 "Rural Areas"**

**Key Delivery Items**

- 4.26 This policy has no targets or indicators; however, it has a number of Key Delivery Items, progress in relation to which is set out below.

Implement the Rural Economy Action Plan

- 4.27 The St Helens Rural Economy Action Plan (REAP) and Strategy, which was adopted in 2007, has now been superseded by the Local Economy Supplementary Planning Document (November 2013).

Provide Access to Employment Opportunities in Rural Areas

- 4.28 Whilst there is no reliable data readily available to assess progress against this, the Council takes into account rural employment opportunities and diversification when assessing relevant planning applications.

Implement Various Green Infrastructure Projects

- 4.29 Work on designing and preparing cycleway improvements within the Sankey Valley area has commenced with delivery expected in 2021-22. Work will



include tree planting and woodland management in association with the improvements.

Adopt Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan

4.30 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was adopted in July 2017. Forming part of the Development Plan for St Helens, the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan is a statutory planning policy document, which sets out the detailed policies and actions required to develop Bold Forest Park. The Plan contains a Delivery Plan and Monitoring Framework setting out the elements necessary to shape the Forest Park and provide the necessary platform for future growth through rural entrepreneurial activity and community activity.

**Policy CP 1 “Ensuring Quality Development in St Helens”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.31 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy include the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and the Waste DPD; a suite of SPDs; and the North West River Basin Management Plan. The decision to produce a new Local Plan superseded the need for a Sustainable Development DPD, and the development of most SPDs has been put on hold until the new Local Plan has been adopted.

4.32 The North West River Management Plan<sup>5</sup> produced by Defra and the Environment Agency (EA) was first published in 2015, and was updated in June 2018. It covers the entire river system for the north-west. It aims to protect the water environment and maximise its benefits and informs decisions on land-use planning.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CP1**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions (Baseline 2006 9.42 tonnes per capita)	5% reduction	Data for the 2019-2020 AMR: <b>Target met</b> - overall St Helens Council Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions have reduced by 51% compared to the baseline year of 2009/10.  There was a 5% reduction in GHG emissions from last year.  Emissions from electricity in corporate buildings are 58% lower than the baseline year and 9% lower than last year.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/river-basin-management-plans-2015#north-west-river-basin-district-rbmp:-2015>



		<p>Emissions from street lighting are 66% lower than the baseline year.</p> <p>The amount of electricity used in schools, corporate buildings and street lighting continues to reduce but a large contributor to the GHG figures comes from the lower conversion factor due to a national switch away from coal as fuel for power stations (Source: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Report 2019/2020).</p> <p><b>The data for this monitoring year (2020/2021) has yet to be collected and, therefore, it will be reported in the 2022 AMR.</b></p>
E1 Number of Planning Permissions Granted Contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding and water quality grounds (Baseline: AMR 2008 = 0)	0	<b>Target met</b> – No planning applications were approved contrary to Environment Agency advice. This reflects the Council's continuous commitment to address flooding and water quality issues.
E3 Renewable Energy Generation (Not currently measured)	EM 18 RSS and policy CP 1 provides interim target of 10% to be updated in a future Sustainable Development DPD	<b>Not measured</b> – however, no planning applications have been received or approved during this monitoring period for renewable energy.  The Sustainable Development DPD referred to in the target has not been pursued. Policy will be set out instead in the emerging new Local Plan.
H6 – Housing Quality – Building for Life Assessments  Number and proportion of total new build completions reaching very good, good, average and poor ratings (Not currently measured)	100% of residential completions to achieve at least good	<b>Not measured</b> – it is not considered appropriate to measure this target given the Government's revised approach to housing standards. Building sustainability issues are also addressed in part in the Building Regulations.
Number of residential developments achieving at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 rising to Level 4	100% of residential completions to achieve at least level	<b>Not measured</b> – the Code for Sustainable Homes has been superseded by the Government's revised approach to housing standards and it is therefore not considered appropriate to monitor this



between 2013 and 2016 and Level 6 after 2016 (Not currently measured)	required by Building Regulations. To be updated in Sustainable Development DPD	target in the AMR. Building sustainability issues are also addressed in part in the Building Regulations.
Number of developments achieving BREEAM rating of very good (Not currently measured)	100% of non-residential completions to achieve at least very good. To be updated in Sustainable Development DPD	<b>Not measured</b> – it is not considered a proportionate use of resources to monitor this target. Building sustainability issues are also addressed in part in the Building Regulations.

**Policy CP 2 “Creating an Accessible St Helens”**

**Key Delivery Items**

- 4.33 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy include the implementation of the Merseyside Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority published “A Transport Plan for Growth” in March 2015 and has published the fourth LTP for Merseyside (2019), which provides a revised long-term strategy to improve transport accessibility. Progress has also been made in relation to the other Key Delivery Items which include the implementation of the “Ensuring a Choice of Travel” SPD and the delivery of improved links to schools and improved sustainable access to employment facilities in Merseyside.
- 4.34 The Council has been successful in recent years in securing funding for high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure to support residents in transitioning to sustainable modes of transport for short everyday trips, with work currently underway with local SME ‘Flinders Chase’ to develop design options for the next tranche of routes, including routes to Whiston Hospital, Haydock and Widnes.
- 4.35 Work has begun on a new study to develop and design improvements to key corridors between St Helens town centre and the A580 East Lancashire Road, including assessing the potential for a new strategic link road through the major brownfield development at Cowley Hill. The work will look at what interventions can be made on these corridors to help improve the offer for sustainable modes of transport, as part of the council’s ambition to transition towards net zero.



- 4.36 Proposals have begun for the LCR Green Bus Routes programme which proposes to invest in infrastructure improvements to speed up bus journeys on priority routes and make journeys more reliable and attractive to customers. The first route in this programme will be the 10A (between St Helens and Liverpool city centre) the city region's busiest bus route. Improvements will look at creating dedicated road space for bus and active travel, junction upgrades, reviews of parking and loading restrictions, traffic signal upgrades and bus stop and shelter upgrades, including, digital, real-time passenger information.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CP2**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
A1 Cycling Index of Usage (Baseline: 2011)	Maintain or improve	<b>Target met</b> – continuing to improve
B1 National Accessibility Indicator (previously Economic Impact Education indicators) (Baseline: 2011)	Maintain or improve	<b>Target met</b> – continuing to improve
B3 Mode Share of journeys to School (Baseline: 2011)	Maintain or improve	<b>Target met</b> – continuing to improve
Mode Share of journeys into St Helens Town Centre (Baseline: 2011)	Increase % using sustainable modes	<b>Not measured</b> - the data used to monitor this indicator is no longer available to the Council. An alternative indicator would be needed to measure mode journeys into St Helens town centre.
% of new dwellings built within 800m of rail station or 400m of bus service	100%	<b>Target met</b> – 100% of all new dwellings built have been constructed within a 400m radius of a bus service.  <b>NB</b> 58.15% of the Borough (as a whole) is within 400m of a bus service, whilst only 14.38% of the Borough is within 800m of a rail station (both as the crow flies). Further details are set out in Table 5 below in terms of new build and its access to public transport (bus and rail).



**Table 5: Percentage of new housing constructed within 800m of a rail station/400m of a bus service in St Helens – 2010 to 2021**

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
800m Rail Station	28%	48%	39%	35%	28%	32%	32%	30%	37%	41%	45%
400m Bus Service	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

**Policy CH1 “Meeting St Helens Housing Requirement”**

**Key Delivery Items**

- 4.37 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy include the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD; the adoption of a suite of SPDs; the production of Development Briefs; and the completion of 13,680 dwellings by 2027.
- 4.38 As previously stated, the decision to produce a new Local Plan superseded the production of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD. Many of the SPDs set out as Key Delivery Items have now been adopted, including those for Rural Buildings, Householder Development and New Residential Development. The production of Development Briefs was on a ‘when required’ basis and no Development Briefs have been produced since 2009. Current performance in relation to housing delivery is set out below.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CH1**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
NI 154 (Core Output H2b) - No. of net additional dwellings to be provided each year	570 per annum	<b>Target met – 2020/21 Net housing completion of 646 units</b> See Table 6 below for further details.
Five-year supply of deliverable housing sites	100%	<b>Target met</b> – as of 31.03.2021, St Helens Borough Council has a housing supply of 5.1 years. As the Local Plan is in Examination, the housing supply figure includes proposed Local Plan allocations.
H1 – Housing Target for Plan period	13,680 net new dwellings	<b>Target not met</b> – the Core Strategy housing target (570 dpa up to 2027) runs



H2a – Net additional dwellings in previous years (Baseline: Average of 472 units to date (2001/04-2010/11))	570 per annum	from a base date of 2003. 9,243 new dwelling completions (net of losses) have taken place between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2021, i.e., an average of 514 dwellings per annum. Whilst this is lower than the target of 570dpa it is more in line with the proposed housing requirement of 486 per annum target in the emerging Local Plan. The Borough has also (in 2021) met the requirements of the national standard method (for calculating housing needs) and the Housing Delivery Test recently introduced by the Government. See Table 6 below for further details.
H2c – Net additional dwellings for future years	570 per annum	
H2d – Managed Delivery Target (Baseline: 2010/11 = 619 units)	570 per annum	
H3 – Proportion of new and converted dwellings on Previously Developed Land (PDL) (Baseline: 2010/11 = 92.35%)	80%	<b>Target met</b> – 81% of new dwellings in 2020/21 were built on Previously Developed Land. Table 7 below sets out details on an annual basis.
% of new dwellings provided at <30 dph; 30-50 dph; and >50 dph (Baseline: 2010/11 = 4.92% <30dph; 55.74% 30-50 dph; and 39.34% >50 dph)	Minimum of 40 dph in sustainable locations, 50dph within and adjacent to St Helens and Earlestown town centres, and 30 dph elsewhere.	<b>Target not met</b> – see details set out in Table 8 below.
Proportion of vacant dwellings (Baseline 2010/11 = 3.7%)	Reduce proportion of vacant dwellings annually	<b>Target met</b> – Due to the Covid pandemic, the data for this target has not been updated. However, from previous AMRs, local indicators suggest there were 933 long-term, private-sector, vacant properties within St Helens, which equates to 1.11% and lower than last year's figures.  To date, since the empty property strategy was introduced a total of 1,047 vacant properties have been demolished or brought back into use (December 2019 data).



**Table 6: Net housing completions in St Helens 2003-2021**

2003 – 2010 (7 years combined)	2010 -	2011 -	2012 -	2013 -	2014 -	2015 -	2016 -	2017 -	2018 -	2019 -	2020 -
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
3,619	157	419	264	503	632	575	487	408	775	758	646
<b>Total 2003 - 2021</b>									<b>9,243</b>		

**Table 7: Percentage of gross housing completions on Previously Developed Land – 2010 to 2021**

2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
90%	91%	78%	72%	72%	63%	85%	85%	75%	79%	81%

**Table 8: Percentage of new housing built to different densities in St Helens – 2010 to 2021**

	2010 -	2011 -	2012 -	2013 -	2014 -	2015 -	2016 -	2017 -	2018 -	2019 -	2020 -
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<30 dph	15%	4%	17%	12%	14%	20%	19%	21%	6%	9%	8%
30-50 dph	55%	62%	67%	68%	67%	74%	66%	72%	68%	70%	51%
>50 dph	30%	34%	16%	19%	19%	7%	14%	7%	26%	21%	41%

(Figures contained in Table 8 are Gross Completions)

## **Policy CH2 “Meeting St Helens Housing Needs”**

### **Key Delivery Items**

4.39 The Affordable Housing SPD has been completed and implemented. An updated Housing Strategy is currently being prepared.

### **Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CH2**

<b>Item and Baseline</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Performance against targets in 2020/21</b>
NI 155 (Core Output H5)- No. of affordable homes delivered per year (Baseline = 87 affordable units)	100 affordable units per annum. If target not achieved for three consecutive years, then viability to be reviewed and revision to target considered.	<b>Target met</b> - Table 9 clearly shows there have been a total of 1,585 affordable completions over 11 years, which equates to an average of 144 affordable completions per year.





**Table 9: Affordable and gross housing completions in St Helens – 2010 to 2021**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
	- 2011	- 2012	- 2013	- 2014	- 2015	- 2016	- 2017	- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021
Affordable Completions	87	231	149	142	112	122	66	80	128	192	276
Gross Completions	182	432	332	509	633	576	489	457	806	765	654
Affordable Completions as a %	48%	53%	45%	28%	18%	21%	13%	18%	16%	25%	42%

**Policy CH3 “Meeting the Needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.40 The Key Delivery Item for this policy was to provide permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers & Travelling Showpeople in accordance with need, and deliver a new transit site, for which funding was secured. The Council has acquired the land for the transit site, which has also been identified as a proposed allocation for this use in the emerging Local Plan. The annual Caravan Count required by Government was delayed for this monitoring period due to the Covid pandemic, and therefore will be reported in the 2022 AMR.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CH3**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
H4- Net Additional Pitches (Gypsy and Traveller) (Baseline: 2008/09 = 50 existing pitches)	In accordance with identified needs	No gypsy and traveller sites were permitted between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021. Existing Council provision stands at 29 pitches on private sites and 20 on Council owned sites. A further three sites exist providing approximately 14 pitches but without planning consent. The emerging Local Plan seeks to allocate eight new pitches on a permanent site and three additional transit pitches.

**Policy CE 1 “A Strong and Sustainable Economy”**

**Key Delivery Items**



- 4.41 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy include the development of 37 hectares of land for B1, B2 & B8 uses by 2027, and development of the Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange; the adoption of an Allocations DPD, and the implementation of the City Growth Strategy.
- 4.42 Parkside represents the single largest strategic commercial development site within the LCR, holding substantial potential for future industrial space growth. There are currently two live planning applications on the Parkside site. Planning application P/2018/0048/OUP6 was submitted in January 2018 for a phase 1 logistics development on Parkside West (site 8EA in the emerging Local Plan). Planning application P/2018/0249/FUL was submitted in March 2018 for a single carriageway road referred to as the 'Parkside Link Road', which would link the A49 Winwick Road to the A579 Winwick Lane enabling access to Junction 22 of the M6. In May 2020, both planning applications were called-in for determination by the Secretary of State, and a local inquiry was held in January 2021. A decision on both applications is expected in August 2021.

### Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CE1

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
URH 80 (NI 171) New business births (Baseline: 2010/11 = 445 achieved)	Annual Target = 400	<b>Target met – 885</b> new business births were recorded, 485 above the annual target.
BD1 Total amount of additional employment floorspace – by type (Baseline: 2010 AMR = negative 53,169sq.m.)	No target	There was a negative figure of 1,116m <sup>2</sup> of net employment floorspace developed, this was due to a significant loss of industrial floorspace at one particular site which equated to the loss of <b>9,718m<sup>2</sup></b> of B1 use.
BD2 Total amount of employment floorspace on previously developed land – (Baseline: 2010 AMR = 100%)	75%	<b>Target met</b> – only 8% (717m <sup>2</sup> of 8,602m <sup>2</sup> ) of the total amount of completed employment floorspace was constructed on greenfield land.
BD3 Employment land available – by type (Baseline: 2010 AMR = 87ha)	No target	The amounts of employment land with planning permission (commenced and not commenced) based on end of year survey (March 2021) are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>B1</b> – 3,205m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>B2</b> – 10,313m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>B8</b> – 44,896m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>Mixed Use</b> - 576m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <b>Total: 58,990m<sup>2</sup></b>



Amount of floorspace developed by type in employment areas (Baseline: 2010 AMR = 11,135sq.m.)	No target	A total of 8,602m <sup>2</sup> of new build employment floorspace was completed in 2020/21, equating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>B1</b> – 6,314m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>B2</b> – 1,919m<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>B8</b> – 369m<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <p>Comparison details are set out in Table 10 below.</p>
Total amount of industrial/commercial floorspace lost to other uses (Baseline: 2010 AMR = 35,304 sq.m.)	0 loss	<b>Target not met</b> – 9,178m <sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace was lost to other uses in 2020/21 (see Table 11 below for further details). This target is no longer considered up to date as national planning policy recognises that there are circumstances where such losses will be justified.

**Table 10: New build employment floorspace completed in St Helens, 2010-2021**

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020	2020 - 2021
B1(m <sup>2</sup> )	7,505	3,241	469	40	565	134	936	354	8,566	959	6,314
B2(m <sup>2</sup> )	9,340	985	330	3,853	2,899	364	2,240	412	2,339	4,964	1,919
B8(m <sup>2</sup> )	865	30	605	730	140	1,269	949	-	300	138,589	369
Mixed (m <sup>2</sup> )	-	-	-	-	-	4,553	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>17,710</b>	<b>4,226</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>4,362</b>	<b>3,604</b>	<b>6,320</b>	<b>4,125</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>11,205</b>	<b>144,512</b>	<b>8,602</b>



**Table 11: Loss in employment floorspace by type and year in St Helens. 2010- 2021**

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
B1 (m <sup>2</sup> )	115	525	187	2,481	751	53	2,377	400	1,789	9,718
B2 (m <sup>2</sup> )	5,605	-	-	5,476	50,737	1,089	-	14,150	253	-
B8 (m <sup>2</sup> )	-	458	-	922	2,110	1,430	965	-	8,769	-
Mixed (m <sup>2</sup> )	-	-	-	-	-	-	249	-	-	-
<b>Total (m<sup>2</sup>)</b>	<b>5,720</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>8,879</b>	<b>53,598</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>3,591</b>	<b>14,550</b>	<b>10,811</b>	<b>9,718</b>

**Policy CQL1 “Green Infrastructure”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.43 There are a number of Key Delivery Items for this Policy, the current situation in relation to which is set out below.

Adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD and Proposals Map

4.44 The need to produce these documents has been superseded by the production of the emerging Local Plan.

Adoption of Bold Forest Park AAP and implementation of Bold Forest Park project

4.45 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was formally adopted in July 2017.

Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor

4.46 This delivery Item has been successfully completed, including archaeology works, new pathways and the leaky dams project.

Restoration to Country Park of the former Lyme and Woods pits

4.47 There has been a slight delay to the full completion of the former Lyme and Woods Pits Country Park due to the extension of tipping on the site. 80% of the site is complete, with just 20% requiring profiling and planting. This is scheduled to be completed before 2027.

Sankey Valley Park, between St Helens and Warrington

4.48 Similar to the Stanley Bank, Carr Mill Dam and Billinge Hill Corridor scheme, this project has also been completed.

The former Ibstock Quarry



- 4.49 The Forestry Commission had completed their section of works in 2012 and planting on the site has been completed; however, not all the site is open to the public due to on-going methane extraction. The site is now known locally as the 'Brick Fields site', and comprises of cycleways, pathways and bridle ways.

Existing Green Flag status maintained, and additional ones achieved

- 4.50 The Borough currently has one park (Victoria Park) with Green Flag status. This represents a reduction since 2012, which can be attributed to budget costs and the loss of central government funding.

Delivery of Mersey Forest

- 4.51 The Mersey Forest is a growing network of woodlands and green spaces across Cheshire and Merseyside, with its priority to get more trees planted in the area. In 2017/18, £1.5m was secured in funding that helped to create 26 hectares of woodland. The work of the Mersey Forest team is guided by the Mersey Forest Plan (which is a long-term strategic plan) and The Mersey Forest Delivery Plan (a five-year action plan). Projects relevant to St Helens include:

- **Urban Tree Challenge First Phase** - 418 standard and heavy standard trees planted within several parks and highway areas, throughout St Helens.
- **Sutton Manor and Wheatacre Farm Tree Thinning** – Forestry England carried out first thinning within the woodlands at Sutton Manor and Wheatacre Farm, which both lie within Bold Forest Park. The trees felled were used for timber production with the respacing of the trees within the woodland improving future economic and biodiversity value of the woodlands.
- **Sankey Wildlife Corridor** – Lancashire Wildlife Trust are looking at small scale habitat improvement, survey, and monitoring of the Nine Arches- Stanley Bank area. Outcomes will include grassland management and interpretation as well as site survey data.

Adoption of Biodiversity SPD

- 4.52 The current Biodiversity SPD was adopted in June 2011. A draft update, known as the Nature Conservation SPD, has been produced and will be progressed towards adoption following the anticipated adoption of the St Helens Borough Local Plan, which is currently at Examination. The draft SPD will be reviewed to ensure it is in line with new legislation and national policy.

Adoption of Green Infrastructure SPD

- 4.53 A Green Infrastructure SPD was not progressed. However, the Council is in the process of preparing a Nature Conservation SPD to replace the existing Biodiversity SPD, which will support the implementation of the emerging Local Plan.

North West River Basin Management Plan



4.54 The North West River Management Plan has been produced by DEFRA and the Environment Agency (EA). It was first published in February 2016 and later updated in June 2018 to fix broken links.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CQL1**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Length of Greenway lost to development (km) (Baseline: Not currently measured)	No net loss	<b>Target not monitored</b> - The current policy position is however to resist any un-justified Greenway loss to development, in-line with the St Helens Greenway Policy Review (February 2015).
Amount of Open Space lost to development (Ha) (Baseline: Not currently measured)	Identify and protect all sites over 0.4ha (0.2ha for playing pitches)	<b>Target not monitored</b> - The current policy position is however to resist any un-justified loss of open space to development.
No. of Green Flag Status Parks (Baseline: 2008 = 9)	Achieve additional designations Borough wide	<b>Target not met.</b> The Borough currently has one park (Victoria Park) with Green Flag status. This represents a marked reduction since 2012, which can be attributed to budget costs and the loss of central government funding.

4.55 The Open Space Assessment Report for St. Helens (Knight Kavanagh & Page 2016) identified that:

- 286 sites in the St Helens borough form open space provision. This equates to over 1,004 hectares across the borough.
- Most typologies are set as having an accessibility standard of a 15-minute walk time. For certain typologies it is less to reflect their role and function.
- Over three quarters of all open spaces score above the threshold for quality. More amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural sites score low for quality compared to other typologies. This is as such sites tend to lack features.
- Most open spaces are assessed as being of high value. Sites which do not do so tend to be in either the ‘amenity greenspace’ or ‘natural and semi-natural’ typologies.

**Policy CQL2 “Trees and Woodlands”**

**Key Delivery Items**



4.56 The Key Delivery Items for this Policy are set out below.

Adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD and Proposals Map

4.57 The need to produce these documents has been superseded by the production of the emerging Local Plan.

Adoption of Trees and Development SPD and implementation of CIL

4.58 The Trees and Development SPD was adopted in June 2008. The Council does not currently plan to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Adoption of Bold Forest Park AAP and implementation of Bold Forest Park project

4.59 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was adopted in July 2017 (see further information in Chapter 5 of this AMR).

Delivery of Mersey Forest

4.60 See information in paragraph 4.52 above under Policy CQL1 Green Infrastructure.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CQL2**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Mersey Forest tree coverage created (ha) (Baseline: Not currently monitored)	No target	<b>Target and Indicator not monitored</b> – however, the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was adopted in 2017, potentially delivering 1,808 ha of new woodland.
Number of trees provided through Planning Obligations	Two new trees per one tree lost to development	<b>Targets and Indicator not monitored</b> – however, the Council regularly seeks new tree and woodland planting in accordance with the policy and target when dealing with planning applications.
Changes in areas of woodlands (ha)	No target	As above

**Policy CQL3 “Biodiversity”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.61 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy include the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD; the adoption of a Biodiversity SPD; implementation of a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the adoption of a Green Infrastructure SPD.



- 4.62 As previously stated, the decision to produce a new Local Plan in 2015 superseded the production of the Sustainable Development DPD and the Allocations DPD. A Green Infrastructure SPD was not progressed. However, the Biodiversity SPD was adopted in June 2011 and the Council intends to update this SPD with a new Nature Conservation SPD (a draft of which has already been produced) in line with new legislation and national policy to support the implementation of the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.63 The North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan comprises a number of individual Species & Habitat Action Plans and a Business Plan to prioritise work for conservation over the next few years. All these and other related documents are available on the Merseyside Biodiversity Group website at: <http://www.merseysidebiodiversity.org.uk/>

### Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CQL3

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
The condition of Stanley Bank Meadow SSSI (Baseline: Favourable condition)	Maintain current status	<b>Target met</b> –Stanley Bank Meadow SSSI is currently in a favourable condition with ongoing management and harvesting of grassland.
Percentage of local wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition (Baseline: (2011) – 16.2% in conservation management (implying the habitat is in favourable condition))	75% of local wildlife and geological sites in favourable condition by 2027	<b>Target yet to be met</b> - Based on April 2020 – March 2021 data in the <i>An Assessment of Local Wildlife Sites in Merseyside Report</i> (April 2021) 20% of Local Wildlife sites in St Helens were in good condition, 50% in moderate and 30% in poor condition  <i>(This specific target has not been updated since 2016/17).</i>
Extent and condition of key habitats for which BAPs have been established (Baseline: Local Sites Partnership AMR 2008)	No target	<b>Target not monitored</b> - No information available at present.
Area of habitats created (Baseline: to be confirmed)	35ha of new woodland created, 1ha of new wetland habitat created,	<b>Target not monitored</b> - No information is available at present.





	31ha of new grassland habitat created by 2027	Planning applications at Omega and Parkside require offsite mitigation for habitat loss likely to be targeted at Bold Forest Park and Sankey Valley areas.
Area of Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (Baseline: 6 sites totalling 109.39ha)	Meet Natural England guidance of 1ha of LNR land per 1000 population by 2027	<b>Target yet to be met</b> - There are currently seven LNR sites within the Borough, totalling 111.27 ha. Given the Borough's population of 180,585, the target of 1ha per thousand of the population has yet to be met. Discussions with a local group are looking at the potential of woodlands and meadows on a former Rainhill Hospital site becoming a Local Wildlife Site.

### **Policy CQL4 “Heritage and Landscape”**

#### **Key Delivery Items**

4.64 There are a number of Key Delivery Items for this Policy as set out below. The Council currently has no permanent Conservation Officer in place. As a result, the Council has contracted 'Growth Lancashire'. They provide conservation advice on planning applications and enforcement cases, along with monthly visits to the Council offices to discuss matters arising.

#### **Adoption of the List of Locally Important Buildings SPD**

4.65 The List of Locally Important Buildings SPD was adopted in 2011. The Council has now commissioned S.G. Lingard Consultancy to develop a Heritage Strategy and delivery plan for the Borough.

#### **Completion of Conservation Area Appraisals (CAAs)**

4.66 All Conservation Areas in the Borough have been appraised. Whilst the appraisals are all more than five years old and are now considered to be in need of updating, this Key Delivery Item has been implemented.

#### **Implementation of Conservation Area Management Plans (CAMPs)**

4.67 CAMPs have been completed for all Conservation Areas in the Borough. Whilst a number of these are now dated, this Key Delivery Item has been implemented.



Implementation of Article 4 Directions

4.68 Several Conservation Areas in St Helens are covered by Article 4(2) Directions which limit the types of development which may be implemented without specific planning consent. These are due to be reviewed and updated if required.

Implementation of Article 4 grant schemes

4.69 This grant scheme has had to be reviewed as part of budget cutbacks.

Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CQL4

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Number of Listed Buildings (Baseline: 2008 = 145)	No loss	<b>Target met</b> - in 2021, according to Historic England St Helens has 148 (Grade I, Grade II* and Grade II) list buildings, with no net losses.
Number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Baseline: 2008 = 11)	No loss	<b>Target met</b> - Historic England's Heritage List for England identifies 12 Scheduled Monuments in the Borough. Whilst four of these are on their Heritage at Risk Register, none of them have been lost.
Properties in Historic England's Buildings at Risk register (Baseline: 2008 = 3)	No target	Although there is no specific target set for this indicator, there has been a regression in comparison with the original baseline. Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register now identifies four Listed Buildings, which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church of St Helen</li> <li>• Church of Holy Trinity</li> <li>• Church of St. Mary</li> <li>• Rainhill Hall Farmhouse</li> </ul>
Number of Conservation Areas with up-to-date Conservation Area Management Plans (Baseline: 10/10 in 2011)	Maintain up to date management plans	<b>Target yet to be met</b> - No new Conservation Areas or appraisals have been designated or undertaken during this monitoring period.  Currently, the Borough has eight Conservation Areas, three of which (at Rainhill, George Street (St Helens) and Earlestown) are on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.  The Council as part of the Local Plan preparation process prepared a Heritage Background Paper <sup>6</sup> .

<sup>6</sup> SD23: Heritage Background Paper, April 2020 <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/article/3491/Local-Plan-examination-library>



## **Policy CQL5 “Social Infrastructure”**

### **Key Delivery Items**

4.70 The Key Delivery Items for this Policy are set out below.

#### **Implementation of CIL**

4.71 The Council does not currently plan to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

#### **Improvements to Secondary Education**

4.72 Cowley International College, Haydock High School and Landsbury Bridge Special School have benefitted from recent investment to improve buildings based on various condition issues. Millgreen Special School was successfully rebuilt based on condition and suitability. Further work on improving facilities for both teaching staff and pupils is on-going.

#### **Improvements to Primary Education Facilities**

4.73 Ashurst Primary School is being totally redeveloped with a replacement facility in the grounds of the single form Ashurst Primary School via a £8.6m project. The work will be carried out in two phases with first being the construction of the new school. The second phase will be the demolition of the original school building and final phase landscaping of the site. Due to restricted site space, the building will go up one storey. Located on the ground floor will be the nursery, reception, infant classrooms, a special needs classroom, hall, kitchen and plant room. On the first floor will be classrooms for junior students, along with the library, SEN resource room, small group rooms and staff room.

4.74 Penkford Special School for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) is being moved to the former Red Bank Educational site as part of a £7.6m project. The building is being completely remodelled, and extended to include a new sports hall, kitchen and dining area and staff offices. The building will house Key stage 2, 3 and 4 in separate zones along with centrally located, shared specialist rooms for art, science, design technology and food technology. Work on site is due to commence in September 2021.

#### **Health Facilities programme**

4.75 The Eccleston Health Centre has recently been completed. The Council works pro-actively with partner organisations to identify priorities for health-related investment.

#### **Complete Redevelopment of St Helens College**

4.76 St Helens College has seen significant investment over recent years, with the whole campus being redeveloped. This scheme has been completed.



**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CQL5**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) (Baseline: IMD 2007 = 47 <sup>th</sup> )	Improve deprivation levels across all SOAs	<b>Target not met</b> – the latest IMD (2019) = 26 <sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority out of 317 across the country, its relative position worsening on the 2015 Index where St Helens was ranked as the 36 <sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority out of 326 districts.
Access to GP, Hospitals, Primary and Secondary Schools, Town and Local Centres by Public Transport (Baseline: 2008 GP = 99.6%; Hospital = 96%; Primary School = 99.4%; Secondary School = 91.4%)	Improve overall accessibility where possible	<b>Target no-longer monitored</b> - Access to GPs, Hospitals, Primary and Secondary Schools, Town and Local centres by Public Transport in the Borough is generally good, with residents in most of the built-up areas being able to access a site within 30 minutes. Data used to be collated using a specialist software, however, this software is no-longer available. Therefore, the Council can no-longer monitor this as was done in previous AMRs.
Amount of Social Infrastructure lost to development (Baseline: Not currently measured)	No net loss unless surplus to requirements	<b>Target not currently monitored</b> – however the Council has a policy of resisting development which could lead to the loss of infrastructure unless it can be demonstrated that the infrastructure affected is surplus to requirements.

**Policy CR1 “Minerals”**

**Key Delivery Items**

4.77 The Key Delivery Item associated with this policy was the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD. The decision to produce a new Local Plan in 2015 superseded the production of both these documents.

**Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CR1**

Item and Baseline	Target	Performance against targets in 2020/21
M1 Production of primary land won aggregates by mineral planning authority	Maintain current supply	<b>These indicators are no longer up to date.</b> Aggregate monitoring is



(Baseline: 2008 = 264 tonnes)		no-longer collated at a district level. Data is now collected at a sub-regional level and can be found via the Joint Local Aggregate Assessment <sup>7</sup> .
M2 Production of secondary and recycled aggregates by mineral planning authority (Baseline: Not currently measured)	No target until baseline known	

## **Policy CR2 “Waste”**

### **Key Delivery Items**

- 4.78 Key Delivery Items associated with this policy included the adoption of a Sustainable Development DPD and an Allocations DPD, along with a number of Area Action Plans; a new Resource Recovery Contract; and the adoption of the Joint Waste DPD.
- 4.79 The decision to produce a new Local Plan superseded the production of the Sustainable Development DPD and the Allocations DPD. The Resource Recovery Contract for Merseyside has been awarded. The Joint Waste Local Plan is discussed in Chapter 6.

### **Targets and Indicators for Core Strategy Policy CR2**

<b>Item and Baseline</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Performance against targets in 2020/21</b>
W1 Capacity of new waste management facilities by waste planning authority (Baseline: Figures available from the Waste DPD when adopted)	To meet the specific targets outlined in the Joint Merseyside Waste DPD – Needs Assessment, making an appropriate contribution to sub-regional needs	These matters are monitored separately in the AMR for the Joint Waste DPD – see Chapter 6 of this AMR for further details of how to access this document.
W2 Amount of municipal waste arising, and managed by management type waste planning authority	50% recycled /composed by 2020 40% residual waste treated by 2020 Max 10% residual waste landfilled by 2020	

<sup>7</sup> Available to view at [Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan 2013.pdf](http://Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan 2013.pdf) ([sthelens.gov.uk](http://sthelens.gov.uk))



## **Policy CIN1 “Meeting St Helens Infrastructure Needs”**

### **Key Delivery Items**

4.80 There were no Targets and Indicators for this Policy. However, there are several Key Delivery Items as set out below.

#### **Introduction of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

4.81 St Helens Council does not currently plan to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

#### **Implementation of CIL, or other developer contribution regime**

4.82 Developer contributions are collected through Section 106 contributions and can be found within the Council’s published Infrastructure Funding Statement.

#### **Supporting Infrastructure delivery Partners Programmes**

4.83 The Council works closely with its infrastructure delivery partners to bring forward various programmes throughout the Borough. These partners include (for example):

- Department for Transport;
- Merseytravel;
- Highways England;
- United Utilities;
- Mersey Forest;
- Forestry England; and
- Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

#### **Adoption of Waste DPD**

4.84 The Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP) was adopted by the local authorities of Merseyside and Halton in July 2013, at which point its policies and allocations became part of each authority’s Development Plan. Further details of the WLP are set out in Chapter 6 of this AMR.



## 5 BOLD FOREST PARK ACTION AREA PLAN 2017: POLICY MONITORING

- 5.1 This Chapter sets out current progress in delivering the policies of the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (AAP) (adopted in July 2017). The AAP sets out (in Chapter 16) a Delivery Plan and Monitoring Framework which establishes the elements necessary to shape the Forest Park and provide the necessary platform for its future development. The section below analyses progress against the indicators set out in that Framework during the period 1 April 2020 until 31 March 2021.
- 5.2 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has not been possible to collate data surrounding most of the indicators required for the Bold Forest Park Monitoring Framework. The pandemic has had a profound impact on the ways in which Council staff have been working for this AMR period with many staff working from home as well as the various Covid-19 related restrictions. In addition, as there is still uncertainty around the pandemic and when working patterns will return to normal, it is unlikely that data for these indicators will be collected and ready for publication in the next AMR period, i.e., 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

### **Indicator 1: Visitor numbers to the Bold Forest Park**

Description of indicator	Target
Visitors to the Bold Forest Park a) Overall visitor numbers b) Numbers of visitors from Thatto Heath, Parr, Bold and Sutton wards	a) Upward trend on baseline b) Upward trend on baseline

- 5.3 The baseline estimated visits (2012) were calculated as follows:

Site	Total visits pa
Wheatacre	31,755
Sutton Manor	68,985
Clockface Country Park	43,691
Griffin Wood	21,079
Colliers Moss Common	16,863
Maypole	10,646
Brickfields	7,665
<b>Total</b>	<b>200,683*</b>

- 5.4 The data for Indicator 1 is to be collected every three years and was due to be collected for this AMR period; however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to monitor visitor numbers to the Bold Forest Park.



**Indicator 2: Customer satisfaction rates**

Description of indicator	Target
Customer Satisfaction Rates	Upward trend on baseline

5.5 Again, data for Indicator 2 is to be collected every three years and was due to be collected for this AMR period. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to collate any information on customer satisfaction rates regarding the Bold Forest Park.

**Indicator 3: Percentage of journeys made to Bold Forest Park by car**

Description of indicator	Target
Percentage of journeys made to Bold Forest Park by car	Decrease on baseline

5.6 Baseline data, prepared before the AAP was adopted, suggests that most of the visitors to the Dream and the surrounding area were local residents, and that the area is mainly used on a high frequency level by local people for walking and dog walking. The data suggested that 35% of visitors walked to the site and 56% drove from surrounding post code areas and just 8% drove from further afield.

5.7 Indicator 3 was due to be collected every three years and was due to be collected for this AMR period. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to collate any information on number of car journeys to the Bold Forest Park.

**Indicator 4: Environmental Enhancements**

Description of indicator	Target
Environmental enhancements in Bold Forest Park a) Percentage of tree cover in Bold Forest Park b) Changes in Priority Habitats in the Forest Park c) Number of Lapwing	a) Increase cover to 20% south of M62, 30% north of M62 b) Minimum no net loss c) Monitoring of population trend

5.8 Trees within the Bold Forest Park have now matured and form an important green asset, providing for example the setting for the Dream landmark sculpture.





- 5.9 The 'St Helens Forest Plan 2017 to 2027', published by the Forestry Commission, summarises proposals for the management of several woodlands, of which those at: Sutton Manor (62ha); Wheatacre (22ha); Brickfield & Red Quarry (12ha); and Maypole (13ha) lie in Bold Forest Park. All of these woodlands are managed by the Forestry Commission with the emphasis on creating a safe welcoming environment to be enjoyed by local families and visitors to the area.
- 5.10 The current progress in monitoring Indicator 4 is set out below.

Indicator element	Target	Frequency	Current Status
Percentage of tree cover in Bold Forest Park	Increase cover to 20% south of M62, 30% north of M62	Year 1	<p>This has been a difficult target to measure. Whilst there have been a number of tree planting schemes in and around the Bold Forest area since the AAP's adoption, these have not been quantified.</p> <p>The woodlands in the Bold Forest Park are all very young and have only just become fully established. No major felling operations are planned but some stands will be thinned out.</p> <p>The Council intends to work with its partners, Forestry England and The Mersey Forest to gain more detailed data.</p>
Changes in Priority Habitats in the Forest Park	Minimum no net loss	Year 3	In collaboration with The Mersey Forest, data for this target will be collected on a three-yearly basis. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it has not been possible to measure this data.
Number of Lapwing	Monitoring of population trend	Year 3	In collaboration with The Mersey Forest, data for this target will be collected on a three-yearly basis. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it has not been possible to measure this data.



### **Indicator 5: Protection of the Historic Environment**

Description of indicator	Target
Protection of the Historic Environment in Bold Forest Park a) The number of Scheduled Monuments at risk in Bold Forest Park b) The number of listed buildings in Bold Forest Park	a) Zero b) No loss

5.11 The current progress in monitoring Indicator 5 is set out below

Indicator	Target	Current Status
The number of Scheduled Monuments at risk in Bold Forest Park	Zero	<b>Target not met</b> - there are currently three Scheduled Monuments within the Bold Forest Park. Of these, one is currently on Historic England's 'At Risk' list.  Old Moat House Medieval Moat, Bold, is in a generally unsatisfactory condition with major localised problems, with vehicle damage/erosion which appears to be extensive.
The number of listed buildings in Bold Forest Park	No loss	<b>Target met</b> – in 2020/21, Bold Forest Park contained seven Listed Buildings, with no net losses.

### **Indicator 6: Developer Contributions**

Indicator description	Target
The number and amount of developer contributions to the infrastructure of the Forest Park	Increase on baseline

5.12 As of 31 March 2021, there had been no monetary planning obligations received from developer contributions towards the infrastructure of the Bold Forest Park.

5.13 However, the emerging Local Plan allocates three sites for development in the Bold Forest area (two for proposed housing development and one for employment use), with a fourth site having been identified for safeguarding for employment use beyond the proposed Local Plan period, i.e., after 2035. The Plan states that any development on these sites must be consistent with the



vision, aims, objectives and policies of the Bold Forest Park AAP. The Council also has a number of requirements of any development on these sites as set out in Appendix 5 of the emerging Local Plan. For example:

- On site 4HA (Bold Forest Garden Suburb), development must provide a well landscaped setting including extensive green links through and around the site, and tree planting to increase tree cover by 30% across the Bold Forest as a whole; and
  - On site 5HA (land south of Gartons Lane), development should integrate well into the Bold Forest Park setting and provide satisfactory pedestrian, bridleway and cycleway access into the Forest Park. The developer will also be expected to fund the provision of a suitable access road to the car park area in the adjacent Bold Forest Park, as well as utility service connections.
- 5.14 In January 2020 an application was submitted to the Council for a hybrid application on a site allocated for employment use in the emerging Local Plan (Ref: 1EA – Omega West). The proposals sought full planning permission for the construction of one logistics warehouse comprising 81,570 square metres with 77,084 square metres within use class B8 (storage and distribution) with ancillary B1(a) offices comprising 4,486 square metres along with associated serving and infrastructure. The site area is approximately 37ha and the unit has an identified end user, Home Bargains.
- 5.15 Following Council approval, the application was called in by the Secretary of State whose decision is expected later this year (October 2021). This allocation will be a strategically important employment site for the Borough, which would secure a range of opportunities for St Helens residents with several future occupiers having been secured subject to a positive planning outcome. The application will include several planning obligations secured through a S106 agreement, including a biodiversity contribution to provide off-site mitigation in order to enhance landscape character and tree cover of the Bold Forest Park, and infrastructure contributions for further Bold Forest Park Initiatives.

**Indicator 7: Increasing Employment Opportunities**

Indicator description	Target
Increasing employment opportunities in Bold Forest Park a) Number of people employed in Bold Forest Park b) Percentage increase/decrease of VAT registered businesses in Bold Forest Park c) The number of development proposals resulting in employment floorspace generation	a) Upward trend from baseline b) Upward trend from baseline c) Upward trend from baseline

- 5.16 The Council has not obtained detailed information to monitor elements a) or b) of this indicator. No new employment sites have been developed in the Bold



Forest Park area since 2017. However, should the application of Site 1EA – Omega West be approved by the Secretary of State, then it is expected that the proposed development would result in a significant investment into the local economy and would create/support a number of jobs during the construction and operational phases.

- 5.17 The Council will work in partnership with the developer and its contractors to provide help and support which will enable local people to access the many jobs and training opportunities that this development would offer, both during the construction and operational phases. The Council’s Ways to Work team will provide bespoke support including running local ‘Access to Jobs’ events, help with application forms, training, and matching people to the available jobs on the site. The target in relation to element c) of this indicator has therefore not currently been met.

**Indicator 8: Increasing Accessibility in Bold Forest Park**

Indicator description	Target
Increasing accessibility in Bold Forest Park a) Length of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways b) Length of accessible footpaths (DDA compliant – in accordance with most up to date Department for Transport guidance)	a) Increase on baseline b) Increase on baseline

- 5.18 No public rights of way have been improved in the Bold Forest Park area since 2017. However, there have been several improvements on non - public rights of way paths and tracks on the Mersey Forest Colliers Moss site. Some improvements have also been carried out on Council owned land to the rear of Bold Business Park. A significant amount of improvement work had already been completed by 2017 (such as the mineral railway).

**Indicator 9: Community engagement**

Indicator description	Target
Community engagement a) Establishment of Bold Forest Park Community Network and numbers of members b) Establishment of Bold Forest Park Community Action Plan	a) Maintain active membership b) Establish Community Action Plan

- 5.19 Several community action groups exist in the Bold Forest Area including: The Friends of Griffin Wood; The Forest Park; and Shining Lights Heritage Group. Forestry England and The Mersey Forest also run community engagement programmes, which actively encourage local community participation. Whilst



no formal Bold Forest Community group or Action Plan has been developed to date, the Council hopes to address this matter in the coming years.

**Indicator 10: Addressing Anti-social Behaviour**

Indicator description	Target
Incidence of anti-social behaviour in Bold Forest Park	Monitoring of trend

5.20 The way in which incidents of crime are now reported has changed compared to how it was originally collated in previous years and reported in earlier AMRs. However, 1,316 incidents of crime were reported in the months from June 2020 to May 2021. The majority of these crimes occurred in the built-up urban areas within and surrounding the Park. This number is higher than the previous number recorded for former years. This is based on data for individual crime incidents published via the [www.police.uk](http://www.police.uk) open data portal, which has been linked by St Helens Council (Local Insight) to selected neighbourhoods.

**Indicator 11: Healthy Living Activities**

Indicator description	Target
Number of Healthy Living Activities in Bold Forest Park (including participation levels in walking, cycling, horse riding and Green Gyms)	Increase on baseline

5.21 The data for Indicator 11 is to be collected every three years and was due to be collected for this AMR period. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic it was not possible to monitor healthy living activities in the Bold Forest Park.



## **6 MERSEYSIDE AND HALTON JOINT WASTE LOCAL PLAN: POLICY MONITORING**

### **Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP)**

- 6.1 Planning policy for waste management development in St Helens is contained in the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (WLP), adopted by the local authorities of Merseyside and Halton in July 2013. Upon adoption, the WLP's policies and allocations became part of each authority's Development Plan. They form an important consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 6.2 The WLP covers the period from 2013 to 2027 and must be regularly reviewed under relevant legislation. It contains 16 Policies and 18 Site Allocations dealing with all aspects of waste management from waste prevention to energy from waste facilities. The WLP was prepared by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS).

### **Monitoring of the Waste Local Plan**

- 6.3 To assess progress in implementing the WLP, an Implementation and Monitoring Report is prepared to cover the period from 1st April to 31st March each year. These documents are prepared by MEAS on behalf of the six Liverpool City Region councils. They also provide more recent contextual information especially where this relates to cross-boundary matters or progress with implementation of planning consents.
- 6.4 Unfortunately due to the Covid19 pandemic, the Implementation and Monitoring report has not been updated, with the most recent Implementation and Monitoring Report for the WLP being the 2018/19 edition, published in July 2020. That report and other documents relating to the Joint WLP, and its monitoring are available on the MEAS website at <http://www.meas.org.uk/1090>.

## 7 DUTY TO COOPERATE

### Introduction

- 7.1 The 'Duty to Cooperate' became a legal requirement under the Localism Act, which came into force in November 2011. It requires local planning authorities and other prescribed bodies to cooperate on strategic matters so as to maximise the effectiveness of preparing development plan and other local development documents. Advice about the duty is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Whilst the Duty to Cooperate is not a "duty to agree", the PPG makes it clear that local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their local plans for examination. National regulations require the AMR to include details of any activities undertaken in relation to the Duty to Cooperate.
- 7.2 St Helens Council has addressed the Duty to Cooperate by working with:
- neighbouring local authorities to identify and address strategic cross-boundary issues; and
  - other public bodies and infrastructure providers to ensure that relevant strategic planning matters are identified and addressed.

### The sub-regional context

- 7.3 St Helens, along with the local authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral, falls within the Liverpool City Region (LCR), with West Lancashire District Council as an associate member of the LCR. Whilst each of the LCR local authorities delivers their own local planning and other services, they have an extensive history of joint working. This was formalised in 2014 through the establishment of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (the LCRCA), which forms a joint entity with a range of functions covering employment and skills, culture and tourism, transport (delivered through Merseytravel, the integrated transport authority), economic development, and housing and strategic planning.
- 7.4 The Council has prepared statements of common ground with other authorities covering the Liverpool City Region<sup>8</sup> and Warrington in support of the preparation of the St Helens Borough Local Plan. Copies of both these statements are available on request.
- 7.5 There are several officer working groups within the LCR including the Liverpool City Region Chief Planning Officers Group and its subgroups. The Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) provides specialist support and advice to the City Region authorities on environmental planning, waste, minerals, contaminated land and ecology.

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<sup>8</sup> Liverpool City Region Spatial Planning Statement of Common Ground, October 2019. This document also covers West Lancashire.



7.6 Under the LCR Growth Fund Initiative, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and central government have agreed to co-invest in jointly agreed priorities across the LCR. Those which have or are likely to benefit St Helens include:

- The Parkside Link Road;
- Key Route Network: A580/ A58 Junction Improvement (Pewfall);
- Continuation of the Sustainable Transport Enhancement Packages (STEP) which currently provide six years of funding which will help to improve access to Haydock Industrial estate, active travel facilities at Newton-le-Willows and along the A580; and
- Improvements to cycling and walking as part of the Active Travel Emergency Fund, consultation took place in October 2020.

7.7 The LCR authorities have collaborated for several years on a wide range of joint projects. Examples of this include:

- LCR Brownfield Register (2021 - 2022);
- LCRCA Housing Statement 2019-24;
- LCR SHELMA Areas of Search Assessment (August 2019);
- LCR SHELMA Large Scale B8 Site Supply Assessment (June 2018);
- LCR Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021;
- LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan 2020 (LCWIP);
- LCRCA Transport Plan (2019);
- LCRCA Rights of Way Improvement Programme 2018-2028;
- LCR Road Safety Strategy 2018-2020;
- LCRCA Long Term Rail Strategy (2018); and
- LCRA Local Journeys Strategy (2017).

7.8 Due to its location on the edge of the Liverpool City Region, St Helens also has strategic cross boundary links with West Lancashire, Warrington and Wigan. St Helens Borough Council has therefore cooperated extensively with these neighbouring authorities in preparing the St Helens Borough Local Plan.

7.9 Warrington Borough, immediately to the south and east of St Helens, although outside the LCR, has very strong economic, housing and infrastructure links with St Helens. Over the past year St Helens and Warrington Councils have been working closely on the potential expansion of Omega, which is a large employment location on the boundary of both boroughs.

### **Key Activities under the 'Duty to Cooperate' in 2020/2021**

7.10 St Helens Council has worked jointly with neighbouring authorities and other relevant organisations to deal with strategic issues that either extend across local authority boundaries or involve a number of different agencies. During the monitoring period it has (amongst others):

- Progressed (alongside Warrington and Wigan) work on the M6 Junction 23 study;
- Continued working closely with the LCR in contributing to the establishment of Transport for the North and its emerging Strategies;





- Provided information for the production of the LCR Brownfield Register (2020 - 21);
- Provided further detailed comments to the LCR on the Spatial Development Strategy, Our Places Consultation;
- Worked at length with the LCR, MEAS and Natural England on the Recreation Mitigation Strategy;
- Continued to work with Warrington and Halton Councils, the Environment Agency, MEAS, United Utilities and other stakeholder bodies as part of the Sankey Catchment Steering Group in order to foresee the implementation of the Sankey Catchment Plan;
- Attended meetings as part of the Mersey Forest Steering Group to progress various schemes across the Borough, including Forest Schools and St Helens Parks and Green Space Strategy;
- Continued to work closely with Warrington Council in relation to the future development of the Omega employment area.
- Worked with Highways England in order to progress the Local Plan through Examination and towards adoption, ensuring cross boundary matters involving the Strategic Road Network are appropriately addressed, including the current preparation of a Statement of Common Ground.

7.11 Further information about these activities, including outcomes of the cooperation which has taken place, is set out in the emerging St Helens Borough Local Plan and its supporting documents, which are available on request.



## APPENDIX A: DEVELOPMENT PLAN TIMETABLE IN ST HELENS LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME, 2020

Local Plan Stage	2020				2021								2022					
	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February
Preparation of Plan prior to submission																		
Submission to Secretary of State (Regulation 22)																		
Examination in Public (H = hearing sessions)							H	H										
Inspectors Report																		
Adoption																		

