

# Planning Statement Proposed Housing Development

Former Gateacre Comprehensive School,  
Grange Lane, Liverpool

Countryside Properties

February 2015

**Turley**

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February 2015

# 1. Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Countryside Properties and supports a full planning application submitted to Liverpool City Council for the development of land formerly occupied by Gateacre Community Comprehensive School, Grange Lane, Liverpool.

1.2 The description of development is as follows:

*“Full planning application for the erection of 200 no. dwellings with associated landscaping, access arrangements and car parking.”*

1.3 The site is situated within the Gateacre district of Liverpool and is accessible to a wide range of local services including retail provision, schools and other community facilities. It benefits from good public transport connections to Liverpool City Centre and other locations within and around the City and represents a highly sustainable location for new housing.

1.4 This statement sets out the context for the development by providing the background to the proposals including a description of the site, the background context to the application, the site and its surroundings, the proposed development and relevant policy framework. It assesses the proposals against the identified policy framework and the key issues to set out the case that clearly points to a grant of planning permission for the development.

## Overview of Case

1.5 This statement demonstrates that:

- The application site occupies a sustainable location for housing development being located within the defined urban area of the City and benefitting from good access to local services and facilities, including Liverpool City Centre;
- The proposed development will help to meet the significant shortfall against the five year housing requirement in the City, the development will therefore make an important contribution towards meeting short-term deliverable housing needs;
- The proposals have been assessed against the development plan, which must be assessed as a whole in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and found to be in general compliance;
- The proposed development is consistent with the relevant spatial objectives and general policies of the UDP which seek to ensure that good quality housing, appropriate to people’s needs is available for all those who wish to live in the City;
- Whilst the site is allocated as protected open space, the site includes a significant area of previously developed land, has no current recreational value or ecological value and only limited visual value. The proposed development is

broadly compliant with the exception criteria set out in Policy OE11 for development on open space;

- The proposal will have a minimal impact on the setting of two nearby listed buildings. It will have less than substantial harm and, having regard to the more up-to-date policies of the Framework, is considered acceptable;
- The development proposals are capable of meeting all of the relevant requirements of other technical and development management policies identified;
- Material considerations have been assessed and found to provide further support to the application proposals. In particular the development would accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in Framework and the emerging policies and themes of the Liverpool Local Plan;
- These material considerations together with the added presumption in favour of development resulting from the lack of identified five year housing supply clearly weigh in favour of a grant of planning permission in this case.
- There are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits which the development will bring. Therefore, paragraph 14 of the Framework directs that planning permission should be granted.

## **Accompanying Documents**

1.6 The Planning Statement complements a number of other documents submitted as part of the planning application comprising:

- Application Plans prepared by Countryside Properties;
- Planning Submission Drawing Register prepared by Countryside Properties;
- Materials Schedule prepared by Countryside Properties;
- Design & Access Statement prepared by Turley;
- Heritage Statement prepared by Turley;
- Economic Benefits Statement prepared by Turley;
- Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Turley;
- Transport Assessment including Framework Travel Plan and Minimum Accessibility Standard Assessment (MASA) prepared by CBO Transport;
- Air Quality Assessment prepared by REC Ltd;
- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey prepared by Appletons;

- Flood Risk Assessment including drainage statement prepared by Betts Associates;
- Drainage Strategy Layout prepared by Bretts Associates;
- Phase I and II Geo-environmental Assessment prepared by REC Ltd;
- Land Remediation Strategy prepared by REC Ltd;
- Landscape Scheme prepared by David Fountain Designs;
- Lighting assessment prepared by Aptus Utilities;
- Completed Lifetime Homes Checklist;
- Tree Survey prepared by Appletons; and
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment prepared by Appletons

## **Community Consultation**

- 1.7 A community consultation exercise was carried out prior to submission of the application. The scope of this exercise and the feedback received can be found within the Statement of Community Involvement submitted in support of this application.

## **Structure**

- 1.8 The remainder of this Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 provides a description of the site context;
  - Chapter 3 provides background information relevant to the planning submission;
  - Chapter 4 provides an overview of the development proposals for which planning permission is sought;
  - Chapter 5 provides a summary of the community consultation exercise that was carried out prior to the submission of the application;
  - Chapter 6 sets out the planning and associated policy context to the proposal;
  - Chapter 7 provides a summary of the housing land supply in the City;
  - Chapter 8 sets out the key issues
  - Chapter 9 appraises the proposed development in the context of the development plan
  - Chapter 9 appraises the proposed development in the context of relevant material considerations;
  - Chapter 10 sets out the planning balance; and

- Chapter 11 provides a summary and conclusions.

## 2. Site Context

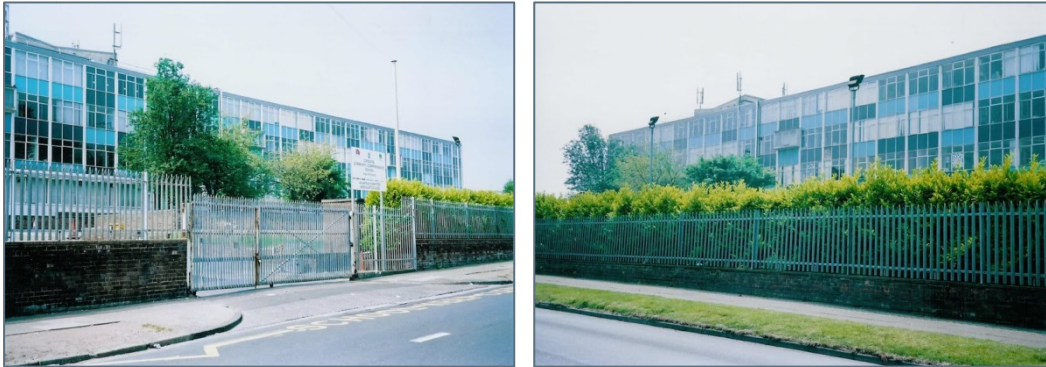
### Gateacre and Surrounds

- 2.1 The application site is located in the well-established residential community of Gateacre which lies within the Woolton ward of the City of Liverpool. Woolton has relatively low levels of deprivation, unemployment and crime when compared to both the national and Liverpool average. The location is popular with residents wishing to combine relatively easy access to Liverpool City Centre with a suburban setting.
- 2.2 The application site occupies a sustainable location for residential development. It is located approximately 8 km to the south-east of Liverpool City Centre, the economic driver of the Liverpool City Region, and connected to it by regular bus services which run along Grange Lane and Rose Brow to the south of the site. These services also connect the site with Belle Vale, the airport, Speke and Bootle.
- 2.3 The site benefits from a range of retail facilities within close proximity. Gateacre Neighbourhood Centre is located c580m north of the site, on the east side of Gateacre Park Drive. The neighbourhood centre has been recently redeveloped and comprises a small range of local retail and related services including a new Aldi foodstore. The application site has a direct connection to the Neighbourhood Centre via Grange Road.
- 2.4 The site is also located close to Belle Vale District Centre, c 1.2km from the centre of the site and much closer for a large number of the proposed dwellings. The District Centre contains a concentration of local retail and related services, comprising 57 units anchored by a large Morrisons foodstore. The application site benefits from a convenient connection to the District Centre via Grangemeadow Road and to the City Centre via the regular bus services which operate along Rose Brow, (approximately 700m from the centre of the site).
- 2.5 A range of other local facilities including schools, healthcare facilities and recreational facilities are also located within the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 2.6 A location plan is provided at Appendix 1 and a plan showing the local facilities within the vicinity of the site is included at Appendix 2.

### Site and Surroundings

- 2.7 The application site comprises a parcel of land, measuring approximately 7.89 ha in area. It is bounded by Grange Lane to the east, Cuckoo Lane to the west, Gateacre Park Drive to the north and by Meadow Oak Drive to the south. Beyond these boundaries, the site is surrounded on each side by residential development, typical of suburban development in east Liverpool. A predominantly residential area, Gateacre comprises a mix of detached and semi-detached properties with some older terraced housing.
- 2.8 The application site is currently vacant, having previously been occupied by the Gateacre Community Comprehensive School before this was relocated to its new site in

2011. It currently comprises a significant area of previously developed land (the site of the former school buildings), together with its associated former playing fields.



**Figure 2.1 and 2.2: Views of the former school site from Grange Lane showing the imposing four storey school building (c.2007)**



**Figure 2.1: Views of the former school site from Cuckoo Lane showing that the school buildings interrupt long range views towards the east (c.2007)**



**Figure 2.4 and 2.5: Views of the previously developed area of the site from Grange Lane following the demolition of the school buildings (2014)**

- 2.9 The existing site levels fall steeply from west to east, over a range of approximately 15 metres. The raised western area of the site is identified as having been used as a historical household landfill prior to the school being built in 1957.
- 2.10 Views looking onto Cuckoo Lane from Grange Lane are not possible due to the steeply rising gradient which exists on site. Views do exist from the highest point on the site, primarily along the western boundary looking east. Short range views are over unrelieved playing fields of limited visual amenity value and while longer range views exist now they would historically have been interrupted by the school buildings until their recent demolition.
- 2.11 There are three existing vehicular accesses in to the site from Grange Lane, together with a pedestrian access. The southernmost vehicular access is situated just to the north of Grange Way, whilst the northern access is situated just to the north of Grangemeadow Road. The third access is central to the two. All three of these accesses (including the pedestrian access) are now closed. There is also a dropped kerb access arrangement serving the site off Cuckoo Lane opposite Siskin Green. This too is now closed.
- 2.12 The site is not located within or adjacent to a Conservation Area; however there are three listed buildings within close proximity of the site. These are the Crying Tree Bar and Grill, Grange Hollies Residential Care Home and Oakfield Terrace, all of which are grade II listed. These buildings are identified on the plan at Appendix 3.

### **Summary of Site Context**

- 2.13 The site constitutes a sustainable location for residential development within the urban area and a well-established and popular suburban setting. The vacant site comprises a significant proportion of previously developed land, with a significant part of the associated playing fields having previously been used for landfill.

### 3. Background to application

#### Relocation of Gateacre Community Comprehensive School

- 3.1 Until 2011, the application site was occupied by the former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School. Prior to their demolition, the school buildings together with the related hard standing, previously occupied approximately 38% of the site area and constitutes previously developed land. The balance of the site (c4.9ha) formed playing fields and open space associated with the school.
- 3.2 The playing fields' were inherently linked to the former occupation and operation of the school with no community access. They comprised two adult grass playing pitches of average quality and very minimal landscape or ecological value.
- 3.3 As can be seen from figures 3.1 and 3.2 below, the main school building that previously occupied a significant proportion of the site was a large, utilitarian block four storeys in height. The building would have prevented views in to the site from a considerable part of Grange Lane and limited long range views from Cuckoo Lane.



**Figure 3.1 and 3.2: Views of the site from Grange Lane (2007)**

- 3.4 Following relocation to a new site on Hedgefield Road, c1.2km to the east, the school reopened as Gateacre School. The relocation was part of a major programme of investment in secondary schools within the City under the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. The move, which involved a c£35 million capital investment, provided a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment with state of the art buildings, ITC and sports facilities. Wide ranging community benefits have resulted from the relocation including community use of the new sports facilities, improvement in skills and employability and reductions in anti-social behaviour.
- 3.5 As a result of this relocation, the site of the former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School and its associated playing fields has become surplus to requirements for educational purposes. Under Schedule 1 of the Academies Act 2010 and Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Secretary of State has approved the disposal of the former school site by the Council (provided at Appendix 4).
- 3.6 The site was subsequently been marketed for sale by the City Council and expressions of interest were sought from developers with a view to bringing it forward for

redevelopment for residential purposes. Countryside Properties secured the site and planning permission is now sought for its redevelopment for residential uses.

### **Planning History**

- 3.7 An application for the prior notification of development relating to the demolition of the vacant school buildings was granted by the Council on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2012 (app ref: 11PM/2776); all of the buildings were subsequently demolished to base level.

### **Environmental Impact Assessment Screening**

- 3.8 The applicant submitted a formal request for a Screening Opinion pursuant to Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 on 22nd May 2014. The Council confirmed that the application does not require EIA on 17th June. The Council's screening opinion is enclosed at Appendix 4.

## 4. Development Proposals

- 4.1 In summary, the development comprises:

*'Full planning application for 200 residential units (Use Class C3) with associated landscaping, access arrangements and car parking.'*

- 4.2 Full details of the proposed development are set out in the accompanying application plans and the Design and Access Statement which explains how the design has evolved in response to an appraisal of the opportunities and constraints. Further technical details are contained in the accompanying technical reports. Summary details are set out below.

### Housing Mix

- 4.3 The development comprises a range of 2 to 5 bedroom homes. This mix of housing reflects the strong and well recognised market demand to increase the quantum of high quality family housing in the city<sup>1</sup>. The proposal will help to address this need and in turn support the City in attracting and retaining economically active family households to support the continued economic growth of Liverpool.

- 4.4 In summary the development will provide:

- 54 no. 3 bed (27%)
- 113 no. 4 bed (56%)
- 33 no. 5 bed (17%)

### Vehicular Access

- 4.5 Vehicular access to the site is proposed by way of a new access off Gateacre Park Drive, a new access off Grange Lane and five new accesses off Cuckoo Lane. A number of properties would be served via direct driveways off Grange Lane (53 dwellings), Gateacre Park Drive (10 dwellings) and Cuckoo Lane (23 dwellings).
- 4.6 The new access roads would all take the form of simple priority junction arrangements, with 5.5 metre wide carriageways, with two metre footways on each side and six metre radii.
- 4.7 Further details of the proposed access arrangements are shown on Plan 4.1 within the Transport Assessment.

### Pedestrian and Cycle Access

- 4.8 Each access will include a two metre wide footway on both sides. The main site accesses link the site to the surrounding pedestrian network off Gateacre Park Drive,

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 6.73 Liverpool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2011)

Grange Lane and Cuckoo Lane. Footways continue throughout the site on both sides of the internal road network.

- 4.9 All accesses off Grange Lane, Gateacre Park Drive and Cuckoo Lane will include dropped crossings and tactile paving across the site access arms. In addition, it is also proposed to provide dropped crossings and tactile paving at the following off-site locations:

- across the Grange Lane arm of the Gateacre Park Drive / Grange Lane junction;
- across the Cuckoo Lane arm of the Gateacre Park Drive / Cuckoo Lane junction;
- across the Oakfield Avenue arm of the Cuckoo Lane / Oakfield Avenue junction; and
- on Grange Lane in the vicinity of the southbound bus stop north of Grangemeadow Road.

- 4.10 The internal site layout has been designed to be conducive to cycle use and the accesses from the site on to Gateacre Park Drive and Grange Lane link directly to the existing cycle network that runs along these roads. A plan showing the existing cycle routes within a 5km catchment of the site is shown at Appendix 3.2 of the Transport Assessment.

## **Layout**

- 4.11 The development proposals have been carefully prepared through a detailed assessment of the site, its opportunities, constraints, and the overall objective to create an aspirational, high quality housing development within the heart of Gateacre, with good access to schools and services.
- 4.12 The layout of the site is developed around clear perimeter blocks. Working with the existing landform, the blocks create a good level of natural surveillance to streets and spaces and promote legibility. The use of perimeter blocks also ensures rear gardens are fully enclosed and enhances the safety and security of the development.
- 4.13 Throughout the layout key corner buildings have been designed to frame views and aid orientation. These houses have feature gables articulated with windows and projections for added definition.

## **Scale**

- 4.14 The homes across the site reflect the scale and massing of the surrounding vernacular. The houses are a mix of 2 storey and room-in-roof homes. A number of properties have low eave lines to reduce the perceived building height and variation to the building line is further created through single storey garages with pitched roofs.

## **Appearance**

- 4.15 The house types have been carefully designed to respond to the existing settlement. The homes are traditional in appearance, with predominantly brick build facades. A variety of materials is proposed, including render and vertical tile hanging to add depth to the street scene. Architectural devices have been employed, such as deep windows, dormers and projecting bays, to further articulate the homes and allow light to penetrate the internal spaces.
- 4.16 The material palette for the development has been carefully chosen to comprise varying colours, textures and profile, which together will bring the homes to life.

## **Density**

- 4.17 The area immediately surrounding the application site is predominantly characterised by blocks of two storey semi-detached dwellings with front and rear gardens. The proposal includes dwellings which are of a similar density to the surrounding properties with front and rear gardens and driveways. The scheme will provide an overall density of 27 units per hectare.

## **Lifetime Homes**

- 4.18 The proposed development will comply with the policies of the Council's SPD 'Design for Access for All' in relation to Lifetime Homes. Countryside construct all properties in timber frame construction with the intermediate floors being clear spanning to a maximum of 6m; as a result, most of the internal walls are non-loadbearing and can be removed / re-positioned as required by any future occupants. This means that in the main, the only fixed elements within each property are the external openings and drainage penetrations through the ground floor slab. This principle was confirmed as acceptable by the Council in their consideration of a housing development by Countryside Properties at the former Queen Mary School in Walton (LPA reference: 13F/2344).
- 4.19 The interface distance between the proposed dwellings accords with the guidance set out in SPG relating to 'New Residential Developments' and will provide adequate space between the proposed and existing dwellings on Grange Lane to the east, Cuckoo Lane to the west, Gateacre Park Drive to the north and Meadow Oak Drive to the south, so as not to cause harm to residential amenity.

## **Parking**

- 4.20 In accordance with the Council's 'Ensuring Choice of Travel' SPD the layout proposes a minimum of two off-street parking spaces per dwelling. This level of parking provision will ensure that regular on street parking will not occur at the proposed site. In addition, to further encourage travel by bicycle, it is proposed that each dwelling would include secure cycle parking provision in a garage and/or a shed within each property curtilage.

## **Landscaping**

- 4.21 The site will be appropriately landscaped to achieve integration into its setting. This will include street tree planting which will provide a continuous frame to the internal road network and perimeter of the site. Strong boundary treatments to the perimeter of the site on Cuckoo Lane and Grange Lane are provided by railings backed with strong hedge planting.
- 4.22 Further information on the detailed design of the proposal is provided in the submitted Design and Access Statement.

## **Planning Obligations**

- 4.23 The following provisional planning obligations will be subject to negotiation and agreement with the local planning authority:
- An off-site contribution to local open space;
  - A contribution towards the provision of Public Art; and
  - A contribution towards funding the post of a Section 106 Monitoring Officer;

## **Conclusion**

- 4.24 The Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the detailed analysis and technical reports have informed the proposed site layout. The development proposes a range of high quality homes, predominantly four bedroom dwellings, reflective of the identified and well recognised need for larger, higher value properties within the City.
- 4.25 The proposed development has been designed with careful consideration to the site's existing, well-established residential context and will respect the amenity of surrounding properties. It will retain visual links across the site maintaining the opportunity for long views through the site to the east.

## 5. Policy Context

- 5.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides an overview of the planning policy context and associated planning evidence relevant to the proposal and against which the planning application will be determined.
- 5.2 The adopted statutory development plan for the City of Liverpool currently comprises the 'saved' policies of the City of Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in November 2002 and the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan.
- 5.3 In addition to the statutory development plan, the following documents should be given appropriate weight as material considerations in the planning assessment:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
  - Associated local supplementary planning documents:
    - (i) - Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD (2008)
    - (ii) - Design For Access For All SPD
  - Associated local supplementary planning guidance:
    - (iii) - Liverpool Urban Design Guide
    - (iv) - Trees and Development
    - (v) - Car and Cycle Parking Standards
    - (vi) - New Residential Development
    - (vii) - Refuse Storage and Recycling Facilities in New Developments
  - Emerging Local Development Framework and associated evidence
- 5.4 The key messages from this policy context can be summarised as follows.

### **The Development Plan**

- 5.5 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the development plan is the starting point for the determination of the application. The application must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is reaffirmed within the Framework, including the requirement that applications which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

### **Liverpool Unitary Development Plan**

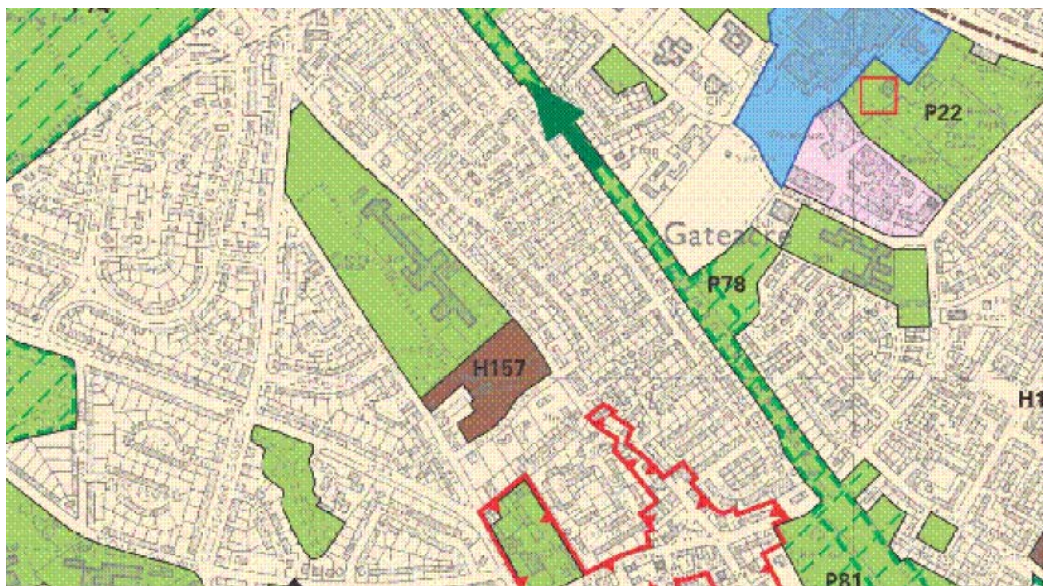
- 5.6 The Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2002 and was prepared under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The Plan is therefore not considered to be up to date within the context of paragraph 214 of the Framework.
- 5.7 As a strategy for growth, its policies were written in the context of the City planning for a significantly lower level of development than is now required. In the circumstances, due weight should be given to saved policies only to the extent that they are consistent with the Framework.

#### ***Strategic Objectives***

- 5.8 The strategic objectives and policies of the UDP have been set within the context of the economic, social and environmental conditions that effect Liverpool and the corporate programmes designed to address issues arising from them. This is set out in the Corporate Policy Context chapter (3) of the plan, which refers to other (non-planning) policy strategies and initiatives across the city, and how the UDP will contribute to the holistic approach for addressing key issues such as population loss, high unemployment and declining environmental quality.
- 5.9 The Corporate Vision identifies the overriding objective of the UDP which is for urban regeneration, refined into 3 key themes: economic regeneration, environmental improvement and reduction of inequality. Those themes underpin the general, strategic criteria-based policies of the Plan, including reversing the decline in economic activity [GEN1], preserving and enhancing historically and architecturally important buildings [GEN3], promoting a good quality of living environment [GEN 4] and promoting the recycling of land for productive use through the treatment of vacant, derelict and underused land [GEN 8].

#### ***Site Specific Considerations***

- 5.10 The application site is designated as 'green space' on the UDP Proposals Map (Figure 4.1 extract below) subject to the provisions of Policy OE11.



**Figure 5.1: UDP Proposals Map Extract**

### ***Greenspace***

- 5.11 Policy OE11 affords protection to designated green space. This designation was applied to the majority of greenspaces in the city at the time the UDP was prepared. Sites range from city parks to incidental areas of open space and school playing fields. The policy seeks to protect the amenity value of the City's green space and takes a protective stance, which necessitates the consideration of any development proposals against a number of criteria, the combination of which together form the green space's 'amenity' value. The four criteria comprise the recreational function and visual amenity value of the site, its relationship to adjoining green spaces and any inherent nature conservation value that the site may have.

### ***Housing***

- 5.12 The housing policies within the UDP confirm that permission will be granted for residential development within the Primarily Residential Areas provided it satisfies other Plan policies (Policy H4).
- 5.13 The design of new residential developments should respect the character of the surrounding area, maintaining levels of privacy and amenity for existing and future residents and ensure a safe, attractive and convenient highway environment (Policy H5).
- 5.14 Policy OE14 requires that new residential developments of over 25 family dwellings should make appropriate provision for recreational open space, with priority given to on-site provision on the basis of 50sq m per dwelling provided as a single plot. Consideration will be given to off-site provision where this cannot be achieved.

### ***Highways***

- 5.15 The highways policies promote and support initiatives designed to maximise the role of walking and cycling as alternative transport modes including requiring new developments to provide secure cycle parking facilities, giving consideration to the provision of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes and improving access and mobility (Policy T6 and T7).
- 5.16 New developments must make provision for car parking on site, to meet the minimum operational needs of the development (Policy T12) and be supported by a full Traffic Impact Assessment where planning permission is sought for new development which is likely to result in a material change in the character or volume of traffic on the surrounding highway network (Policy T15).

### ***Historic Landscape***

- 5.17 Policy HD5 indicates that planning permission affecting the setting of a listed building will only be granted where the setting and important views of that building are preserved.

### ***Design***

- 5.18 The UDP includes a number of policies relating to the design of new development. Policy HD18 requires applications to comply with a set of identified criteria to ensure a high quality of design. These criteria include the need for the scale, density, massing,

external boundary treatments and building lines of a proposed development to relate well to its locality and to include characteristics of local distinctiveness within the development through design, layout and materials. There should be no severe loss of amenity or privacy to adjacent residents and adequate arrangements made for storage and collection of refuse within the curtilage of the site.

- 5.19 Consideration should be given to achieving a fully accessible environment through ease of access, siting and design of parking areas, paths, dropped kerbs, pedestrian crossings, street furniture and open space (Policy HD19).
- 5.20 Encouragement is given to developers to incorporate measures which reflect the need to make proper provision for personal safety and crime prevention, paying particular attention to hard and soft landscaping arrangements, the design and relationship of car parking and the distinction between public and private space (Policy HD20)
- 5.21 The City Council will require the submission of a full independent tree survey to enable the effect of the proposal on the trees to be fully assessed and will refuse planning permission for proposals which cause unacceptable tree loss, or which do not allow for the successful integration of existing trees identified for retention following consideration of the tree survey (Policy HD22).
- 5.22 All new development proposals should make provision for the planting and successful growth of new trees, high quality landscaping and boundary treatments (Policy H23).
- 5.23 The City Council will require developers to ensure that the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum required for security and working purposes and that light spillage and potential glare is minimised (Policy HD28).

#### ***Ecology***

- 5.24 The UDP contains a number of policies relating to ecology and the protection of habitats. Policies refer to habitat creation and enhancement and impact on legally protected wildlife species (Policies OE5 and OE7).

#### ***Vacant, Derelict and Neglected Land***

- 5.25 Reclamation of derelict land, restoration of neglected land and the development of these and other vacant sites for appropriate uses is encouraged and promoted (Policy EP1).

#### ***Contaminated Land***

- 5.26 Where development is proposed on a former landfill site or within 250 metres of a current or former landfill site, the applicant must clearly demonstrate that there is no risk from the generation or migration of landfill gas, or that satisfactory measures can be taken to counter any possible hazard (Policy EP3)

#### ***Environmental Protection***

- 5.27 The UDP contains a number of policies which set out the requirements for new development having regard to impacts on air, water, noise or nuisance and protection of water resources and flood prevention (Policies EP11 - EP13).

## **Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan**

- 5.28 The Waste Local Plan was adopted in July 2013. It contains a number of general policies that are relevant to most forms of development including: ensuring that construction and demolition implements measures to achieve the efficient use of resources (Policy WM8); and development incorporates sustainable waste management principles into proposals (Policy WM9).

## **Other Material Considerations**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework)**

- 5.29 The Framework was published on 27 March 2012, replacing existing Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes.
- 5.30 The Framework sets out the fundamental purpose of the planning system, which is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To this end, the cornerstone of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This requires (at Paragraph 14) that applications which accord with the development plan be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, applications should be approved unless there are any adverse impacts attributed to doing so, that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development when this is assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole, or where specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
- 5.31 The Framework represents a step change in how the planning system operates. It is purposefully positive, opportunity focused and pro-growth in seeking to facilitate development which will contribute to meeting wider Government objectives, particularly around economic growth and stabilisation. This is reflected in both the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the Core Planning Principles set out in paragraph 17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These include the need for planning to:
- be genuinely plan-led. Plans should be kept up-to-date and provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of predictability and efficiency;
  - not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;
  - proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs;
  - always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
  - support the transition to a low carbon future, taking full account of flood risk and encouraging the reuse of existing resources;

- encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land);
- conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations; and
- actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling.

5.32 Reflecting that the overriding objective of the planning system is to deliver sustainable development, the Framework sets out the Government's definition of sustainable development based around the policies provided at paragraphs 18-219. These paragraphs reflect the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and include the following headlines:

- Building a strong, competitive economy;
- Promoting sustainable transport;
- Delivering a wide choice of quality homes;
- Requiring good design;
- Promoting healthy communities;
- Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change; and
- Conserving and enhancing the nature environment.

5.33 In terms of housing development, and in line with the Framework's objective of stimulating new house building, Local Planning Authorities are required to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing sites at all times in order to 'boost significantly the supply of housing' (paragraph 47 of the Framework). Consistent with the Framework's pro-growth approach and emphasis on the delivery of development, a 5% buffer is required on top of this to ensure choice and competition in the market. A 20% buffer is required where there has been a record of persistent under delivery of housing within the authority area. The Framework is clear that such an evaluation should take place against the relevant housing requirement, which in turn should reflect an objective assessment of need in the area.

5.34 The Framework also requires housing applications to be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 49). It stresses that relevant policies for the supply of housing within the development plan should not be considered up to date if the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five year housing land supply.

5.35 By reference to paragraph 14 and paragraph 215, where policies within an adopted development plan are absent, silent or not up to date, or where they conflict with the Framework, the weight to be given to policies is significantly lessened and the

Framework will provide the primary basis against which relevant applications should be determined in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

### **Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)**

- 5.1 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014 and sets out the Government guidance which underpins the policies within the Framework.
- 5.2 PPG contains sections on 'housing and economic development needs assessments' and on 'housing and economic land availability assessment' and contains a detailed methodology as to how objectively assessed need should be calculated. Importantly, PPG states that in preparing their housing requirement:

*'Local planning authorities should aim to deal with any undersupply within the first 5 years of the plan period where possible.'<sup>2</sup>*

- 5.3 It is considered that PPG therefore endorses the 'Sedgfield' approach to dealing with shortfall in housing delivery.

### **Plan for Growth (HM Treasury 2011)**

- 5.4 From taking office in May 2010, the Coalition has remained committed to its policy cornerstone of returning the economy to strong, sustainable and balanced growth, and delivering the homes the UK needs, together with the reform of the planning system so that it actively encourages growth.

- 5.5 The 2010 Local Growth White Paper<sup>3</sup> indicated that delivery of an appropriate housing offer is integral to this objective. It states:

- 5.6 *'Housing can be an important source of economic growth. The recession has had a severe impact on housing construction with output falling by around a third from its pre-recession peak. However, this also means that the sector has clear potential to grow. It could therefore play a major role in leading the economy back towards growth and improving the long-term competitiveness of the UK economy.'*

- 5.7 The Statement confirms that delivery of a sufficient quantum of housing of the right type is fundamental and as much a part of the growth agenda as direct economic development. It states that:

*'When deciding whether to grant planning permission, planning authorities should support enterprise and facilitate housing, economic and other forms of sustainable development. They should therefore...ii) take into account the need to maintain a flexible and responsive supply of land for key sectors, including housing'.*

### **Housing and Growth (DCLG 2012)**

- 5.8 On 6th September 2012 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government made a written statement to Parliament confirming that the number one priority for Government is to get the economy growing. Within the statement, the Secretary of State confirms that the need for new homes is acute, but that supply remains constrained,

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<sup>2</sup> Paragraph: 035 Reference ID: 3-035-20140306

<sup>3</sup> White Paper Local growth: realising every place's potential (28 October 2010)

noting that housing schemes in areas of high demand could provide a real benefit to the local community once delivered.

### **Liverpool Supplementary Planning Guidance and Documents**

- 5.9 The Council has prepared a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) to provide additional guidance for the existing UDP policies; the following are relevant to the consideration of the application:

#### ***Car and Cycle Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Guidance***

- 5.10 This SPG was adopted by the City Council in April 1996, to supplement UDP Policies T12 (Car Parking Provision in New Developments) and T6 (Cycling) in the Liverpool. The guidance note sets out the Council's standards for car parking, including layout and design, in relation to proposals for new development.

#### ***Design for Access for All Supplementary Planning Document***

- 5.11 This SPD provides advice in relation to the integration of inclusive design principles into planning proposals, promotion of high quality design and inclusive environment for all. The SPD specifically sets out the requirements with regards to disabled access.

#### ***Ensuring a Choice of Travel Supplementary Planning Document***

- 5.12 This SPD was developed in partnership with the Merseyside Local Authorities and Merseytravel and adopted in December 2008. The key objectives of the document are to ensure a reasonable choice of access by all modes of transport to new development; reduce the environmental impact of travel choices' improving road safety; promote healthier lifestyles; reduce the level of traffic growth and encourage opportunities to improve the quality of development proposals.

#### ***Trees and development Supplementary Planning Guidance***

- 5.13 This SPG supplements UDP Policies HD22 and HD23. It provides information and advice to developers regarding the protection of existing trees; integration of existing trees into new development and the requirements for new tree planting as part of development proposals.

#### ***New residential development Supplementary Planning Guidance***

- 5.14 This SPG was adopted in April 1996 and is therefore considered to be significantly out of date. The document is intended to supplement UDP Policy H5. The main objective of this SPG is to ensure that new developments are well integrated with their surroundings and offer a good standard of amenity to future occupants whilst protecting the amenity of existing occupiers.

#### ***Planning advice note for developers on developing on contaminated land***

- 5.15 This guidance note comprises general advice and consistent, transparent requirements for planning application submissions on potentially-contaminated land.

#### ***Planning advice note on refuse storage and recycling facilities in new developments***

- 5.16 Adopted in March 2005, this guidance note provides advice on the Council's recommended standards for refuse storage and recycling in all new developments.

### **Emerging Local Plan**

- 5.17 A review of the adopted Liverpool UDP commenced in 2002. Subsequent changes in planning law and guidance led the Council to commence preparation of a Core Strategy as part of the then Local Development Framework system. The Core Strategy reached draft submissions stage in 2012 and was published in spring 2012 for a period of public consultation. Further progress on the Core Strategy was halted in February 2013, when the City Council resolved to prepare a new Local Plan for Liverpool, with the Core Strategy (Submission Draft 2012) at its heart alongside land allocations and development management policies. While the draft Core Strategy is no longer being pursued, that document will set out the framework for the Local Plan moving forward. As such, those parts of the draft Core Strategy plan relevant to the current proposals are identified below.
- 5.18 The provision of new housing is considered within draft Strategic Objective Two (Create Residential Neighbourhoods that Meet Housing Needs). This advocates a balanced approach to the location of residential development. Within Suburban Areas emphasis is placed upon the restructuring of housing markets and diversification of the existing housing offer by providing predominantly private sector, family housing.
- 5.19 Draft Strategic Objective Four (Attractive and Safe City With A Strong Local Identity) seeks to protect and enhance the City's unique historic and architectural environment, including Listed Buildings, ensuring all new development achieves high quality and inclusive design.
- 5.20 Draft Strategic Objective Six (Use Resources Efficiently) seeks to ensure the sustainable growth of the City by prioritising the development of the City's vacant and derelict land and buildings, ensuring all new development avoids adverse environmental impact.
- 5.21 Draft Strategic Objective Seven (Maximising Sustainable Accessibility) seeks to ensure all new development is highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.22 Draft Strategic Policy 9 (The Location and Phasing Of New Housing) sets the proposed policy for the provision of new housing at a total of 40,950 dwellings (net) for the period 2011-2028.
- 5.23 Other relevant draft policies in the Core Strategy include:
- SP1 (Sustainable Development Principles) which sets out a series of policy criteria to ensure that new development makes best use of resources, protects the environment, addresses climate change and the needs of the local community. The policy recognises that it is important to weigh the benefits of new development proposals, against any potential policy conflicts;
  - Strategic Policy 13 (Housing Mix - Citywide Principles) which seeks to prioritise the delivery of housing development proposals which broaden the City's housing offer. All new housing provision should enable the needs of a household to be met over its lifetime, for example through the application of "Building for Life" and / or "Lifetime Homes" criteria.

- Strategic Policy 16 (Housing Mix - Suburban Areas) seeks to place the overall emphasis on delivering mixed-value, private sector family housing, especially semi-detached and detached houses within suburban areas. New development will be expected to be delivered at densities of 30-50 dwellings per hectare, but densities outside this range will be allowed where they can be demonstrated to reflect the character of an area or broaden local housing choice.
- SP23 (Place Making and Design Principles) sets out criteria to ensure innovative, high quality design to create well-integrated and usable places;
- SP24 (Historic Environment) sets out the policy requirements for consideration of development proposals effecting historic assets;
- SP31 (Sustainable Growth) aims to ensure that development makes the best use of resources;
- SP33 (Environmental Impacts) aims to ensure that the environmental impacts of development are minimised;
- SP34 (Accessibility and Managing Travel Demand) aims to ensure that development makes the best use of existing and proposed transport infrastructure
- SP35 (Maximising Social Inclusion and Equal Opportunities) indicates that major development will be required to demonstrate the positive impact it will have on social inclusion and equal opportunities for the communities living in and around the development site

5.24 Importantly, the application site is not identified on picture 9 'Liverpool Green Infrastructure'. And as such draft Policy SP26 does not apply;

5.25 Public consultation on an informal draft of the Local Plan is due to take place in early autumn 2015 with submission currently scheduled for November 2016.

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment May 2011**

5.26 The most up to date Liverpool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was carried out by GVA on behalf of the Council in 2011 and published in May of that year.

5.27 The SHMA notes that Liverpool is characterised by a high proportion of terraced properties (45.8%) and semi-detached properties (28.5%). Detached properties account for only 6.9% of the total housing stock which is significantly below the regional (17.6%) and national (22.5%) averages.

5.28 Importantly, the SHMA states that to achieve the economic aspirations of Liverpool, specifically achieving a higher level of household containment within the city, the development of additional family-sized housing is required<sup>4</sup>.

5.29 Current migration flows out of the City and daily commuting patterns into the City largely comprise economically active persons seeking aspirational housing in good quality

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<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 6.73 Liverpool Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (2011)

neighbourhoods with good access to good schools and services. This is evidence of a clear mismatch between the economic role of the City and its housing offer to the extent that high income households are leaving Liverpool and having to commute into the City on a daily basis for employment. In response, there is a pressing need to increase the stock of high quality family housing in attractive parts of the City to reverse this trend.

### **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2012 Update)**

- 5.30 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2012 Update) was prepared by GVA on behalf of the Council and published in August 2013.
- 5.31 The SHLAA claims to identify a total deliverable five year (2012-2017) housing supply of 12,019 units across the City (including a windfall allowance) at the time of its preparation.
- 5.32 Further to this 2013 report an updated five year land supply assessment to April 2013 has been undertaken and reported to Cabinet. This assessment claims a total deliverable five year (2013-2018) housing supply of 12,681 units across the City (including a windfall allowance).

### **Spatial Investment Plan Liverpool City Region 2014-2017**

- 5.33 Published in May 2013, the Spatial Investment Plan was jointly commissioned by the City-Region Planning and Spatial Group and the Liverpool City Region Local Employment Partnership (LEP) to contribute both to the investment planning of the LEP and the emerging strategic role of the City Region Combined Authority.
- 5.34 Importantly the Plan confirms that there is on-going need to raise the quality of the housing offer overall and a need to provide a wider range of housing choices, in particular a better supply of 'aspirational' homes as 68% of properties across the City Region are estimated to be in Council Tax Bands 'A' and 'B', with only 15% in Band 'D' or above. The Plan states that:

*'The focus of policy should be to maximise the range and choice of housing options, with an emphasis placed upon jobs and growth.'*<sup>5</sup>

- 5.35 The Plan recommends that:

*'The City-Region housing strategy should consider the extent to which there has been 'leakage' of wealthier families from parts of the city-region because of a lack of supply of larger new build housing.'*<sup>6</sup>

### **Summary of Planning Policy**

- 5.36 Relevant planning policy is contained within the adopted Liverpool Unitary Development Plan and the Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan with guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);. A key theme of all of those policies is for sustainable development that contributes to economic growth, the creation of sustainable communities and making the best use of resources.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 5.4

<sup>6</sup> Section 6.4

- 5.37 Economic growth and regeneration will only be delivered by taking a pro-active and holistic view addressing social, economic and environmental issues. The major themes of the development plan reflect the importance of the availability of high quality, new housing in retaining and attracting economic investment and the link between this and maintaining an attractive and well maintained physical environment.
- 5.38 The key objective of the adopted and emerging development plan's housing policies is to ensure that good quality housing that is appropriate to people's needs is available for all those who wish to live in the City. This means ensuring sufficient opportunities for new housing which meet not only the needs of the existing population but the future needs of the community.
- 5.39 The application site is currently designated within the adopted development plan as an open space, a reflection of its former use as playing fields associated with the school buildings that occupied the site. Policy OE11 does not preclude development on green space but rather sets out the circumstances in which development on such land may be accepted. Policy OE11 therefore necessitates the consideration of the scheme against the recreational function, visual amenity value, relationship to adjoining green spaces and any known conservation value.
- 5.40 The application site is located adjacent to two listed buildings with a third located within close proximity of the site. Planning policies at national and local level require development proposals to assess their impact on the setting and significance of those heritage assets.

## 6. Five Year Housing Supply

- 6.1 Before proceeding to undertake an appraisal of the proposal against the policy context outlined above, this section addresses the issue of five year housing supply.
- 6.2 The Framework requires Local Planning Authorities to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area and to maintain a deliverable five year supply of housing land with either a 5% or 20% buffer carried forward from later in the plan period depending on whether there has been a persistent record of under delivery in the area (Paragraph 47 of the Framework). In setting this requirement and that of the 'buffer' to be applied (be it 5% or 20%), Government was seeking to recognise the vital importance of accelerating housing delivery and '*boost significantly the supply of housing*'<sup>7</sup>.
- 6.3 Until revoked, Policy L4 of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy (RS) provided the policy basis for determining the City's strategic housing requirement. This required the Borough to plan for the provision of 1,950 dwellings per year net of clearance between 2003 and 2021 (total of 35,100). In preparing their emerging draft housing requirement, currently set out within the Submission Draft Core Strategy, the Council has not undertaken an Objective Assessment of Need in accordance with the Framework. Instead, the Council have proposed to roll forward the housing requirement for Liverpool set within the revoked RS to 2028, together with an additional delivery of 3,510 to reflect the City's status as a Growth Point under the previous government's Growth Point initiative.
- 6.4 Recent High Court judgements have confirmed that rolling forward the annual housing requirement advocated within the RS, is an inappropriate basis upon which to calculate housing land supply as it does not represent an objective assessment of need that is reflective of current circumstances. Nonetheless, in the absence of an Objective Assessment of Need, the RS requirement is accepted by Liverpool City Council as the most appropriate basis for the purpose of calculating housing land supply. We have therefore undertaken our calculation based upon the Council's established commitment to housing delivery and the RS plan period of 2003-2021. The Council have not yet had formal approval to re-base their plan through the adoption of the draft Core Strategy and therefore the RS plan period remains the most appropriate for assessment of the Council's supply position.

### Calculation based on RS

- 6.5 RS sets out the Council's housing requirement over the next five years as a minimum of 9,750 dwellings based upon an annual housing requirement of 1,950 dpa. Having identified this minimum requirement, it is necessary to apply the appropriate level of flexibility allowance in line with Paragraph 47 of the Framework.
- 6.6 Within eight of the ten years to 2013 the City has not achieved its annual target figure and in many cases net completions have fallen significantly below this figure. Whilst the NPPF does not provide specific guidance on what should be considered to constitute

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<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 47 National Planning Policy Framework

'persistent under delivery', this degree and regularity of under delivery should certainly be considered to fall within this category. On that basis, it is clear that Liverpool is a 20% authority for the purposes of applying the flexibility allowance in paragraph 47 of the Framework (1,950 dwellings).

Table 6.1: **Net Housing Completions**

Year	RSS Requirement	Net Completions	Shortfall/ Surplus
2003/04	1,950	1548	-402
2004/05	1,950	1225	-725
2005/06	1,950	1517	-433
2006/07	1,950	2104	+154
2007/08	1,950	1486	-464
2008/09	1,950	2278	+328
2009/10	1,950	924	-1,026
2010/11	1,950	228	-1,722
2011/12	1,950	942	-1,008
2012/13	1,950	896	-1,054
Total	19,500	13,148	-6,352

6.7 It is then necessary to account for the shortfall in provision over the course of the plan period. Table 7.1 demonstrates that between 2003 and 2013, there was a shortfall of 6,352 dwellings.

6.8 Paragraph 47 of the Framework states that LPAs should 'boost significantly' the supply of land for housing. PPG indicates that this normally requires the shortfall to be made up as soon as possible and included within the future requirement over the next five years to 2018 (known as the Sedgefield approach).

6.9 The ethos of the NPPF is that housing delivery should be front loaded, best illustrated by the requirement to allow a buffer against the required housing target, by bringing completions forward from later in the plan period (paragraph 49). This approach is endorsed within the recently issued National Planning Policy Guidance.

6.10 The resultant 5-year housing requirement is set out below in table 6.2.

Table 6.2: **Housing Requirement (using RSS + Growth Point)**

Annual Requirement	1,950 (RS Table 7.1)
Annual Requirement x 5 years	9,750 dwellings
20% Flexibility Allowance	1,950 dwellings

Shortfall 2003-2013	6,352 dwellings
<b>Total 5 year requirement</b>	<b>18,052 dwellings (9,750 + 1,950 +6,352)</b>

- 6.11 The SHLAA (base date of 1st April 2013) identifies a total net supply of 12,681 units that it considers will come forward in the five year period 2013 to 2018 (inclusive of windfall allowance).
- 6.12 Therefore taking the five year supply identified within the SHLAA without critique, the table 6.3 provides the current supply position relative to the RS annual requirement adopting the Sedgfield approach.

Table 6.3: **Housing Requirement (adopting Sedgfield approach to shortfall)**

Annual Requirement	1,950 (RS Table 7.1)
Annual Requirement x 5 years	9,750 dwellings
20% Flexibility Allowance	1,950 dwellings
Shortfall 2003-2013	6,352 dwellings
<b>Total 5 year requirement</b>	<b>18,052 dwellings (9,750 + 1,950 +6,352)</b>
Average Annual Requirement	3,610 dwellings (18,052 / 5)
Claimed Supply	12,681 dwellings
Shortfall	5,371 dwellings
<b>No. of years supply</b>	<b>3.5 years (12,681 / 3,610)</b>

- 6.13 On the basis of the above analysis, it is concluded that Liverpool City is currently unable to demonstrate a five year housing supply. If the alternative 'Liverpool' method is adopted when approaching the shortfall and this is spread over the remaining years of the (RS) plan period to 2021, the annual requirement falls to 3,134 and the number of years supply rises marginally to 4 years.

### Calculation based on Emerging Development Plan

- 6.14 The City Council is in the early stages of preparing a new development plan with a base date of 2011. For completeness, the following table only applies the shortfall that has accrued since the new base date and applies a 5% flexibility allowance for robustness.

Table 6.4: **Housing Requirement (adopting Sedgfield approach to shortfall)**

Annual Requirement	1,950 (draft Core Strategy)
Annual Requirement x 5 years	9,750 dwellings
5% Flexibility Allowance	486 dwellings
Shortfall 2003-2013	2,062 dwellings (see table 8.1 above)

Growth Point additional requirement	3,510 (see paragraph 6.3 above)
<b>Total 5 year requirement</b>	<b>15,808 dwellings (9,750 + 486 +2,062 +3,510)</b>
Average Annual Requirement	3,161 dwellings (15,808 / 5)
Claimed Supply	12,681 dwellings
Shortfall	3,127 dwellings
<b>No. of years supply</b>	<b>4 years (12,681 / 3,127)</b>

### Conclusion on Housing Land Supply

- 6.15 On the basis of the above analysis, it is concluded that Liverpool City is currently unable to demonstrate a five year housing supply. Given these circumstances, the provision of market housing will go some way in helping to address the clear and identified need and shortfall in supply. This consideration weighs strongly in favour of the proposals. Paragraph 47 of the Framework cannot therefore be satisfied and paragraph 49 and hence 14 are therefore engaged.

## 7. Key Issues

### Introduction

- 7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 refers to the Development Plan as a whole and requires that:

*“If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”*

- 7.2 The statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making is further emphasised within Paragraph 12 of the Framework.

- 7.3 However, the Framework also makes it clear that development plans should be kept up-to-date and in accordance with its policies at all times, following the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. For that reason, wherever an adopted Development Plan is absent, silent or not up to date, or where there is more than limited conflict with its policies, the Framework will carry greater weight as a material consideration in the decision-making process.

- 7.4 On this basis, the key issues to determine in the consideration of this planning application are:

- whether the development proposals are in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted Development Plan, in so far as they apply and the degree of weight that can be reasonably attributed to them;
- whether other material considerations, including the Framework, provide further support for the development in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development; and
- If there are any adverse impacts arising from the development, would they significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposal in the planning balance?

- 7.5 These are assessed in turn within the following sections of this Statement.

## 8. Issue 1: Compliance with the Development Plan

- 8.1 The second part of paragraph 14 of the Framework sets out clear guidance for decision makers, stating that, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, the presumption in favour of sustainable development means:

*“Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay”*

- 8.2 Having identified those parts of the development plan that are relevant and up-to-date, the following paragraphs go on to assess whether the development proposals are in accordance with the development plan as a whole.

### **Liverpool Unitary Development Plan**

- 8.3 In this case, the development plan comprises the adopted Liverpool UDP and the Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan.

### **Principle of Development**

- 8.4 The overall strategic objectives of the UDP are set within the context of the economic, social and environmental conditions that affect the city. The plan sets out a holistic approach for addressing key issues such as population loss, high unemployment and declining environmental quality. It recognises that housing has a key role to play in achieving those three main objectives by encouraging the provision of a sufficient range of housing types to meet the requirements of all those that wish to live in the city.
- 8.5 The application site lies within a Predominantly Residential Area, albeit that the site itself is allocated on the proposals map as open space (Policy OE11 – see below). Policies in the UDP (GEN4 and H4, paragraph 9.64) provide general, in principle, support for new housing development in those areas, in accordance with the strategic objectives of the plan.
- 8.6 The key objective for the Plan’s housing policies is to ensure that good quality housing appropriate to people’s needs is available for all those who wish to live in the City. The Plan therefore seeks to ensure sufficient opportunities for new housing, which meet not only the needs of the existing population but the future needs of the community. The need for aspirational housing in attractive neighbourhoods with access to good schools and services is key to the City’s economic growth aspirations clearly identified within the development plan and is further emphasised within the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
- 8.7 The proposed development will therefore make a very valuable contribution to the City’s housing market by providing 200 high quality family homes within the heart of an established residential community. It will assist the Council in meeting the overriding objective of the development plan with respect to housing delivery the emphasis of which is in line with the Framework.

## **Protection of Green space**

- 8.8 The application site is identified as open space on the proposals map of the UDP (Policy OE11). This designation was applied to the majority of greenspaces in the city at the time the UDP was prepared. Sites range from city parks to incidental areas of open space and school playing fields. The policy seeks to protect the amenity value of the City's green space and takes a protective stance, which necessitates the consideration of any development proposals against a number of criteria, the combination of which together form the green space's 'amenity' value. The four criteria comprise the recreational function and visual amenity value of the site, its relationship to adjoining green spaces and any inherent conservation value that the site may have.
- 8.9 Paragraph 8.141 confirms that the Policy is not intended to form a restrictive block on the development of all green space, but to allow the merits of a development proposal to be weighed against the value of a particular green space.
- 8.10 In assessing the application site against the measures of amenity value identified within Policy OE11, it is considered that only the part of the site previously occupied by the playing fields (covering approximately 4.9ha of the total site area) could be considered to have a green space character and/or function; with the remainder being previously developed land, formerly covered by buildings and associated hardstanding. In so far as Policy OE11 seeks to protect designated green space sites, it should only apply to the playing field area.

### **The recreational function of the green space**

- 8.11 The application site's designation within the adopted development plan as an open space is a direct reflection of its former use as playing fields associated with the school buildings that occupied the site. The playing fields' recreational function was therefore inherently linked to the former occupation and operation of the school. The playing fields were used exclusively by the school and were not accessible to the local community either on an open access basis or by prior arrangement.
- 8.12 The school closed in 2011 and has since relocated to a new facility at Hedgefield Road, approximately 1.2km to the north east of the site. All pupils at the former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School relocated to the new school site and the application site is no longer used or required for educational use and has no existing recreational function; it is notable that this position is reflected within the draft Core Strategy where the application site is not identified on picture 9 'Liverpool Green Infrastructure' and as such draft Policy SP26 does not apply. As such, the site clearly does not have a recreational function.
- 8.13 In being devoid of any active recreational function, it follows that the redevelopment of the playing fields for alternative uses would not harm that objective of Policy OE11.
- 8.14 Even if the site was considered to have value for recreational purposes, Policy OE11 goes on to set out four circumstances under which development proposals would be acceptable. These circumstances comprise:

- The development is ancillary to the use of the site for active and passive outdoor recreation and enhances its value for these activities;
- The site does not lie in an area of open space deficiency;
- A replacement facility of at least equal quality and suitable size is provided at an appropriate location to ensure that an area of open space deficiency would not otherwise be created;
- In the case of green space in educational use, the development is specifically required for educational purposes and that suitable and convenient alternative recreational facilities are available.

8.15 In this case, the proposed development is not ancillary to any existing or future use of the site for outdoor recreation. Nor is the proposed development specifically required for educational purposes. Those two exceptions are not, therefore, relevant to the current proposal. Assessment against the remaining two criteria is considered in turn below.

#### **Open space deficiency**

8.16 The Council is currently in the process of preparing a new Playing Pitch Strategy which assesses local provision and makes recommendations for future provision within the City. This document remains in draft and the final version is not expected to be publically available until later this year.

8.17 In the absence of any published up to date information our assessment of playing pitch provision within the locality of the site has been informed by discussions with Officers regarding the findings of the draft strategy. We understand from these discussions that the application site is listed as a 'disused Site' and it no longer forms part of the Council's strategy for recreation provision moving forward.

8.18 Notably, we have been advised by Officers that there are a significant number of playing pitches within the locality of the application site (within 1 mile) and that the emerging Playing Pitch Strategy proposes a number of qualitative improvements to existing facilities rather than any quantitative increase in provision. The sites in close proximity to the application site comprise:

Barnham Drive Playing Fields - provides three senior pitches and three mini pitches with a changing pavilion (steel container) on a 6.47ha site;

- Caldway Drive Playing Fields – provides three junior and three mini pitches with changing pavilion on a 4.5 ha site;
- New Gateacre School - provides two senior football pitches and two junior pitches on a 3 ha site;
- St Julies Catholic High School provides two junior pitches on a 0.25ha site;
- Wood Lane Playing Fields provides one senior pitch on a 1.0 ha site; and

- St Francis Xavier School provides two senior pitches alongside an artificial cricket pitch on a 5.85 ha site.

8.19 The Council has not adopted any standards relating to the provision of playing fields and the Council's published evidence on this matter is significantly out of date. Importantly there are 21.01 ha of playing pitch provision located within one mile of the application site and as highlighted the loss of the site has already been compensated for through improvements at the new school site. It is therefore concluded that the application site does not lie in an area of open space deficiency and this position has been confirmed through discussions with Officers. A plan showing the closest greenspaces to the site is provided at Appendix 6.

### **Replacement Facility**

8.20 Prior to the school relocating to the new facility, the application site provided a 4.9ha area of playing fields containing two adult grass pitches that were of an average quality. The turf was in average condition with some boggy areas and during periods of inclement weather some water remained on the surface of grass pitches making it difficult to deliver the P.E curriculum. The topography of the site with the grass playing fields on a much higher level to the school buildings was not suitable for a school and the arrangement caused access issues, particularly for those students with disabilities. The former school did not use any other piece of land, nor was any other land available to them for the purposes of sports provision at the time of closure in 2011.

8.21 The new Gateacre School is located c500m to the north east of the application site on Hedgefield Road. Prior to planning approval being granted for the new school, the Hedgefield Road site comprised three parcels of land. One of these parcels was known as the "former Reggie Smith Playing Fields" and was laid out as grassed football pitches comprising four junior pitches and two mini pitches. These pitches were used by local football teams, including the Belle Vale & District Junior Football League. With the redevelopment of the site for occupation by Gateacre School, there was a net loss of two grass junior pitches and two grass mini pitches (with the remaining two mini pitches retained on the new school site). In order to mitigate the loss of these facilities, a further parcel of land was included within the application for the new school, at Caldway Drive. That site did not have any pre-existing sports facilities.

8.22 Table 8.1 below provides a summary of the quantity of provision prior to the relocation of Gateacre School provided at both the former school site on Grange Lane and the former Reggie Smith Playing Fields.

**Table 8.1: Pitch provision prior to relocation of Gateacre School**

Sites	Area of site	Adult Pitches	Junior Pitches	Mini Pitches
Former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School (Grange Lane)	49,009m <sup>2</sup>	2	0	0
Former Reggie Smith Playing Fields	49,800m <sup>2</sup>	0	4	2

<b>Total</b>	<b>98,809m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
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8.23 The new playing pitches at Hedgefield Road and Caldway Drive have been provided to the highest specification. Two adult pitches have been provided at Hedgefield Road (in addition to the two junior pitches retained) which are capable of sustaining extensive use throughout the week. Gateacre School use those pitches as their main playing field provision to deliver the P.E curriculum. At Caldway Drive, grass playing fields have been provided for dual use by Gateacre School (weekdays) and Belle Vale Junior Football Club (weekends). These pitches include provision of a new changing pavilion along with significant drainage works to allow for year-long usage of the pitches. Gateacre School has use of these pitches should their main playing field provision at Hedgefield Road be unavailable, in the event of curriculum overspill, or to accommodate specific inter-school sports tournaments. The facilities provided at Caldway Drive comprise three junior pitches and two mini pitches.

8.24 Table 8.2 below provides a summary of the quantity of provision following the relocation of Gateacre School provided at both Hedgefield Road and Caldway Drive.

Table 8.2: **Pitch provision following relocation of Gateacre School**

Sites	Site area	Adult Pitches	Junior Pitches	Mini Pitches
New Gateacre School site (Hedgefield Road)	30,034m <sup>2</sup>	2	2	0
Caldway Drive	43,971m <sup>2</sup>	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,371m<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

8.25 Whilst table 8.1 and 8.2 demonstrate there has been an overall reduction in the quantum of open space provided (17,438m<sup>2</sup>), there has been significant qualitative improvements made to enable more intensive use of the new pitches for both the school and the local community. The loss of the former playing fields associated with the educational use of the application site, in addition to those previously in place at the former Reggie Smith Playing Fields has already been mitigated through replacement provision at Hedgefield Road and Caldway Drive. In the circumstances there is no conflict with this criterion of Policy OE11.

### **The visual amenity of the green space**

8.26 The existing site levels fall steeply from west to east, over a range of approximately 15 metres. Currently, long range views looking onto Cuckoo Lane from Grange Lane are not possible due to the steeply rising gradient which exists on site. Short range views from Grange Road are currently of vacant and derelict land, a direct result of the demolition of the former school buildings which have been reduced to hardstanding. However, historically these short views would have been of an imposing, utilitarian school building of four storeys in height. The building would have prevented views in to the site from a considerable part of Grange Lane.

- 8.27 Views do currently exist from the Cuckoo Lane to the east. Current short range views are over unrelieved playing fields of limited visual amenity value and while longer range views exist now they would historically have been interrupted by the tall school buildings that would have interrupted these views from many vantage points until their recent demolition.
- 8.28 In developing the site for redevelopment, there will inevitably be a change in its appearance and the visual amenity value. However change does not necessarily equate to any diminution in value.
- 8.29 Following the proposed development, short range views from Cuckoo Lane and Grange Lane will be of high quality residential development in a landscape setting. Whilst long views from Cuckoo Lane to the east will be more limited as a consequence of the proposals, care has been taken in designing the site to provide the opportunity for a series of viewpoints through the site to the east. The Cuckoo Lane frontage is broken by a series of access roads which will provide long distance views through the site. As demonstrated on the sections provided, the levels enable long views that will not be interrupted by the properties proposed fronting Grange Road, as these will be situated substantially lower.
- 8.30 In addition, the proposed development has been sensitively designed to integrate with its built and landscape setting. This is achieved by providing a layout and house type profile which is consistent with and reflective of the character of the surrounding area and by retaining perimeter street trees where possible and planting additional trees within the application site. This smaller scale of development positively responds to the visual amenity value of the site within its context.
- 8.31 In light of the above, it is considered that while there will be change to the visual amenity of the site arising from a reduction of openness any the harm to the objectives of policy OE11 are limited due to:
- the limited value of the historic short range views;
  - the limited value of historic long range views which were interrupted by a significant four storey school building;
  - the preservation of key, long-range views that the proposed development will ensure; and
  - the high quality of the development and landscape setting proposed.

#### **The relationship to adjoining green spaces**

- 8.32 The site does not currently benefit from a direct connection to adjacent green spaces and it is therefore considered that the release of the site for development would not impact upon any link between such spaces.

#### **Conservation value**

- 8.33 The application site does not have any inherent conservation value warranting specific protection. New trees will be planted and residential gardens provided which will serve to maintain and improve the current ecological value of the site.

### **Conclusion regarding Policy OE11**

8.34 Based on the foregoing, it is concluded that:

- the proposed development will not cause material harm to the recreational function of the green space, by virtue of the fact that the site cannot be considered to presently hold any recreational value;
- even if this was not considered to be the case, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development would fall under two of the exception criteria identified; namely that the application site does not lie in an area of open space deficiency and that replacement facilities of additional qualitative and quantitative value have been provided at the new school site to ensure that an area of open space deficiency will not be created;
- the proposals will not affect a relationship to an adjoining green space; and
- the proposals will not affect the conservation value of the site.

8.35 There will be change to the visual amenity of the site. Strict interpretation of Policy OE11 indicates a minor conflict against this aspect of the policy. However, this needs to be considered in balance with the development plan as a whole and the other relevant material considerations.

### **Meeting Housing Requirements**

8.36 The analysis of the current housing land supply position in the City at Chapter 7 of this Statement demonstrates that there is a shortfall against the five year housing requirement in the City. Significant development is required to meet the short term housing need and the housing delivery objectives of the plan.

8.37 The application site is deliverable and the proposals would go some way in helping to address the clear and identified need and shortfall in supply. This consideration weighs strongly in favour of the proposals. Paragraph 47 of the Framework cannot therefore be satisfied and paragraph 49 and hence 14 are therefore engaged.

### **Historic Environment**

8.38 The development plan contains policies that are designed to protect the historic environment, including the setting of listed buildings (Policy HD5). However, the development plan was adopted in 2002 and is therefore not consistent with the most up-to-date policy contained in the Framework and guidance prepared by English Heritage<sup>8</sup>. The EH guidance provides detail on how to define and assess setting and the associated impact of any changes arising a development. It confirms that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, rather the importance of setting lies in what contributes to the significance of the relevant heritage asset itself.

8.39 The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

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<sup>8</sup> The Setting of Heritage Assets, English Heritage (2011)

*“...the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*

- 8.40 The assessment of the application proposals, against the relevant heritage policy in the adopted UDP, takes accounts of the current EH guidance and the Framework. Full details and analysis are set out in the submitted Heritage Statement that accompanies the application.
- 8.41 There are a number of listed buildings in close proximity to the application site, upon which the proposed development has the potential to impact on their setting:
- The Crying Tree is located to the north west of the Appraisal Site and is accessed from Grange Lane. The building was added to the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest at grade II on the 14th March 1975;
  - Grange Hollies is also located along Grange Lane to the north of the Appraisal Site. It was grade II listed on the 22nd June 1973; and
  - Oakfield Terrace listed at grade II on 19th June 1985. This building is located along Cuckoo Lane to the south of the Appraisal Site.
- 8.42 The Heritage Statement confirms that the listed buildings that have been identified to the north east of the Appraisal Site (Crying Tree and Grange Hollies) are representative of a phase in the history and development of Liverpool when wealthy merchants left the cramped conditions of the City and sought improved living conditions in the suburbs. These buildings originally benefitted from extensive views to the north east and were therefore designed to be orientated in that direction, with large bay windows overlooking private rear gardens and views beyond to Lancashire and Cheshire. Historic map regression indicates that these properties had a more functional relationship with Grange Lane. The setting and context of these buildings changed considerably and due to the expansion of Liverpool they no longer sit within a rural context or command open views of the countryside.
- 8.43 The application site originally formed part of the rural backdrop of the identified listed buildings. However the orientation and design of the listed buildings suggests that the visual relationship between them and this land was less important than land to the north east. The application site was also redeveloped during the significant phase of growth in the 20th century and until its demolition following the school's closure in 2011, Gateacre Comprehensive School was a large, dominant four storey building on the south eastern part of the site.
- 8.44 Overall, the Heritage Statement concludes that the proposals fully accord with Policy GEN3 of the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan by preserving those elements of setting which contribute to the significance of the listed buildings. The proposals do not adversely affect the architectural or historic character of the listed building and therefore accord with Policy HD4. The setting and key views of both the listed building and nearby

heritage assets has been taken into consideration and will not be harmed by the proposals, thereby complying with Policy HD5.

- 8.45 The proposals will protect the character and contribution the heritage assets make to the distinctiveness of Liverpool, thereby complying with Strategic Policy 1 of the draft Liverpool Core Strategy. Through preserving those elements of setting that contribute to the significance of the listed buildings, the proposals accord with both Strategic Policy 23 and 24.

#### **Reclamation of Vacant Site**

- 8.46 The application site is currently vacant, following the demolition of the former school buildings. In addition, it has been confirmed that prior to the development of the school, part of the site was used for household landfill. Policy EP1 of the development plan sets out a clear aspiration for such sites to be reclaimed and restored for appropriate use. Remediation of the site for residential use will ensure that it makes a meaningful and significant contribution to urban regeneration objectives within the locality as well as the local economy, by providing high quality family housing to assist in rebalancing the city's housing stock and retaining and attracting skilled and economically active households within Liverpool.
- 8.47 The application is supported by a Site Remediation Strategy which provides a comprehensive specification for the site remediation and enabling works that are required to construct a development platform that will be geo-technically suitable for the construction of the proposed residential development.

#### **Assessment of other technical considerations**

- 8.48 The technical information and reports submitted in support of the application demonstrate that the development proposals are capable of meeting all of the relevant requirements of other technical / development management policies identified. The findings of the relevant reports are summarised below, in referring to the relevant policies of the UDP:
- The Design and Access Statement submitted in support of this application demonstrates how the design of the development positively respects and responds to the density, design and layout of the local area in which it is situated, maintains levels of privacy and amenity for existing and future residents and demonstrates good design in accordance with Policies H5 and HD18.
  - Each dwelling will have access to a private rear garden and the development will provide a financial contribution towards off site provision of open space within easy walking distance of the application site in accordance with Policy OE14.
  - All the proposed house types are timber frame construction with the intermediate floors being clear spanning to a maximum of 6m; as a result, most of the internal walls are non-loadbearing and can be removed / re-positioned as required by their future occupants to adapt their needs in accordance with Policy HD19.

- The Transport Assessment submitted demonstrates that the proposed development would have no perceptible impact on the highway network arising from traffic generation, will ensure a safe, attractive, convenient and nuisance-free highway environment for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers and the site occupies a sustainable location with access to public transport services, good connections and with access to a range of local facilities in accordance with Policies H5, T6 and T7.
- The submitted Transport Assessment also confirms that there will be no detrimental impact to the safe and efficient operation of the highway network and the proposal will accord with the Council's schedule of parking standards in accordance with Policies T12 and T15.
- The Air Quality Assessment confirms that whilst there is potential for air quality impacts to occur as a result of fugitive dust emissions during the construction phases, assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented, the residual significance of potential air quality impacts from dust generated by earthworks, construction and trackout activities will be negligible. The results of the dispersion modelling assessment predict that the impacts on NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> levels as a result of operational phase vehicle exhaust emissions will be negligible at all sensitive receptor locations. The overall significance of potential impacts is determined to be negligible, in accordance with the EPUK guidance. Air quality is not considered a constraint to planning consent for the proposed development in accordance with Policy EP11.
- The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey confirms that there are no protected plant species located either within or immediately adjacent to the site and that the habitats within the site are common to the local area and of limited botanical value. The Survey confirms that there are no overriding ecological factors present that would preclude development at this site in accordance with Policy OE5, OE7 and HD22.
- The Arboricultural Impact Assessment submitted with the application demonstrates that the proposals would not result in the unacceptable loss of or damage to trees. A large amount of additional street tree planting is proposed within the scheme and all existing trees have been retained where possible in accordance with Policy HD22 and HD23;
- The Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy submitted with the application, confirm that the site lies wholly within Flood Zone 1; there would be no increased risk of flooding as a result on the proposed development and that appropriate attenuation features will be provided on site to ensure there will be no risk of additional surface water or to ground water quality in accordance with Policy EP12 and EP13.
- The Phase I and Phase II Geo-Environmental Site Investigations confirm that the raised western area of the site has been identified as having been used as a historical household landfill prior to the school being built in 1957. A Remediation Strategy has been prepared in support of the proposal which demonstrates that

the redevelopment of the site will take place in a safe and legislatively compliant manner in accordance with Policy EP3.

- The submitted Lighting Assessment confirms that the lighting scheme is the minimum required for security and that light spillage will be minimised in accordance with Policy HD28.
- The Statement of Community Involvement confirms that the consultation exercise has been undertaken in accordance with the City Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

### **Conclusion on Development Plan Compliance**

- 8.49 The proposed development is consistent with the key objective to ensure that good quality housing, appropriate to people's needs is available for all those who wish to live in the City. This key objectives accord with the Framework.
- 8.50 We have identified that there is a significant shortfall against the five year housing requirement in the City and the development will make an important contribution towards meeting the this short-term housing need. The application therefore needs to be considered within the context of Paragraph 47 of the Framework which aims to "boost significantly the supply of housing".
- 8.51 By virtue of the site's historic educational use, the application site is allocated as protected open space on the proposals maps of the adopted UPD. However, the site has no current recreational use and comprises a significant quantum of previously developed land. The proposed development is broadly compliant with the exception criteria set out in Policy OE11 for development on open space and whilst the development will result in a change to the visual amenity of the site, the harm to the objectives of Policy is very limited and needs to be considered in the wider context of the development plan.
- 8.52 Careful consideration has been given to the setting of the listed buildings which are located within close proximity to the site. The development will preserve those elements of setting that contribute to the significance of the listed buildings.
- 8.53 The development proposals are capable of meeting all of the relevant requirements of other technical / development management policies identified.

## 9. Issue 2: Other Material Considerations

- 9.1 Both the Act and the Framework refer to other material considerations that may be taken into account in the decision-making process. In this case, the principal material consideration is the Framework, together with other relevant documents including the emerging development plan.

### **Compliance with the Framework**

- 9.2 In the first instance, the proposed development accords with the following relevant Core Planning Principles set out at Paragraph 17 of the Framework. The development:

- will help to support sustainable economic development through the delivery of homes and a thriving local community;
- will help to meet the housing needs of the area;
- will secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupants;
- will take account of the role and character of the locality and will support the thriving community in Gateacre; and
- will promote growth in a sustainable location where the full use of public transport, walking and cycling can be made.

### **The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development**

- 9.3 Paragraph 14 of the Framework sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This lies at the heart of the Framework and forms the golden thread running through it. It provides that development that accords with the development plan should be approved without delay. In circumstances where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, it provides planning permission should be granted for sustainable development unless:

*‘any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework when taken as a whole; or*

*Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted’*

- 9.4 The Framework requires that an overall approach is taken to sustainable development incorporating social, economic and environmental elements (paragraph 7). These elements should not be considered in isolation.
- 9.5 Paragraph 6 of the Framework makes clear that Sustainable Development means consideration of development proposals against paragraphs 18 - 219 of the Framework as a whole. Such an assessment should be read in the context of the three dimensions set out in paragraph 7 of the Framework and the guidance at paragraphs 8-17. All

elements of a scheme should be balanced; even if there is a conflict with one aspect of policy, a development may still be sustainable.

- 9.6 The following is an assessment of the proposed development against the relevant policies of the Framework:

### **Building a Strong Competitive Economy**

- 9.7 The Framework confirms, at paragraph 18, that the Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to secure jobs and prosperity. Planning should not be an impediment to sustainable growth and significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system (paragraph 19).

- 9.8 Housing development is a key component of economic growth; this is recognised in Government Policy and Ministerial statement. An Economic Impact Statement has been prepared by Turley Economics in support of the proposed residential development (see Appendix 6). This confirms:

- That the construction of 200 homes would have the capacity to support approximately 312 person-years of direct employment with the construction sector. This equates to an average of 52 full-time equivalent (FTE) construction jobs on-site annually, many of which would be available to local people.
- A further annual average of 23 FTE jobs would be supported within the supply chain, related businesses and onward expenditure across Liverpool and the wider North West regional economy throughout the construction period.
- The construction capital expenditure associated with the proposed development could deliver an annual net additional £1.8 million contribution to Liverpool, and the wider regional economy, during the construction period
- In addition, the proposed development has the potential to increase the population by circa 440 people. Based on this total population growth, there will be circa 174 economically active and employed residents residing on the completed scheme, who will generate a gross household income of approximately £3.8 million annually. These residents will bolster local labour supply.
- There is the potential to capture circa £2.4 million of household retail (convenience and comparison) expenditure and £1.3 of leisure (goods and services) expenditure, every year within the City's economy, from households living on the completed scheme. This will help to boost the vitality and viability of local shops, businesses and sustain essential local services.
- The development would also contribute approximately £400,000 per annum in increased Council Tax revenue and £2.1 million in New Homes Bonus for Liverpool City Council.

## **Promoting Sustainable Transport**

- 9.9 The following section outlines the accessibility of the site to a range of employment, education, health and retail/leisure destinations by sustainable travel modes.

### **Education**

- 9.10 There are number of primary and high schools within a 2km walking catchment of the site. The closest primary schools to the site are Our Lady of Assumption Catholic Primary School and Belle Vale Community Primary School located to the east of the site. The high school in closest proximity to the proposed development is the relocated Gateacre School, located off Hedgefield Lane. In addition, a number of other schools are located within the 2km walking catchment. These include:

- Woolton Primary School
- Bishop Martin C of E Primary School
- St Francis Xavier's College
- Abbot's Lea School
- Woolton High School

### **Employment**

- 9.11 Employment destinations available in Liverpool City Centre, Speke (including the airport) and Bootle can be accessed by the number 75 and 81 bus services from Rose Brow. The number 75 service runs between Liverpool and Halewood. With a 10 minute frequency offering a 'turn up and ride' service and a travel time of just 30 minutes to Liverpool City Centre. The number 81 provides a service between the airport, Speke and Bootle. With a 10 minute frequency offering a 'turn up and ride' service and a travel time of just under 15 minutes to Speke. The buses serving the site therefore offer an excellent opportunity for travel by bus, with regular services to local employment destinations.

### **Healthcare**

- 9.12 A number of healthcare facilities (GPs, dentists and pharmacies) are located within a 2km walking distance of the site. The closest GP facility to the site is Gateacre Brow Surgery, located within 1.2km of the site. In addition further GP services are located at Gateacre Medical Centre and Belle Vale Health Centre, within the 2km catchment.
- 9.13 The closest pharmacies to the site are located on Gateacre Park Drive (Gateacre Park Pharmacy) and Grange Lane (Grange Lane Pharmacy) with dental practices located on Gateacre Park Drive (Peers Backstrom Dental Surgeon) and Halewood Road (Gateacre Dental Surgery). The site is well located with respect to health facilities.

### **Retail and Leisure**

- 9.14 The nearest retail facilities to the site are located at the recently opened Gateacre Neighbourhood Centre, which has been redeveloped to include an Aldi foodstore together with a number of smaller retail units. Gateacre neighbourhood centre is located 580 metres from the site centre and therefore within the 0.8km catchment area

and an acceptable walking distance of the proposed development. Belle Vale local centre is located c1.2km to the east of the site with Woolton local centre located to the south west of the site, just outside the 2km catchment. It is therefore concluded that the site is well located with respect to local retail facilities.

### **Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes**

- 9.15 Paragraph 47 of the Framework states that to 'boost significantly' the supply of housing Local Planning Authorities should identify a supply of specific immediately deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years supply with an additional buffer of 5% or 20% in areas of persistent under delivery.
- 9.16 In light of the above, there is an urgent need to grant planning permission for new housing on unconstrained, deliverable housing sites in sustainable locations. The development of 200 new homes on the application site will contribute to meeting the existing deficiency in the City's overall supply.
- 9.17 Moreover, the development proposals deliver a wide choice and mix of new housing to meet an identified local need for family housing. The accompanying Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the development has been designed and will be built to a high standard.

### **Housing Mix and Choice**

- 9.18 Paragraph 50 of the Framework states that local authorities should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community.
- 9.19 Liverpool's current housing stock is dominated by smaller terraced properties and there is an identified need to diversify this stock by encouraging more family and aspirational housing. This would also help to diversify the borough's overall housing stock and ensure it supports the aim of retaining and attracting households, including those central to the borough's economic growth prospects.

### **Requiring Good Design**

- 9.20 The application is submitted in full. The design is detailed through the submitted application plans which demonstrate how the site will successfully accommodate the proposal for 200 units. It is supported by a detailed Design and Access Statement which demonstrates that the proposed development is responsive to its surrounding context and in accordance with local development plan policies on design.
- 9.21 Given the foregoing, it is considered that the proposals are consistent paragraphs 56-68 of the Framework.

### **Promoting Healthy Communities**

- 9.22 Healthy communities are those that interact and are cohesive. The location of the proposed development is sustainable, adjoined on all sides by existing residential properties which will facilitate the integration of new residents within the existing community.

- 9.23 As demonstrated the site's proximity to local facilities will serve to promote walking and cycling, as healthier modes of transport amongst new residents as alternatives to the private car for everyday travel.
- 9.24 It has been demonstrated that the loss resulting from the disposal of the application site for alternative use, has been mitigated through the replacement of improved provision (in terms of quantity and quality) at the new Gateacre School site at Hedgefield Road.

### **Protecting Green Belt**

- 9.25 The proposal does not involve development in the Green Belt. However, there is significant pressure on the Merseyside Green Belt to accommodate future development needs and the release of this urban site comprising a significant proportion of previously developed land will help meet the objective of the Framework in protecting the Green Belt from development.

### **Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change & Flooding**

- 9.26 The site is in a sustainable location with access to good public transport and within walking and cycling distance of key facilities. The location of the development is consistent with the objective of minimising the need to travel and thereby minimising any contribution of vehicle emissions to climate change.
- 9.27 The proposal is accompanied by a detailed Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrates that there will be no adverse effects with regards to flood risk as a result of this application.
- 9.28 The proposed development will involve the re-use of (part) previously developed land and (part) reclaimed land, previously used for landfill prior to the development of the school. The application is accompanied by a land remediation strategy which provides a comprehensive specification for the site remediation and enabling works that, when implemented will ensure the site is suitable for the construction of residential development. Overall, the proposals would accord with the Framework in terms of meeting the challenge of climate change.

### **Conserving the Natural Environment**

- 9.29 The technical information and reports submitted in support of the application demonstrate that the development proposals are capable of meeting all of the relevant requirements of the saved technical and development management policies within the UDP.
- 9.30 A proportion of the site comprises previously developed land, the remaining part comprises reclaimed land, previously used for landfill prior to the development of the school. Paragraph 111 of the Framework encourages the re-use of previously developed land, the paragraph does not place preference on the development of such land ahead of greenfield sites. Redevelopment of the application site for residential development is therefore not inconsistent with the Framework in this respect.
- 9.31 Overall, the proposals would accord with the Framework in terms of meeting the challenge of conserving the natural environment.

### **Conserving the Historic Environment**

- 9.32 There are a number of listed buildings in close proximity to the application site, upon which the proposed development has the potential to impact on their setting. Due consideration has been given to these identified assets and their setting in preparing the proposed application and a Heritage Statement detailing this work has been submitted in support of the planning application.
- 9.33 Having assessed the significance of relevant designated heritage assets, the Heritage Statement concludes that the development will overall sustain the significance of The Crying Tree, Grange Hollies and Oakfield Terrace ensuring compliance with paragraph 134 of the Framework.

### **Decision Taking**

- 9.34 The chapter on decision-taking in the Framework reinforces the requirement for the local planning authority to take a positive and pro-active approach that looks for solutions rather than problems (paragraphs 186, 187, 190). It reaffirms that applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise and that the Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions (paragraph 196).
- 9.35 Paragraph 197 repeats the requirement that, in assessing and determining proposals, Local Planning Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The proposed development comprises sustainable development in accordance with the definition set out in the Framework. In the circumstances, a positive approach and grant of planning permission would be consistent with the decision-taking chapter of the Framework.

### **Conclusion on Sustainable Development**

- 9.36 The development proposals have been assessed against the definition of sustainable development contained in the Framework (paragraphs 18. 219). Overall, it is clear that the proposal comprises a sustainable housing development, attaining the requisite beneficial economic, social and environmental outcomes which are now enshrined in national planning policy.
- 9.37 There are no policies in the Framework which indicate permission should be refused. Rather the application should be determined having regard to the presumption in favour of sustainable development (para 14) and the added presumption in favour of housing development due to absence of a five year land supply (para 49) this is a material consideration that should be afforded significant weight in determination of this planning application.

### **Emerging Liverpool Local Plan**

- 9.38 The draft Local Plan is capable of being considered a material consideration to the determination of this application. However, this remains at an early stage of preparation and can therefore only be afforded minimal weight.
- 9.39 Nevertheless the proposals have been assessed against the provisions of the draft Core Strategy which will form a key part of the emerging Local Plan. This has confirmed that:

- The proposals will protect the character and contribution the heritage assets make to the distinctiveness of Liverpool, thereby complying with Strategic Policy 1;
- The proposed development will help to restructure the City's housing market and diversify the existing housing offer by providing predominantly private sector, family housing which will help to improve the stability and success of the housing market in accordance with draft Strategic Objective 2;
- The proposed high quality design will have a less than significant impact upon the adjacent listed buildings and will ensure that the City's unique historic and architectural environment is protected in accordance with draft Strategic Objective 4;
- The proposal will remediate a vacant and contaminated site and bring this back in to beneficial use without any adverse environmental impacts in accordance with draft Strategic Objective 6;
- The supporting Transport Assessment confirms that the site is accessible via a range of sustainable modes of transport and the development will make the best use of existing and proposed transport infrastructure in accordance with draft Strategic Objective 7 and draft Policy SP34;
- The development will make a significant contribution to meeting the city's housing requirement by diversifying the local housing offer and improving the sustainability of an established residential neighbourhood in accordance with draft Policies SP9 and SP12;
- The proposal will make the best use of a vacant site and will bring a number of economic benefits to the local area in accordance with draft Policy SP1;
- The development will help to broaden the City's housing offer and will accord with the policies of the Council's SPD 'Design for Access for All' in relation to Lifetime Homes in accordance with draft Policy SP13;
- The scheme will comprise a broad mix of high quality mixed-value, private sector family housing, a high proportion of which will be semi-detached and detached homes. The scheme proposes a density of 27 units per ha which is reflective of the locality of the site and a direct result of the site's orientation and topography. It is therefore considered that the proposals accord with draft Policy SP16;
- As set out within the Design and Access Statement the scheme will provide a high quality design and create a well-integrated and useable residential environment in accordance with draft Policy SP23;
- Careful consideration has been given to the listed buildings located in close proximity to the site and their settings in accordance with draft Policy SP24;
- The application site is not identified on picture 9 'Liverpool Green Infrastructure'. And as such draft Policy SP26 does not apply;

- The proposed development will make the best use of vacant and contaminated site in accordance with draft Policy SP31; and
- The planning application documents together confirm that the environmental impacts of the development are minimised in accordance with draft Policy SP33.

9.40 It is therefore concluded that the proposals are in full conformity with the emerging Local Plan. This is a material consideration to be weighed in support of the application.

#### **Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)**

9.41 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a material consideration to the determination of this application of significant weight. Importantly, PPG endorses the Sedgefield approach taken within our assessment to calculating the 5-year housing requirement.

#### **Plan for Growth (HM Treasury 2011)**

9.42 The proposals have been assessed against the 2010 Local Growth White Paper which must be afforded weight as a material consideration. The proposed development is wholly compliant with the White Paper and will secure high quality, aspirational housing, key to the City's economic growth aspirations and the national growth agenda.

#### **Housing and Growth (DCLG 2012)**

9.43 The proposed development will make a direct contribution to meeting the acute need for high quality housing within areas of high demand in accordance with this ministerial statement.

#### **Conclusion on Material Considerations**

9.44 Material considerations have been identified that provide further support to the application proposals. In particular the development would accord with the emerging development plan and the principles of sustainable development as set out in Framework. It would provide additional benefits comprising:

- The creation of a high quality residential environment;
- The introduction of new housing increasing quality and choice of housing to meet identified local needs and economic growth aspirations;
- New direct and indirect employment opportunities;
- Support for local services;
- Increased Council Tax revenue and receipt of New Homes Bonus payments to further invest back into Liverpool.

## 10. Planning Balance and Conclusions

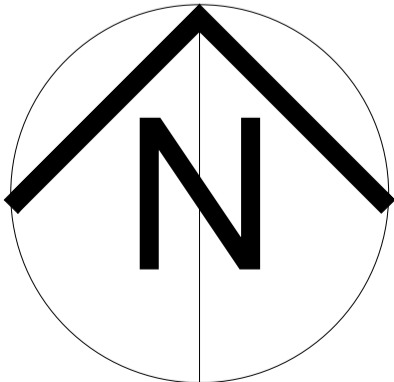
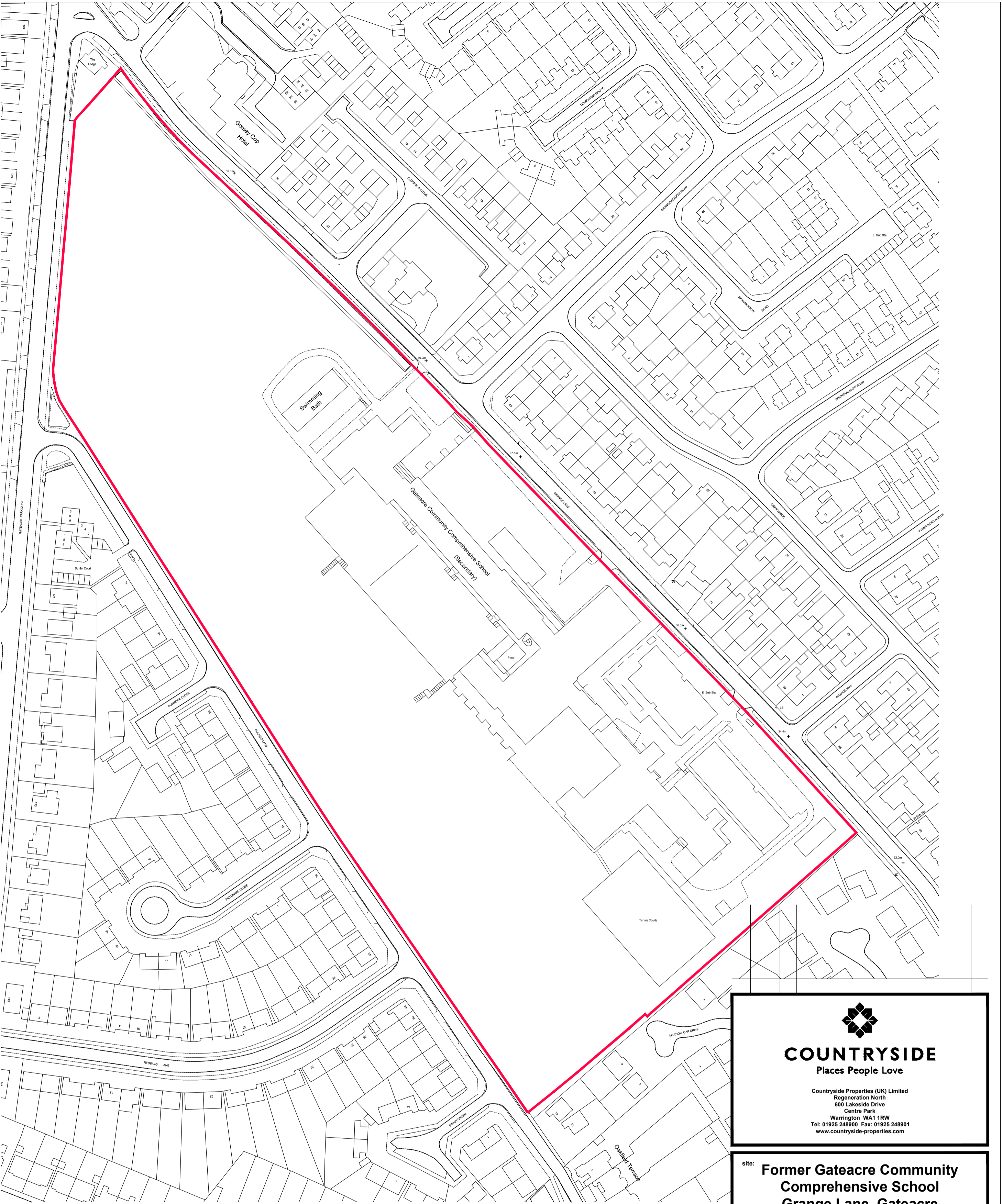
- 10.1 The site constitutes a sustainable location for residential development within the urban area and a well-established and popular suburban setting. The vacant site comprises a significant proportion of previously developed land, with a significant part of the associated playing fields having been formerly used for landfill. The development provides an opportunity for re-use of urban land and through remediation will bring it back in to beneficial use.
- 10.2 The Design and Access Statement demonstrates how the detailed analysis and technical reports have informed the proposed site layout. The development proposes a range of high quality homes, predominantly four and five bedroom dwellings, reflective of the identified and well recognised need for larger, higher value properties within the City.
- 10.3 The proposals have been assessed against the development plan, which must be assessed as a whole in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and found to be in general compliance.
- 10.4 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is consistent with the relevant spatial objectives and general policies of the UDP which seek to ensure that good quality housing, appropriate to people's needs is available for all those who wish to live in the City. In addition, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development will make an important contribution towards meeting the significant shortfall against the five year housing requirement in the City
- 10.5 Whilst the site is allocated as protected open space, the site has no current recreational use and is broadly compliant with the exception criteria set out in Policy OE11 for development on open spaces. It will result in changes to the visual amenity of the site; however, the harm to the objectives of the policy is limited and needs to be considered in the wider context of the development plan. The application has been assessed against the criteria of Policy OE11 and broad compliance demonstrated; nevertheless, it is arguable that the policy is out of date having regard to the provisions of Paragraph 49 of the Framework.
- 10.6 Considerable importance and weight has been given to heritage considerations and the submitted Heritage Statement confirms that the proposed development will overall sustain the significance of the listed buildings and their setting.
- 10.7 The development proposals are capable of meeting all of the relevant requirements of other technical and development management policies identified and material considerations have been identified that provide further support to the application proposals. In particular the development would accord with the principles of sustainable development as set out in Framework.
- 10.8 Paragraph 14 of the Framework is clear that planning permission should only be refused for sustainable development where any adverse impacts of the proposals would *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh the benefits.

10.9 In this case, the only minor adverse impacts that have been identified are the limited conflict with the visual amenity objectives of Policy OE11 and the identified less than substantial impact on the setting of the two adjacent listed buildings. No other adverse effects are identified, and certainly none that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the identified benefits which are:

- The proposal will provide up to 200 high quality family homes contributing to the qualitative need for this type of accommodation within the borough as well as helping to address the pressing quantitative need for new housing in the City.
- The proposal will contribute to achieving a more balanced mix and choice of housing within the City by diversifying the range of housing available and rebalancing the borough's housing stock profile characterised by an oversupply of terraced housing and a shortage of larger high quality, modern family dwellings;
- The proposal will contribute to building a strong competitive economy by providing high quality homes needed to attract and retain economically active households and to rebalance the housing stock whilst contributing to the creation of new jobs and delivering Council Tax revenue and New Homes Bonus revenue for the borough;
- The proposal occupies a sustainable location for residential development within walking and cycling distance of a range of every day services and accessible to Belle Vale District Centre, Liverpool City Centre and surrounding employment locations by public transport. The proposal will therefore promote sustainable transport;
- The proposed development will retain existing trees where possible and will introduce a large number of new street trees along key routes and vistas;
- The proposed development embraces the objective of achieving good design and positively responds to the opportunities and constraints presented by the site context.
- The sustainability of the site's location and the ability of future residents to access local services using the most sustainable modes of transport mean the development will make a positive contribution to meeting the challenge of climate change;
- The proposed development will remediate a previously contaminated site and bring this back in to effective, beneficial use.

10.10 As there are no adverse impacts which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits which the development will bring, paragraph 14 of the Framework directs that planning permission should be granted.

## **Appendix 1: Site Location Plan**



**COUNTRYSIDE**  
Places People Love

Countryside Properties (UK) Limited  
Regeneration North  
600 Lakeside Drive  
Centre Park  
Warrington WA1 1RW  
Tel: 01925 248900 Fax: 01925 248901  
www.countryside-properties.com

site: **Former Gateacre Community  
Comprehensive School  
Grange Lane, Gateacre**

title: **Location Plan**

scale: **1:1250**  
@A2  
date: **April 2014**

drawn by: **AC**  
checked:



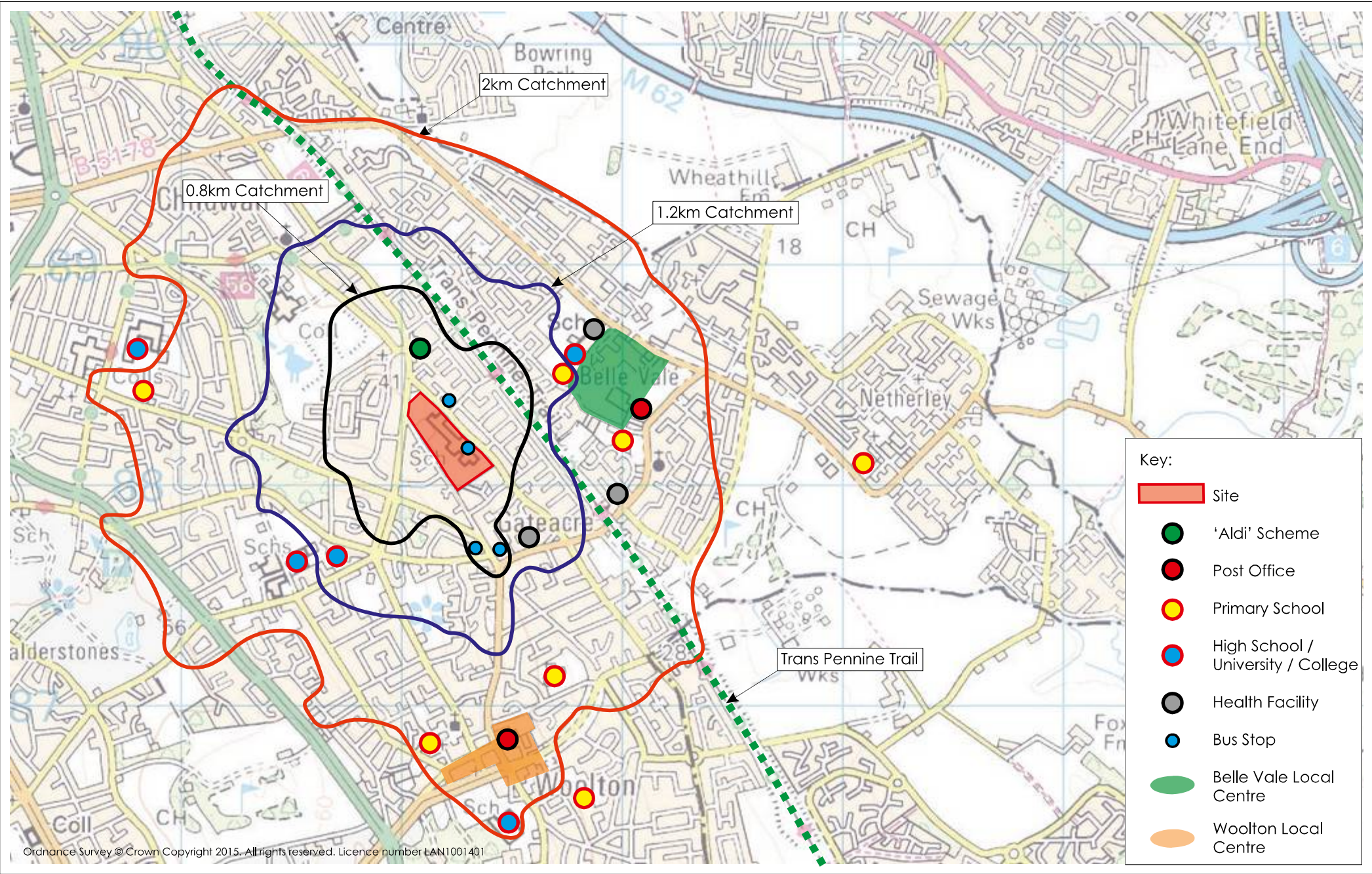
drawing no: **SK384-LP-01**

sheet no: **Sheet 1 of #**

revision: **\***

## **Appendix 2: Local Facilities**

Figure 3.1 Walking Catchment and Site Accessibility



## **Appendix 3: Section 77 Approval**



Education  
Funding  
Agency

**Education Funding Agency**  
Schools Assets Team  
Ground Floor Mowden Hall  
Staindrop Road  
Darlington DL3 9BG

Bob Turner  
Project Manager  
BSF & Capital Development Team  
Liverpool City Council

Direct Line: 01325 735634

Email: [George.carney@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:George.carney@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Your Ref: LSIT/0113/GC/S77/GateacreB

Date: 11 January 2013

Dear Bob,

**Former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School Site, Grange Lane,  
Liverpool.**

I acknowledge receipt of your email dated 8 January 2013, advising that Liverpool City Council has awarded itself a general class consent to dispose of 49,009m<sup>2</sup> of playing field land under paragraph 7 of the schedule of The School Playing Fields General Disposal and Change of Use Consent (no 4) 2012, at the former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School site.

Yours sincerely

George Carney  
Schools Assets Team

## **Appendix 4: Screening Opinion**

## **Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2011**

### **Former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School, Grange Lane, Gateacre, Liverpool, L25**

#### **Introduction**

Liverpool City Council has been asked for a formal screening opinion by Turley Associates on behalf of Countryside Properties UK Limited in relation to a residential development at the above site comprising up to 202 dwellings with associated access, parking, landscaping and amenity spaces.

This screening opinion is based upon information contained in the letter from Turley Associates dated 22 May 2014 and the plan identifying the site.

#### **The Site**

The site comprises an area of some 7.89 ha. as identified on the accompanying plan and is within the Gateacre district of Liverpool. The site is bounded by Grange Lane to the east, Cuckoo Lane to the west, Gateacre Park Drive to the north and by residential properties of Meadow Oak Drive to the south. The site is currently vacant land, having previously been the site of Gateacre Community Comprehensive School before it moved site in 2011; it is cleared of buildings but includes areas of hard-standing and former school playing fields. The land slopes steeply from east to west with the former school playing fields located on an elevated plateau adjacent to Cuckoo Lane, several metres above the level of the former buildings which were sited at the level of Grange Lane. The site is allocated as greenspace in the Unitary Development Plan. The site is more fully described in the letter of 22 May.

#### **Proposal**

The proposed redevelopment of the site will be for private housing of up to 202 units with associated access, parking, landscaping and amenity areas. An indicative layout demonstrates the proposal for 202 houses of different sizes and this is considered the maximum number to be delivered for the purposes of this screening request, although the ultimate layout and design may change through consultation and pre-application discussions.

#### **Assessment**

The proposal does not fall within Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations.

The proposal is not within the various descriptions as set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations but is capable of being described as an 'urban development project' on a site in excess of 0.5 ha and as such, constitutes Schedule 2 development.

Schedule 3 of the Regulations provides guidance on how to decide whether the project is likely to have significant environmental effects, thereby requiring EIA under Schedule 2.

#### **National Planning Practice Guidance**

NPPG has now replaced previous guidance on Environmental Impact Assessment as set out in Circular 02/99 and advises:

*When screening Schedule 2 projects, the local planning authority must take account of the selection criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations. Not all of the criteria will be relevant in every case. Each case should be considered on its own merits in a balanced way and authorities should retain the evidence to justify their decision.*

*Only a very small proportion of Schedule 2 development will require an assessment. While it is not possible to formulate criteria or thresholds which will provide a universal test of whether or not an assessment is required, it is possible to offer a broad indication of the type or scale of development which is likely to require an assessment.*

The NPPG also provides an annex providing Indicative Screening Threshold as follows:

10. INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS			
(a) Industrial estate development projects;	The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare.	Site area of the new development is more than 20 hectares.	Potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise.
(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks, sports stadiums, leisure centres and multiplex cinemas;	The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare.	Environmental Impact Assessment is unlikely to be required for the redevelopment of land unless the new development is on a significantly greater scale than the previous use, or the types of impact are of a markedly different nature or there is a high level of contamination.  Sites which have not previously been intensively developed:  (i) area of the scheme is more than 5 hectares; or (ii) it would provide a total of more than 10,000 m <sup>2</sup> of new commercial floorspace; or (iii) the development would have significant urbanising	Physical scale of such developments, potential increase in traffic, emissions and noise

		effects in a previously non-urbanised area (e.g. a new development of more than 1,000 dwellings).	
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### **Schedule 3 Criteria**

Schedule 3 of the regulations outlines the criteria against which any Schedule 2 development should be assessed.

#### **Characteristics of the Development**

Size of the development: The development would not be of a significant scale, would be compatible with its surroundings and would not have a significant urbanising effect.

Cumulation with other development: The development would be a stand alone scheme which is not dependent on other development.

Use of natural resources: There would be no significant use of natural resources.

Production of waste: Waste produced is unlikely to be significant and could be mitigated by the use of standard good practice and appropriate conditions.

Pollution and nuisance: Works are unlikely to impact on air quality in any significant way. Some local nuisance may arise during demolition and construction but could be mitigated by effective site management.

Risk of accidents: There is no evidence that risk of accidents would be significant.

In assessing the characteristics of the development against the criteria within Schedule 3, Part 1, it is considered that the impact would not be significant and the submission of an ES is not required.

#### **Location of Development/Environmental Sensitivity of the Site**

Existing land use: The site is not a specific, sensitive area.

Abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area: The proposed works are unlikely to have any significant effect on natural resources.

The absorption capacity of the natural environment: The character of the site may provide limited opportunities for wildlife eg through bat roosts in trees or nesting opportunities but separate legislation exists to address these matters and the works are unlikely to have significant effects upon ecological resources.

In assessing the location of the development against the criteria within Schedule 3, Part 2, it is considered that the impact would not be significant and the submission of an ES is not required.

### **Characteristics of the Potential Impact**

When assessed against the criteria within Schedule 3, Part 3, sections a) to e) of the regulations, it is considered that the effects of the proposals would not be significant given the extent of the impact, the transfrontier nature of the impact, the magnitude and complexity of the impact, the probability of the impact and the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.

### **Conclusion**

It is considered that the development is not likely to give rise to significant environmental effects having regard to all the information contained in the letter of 22 May 2014 and accompanying plan, the criteria in Schedule 3 of the Regulations and guidance in National Planning Practice Guidance. Accordingly an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

## **Appendix 5: Economic Impact Statement**

# **The Former Gateacre Community Comprehenshiv School Site, Gateacre, Liverpool**

## **Economic Benefits Summary Statement**

Countryside Properties

February 2015

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1.	Economic Benefits Summary Statement	1
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## **Contact**

Matt Spilsbury MRTPI MRICS  
Associate Director – Economics

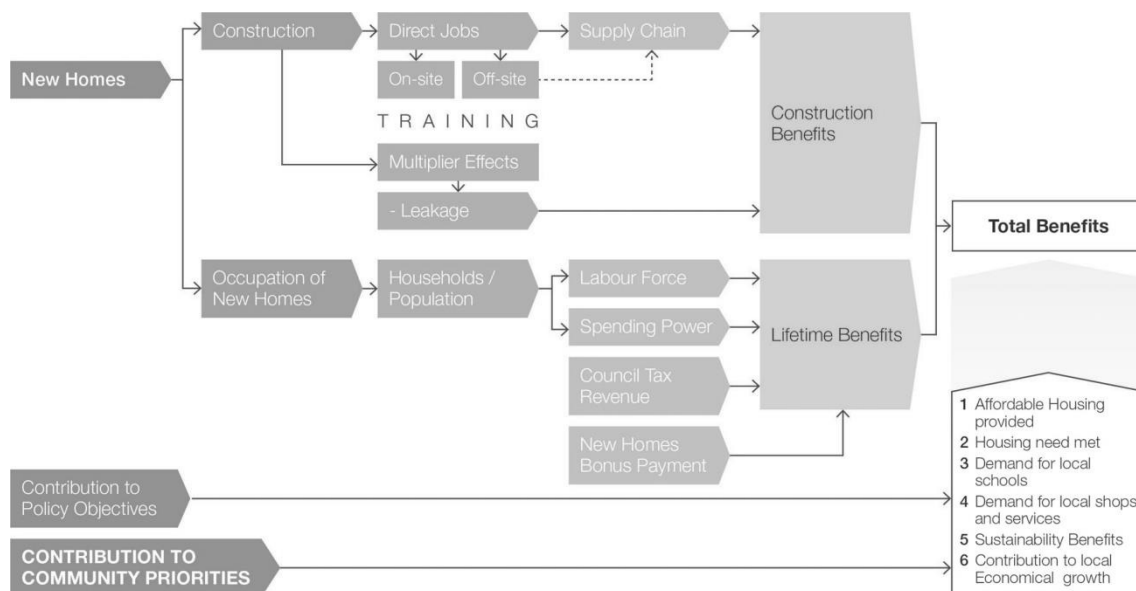
February 2015

# 1. Economic Benefits Summary Statement

## Introduction

- 1.1 This Economic Benefits Statement has been prepared by Turley Economics in support of the proposed residential development on land at the site of the former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School, Gateacre, Liverpool.
- 1.2 This Economic Impact Statement utilises Turley Economics' Local Economic Benefits (LEB) methodology. LEB provides a robust logical framework for evaluating the economic impacts of development proposals.

**Figure 1.1: Local Economic Benefits Framework – Residential Development**



Source: Turley Economics

- 1.3 This assessment of economic impacts evaluates the potential economic impacts of 200 (C3) residential dwellings. An illustrative accommodation schedule, incorporating a mix of units sized at 3 beds, 4 beds and 5 beds, has been utilised. This draws upon the illustrative masterplan layout for the proposed development, which has been made available to Turley Economics by the applicant, and forms part of the information prepared in generating the related planning application for the proposed development.
- 1.4 This evaluation considers the quantifiable impacts of the proposed development both during the construction phase and the subsequent operational 'lifetime'.
- 1.5 This evidence therefore forms part of the planning application documentation submitted to Liverpool City Council ('the Council') for the proposed development.

## The Economic Benefits

1.6 The following headline economic impacts have been identified as being derived from the provision of new residential dwellings on the application site during the construction phase:

- **Direct Construction-Related Employment** – the proposed development has the capacity to support approximately 312 person-years of direct employment with the construction sector. This equates to an average of **52 full-time equivalent (FTE) temporary construction jobs** on-site annually<sup>i</sup>, of which it is estimated that 47 FTE jobs could be sourced locally and across the wider North West regional labour force<sup>ii</sup>.
- **Construction-Derived Indirect and Induced Employment** – a further annual average of **23 FTE temporary jobs** would be supported within the supply chain, related businesses, and onward expenditure within Liverpool and across the wider North West regional economy throughout the construction period<sup>iii</sup>.
- **Construction-Related Productivity** - the construction phase of the proposed development will generate a significant increase in Gross Value Added (GVA)<sup>iv</sup>, which provides a key measure of economic productivity. Put simply, GVA is the total of all revenue into businesses, which is used to fund wages, profits and taxes. The construction capital expenditure associated with the proposed development could deliver an annual net additional **£3.6 million GVA contribution to the North West economy** each year, of which circa £1.8 million per year could contribute to the growth of the Liverpool economy<sup>v</sup>, during the construction period.

1.7 The following headline economic impacts have been identified as being derived from the provision of new residential dwellings on the application site during the operational lifetime of the proposed development:

- **Enhanced Local Labour Force & Spending Power** – there is potential to increase the local population by **circa 440 people** residing within 200 new high quality homes<sup>vi</sup>. Based on this total population growth, there will be **circa 174 economically active and employed residents** residing on the completed scheme<sup>vii</sup>, who will generate a gross household income of approximately **£3.8 million annually**. These residents will bolster local labour supply, with circa 41% projected to be employed in higher skilled and professional occupations.
- **Support for Local Retail & Leisure Services** - from these residents there is the potential to capture circa **£2.4 million of household retail (convenience and comparison) expenditure, and £1.3 million of leisure (goods and services) expenditure**, every year within Gateacre and the wider Liverpool economy, from households living on the completed scheme<sup>viii</sup>. This will help to boost the vitality and viability of local shops and businesses, and sustain essential local leisure and support services.

- **Public Council Tax Revenue for Investment in Community Services** – the construction of the new homes on the application site would generate **circa £400,000 additional Council Tax revenue** for Liverpool City Council per annum upon full occupation<sup>ix</sup>.
- **Public New Homes Bonus Revenue for Investment in Community Services** - the proposed development also has the potential to generate circa **£2.1 million New Homes Bonus payment for Liverpool City Council**. This would provide an important source of revenue funding for the Local Authority in delivering public services as well as investing in maintaining and enhancing infrastructure within the locality.

1.8 The economic benefits presented above are reproduced in a summary infographic format within Appendix 1 overleaf.

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<sup>i</sup> HM Treasury considers that 1 permanent FTE construction job is equivalent to 10 person-years of employment. This therefore assumes a 10 year construction period as standard. In reality the volume of construction employees on site will fluctuate and will be higher if the construction period is reduced. It is assumed that the proposed development will have a 6 year construction period allowing for site preparation, infrastructure and residential development.

<sup>ii</sup> Local and regional labour market containment assessed utilising ONS Annual Population Survey (APS)

<sup>iii</sup> Direct, indirect and induced impacts applied utilising leakage, displacement and multiplier effects in line with HCA (2014) Additionality Guide Fourth Edition.

<sup>iv</sup> GVA measures the value of output created (i.e. turnover) net of inputs purchased and used to produce a good or service (i.e. production of the output). GVA therefore provides a measure of economic productivity.

<sup>v</sup> Average GVA per FTE employee estimates within Liverpool and the North West construction sector sourced from Experian Local Market Forecasts (average trend derived from 2010-14 period).

<sup>vi</sup> Assuming 2.2 persons per household in line with average household size in Liverpool drawn from the Census 2011.

<sup>vii</sup> NOMIS (2014) ONS APS (October 2013 - September 2014)

<sup>viii</sup> Expenditure data drawn from Oxford Economics via Pitney Bowes – estimates in 2014 prices

<sup>ix</sup> Utilises assumed 2015/16 Council Tax charges based on 2% inflation of 2014/15 charge applied by Liverpool City Council

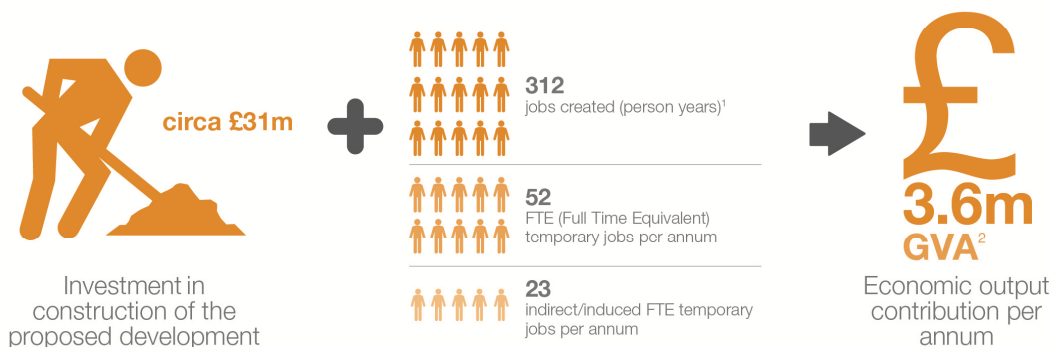
# Appendix 1: Infographic Diagram

## Economic Benefits Infographic

Site: The former Gateacre School, Gateacre, Liverpool

Scale of development: 200 residential dwellings

### Construction Phase



### Lifetime Phase

“174 working age economically active and employed residents estimated to live on the new development”



“Enhance vitality and viability of local retail and service offer and provision within Liverpool and the wider North West region”



<sup>1</sup> A person year is the volume of work that is equal to the output of a single person in a single year (i.e. the volume of construction workers required to deliver the proposed scheme in a single year).

<sup>2</sup> GVA (Gross Value Added) measure the value of output created (i.e. turnover) net of inputs used to produce a good or service (i.e. production of outputs). It provides a key measure of economic productivity. Put simply the GVA is the total of all revenue into businesses, which is used to fund wages, profits and taxes.

## **Appendix 6: Greenspaces Plan**

# Former Gateacre Community Comprehensive School site

## Sustainability plan



**Turley**

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