

**WARD:** Bowdon

**98031/OUT/19**

**DEPARTURE:** Yes

**Residential development of up to 400 dwellings, including the creation of new points of access, provision of formal and informal open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking and highway and drainage works**

Land To The East And West Warburton Lane, Warburton Lane , Warburton, WA13 9TT

**APPLICANT:** Redrow Homes Limited

**AGENT:** WSP Indigo

**RECOMMENDATION: MINDED TO REFUSE (IN CONTESTING THE APPEAL)**

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## **INTRODUCTORY MATTERS**

The context of this report is to establish the Council's stance at a forthcoming public inquiry in respect of application ref. 98031/OUT/19 (following the submission of a non-determination appeal). The submission of this type of appeal has removed the ability of this Council to determine the application. However, there remains a need to define the Council's position to adopt at the inquiry. The inquiry is scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 for eight days.

The applicant's decision to submit a non-determination appeal came at a time when negotiations were continuing in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues; a process that it was understood both parties were committed to. Moreover, amended/additional information was submitted for the Council's review at the same time as the appeal was lodged to the Planning Inspectorate (and with further 'new' information submitted following the appeal). The effect is that, as reflected in this report, there are some matters on which a solution may be capable of being reached but positive discussions with the applicant have ceased such that whether it accepts particular requirements – to be imposed via condition/and or planning obligation - is unknown at this stage.

## **OVERVIEW**

The outline application subject of this report is connected to two other full planning applications which presently remain with officers for consideration. All three applications have been submitted by Redrow Homes Ltd and all relate to land at the southern fringes of Partington, at Warburton Lane specifically. In summarising the three proposals:

- This application (ref. 98031/OUT/19) is an outline application with all matters (of scale, layout, appearance and landscaping) reserved with the exception of access. This proposes a residential development of up to 400 dwellings on land to the east and to the west of Warburton Lane;

- Application ref. 98029/FUL/19 is a full application which proposes the erection of 163 dwellings on land to the east of Warburton Lane (the same site as covered by part of the outline application); and
- Application ref. 98030/FUL/19 is a full application which proposes the erection of 201 dwellings on land to the west of Warburton Lane (the remaining area covered by the outline application).

## **SITE**

The site is in open countryside of Warburton parish to the south of Partington and separated from it by Red Brook. Partington is located to the west of the Borough, with the industrial area of Carrington to its north, open countryside to the east and south, and the Manchester Ship Canal to the west. The countryside to the south of Partington, which is largely designated as Green Belt, contains some historic rural settlements, including Warburton and Dunham Woodhouses. Partington itself was once a small rural village but it was transformed when a large number of council houses were built in the 1960s. The predominant land use within Partington is residential, typically arranged in residential estates, and with supporting social and community infrastructure, including schools, places of worship and local shops. Partington is not covered by the Greater Manchester tram network and nor is there a railway station. It is chiefly served by the A6144 Manchester Road/Warburton Lane which connects to the M60 motorway to the north and the rural area to the south.

The application site comprises land which is situated beyond the southern edge of the built up area of Partington. Whilst the address of the site is 'Land at Warburton Lane, *Partington*', the site is located within the parish of Warburton and is in the Bowdon Ward. The site extends to approximately 24.8 hectares and spans two parcels of land which are separated by the route of Warburton Lane (which divides the site on a north/south axis).

### **Site 1**

The first land parcel (commonly referred to as 'Site 1' in application documentation and covered by the accompanying full planning application ref. 98029/FUL/19) is located to the east of Warburton Lane. It is a greenfield site and is mainly composed of managed arable fields. There are a number of mature trees, together with hedgerows, along the existing field boundaries, and there are some scattered trees within the site. There is currently no vehicular access into the site. Two public footpaths run through the site.

This site is bounded to the north by Red Brook, and beyond this the grounds of Broadoak School and the Fuse ROC Community Centre, and a small residential estate (Brook Farm Close). To the north-east are further arable fields. Warburton Lane marks the site's western boundary, and Moss Lane the southern boundary. To the west of Warburton Lane the applicant's 'Site 2' is located. There are two residential properties – Pear Tree Cottage and Birch Cottage – which take access from the northern side of Moss Lane and which the site encircles. Beyond the site boundary to the east is Birch Farm. Further to the east, south and west of the site are more arable fields. To the south-west of the site is a cluster of residential

properties at the junction of Warburton Lane and Moss Lane (Top Park Close, Brook House and Brook Farm).

The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1, which comprises land which has the lowest probability of river or sea flooding. However, areas of the site adjacent to Red Brook (towards the site's northern boundary) lie within Flood Zones 2 and 3. There is also an underground gas main within the western and north-western parts of the site.

## Site 2

The second land parcel (commonly referred to as 'Site 2' in application documentation and covered by the accompanying full planning application ref. 98030/FUL/19) is located to the west of Warburton Lane. It is similarly a greenfield site and is also largely comprised of managed arable fields. In this case these fields are understood to have formed part of a medieval deer park known as Warburton Park. Again, there are a number of mature trees, as well as hedgerows, along existing field boundaries, with the exception of the western boundary which is undefined. Vehicular access into the site presently consists of a gated farm access from Warburton Lane towards the site's south-eastern corner.

This site is also bounded to the north by Red Brook and with residential development on Oak Road beyond, which is contiguous with the residential core of Partington. Warburton Lane defines the site's eastern boundary which then adjoins 'Site 1'. To the south of the site are further arable fields, separated only by a field access. More open land is found to the site's west which then borders the Ship Canal.

Again, the majority of the site has a Flood Zone 1 categorisation, with the exception of land adjacent to the Red Brook watercourse which similarly falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The same underground gas main continues into this site and with it running parallel to the northern boundary.

The site, in totality, generally follows a level profile, although with a gentle downwards slope on approach to Red Brook. There are four listed buildings in close proximity to the site as a whole. These comprise: a barn (Grade II) within the curtilage of Birch Farm to the east of Site 1, and Heathlands Farmhouse and the adjacent Heathlands Barn (both Grade II listed) between the two site's at Warburton Lane. To the west of Site 2 is a Grade II listed farm building within Warburton Park Farm.

## **PROPOSAL**

The application is submitted in full with all matters reserved with the exception of 'access' (i.e. with 'appearance', 'landscaping', 'layout' and 'scale' reserved for subsequent consideration). 'Access' in this context means 'the accessibility to and within the site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians in terms of the positioning and treatment of access and circulation routes and how these fit into the surrounding access network' (as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)).

The application proposes the residential development of the site for 'up to 400 dwellings, including the creation of new points of access, the provision of formal and informal open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking, and highway and drainage works.' It is noted that 400 dwellings is greater than the combined total quantum of development currently applied for through the concurrent full, detailed applications (which amounts to 364 units).

In contrast to the concurrent full submissions, the drawings/plans package accompanying the outline submission is limited (reflecting the extent of the outline proposal). It is largely restricted to a parameters plan which is contained within the Environmental Statement. There is also a Design and Access Statement which contains some illustrative material, and there are some technical highway drawings within the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) and subsequent updated highways technical notes.

With regards to 'access', the TA explains that vehicular access from Warburton Lane is proposed to both land parcels. This would be through the introduction of two priority controlled ghost island junctions, and with detailed drawings of the accesses within the TA appendices and technical notes. For Site 1 it is explained that a new vehicular access point would be provided between Red Brook and the existing housing development to the south. For Site 2, the proposed access would be to the south of the Site 1 access to provide a staggered arrangement. The existing farm access to Site 2 is not proposed to be utilised. The TA explains that the internal estate roads would be designed to achieve low vehicle speeds within both sites, and that a network of cycleways, footways and footpaths would also be provided. Leading from the internal estate roads, access would be provided to individual properties via private drives. A proposal to extend the existing 30 mph speed limit, which is currently located to the north of Site 1, to the south of the Warburton Lane/Moss Lane junction is also referred to within the TA.

The parameters plan provides a basic level of information regarding the proposed development as a whole, although with many of its illustrations identified as 'indicative.' It shows the location of the internal access roads leading from the proposed Warburton Lane access points, and it also illustrates areas of built residential development as well as parts of the site that would remain as open space. It indicates the position of attenuation ponds, pedestrian and cycle routes through the site, planting buffers, trees to be retained, potential pedestrian crossing points over Red Brook, an area of ecological mitigation, a proposed bus stop along Moss Lane, and additional vehicular access points for emergency or 'local' vehicles from Moss Lane. The information within this parameters plan is developed in the illustrative material contained within the Design and Access Statement. The illustrative site layout for Site 1 is based on 167 dwellings, whilst for Site 2 it is 233 dwellings; in both cases this is greater than that proposed in the respective full applications.

On this outline application with all matters except access reserved, it is assumed that 'up to 400 dwellings' would be provided based on the parameters plan. The indicative site layout contained within the Design and Access Statement shows just one possible way in which the site could be developed, and matters of detail would remain for a later decision.

## VALUE ADDED

In the earlier stages of the assessment process, additional information was submitted to respond to the comments of consultees, chiefly in relation to highways and flood risk/drainage matters. More recently, an amended parameters plan has been submitted, and with a number of supporting studies also updated to account for the changes in the parameters plan or to respond to consultee concerns.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

For the purposes of this application the Development Plan in Trafford comprises:

- **The Trafford Core Strategy**, adopted 25 January 2012. The Trafford Core Strategy is the first of Trafford's Local Development Framework (LDF) development plan documents to be adopted by the Council. It partially supersedes the Revised Unitary Development Plan (UDP), see Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy;
- **The Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan (UDP)**, adopted 19 June 2006. The majority of the policies contained in the revised Trafford UDP were saved in either September 2007 or December 2008 in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 until such time that they are superseded by policies within the LDF. Appendix 5 of the Trafford Core Strategy provided details as to how the Revised UDP is being replaced by the Trafford LDF.

## PRINCIPAL RELEVANT CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- SO1 – Meet housing needs
- SO2 – Regenerate
- SO5 – Provide a green environment
- SO6 – Reduce the need to travel
- SO7 – Secure sustainable development
- SO8 – Protect the historic built environment

### STRATEGIC LOCATIONS:

- SL5 – Carrington

### CORE POLICIES:

- L1 - Land for new homes
- L2 - Meeting housing needs
- L3 - Regeneration and reducing inequalities
- L4 – Sustainable transport and accessibility
- L5 – Climate change
- L6 - Waste
- L7 – Design
- L8 – Planning obligations
- R1 – Historic environment
- R2 – Natural environment
- R3 – Green infrastructure

R4 – Green Belt, countryside and other protected open land  
R5 – Open space, sport and recreation

### **PROPOSALS MAP NOTATION**

Protected Open Land  
Priority Area for Regeneration  
Protection of Landscape Character  
River Valley Floodplains  
Wildlife Corridor

### **PRINCIPAL RELEVANT REVISED UDP POLICIES/PROPOSALS**

C8 – Protected Open Land

### **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**

SPG1 – New Residential Development  
SPG24 – Crime and Security  
SPG30 – Landscape Strategy  
SPD1 – Planning Obligations  
SPD3 – Parking Standards and Design  
SPD5.20 – Warburton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan

### **OTHER GUIDANCE**

Warburton Village Design Statement

### **GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK**

The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF) is a joint Development Plan Document being produced by each of the ten Greater Manchester districts. Once adopted it will be the overarching development plan for all ten districts, setting the framework for individual district local plans. The first consultation draft of the GMSF was published on 31 October 2016, and a second draft was consulted on in January 2019. A further draft plan will be published for consultation in Summer 2020 before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. The weight to be given to the GMSF as a material consideration will normally be limited given that it is currently at an early stage of the adoption process. Where it is considered that a different approach should be taken, this will be specifically identified in the report. If the GMSF is not referenced in the report, it is either not relevant, or carries so little weight in this particular case that it can be disregarded.

### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY**

#### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)**

The DCLG published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 19 February 2019. The NPPF will be referred to as appropriate in the report.

#### **NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG)**

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics in one place. It was first

launched by the Government on 6 March 2014 although has since been subject to a number of updates. The NPPG will be referred to as appropriate in the report.

## **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

### **At the application site:**

**98029/FUL/19** - Residential development on land to the east of Warburton Lane comprising 163 dwellings, including the creation of a new access, provision of formal and informal public open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking and highway and drainage works.

Pending consideration

**98030/FUL/19** - Residential development on land to the west of Warburton Lane, comprising 201 dwellings, including the creation of a new access, provision of formal and informal open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking and highway and drainage works.

Pending consideration

**The following applications within the wider Partington/Carrington area** are also of relevance (when considering the cumulative impacts of the development and the context within which this site is proposed to come forward):

### **Land at Lock Lane, Partington:**

**86160/OUT/15** - Application to extend the time limit for the implementation of planning permission H/OUT/68617 (Outline application, including details of access, for residential development of up to 550 dwellings; associated footpath, landscaping and ecological works).

Approved with conditions and a S106 legal agreement (26.09.19)

### **Land off Common Lane, Carrington:**

**88779/OUT/16** - Outline application for demolition of the existing farmhouse and two agricultural buildings, erection of buildings for use within Use Classes B1 (b) (Research and Development), B1 (c) (Light Industry), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution), up to 43,874 sq. m, with ancillary offices, improvements to existing Common Lane access, associated landscaping, pumping station(s), package treatment plant and car parking. Approval sought for access with all other matters reserved

Approved with conditions (05.05.17)

### **Land known as Carrington Village, on land off Manchester Road, Carrington:**

**88439/HYB/16** - Hybrid application comprising: - a) Application for full planning permission for the demolition of existing buildings and structures, re-contouring of the site to form development platforms, new access(s) off Manchester Road to serve residential, employment, retail/health development and new emergency access(s) off the A1 private road to serve employment development, improvements to the A6144 Manchester Road/Flixton Road/Isherwood Road junction and the A6144 Carrington

Lane/Carrington Spur/Banky Lane junction; b) Application for outline planning permission for the construction of up to 725 dwellings, erection of up to 46,450sq m employment floorspace (Use Classes B1/B2/B8), erection of up to 929 sq m of retail (Use Class A1)/ health (Use Class D1) floorspace, creation of public open space, rugby pitch relocation along with new training pitch, erection of replacement rugby clubhouse, replacement car park for retained parts of Carrington Business Park, drainage principles, landscaping and ecological works, noise mitigation measures, electrical sub stations, pumping stations, car parking and vehicle, cycle and pedestrian circulation.

Approved with conditions, 25.08.17

[Conditions include those which prevent the bringing forward of certain development quantum before off-site highway mitigation is implemented, as explained within the report]

**94601/RES/18** - Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale), pursuant to planning permission 88439/HYB/16 for the erection of six buildings for use within Use Classes B1b (Research and Development)/ B1c (Light Industrial)/ B2 (General Industrial)/ B8 (Storage or Distribution) comprising 218,884 sq ft (20,335 sq m), with ancillary offices, associated car parking, landscaping, and two electrical substations.

Approved with conditions, 13.08.18

**94670/RES/18** - Approval of reserved matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale), pursuant to planning permission 88439/HYB/16 for the erection of 277 dwellings with associated formal and informal public open space, landscaping, electric substation and pumping station.

Approved with conditions, 15.11.18

**99245/OUT/19** - Outline application for the erection of up to 320 dwellings, erection of up to 668,000 sq ft (62,057 sq m) employment floorspace (Use Classes B1/B2/B8 including open storage), erection of up to 12,917 sq ft (1,200 sq m) retail/health floorspace (Use Classes A1/D1), demolition of existing buildings and structures, re contouring of the site to form development platforms, creation of public open space, rugby pitch relocation along with new flood-lit training pitch, erection of replacement rugby clubhouse, landscaping and ecological works, noise mitigation, electrical sub stations, pumping stations, car parking and vehicle, cycle and pedestrian circulation including details of 5 access(s) off Manchester Road to serve residential, employment, retail/health development and 2 emergency access points off the A1 private road. Approval sought for access with all other matters reserved.

Pending consideration

Land at Heath Farm Lane, Partington:

**94949/HYB/18** - Hybrid application comprising: - a) Application for full planning permission for the clearance and remediation of the existing site and the erection of 148 dwellings with access from Broadway and associated works including the provision of internal estate roads, parking and turning circle, landscape works (including provision of public open space, tree clearance/replacement/woodland management and ecological management), electrical sub-station, and sustainable urban drainage works; and, b) Application for outline planning permission for the



erection of up to 452 dwellings with access from Broadway and associated works including the provision of internal estate roads and parking, landscape works (including provision of public open space, tree clearance/replacement/woodland management and ecological management), electrical sub-stations, and sustainable urban drainage works drainage principles.

Minded to grant (11.04.19) subject to the signing of a S106 legal agreement [Conditions include those which prevent the bringing forward of certain development quantum before off-site highway mitigation is implemented, as explained within the report]

Voltage Park, Manchester Road, Carrington:

**97261/FUL/19** - Erection of five buildings for use within Use Classes B1c (Light Industrial) / B2 (General Industrial) / B8 (Storage & Distribution) comprising 62,442 sq m GIA to provide flexible employment purposes with ancillary offices, car parking, landscaping, service yard areas, ancillary uses and associated external works and operational development including remediation and ground levelling works.  
Pending consideration

Land north of Oak Road and west of Warburton Lane, Partington:

**97897/FUL/19** - Erection of 86 new affordable dwellings and ancillary infrastructure including new main site access off Oak Road.  
Pending consideration

**APPLICANT'S SUBMISSION**

The following documents have been submitted in support of the application and will be referred to as appropriate within this report:

Air Quality Assessment  
Archaeological Desk-based Assessment  
Badger Survey  
Bat Survey  
Breeding Bird Survey  
Carbon Budget Statement  
Crime Impact Statement  
Design and Access Statement  
Environmental Statement  
    Volume 1: Non-technical Summary  
    Volume 2: Main Report  
    Volume 3: Plans and Illustrations  
    Volume 4: Technical Appendices  
Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Management Strategy  
Great Crested Newt Survey  
Green Infrastructure Statement  
Ground Investigations Study  
Heritage Impact Assessment  
Noise Assessment

Planning Statement (including Affordable Housing Statement and Meeting Housing Needs Statement)  
Road Safety Audit  
Statement of Community Involvement  
Transport Assessment  
Travel Plan (including Access Plan)  
Tree Survey  
Utilities Assessment  
Financial Viability Appraisal  
Water Vole and Otter Survey

The Environmental Statement includes chapters on the following:

Landscape and visual impact  
Nature conservation and biodiversity  
Ground conditions and geology  
Hydrology, drainage and flood risk  
Traffic and transport  
Noise  
Air quality  
Waste  
Population and human health

To reiterate, during the course of the application process some updates to certain documents have been provided (comprising the Design and Access Statement, the Financial Viability Appraisal, the Transport Assessment, the Travel Plan, the Heritage Impact Assessment, the Archaeological Assessment, the Flood Risk Assessment, the Noise Assessment, the Ground Investigation Study, and the Green Infrastructure Statement), and some additional Highway Technical Notes have been submitted. An Agricultural Land Classification Report has also been supplied. These have sought to be taken into account in this report.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

*At the outset of this section of the report, it should be commented that some of the comments raised by consultees relate to matters of detail relevant to the concurrent planning applications (refs. 90829/FUL/19 and 98030/FUL/19), but with only one consultation response provided to cover all three applications. The same applies in respect of some of the representations received.*

**Cadent Gas** - No objection, subject to informative (to advise of the existence of gas mains and pipelines in the area)

**Cheshire East Council** – No response received

**Environment Agency** – No objection, subject to condition/informative (to ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment, to request details of open space areas adjacent to Red Brook, to request a landscape and ecological management plan, and to ensure the provision of a method statement

for the control of invasive species, and to advise of the potential need for an Environmental Permit)

**Forestry Commission** – ‘The local planning authority is directed to the Forestry Commission’s standing advice’

**Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service** – Objections raised, which can be summarised as:

- Shortcomings identified within the submitted Archaeological Desk-based Assessment;
- The lack of field evaluation; and
- Evidence of potential schedulable archaeological assets in the locality.

**Greater Manchester Ecology Unit** – No objection, subject to condition/informative (to ensure the use of Reasonable Avoidance Measures for amphibians, to request a pre-construction survey for badgers, to request further tree inspections for bats prior to any tree works, to prohibit vegetation clearance during the breeding bird season, and to request a Habitat Creation and Management Plan)

**Greater Manchester Fire Authority** – No response received

**Greater Manchester Pedestrian Association** – No response received

**Greater Manchester Police** – No objection, subject to condition (to ensure the development is progressed in accordance with the Crime Impact Statement)

**Health and Safety Executive** - Do not advise against

**High Speed Two Ltd** – No response received

**Highways England** – No objection, subject to condition (to secure the implementation of a Travel Plan)

**Natural England** – No objection, subject to condition (to request a scheme for the treatment and handling of soil)

**Partington Parish Council** – Objections raised, which can be summarised as:

- There has been inadequate public consultation concerning these proposals;
- There are no plans to tackle, at the same time, the traffic and pollution problems that would arise; and
- The road infrastructure and local amenities (including schools and doctors) need revisiting before any planning approval is given.

**Peak and Northern Footpath Society** – No objection, subject to informative (to advise of the existence of public rights of way within the site)

**Public Health England** – No objection

**Ramblers Association** – No objection, subject to informative (to advise of the existence of public rights of way within the site)

**Sport England** – No objection, subject to a financial contribution towards off-site sports facilities

**Trafford Clinical Commissioning Group** – No objection

**Trafford Council Education** - No objection, subject to a financial contribution to support local primary school expansion

**Trafford Council Heritage Development Officer** – Objections raised, which can be summarised as:

- Deficiencies identified within the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment; and
- Less than substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets would arise.

**Trafford Council Housing Strategy** – The development is welcomed in principle, however affordable provision in line with policy requirements is sought

**Trafford Council Lead Local Flood Authority** – No objection, subject to condition (to ensure the provision of a satisfactory surface water design and a surface water drainage scheme, to ensure their subsequent implementation, and to provide details of their maintenance).

**Trafford Council Local Highway Authority** - No objection, subject to condition/financial contribution (to ensure that the site access work also includes a controlled pedestrian crossing, to secure mitigation works to the Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout, to secure mitigation works to the Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 mini-roundabout, to secure mitigation works to the Flixton crossroads (or the delivery of the Carrington Relief Road with a financial contribution), to secure a financial contribution towards public transport, and to request the provision and implementation (separately) of a Travel Plan and a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

**Trafford Council Pollution and Licensing (Air Quality)** – No objection, subject to condition (to request a Construction Environmental Management Plan and to ensure the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure)

**Trafford Council Pollution and Licensing (Contaminated Land)** - No objection, subject to condition (to request a remediation strategy and subsequent verification report)

**Trafford Council Pollution and Licensing (Nuisance)** – No objection, subject to condition (to ensure that the recommended noise insulation scheme is implemented, to update the noise insulation scheme to mitigate the impact of the HS2 development, and to request a Construction Environmental Management Plan)

**Trafford Council Tree Officer** – No objection with regard to trees, subject to condition/informative (to request an arboricultural impact assessment and tree protection plan for all retained trees, and to advise that pruning works to the adjacent TPO group would require a separate application). Concerns expressed in relation to the potential loss of historic hedgerows

**Trafford Council Waste Management** – No objection

**Transport for Greater Manchester** – No objection, subject to condition/financial contribution (in accordance with the recommendations of the local highway authority)

**United Utilities** – No objection, subject to condition/informative (to request details of surface water and foul water drainage, and to advise of the presence of a water main in the vicinity of the site)

**Warburton Parish Council** – Objections raised, which can be summarised as

- The planning application documentation should be amended to correctly refer to the site as being within Warburton and not Partington;
- Warburton Parish Council has consistently opposed the development of the land to the south of Red Brook;
- Warburton Parish Council is in the initial stages of commencing a Neighbourhood Plan for Warburton and the development is far in excess of what is envisioned
- The Redrow proposals would have a devastating and permanent effect on Warburton Parish and its residents;
- The identification of the site as Protected Open Land will continue to be objected to by the Parish Council as part of the GMSF and new Local Plan processes;
- Whilst it is accepted that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is engaged due to the lack of a five year housing land supply, it is evident that a number of adverse impacts would arise which would outweigh any benefits
- The position of the applicant that affordable housing could not be provided on the grounds of viability is questioned;
- The proposed two development sites would have virtually no permeability and connections with their immediate environment, and instead they would appear as isolated islands of development;
- Residents of the development would be reliant on the private car, including even for 'short' journeys to the shops in the centre of Partington;
- The Warburton toll bridge is already a source of major traffic congestion, but the application submission does not consider the impacts of the development on this infrastructure;
- The extra traffic on the roads would have a detrimental effect on local air quality which has potentially serious health consequences;
- The proposed development would have a major adverse landscape impact;
- The development ignores the guidance in the Warburton Village Design Statement;

- The standard Redrow house types are completely inappropriate for a rural location;
- The proposed car-focused layouts would be alien to the Warburton area;
- The application sites consist of Grade 2 or 3a agricultural land, and therefore the requirements of the NPPF which seek to avoid the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land need to be taken into account;
- The land west of Warburton Lane contains a large area of Ancient Woodland which is protected as a Grade B Site of Biological Interest, and yet this is not referred to within the application submission;
- Several of the ecology surveys are out-of-date and should be redone;
- Further information is needed to ensure that surface water run-off, potentially involving multiple outfalls into Red Brook, could be properly managed;
- Further detail is needed to demonstrate that the proposals for foul water management could be achieved without damaging the ancient woodland at Coroner's Wood;
- The land to the east of Warburton Lane has recently flooded following heavy rainfall, and yet the submitted documents refer to no flooding events at the site;
- The submitted Road Safety Audit is not robust; and
- Overall, Warburton Parish Council has very serious concerns regarding both the principle and the detail of the submitted applications.

**Warrington Borough Council** – No objection since the highways impacts are limited to Greater Manchester (although that the methodology used to determine the highways impacts is considered to be flawed is placed on record)

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

### STATUTORY CONSULTATION

#### **In Support:**

No representations received

64 letters of objection have been received from local residents. The key issues raised can be summarised as (and when grouped into topic areas):

#### Development in Principle:

- There are already a large number of new developments proposed for the Partington area;
- These three applications should not be considered in isolation of other proposals for new housing in Carrington and Partington;
- Whilst there may be a nationwide need for housing, there are far more suitable sites than this;
- Building on greenfield land is unacceptable when there are so many brownfield sites in the area;
- In 2002 the UDP Planning Inspector expressed serious reservations regarding the suitability of this land for extensive development;

- The Trafford Core Strategy states that there will be no development on this 'protected' land before 2026;
- The proposal does not accord with any of the exceptions which allow for development on Protected Open Land;
- The masses of brownfield sites in this locality should be exploited first;
- The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework process is far from completed and the housing numbers needed are not yet known;
- The proposed development is a bad example of urban sprawl, bringing Partington closer to Warburton and Lymm;
- The proposed development would swamp the Parish of Warburton, which currently comprises only around 142 scattered properties;
- Development in Warburton should be limited to small infill proposals;
- The development would have a massive negative impact on the area and with no benefits whatsoever to the people who already live here;
- Partington has a natural defined boundary which is Red Brook and which should not be crossed; and
- There are already enough houses being built in Carrington and Partington.

#### Green Belt:

- The development would lead to the loss of Green Belt land;
- Green Belt should not be built upon;
- In developing this site one of the last sections of Green Belt between Trafford and Warrington would be lost;
- This site should be placed back into Green Belt; and
- If approval is given, an extremely poor artificial barrier to the Green Belt would be created.

#### Unsustainable Location:

- The development would end up as another 'overspill estate' due to the poor linkages;
- Warburton is a small community with narrow country lanes, no amenities and an irregular bus service;
- The proposed developments would create very insular neighbourhoods and the residents would be reliant on private cars;
- Increasing the population by thousands without separate road developments would make living in the area unsustainable;
- No supporting infrastructure is proposed and there is already insufficient shops, doctors, dentists, district nurses and public transport;
- There is virtually no access between the site and the local amenities in Partington;
- The proposed housing area is badly sited as it is not part of Partington and nor does it relate to the village of Warburton; and
- This development would change Warburton from a rural village to a town, but without the facilities of a town.

#### Highways Issues:

- Access to both developments would be onto the A6144 which already experiences severe congestion during the rush hour;

- New development on this scale would overwhelm the road infrastructure which is composed of single carriageways and minor rural lanes;
- The Warburton toll bridge already struggles with levels of traffic and is a bottleneck at peak times;
- Moss Lane is already a narrow road with traffic exceeding the speed limits and is dangerous for anyone walking along it;
- Existing approvals for future development in neighbouring Partington will already further increase traffic volumes;
- This area does not need more homes but rather a better road structure, improved links to the M60 and another bridge over the Manchester Ship Canal;
- There are no regular bus services in this area, so all new traffic would be car-based;
- The traffic survey undertaken by the applicant was not done at peak times so does not reflect proper circumstances;
- Housing developments of this size should have more than one internal access road;
- The proposed exit onto Warburton Lane has very limited sight-lines;
- The proposed vehicular access arrangements have paid no regard to existing road entrances;
- With the increase in traffic, highway safety in the area would be compromised, including for pedestrians and cyclists;
- This development represents a danger to lives since emergency services would not be able to get through the village due to the traffic; and
- Temporary traffic lights during the construction period would worsen existing traffic problems.

#### Design:

- The Redrow house types are of a standard design and pay no attention to local architecture;
- The proposed houses could be built anyway in the country and are more fitting for an urban environment;
- The submitted Design and Access Statement includes a design analysis of Partington but not of Warburton;
- The proposals are contrary to the Warburton Village Design Statement;
- There are very few hipped roofs in Warburton and no houses have integral double garages;
- Many of the proposed houses are 12m high, and these would dwarf existing properties;
- The proposed housing layout has large areas of unused land which would become a magnet for youths;
- The style and layout of the houses is totally incompatible with the rural area; and
- The removal of the access route to the old Red Brook bridge, if that is what is proposed, is objected to.

#### Impact on Heritage Assets:

- Warburton village is a conservation area and a Doomsday village;
- There are several listed buildings in this area;



- The heritage impact would be very high, affecting Ancient Woodland at Coroner's Wood and the remains of Warburton deer park;
- The desk-based Archaeological Assessment does not take account of the history and archaeology of Warburton;
- The Heritage Impact Assessment is too narrow in its focus and it does not attach sufficient value to Warburton Park;
- The boundary between Warburton Park and the ancient woodland of Coroner's Wood should be protected; and
- The new NPPF extends protection to ancient woodland, and yet the Council does not seem to recognise the rarity of ancient woodland in this location.

#### Affordable Homes:

- Housing sites should be used for affordable homes for young local families, not for large detached houses which look unaffordable; and
- A development in this area is expected to provide at least 40% affordable housing yet this scheme offers none.

#### Impact on Local Services:

- The doctors surgeries are already over-subscribed and it takes weeks to get an appointment;
- The local schools are already full up and all local services would become extremely stretched;
- The developer makes no mention of providing new community services; and
- New infrastructure should be put in place to support these proposals.

#### Landscape Impact:

- This rural area would be transformed into an urban neighbourhood;
- Irreversible damage to the landscape character of the area would be done;
- The western part of the proposed development would sit within a valuable historic landscape;
- The proposals do not comply with the Council's Landscape Strategy SPD and they are also at odds with the Greater Manchester Landscape Character and Sensitivity Assessment;
- Contrary to the findings of the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), it is considered that there would be 'Major Adverse' landscape and visual impacts;
- The LVIA does not offer sufficient mitigation in the form of enhanced screening or a reduced height of development;
- A fully costed landscape management plan for the scheme should be provided; and
- The development of the western site would clearly be seen from much of Warburton village.

#### Residential Amenity:

- The privacy and security of those residents encircled by the proposed developments would be considerably diminished;
- The access road to the proposed development is within 8 metres of a bedroom window of an existing house;

- The orientation of three houses on the western site would result in unacceptable overlooking;
- Existing residents would be overlooked by the new houses;
- The development would have a direct adverse effect on surrounding properties because of the loss of open views;
- The increase in dirt and pollution would negatively impact upon resident health; and
- There would be a large reduction in residential amenity for Warburton residents.

#### Ecology

- The development would lead to a destruction of the local ecosystem;
- Red Brook is a designated wildlife corridor;
- There are nesting birds of prey in this area and rare bird species;
- The area is a haven for wildlife, including bats which are a protected species, birds, small mammals and insects; and
- It is highly unlikely that the proposed skylark mitigation plots will work.

#### Other Environmental Issues:

- The land either side of Red Brook already floods;
- Much of the proposed development would be built on a flood plain;
- The development site is Grade 2 (very good) arable land;
- The country's rural farming environments should be retained;
- The peace and tranquillity of the area would be lost;
- Recreational walking routes in the area would be destroyed;
- There are fault lines traversing the site;
- The proposed site is surrounded by hedgerows which would be damaged;
- No investigations have been carried out in respect of the potential risk from the nearby landfill site;
- The surface water drainage strategy may put Red Brook at risk of pollution;
- The proposal would increase the toxicity of groundwater through an expanded population, intensification and use of toxic products;
- These green fields act as a carbon filter and perform a role in protecting the environment;
- The construction process would pollute the area with dirt, dust and debris, and the heavy machinery, lorries and builders would generate unacceptable levels of noise;
- Air pollution in Partington is already above safe levels and it would only increase with the extra traffic; and
- The development could result in an accumulation of atmospheric pollutants and particulates on Warburton Lane and close to a school.

#### Miscellaneous:

- The findings of the various submitted reports are based on desk research and with limited onsite observations carried out over short periods;
- The building work would cause chaos;
- This area has very poor internet access and no mains sewage connection;
- HS2 is already likely to carve up the countryside in this area:

- Planning officers are advised to scrutinise the applicant's viability claims, especially surrounding abnormal costs;
- It is incorrect to state that this proposal is in Partington; the site is in Warburton;
- The application submission suggests that Warburton Parish Council is in support of the proposals, which is not the case;
- The consultation event was brief and held at very short notice; and
- Residents of Warburton were not invited to the consultation event;

In addition to these **64** letters of objection (from local residents), the following additional **4** letters of objection have also been received (providing **68** in total):

Cllr Sean Anstee, with the key issues raised summarised as:

- The proposal is far in excess of the scale of development envisaged for Warburton in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan;
- The village is primarily served by the A6144 which is regularly congested;
- The Warburton toll bridge persists in being a significant cause of major disruption;
- There is substantial development already consented in Partington and Carrington, and any new development must consider the cumulative impact;
- Public transport links are poor or non-existent, with no tram or train access;
- Engagement with Warburton Parish Council has been limited;
- In recent wet weather the land became heavily flooded, demonstrating its important function as a floodplain;
- The affordable housing ratio for this development in the Bowdon ward is 45%, and the Council should be consistent in requiring this policy to be fully met;
- The land has previously been considered for development (in 2002) but was deemed by a Planning Inspector to be 'unlikely to be sustainable'; and
- Warburton is the most rural village in Trafford and it is already under pressure from development at its borders in Partington and Lymm, together with HS2 and the realignment of the A6144.

Dunham Parish Council, with the key issues raised summarised as:

- Whilst the planning applications fall outside of the parish boundary, it is considered that they will have an adverse impact on Dunham Massey and its residents;
- The development would result in the loss of valuable green space including grade 2 agricultural land and it would adversely impact upon ancient woodland;
- The proposed development would reduce the green gap between Partington and Lymm;
- The proposal development may increase the risk of flooding;
- The isolated nature of this development and the limited public transport in the area would make new residents dependent on motorised transport which would increase congestion;
- The route of the Warburton toll bridge is already heavily congested; and

- To access services in Altrincham, new residents would need to travel through Dunham Massey but the road infrastructure is not designed to cope with these volumes.

HIMOR (Carrington) Ltd, with the key issues raised summarised as:

- The Trafford Core Strategy identifies Carrington as a Strategic Location, and the aim is to reduce the isolation of both Carrington and Partington by creating a substantial new mixed use sustainable community on brownfield land;
- HIMOR is working with the Council to deliver this holistic regeneration which would include strategic road infrastructure improvements along with wider sub regional improvements to the road network;
- A hybrid planning permission has been secured by HIMOR (including for up to 725 dwellings) which includes a series of localised highway improvements to existing key junctions;
- The submitted Redrow Transport Assessment does not include an assessment of the impact on the Strategic Road Network, which is not consistent with the approach adopted by HIMOR in its assessments;
- The Transport Assessment assumes that a decent proportion of traffic would travel towards Altrincham, but the impact of this traffic on the local network has not been assessed;
- The Transport Assessment demonstrates that the development would have an adverse impact on the Flixton Road/Isherwood Road/A6144 Manchester Road junction and the Carrington Lane/Banky Lane/A6144 Manchester Road junction, but the application proposals are relying upon HIMOR's highway improvements for its mitigation;
- This is of significant concern to HIMOR since it is not considered fair that other developments of a similar scale would benefit from the mitigation package whilst not being required to provide any improvements themselves;
- It is considered that a proportionate financial contribution from Redrow towards the delivery of the Carrington Relief Road would be appropriate; and
- The application proposals do not provide an access through the site to enable the wider GMSF masterplan to be taken forward, and thus they are prejudicial to the wider GMSF aspirations.

Positive Partington Partnership (tenants and residents association), with the key issues raised summarised as:

- It is inappropriate to build on a greenfield site;
- Air pollution would increase due to the additional traffic;
- The density of the development is too high;
- The infrastructure in this area would not be able to cope (including roads, schools and health care);
- Public transport provision is poor; and
- The traffic problems caused by the toll bridge have not been taken into account.

**Neither Objecting nor Supporting**

The National Trust has also provided a letter of representation, in noting that the application site lies to the north-west of its Dunham Massey estate. The key issues raised in this letter can be summarised as:

- Dunham Massey includes the Grade I listed main house which is set within a Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden, and with the wider estate containing 15 working farms, 13 tenant businesses and some 100 cottages;
- The National Trust notes that the site in question forms part of the wider 'New Carrington' allocation in the emerging GMSF; the Trust also owns land within this allocation;
- The Trust is keen to ensure that the major development proposed at New Carrington would not adversely impact upon the setting of the Dunham Massey estate or its functioning as both a popular visitor destination, and a place of residence and work;
- It is essential that a masterplan is prepared for New Carrington which would ensure that the site is considered in a holistic way;
- The submitted Environmental Statement does not include a robust assessment of the impacts that would be experienced by the estate;
- The inclusions within the proposal of a new area of open space adjacent to Red Brook are welcomed;
- There are concerns that the proposed development, in the absence of suitable transport infrastructure, could result in local roads throughout the estate being used as 'rat runs';
- The submitted Transport Assessment has not considered the impact of extra traffic on junctions within the estate (particularly at Dunham Road, Woodhouse Lane and Charcoal Road);
- Construction traffic should be routed away from the local roads within the estate; and
- There are further concerns that the proposed development could place local utilities under strain, particularly in terms of water supply.

## CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN BY THE APPLICANT

In the case of this application and the related applications, the applicant has also undertaken its own consultation, including a public exhibition, the establishment of a dedicated website, and liaison with a wider variety of stakeholders (including parish councils). The results of this consultation have been summarised in a submitted Statement of Community Involvement. Key headline information from the submitted statement includes:

- The public exhibition took place on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018 between 4pm and 7pm at the Fuse ROC Centre, Partington;
- Approximately 130 people attended the event and 70 response forms were completed in;
- The main issues arising from the exhibition comprise:
  - Whether there is a need for new housing in Partington;
  - Whether the developments would have a Partington or a Warburton identity;
  - Whether affordable housing should be included;

- The impacts of the development on the road network; and
- The effects on local infrastructure, including schools and doctors.
- Analysis of the response forms reveals that:
  - 26% of respondents were in favour of the development in principle;
  - 58% of respondents raised concerns regarding the proposed access to/from Warburton Lane; and
  - 39% of respondents disagreed with the proposed illustrative layout.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

### **The Decision-Taking Framework**

1. S.38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. That remains the starting point for decision making. The NPPF is an important material consideration.
2. Where development plan policies are out of date, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF (as described in paragraph 11d) may apply – namely (1) applying a ‘tilted balance’ under which permission will be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole (see paragraph 11d(ii)), or (2) where the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed (see paragraph 11d(i)). In the latter case, policies relating to designated heritage assets (or equivalent buried archaeological remains) are central to the assessment of these proposals.
3. The Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and the ‘most important’ policies are therefore deemed out of date. Some are also not fully consistent with the NPPF. Therefore, it is necessary to consider at the outset how the presumption above applies.
4. Under limb (2) of the presumption in favour it is necessary to consider harm to heritage assets. As demonstrated later on in this report, it is considered that the harm to heritage assets provides a clear reason for refusal not outweighed by the benefits, and thus the tilted balance in limb (1) is not triggered. On that basis, the application is to be assessed under s.38(6) having regard to the policies in the NPPF and housing need and with the overall harms weighed against the overall benefits of the development in a straightforward balancing exercise. On that basis it is concluded that the application should be refused.
5. This report also considers the position were the tilted balance to be engaged. It is concluded that the harm arising from the development significantly and demonstrably outweighs the benefits and that permission should be refused on that basis.

### **Impact on Heritage Assets**

6. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is an important component of the NPPF. The document introduces the term 'heritage assets' which are defined (in the glossary) as: 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).' It is the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their 'significance' which is the focus of the NPPF, and with this significance defined (in the glossary) as: 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting.' 'Setting' is defined (by the NPPF glossary) as: '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.'
7. In determining planning applications, paragraph 192 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities to take account of: 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.' Further, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 193 requires that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The subsequent paragraph (194) continues that: 'Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.' Substantial harm or total loss of assets of the highest significance should be wholly exceptional.
8. Policy R1 of the Core Strategy specifically seeks to ensure that the Borough's heritage assets are safeguarded for the future, where possible enhanced, and that change is appropriately managed and tested for its impact on the historic environment. It should be noted, however, that Policy R1 does not reflect the NPPF's categories of 'substantial' and 'less than substantial' harm (applying to designated heritage assets) and their corresponding tests. Those NPPF tests provide an opportunity for an applicant to demonstrate that there would be public benefits arising from a proposal which may outweigh heritage harm. A similar, proportionate balancing exercise is contained in the NPPF's paragraph 197 in relation to non-designated heritage assets. The 'protect, preserve and enhance' requirement of Policy R1 infers that no harm should be caused or would be justified and in this respect, Policy R1 is out-of-date.
9. In addition, any planning decisions relating to listed buildings must also address the statutory duty of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act requires decision-makers to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of

special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Act 1979 (as amended) is the legal framework for the protection of scheduled monuments. Scheduled monument consent is required for most works that physically affect a scheduled monument, and with an application made to the Secretary of State via Historic England.

10. Draft Policy GM Allocation 45, in outlining the expectations for new development in this broad area, advises that those heritage assets within and close to the proposed New Carrington allocation, as well as their setting, should be protected and enhanced, and that any assets of archaeological interest should also be identified. This requirement is in response to emerging baseline evidence undertaken on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority regarding the historic environment interest of New Carrington. The assessments undertaken have considered not only built heritage but also archaeological interests (including the sites of now demolished buildings) as well as the historic landscape of the area. Work undertaken to date has identified a multitude of heritage assets across and adjoining the allocation, and with several of these in the vicinity of the application site. In specifically considering the Redrow site and its locales, the list includes:

- Grade II listed Birch Farm;
- Grade II listed Heathlands Farmhouse;
- Grade II listed Heathlands Barn;
- Grade II listed Timber-framed farm building at Warburton Park Farm;
- Warburton Park (a medieval deer park centred around Park Farm, a non-designated heritage asset);
- Coroner's Wood (Ancient Woodland, a non-designated heritage asset);
- The site of the former Millbank Hall Farm, now demolished (a non-designated heritage asset);
- Brook House and site of Brook Farm, now demolished (a non-designated heritage asset);
- Birch Cottage and the site of Moss Lane Cottages, now demolished (a non-designated heritage asset);
- Pear Tree Cottage (a non-designated heritage asset);
- The site of Brook Cottage, now demolished (a non-designated heritage asset); and
- Kiln field (a non-designated heritage asset).

11. In addition to this list, work undertaken to inform the GMSF has also identified the potential presence of historic hedgerows within the draft allocation (including within and adjoining the application site). The work carried out regarding the historic environment interest of New Carrington, which is continuing, will be used to inform the forthcoming masterplan exercise.

12. The documentation submitted with the application which considers the historic environment comprises, in the main, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and a desk-based archaeological assessment. Both have recently been updated



to address comments raised through earlier consultation. The key consultees whose expertise has been drawn upon comprise the Council's Heritage Development officer (in principally considering built heritage) and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service, GMAAS, (in focussing on archaeological matters, including historic hedgerows and the historic landscape).

### Built Heritage

13. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF encourages local planning authorities to seek a proportionate heritage assessment, sufficient to understand the potential impact on significance, when determining planning applications. The heritage assets that the Heritage Development Officer considers to have the potential to be impacted upon by this development are more extensive than the list referred to in paragraph 11 above. It includes additional non-designated heritage assets such as Lighthouse Farm and Moss Lane Farm on Moss Lane, and Broad Oak Farm on Chapel Lane. Warburton Toll Bridge, which is a high-level cantilever bridge which crosses the Manchester Ship Canal, is a further non-designated heritage asset which has been identified. Whilst this is a more remote asset, long-distance views of it can be gained from Warburton Lane.
14. Although some additions and amendments have been made to the applicant's HIA since first submission, the Heritage Development Officer has continuing concerns regarding the quality and breadth of the assessment that has been undertaken. As the NPPG advises, fully understanding the significance of a heritage asset and its setting from an early stage in the design process is crucial in helping to further inform the evolution of proposals in order to avoid or minimise harm. A more considered approach to LVIA viewpoints, for example, may have enabled the identification of other alternative development options which may be more sensitive to the surrounding historic landscape or would better conserve affected heritage assets. It is this type of approach that draft Policy GM Allocation 45, in recognising the heritage value of the New Carrington allocation, envisages being applied. There is, therefore, a lack of confidence in the outline submission and in this respect the heritage impacts of the development have not been fully demonstrated and the submitted documentation still does not adequately address the requirements of the NPPF's paragraph 189.
15. In seeking to define the heritage value of the area, and in noting the breadth and range of heritage assets in the locality, the Heritage Development Officer has identified that the character of the area to be one of dispersed farmsteads, cottages and barns sited within a large area of arable and pasture land, which includes the site itself. Warburton Park, a medieval deer park centred around Warburton Park Farm, is identified as a particularly significant landscape. The rural nature of the application site provides an appropriate setting which positively contributes to the aesthetic and historical significance of the heritage assets identified. Furthermore, there is evidence that the boundaries of Warburton Park and the application site (Site 2) overlap. The development proposed would fundamentally change the landscape character

of the site and the contribution that it presently makes to the setting and significance of adjacent and co-existing designated and non-designated heritage assets. It would also lead to the loss of in situ historic hedgerows.

16. Additionally, the Heritage Development officer is concerned about the overall design approach that has been put forward. These concerns cover a wide spectrum of issues which, in many instances, go beyond the remit of this outline application. Nonetheless, some of these objections derive from the submitted parameters plan which illustrates a particular design vision for the physical development of the site (including, for example, the overall quantum of development, the distribution of development, and the internal road layout). This further underlines the concerns raised elsewhere in this report that this proposal cannot be dealt with as an outline application if its impacts are to be properly understood and appropriate mitigation provided.
17. The Heritage Development officer's latest response recognises the revised parameters plan has pulled the development away from Birch Farm (listed) and also from the listed Heathlands Barn and Farmhouse. It also introduces an additional area devoid of built development which, it is claimed, would enable distant views of Warburton toll bridge to be retained. It is considered, however, that these marginal adjustments, principally to the location of built development, are not sufficient to address concerns raised. The parameters plan still indicates a substantial residential development (of up to 400 homes) in close proximity to these designated heritage assets and with no adjustment in siting in respect of the non-designated heritage assets (to the north of Moss Lane) that the proposed development would also encircle.
18. Whilst the lack of an informed assessment renders it difficult to precisely measure the scale of harm likely to occur, and further work will be carried out on this prior to the public inquiry, the Heritage Development Officer considers, and this view is shared by officers, that a residential development of this magnitude and coverage would cause 'less than substantial' harm to the significance and setting of a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets. This harm is a function of the contribution made by the application site in providing an agricultural setting (both visually and functionally) to the surrounding heritage assets; to the dramatic change in landscape character that would occur; and to the absence of genuine and informed mitigation. This harm, to varying degrees, would be experienced by all built heritage assets, designated and non-designated, identified above.
19. However, in the interests of completeness, it is confirmed that no harm is anticipated in respect of the non-designated heritage asset of Coroner's Wood (Ancient Woodland). This is confirmed in a subsequent area of the report concerning trees and arboricultural matters.

#### Archaeology

20. Footnote 63 of the NPPF identifies that non-designated heritage assets of archaeological significance, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for

designated heritage assets (in applying the tests at NPPF paragraphs 195 and 196, rather than paragraph 197). Core Strategy Policy R1, in listing types of heritage asset that the Borough possesses, also refers to sites of archaeological significance. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

21. There is clear existing evidence of the archaeological significance of Warburton Parish, which includes the application site. Excavations carried out over a number of years by South Trafford Archaeology Group, Salford Archaeology and Channel 4's Time Team have revealed evidence both in terms of individual finds and buried landscape features of human settlement and activity stretching back to the prehistoric period. Neolithic, Romano-British and medieval remains have been found in excavations carried out in the 1990s and 2000s in and around Warburton Village to the south of the application site. Further evidence of the archaeological significance of this area is also emerging through work being carried out to inform the GMSF, which, among other things, has identified the presence of medieval fishponds on the site boundary.
22. However, prior to this application coming forward, no on-site archaeological assessment had been carried out of the land within the application site as access had not been possible. It is highly likely that there is buried archaeology of some significance in situ on the application site as not only is there no natural landscape boundary which would have prevented or limited the spread of human settlement or activity from the south, it is evident from map regression and from existing landscape features that part of Warburton Park, a medieval deer park, is within the application site. Warburton Park is clearly shown on Speed's map of Cheshire of c. 1610. Additionally, the land is not previously developed.
23. The geophysical survey recently submitted with the application strongly indicates that there may be important archaeology on the site. Whilst there are significant limitations to the geophysical survey due to waterlogging, it shows two features of particular interest. In Site 2 is a feature which could potentially be the medieval 'park pale'; the boundary of the deer park in a bank and ditch formation with timber palings erected on top of the bank. The bank and ditch may even be of earlier prehistoric or Romano-British origin and then later incorporated into the deer park. There is also the potential for smaller finds in and around the bank and ditch. Also in Site 2 there is a feature which could be a prehistoric trackway. However, the heritage significance of these features cannot be properly understood without evaluation trenching to determine what buried remains are in situ.
24. The limitations of the geophysical survey mean that there may be other features of equivalent or greater importance which have not been picked up by the survey work, particularly as it was not possible to survey substantive areas of the site at all. Indeed the applicant's archaeological assessment itself

concedes that physical evidence of a known medieval kiln was not found, and that this may have been due to the limitations of the survey.

25. GMAAS in their consultation response state that the applicant's archaeological survey fails to properly address or acknowledge the archaeological interest of the surrounding area or indeed even the presence of the medieval deer park. GMAAS consider that archaeological remains on the site, e.g. the potential medieval or earlier 'park pale' and other, as yet unidentified archaeology (given the known archaeological interest of the surrounding area and the limitations of the geophysical survey), could be of national importance and therefore of equivalent significance to scheduled ancient monuments. They should therefore be treated as designated heritage assets for the purposes of decision making (Footnote 63 NPPF).
26. There are thus clear weaknesses in the applicant's evidence base on archaeological matters. To date, the applicant has not provided adequate information to identify the extent and significance of heritage assets with an archaeological interest. Even when allowing for the recent geophysical survey, the limited scope of the archaeological assessment is not considered to be reflective of the known and potential value of the site. GMAAS has advised that a programme of evaluation trenching and field walking is warranted to establish a proper and appropriate level of understanding of the location, form, function, date, extent, and significance of archaeological sites and features.
27. An understanding of the significance of a heritage asset is the starting point for determining what mitigation would be appropriate. Without a programme of targeted field evaluation trenching there is no means of establishing the origins and significance of these features and whether they should rightly be preserved in situ. This matter goes to the heart of the principle of the development as it could have significant impacts on the quantum, design and layout of any development. Otherwise there is a realistic possibility that substantial harm or total loss of a heritage asset of the highest significance would take place, in the terms of Footnote 63 of the NPPF.
28. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF states that that justification for this scale of harm or loss should be wholly exceptional and Paragraph 195 states that in these circumstances permission should be refused unless substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.

#### Public Benefits

29. Harm to heritage is to be considered against the public benefits. The NPPG explains that 'public benefits' may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described by the NPPF. It is very evident that, in this case, the overriding public benefit, with both social and economic values, is in relation to the provision of much sought-after new housing (family housing specifically) and with this development capable of delivering housing on a significant scale (up

to 400 new homes). The scheme would make a very meaningful contribution to Trafford's housing supply shortfall and would allow some progress to be made for this Council in aspiring to achieve a rolling five-year supply of deliverable land for housing. Whilst new housing is generally seen as an important public benefit in planning decisions in the context of the message of the NPPF, it is accepted that this is amplified in this instance given that housing targets for the Borough have remained unmet and that there is an unquestionable need for new and more homes Trafford-wide. Nevertheless, the weight to this benefit is lessened by the lack of any affordable housing, as discussed in due course.

30. Aside from the important public benefits derived from the provision of 400 (maximum) new homes, other public benefits are limited. The proposal offers, exclusively, residential development with no direct investment made on-site to local amenities or community/social uses, for example. Where the development has offered to contribute (for instance, in respect of sports facilities), this is required in order to mitigate the impacts of the development and to meet the recreational needs of the new residents with no wider benefits. The same would apply in respect of any potential contribution towards local primary school expansion, if this is to be accepted by the applicant (as will be discussed in due course). As to highways, the development only seeks to mitigate its own impact on the road network. In addition, the delivery of potential new footbridge links leading to/from the site are not confirmed.
31. Whilst it is accepted that the development would over-provide in terms of the amount of spatial green infrastructure incorporated on-site, it is doubtful whether this would genuinely be of value to, or used by, non-residents, given its location and accessibility. In any event, relevant appeal decisions have established a cautionary approach for decision-takers when affording extra weight to benefits which are derived from an applicant's offer which is over and above the relevant policy requirement.
32. The development would generate new employment opportunities during the construction phase. The submitted Planning Statement refers to the scheme supporting the equivalent of around 37 construction jobs. The Planning Statement also refers to other economic benefits including: temporary investment in the local area during the construction period, New Homes Bonus payments, additional Council tax receipts, and increased household spending in the Partington area. On this latter cited benefit, the case for this to occur on a meaningful scale is questioned given the site's physical and functional separation from Partington (and with this issue expanded upon elsewhere within this report).
33. Notwithstanding the limitations of the baseline evidence, harm of a 'less than substantial' nature to the significance of designated heritage assets (by virtue of the impact on setting) has been concluded. Added to this, is the 'less than substantial harm' to significance that would be experienced by the non-designated heritage assets (again in view of the effect on setting). There is insufficient information at this stage to make an informed judgement regarding

the impact on the significance of a range of other non-designated (chiefly archaeological) assets, and there is the potential for substantial harm or total loss of archaeological remains of equivalent significance to scheduled ancient monuments, or 'less than substantial harm' as a minimum, which has yet to be properly investigated by virtue of the inadequate archaeological work to date. In totality, therefore, the heritage impacts have the potential to be considerable.

34. Overall, the position of officers has been to conclude that the public benefits case in this instance is not sufficient. 'Substantial public benefits' that would outweigh substantial harm (or total loss) of significance, as required under paragraph 195 of the NPPF would not be achieved. Even if the harm, to potential schedulable remains, were to be categorised as 'less than substantial' (and the test in paragraph 196 applied) then the harm, when combined with other 'less than substantial' harm (to listed buildings), would not be sufficiently compensated. In essence, the assistance that the development would make to housing objectives, whilst significant at 400 homes, would not justify the cumulative harm caused. In this scenario, an assessment under paragraph 197 of the NPPF in respect of non-designated heritage assets becomes irrelevant.
35. For the avoidance of doubt, it is confirmed that the alternative test under paragraph 195 (where 'substantial harm' or 'total loss' to significance would occur) which is comprised of four subsections (all of which must be passed) cannot comfortably be applied to a heritage asset of an archaeological nature. Thus, the application proposal does not perform any better against this requirement.
36. Failure to comply with these tests leads back to 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development' (as set out in the NPPF at paragraph 11d and explained at the beginning of this report). To reiterate, this applies to the decision-taking process when there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are 'most important' are out of date. The effect of paragraph 11d is that planning permission should be granted unless either paragraph 11d (i) - described as limb 2 within this report - *or* paragraph 11d (ii) - described as limb 1 within this report - applies [emphasis added].
37. The footnote to paragraph 11d (i) confirms that the NPPF policies referred to includes heritage assets of archaeological interest as covered by footnote 63. In essence, the failure to meet the heritage tests of the NPPF (at paragraphs 195 and 196) is a circumstance anticipated by paragraph 11d that overrides 'the presumption in favour.'
38. As such, it has been concluded by officers that the application of policies in the NPPF relating to heritage assets provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. This in itself, and irrespective of the discussion that follows, is considered to amount to a clear reason for refusing the proposal when applying the decision-taking framework of the NPPF.

#### The Principle of the Development Proposed

39. It is apparent from an analysis of the relevant issues that, in many cases, far more than a parameters plan and indicative drawings are required in order to establish the acceptability of the scheme as a whole. In particular the amount, nature and location of on-site mitigation required has been impossible to establish, and this is key to understanding whether any measures are possible to make the development acceptable in planning terms. This mitigation would be an integral part of the layout and appearance of the development but here both matters are reserved for subsequent approval. It would also substantively influence the possible quantum of development on the site. On that basis it is considered that an outline application is not an appropriate mechanism by which to determine the acceptability of these proposals. Officers' ongoing concerns in relation to the detail submitted with the accompanying full applications, particularly in relation to layout and design, but which cover the full remit of reserved matters, would also indicate that these matters of detail cannot be reserved for subsequent approval.

#### The Statutory Development Plan

40. The Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and the 'most important' policies are therefore deemed out of date. Some are also not fully consistent with the NPPF. Notwithstanding this and in accordance with Section 38(6) of the PCPA 1991, the development plan is the starting point for decision making. The factors that underpin the policy framework within the development plan remain important when considering planning applications and will provide the basis for this assessment.
41. The Trafford Core Strategy was adopted in January 2012 and covers the period to 2026. It identifies five 'Strategic Locations' across Trafford where the Borough's housing and other development needs will primarily be directed.
42. For each of the Strategic Locations, the Core Strategy sets out what will be delivered and the essential requirements (e.g. infrastructure) to ensure that development in that location can be delivered in a sustainable way.
43. Policy SL5 sets out the requirements for the Carrington strategic location. The policy explains that this location offers the opportunity to reduce the isolation of both Carrington and Partington by creating a substantial new mixed-use community on large tracts of former industrial brownfield land. The location is described as being able to accommodate 1,560 residential units and 75 hectares of land for employment activities supported by: new road infrastructure to serve the development area and to relieve congestion on the existing A6144, significant improvements to public transport infrastructure, community amenities including convenience retail, school provision, and health and recreational facilities. Accordingly, the policy sets out a number of requirements in order for development in this area to be viewed positively. An indicative phasing plan is also contained within the policy.

44. The adopted SL5 allocation encompasses the industrial area of Carrington on the whole, although it also includes brownfield land on the north-eastern edge of Partington. It does not extend towards the southern part of Partington and it does not include the application site.
45. Within the framework of Policy SL5 planning permission has been granted (or 'a resolution to grant' has been confirmed) for two key schemes to date. These comprise the 'Carrington Village' application for up to 725 dwellings and up to 46,450sq m employment floorspace on land off Manchester Road, Carrington (ref. 88439/HYB/16), and the development on land at Heath Farm Lane, Partington for up to 600 dwellings (ref. 94949/HYB/18). As part of these developments (if built out), some wider infrastructure improvements have been secured, including highways mitigation measures and the provision of new local amenities (to include a new health centre). It is anticipated that further major proposals will come forward within the Carrington allocation over the remainder of the plan period (and beyond) in order to accomplish the objectives of Policy SL5 and to contribute to housing supply targets.
46. Policy L3 of the Core Strategy identifies Partington as a Priority Regeneration Area (PRA). The application site is within the Partington PRA. The supporting text records that Trafford, often perceived as an affluent borough, has a number of pockets of acute deprivation, which includes Partington. The policy seeks to encourage development that would address and reduce inequalities, including improvements in accessibility between the PRAs and employment areas, improved quality of design, construction and range of the housing stock, and improvements to the local environment. A number of objectives specific to the Partington PRA are also outlined, including for development to contribute to the improvement of public transport infrastructure (to mitigate against the impact of the development on the highway network and to address the deficiencies in the existing public transport provision). The release of greenfield land for development will only be allowed, it is stated, where it can be demonstrated that it would make significant contributions to the regeneration priorities of Partington.
47. The application site forms part of a wider area which is identified on the Proposals Map as 'Protected Open Land.' Policy C8 in the Revised Trafford UDP and Policy R4 (in the Trafford Core Strategy). Protected Open Land is a carefully defined annotation in which land is neither allocated for development nor included within the surrounding Green Belt. It is referred to within the NPPF at paragraph 139 as 'safeguarded land'. Part d of this paragraph states that planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development. It is evident from allied paragraph 20 of the NPPF that such a plan update would need to address not only the need for new development such as housing but also the provision of new infrastructure and community facilities.
48. Policy C8 is clear that planning permission will be refused for new development on Protected Open Land except where it would fall into one of its listed categories. Policy R4 provides that development on 'Other Protected



Open Land' will only be permitted where it is: required in connection with agriculture or forestry, or proposed for agricultural diversification; *and* would not prejudice the future use of the land (emphasis added). The accompanying justification explains that this open land, which includes 'Land in Warburton (immediately to the south of Partington)', may be required to meet development needs beyond the Plan period. It continues that 'these areas will be protected from all but limited essential development to enable them to make a contribution to meeting future, as yet unquantified, needs.' The justification concludes by stating that until such time as a strategic review of the Green Belt takes place, the land is protected from development. Therefore, the key purpose of the policy is to keep the land in its present state and to protect it from anything other than agricultural-related development in the event that it is required to meet housing or other development needs post-2026. It is acknowledged that Policy R4, as a policy to control the supply of housing, is out-of-date in the context of paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

#### Unsustainable Urban Extension

49. The identification of the application site as an area of protected open land in fact stems from the original Trafford UDP, which was adopted in 1996. The merits of the land immediately to the south of Partington as a potential housing location were debated as part of the subsequent UDP examination. In this respect it is most significant that the Inspector's Report (issued in 2003) highlighted serious reservations regarding the suitability of the site for extensive residential development. The Inspector's concerns related to the difficulties associated with successfully integrating the development with existing housing and community facilities, with the road system, with public transport and with other infrastructure. In particular it was felt that Red Brook and its flood plain, together with the adjacent wildlife corridor, would severely inhibit the potential for integration. These concerns led the Inspector to comment that: 'extensive development of this site would be unlikely to be sustainable'. This signals that whilst the land was suitable to remain undeveloped for now as safeguarded land, successful development would be dependent on proper integration and infrastructure provision as part of a wider development.

#### Trafford's Current Housing Requirement

50. Until the publication of a revised version of the NPPF in July 2018, the housing requirement for Trafford asset out within the Core Strategy at Policy L2 was a minimum of 12,210 homes over the plan period to 2026 (a typical annual requirement of 587 new units). However, in the light of the revised NPPF that figure can no longer be relied upon; the Core Strategy having been formulated more than 5 years ago and not updated since. In these circumstances, the NPPG is clear that the starting point for calculating housing requirements should be 'local housing need using the standard method'. In February 2019 the Government confirmed the standard methodology for calculating minimum LHN. The application of this methodology for Trafford has provided a minimum annual LHN figure of 1,362

new homes net. It is evident that this is far in excess of the previous Policy L2 requirement.

### The Emerging Statutory Development Plan

51. The Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (GMSF), on its adoption, will become part of the statutory development plan for Trafford and will set the framework for individual borough-wide local plans, including with regard to housing figures. In this respect, the latest draft document, which was published for consultation purposes in January 2019, set out a draft annual housing requirement for Trafford of 1,015 new homes net, which is slightly lower than the Government-derived LHN figure (although is based upon meeting the LHN for Greater Manchester as a whole).
52. The draft GMSF includes two important Strategic Allocations for Trafford. This includes the 'New Carrington' allocation as covered by Policy GM-Strat 11 and Policy GM Allocation 45. New Carrington incorporates the existing SL5 Carrington allocation but extends beyond it, and is a considerably larger area which ranges to the western edge of Sale as well as encompassing land to the east and south of Partington. In doing so it includes the application site. Thus, the scale of development envisaged under the New Carrington allocation is much greater when compared with the existing SL5. Policy GM-Strat 11 refers to around 6,100 residential units and 410,000 square metres of employment units (to be delivered over the period 2018 to 2037).
53. The GMSF preparation process has been beset by delays. The first consultation draft document was published over three years ago (in October 2016), followed by a second version approaching twelve months ago (in January 2019). A third draft is due to be published in Summer 2020 after the Greater Manchester mayoral election. The GMSF is not at an advanced stage of preparation and it has not progressed even to submission stage. The effect is that it has been widely concluded that only limited weight can be afforded to its policies and proposals when decision-taking. This includes in respect of its strategic Green Belt assessment which has limited status as part of a broad and developing evidence base.
54. A new Local Plan for Trafford is under preparation, although it is also currently at an early stage in the process and is in fact more embryonic than the GMSF. Upon its adoption it will replace the Trafford Core Strategy and the Revised Trafford UDP. Following a first stage issues paper which was released in July 2018, a full consultation draft of the new Local Plan is expected to be published in the first part of 2020. This document will be required to set out a strategy for identifying a sufficient supply of sites and locations across the Borough to meet Trafford's housing requirement (as defined by the GMSF) over the new plan period (to 2037). It is expected that the emerging Local Plan will support the New Carrington allocation, although with its definition and the policy detail set aside for the GMSF to progress. Obviously, at this stage, the Trafford Local Plan carries very limited weight for decision-taking.

### Draft New Carrington Allocation

55. Notwithstanding that only limited weight can be afforded to the draft New Carrington allocation, a review of the policy detail is nonetheless helpful in understanding the rationale for selecting this location as a major new area of growth for Trafford and for Greater Manchester (in building on the SL5 Core Strategy allocation). To differentiate between Policy GM-Strat 11 and Policy GM Allocation 45, Policy GM-Strat 11 is contained within a chapter of the GMSF which identifies the key locations and assets best-placed to support economic growth across Greater Manchester and to help address disparities. It is significant that the New Carrington allocation – in contrast to other allocations defined by the GMSF – is individually recognised within this chapter, and thus is seen as central to the plan’s main aims and ambitions. Policy GM Allocation 45 sets out the general requirements that would be applied to development proposals within New Carrington, and with an equivalent policy for all 51 allocations within the GMSF.
56. The introduction to Policy GM-Strat 11 explains that New Carrington provides the only opportunity in Greater Manchester to create a new settlement of significant size. The location in the western part of Trafford enables the redevelopment of the extensive former Shell petrochemical plant, support the regeneration of neighbouring Partington and Sale West, and deliver the scale and mix of development and associated infrastructure necessary to support a sustainable settlement, the accompanying text sets out. It continues:
- ‘The inclusion of a large amount of employment development and local facilities, as well as a diverse range of housing, will enable New Carrington to function as a sustainable neighbourhood within Greater Manchester rather than an isolated community....The area is currently served relatively poorly by public transport, and significant investment will be required to ensure that residents and workers in the area can travel sustainably.’
57. The supporting text concludes by stating that the size of New Carrington means that its development will extend beyond the end of the GMSF period.
58. Accordingly, the policy itself, in allocating the land for some 6,100 dwellings and 410,000 square metres of employment floorspace (together with a local centre), is clear that major investment in public transport and highway infrastructure, such as the Carrington Relief Road, improvements to Junction 8 of the M60 and public transport corridors, will need to be delivered to support the new settlement, thus ensuring that the area is well-connected to the rest of Greater Manchester.
59. It is very evident therefore that the draft allocation for New Carrington is underpinned by an acceptance that a wholly integrated approach is required in considering the location and scale of housing, employment uses, transport and other infrastructure, and community facilities and services. In turn Policy GM Allocation 45, in providing more detailed requirements for the allocation’s implementation, reinforces this theme. The policy identifies that the development of the whole area will need to be in accordance with an

approved masterplan or supplementary planning document. Other key policy principles include:

- To coordinate the phasing of development with the delivery of infrastructure on the site, ensuring sustainable growth at this location (policy principle 7);
- To contribute towards schemes to mitigate the impact of traffic generated by the development on the strategic, primary and local road networks, including public transport and highway infrastructure schemes (policy principle 8); and
- To provide community infrastructure, including education and health facilities, to support the new community.

60. As part of policy principle 8, further reference is given to the need for new link roads to be provided throughout the allocation to connect to the existing road network.

61. Another important principle underlying the New Carrington allocation is the scope it offers for creating more favourable conditions for existing disadvantaged communities which sit alongside it. As part of this objective, the text supporting Policy GM-Strat 11 emphasises the importance of ensuring that any development is fully integrated into the existing Partington and Sale West areas. Policy GM Allocation 45 continues this intention, with policy principle 5 identifying that new development should be sensitively integrated with existing residential areas. The supporting text stresses the need for issues such as design and linkages through the site to be carefully considered.

62. Thus, there is clearly an overall strategy for the New Carrington allocation which it is intended would address the central priorities of the area whilst simultaneously delivering substantial housing and employment growth. A similar strategy, albeit on a lesser scale, lies beneath the existing SL5 allocation which is still being realised. Key reoccurring themes for New Carrington include the importance of development following an approved masterplan and detailed phasing plan, the opportunity to tackle the physical isolation of the area, the need for major accompanying investment in public transport and highway infrastructure, the provision of other amenities to support and serve the new community, and the need for integration with existing neighbourhoods to support their regeneration. In conjunction, these objectives are aimed at securing the sustainable growth of the location. A significant concern here is whether this proposal would undermine and run counter to that strategy by placing development in the wrong place at the wrong stage without the necessary infrastructure and not as part of a masterplanned approach.

#### New Carrington Masterplan

63. HIMOR (Carrington) Ltd (HIMOR) owns the majority of land within the proposed allocation (including the former petrochemical plant). Other key landowners include United Utilities, National Trust, National Grid and Redrow

(applicant in this case). A commitment has been given amongst the key stakeholders to develop a masterplan for New Carrington (and with this building on early high-level masterplanning work which has informed previous versions of the GMSF). The new work will set out how the allocation could most effectively be developed over (and beyond) the GMSF plan period in order to deliver sustainable growth. Upon its completion the masterplan, which will be prepared in conjunction with a separate Transport Locality Assessment, will outline the phased development of the separate sites/land parcels across the allocation, and will identify integral transport infrastructure improvements.

64. The masterplan will inform the next draft of the GMSF, which is due to be published for consultation in Summer 2020. It is, therefore, at an emergent stage. However, initial findings are due to be reported in March 2020.

#### The Carrington Relief Road

65. That the road network serving Carrington and Partington is constrained has long been recognised. The A6144, which links into the M60 motorway to the north, is presently the only main route through the two areas. The existing Carrington allocation in the Core Strategy (Policy SL5) is already predicated on new and improved road infrastructure being provided in parallel with housing/employment growth in order to relieve the A6144 and to fully unlock the potential of the area. The text supporting Policy SL5 refers to a new 'Carrington link road.' In the intervening period further assessments have been undertaken to determine the scale of intervention required to absorb the housing/employment growth, and the GMSF now makes reference to what has become known as the 'Carrington Relief Road' (CRR). In this respect, and in the context of Policy SL5, the forthcoming permission for the Heath Farm Lane, Partington development (ref. 94949/HYB/18), which achieved a 'resolution to grant' in April 2019, is conditional upon the provision of the CRR at a point when the 251<sup>st</sup> dwelling would be occupied (or, alternatively, a mitigation scheme at the junction of the A6144/B5158 (the 'Flixton crossroads').
66. The intention is that the CRR would provide a new, high standard, alternative route through Carrington. Traffic would transfer from the existing A6144, thus reducing congestion as well as journey times by providing additional capacity, and with such benefits likely to be felt over a wide area. Whilst an indicative route for the CRR has been put forward, it is understood that the precise alignment will be guided by the emerging masterplan. Without prejudice to this ongoing, collaborative masterplanning work, provisional exercises have established that New Carrington could be established over three broad phases. Whilst the first phase could be accommodated when allowing for improvements to existing road infrastructure, it would seem that the delivery of Phase 2 would require the implementation of the CRR, and with Phase 3 being dependent on this and other complementary new highway schemes. It is significant that, at this stage, the land covered by this planning application is identified as being developed as part of both Phase 2 (Site 1) and Phase 3 (Site 2). Land within the existing SL5 allocation is included within both phases

1 and 2. It is understood that CRR would initially be built as a single carriageway road but with it designed to allow additional lanes to be constructed as the traffic generated by New Carrington would increase. It would function as a spine road which would be capable of accepting new road links and other new road connections over time.

67. The CRR scheme is backed by the Council, with significant support from HIMOR. In supplementing HIMOR's significant financial input, a number of other funding sources for the CRR have been identified, including Trafford's Housing Infrastructure Fund, external grants, CIL, and contributions from other New Carrington developers (and with the latter only recently confirmed to be lawful following amendments to the Community Infrastructure Regulations as implemented in September 2019). It is currently envisaged that a planning application for the CRR will be submitted during 2020. As yet, and reflecting the present stage and status of the CRR project (coupled with restrictions imposed by the previous CIL arrangements), no financial contributions have been secured as part of existing planning permissions within the SL5 allocation (notwithstanding the condition to be imposed on the forthcoming Heath Farm Lane development). However, this is expected to change as the case for the CRR, including its detailed design and costing, is finalised. In the interests of clarity, in September 2019 some changes were introduced to the CIL Regulations with the intention of giving local planning authorities more flexibility to fund infrastructure via new development. This includes the lifting of pooling restrictions, and also the requirement for an infrastructure list has been removed.

#### The Application Proposal

68. The above discussion is intended to provide the policy and evidential background to inform an assessment regarding the suitability of the application proposal in principle. The cornerstone to this is that the application site is included within a much larger area which the draft GMSF will promote for extensive residential development and other uses. Added to this is the undisputed fact that the Council's does not have a 5 year housing land supply and that a timely, effective and comprehensive strategy is needed to resolve this.

69. The application site has continually been recognised as a particularly challenging site if the long-standing concerns of the UDP Inspector are to be overcome. However, clearly the vision of the GMSF – in tackling these major obstacles – is to treat this site as part of a wider allocation and one which would be unlocked and brought forward towards the end of the GMSF plan period. This is central to the question as to whether this residential proposal is acceptable now and on its own as an isolated development rather than as a later part of a wider whole with the infrastructure necessary for that wider whole.

70. The application proposal involves the extensive residential development (for up to 400 homes) of a greenfield site. It is the first such proposal which seeks to take advantage of the draft GMSF and which is not simultaneously covered

by the existing Strategic Location at Carrington (Policy SL5). . At this stage the proposal is presented as an isolated residential development on agricultural land which is not previously developed and which is presently 'safeguarded'. Therefore the principle of developing this site for anything other than for agricultural purposes is unacceptable and contrary to Policy R4 and para 139 of the NPPF.

71. The site is on the edge of the settlement in the open countryside, and is in a very peripheral location as part of the draft New Carrington allocation and it would not connect to already-consented developments within the existing SL5 Carrington area. In essence, and without the benefit of key parts of New Carrington coming before it, it is considered that this proposal would create an unsustainable, inaccessible and isolated residential development which would not be sufficiently integrated to the existing settlement, contrary to Policy L3, R4 and L7 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF. The case for this position is expanded upon below.

*The Suitability and Sustainability of the Location at Present*

72. The housing policy objectives within the NPPF include providing new housing in suitable locations which offer a good range of community facilities and with good access to jobs, services and infrastructure, including public transport. Unfortunately, the application site, at present, can boast none of these. Partington suffers due to its geographical remoteness and also its lack of facilities. It is not major service centre in Trafford; it cannot offer a wide range of shops, amenities or employment opportunities. The local bus service is the only method of public transport provision. Furthermore, it is significant that Partington is not recognised by the Core Strategy (see Policy W2) as a principal or main town centre (akin to Altrincham, Sale, Stretford and Urmston) and nor is it treated as a second order district centre. Rather, it has been classified as a lower order local centre on the grounds that the shops and services, at its core, are purely of local significance in catering mainly for day-to-day needs. There is no supermarket to meet main food shopping needs, for example, the bank is only open three days a week, and there are no clothes/fashion shops or restaurants.
73. The application site is positioned approximately 1.7 kilometres from the heart of the settlement (and thus it is not close to Partington's main focal point in any event). Subject to some pedestrian improvements within the highway, the most direct on-foot route between the development and the local centre would exist along the Warburton Lane footway. A second route, via Chapel Lane, would also be available, although this would encompass an unlit public right of way and country lane (without footways), and thus would be even less welcoming. It is noticed that the indicative site layout plan for Site 1, which now shows some localised vehicular accesses onto Moss Lane, does not suggest that footways would simultaneously be introduced along Moss Lane to connect to Warburton Lane. In both situations (via Warburton Lane and via Chapel Lane), Partington local centre could be beyond what might be considered a reasonable walking distance by some residents of the development, particularly when having regard to the condition of the routes

and the limited quality and range of provision at the destination. Whilst there is a neighbourhood shopping parade which is closer to the application site (approximately 450 metres to the north of the site on Oak Road), its offer is even more restricted and low-end.

74. To access, for example, a main food supermarket, residents would need to travel 9 kilometres to Sale, or 8 kilometres to Irlam or Altrincham. It is accepted that there are bus stops on Warburton Lane in reasonable proximity to the application site, and with the bus service providing connections to Altrincham, the Trafford Centre and Warrington. However, the service is limited; the Altrincham to Warrington route offers only seven services a day during the week, reducing further on a Saturday and with no service on a Sunday. Whilst the Altrincham to the Trafford Centre route is served more regularly, this is still only every half hour Monday to Saturday, and only once an hour on Sundays.
75. Partington is located 18 kilometres to the south-east of Manchester city centre which self-evidently is a major location for business and commercial activity, and Trafford Park and Salford Quays are closer than that. However, frequent and reliable public transport connections between the application site and these key employment and service destinations are not available. Residents would need to make a separate trip to Sale or Altrincham to access the Metrolink service, or to Flixton or Altrincham to board a train. Moreover, whilst the local roads surrounding the application site may be suitable for cycling, and whilst the development itself offers cycle routes within the site, there are presently no dedicated cycle routes within the vicinity of the site and cycle infrastructure over the wider area (for commuting purposes, for example) is inferior when compared with other parts of the Borough.
76. There is, therefore, a real paucity in infrastructure and amenity provision as a whole across Partington at present. In this situation it seems clear that residents of the development would have little choice but to rely on the private motor vehicle for the vast majority of journeys, even short trips. Alternative methods of movement, which are safe, convenient and attractive, to enable access to jobs and key services further afield are simply not available.
77. It is accepted that the proposal includes a commitment to providing a new bus stop on Moss Lane, and a £40,000 financial contribution towards 'bus stop improvements' has been set aside. However, other than this general identification within a revised Financial Viability Appraisal, no further details have been provided regarding what it is envisaged this would be used for, how it has been calculated, and when it would be offered. It does not deliver enhanced bus services. An alternative contribution to support enhanced public transport provision, as this is considered necessary to the accessibility and sustainability of the New Carrington allocation, could be secured, although this is not confirmed.
78. When having regard to the already congested nature of the road network in this locality, clearly the situation outlined above (in which prospective residents would become car-dependent) is most undesirable. The draft New



Carrington allocation is predicated on development proposals proportionately contributing to new and improved road infrastructure to mitigate traffic impacts. As will be confirmed via the emerging masterplan, a new road network is envisaged throughout New Carrington (building on that intended as part of Policy SL5) to provide an alternative to the A6144, and with the CRR acting as the principal route with other connections and road links built over time. The case for this proposed development being unsustainably located and generally inaccessible, as a standalone application, has been set out in the paragraphs above. It is clear that if the draft allocation was to be confirmed, then these fundamental shortcomings would gradually be overcome over in the future as the wider road connections would be formed which would serve to incrementally unlock different land parcels and an outwards spread of development (including from the application site's north and east) would occur. However, clearly this does not reflect present circumstances on which an assessment of this application has to be based. In short unless and until the proposed allocation extends west and south, this site is too isolated and not served by appropriate/adequate infrastructure.

79. As part of a subsequent discussion within this report regarding the traffic impacts of this development, it will be reported that a potential solution has very recently emerged which would address the local highway authority's outstanding objection. However, this is subject to the applicant being prepared to accept a condition (which is, as yet, confirmed) which would prevent the development from being occupied until mitigation works are implemented at the Flixton crossroads or, alternatively, the provision of the CRR (which could include a proportionate contribution to the CRR once the emerging masterplanning exercise has established the detailed phasing of infrastructure requirements and the financial responsibilities of the developers). However, even at this stage it is evident that the CRR, with its origin in Policy SL5 for Carrington, is only part of the highways package for New Carrington and that other major road infrastructure works are required. If the CRR were to be provided then the LHA is satisfied that the cumulative traffic impacts on the local road network would not be 'severe' in NPPF terms. However, the provision of the CRR in isolation, whilst beneficial in highway impact terms, would not be comparable to the wider network of new road systems with integrated public transport systems that the New Carrington vision assumes. This is what is needed to render the application site a sustainable and accessible location.

#### *Unintegrated Development*

80. Aside from concerns surrounding the development's inaccessibility, other 'in principle' objections relate to the proposal's lack of integration with existing Partington. That the site commands a marginal location at the fringes of the settlement has been explained. Furthermore, Red Brook and its floodplain (to the site's north) act as a barrier to movement. One of the leading principles of the GMSF allocation for New Carrington is for development to successfully amalgamate with existing communities that it would adjoin, including Partington. Here, even when accepting the site's physical limitations, it is

evident that the proposals have failed to forge visual and functional links with Partington.

81. As noted above there are serious shortcomings with existing off-site pedestrian routes. The development, of up to 400 homes, has the potential to generate significant amounts of pedestrian movement. However, new and improved linkages are a necessity in order to extend the site's movement network, to draw prospective residents into Partington, and to generally promote activity and social interaction. This includes facilitating new patterns of movement *into* and across the site to take advantage of the proposed public open space and areas of play.
82. The proposal does not, however, offer - in any meaningful way - any new and improved pedestrian linkages. It is acknowledged that the revised parameters plan illustrates two new footbridges over Red Brook, one within Site 1 (to supplement the one existing footbridge) and one within Site 2. The parameters plan and accompanying Design and Access Statement refer to them as 'potential connections'. In both cases the bridges would need to extend beyond the site boundaries (and are outwith the area controlled by the applicant), cross the brook and then connect to the brook's northern banks. This land, to the north of Site 1 and to the north of Site 2, is believed to be in third party (separate) ownership, and there is no evidence of any willingness on their part to cooperate with the applicant's suggestion. Permission would be required and has not been sought. Furthermore, consent from the Environment Agency would also be needed, and this has not been obtained or even sought, it is understood. At this stage, therefore, and in the absence of a firm commitment to this proposal from all parties involved, there is no guarantee of any kind that these footbridges could be delivered.
83. The revised Financial Viability Appraisal has allocated £222,660.69 to be used towards 'footpath/cycle improvements and footbridges.' However, as with the bus stop improvement contribution (and other financial contributions imprecisely offered), no further details have been provided, and the Council upon receipt of any Section 106 funds (should it be deemed appropriate for the Council to deliver new footbridges) would face the same impediments to delivery. In these circumstances, very limited weight can be attached to the potential footbridge links. The Council cannot therefore be satisfied that adequate connections beyond its site boundaries to integrate successfully will be secured.
84. Red Brook currently presents an obstacle to achieving integration. However, the GMSF and its aspirations for New Carrington does not envisage the application site purely connecting to the existing built up area to its north. The phased development of the allocation would involve areas to the east and north-east of the application site also being released, and it is anticipated that that would include new crossings to Red Brook, including road links. In this scenario, there would be other opportunities for the application site to integrate, in other directions, since it would form part of a wider well-designed and connected (expanded) Partington community. It is this progressive growth of New Carrington, stemming from the original Carrington allocation,

that would enable the application site to eventually become a natural and sustainable extension after the phases to the north and east have been delivered and as part of a masterplanned whole. New pedestrian footbridges across Red Brook, starting from the application site to the land directly to the north, would certainly be beneficial. However, what is especially needed is for development on the application site to merge and dovetail with other parts of New Carrington in order that this most marginal site would become integrated.

85. Given the weak accessibility and the inherent problems with integrating this site with Partington it is considered that the development would not function as part of Partington. Nor would the development integrate and function as part of Warburton a small rural village. Instead, it would operate as an isolated residential destination in which prospective residents would be heavily reliant on private cars and where there would be limited cross-integration between the site and existing Partington and Warburton, and between future residents and the existing community.

86. As has previously been shown, historically there have been a number of underlying difficulties facing Partington which has resulted in population decline and an inability to achieve sustainable growth. In response, Partington has been recognised as a settlement in need of a comprehensive regeneration plan to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area (as reflected in its identification as a PRA by the Core Strategy). Much has been achieved to date, although the Council remains committed to further transformational change, including to address the area's geographical isolation and its poor transport links. Accordingly, that the New Carrington allocation has the potential to deliver a real step change for Partington has been recognised. The core policy principles of the GMSF, surrounding accessibility and integration particularly, are in order that the regenerative potential of New Carrington is maximised and that existing and new communities are not separated, with new infrastructure, facilities and services accessible to all within the wider area. However, in providing an inward-facing development which would only offer, exclusively, market housing dependant on the car and without the provision of or contributions to mitigate harm and improve local infrastructure and services (pedestrian routes, public transport, road network, education contributions), it is considered that the proposal would not support and would prejudice the wider regeneration priorities for Partington and would in fact serve to introduce further separation and would put pressure on the existing services and highway network within the locality.

#### Loss of Agricultural Land

87. The NPPF advises local planning authorities to recognise the economic and other benefits that are derived from the best and most versatile agricultural land. This is defined, within the glossary, as 'land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.' Within the Core Strategy, Policy R4 specifically identifies land to the south of Carrington Moss as the area of the Borough with the richest soils to support arable farming. The GMSF, as part

of the text accompanying Policy GM Allocation 45, also recognises that parts of the proposed New Carrington allocation support organic soils (peat).

88. The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system provides a national framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. Land is assigned into one of five classification grades, Grade 1 being the highest quality and Grade 5 the lowest quality. Grade 3 is subdivided into Grades 3a and 3b to differentiate good quality agricultural land from moderate quality. An ALC report has been submitted with the application. This confirms that the site is presently in active agricultural use, with it noting that at the time of the survey it supported both wheat and potatoes. The report identifies that the majority of the site (83.5%) is classified as Grade 3a (good quality agricultural land). The remaining parts of the site are categorised as Grade 3b (moderate quality, 10.2%) and Grade 2 (very good quality, 3.7%). 2.6% of the site is in non-agricultural use.
89. With reference to the land protected by Policy R4, and when looking at ALC mapping over a broader area, it would appear that land within the wider area, including to the south of Carrington Moss and extending to Sinderland Green and parts of Warburton, is of a higher quality, with Grade 2 predominating. By contrast, land immediately to the south of Partington, including some of the application site, is of lesser soil quality in this wider context.
90. With reference to the NPPF definition the site encompasses in the main 'best and most versatile agricultural land,' and thus the NPPF provides in principle support for its protection. In this context, the loss of this agricultural land is clearly undesirable. This is confirmed in a consultation response from Natural England (NE), which restates the importance of protecting such land as an important resource for local economies. NE's response also refers to the parameters plan indicating that a proportion of the site would remain undeveloped as habitat creation and landscaping. It would be possible to retain the long term potential of this land and to safeguard soil resources for the future, the response identifies, if careful soil management practices were employed. As such, the overall position of NE is of 'no objection' but this is subject to the imposition of a condition which would serve to protect, as much as possible, soil resources on site.
91. Therefore, on balance, that the proposal would lead to the loss of quality and operational agricultural land is not factored into the 'in principle' reason for refusal. However, this issue will be returned to as part of the subsequent planning balance.

## Conclusions

92. The achievement of sustainable development is the key purpose of the planning system, paragraph 7 of the NPPF advises. Overall, therefore, in concluding on the issue of the proposal's acceptability in principle, it seems evident that the application proposal would not deliver housing in an accessible location and it would not be well-integrated with and

complementary to the existing local area. The site is allocated as safeguarded land and its development for a residential use would conflict with Policy R4 of the Development Plan and Para 139 of the NPPF. Whilst it is accepted that Policy R4 is out of date and limited weight can be afforded to it, it is consistent with the NPPF para 139 and weight should be appropriately afforded to this.

93. Whilst the draft GMSF is acknowledged, it is the view of officers that the New Carrington allocation cannot be relied upon at this stage in its evolution and delivery to support this isolated application proposal. It is the potential contribution to the wider infrastructure package (once confirmed), and when delivered as part of a much larger area of growth, which could serve to make the development of this marginal site sustainable. However, to grant planning permission on this ad hoc basis for up to 400 dwellings, and on a greenfield and outlying part of the draft allocation, in the absence of supporting infrastructure would be at odds with central planning principles in the NPPF of providing sustainable development. Therefore, it is considered that the objectives of sustainable development would not be met, an unsustainable form of development would result, and a sustainable and integrated community for Partington would not be achieved. On this basis, the proposal is in conflict with matters which form the cornerstone to the NPPF, it is considered, and it would also be contrary to Core Strategy Policy L3, Policy L7 and Policy R4. It is considered that the application should be refused on these grounds, and that the benefits of the development do not outweigh the significant harm identified.
94. When considering the decision taking framework and paragraphs 4 and 5 of this report, the Council's development plan is out of date and as such the tilted balance could be engaged. If the tilted balance is engaged the overriding harm identified due to the lack of accessibility and sustainability of the site, its isolated nature and its failings to successfully integrate into the settlement would be so severe that it would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the development and the application should be refused on these grounds.

#### Residential Development

95. The NPPF places great emphasis on the need to plan for and deliver new housing throughout the UK. Local planning authorities are required to support the Government's objectives of significantly boosting the supply of homes. With reference to paragraph 59 of the NPPF, this means ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed, and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The responsibility of local planning authorities in supporting the Government's ambitions include identifying and updating annually a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement. This is in addition to a new housing delivery test (HDT) which is intended to measure a local planning authority's performance in facilitating the delivery – rather than merely planning for – new homes. In turn, the

importance of planning for significant housing growth is reflected within the strategy and ambitions of the GMSF.

96. Trafford's current annual housing requirement has already been identified within this report (at 1,362 new units, net). It is most significant that this Council cannot presently identify a rolling five-year supply of deliverable land for housing against this requirement, and thus - to reiterate - the NPPF's 'presumption of favour of sustainable development' is engaged. Latest monitoring (from December 2019) indicates a supply of some 2.8 years. In terms of the HDT, which is a percentage measurement of the number of actual homes delivered against the number of homes required, Trafford's most recent measurement (from February 2019) is 47 per cent. Some sanctions apply as a result of this figure, although the 'presumption in favour' is not initiated as a consequence of the HDT result (although it remains in place anyway). A new, up-to-date HDT figure for Trafford is expected imminently.
97. Policy L2 of the Core Strategy is clear that all new residential proposals will be assessed for the contribution that would be made to meeting the Borough's housing needs. Therefore, the ability of this development to contribute to meeting housing supply targets is important. This is amplified in the context of the absence of a five year supply of deliverable housing land. Moreover, it is accepted that the contribution made across this 24.8 hectare site (at 'up to 400 units') would be significant. Clearly, the scope of the development to have this positive impact weighs in its favour.

#### Meeting Housing Needs (including Affordable Housing)

98. The NPPF requires local planning authorities to plan for an appropriate mix of housing to meet the needs of its population and to contribute to the achievement of balanced and sustainable communities (paragraph 61). This is supported by Policy L2, which refers to the need to ensure that a range of house types, tenures and sizes are provided. Draft Policy GM Allocation 45, in its vision for New Carrington, also references the importance of providing a broad housing mix. In the context of this outline application, the precise housing mix is unconfirmed. However, the Planning Statement describes the development in general terms as one which 'would deliver much-needed family homes' and a mix of two, three, and four bedroomed houses is referred to. In addition, the revised Financial Viability Appraisal, and the assumptions contained within it, is based on the development comprising 131 2-bed units, 143 3-bed units, and 126 4-bed units. It is to be assumed, therefore, that the intention is not to provide any 1-bedroomed units.
99. That the development would provide family homes is welcomed, and it is noted that Policy SL5 of the Core Strategy and draft Policy GM Allocation 45 of the GMSF both primarily seek the provision of family housing across the Carrington and New Carrington allocations respectively. This is further confirmed in the consultation response of the Council's Housing Strategy officer which refers to the development bringing much-needed family homes to the Borough. In addition, and with reference to the emerging Trafford

Housing Need and Demand Assessment (2019) which will be used to inform a number of housing and related policies (including the new Trafford Local Plan), the response identifies that the provisional housing mix is reflective of the assessment's early stage findings regarding the size of dwellings most in demand in the relevant sub-area.

100. Another important component in contributing to the objectives of creating mixed and balanced communities, as required by the NPPF, is the provision of affordable housing. The definition of affordable housing is broadened in the NPPF relative to that reflected within the Core Strategy. The glossary defines it as: 'housing for sale or rent for those whose needs are not by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers)'. It includes affordable housing for rent (including affordable rented and social rented), starter homes, discount market sales housing, and other affordable routes of home ownership (including shared ownership and rent to buy). Paragraph 63 states that affordable homes should be sought within all new residential proposals for major development (ten units or more).

101. At the local level, the requirement to secure an affordable housing contribution is covered by Core Strategy Policy L2. The policy is clear that – in respect of all qualifying development – appropriate affordable provision should be made. In recognising that the Borough does not perform as a single uniform property market, the policy explains that Trafford is split into three broad market locations which have different percentage requirements for the provision of affordable housing. As corroborated by an accompanying Supplementary Planning Document (SPD1: Planning Obligations, July 2014), which draws upon the recommendations of the Trafford Economic Viability Study (2009 and a 2011 update), the application site is located within a 'hot market location' which covers the vast majority of Trafford's rural areas. Partington itself is within a 'cold market location' but with the application site sited directly to the south of the point of changeover. In such 'hot' locations, provision of affordable housing at a high-level percentage is typically sought (i.e. at a level higher than in 'moderate market locations' and higher again than in 'cold market locations'). Policy L2 and SPD1 also acknowledge that different market conditions can apply throughout a development plan period which also impact upon the level of affordable provision that a new residential development can successfully sustain. As of November 2018, 'good market conditions' have been applied (wherein the percentage contribution is further increased). The effect, therefore, is that within this 'hot market location' and under present 'good market conditions' a 45% affordable housing target will normally be applied, the SPD advises. By way of a comparison, development proposals wholly within the built up part of Partington would presently be expected to deliver affordable housing at a rate of 10%. There is a further allowance incorporated within the SPD in respect of situations where a new residential development may introduce a non-generic type of housing to an area with the effect that it may perform differently to other more commonplace housing within that market location. In these circumstances the SPD advises that the affordable housing contribution arrived at should be determined via a site-specific viability study, but it should not normally exceed 40%. Other

stipulations provided by the SPD and Policy L2 include the expectation that the affordable provision will be made onsite (rather than via an off-site contribution), and that the type of affordable housing will reflect a 50/50 split between intermediate (shared ownership) and social/affordable rent. In circumstances where application proposals do not meet the identified proportion, mix and type of affordable housing (typically due to claims regarding scheme viability), then an applicant's position is expected to be justified through a viability appraisal, the SPD states.

102. Affordable provision is also sought as part of the new housing to be accommodated within the New Carrington site. Policy GM Allocation 45 of the draft GMSF is clear that new developments will be expected to simultaneously deliver a minimum of 30% affordable housing.

103. In a situation where this Council is not meeting its general housing requirements, it is self-evident that affordable housing targets have similarly not been met, and thus there is a pressing need for affordable housing across the Borough. However, this application proposal does not include any affordable homes, neither on site nor in the form of a commuted sum to support delivery off-site. All of the homes proposed (the 'up to 400') are intended for open market sale, and the applicant's position is that this development would not be financially viable if it were expected to bear affordable provision.

104. The application was accompanied by a Financial Viability Appraisal (FVA) and the Council's independent viability consultant has been appointed to review it. In recent weeks a revised FVA has been submitted and with this comprising a substantially different document to that previously seen. The provision of the revised FVA followed a series of unsuccessful exchanges between the Council's consultant and the applicant's viability advisor which served to highlight a difference in approach. The repeated position of the Council's consultant has been that more detailed evidence and justification is required to support the applicant's case, and moreover that the submitted FVA deviates from established Government guidance, including within the NPPG, and also from RICS guidance, Financial Viability in Planning (2012). Indeed, the NPPF, when revised in 2018 and 2019, established a refreshed approach to viability, and with new guidance in NPPG published alongside it. Amongst other aims, the adjustments have sought to improve the robustness of the viability process in the interests of striking a genuine balance between the aspirations of developers/landowners and the aims of the planning system to secure maximum benefits in the public interest.

105. The revised FVA has also – recently - been reviewed by the Council's consultant. Whilst the response confirms that this entails a brand new viability case for the outline proposal, many of the previous repeated requests intended to secure a defensible assessment on the applicant's part have not been addressed. The key changes to the applicant's appraisal include an increase in the number of units proposed, a decrease in the gross internal area of the development (with the number of 2-bed units increasing and 4-bed units decreasing), a reduction in the Gross Development Value, various



adjustments to build cost data, reduced abnormal costs, a decrease in total development costs, a lesser profit margin, and a reduced residual land value. Whilst it is noted that this revised FVA now includes some allowance for Section 106 contributions (unlike the original FVA), this does not extend to affordable housing. Thus, the updated appraisal is still based upon a 100% market housing scheme.

106. There are continuing areas of concern in the revised appraisal, officers have been advised, which call into question the validity of the applicant's overall approach. Some new unqualified assumptions have also been introduced. This includes in respect of comparable sales values, assumptions surrounding base build costs, and unexplained reductions in external works costs. One particular area of continued disagreement is in relation to total abnormal costs, which the Council's consultant still considers to be very high. The position adopted by the applicant would suggest that this relatively low-density development would in itself generate a massive abnormal cost (on the basis that parts of the site are undevelopable), but any logic to this approach has not been adequately articulated and thus is not understood. If it were to be accepted that the application site poses a considerable abnormal costs challenge, then it would be fair to conclude that the site is of poor quality and that its 'benchmark land value, BLV' (the value of a site in its existing use with a premium that recognises policy requirements) would reflect this. The Council's consultant has a number of continuing crucial queries concerning the applicant's assumption surrounding BLV which officers share. The applicant's approach to assessing BLV is not based on the 'Existing Use Value Plus (EUV+)' method which is now required by up-to-date (2018) guidance and instead it relies on an outdated and misconceived approach. Furthermore, the applicant has not responded to repeated requests to provide information regarding whether the site has been acquired or whether an option agreement has been entered into, or in turn how much it has paid or it will pay for the site. The provision of this information, as part of an open-book viability assessment process, is supported by the NPPG and the RICS guidance.

107. Overall, therefore, it has been concluded that the viability case put forward by the applicant does not satisfy present requirements, and thus it has not been effectively demonstrated that this is a development that cannot sustain affordable provision. Given this lack of evidence, it is therefore considered that the proposal is contrary to Core Strategy Policy L2 as well as the NPPF on the subject of affordable housing. Whilst it has already been documented that the delivery of housing weighs in favour of the scheme, the lack of affordable housing reduces the strength of this point. For the avoidance of doubt, unlike the position regarding an education contribution for example which is covered elsewhere in this report, there is no evidence at this stage of the applicant's willingness to concede on the issue of affordable housing.

#### Highways Matters

108. The following section of this report outlines the highways position as concluded by officers. In summary, concerns regarding an otherwise 'severe' impact on local roads could be addressed through the imposition of Grampian planning conditions which would require off-site mitigation at three key junctions. Whether the applicant is agreeable to these conditions is unconfirmed at this stage. A potential accessibility reason for refusal is also identified in the event that the applicant does not accept the need for a financial contribution to improved public transport provision.
109. The planning system plays an important role in delivering and promoting sustainable transport. Significant development should be focussed on locations which are or can be made sustainable through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Transport issues should be considered at the outset in relation to development proposals (NPPF paragraph 102). This is in order that the potential impacts of new development on transport networks can be addressed. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be accompanied by a travel plan together with a transport statement/transport assessment. Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe (paragraph 109).
110. In reflecting the NPPF, Core Strategy Policy L4 seeks to direct development to accessible places that benefit from existing transport networks, services and facilities in order to reduce the need to travel. It also supports opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment and cycling network. Planning permission will not be granted for new development that is likely to have a significant adverse impact on the safe and efficient operation of the strategic, primary and local highway unless appropriate transport infrastructure improvements and/or traffic mitigation measures can be secured. The severe reference within the NPPF is a more stringent test for residual cumulative impacts on the road network, and thus the relevant part of Policy L4 is out-of-date for the purposes of decision-taking.
111. The highways implications of this development have been very carefully examined, drawing upon the 'Traffic and Transport' chapter of the Environmental Statement and the submitted Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan. There have also been a series of technical notes provided by the applicant's highways consultant to respond to specific issues raised. A revised TA (and Travel Plan) has also recently been submitted superseding all previous assessments and technical notes. This highways submission has been reviewed by the local highways authority (LHA) as a statutory consultee, together with Transport for Greater Manchester (TFGM) in an advisory role and when also having regard to their responsibility for the design and operation of traffic signals across the network. The role of the LHA and TFGM has been in relation to the anticipated traffic impacts on roads of local and borough-wide significance. In addition, Highways England, 'HE' (also a statutory consultee in this instance) has played a significant part in the assessment process in examining the potential impacts on the Strategic Road Network (SRN), and with their focus being on Junction 8 of the M60 motorway

(to which the route of the A6144 leads). In this respect, HE has issued a series of recommendations to the local planning authority advising that the application should not be determined due to a number of outstanding issues and to allow time for further review. However, following the latest additional submission by the applicant, the position has very recently moved on and the HE 'holding recommendation' has now been lifted. In reviewing the traffic impacts of the application proposal, the focus of all consultees has been in respect of the *cumulative* position when having regard to all other committed (and some other emerging) developments. Therefore, care has been taken, in collaboration with the applicant, to ensure that all other relevant proposals have been accounted for, and that the traffic implications of this development are not considered in isolation. The HE's position, as very recently confirmed, is dealt with firstly, below.

### The Strategic Road Network

112. The M60, which is maintained by HE, is located approximately 9.4 kilometres to the north east of the site. Access to the site from the M60 is via Junction 8 which connects onto the 'Carrington Spur'. Improvements at Junction 8 have recently been implemented as part of the M60 Smart Motorway scheme. This has included variable speed limits and traffic detection loops.
113. In reviewing this application, a key objective of HE has been to ensure that the proposed development (in combination with other committed developments) would not lead to adverse traffic conditions that would significantly erode the safe operation of the SRN. This includes in respect of the potential for traffic to build up on approach to the M60, including at key junctions on the local road network.
114. In its first consultation response, in reviewing the original TA and first stage technical note, HE raised a number of outstanding queries that prevented HE from making a conclusive recommendation on the proposed development. Since then, there have been a series of further submissions by the applicant's highways consultant and subsequent rounds of review, and a position was reached wherein the majority of concerns had been addressed. This included in respect of the applicant's submission now making some allowance for an assessment of impact at the development's opening year in addition to the 10-year post-submission scenario of 2029 (in accordance with advice contained in HE's Planning for the Future, September 2015, publication), agreement in respect of relevant commitments, further exploration of traffic safety data, and the application of some sensitivity testing (consistent with the approach adopted in the assessment of the outstanding Voltage Park application) when recognising that there is likely to be further traffic growth over the 10-year study period (over and above existing commitments) in the context of the draft GMSF New Carrington allocation.
115. However, there had been one remaining area where HE had continued to seek further information and clarity. Whilst HE itself had confirmed its satisfaction that the additional traffic generated by the

development would not have a direct severe highways impact on the M60 (including Junction 8), it had been recognised that the highways model contained within the submitted TA for the local road network had not, at that point, been fully agreed by TFGM. This included in respect of the predicted cumulative impacts upon the Banky Lane/A6144 signalised junction (the Carrington Spur), and with TFGM expressing concern that the assumptions applied within the TA had served to produce impact figures that were overly optimistic. This position had prevented HE from determining the extent of any potential queuing back towards the motorway junction; this queuing in itself could have problematic effects on the operation of the junction and possibly result in an unacceptable safety impact or severe highways impact on the SRN, HE had stated. However, some very recent progress has been made in unlocking this issue in which the LHA has done its own sensitivity testing based on the applicant's highways model and has reported back to HE and TFGM, and with then then further corroborated by a formal update to the applicant's model. Even when assuming a worse outcome than that adopted within the TA, and when considering a number of different scenarios (to include other committed development and approved mitigation at nearby junctions), the LHA has concluded that queuing on the Carrington Spur – whilst it may be more extensive than the TA illustrates, would still be sufficiently clear of Junction 8. TFGM, in liaison with the LHA, has also now (recently) accepted this position, and the effect therefore is that TFGM concerns regarding the applicant's model for the Carrington Spur have been addressed. In turn, HE – very recently - has confirmed that it is now satisfied in respect of the implications for the SRN and that its holding recommendation can finally be lifted.

#### Local Road Network

116. In presenting the position regarding the impact upon the local road network, the commentary which follows takes account of the review and assessment of the application by both the LHA and TFGM (including when allowing for very recent submissions and very recent consultation responses), and with both parties confirming agreement with the final conclusions drawn.
117. That the A6144, as the single route through Carrington and Partington, is a source of significant congestion has long been recognised. It is acknowledged by Policy SL5, which seeks substantial new road infrastructure and public transport improvements as part of the delivery of 1,560 new homes and employment floorspace, and has been further highlighted by the draft GMSF. As major development proposals have come forward in building upon the existing Carrington allocation, and for new development more broadly within the Partington area, the matter of whether the predicted traffic uplift could be accommodated within the existing road network, or whether mitigation would be justified, has been subject to the closest scrutiny. This includes developments at Carrington Village, at Heath Farm Lane (Partington) and at Lock Lane (Partington). In this respect, the focus has been on a number of key junctions along the A6144, including: at Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 (mini-roundabout) in central Partington; at Common Lane/A6144; at Banky Lane/A6144 (the Carrington Spur); at Ackers

Lane/A6144; and – notably – at Isherwood Road (B5158)/A6144 (known as Flixton crossroads). This is in addition to the motorway junction (Junction 8 of the M60). Highways mitigation schemes have been secured at some of these junctions as part of earlier consents, and with these needing to be in place before a certain quantum of development is delivered and occupied.

118. Similarly, in assessing this application (and when having regard to cumulative impacts), whether these junctions – which already represent significant pinch points on the network – could accommodate any additional traffic has been at the centre of highway discussions. Other junctions closer to the application site have also been analysed, including Moss Lane/A6144 (adjacent to the site), and the Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout (in the centre of Partington). In this respect, the submitted TA has considered a number of scenarios, and with the impacts arising from its proposed 400 homes (maximum) considered against the existing network and also with some already approved mitigation schemes in place.

119. The applicant's overall conclusions, as stated within the TA (as revised), is that the cumulative traffic impacts of the development, in an assessment year of 2029, could be comfortably absorbed by the existing network at the majority of key junctions. There are three exceptions, however – it is stated – where junctions would be expected to operate in excess of existing capacity. These are identified, and responded to, as follows (in summary):

1. The Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout: mitigation works are proposed by this applicant;
2. The Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 mini-roundabout: mitigation works have already been approved as part of the Lock Lane (Partington) development; and
3. Flixton crossroads (signalised junction): mitigation works have already been approved as part of the HIMOR Carrington Village and Common Lane (Carrington) developments, and the Heath Farm Lane (Partington) development.

120. In respect of items 2 and 3, the applicant's position is that the mitigation required by others (at the Moss Lane mini-roundabout and at Flixton Crossroads) would provide additional capacity but that, in any event, the impacts of the Redrow development 'would have no material impact above that which would normally be seen in the variation of day-to-day traffic flows on the surrounding road network.'

121. The consultation response of the LHA confirms its agreement that it is the three junctions stated above which are of primary concern in this instance. In each case, the LHA is of the view that a 'severe' (cumulative) highways impact would arise in the absence of appropriate mitigation. The applicant's own mitigation scheme for the Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout – where a new 'compact' roundabout is proposed – is likely to be acceptable in principle, although there remain a number of outstanding queries which the LHA intended to pursue (regarding the absence of vehicle tracking and a road

safety audit) but with the appeal submission limiting the scope for further negotiation. However, the LHA is of the view that these matters are not fatal and, whilst not desirable, could reasonably be addressed via condition if required, and with such a condition used to ensure that the approved scheme would be implemented at a point when the 101<sup>st</sup> dwelling was occupied.

122. At the Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 mini-roundabout, again, the LHA is in agreement that the previously approved mitigation works as part of the Lock Lane (Partington) development (ref. 86160/OUT/15) would also provide sufficient alleviation for this application (in conjunction with other committed development) if the Lock Lane development goes ahead and delivers that mitigation. It is understood that a provisional mitigation scheme comprises an enlargement to the existing mini-roundabout to increase its capacity, and with a condition imposed on the Lock Lane approval which serves to prevent any occupation until an approved detailed design had been implemented. However, it cannot be assumed that the Lock Lane approval, which is only in outline form, will be implemented and the mitigation trigger initiated, prior to any approval for Redrow being built out. Accordingly, the LHA has advised on the need for an equivalent condition to feature on this decision notice, if approved. It is understood that the required mitigation in this case (consistent with the position at the Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout) could be accommodated within the adopted highway. Accordingly, and notwithstanding that negotiations have stalled, it is to be assumed that the applicant would be agreeable to this condition.

123. The situation for the Flixton crossroads is more complicated, however. Based on site observations and the modelling undertaken, this is perhaps the junction which presently experiences the most extreme congestion at peak periods, particularly on the eastbound carriageway (towards the Carrington Spur). There have been two mitigation schemes previously considered and accepted, in principle, for this junction. The first, secured by HIMOR as part of the Carrington Village and Common Lane developments, takes the form of road widening, lane extensions and a bus layby, and with this required to be implemented when a certain development quantum is reached. That quantum of employment development has now been reached (with the relevant reserved matter consent now in the process of being implemented (ref. 94601/RES/18) and the relevant s106 contribution has been paid by HIMOR) and it is understood that this work is likely to be implemented under a Council contract over the course of this year. The reserved matters consent for residential development (ref. 94670/RES/18) will not be implemented until these works have been completed as no occupation of those dwellings could take place. When the Heath Farm Lane application came forward, a second round of mitigation needed to be considered for the Flixton crossroads, independent – but complementary to – the HIMOR proposal. The developer in that instance came forward with an option which, broadly, would involve the provision of a new left turn lane (towards the B5158) when travelling eastbound. This would provide additional capacity for the movement of traffic towards Flixton. This was accepted, in principle, as appropriate mitigation at a point when the 251<sup>st</sup> dwelling would be occupied (at Heath Farm Lane) or, alternatively, the provision of the CRR (as required by condition). The

difficulty with this mitigation for Flixton crossroads is that it relies upon third party land, and with no evidence of the landowner being willing to co-operate. However, the applicant in that instance was willing to accept such a condition in the knowledge that full scheme delivery (i.e. after 250 units had already been delivered) could be stalled until such time as the issues surrounding either the landownership or the CRR would be unlocked. It was widely acknowledged at the time, however, that the CRR option would be the favoured approach.

124. Contrary to the position of the applicant, the LHA is of the view that this proposal would in fact have a tangible and material impact on the Flixton crossroads junction. The applicant's TA reveals that the proposed development would place extra pressure on the junction in both the AM and PM peak periods, and with the likelihood of increased queue lengths particularly on the Manchester Road west and Carrington Lane east approaches. However, the LHA has concluded that the proposed left turn mitigation works associated with the Heath Farm Lane development would provide the junction with sufficient future capacity to also accommodate the extra traffic arising from the Redrow scheme. No other alternative mitigation proposals (other than the opportunity afforded by the CRR) have been found to work, and with the applicant's earlier suggestion of a new roundabout to replace the crossroads subsequently dismissed. Therefore, in order to address the otherwise 'severe' impact at this junction, the same left turn mitigation scheme would also need to be integral to any consent for this applicant. However, as a proposal submitted and considered after the Heath Farm Lane application (regardless of when any implementation may occur), the requirement in this case would be for the mitigation works to be provided before any unit occupation occurs because the Heath Farm Lane development is already permitted to use up the limited spare capacity at this junction.

125. The applicant's decision to submit a non-determination appeal, whilst simultaneously revisiting its highways position, has reduced the scope for the LHA (and TFGM) to provide its latest feedback in seeking a highways solution. It is evident that, in terms of the key issue of traffic impacts, a number of important Grampian conditions would be necessary (which would prevent the occupation of the development) to secure off-site highway works and to ensure that the residual cumulative traffic impacts would not be 'severe' in NPPF terms (which would otherwise warrant a highway reason for refusal). To reiterate, these are works to: the Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout; to the Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 mini-roundabout; and to Flixton crossroads.

126. Subject to the applicant's agreement with these crucial conditions (which has not been confirmed to date), it is accepted that incremental mitigation is available which would ensure that there would be no demonstrable severe impact on the safety or operation of the local road network. No notable betterment would be achieved but the works would address the impacts arising. As with the Heath Farm Lane decision, it is anticipated that the condition in respect of Flixton crossroads would provide

an alternative to the left turn lane mitigation option in the form of the provision of the CRR. The level of this required financial contribution has not yet been determined.

127. It is the condition (and legal agreement) for Flixton crossroads which it is envisaged the applicant may seek to dispute in particular. This is given the uncertainty surrounding the delivery of the mitigation works on third party, and the timescales associated with the alternative option of the provision of the CRR (which the condition would require would be constructed and available for use by vehicular traffic prior to any development's occupation, consistent with Heath Farm Lane).

128. Some reference is again given to the applicant's allowance of £1.5m of Section 106 costs within the recently revised FVA 'for A6144/Flixton Road highway improvements' (despite the TA seeking to make the case that no discernible impacts would occur in this location). However, in the absence of any further information from the applicant regarding what the improvements entail, how the figure has been calculated, and whether, and at what point, the works would be linked to the development, very little weight is afforded to this as a potential solution. The appropriate, alternative solution for the Flixton crossroads, as concluded by officers, is that discussed in paragraphs 125 to 127 above.

129. It is expected that the applicant will confirm its agreement, or otherwise, to these conditions and requirements in the short term as appeal proceedings move forwards. The applicant's acceptance would mean that there would be no highways issue (in terms of traffic impact on the local road network) to contest at the subsequent inquiry. Should all identified necessary conditions and requirements not be agreed to, however, then the effect is that severe cumulative highways impacts would then arise, the LHA has advised. In this situation, and in the absence of any apparent alternative mitigation, an unresolvable highways objection would remain. Thus an indicative reason for refusal would be included as part of the Council's inquiry case. The situation is presently unknown but it is assumed for the purposes of this report and the planning balance contained within it that the applicant will acknowledge that the proposed Grampians and financial contribution to CRR provides the most appropriate and positive strategy for dealing with the crucial matter of (local) highways impact.

130. For the avoidance of doubt, it is confirmed that consideration has also been given by the LHA in respect of the impact on the Warburton toll bridge. This is a location on the local road network that has consistently been raised as a concern by members of the objecting public and is in the opposite direction to the majority of key junctions that it is anticipated would be affected; it would be impacted upon by additional traffic leaving Partington to the south-west towards Warrington. However, the revised TA assigns relatively low traffic volumes travelling to and from the toll bridge on Paddock Lane, which the LHA agrees is a reasonable approach. As a result, the LHA accepts that such traffic levels would not cause any further material



congestion at the bridge and therefore no mitigation is warranted, it is concluded.

131. It can also be confirmed that the LHA is satisfied with the capacity assessments for the following additional junctions: Warburton Lane/Moss Lane; Common Lane/A6144; Ackers Lane/A6144; and Banky Lane/A6144 (the Carrington Spur). In respect of the latter, this follows the recent sensitivity testing as referred to previously. Moreover, to reiterate, TFGM, has confirmed its acceptance in all cases, and this includes those junctions which are signalised (and therefore it supports the LHA in its approach to mitigation at the Flixton crossroads).

#### Accessibility

132. The shortcomings of the site as an accessible location have already been commented on as part of discussions surrounding the principle of the development. The LHA has also considered the issue of accessibility from its own viewpoint; its relationship with existing highway, public transport and pedestrian networks and in seeking to get the best possible, and safest, use out of the infrastructure that is already in place.

133. With reference, firstly, to pedestrian linkages, there are a number of outstanding issues, the LHA has identified. In the development of Site 2 it is noted that a 3 metre footway is proposed on the western side of Warburton Lane. In continuing towards Partington, pedestrians would then need to cross Warburton Lane from west to east to arrive at the existing (narrower) footway on the eastern side. Whilst a pedestrian island is proposed in this location to encourage safe movement, the LHA has advised that this would need to be upgraded to a controlled pedestrian crossing. This is in view of predicted traffic levels in this location and in the best interests of pedestrian safety. This alternative crossing feature could be secured via a planning condition. The applicant's stated intention to re-utilise and enhance the old Warburton Lane alignment as a pedestrian linkage is noted by the LHA. This route, which lies at a lower level to the Warburton Lane carriageway and which includes a bridge over the Red Brook, is presently in an unkempt and uninviting state and with bollards and vegetation hindering full access. Whilst this proposal may be welcomed in principle, the LHA (and when recognising that old Warburton Lane forms part of the adopted highway) has advised that further detail would need to be seen in time. This would include a condition survey of the bridge structure, the scope of works required to bring it up to a suitable standard, and confirmation regarding the extent of the applicant's offer in noting that part of the route lies outside the application site. Finally, the LHA is in agreement that the applicant's late proposals in respect of the potential footbridges over Red Brook lack any firm detail and with similar doubts, as also held by officers, regarding the potential in reality to secure these linkages.

134. The LHA is familiar with the limited public transport availability across the Partington area. The draft GMSF and Policy SL5 encourage development proposals to make a contribution towards the delivery of improved sustainable

transport choices. The submitted TA itself recognises that the only public transport option for Partington residents is the bus service. The nearest bus stops are located on Warburton Lane: southbound close to the main vehicular entrances; and northbound approximately 150 metres to the north of the entrance to Site 1. The TA explains that the local bus service provides connections to Altrincham, the Trafford Centre and Warrington. However, as has already been stated, the existing frequency of service is poor. The bus stop improvements, whilst welcome, do not address the frequency issue. Given the paucity of public transport provision – presently – it is to be expected that a significantly greater financial contribution figure would be needed to deliver a real step change in the quality and choice of transport links to render this development accessible. The LHA and officers are agreed that some form of public transport contribution is warranted, although - similar to the CRR position - what this figure might amount to cannot, as yet, be given. A commitment to making the necessary contribution could be secured by means of a Section 106 legal agreement.

135. Overall, in concluding on this matter, the LHA is in agreement that the accessibility credentials of the site and the development are poor. Some conditions are recommended in order to address pedestrian safety issues, and with the response supporting the need for some form of financial contribution to support improvements to public transport (although not the one on offer). It is hoped that agreement can be reached on these issues with the applicant but, failing this agreement, there would be a further reason for refusal concerning lack of adequate accessibility and lack of contributions to address this inadequacy (contrary to Policy L4 and Policy L7).

#### Other Highway Matters

136. In terms of other matters considered by the LHA, and acknowledging that 'access' is a matter to be approved at outline stage, it has been confirmed that the information supplied to support the provision of the main vehicular accesses from Warburton Lane is acceptable. This includes in respect of the required visibility splays to the north and south of each access. With regard to car parking and cycle parking/storage, the LHA acknowledges the commitments given to securing adequate provision, consistent with required standards and when having regard to the accessibility of the site and area, as part of any reserved matters submission, and there is no evidence at this stage (with reference to the parameters plan and indicative site layout) that appropriate provision could not be made.
137. It is evident, therefore, that a very detailed review of the highways position has been undertaken, and with some very recent conclusions made in response to new submissions. On the critical matter of whether the additional traffic generated by the development could be accommodated on the network, the HE has just confirmed its satisfaction regarding the SRN. In respect of local roads, a pragmatic assessment has been undertaken by the LHA, in conjunction with TFGM. A solution has been presented in this report, which would involve off-site mitigation to a number of key junctions including the Flixton crossroads. Whether the applicant is agreeable to this, and the

alternative CRR option, is unknown at this stage. A challenge to this approach on the applicant's behalf would need to be defended by the Council at the subsequent inquiry on the grounds that a severe highways impact in NPPF terms would otherwise occur. However, at this stage and for the purposes of this report, it is assumed that the approach to highways impact will be accepted.

### Landscape Impact

138. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment, the NPPF advises at paragraph 170. As part of this, valued landscapes should be protected, and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside should be recognised. Within the Core Strategy this objective is articulated by means of Policy R2 (Natural Environment). This policy restates the importance of protecting and enhancing landscape character and of recognising the value of the Borough's countryside assets. In this respect, and with reference to the Proposals Map accompanying the statutory development plan, it is significant that the site forms part of a much wider area that has been specifically recognised for its landscape quality (Policy R2 of the Core Strategy).
139. This is a greenfield site on the edge of the built up area, and it is considered that it has some genuine landscape (as well as heritage) sensitivity. The brook forms a clear and strong edge to the settlement to the south, and with this further reinforced by the trees which align it and the fact that it sits within a natural valley. Beyond the brook when travelling south, as the land rises up and the tree cover diminishes, the impression is one of leaving Partington and of arriving in a more rural landscape on approach to the village of Warburton. Moss Lane (the southern boundary of Site 1), with its narrow winding route, its lack of street lights and its aligning hedgerows, is clearly rural in character. Furthermore, the western land parcel (Site 2) is especially prominent when travelling northwards from Warburton and it provides the clear presence of an agricultural landscape which coexists with the fields it adjoins.
140. The application proposals, and the two accompanying full applications, were presented to an independent panel of built environment professionals at a specialist design review (by Places Matter) in September 2019, as initiated by the applicant. This was, in part, a response to continuing officer concerns regarding the scheme's design and layout, as most clearly articulated within the detailed proposals. In providing its written response to the applicant, which it was intended would encourage a re-design, the Places Matter panel refers to both land parcels as 'gorgeous sites with tremendous opportunity', and with Site 2 comprising 'an extremely attractive, open rural site with a traditional parkland feel.'
141. Of course, the proposed development of this greenfield site as part of the draft GMSF's New Carrington allocation is noted. However, it is significant that a number of the policy principles included within draft GM Allocation 45 acknowledge the allocation's landscape worth (as a whole). The

importance of respecting the site's urban/rural fringe setting is referred to (policy principle 13) together with the need to minimise the loss of landscape features (such as hedgerows and tree belts) and to enhance these features to create defensible Green Belt boundaries (policy principle 17). Indeed, the proposed development would become the new settlement edge for Partington, and with land immediately to its south remaining in Green Belt.

142. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a helpful tool in identifying the effects of new development on key views and on landscape features. The submitted Environmental Statement includes an LVIA, and an independent landscape consultant has been appointed to review its findings. It is commented that the LVIA is based upon the originally submitted parameters plan and it has not been updated to reflect the more recently revised parameters plan (or the indicative site layout). The applicant's position is that this is unnecessary since the LVIA has already assessed a worst-case scenario.

143. In outlining the relevant planning policy background, the LVIA refers to an adopted supplementary planning guidance document, SPG30: Landscape Strategy. This sets out the character of particular countryside landscapes across Trafford. The site lies within the 'Settled Sandlands' landscape character type (LCT), which comprises an extensive area of landscape in the south-western part of the borough. The main characteristics of the Settled Sandlands LCT are then set out, which includes: a dominant agricultural land use; medium to large-sized fields defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees; a generally low-lying, gentle rolling topography; dispersed farmsteads linked by meandering country lanes; the vernacular architectural style, particularly in farm buildings; and the presence of brooks and ponds. The LVIA then confirms that the Settled Sandlands LCT comprises three subdivisions and the site lies within the sub-type of 'Warburton Park Farm/Mossland Fringe.' In this location there are isolated coverts and pockets of woodland, included linear woodlands associated with watercourses (including Red Brook). The Ancient Woodland at Coroner's Wood provides a visual boundary between the built up area of Partington and the rural areas around Warburton. In identifying the pressures on Settled Sandlands, the LVIA records that 'the LCT is considered to have some of the largest, high quality rural areas in the Borough but is subject to gradual deterioration in areas that abut the urban fringe.' The LVIA also records the 'Strategy Statement' for Settled Sandlands as contained within the SPD, which is for 'visual unity and landscape character to be conserved, restored and enhanced'.

144. The LVIA provides its own summary of the characteristics of the site and of the wider study area (as adopted for the assessment). In general this is consistent with the content of the SPG and with the text including reference to 'fields divided by a network of hedgerows and hedgerow trees', 'tree cover buffers the existing southern settlement edge of Partington' and that 'the fringes of Partington are part filtered by mature trees along Red Brook.' It is noted that the LVIA attributes a landscape value of 'local' to the site and study area, a 'susceptibility to change' for the landscape as 'medium', and a corresponding 'sensitivity to change' also of 'medium'.

145. The LVIA then identifies a series of baseline views (twelve in total). These take in views from the north, south, east and west of the site, and also inter-visibility between the two land parcels. It is recorded that there are no internationally important views of the site or views from any recognised long-distance routes. Public views of the site are identified to be of local value, whereas private views have community value. The LVIA then acknowledges the 'visual receptor type' which would typically experience the identified 12 views. Those views which would be observed from public rights of way within and adjoining the site which would normally be enjoyed by persons engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is likely to be focussed on the landscape. Thus, this receptor type would have a 'high susceptibility to change'. In contrast, those views which would be chiefly taken in by motorists and other road users, and where an appreciation of the view is likely to be lower, are described as having a 'low to medium susceptibility to change'.
146. The 'embedded mitigation' that has been built into the scheme in the interests of encouraging a sensitive development is then described. In cross-referencing the parameters plan, the LVIA explains that the proposed built development would be set within a robust landscape framework containing pockets of new woodland planting, groups of and individual tree planting, and hedgerow planting. That some visual mitigation measures could be introduced during the construction period to reduce the influence of construction activity is also identified, including screen fencing and soil bunds.
147. In turning to the key component of the LVIA process, the document seeks to quantify the significance of both landscape character impacts and of the visual effects that would arise. In doing so, the two land parcels are dealt with individually (as Site 1 and as Site 2). The process involves judgements being made regarding the site's 'sensitivity to change', together with the 'magnitude of change' of the development proposals, to arrive at a 'magnitude of effect.' This magnitude of effect is reported at three points in time: being construction, following completion in the short to medium term (0 to 15 years); and in the longer term after completion (after year 15, the 'residual effects').
148. It is noted that the magnitude of effect, on landscape character, for both land parcels and at all three stages, is reported as being 'minor adverse' (with the exception being for Site 2 in the short to medium term where no value is expressly stated). In turning to the assessment of visual effects, which takes into account the 12 representative viewpoints considered separately for each land parcel and similarly over the three time periods, the 'magnitude of effect' is again reported. Most commonly, the effects are identified as being 'no change', 'negligible', 'minor' or 'moderate.' However, the assessor's highest level of 'major adverse magnitude of effect' is found to arise in the short to medium term following construction (as derived from the development of Site 1) on two viewpoints, but this is downgraded to 'moderate adverse' over the longer term once landscape mitigation has become established. The viewpoints in question are those taken from the public right of way within the eastern part of Site 1 (viewpoint 1), and from Moss Lane to the south of Site 1 (viewpoint 6). The LVIA also considers the cumulative

landscape and visual effects which would arise from the application proposals in conjunction with other proposed development. The only development where the LVIA identifies some low levels of cumulative effect is HS2. However, it is stated that HS2, which it is understood would be elevated on embankments of up to 18 metres in this location in order to bridge the Manchester Ship Canal, would introduce a greater level of effect than the Redrow proposals.

149. In reviewing the LVIA, the appointed consultant has reported overall confidence in the planning policy and baseline sections of the document (notwithstanding that it does not make reference to the Greater Manchester Landscape Character Assessment which has been used to inform the GMSF). In addition, it is concluded that the methodology is consistent with established guidance and has been appropriately applied when having regard to the scale of development and the landscape context of the site and study area. The response also confirms general agreement with certain judgements surrounding the values and sensitivities attributed to the landscape and visual receptors (although it is noted that the LVIA does not acknowledge the presence and intended removal of historic hedgerows within the site, for which there is continued ambiguity). However, significantly, it disagrees with a number of the judgements made regarding the likely 'magnitude of effects'.

150. Firstly, it is considered that the LVIA has underplayed the likely landscape character impacts. In support of this position, reference is given to the fact that the LVIA states that a 'landscape or visual effect of moderate/major adverse to major adverse would typically be considered to be of significance.' However, the LVIA assessor finds that the proposed development would generate only minor adverse effects on landscape character during construction and at both stages post-implementation. The assessment, therefore, does not ascertain any 'significant' landscape effects, according to the assessor's own terminology. This is considered to be an unreasoned position when having regard to the fact that this is a greenfield site in an open rural location of local value, the scale of development at up to 400 homes, that the development would breach an existing visual boundary, and that – to reiterate - SPG30 identifies that this area (of Settled Sandlands) has some of the largest, high quality rural areas in the Borough. Contrary to the LVIA position, the response records that the construction phase would introduce features and elements that are alien to the landscape, and thus it would expect there to be significant levels change during the construction period. Furthermore, whilst some housing is not a wholly unfamiliar entity within this environment, the introduction of 400 homes across the site would generate a considerably higher magnitude of change than the findings of the LVIA would imply. Interestingly, by attributing a 'minor adverse' magnitude of effect on landscape character in the short to medium term, and a similar 'minor adverse' in the long term, the LVIA would appear to concede that the embedded mitigation would in fact be ineffective.

151. In turning to visual impact, it is similarly considered that the LVIA has in some instances understated the likely visual effects, and with this again derived from LVIA judgements concerning the 'magnitude of effect.' The

response records that several of the representative viewpoints command views that are inherently rural in character. This includes viewpoint 1, which is located on the public right of way which tracks north to south through Site 1; viewpoint 2 which embraces the full west to east vista across Site 1; the presently open view from viewpoint 5 across Site 2; and viewpoint 10 which is located on the Broadoak Meadow Walk which tracks along the wooded Red Brook corridor. These are views which would experience transformational change, both during construction and following the development's implementation. The present rural characteristics of the views would be lost, and the ability to observe more distant views would be removed. In some instances, and with reference to the parameters plan and indicative layout, the proposed houses would be close and prominent within the new view, and with no open space, tree planting or buffering in the immediate foreground. As such, it is considered that the judgements for the magnitude of effect across these viewpoints - for the construction phase, in the short to medium term, and over the longer term - should be more than the present (at worst) 'moderate effect'. If this were to be accepted, a higher level of adverse visual effect would then be categorised as 'significant' (when referencing the LVIA's terminology).

152. The function of the corridor of Red Brook in delineating the settlement boundary and the sense of separation that it provides between the urban area and the rural landscape has been well-documented. It heavily informed the response of the Places Matter design review panel in outlining what may constitute a more sensitive development. Critically, and when having regard to the arrangement of development as proposed - along with the embedded mitigation - the advice received from the Council's landscape consultant concludes that the parameters plan does not incorporate landscape buffers of sufficient scale and depth to the eastern and southern edges of Site 1 and to the eastern, southern and western edges of Site 2 to adequately moderate the landscape and visual effects that would arise. Even once any mitigation planting had matured (i.e. beyond 15 years), it is considered that the modest extent of any landscape buffer would not create an equivalent new green edge to the extended urban area. The response acknowledges that the presence of the Red Brook corridor and its flood plan, combined with the wide services easement, presents significant constraints to development in the northern parts of the site (both Site 1 and Site 2). As a result, the parameters plan prescribes large areas of open space to the site's north (leading to an over-provision of green infrastructure in the context of the requirements of policies R3 and R5), and with this serving to push the built form to the south. In the case of Site 1 in particular, the development would extend almost to its boundary with Moss Lane. Whilst it is acknowledged that the incorporation of additional green corridors, to the south, east and west, would limit the extent of developable area, such buffers are regarded as necessary in sufficiently protecting landscape character, in moderating harmful visual effects, and in providing a replacement robust and defensible Green Belt boundary.

153. Again, that some inherent landscape and visual harm would result as a consequence of the future release of the site as part of the GMSF process is recognised. The conclusions of the review of the submitted LVIA indicate that

there is potential for 'significant' landscape and visual effects when based upon the submitted parameters plan which supports a maximum development of up to 400 homes. It is considered that a reduced scale and spread of development, which allowed for the incorporation of more substantial landscape buffers, may be better assimilated within this rural environment. Moreover, the values placed on the harms to landscape character and to representative viewpoints have not been reasonably applied in all cases, and a solid understanding of such harms is essential when undertaking the planning balance. Accordingly, overall, it is concluded that the LVIA as a document as a whole is deficient and that adverse landscape and visual effects would arise when based upon the proposed quantum and distribution of development. As such, the proposal is considered contrary to Policy R2, to SPG30, and to the NPPF, and an indicative reason for refusal on these grounds is advanced.

### Design and Layout

154. The promotion of high standards of design is a central narrative within the NPPF. The overarching social objective, which is one of three objectives critical to the achievement of sustainable development, is reliant upon the planning system fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, according to paragraph 8. It continues, at paragraph 124, that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 130 urges local planning authorities to refuse development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. It continues that, when determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or which help to raise the standards of design more generally in an area.
155. The Core Strategy also attaches importance to the design and quality of the Borough's built environment. The text supporting Policy L7 advises that high quality design is a key factor in improving the quality of places and in delivering environmentally sustainable developments. Design solutions must: be appropriate to their context; and enhance the street scene by appropriately addressing scale, density, height, massing, layout, elevational treatment, materials, hard and soft landscaping, and boundary treatments, the policy is clear. Policy L7 is considered to be compliant with the NPPF, and therefore weight can be afforded for the purpose of decision-taking.
156. At the outset of this discussion, it is fully acknowledged that matters of design detail are not within the remit of this outline application. This includes in respect of appearance, scale, layout, and landscaping. A parameters plan has been submitted, however, and weight has been afforded to this plan in recognising the potential for it to form an approved document. The applicant's detailed intentions for the site have also been conveyed via the accompanying full applications (albeit for a reduced number of units overall), and then the outline revised Design and Access Statement also includes an indicative site layout (for 400 units) which is based on a similar design philosophy.



157. That the application site poses a number of design challenges has already been referred to. This includes in respect of the northern boundary which severely inhibits the scope for successful integration. Coupled with this, the site lies at a transitional point between the residential area to the north and the countryside to the south, and it is surrounded by fields on three of its four sides. That this is a sensitive location in landscape terms has already been described, and equally the site has heritage value, including in respect of surrounding built heritage, high potential for on-site archaeological significance and historic landscapes. Furthermore, the discussion above concerning the principle of the development highlights some fundamental drawbacks - with this site and with this proposal – which limits the potential for a sustainable development, including in a design sense, to be achieved.

158. The position of officers, at this stage, is that these detailed proposals in the full applications do not represent good design and layout. Officers' reservations in this regard are widespread and encompass a host of design components, including in respect of the general layout (of both the houses and the internal road layout), development densities, house designs and materials, the relationship with surrounding heritage assets, the approach to car parking, the prevalence of driveways, and the proposed boundary treatments. Many of these concerns were corroborated by an independent panel of built environment professionals at the specialist design review (Places Matter) in September 2019 (and in supplementing more deep-rooted 'in principle' reservations, concerning integration and accessibility for example). It is fully appreciated that, for the purposes of this outline application, a step back has to be taken when considering design merits, with the focus chiefly being on the submitted (and recently revised) parameters plan. However, the multiple flaws with the detailed proposals serve to illustrate the difficulties of this site and the 'in principle' difficulties with approving an outline. Moreover, the full applications are based on a design concept that is first articulated at outline stage. The parameters plan, in confirming matters of access, illustrates the provision of a dominant internal estate road, and it also shows the proposed location and distribution of the development in seeking to accommodate up to 400 homes.

159. The publication of the new National Design Guide emphasises the Government's commitment to achieving high quality places and buildings. The document outlines and illustrates the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics. These are identified as: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources, and lifespan. These characteristics can be applied to proposals of all sizes, the document sets out, including new buildings, infill developments, major proposals and larger scale developments such as urban extensions. In a well-designed place an integrated design process would bring the ten characteristics together to create an overall character of place.

160. The design characteristic of 'context' is introduced first within the National Design Guide. It is defined as 'the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.' The

document recognises that a well-designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and also of the surrounding context beyond the site boundaries. These features can include existing built development (including layout, form, details and appearance), landscape character, local heritage, landform and topography, and views inwards and outwards. One continuing concern of officers has been that insufficient regard has been paid to the site's existing character and context. Recently, a revised Design and Access Statement has been submitted, and with this supporting an amended parameters plan and an indicative site layout. Whilst this document provides a much more thorough analysis of the physical characteristics of the area, concerns remain that this assessment has still not informed a truly original design concept which has been influenced by all site's constraints and opportunities.

161. It is accepted that some progress has been made when considering the revised parameters plan. This includes the potential for some local vehicular accesses from Moss Lane (to Site 1) to serve small clusters of development (although with this then resulting in further historic hedgerow loss, the impact of which has not been accounted for), and the introduction of undeveloped space in the vicinity of adjacent listed buildings. In addition, a further north-south 'green infrastructure corridor' to Site 2 has been introduced to provide a physical and visual connection with the countryside to the south. However, there are some basic areas where it appears, at this stage, the applicant is not prepared to compromise further. The proposal remains a development of 'up to' 400 houses (typically 2, 3 and 4 bed family homes), and with housing proposed (according to the parameters plan) up to the southern and eastern edges of Site 1, and the southern, eastern and western boundaries of Site 2. Problems stemming from this quantum and distribution, both in landscape and in heritage terms, have been individually reported. Furthermore, on the whole, the proposal remains a development that would chiefly be served by a dominant and over-engineered central estate road (to Site 1 and Site 2), and with this then engendering a standard suburban-type layout. This, it is considered, represents a generic response from a volume housebuilder which could be replicated on any site.

162. The Landscape Strategy SPG previously referred to comments that, within the Settled Sandlands LCT, the vernacular style is a distinguishing feature. It explains, however, that traditional-style buildings are either being altered or demolished and replaced with modern buildings which ignore the traditional details, scale and materials. Similarly, changes in road alignment, new kerbs, signs and lighting serve to dilute and weaken the character of the area. In turn, the document provides guidance (in the form of a Strategy Statement) to help accommodate change within the LCT in a positive way. In order to conserve the rural character of the area, development should integrate into the landscape pattern, and should reflect a style, scale and location appropriate to the area. Furthermore, the pattern of roads within the LCT should be conserved since small winding country lanes which follow field boundaries, demarcated by hedgerows and grass verges, are an integral feature of the landscape.

163. Therefore, it is not considered that the application proposal, even in outline form, constitutes a well-designed development which has been positively shaped by a genuine commitment on the part of the applicant to 'context'. In particular, it has not accounted for the overriding rural characteristics of the site and area and it has not sufficiently respected the site's adjacency to the open, rural landscape to the south. The parameters plan put forward, even in its amended form, illustrates an arrangement of development that would not be well-integrated into the rural landscape and would not sensitively redefine the settlement edge of Partington.
164. The National Design Guide, as part of consideration of the characteristic of 'movement,' explains that patterns of movement for people are integral to well-designed places. Such patterns include walking and cycling, access to facilities, employment and servicing, parking and the convenience of public transport. Successful development depends upon a movement network that makes connections to destinations, places and communities, both within the site and beyond its boundaries, it continues. That the application site acutely suffers from a lack of integration and wider connections has been emphasised. This is observed in the poor public transport links serving Partington as a whole, and then with the site itself experiencing even greater visual and functional isolation in view of the Red Brook corridor. The underground service easement within the site presents a further barrier to forming successful linkages. The independent design review panel, in critiquing the proposal in September 2019, stressed the importance for the scheme's design concept in making important connections between this new development and the existing centre of Partington.
165. That the site has these inherent limitations is fully appreciated, and of course that this is the case has influenced conclusions regarding the acceptability of the application proposal in principle. The GMSF draft allocation for New Carrington (see Policy GM Allocation 45) encourages a form of development that would integrate as much as possible with existing residential areas. However, it is not considered that the development, as conveyed at outline stage, has been sufficiently well-designed to compensate for the site's shortcomings and to maximise the scope for a genuinely connected network. The only real change that the revised parameters plan makes in seeking to address repeated concerns regarding the development's segregation is in relation to the provision of two 'potential' footbridges over Red Brook. However, as has already been stated and conceded by the applicant, there is no guarantee that these could be delivered, and thus very little weight can be afforded to them as linkage opportunities. The proposal for Old Warburton Lane is not confirmed and whilst welcomed in principle it would largely replicate the existing walking route, in terms of location and distance, that is available on the footway to Warburton Lane (the eastern side).
166. The provision of an increased amount of pedestrian and cycle routes *within* the site is noted. The revised parameters plan indicates that these would be focussed within the northern, undeveloped areas of both land parcels and then as part of the north-south green infrastructure corridors

interspersed throughout the site. For Site 2 a further route is illustrated tracking the southern boundary. These adjustments are welcomed in the interests of improving the development's permeability and to facilitate inter-site movement. Nonetheless, there remains the issue of extending this pedestrian/cycle movement network beyond the site and towards Partington, which has not been addressed. For those wishing to travel to Partington on-foot to access local shops and amenities, the development would chiefly rely on residents walking to the Warburton Lane frontage (and using the LHA's requested controlled crossing if residing in Site 2) and then continuing northwards up Warburton Lane. The existing footbridge over Red Brook towards Chapel Lane may be preferred by some Site 1 residents, although there would be practical difficulties in using this route. Both routes are not without effort when on-foot and both could be beyond what might be described as a reasonable walking distance by some. The proposal's attempts to address deficiencies in public transport provision in the area are seriously inadequate.

167. Overall, therefore, this proposal, as presented within the parameters plan, would provide a development where its residents would primarily rely on the private motor vehicle for the vast majority of journeys. In addition, and despite the incorporation of some pedestrian and cycle routes within the site, the, the principal vehicular estate road dominates. Concerns regarding this residential development functioning as an isolated, principally car-borne destination have already been stated, and the submitted parameters plan (even as revised) does not provide any reassurance in this regard. Therefore, in returning to the National Design Guide, it is not considered that all forms of 'movement' have been designed into the parameters plan and the potential to create important off-site connections has not been suitably explored.

168. 'Public spaces' is a further important design characteristic established by the National Design Guide. The quality of the spaces between buildings is as important as the building themselves and public spaces should be streets, squares and other spaces that are open to all. A further design criticism directed at the proposal has been that the layout does not promote a sense of welcome to all visitors, which it should, including to use the play equipment and the areas of open space. The creation of a development with an 'exclusive feel' was referred to in the design critique provided by the design review panel. , In the absence of enhanced off-site linkages, there is still little within the scheme's parameters which would serve to draw existing Partington residents *into* the development (in addition to facilitating the reverse pattern of movement for prospective residents) to enjoy and appreciate the public spaces that would be on offer. Given that the proposal, as presented within the parameters plan, remains a largely unintegrated development, it is considered that the appeal and usability of its 'public space' is reduced. This is because the development – fundamentally – has not been designed to be inclusive, and the public space, it is considered, would not be in any practical sense open and accessible to all.

169. The level of detail indicated on the parameters plan is noted, and it is fully understood that matters of scale, layout, appearance and landscaping are not presented for determination. However, the submitted parameters plan provides some clarity regarding the applicant's intended design vision for the site. With this in mind, it is concluded that this plan does not set the foundations for a successful development as a whole. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF is clear that planning decisions should ensure that new developments: function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive including as a result of good layout; are sympathetic to local character including the built environment and landscape setting; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. It is considered that the parameters plan, which seeks to establish a particular design code in accommodating 400 new houses, is contrary to these aims. It is also in conflict with Core Strategy Policy L7 (Design) on matters relating to 'design quality', 'functionality' and 'accessibility.' Consequently, an indicative reason for refusal on design grounds is also put forward.

#### Impact on Local Services

170. As part of the objective of delivering sustainable and balanced communities, the NPPF advises on the importance for local planning authorities in taking an integrated approach in considering the location of new housing as well as community facilities and services (paragraph 92). New development often creates new demands on local infrastructure, and the NPPF also recognises that it is right that developers are required to mitigate this impact. Core Strategy Policy L2 identifies that all new development should be appropriately located in terms of access to existing community facilities and/or it would deliver complementary improvements to the social infrastructure (including schools and health facilities) to ensure the sustainability of a development. Allied to this, Policy L8 (Planning Obligations) explains that in circumstances where a proposed development would create a need for a particular facility or generate a specific adverse impact that cannot be provided for, then the Council will seek to negotiate appropriate planning obligations to make the development acceptable. The importance of this issue has already been highlighted in the context of preceding discussions surrounding the principle of the development and when cross-referencing emerging expectations in the draft GMSF allocation for New Carrington (which emphasise the need for supporting infrastructure alongside the 6,100 new homes).

171. Consultation has taken place on this application in the context of specific impacts on local health care facilities and on education provision. It is reiterated that permission is sought exclusively for residential development (at up to 400 homes) and with no supporting uses provided on site. The submitted Environmental Statement includes an assessment of the effects on local health infrastructure. This has been reviewed by the Trafford Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in conjunction with its own evidence concerning health care demand and supply, and with a particular focus on GP provision. Whilst the development – in conjunction with other committed developments – may place some extra strain on existing GP practices, the CCG has taken

some reassurance from the fact that the development would be phased. Accordingly, the maximum uplift in population, and the elevated patient to GP ratios that would result, would be experienced gradually. From this position, the CCG is satisfied that local practices would be able to cope, even in the longer term. Given that this conclusion has been reached in respect of GP services (where the effects of population growth are felt most acutely), it is concluded that the impacts on all other local health care resources would not be unduly harmful.

172. A different conclusion has been reached, however, following consultation with the Council's Education team in respect of the impact on local schools, and primary schools particularly. There are three primary schools within the Partington area. When allowing for an 'adjusted shortfall' (which recognises that a surplus in spaces would need to be available across all year groups to be genuinely considered a surplus), evidence from the Education team indicates that there was only - in effect - three unutilised places as at May 2019. In applying the relevant pupil yield (when having regard to the indicative housing mix), 84 primary school children could be expected to reside in the proposed development (and with these likely to place a demand for places across the seven year groups at primary level). Clearly, when taking the base year of 2019, there are insufficient surplus places (by some margin) to accommodate the expected pupil growth, and with an equivalent deficit expected in future years when the proposed development would begin to be occupied. Furthermore, this position does not account for other committed developments which would themselves absorb existing places and would generate a separate demand for new primary school places. In the absence of any new/expanded primary school provision, consultation with the Education team has indicated that a harmful impact would arise since a shortfall in primary school places would force primary school-age pupils to access provision beyond the Partington area. This may include other Trafford schools in the Sale or Altrincham areas, or schools beyond the Trafford boundary (in the Warrington borough for example), which would be beyond a reasonable commute at primary age and which would not be consistent with encouraging a sustainable pattern of growth. Furthermore, and whilst the capacity of the closest Warrington schools is not known, what is evident is that the Sale/Altrincham primary schools are already over-subscribed. This impact could be mitigated, the Education team has advised, through a financial contribution of £1.067m which could be used to support extensions at existing Partington primary schools (or the onsite rebuilding of larger primary schools) in order to increase their pupil intake.

173. SPD1: Planning Obligations, in building upon Policy L8, sets out the Council's approach to seeking planning obligations (typically via Section 106 legal agreements) in conjunction with Trafford's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which was introduced in July 2014. In summary, CIL is intended to target essential Borough-wide infrastructure that is needed to support the sustainable growth of an area, whilst planning obligations should only cover site-specific infrastructure. Indeed, as a result of the introduction of CIL, the system of planning obligations has been scaled back. Pooling restrictions introduced as part of the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as

amended) prevented local planning authorities from collecting more than five separate planning obligations for a project or infrastructure. Furthermore, under Regulation 123 of the Regulations, local planning authorities had been required to publish a list of infrastructure projects that it intended would be funded in whole or in part by CIL. The purpose of this requirement was to ensure that there would be no duplication between what is funded by CIL and what is covered by a planning obligation. In respect of education projects, the most recent list produced by this Council (as of December 2016) referred to the: 'the Borough-wide expansion of existing primary schools to provide additional intake places' and the provision of a two-form entry primary school in Carrington.'

174. However, in September 2019 some changes were introduced to the CIL Regulations with the intention of giving local planning authorities more flexibility to fund infrastructure via new development. This includes the lifting of pooling restrictions, and also the requirement for an infrastructure list has been removed. Whilst the intention remains, under the remit of Policy SL5 and potentially Policy GM Allocation 45, for CIL to be used to support the delivery of a new primary school in Carrington and the expansion of primary schools across Trafford, CIL is not expected to deliver this infrastructure in the short to medium term over a timeframe consistent with the occupation of this development. In the meanwhile, an adverse impact has been identified given the absence of capacity in existing local schools (at the primary level). Separate from the general CIL contribution that the proposal would make, this application also needs to provide separate mitigation to meet the specific need arising from the (up to) 400 homes. The recent adjustments to the CIL Regulations have confirmed that this two-layered approach to seeking developer contributions is valid, subject to any contribution that is being sought still complying with the established tests. These state that the contribution: should be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; is directly related to the development; and is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. In this respect, it is considered that the scale of contribution asked for, which has been informed by up-to-date evidence surrounding pupil yields and developer contribution rates, satisfies the three tests.

175. There would be an unacceptable impact arising from this development due to there being a shortfall in local primary school places to accommodate the expected pupil yield. Moreover, this impact would not be timely mitigated by the provision of infrastructure collected via CIL payments. In this scenario, the applicant would need to separately contribute to the costs of providing the new school places – the demand for which is development-specific - via a Section 106 agreement. It is not known at this stage whether the applicant would accept this contribution; it has not been included within the revised FVA as a Section 106 cost. The case for the contribution, and its amount, has been communicated to the applicant (although it is accepted that there has been some delay in doing this which has been as a consequence of the Regulation changes and the need to obtain external advice). If no contribution were to be made, then this would constitute an adverse impact and a separate (indicative) reason for refusal (on the grounds of conflict with

Core Strategy Policy L8 (Planning Obligations) as well as the NPPF) is included to be presented at inquiry. However, for the purposes of this report and the planning balance exercise (consistent with the approach taken in respect of highways impact) it is assumed that the applicant will, in advance of the inquiry, accept the need for these contributions.

### Residential Amenity

176. In addition to ensuring that developments are designed to be visually attractive, the NPPF (paragraph 127) also advises that planning decisions should create places that provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. Policy L7 of the Core Strategy contains a similar requirement, and with it made clear that new development must not prejudice the amenity of future occupiers of the development or occupants of adjacent properties by reason of overbearing, overshadowing, overlooking, visual intrusion, noise/disturbance, odour or in any other way. The GMSF, as part of the policy requirements for the development of the New Carrington allocation, refers to the need to ensure that new development is sensitively integrated with existing residential areas.
177. A range of issues have been considered under the broad topic of residential amenity in this case, albeit to a level commensurate with the outline nature of the scheme. As part of this it has been acknowledged that there are existing residential properties in proximity to the site. This includes the small residential estate of Top Park Close and individual dwellings located on Warburton Lane and Moss Lane. The existing site is devoid of any built structures, and thus there are no present impacts attributable to the site in terms of overbearingness, overshadowing, loss of privacy or visual intrusion. Clearly, the character of the site would be transformed in the provision of up to 400 new dwellings. However, the parameters plan, together with the illustrative layouts within the revised Design and Access Statement, indicate that development could be arranged in a manner which would not be unduly imposing for neighbouring residents and that the separation distances that are typically requested (as set out in SPG1 – New Residential Development and to prevent an unacceptable overlooking, for example) in all likelihood could be achieved. This includes Pear Tree Cottage and Birch Cottage when allowing for the surrounding planting buffers (notwithstanding the inappropriateness of this solution in heritage and design terms).
178. With regard to prospective residents, when having regard to the submitted outline information, there is no evidence at this stage that a housing layout could not be devised which would not deliver an appropriate spacing of units and which would not provide decent levels of private amenity space in accordance with the guidance in SPG1 (even when allowing for the maximum of 400 units).
179. The NPPG is clear that noise is a relevant planning consideration which should be taken into account in determining planning applications for both noise-sensitive developments and for new activities that may generate noise. Accordingly, the application is accompanied by a Noise Assessment,



with its scope to assess whether the residents of the development would be exposed to any significant noise sources. In addition, there is a dedicated noise chapter in the Environmental Statement, and with this considering the noise impact of the development on existing noise sensitive receptors in the area. A revision to the Noise Assessment has recently been submitted.

180. In examining the suitability of the application site for a residential use, the Noise Assessment identifies that the most significant source of noise is likely to come from vehicles travelling along Warburton Lane and Moss Lane. However, when having regard to predicted noise levels, it is concluded that – on the whole – noise traffic would not pose any significant constraints to a residential development. Some outline noise mitigation measures are suggested, however, and specifically for those parts of the site closest to the surrounding roads (for example, regarding the use of particular glazing).
181. The assessment also considers the noise impacts – for prospective residents – of the proposed route of Phase 2b of High Speed (HS) 2. Based on the latest Government plans, the line would be located, at its nearest, approximately 400 metres from the site (to the west of Site 2). Policy GM Allocation 45 within the draft GMSF acknowledges that the incorporation of noise mitigation may be necessary as part of the establishment of New Carrington when having regard to HS2 and other new major transport corridors. Whilst it is anticipated that railway noise levels perceptible at the site would generally be low, the noise impacts of HS2 will need to be determined on their own merits through the HS2 consenting process and are not for this application to predict or mitigate.
182. The Environmental Statement acknowledges that construction noise has the potential to give rise to short-term noise impacts. This includes the use of heavy plant during the initial ground preparation works and traffic movements associated with the delivery of materials. That being the case, it is stated that no unduly noisy construction activities are anticipated in this case given that there is no requirement for piled foundations or for demolition. Nonetheless, the Environmental Statement advises that construction noise could be effectively controlled through the implementation of best practice principles. Accordingly, the consultation response recommends that a condition is imposed which would secure the provision and implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan. This would seek to minimise and mitigate any adverse noise effects and could also control the hours when construction activity could take place.
183. The Environmental Statement, in exploring the impacts on existing residents, also assesses potential traffic noise changes on a sample of roads in proximity to the site and some in the wider area. Even when allowing for the cumulative change brought about by other committed developments in the area, it is concluded that there would be no significant uplift in road traffic noise in any of the sample locations. It follows that no mitigation measures are warranted, it is stated, and the consultation response from the Nuisance team is in agreement with this position.

184. Overall, therefore, and whilst acknowledging that there are some sensitive residential uses in proximity to the application site, officers are satisfied that the development (as presented within this outline submission) could be further designed and controlled in a way which would not unduly compromise existing standards of residential amenity. In addition, it is considered that decent living standards for prospective occupiers could be secured. As such, the proposal meets the requirements of Policy L7 and the NPPF in this respect.

### Green Infrastructure

185. As part of the introduction to Core Strategy Policy R3, it is explained that Trafford contains a range of physical environmental assets, which are collectively referred to as 'green infrastructure', and which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. The policy itself contains a commitment, involving the Council working with local communities, developers and partners, to expand and develop an integrated network of high quality and multi-functional green infrastructure. Amongst other purposes, this network will improve health and well-being, maximise potential climate change benefits including enhanced flood risk management, and create improved linkages to recreation opportunities. It is also noted that draft Policy GM Allocation 45 regards the development of New Carrington as an opportunity to deliver significant improvements to the green infrastructure network and to enhance existing green infrastructure characteristics across the site. Reference is also given, in respect of the separate development areas, to provide publically accessible green spaces which would be protected from future development (policy principle 15).

186. The need for green infrastructure provision within new development, as required by Policy R3, is further supported by SPD1: Planning Obligations. Depending on the scale of the proposal, development will be expected to incorporate 'specific green infrastructure' and 'spatial green infrastructure', and with these treated as a planning obligation in mitigating the negative impacts of development and in meeting new recreational needs. Specific green infrastructure chiefly relates to onsite planting, including tree planting and hedgerow planting, but it can also encompass other soft landscape features such as green roofs, green walls, wildflower meadows, and landscaping elements relating to sustainable drainage systems. The SPD explains that the scale of provision should be tailored to the details of the proposal, since the intention is that it would mitigate specific issues in that area. This could include the effects of urban heat or of air and water pollution, or to address local surface water management needs or ecological impacts. The SPD contains a guide regarding the level of specific green infrastructure which may be expected in each case. However, there is no set formula to be applied, and whether sufficient specific green infrastructure is incorporated is a matter of judgement when having regard to the details of the proposal.

187. Spatial green infrastructure, it is explained, is the open and natural green space associated with the needs of the residents of a development. It can include local open space (which covers local parks and open spaces with

purpose-built features such as footpaths, children's play, and informal sports provision) and semi-natural greenspace (which offers a more natural recreational experience). Whilst specific green infrastructure is required to be incorporated in almost all development proposals, the requirement for spatial green infrastructure is only triggered in schemes involving residential development of five units or more. In the case of applications involving more than 100 units, the requirement for spatial green infrastructure additionally includes children's play equipment (to nationally recognised standards), and developments in excess of 300 units should also provide for sports facilities, the SPD advises. In respect of the latter, it is recognised that occupiers of new residential development will also generate demand for sports provision. However, existing provision within an area may not be able to accommodate the increased demand without exacerbating existing and/or future predicted deficiencies. The SPD acknowledges that it may be appropriate for developers to pay a commuted sum towards offsite sports facilities rather than make provision on site.

188. The open space needs of new development are calculated using the standards in Core Strategy Policy R5 (Open Space, Sport and Recreation), the SPD outlines. These have been calculated using up-to-date audits of existing open space and indoor/outdoor leisure provision across Trafford, and also take account of quantity, quality and accessibility, it is explained. These local standards have also been informed by some national guidelines, it is continued.

189. The application submission includes a Green Infrastructure Statement which serves to explain the development's overall green infrastructure contribution. This has been reviewed by the Council's Sustainability officer for the purposes of establishing the extent to which the proposal would meet green infrastructure needs. The Green Infrastructure Statement has recently been revised to account for the revised parameters plan which, it is stated, has increased the quantity of green infrastructure incorporated. This includes the provision of a wider green infrastructure corridor within Site 1 to either side of the public right of way, and the introduction of an additional north to south green infrastructure connection in Site 2.

190. The document explains that green infrastructure has been treated as an integral feature of the development proposals. The key components of the green infrastructure strategy for the site are identified, which comprise: the maintenance of a strategic open space corridor along Red Brook; the creation of a series of north to south green infrastructure corridors interspersed throughout the site which would link with the strategic corridor; landscape buffers at the southern, eastern and western boundaries; pocket green spaces within the development and as buffers to heritage assets; and provision for children/young people, including equipped play.

191. That the application is in outline with the majority of matters (including landscape) reserved for subsequent consideration is acknowledged within the statement. Accordingly, the quantity and provision of specific green infrastructure would be subject to detailed design and layout at the reserved

matters stage. Nonetheless, in applying the guidance in the SPD, the document identifies what form and quantity appropriate specific green infrastructure may take. This could include tree planting (of more than 1,000 trees), or alternative features in lieu of, or in combination with, trees. Suggestions includes native hedge planting (in the order of 2,000 metres), green roofs/green walls (at 10% of the area of the building footprint), or additional biodiversity or landscaping elements to a sustainable drainage feature. Given the nature of the application and the level of detail provided, it is difficult to adopt a conclusive position regarding specific green infrastructure. However, there is no evidence at this stage that appropriate specific green infrastructure could not be provided within the parameters plan layout when having regard to the specific green infrastructure needs of the maximum quantum of development (at 400 homes) and when having to compensate for some existing green infrastructure loss (for example, tree and hedgerow removal).

192. In considering spatial green infrastructure, again the document outlines that the precise quantity and provision of spatial green infrastructure, as well as its locational accessibility to residents, would be confirmed at outline stage. However, nonetheless, a strategy for providing spatial green infrastructure within the site is outlined, and with this including provisional areas of coverage which accords with the revised parameters plan. In the region of 3.62 hectares of local open space would be provided across the full site area, it is stated. Consultation with the Council's Sustainability officer has identified a requirement for in the order of 1.35 hectares (when based upon the maximum quantum and indicative housing mix presented, along with Policy R5's standards) of local open space, and thus the development's provision – as presently indicated - exceeds the requirement quite significantly. As part of this, the development would make 0.14 hectare of provision for children/young people including some equipped play, which would be contained within two LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) play areas and six LAP (Local Area for Play) play areas. This is regarded as acceptable provision for a development with a residential capacity of some 1,000 people, it has been concluded. In turning to semi-natural greenspace, 5.97 hectares of semi-natural greenspace has been incorporated within the parameters plan, it is stated. This compares with a requirement for some 2 hectares of semi-natural greenspace (according to the Council's Sustainability officer), and therefore – again – the proposal is offering considerably more than the benchmark standard. Of course, these conclusions are based upon the submitted parameters plan, and the detailed design would need to follow these principles if this over-provision were to be secured.

193. Finally, in turning to sports facilities, consultation has taken place with the Council's Sustainability officer to identify existing outdoor sports sites/projects that would benefit from some form of contribution. With reference to the findings of the Council's Playing Pitch Strategy, qualitative deficiencies at Cross Lane playing fields in Partington, which is located to the north-east of the site, have been revealed. Further liaison with Sport England, in utilising their Pitch Calculator and when having regard to the additional population that the proposal is likely to generate (based on the maximum 400

homes), has established a level of contribution of £263,033. These funds, which would be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement, could be used to support new changing rooms and improvements to existing pitches at Cross Lane. It is significant that the applicant has allowed for this contribution within the revised FVA.

194. Overall, therefore, and for the purposes of this outline application, it is considered that the proposal has made sufficient provision for all forms of green infrastructure (either on or offsite). Furthermore, that its offer of spatial green infrastructure in particular is quite significantly in excess of that required by policy is recorded. Whilst this is welcomed, it is noted that the over provision of spatial green infrastructure is, in part, a consequence of the existence of substantial service easements within the site, together with the Red Brook flood plain, and with this rendering large portions of the site undevelopable. In any event, the proposal is considered to comply with Core Strategy policies R3 and R5 in this respect, as well as SPD1.

#### Air Quality

195. The NPPF promotes healthy communities and recognises that the planning system can play an important role in this. As part of this, it is made clear that development should, where possible, help to improve local environmental conditions, including air quality. It continues (in paragraph 181) that planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Within the Trafford Core Strategy, Policy L5 similarly seeks to ensure that new development would not give rise to significant adverse impacts on resident health, including from air pollution. Policy L5 is regarded as generally consistent with the NPPF on the matter of air quality, although that it does not refer to the provision of low emission vehicle charging points that are specifically encouraged by the NPPF is noted.

196. The location of AQMAs has been declared by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority when having regard to exceedances of annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) across Greater Manchester. Within the Trafford Borough, the Greater Manchester AQMA is chiefly focussed on the M60 motorway and the A56 Washway Road. However, there are other localised hotspots where standing traffic accumulates, and this includes parts of the route of the A6144 Manchester Road through Carrington and on approach to the M60.

197. The application submission includes an Air Quality Assessment and also a dedicated air quality chapter within the Environmental Statement. It is acknowledged within the documentation that the application site is located in proximity to the A6144 which is a significant source of road vehicle exhaust emissions. As such, the development has the potential to introduce future residents to poor air quality, as well as to be the cause of additional air quality impacts at sensitive locations, it is stated. Accordingly, the submitted

assessments have considered the potential for vehicle emissions associated with the extra traffic generated by the development and also fugitive dust emissions from constructions works, it is explained. Consideration of the former includes the application of dispersion modelling techniques to predict the concentration of pollutants across the local highway network, and with this also accounting for the impacts of other committed developments in the area.

198. The submitted assessments have been reviewed by the Air Quality team within the Pollution Control Service. The consultation response agrees with the methodology and criteria adopted. In turn it is accepted that the development, upon its operation, would not give rise to significant emissions to the undue detriment of local air quality and public health, including at key sensitive receptors and within AQMAs. Furthermore, the application of good practice dust control measures, to be enforced by means of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, would adequately protect against the risks from construction dust. With this condition in place, together with a requirement for low emission vehicle charging infrastructure to be installed within each residential plot (to be conditioned), it is considered that the proposal is acceptable with regard to the impact on air quality, and thus compliant with Policy L5 and the NPPF.

#### Contaminated Land and other Site Constraints

199. As part of the objective of ensuring that new development would not give rise to significant adverse impacts on health, the NPPF advises local planning authorities to ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use when taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from contamination. With the Trafford Core Strategy, Policy L5 is the relevant policy which serves to ensure that a site and its intended use is appropriate and safe. Policy L5, and its coverage of pollution matters, is considered compliant with the NPPF (and therefore up-to-date).
200. The application, upon its submission, included a desk-top contaminated land assessment and with this supported by a specific chapter within the Environmental Statement covering 'grounds conditions and geology'. More recently, a revised contaminated land assessment has been submitted, and with this covering additional survey work at the eastern edge of the site. The submitted assessments have been reviewed by the Contaminated Land team within the Pollution Control Service. The consultation response confirms that the submission provides a detailed assessment for land contamination, ground gas issues and any potential contamination of groundwater. There is one area of the site where some remediation would be required, it is stated, due to elevated levels of arsenic in the soil, and a ground gas assessment would also be needed to inform a subsequent risk assessment and to identify where gas protection measures would be required within the development. The submission does not reveal any particular risks of pollution to groundwater due to the low level of contaminants identified, it is identified. Overall, therefore, it is concluded that there is presently a moderate risk to future site users from contamination and from ground gas. Whilst this should not preclude the site's development, a

series of conditions are recommended in order that a detailed remediation strategy is approved, implemented and verified.

201. As part of coverage of this issue, reference is also given to the underground high pressure gas main which crosses the site towards the northern boundary. It forms part of the route of the 'Warburton Tunnel South to Partington' gas main, which is understood to be of strategic importance in transporting large quantities of gas to more local and lower pressure networks. The proposed development allows for the retention of the main, but with a significant easement zone identified on the parameters plan where no residential development would be proposed.
202. The Environmental Statement, as part of a chapter which assesses a series of health impacts, considers whether the comprehensive development of the site is compatible with the presence of the gas main, and also whether the main would pose a health risk to prospective site residents. In turn it is explained that the easements adopted accord with published advice from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) relating to new developments in the vicinity of hazardous installations. As such, it is concluded that a safe development which provided the necessary separation distances could be achieved.
203. The HSE is a statutory consultee for certain developments within the consultation distance of major hazardous sites, including pipelines. On the basis of the indicative parameters plan, and in accordance with standard terminology, the consultation response outlines that 'the HSE does not advise - on safety grounds - against the granting of planning permission'. Separate consultation has also been undertaken with Cadent Gas Ltd, as operator of the pipeline. However, similarly, and on the basis of the submitted information, the response records no overriding concerns, although it provides some important advice for the applicant when working in the vicinity of gas installations.
204. Therefore, when having regard to the site's underground conditions, it is considered that the site is suitable for its proposed use and compliant with Policy L5, but with some important conditions to control health risks.

### Ecological Issues

205. The NPPF is clear that the planning system should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including minimising impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity. The accompanying PPG advises that planning decisions have the potential to affect biodiversity interests outside, as well as inside, officially designated areas of importance for biodiversity. Local planning authorities are also advised to consider the opportunities that individual development proposals may provide to enhance biodiversity. At the development plan level, Core Strategy Policy R2 similarly seeks to ensure that new development would not have an unacceptable impact on the Borough's ecological assets, and that it should seek to provide

net gains. Policy R2 is regarded as consistent with the NPPF; it is thereby up-to-date for the purposes of decision-taking.

206. In terms of formal ecological designations, there is an identified Site of Biological Importance (SBI) to the north-west of the site at Coroners Wood on the opposite side of Red Brook, and part of Red Brook (to the north of Site 1) is also an SBI. An SBI is one of the non-statutory designations adopted throughout the north-west region to protect locally valued sites of biological diversity. There are two other SBIs within a 600 metre radius of the site. In addition, the full course of Red Brook is an identified wildlife corridor. It is noted that Policy GM Allocation 45, in establishing important principles for the development of New Carrington, refers to the need to minimise impacts on local SBIs within and adjacent to the allocation (policy principle 19).
207. A range of ecology surveys and assessments have been submitted to inform the outline application. This includes individual bat, badger, breeding bird, Great Crested Newts, and water vole and otter surveys, together with a dedicated 'Nature Conservation and Biodiversity' chapter within the Environmental Statement. These reports have been reviewed by the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). The consultation response records that the site is dominated by arable land which in fact is of limited nature conservation value. However, it continues that there are more important individual habitats present within and close to the site. This includes the corridor of Red Brook along the northern boundary, wooded areas, and trees, hedgerows and ponds.
208. The parameters plan, whilst indicative only, identifies areas of the site which could remain undeveloped and existing landscape features that could be retained. Whilst GMEU acknowledges that the proposed residential development would transform the character of the agricultural landscape, it is commented that the submitted plan allows for a reasonable degree of landscape connectivity with offsite habitats and sites, particularly at the northern and southern boundaries. The areas of new open space within the site (which it is expected would include significant new planting, including trees, hedgerows, grassland and aquatic planting) and attenuation ponds are also welcomed. The parameters plan also identifies an area of 'skylark mitigation' in its north-western corner. The comments of GMEU reiterate that the area surrounding the application site is known to be of value for supporting farmland bird communities (including skylark, grey partridge, barn owls and yellowhammers). The proposal would lead to some loss of farmland bird habitat, GMEU acknowledges, and the intention is to establish an area of dedicated species-rich grassland which would be fenced-off to provide continued (and inaccessible) habitat for farmland bird species. Whilst this may have some value, GMEU is of the view that the area is likely to be too small to be sustainable as farmland bird habitat in the longer-term, but in any case an effective scheme of landscaping, if delivered, would support other bird communities.
209. GMEU has confirmed satisfaction with the range and substance of the submitted species surveys. No significant harm to protected species has



been identified, and with GMEU in agreement with these findings. However, a series of conditions/informatives are recommended to provide additional safeguards prior to development commencing. This includes, for example, additional tree inspections to check for bat activity, a pre-construction survey to verify no presence of badgers, the adoption of 'Reasonable Avoidance Measures' in relation to Great Crested Newts, and restricting vegetation clearance to outside of the bird breeding season.

210. Overall, GMEU is assured that the principle of the development would not lead to significant harm to biodiversity interests on the basis of the submitted information, and this includes with reference to the Coroners Wood SBI and the corridor of Red Brook (including the SBI) as well as individual species. However, this is dependent on the details of the development being progressed in accordance with the parameters plan, and in particular for a comprehensive and considered approach to landscaping to be secured which would serve to deliver biodiversity enhancements in key areas of the site. This should extend to include a commitment to careful landscape management, which could also be conditioned. Again, it is noted that draft Policy GM Allocation 45 of the GMSF (as part of policy principle 20) requires development within the allocation to deliver a clear and measurable net gain in biodiversity and to make appropriate provision for the long-term management of habitats.

211. It should also be commented that the Environment Agency, as part of a wider consultation response, has also considered the biodiversity impacts of the development when having regard specifically to water-based habitats and species. With reference to the submitted parameters plan, the response recognises the opportunities attached to the development of improving the ecological status of the Red Brook wildlife corridor and of offering additional habitats as part of new water management features. However, again, the importance of an effective management plan is emphasised. In addition, the need to control the further spread of invasive species (Himalyan balsam) on the site is referred to. Therefore, for the purposes of the outline application, is it considered that the proposal is compliant with Core Strategy Policy R2 and the NPPF on the issue of biodiversity.

#### Flood Risk and Drainage

212. The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which also includes a drainage management strategy and there is a 'hydrology, drainage and flood risk' chapter within the Environmental Statement. These documents have been reviewed by a number of consultees in the context of their specific remit, comprising the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the Environment Agency (EA) and United Utilities. There have also been a number of supplementary submissions to address matters raised, together with a recently revised FRA.

213. With reference to the EA's flood maps, the FRA confirms that the majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1, which is described as 'low probability' for river or sea flooding. However, parts of the site are located in

Flood Zone 2 ('medium probability') and even in Flood Zone 3 (high probability' and including the 'functional floodplain'), specifically in the vicinity of Red Brook. The NPPF, through the application of the sequential test, aims to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. A similar approach is embedded in Core Strategy Policy L5 (and thus this aspect of Policy L5 is also up-to-date for the purpose of decision-taking). This advises that development should not be permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower probability of flooding. Furthermore, residential development is classified as a 'more vulnerable use' which should only be permitted in Flood Zone 3 (when including the functional floodplain) if an exception test is also passed. However, a more bespoke approach has been accepted in this instance given that the site encompasses land in all three flood zones (1, 2 and 3). The parameters plan illustrates that built development would be located away from flood zones 2 and 3, and would be contained within Flood Zone 1. Furthermore, the indicative site layout in the revised Design and Access Statement identifies that the maximum of 400 homes could indeed be arranged in this way. The submitted documentation describes this as an 'intra-sequential approach', and it is accepted that it is successful, in principle, in directing development away from areas of the site at highest risk. Accordingly, the LLFA has confirmed acceptance with this method and with no requirement for the applicant to look at other alternatives locations (beyond the site and wholly in Flood Zone 1) which may be suitable and reasonably available for the development proposed. The consultation response from the EA has also concluded satisfactorily on the issue of flood risk, although with this subject to a condition to ensure that certain flood mitigation measures identified in the FRA would be imposed (regarding the setting of finished floor levels, for example).

214. The LLFA's review has also taken account of the development's proposed drainage strategy. This is in the context of NPPF's advice which states that major developments should also incorporate sustainable drainage systems in order that surface water runoff does not pose a further flood risk. This is reaffirmed by Policy L5 which explains that new development will be required to reduce surface water runoff through the use of appropriate measures. In addition, draft Policy GM Allocation 45 of the GMSF advises that development proposals within the allocation should address flood risk and surface water management, including through the use of sustainable drainage systems.

215. Sustainable drainage systems are intended to manage surface-water run-off and to mimic natural drainage processes, either through infiltration and/or attenuation. They should serve to reduce the quality and velocity of run-off and they can also provide amenity and biodiversity benefits. In considering the type of system to be incorporated, the NPPG advises that the aim should be to discharge run-off as high up the following hierarchy of drainage options as reasonably practicable: 1. Into the ground (infiltration); 2. To a surface water body; 3, To a surface water sewer, highway drain or another drainage system; and 4. To a combined sewer. The submitted FRA outlines a strategy for surface water management. Due to ground conditions

and results of site testing, it is stated that on-site infiltration (the NPPG's preferred technique) is not likely to be feasible. However, the strategy endorses the next method based on discharge into the adjacent watercourse. Given the scale of development, multiple outfalls to Red Brook are likely to be required, it is stated, which will require consent from the Environment Agency via an environmental permit. It is significant that the LLFA is satisfied with this approach, and also in respect of the preliminary findings regarding the proposed rates of discharge into the watercourse. However, this strategy is reliant on the provision of attenuation ponds on-site which would serve to restrict the rate of discharge in extreme events. The parameters plan and indicative site layout plan illustrate a pond/basin (five in total) at each proposed outfall location (towards the northern parts of the site), and it is accepted that these drainage features also have the potential to create new habitat opportunities, as acknowledged by the GMEU. Accordingly, for the purposes of this outline application, the LLFA is satisfied that sufficient commitment has been given at this stage to ensure that surface water runoff would be adequately managed. However, a condition is recommended to request further details of a fully acceptable scheme, including to confirm satisfactory discharge rates, to ensure that the proposed storage ponds would have adequate capacity (including when allowing for climate change), and to make sure that the drainage system implemented would be appropriately managed and maintained.

216. In considering the position of United Utilities (UU), it can be commented that their position regarding surface water management is largely consistent with that of the LLFA, and with a condition recommended to secure proper surface water drainage. In addition, in respect of foul water drainage, a further condition is put forward which seeks to agree the specific details of the proposed approach. In this respect, however, it is reported that there is some concern on the part of UU regarding the applicant's intentions as communicated most clearly within the accompanying full applications. The submitted strategy is based on the two separate parcels of land being served by separate onsite pumping stations. In the interests of providing a more sustainable and economical system, UU has asked to applicant to rationalise its approach such that only one pumping station would be proposed to serve the development as a whole. This remains an unresolved issue. Furthermore, more widely, UU has expressed disappointment that this proposal is submitted in advance of a comprehensive drainage masterplan for the wider New Carrington (draft) allocation, which would be likely to support a small number of centralised pumping stations. The suggested condition by UU regarding foul water drainage - for this outline application and when acknowledging the matters on which this outline application is based, is intended to seek a satisfactory solution. It is acknowledged, however, that the revised Design and Access Statement maintains the applicant's position regarding two pumping stations.

#### Trees and Arboricultural Matters

217. Policy R2 of the Trafford Core Strategy (which, it has been stated, is up-to-date) affords protection to a range of different natural assets that can be

found across the Borough. It cites woodland (including recognised Ancient Woodland), trees and hedgerows. In describing the site it has already been commented that there are mature trees within and surrounding the site, and also hedgerows at site boundaries (including historic hedgerows). There are no trees that are subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the site, although there is an area TPO on the opposite bank of Red Brook adjacent to the north-western tip of Site 1.

218. The application submission includes a pre-development arboricultural survey of trees and significant vegetation within the adjoining the site, and with this reviewed by the Council's Tree officer. 137 individual trees, tree groups and lengths of hedgerow were assessed, and with the survey identifying key facts regarding each entry (such as species, age group, height, condition, and future growth potential). 27 trees, tree groups, or hedgerows were categorised as falling within Retention Category A, which describes those of the highest quality with an estimated life expectancy of at least 40 years.

219. The first stage consultation response from the Council's Tree officer raised some concerns since the parameters plan did not allow for the retention of a particular tree within Site 2 (the western land parcel). It is a large mature oak which is a prominent road side specimen and is growing on the Warburton Lane boundary close to the existing farm entrance. The tree survey, which identifies it as 38T, places it within Retention Category A, and it was confirmed that its loss was associated with the provision of a new footpath. However, in response to these objections, the revised parameters plan illustrates that it would be protected, and with this corroborated by the indicative site layout which shows an adjusted siting for the footpath. Accordingly, more recent consultation with the Tree officer has concluded positively in this regard, and with it also confirmed that the wider approach to tree retention across the site is acceptable. However, a condition to secure a detailed Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Tree Protection Plan for all retained trees is requested. The need for a separate application for the identified pruning works to the overhanging trees within the adjacent area TPO (as well as landowner consent) has also been highlighted.

220. Conversely, the revised parameters plan and accompanying indicative site layout has served to exacerbate another concern for the Tree officer. To reiterate, according to the parameters plan and other available evidence, the site contains some stretches of historic hedgerows. For Site 1, the parameters plan shows these to be located along parts of the Moss Lane frontage and within the site (aligning a culvert and the public right of way). For Site 2, historic hedgerows are illustrated at the southern boundary and to Warburton Lane. With reference to the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, a hedgerow is 'protected' if it meets certain criteria regarding length, location and 'importance'. A hedgerow is 'important', and is protected, if it is at least 30 years old and meets at least one of a series of detailed criteria (which includes, for example, that it marks a parish boundary that existed before 1850, or it contains an archaeological feature). SPG30: Landscape Strategy (as cited above), in its description of the Settled Sandlands LCT, records that

some of the hedgerows around the Warburton area are believed to be the oldest in the Borough. The revised parameters plan and indicative layout illustrate the potential loss of sections of historic hedgerow (and with this greater than previously identified). This includes to Moss Lane (Site 1) to facilitate a series of emergency and local vehicular access points, and to Warburton Lane as part of the formation of the main vehicular entrance for Site 2 and in the provision of new footways and a footpath. The latest response from the Tree officer expresses concern regarding the potential extent of historic hedgerow loss. Hedgerows, like trees, can make an important contribution to the character of an area and can be historically important as indications of land use and previous ownership, it is acknowledged.

221. This is a concern that has already been revealed in the archaeology and landscape impact commentaries of this report, including in respect of the lack of consistency within the submission regarding the location and loss of historic hedgerows. The need for greater precision on this matter (as with other topics) has been made clear in order that the impacts can be fully appreciated, in a heritage, landscape and general visual amenity sense.

222. It is recognised that, in the case of Moss Lane, the increased extent of hedgerow loss is a response to concerns raised by officers regarding the previous layout. The provision of localised entrances to separate housing groups – directly from Moss Lane – is intended to better reflect local character and layout when having regard to this area’s rural qualities. Draft Policy GM Allocation 45 of the GMSF, in recognition of the range of natural features across the allocation, encourages a form of development for New Carrington which would minimise tree and hedgerow loss (policy principle 17). This is an approach that is wholly supported by officers in principle, and with higher values likely to be assigned to features of recognised significance and worth.

223. In the case of this application, even at outline stage, whether a hedgerow is or is not historic is considered to be quite critical. The site’s hedgerows, typically, are located at the site boundaries, and the proposed breaks in the hedgerows are to accommodate new access points. Of course, ‘access’ is a matter to be concluded upon at outline stage, and the location of accesses is illustrated on the submitted parameters plan. However, at present there is uncertainty, and the issue has clearly caused concern for a number of consultees. A coherent picture regarding the presence, significance and potential reduction in historic hedgerows, and any potential mitigation, is needed. This is similar to other requests that have been made in respect of other areas of the application submission, particularly in the context of heritage and archaeology.

224. In concluding on this matter, no independent reason for refusal is advanced in the context of Core Strategy Policy R2. However, despite the lack of clarity, it seems a reasonable prospect that some harm to historic hedgerows would arise, which has not been properly accounted for. Given the strength of concerns it seems appropriate for this issue to be encompassed within the wider heritage reason for refusal in rightly treating

the site's historic hedgerows as a 'non-designated heritage asset' (see paragraph 93).

225. Also in respect of arboricultural matters, there is an area of Ancient Woodland to the north-west of the western land parcel (Site 2). Coroners Wood, which covers approximately 1.7 hectares, is an area of woodland which exists along the banks of Red Brook. The NPPF offers enhanced protection to ancient woodlands, which are defined in the glossary as areas that have been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. At paragraph 175 local planning authorities are advised to refuse development proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland) unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

226. With this in mind, advice has been sought from the Forestry Commission (FC) regarding the potential impacts that this application may have on ancient woodland. However, the response from the outset, in line with FC's standard practice as a non-statutory consultee, is clear that its content provides no clear opinion regarding whether the application proposals should be supported or objected to. Rather, the response directs the local planning authority to relevant guidance and policy requirements in order to inform the decision-taking process, and with this referring specifically to a Government publication (dated November 2018): 'Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: protecting them from development.' This guidance explains that development can have direct impacts on ancient woodland through immediate woodland loss, by damaging roots, by damaging the soil around the roots, or by changing surrounding drainage systems. Indirect impacts can also arise by reducing the amount of semi-natural habitat adjacent to ancient woodland, by increasing disturbance to wildlife from additional traffic and visitors, or by increasing light or air pollution. The guidance also refers to the importance of buffer zones to protect ancient woodland. The size and type of buffer zone should vary depending on the scale, type and impact of the development, the guidance continues.

227. Whilst Coroners Wood is in the vicinity of the application site, it is not included within it and nor does the protected woodland area adjoin the application site. At the nearest point the separation distance is approximately 40 metres, and in fact the majority of the protected woodland is on the opposite (northern) bank of Red Brook. Moreover, with reference to the submitted parameters plan, the illustrative layout indicates that the closest part of the site to the ancient woodland would be undeveloped and in fact would comprise a dedicated area of ecological mitigation, supported itself by complementary tree cover and within which access would be restricted. In fact, according to the parameters plan, built development would be 160 metres away from the closest tip of Coroners Wood.

228. Therefore, when applying the guidance referred to by FC, it is considered that the parameters plan indicates that a form of development could be achieved which would provide a buffer zone of an appropriate size and scale. Moreover, this buffer would be of suitable type in consisting itself

of some woodland, which would contribute to wider ecological networks and which would function as part of the green infrastructure of the site. Subject to a form of development being secured which would be consistent with the parameters plan, no material impacts on the irreplaceable habitat of Coroners Wood are anticipated.

229. Overall, therefore, on the topic of trees and woodland, the proposal is considered compliant with Policy R2 and the NPPF. However, that the Tree officer has reiterated concerns regarding the proposal's approach to historic hedgerows is reported.

### Crime Prevention

230. The NPPF is clear that good design encompasses more than just the appearance of a development. Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that development proposals create places that are safe, and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. This is supported by Policy L7 of the Trafford Core Strategy which requires applicants to demonstrate that a proposed development would help to create a safe environment and reduce the potential for crime. This is further communicated in a specific supplementary planning guidance document, SPG24 – Crime and Security.

231. A Crime Impact Statement (CIS) was submitted with the application. This was prepared in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Police, and has also been reviewed by the GMP in acting as consultee. The CIS is specific to the outline application and comments on the generality of the scheme in the context of the parameters plan. It contains some comments regarding the indicative layout, and with support given for the use of cul-de-sacs, and it also provides some further design recommendations as the scheme is progressed, including avoiding the over-provision of recreational footpaths, the incorporation of speed control measures on internal estate roads, and the installation of perimeter fencing to rear gardens. In providing its consultation response, the GMP has requested a condition to ensure that the detailed design is developed in accordance with its further recommendations. Whilst it is noted that some of these suggestions are in fact at odds with wider design aspirations, officers are of the view that there is scope for an alternative improved layout to also provide for the safety of people and the security of property. In any case, with reference to this proposal, compliance with Policy L7, SPG24 and the NPPF has been concluded.

### Waste and Refuse Management

232. In order to ensure that a new development is both functional and attractive, there is a need to ensure that an appropriate system for both waste storage and waste collection has been incorporated. This is recognised by both Policy L7 of the Core Strategy and PG1: New Residential Development (2004). The accompanying full applications have been reviewed by the

Council's Waste Management team, and there are a number of outstanding concerns including regarding the proposed location of the refuse collection points. However, for the purposes of this outline application, officers are satisfied that an appropriate layout is capable of being achieved.

233. For the avoidance of doubt, the comments from the LHA confirm that the proposed site accesses could accommodate the turning manoeuvres of large refuse vehicles.

### **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

234. The proposed development would be liable to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) given that it proposes private market housing in a 'hot charging zone'.

235. Other accepted financial contributions, to be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement, comprise:

- Playing pitch improvements: £263,033

236. Additional financial contributions, to be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement, which have not been accepted by the applicant at this stage comprise:

- Primary school expansion/rebuilding: £1,067,220

237. The applicant's offer of the following financial contributions has not been accepted by officers for reasons stated in the report:

- A6144/Flixton Road highway improvements: £1,500,000
- Bus stop improvements: £40,000
- Footpath/cycle improvements and footbridges: £222,660.69

238. Alternative, as yet undefined, additional financial contributions are sought from the applicant on the following topics (and these have not been accepted):

- Carrington Relief Road;
- Public transport improvements.

239. The proposed development makes a nil affordable housing contribution, which is objected to by officers for reasons stated in the report.

240. The proposed development has made adequate on-site allowance, or is capable of doing so, of specific and spatial green infrastructure.

### **PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS**

241. The application site is located beyond the southern fringe of the settlement of Partington, and it comprises two land parcels located to the east



and west of Warburton Lane. It is a greenfield site. The proposal, which has been submitted in outline with only 'access' to be confirmed at this stage, involves the site's residential development to provide a maximum of 400 homes. Vehicular access, to both parcels, would be taken from Warburton Lane. A parameters plan has been submitted which illustrates, in general terms, the proposed location of built development on site.

242. This outline planning application has been appealed against on the grounds of non-determination, and the purpose of this report is to establish the Council's stance to take at appeal had the application been allowed to run its course. Given the submission of new information by the applicant (in parallel and following the appeal submission), there are some matters which have not been wholly concluded at this stage (when allowing for discussions with the applicant), and there is the prospect for some slight adjustment in position which will be reported to Planning Committee in an Additional Information Report if required.

243. Two further detailed planning applications for the same site by the same applicant remain under consideration.

244. S.38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. That remains the starting point for decision making. The NPPF is an important material consideration.

245. The Council cannot demonstrate a 5 year housing land supply and the 'most important' policies are therefore deemed out of date. Some are also not fully consistent with the NPPF. Where development plan policies are out of date, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF (see paragraph 11d) may apply – namely (1) applying a 'tilted balance' under which permission will be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole (see paragraph 11d (i) of the NPPF), or (2) where the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed (see paragraph 11 d(i) of the NPPF).

246. Limb (2) of the presumption in favour has been dealt with firstly in this report. As part of this it has been demonstrated that the harm to heritage assets provides a clear reason for refusal which would not be outweighed by the benefits and thus the tilted balance in limb (1) is not triggered. On that basis, the application is to be assessed under s.38(6) having regard to the policies in the NPPF and housing need and with the overall harms weighed against the overall benefits of the development in a straightforward balancing exercise. On that basis it is concluded that permission should be refused.

247. However, in the interests of robustness, an exercise has been done in which it is assumed that the tilted balance were engaged (which it is not). This report has identified a real breadth and range of harmful impacts stemming from the proposal. This includes the harm to designated heritage

assets (of a 'less than substantial' or possibly 'substantial nature'). Added to this is the harm to non-designated heritage assets. Moreover, the commentary within the 'in principle' section of this report highlighted that the application would not deliver sustainable development – that would be accessible and properly integrated – and thus it would run counter to the central thrust of the NPPF. It would also involve the permanent development of safeguarded land in advance of any development plan update. The proposal is also not meeting its expectations in respect of affordable housing provision, and with no reasonable viability argument to support this position. Adverse landscape and visual impacts have also been identified, as arising from the scale and distribution of development. The design vision articulated in the parameters plan has further been objected to on the grounds that it would not deliver a well-connected and inclusive development and it would not be sympathetic to local character and context. It follows that individual (indicative) reasons for refusal - concerning the proposal in principle, affordable housing, landscape, and design/layout have been put forward - in addition to the very notable heritage reason. There is supplemented by an additional reason which is based upon this outline submission being fundamentally inappropriate in seeking to establish the acceptability of the scheme as a whole. Whilst not of sufficient strength in itself to justify an independent refusal reason, further more minor harm has been identified in respect of the loss of some 'best and most versatile agricultural land'. These tangible and direct harms are, of course, supplemented by the harm that would arise as a consequence of policy and guidance conflicts, including to Core Strategy policies L1, L2, L7, R1, R2, R3 and R4, to SPD1, to SPG30, to the National Design Guide, and – significantly – to the NPPF.

248. Cumulatively, therefore, when returning to the test at limb (1) of the presumption in favour, to the extent that it is even necessary to do so, it is considered that the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would *significantly and demonstrably* outweigh the benefits.

249. For the avoidance of doubt, this situation would only be even further strengthened in the event that the applicant chooses not to accept crucial stipulations within this report. These would serve to address an otherwise severe highways impact, an unacceptable impact on local schools, and inadequate public transport provision. However, for the purposes of this report and the balancing exercises contained within it, it has been assumed that these are issues that are capable of being addressed.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**A)** That Members resolve that they would, had they been able to determine the planning application been **MINDED TO REFUSE** for the reasons below:

1. The impacts of the proposed development on designated and non-designated heritage assets (including potential assets of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments) have not been adequately accounted for within the application submission. The proposed

development – in principle and without adequate pre-determination evaluation – could result in the total loss of potential assets of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments and to other non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which would equate to substantial harm in NPPF terms. Furthermore, with reference to the submitted parameters plan, the proposed development – by reason of its scale, layout and distribution – would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of other built designated and non-designated heritage assets. This harm would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the development. The proposal thus fails to satisfy the tests at paragraphs 195 and 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework and it is also contrary to Policy R1 and Policy R3 of the Trafford Core Strategy.

2. This is an application in which all matters, with the exception of access, are reserved. It is apparent in reviewing this outline application that a parameters plan and indicative drawings are not sufficient in seeking to establish the acceptability of the scheme as a whole, in particular the amount, nature and location of on-site mitigation required and the effect this might have on the quantum of development the site can reasonably deliver. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy L3, Policy L4, Policy L7, Policy R2 and Policy R3 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
3. The proposed development is in an unsuitable location by virtue of being other protected, open or safeguarded land, in an area of poor accessibility to public transport, jobs and amenities, and with a heavily congested road network. The proposal does not support necessary new infrastructure and facilities, and has not been planned to enable sensitive integration with the existing settlement. As a result, the development would function as an isolated community and a sustainable pattern of growth would not be achieved. Sustainable development would not be delivered and thus the proposal is considered contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, and to Policy L1, Policy L3 and Policy L7 and Policy R4 of the Core Strategy.
4. The proposed residential development generates a requirement for affordable housing. No allowance has been made for affordable provision within the development and the submitted financial viability appraisal has not adequately demonstrated that the development could not otherwise be delivered. The development would not, therefore, contribute to affordable housing needs and would not support the creation of mixed and balanced communities. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy L2 and Policy L8 of the Core Strategy, SPD1: Planning Obligations and the National Planning Policy Framework.
5. The proposed development – by reasons of its scale, distribution and lack of landscape buffers - would be inappropriate to the site's rural context and would cause significant harm to landscape character and to the appreciation of rural views. The proposal is therefore considered contrary

to Policy R2 of the Core Strategy, SPG30: Landscape Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. The proposed development, by reason of its scale, distribution, layout and absence of off-site linkages, fails to respond to the site's context and character, and it would not deliver an accessible, integrated, outward-looking and inclusive residential development as a whole. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy L7 of the Core Strategy, the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Design Guide.

**B) That should the appellants not accept the Council's proposed mitigation via condition / S106 contribution in respect of highways, accessibility and education matters, that the following additional reasons for refusal are also put to the inquiry:**

7. In the absence of an agreed off-site mitigation scheme, the proposed development would have severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network, specifically at the following junctions [delete as appropriate]: Central Road/A6144 mini-roundabout, Moss Lane/Manchester Road/A6144 mini-roundabout, Isherwood Road (B5158)/A6144. The proposal thus fails to satisfy the test at paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework and it is also contrary to Policy L4 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. The application site is located in an area where public transport provision is inadequate and there are limited alternative means of transport to the private car. Insufficient allowance has been made for the development to contribute towards an improved public transport network, and prospective residents of the development would become heavily reliant on the private car. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy L4 and Policy L7 of the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.
9. There are insufficient primary school places in the local area to accommodate the needs arising from this proposed development. No allowance has been made for the development to contribute towards new/expanded primary school provision and thus the development would have an unacceptable impact by creating a shortfall in school places. The proposal is therefore considered contrary to Policy L8 of the Core Strategy, SPD1: Planning Obligations and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**C) That should further information / submissions come forward before the public inquiry is held with the result that any of the matters above are considered capable of resolution via planning condition / S106 that the adjustment of the Council's case accordingly is delegated to the Head of Planning and Development.**