



The Planning  
Inspectorate

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# Report to Halton Borough Council

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an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Date 12 October 2012

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PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 (AS AMENDED)

SECTION 20

**REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION INTO HALTON CORE STRATEGY**

**LOCAL PLAN**

Document submitted for examination on 22 September 2011

Examination hearings held between 25 November and 22 December 2011

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## Non-Technical Summary

This report concludes that the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the Borough over the next 15 years if a number of main modifications are made to the Plan. The Council has specifically requested that any modifications necessary to enable it to adopt the Plan be recommended and indeed most of the necessary main modifications were proposed by the Council itself. Main modifications have only been recommended after consideration of the representations of other parties on the issues they raise.

The modifications can be summarised as follows:

- To increase the number of homes built over the plan period from 9,000 to 9,930 (MM1, MM1f-MM1g, MM1i, MM3, MM3e-MM3g, MM3k and MM43);
- To recalculate the proposed level of employment land provision (MM1g, MM2 & MM4 to MM8 and MM1i) and to make clear that further work will be carried out as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan (MM9);
- To delete reference to the phasing of housing provision in Policy CS3 (MM3, MM3i and MM3k);
- To include reference to the 57:43 (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale) split in housing demand in Policy CS3 (MM1f-MM1g, MM1i, MM3 and MM3k);
- To include clear references in Policies CS1, CS3 and CS6 to the need to carry out a partial review of Green Belt boundaries as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan (MM39-MM42, MM44-MM48, MM1a-MM1d, MM1h-MM1i, MM3a-MM3d, MM3h and MM3k);
- To include a target of 25% affordable housing in Policy CS13 (MM20 to MM23);
- To remove ambiguities in the way Policy CS9 treats Widnes Town Centre (MM10-MM14 and MM16);
- To emphasise the priority to be given to improvements at Junction 11 of the M56 (MM17 and MM19) and to remove references to the proposed station at Daresbury (MM29-MM31);
- To make clear that compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Building Research Environmental Assessment Method will be encouraged rather than required (MM24 to MM28); and
- To make explicit policy reference to the presumption in favour of sustainable development (MM32-MM38).

## Introduction

1. This report contains an assessment of the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan (the Plan)<sup>1</sup> in terms of Section 20(5) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). It considers whether the Plan is sound and whether it is compliant with the legal requirements. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 182) makes clear that to be sound the Plan should be positively prepared; justified; effective and consistent with national policy.
2. The starting point for the examination is the assumption that Halton Borough Council (the Council) has submitted what it considers to be a sound plan. The basis for the examination is the Halton Core Strategy Revised Proposed Submission Document dated May 2011.
3. This report deals with the main modifications that are needed to make the Plan sound and legally compliant and they are identified in bold in the report (**MM**). In accordance with section 20(7C) of the 2004 Act the Council requested that any main modifications should be made that are needed to rectify matters that make the Plan unsound and thus incapable of being adopted. These main modifications are set out in the Appendix.
4. The main modifications have been subject to public consultation and, where necessary, Sustainability Appraisal (SA). During the examination the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was published and consultations were carried out on whether the Plan was consistent with this document. All consultation responses have been taken into account in writing this report.

## Assessment of Soundness

### Main Issues

5. Taking account of all the representations, written evidence and the discussions that took place at the examination hearings, ten main issues have emerged on which the soundness of the Plan depends.

### **Issue 1 – Is the level and phasing of housing provision proposed in the Core Strategy justified, deliverable and consistent with national policy?**

#### *Housing Numbers*

6. The North West of England Plan (the RS) contains a target figure for Halton of 500 dwellings per annum for the period 2003 – 2021 and beyond. In preparing the Plan the Council decided not simply to accept this figure but looked again at the evidence contained in household projections, population

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<sup>1</sup> The plan was originally called the Halton Core Strategy Development Plan Document but was renamed the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan following the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan Regulations 2012.

projections, household change information and in various alternative methodologies that sought to quantify housing growth produced by 4NW, the regional planning body, as part of a then emerging review of the RS<sup>2</sup>.

7. These methodologies produced a wide range of possible outcomes varying from 278 to 647 dwellings per annum<sup>3</sup>. Having taken into account past trends in the delivery of housing and the estimated potential supply of housing land, the Council concluded that a policy figure averaging around 500 dwellings per annum provided the best balance between meeting locally arising need and being realistically deliverable. This figure is consistent with that in the RS.
8. Lower figures, such as the 372 dwellings per annum derived from Office of National Statistics (2006 based) forecasts, were suggested by representors, the argument being that in the future, as in the past, housing completion figures would be boosted by high levels of windfalls - that is the development of sites not previously identified in the planning process. However there can be no certainty that this will be the case in the future as sites are now more likely to be identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and thus not be classed as windfalls. The lower housing growth figures put forward would not, therefore, meet the aim of stabilising the declining population in the Borough and achieving economic growth.
9. The evidence indicates on the other hand that figures well in excess of 500 dwellings per annum, for example a minimum figure of 600 dwellings per annum, would be difficult to deliver. The average number of houses built in the Borough over the period 1996-2010 (net of demolitions) is 402 dwellings per annum (dpa)<sup>4</sup>. This is a period that covers the full economic cycle with net completions as high as 752 dpa and as low as 114 dpa<sup>5</sup>.
10. The suggestion was made that gross housing figures should be used as an indicator of likely growth, the argument being that net figures are reduced by the high number of demolitions at the Castlefields Regeneration Programme, a programme that is due to come to an end. However, that programme involved replacement dwellings as well as demolitions and the two are broadly in balance<sup>6</sup>. That being so, and given the lack of evidence to support the contention that past housebuilding rates have been constrained by a lack of suitable sites, the net housing figures provide a more reliable indicator of likely growth and give a sound basis for the judgement that 600 dpa would be unachievable. Indeed they indicate that an average minimum of 500 or so dpa would be challenging.
11. The net housing figures do, however, indicate that over the period 2003 to

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<sup>2</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper. Document TP2. Paragraphs 2.43 -2.71

<sup>3</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper : Document TP2; Figure 4

<sup>4</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper Document TP2 Annex B Table 6

<sup>5</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper : Document TP2 Annex B Table 6

<sup>6</sup> Document HD7. (HBC Paper) 'Additional Information Requested by the Inspector', Section 1.

2010 house building rates lagged behind the required rate causing a shortfall in housing provision of some 938 dwellings. By adopting a start date of 2010 the Core Strategy, in effect, writes off this shortfall. The effects of the economic recession on housing demand and the weak state of the housing market were the main reasons advanced for this approach. However, if the Core Strategy is to achieve its aim of providing an adequate supply of suitable housing, such a shortfall cannot be ignored. The decision to do so is not, therefore, justified and is unsound. This unsoundness would be remedied by taking account of this shortfall in the overall housing figure and increasing the number of new homes to be built over the plan period from 9,000 to 9,930 as is proposed in main modifications **MM1, MM1f-MM1g, MM1i, MM3, MM3e-MM3g, MM3k and MM43.**

12. Because of the age profile of the existing population in Halton, where large increases are predicted in the proportion of the population over retirement age, a housing growth rate of 500 or so dwellings per annum would not lead to an increase in the size of the workforce actually living in the Borough. However, the Core Strategy seeks the creation of a substantial number of new jobs on sites such as Daresbury and 3MG, and if it were successful in this, the result would be a significant increase in the already high levels of commuting into the Borough.
13. On the face of it this would be an unsustainable outcome that would lead to increased congestion on the strategic road network. However, there is no unanimity as to the actual number of jobs that would be produced as a result of the Core Strategy. Moreover, Halton is part of a densely populated sub region in which employment sites such as those at Daresbury are as conveniently located to parts of the neighbouring Borough of Warrington as they are to parts of Halton. In such a context short distance commuting into the Borough is to be expected and would be no less sustainable than commuting within the Borough.
14. There is, therefore, no imperative need for the Council to base its housing policy figures on an 'employment led' projection and plan for a population which would result in an increase in the workforce living in the Borough.

#### *Phasing*

15. Policy CS3 proposes to phase the provision of housing, with development proceeding at a lower rate of a minimum of 400 dpa for the first 5 years of the Plan rising to 600 dpa for the next 5 years and then returning to 500 dpa for the final 8 years of the plan.
16. There is nothing in principle wrong with a phasing policy if local circumstances warrant it and certainly such a possibility is not precluded by the relevant policy in the RS (Policy L4). However, it is unclear what the local circumstances are that would warrant such a phasing of housing provision in Halton. The weak state of the economy means that housing completions are below the average figure for the plan period and the expectation is that they will not recover in the short term. However, experience indicates that housing delivery can vary within acceptable ranges – for example 10%-20% - so the fact that the actual rate of housing completions has and will depart from the expected rate is not on its own a reason for a phasing policy.

17. The phasing of housing development within Policy CS3 is not therefore justified and is unsound. This unsoundness would be remedied by the deletion of this aspect of the policy as proposed in main modification **MM3, MM3i and MM3k**.

*Separate housing targets for Widnes/Hale and Runcorn*

18. It is common ground that, at the very local level, Runcorn to the south of the River Mersey and Widnes to the north act as largely separate housing markets. The degree to which the one can meet the housing needs of the other is, therefore, open to question<sup>7</sup>. Much of the potential supply of housing land is located south of the river, with Runcorn accounting for some 73% and Widnes some 27%, and this creates a potential mismatch between housing supply and demand<sup>8</sup>. So the challenge in Halton is not simply to maintain an adequate supply of housing to meet the needs of the Borough as a whole but also to meet the needs of the Borough's separate communities.
19. There is, therefore, a need for the Plan to give a policy indication as to how the Borough wide housing requirement should be split between Runcorn and Widnes. In order to do this it is necessary to make an assessment of the likely demand for housing in these two housing market areas.
20. The Plan refers to the demand for additional housing being skewed to Runcorn at 57% of the total, with Widnes/Hale accounting for 43%. The only source for this split referred to in the Plan and its evidence base is the report prepared by JG Consulting entitled '*Projecting Housing Demand in Halton*'. However, this does not provide a robust underpinning for this split as its conclusions are based on the assumption that the somewhat younger population in Runcorn would generate more net in migration than the somewhat older population in Widnes. However, while a younger population would typically result in more gross migration (i.e. movements in and out of an area) there is no evidence to suggest that this would lead to more net in migration.
21. However, the evidence supporting alternative splits in housing demand is also problematic. One suggestion is that the split should simply be based on the potential supply of housing land which would give a 70:30 split (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale) as this would support the regeneration of Runcorn. However, there is no specific reference in the Plan to the regeneration of Runcorn being given priority over development in Widnes/Hale. Moreover, such an approach would ignore the acknowledged mismatch between housing land supply and housing demand as well as flying in the face of the aim of meeting the needs of the Borough's separate communities.
22. Alternatively it was suggested that Widnes /Hale should only make provision for its share of 'locally arising' need, with its 'growth' needs being met in

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<sup>7</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper. Document TP2. Paragraph 2.80

<sup>8</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper. Document TP2. Paragraph 2.82

Runcorn. However, if it was the aim of the plan to export Widnes/Hales's growth to Runcorn it is to be expected that this would be explicitly referred to in the Plan or its evidence base. There is no such reference.

23. A further suggestion was that the split should simply be based on the existing population/household numbers of the two housing areas which, roughly speaking, would give a split of 51:49 (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale). But the identification of further land for housing in Widnes/Hale is likely to involve taking land out of the Green Belt. When considering the alteration of Green Belt boundaries it is necessary to be satisfied that opportunities for development on land outside the Green Belt have been considered<sup>9</sup>.
24. In Halton, as has already been established, the bulk of the potential housing land supply is in Runcorn and this land is outside the Green Belt. While the two housing markets are largely separate this does not mean that Runcorn is incapable of meeting at least some of Widnes/Hale's housing needs. 2001 Census data indicates that there is some limited movement between the two with 7% of new Widnes/Hale residents coming from Runcorn and 5% of new Runcorn residents coming from Widnes/Hale<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, there is the possibility that the construction of the Mersey Gateway Bridge, which is due to open in 2016, will improve links between these two markets but this will depend to an extent on the nature of any toll fees that are charged.
25. This is not an area in which it is possible to seek mathematical precision and on balance, therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the Runcorn:Widnes/Hale split should not simply replicate the existing population split but that Runcorn should accommodate, as it is capable of doing, a small proportion of Widnes/Hale's housing demand. The 57:43 (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale) split put forward in the Plan is, therefore, a sensible one and supported by the evidence.
26. The suggestion was made that while this 57:43 split should apply to the 9,000 dwellings target originally proposed in Policy CS1, it should not apply to the 930 added to this target to make up for the shortfall in dwelling supply (see paragraph 11 above). The justification given for this approach is that as the shortfall had manifested itself in Runcorn it should be met there.
27. However, this approach would result in a 61:39 (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale) split which would be at odds with conclusions reached above. Moreover, there is no evidence that the housing market in Runcorn would support such an increased level of housing growth and this approach would not take sufficient account of market signals that the demand for housing in Widnes/Hale is relatively strong. Such an approach would not, therefore, be effective in meeting the Government's aim of significantly boosting the supply of housing land.

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<sup>9</sup> National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 84.

<sup>10</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper. Document TP2. Annex C

28. The 57:43 (Runcorn:Widnes/Hale) split should, therefore, be applied to the 9,930 dwellings which would give a figure of some 5,660 dwellings for Runcorn and some 4,270 dwellings for Widnes/Hale.
29. The Plan does not include any reference to housing figures for Runcorn or Widnes/Hale derived from this split in any policy. It was agreed at the hearings that the failure to do so made the Plan ineffective and unsound but this would be remedied by including reference to it in Policy CS3 as is recommended in main modifications **MM1f-MM1g**, **MM1i**, **MM3** and **MM3k**.

*Flexible and responsive supply of housing land*

30. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) indicates that the potential land supply in the Borough over the plan period is some 10,855 dwellings<sup>11</sup>. The demand for housing over the plan period on the other hand is some 10,398 or 10,542 dwellings depending on the assumptions made about the number of demolitions (9,930 plus either 468 or 612 demolitions). On the face of it therefore the potential supply of housing exceeds demand by some 300 or 450 dwellings.
31. The SHLAA is a thorough and credible document that has been prepared in accordance with relevant guidance. The sites it identifies are for the most part developable and the numbers of houses which it ascribes to those sites are generally reasonable. However there is evidence to indicate that some of the sites it identifies for development are not genuinely available and that it may have been optimistic in its assessment of the rate at which other sites could be developed.
32. For example, a significant portion of the potential housing land supply identified in the SHLAA (some 1,404 dwellings) consists of 'greenspace' sites. These are sites in Council ownership that are currently allocated as recreational or other greenspace in the Halton Unitary Development Plan where development is restricted by way of various policies in that plan.
33. For these 'greenspace' sites to be regarded as available for development the Council as landowner would need to have expressed an intention to sell them<sup>12</sup>. Halton faces budget cuts and has appointed an Asset Management Working Group to assess its landholdings with a view to potential disposal. At present this group has simply prepared a list of sites which could come forward for sale and it is from this list that the 'greenspace' sites in the SHLAA are drawn. While members are aware that these sites are being considered for sale the Council has not formally resolved to dispose of any of them.
34. It may well be that as far as some individual sites are concerned work is far enough advanced for the Council to be able to establish that it is indeed

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<sup>11</sup> Document HD7. (HBC Paper) 'Additional Information Requested by the Inspector', Section 3.

<sup>12</sup> SHLAA Practice Guidance. Paragraph 39.

intending to sell them. However, for other sites further work needs to be done and further decisions made before this could be established. In the financial straits that the Council finds itself there will no doubt be an incentive to sell sites - but it may be that certain sites are valued by the local community and that such a sale would be resisted. It cannot be assumed that the Council will eventually express an intention to sell all these sites. Not all of the 'greenspace' sites are, therefore, available for development.

35. As to the rate of development on sites identified in the SHLAA, two builders/developers produced updated figures for sites in their control<sup>13</sup> which indicate that the potential housing yield from these sites in the plan period could be lower than forecast in the SHLAA – 160 houses lower in one instance and 280 lower in the other<sup>14</sup>. Both of these are worst case estimates supplied 18 months after production of the SHLAA, but they are prepared by builders/developers who are active in the local market and their findings were not seriously disputed by the Council.
36. Taken together these pieces of evidence indicate that the potential supply of housing land is less than predicted in the SHLAA and that being so it follows that the apparent surplus in supply of between 300 and 450 dwellings will be much reduced or wiped out. The SHLAA is, of course, a snapshot in time, and new sites can emerge as well be lost. Nonetheless, the supply of and requirement for housing is finely balanced and all of the sites in the SHLAA would have to deliver housing as and when expected if requirements are to be met. Experience shows that this is unlikely to happen and it is for this reason that plans generally seek to provide a surplus in the potential supply of housing sites.
37. The Plan does not, therefore, comply with government guidance which seeks to boost significantly the supply of housing land<sup>15</sup>. In this respect, therefore, the Plan is unsound. This element of unsoundness would be remedied by identifying more housing sites or broad locations for housing. This is a point that will be considered subsequently when dealing with Green Belt. Alterations to the text that refers to 2010 SHLAA housing supply figures are also recommended in main modifications **MM1e**, **MM15** and **MM3j**.

*The 40% brownfield target*

38. Policy CS3 states that an average of at least 40% of new residential development should be on previously developed (brownfield) land. On the face of it this seems a low figure given Halton's industrial history, its past performance (66% of housing built between 2003/4 and 2009/10 was on previously developed land<sup>16</sup>) and the RS requirement that at least 65% of residential development in Halton and St Helens should be on brownfield sites.

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<sup>13</sup> Document HD4: Runcorn Waterfront Trajectory and Document HD9: East Runcorn KAC

<sup>14</sup> Document HD10: SHLAA 'Challenge Sites'.

<sup>15</sup> National Planning Policy Framework. Paragraph 47.

<sup>16</sup> Halton Housing Topic Paper. Document TP2. Figure 12.

39. However, many brownfield sites in Halton are heavily contaminated and not suitable for housing and the best source of evidence as to the future supply of such sites that are suitable for housing is the SHLAA which indicates that only 38% of potential future housing land supply is made up of brownfield sites. Undoubtedly a number of additional brownfield sites will come forward but other currently identified sites may not and such imponderables do not provide a firm basis for increasing the brownfield target – particularly when St Helens has not objected to the principle of shouldering the brunt of the burden of meeting the joint brownfield target in the RS.

#### *Conclusions*

40. Subject to the Main Modifications referred to above and those which arise from the subsequent consideration of the partial Green Belt Review, the level of housing provision proposed in the Plan is sound.

### **Issue 2. Does the Plan provide sufficient guidance on the partial Green Belt Review?**

#### *Justification for such a review*

41. The essential characteristic of the Green Belt is its permanence and its boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances. It was common ground at the hearings that with the bulk of the potential supply of housing land being concentrated in Runcorn, the likelihood was that a partial Review of Green Belt boundaries would be needed at some point in the plan period to meet the housing needs of Widnes/Hale. The disagreement was over whether this would be needed sooner or later.
42. When considering Issue 1 in this report it has already been concluded that the Plan has not identified a flexible and responsive supply of housing land and there is a need to identify more housing sites or broad locations for housing. Given the mismatch between housing land supply and housing demand referred to above and given the inability of Runcorn to meet anything other than a small part of Widnes/Hale's housing needs, this additional housing land will need to be found in Widnes/Hale. This provides the exceptional circumstances that warrant the immediate partial Review of Green Belt boundaries in the Widnes/Hale area.
43. The evidence is not available at this time to identify the broad areas of search within which such a partial Green Belt Review should be carried out or to identify the scale of any such release. All the Plan can do, therefore, is confirm that a partial review will take place. Details of the area of land to be taken out of Green Belt and the phasing of its release are matters that could and should be dealt with through a subsequent plan. The most obvious way to do this would be through the forthcoming Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan which the Council anticipates will be adopted by 2014. Indeed it is difficult to see how that plan would meet its stated aim of ensuring that adequate sites exist to maintain housing land supply if it did not include such a review.
44. The Regional Strategy anticipates the possibility of such location specific boundary changes, which would not require reconsideration of wider Green Belt boundaries, being dealt with through the Local Development Framework

process<sup>17</sup>.

*The effect of an early review on urban regeneration*

45. The Inspector dealing with the Halton UDP made the point that one of the purposes of the Green Belt is to assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. He went on to express the view that this would apply to all peripheral open land capable of urban development as the development of such land would to some degree dilute efforts at regeneration.
46. While there is merit in this as a general statement, the evidence before the Examination is that Widnes/Hale, where Green Belt boundaries would be reviewed, and Runcorn, where housing regeneration is concentrated, are largely separate housing markets. It is also the case that on regeneration sites such as Runcorn Waterfront different types of dwellings, aiming at different potential customers, will be built, to those likely to be developed on any land released from the Green Belt. These factors led the developer at Runcorn Waterfront and a major builder involved in the East Runcorn Key Area of Change, a greenfield site, to conclude that the early release of Green Belt land in Widnes/Hale would not represent a significant threat to the development of their sites.
47. Arguably such Green Belt releases could have a greater impact on the neighbouring Borough of St Helens which is close to Widnes and which has a strategy of focusing development on its significant supply of previously developed land. However, St Helens is itself proposing a Green Belt Review and accepts that such a Review may be needed in Halton. Its principal concern is with the timing of the release of any such land.
48. It was common ground at the Examination that a Green Belt Review involves two elements. The first is to define what land should be released from Green Belt and the second is to determine when it will be developed. While the Council is concerned that identifying the land to be released will bring forward the date of its development that need not necessarily be the case. In setting the policy governing the timing of the development of this land, priority could be given to the regeneration of urban sites.
49. On the basis of information put forward at the Examination there is, therefore, little strong evidence to suggest that an early partial Review of Green Belt boundaries would necessarily undermine or dilute urban regeneration initiatives elsewhere in the Borough or in St Helens.

*The effect of an early review on the Plan*

50. The submitted Plan, in effect, accepts the possibility of Green Belt Review late in the plan period. Modifying this to include a commitment to such a review in
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<sup>17</sup> North West of England Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021. Paragraph 5.26.

the early stages of the Plan would not fundamentally alter it – it would still be a plan based on a balanced mix of brownfield development and urban extension. Such a modification would, however, ensure the provision of a flexible and responsive supply of housing land over the plan period, something that the submitted Plan fails to do.

#### *Other Matters*

51. Other than the partial review around Widnes/Hale referred to above and minor alterations to accommodate the needs of Liverpool Airport – a matter discussed under Issue 6 - there is no need to alter Green Belt boundaries around Runcorn in the plan period. There was a suggestion that the small village of Daresbury should be inset within, rather than washed over by, the Green Belt in order to allow for limited development and expansion. However, there is no evidence to suggest that the village cannot meet its local needs either on infill sites or at the nearby Daresbury Strategic Site where substantial amounts of housing and employment development are planned.

#### *Conclusions*

52. The housing figures as revised through the Examination lead to the conclusion that the Plan must commit to an early partial Green Belt Review. The Plan provides insufficiently clear guidance on this matter .
53. The Plan in its submitted form is, therefore, ineffective and hence unsound. This unsoundness, and the unsoundness which stems from the failure of the submitted Plan to identify a flexible and responsive supply of housing land (see Issue 1), would be remedied by including clear references in Policies CS1, CS3 and CS6 to the need to carry out an early partial review of Green Belt boundaries as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan as is recommended in main modifications **MM39-MM42, MM44-MM48, MM1a-MM1d, MM1h-MM1i, MM3a-MM3d, MM3h and MM3k.**
54. The commitment to an early partial Green Belt Review means, logically, that references to the trigger mechanism for such a review are unnecessary and can be deleted. Concern was expressed that this would lead to the removal of any mention of the need to maintain a 5 year supply of housing sites to meet the identified needs of Runcorn and Widnes/Hale. This is true but separate housing targets for these areas are set out elsewhere in the Plan which also makes clear that the Green Belt Review is intended to meet the needs of Widnes/Hale. The deletion of references to the trigger mechanism does not, therefore, affect the soundness of the Plan.

### **Issue 3. Does the Plan make appropriate and justified provision for housing needs?**

#### *Affordable housing*

55. The need for affordable housing in Halton is high; indeed it exceeds the annual requirement to provide housing in the Borough. The desire to maximise such provision is, therefore, understandable. But such provision must be economically viable. Policy CS13 of the submitted Core Strategy seeks affordable housing provision of up to 35% of total residential floorspace. However, this is not supported by the Economic Viability Assessment

commissioned by the Council which recommends the adoption of a target of 25% of all housing units being affordable (50% social and affordable rented, 50% intermediate)<sup>18</sup>.

56. The reason for the difference between the two sets of figures is that the former assumes an 'Improved Market Position' and the latter a 'Mid Market' position. However, there is no certainty that the 'Improved Market Position' will be achieved in the life of the Plan whereas there is a reasonable expectation, based on previous cycles in the property market, that the 'Mid Market' position will.
57. The submitted version of Policy CS13 also states that the mix of affordable housing must be similar to the overall mix on the site. However, the evidence is that the mix of affordable housing should be based on identified local housing needs as set out in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment which may not be the same as the market mix for a particular site.
58. The submitted Plan is, therefore, unsound in that it is not justified by the evidence. This unsoundness would be remedied by including reference to an affordable housing target of 25% of all housing units and making clear that the mix of such dwellings will be expected to address local housing needs as is recommended in main modifications **MM20** to **MM23**.

#### *Aspirational Housing*

59. Policy CS12 makes clear that on all schemes of more than 10 dwellings the dwelling mix should address identified housing needs as defined in the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. The Plan does not specifically mention 'aspirational housing' (broadly speaking this is housing attractive to higher income households) nor is there a need to do so since the greatest identified need is for family housing, particularly 3 bedroom housing, not 4 or 5 bedroom homes. Insofar as there is a need for such homes this would be identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment which is already referred to in policy. Policy CS12 is, therefore, sound in that it is justified by the evidence.

#### *Conclusions*

60. Subject to the Main Modifications recommended above being made the Plan makes appropriate and justified provision for housing needs.

#### **Issue 4. Does the Plan make appropriate provision for employment and economic development?**

##### *Justification for the proposed level of employment land.*

61. In order to determine the amount of employment land to be provided over the
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<sup>18</sup> DTZ Economic Viability Assessment. November 2010

plan period the Council has taken the average annual take up rate for employment land over the period 1992-2008 of 14.47ha, added a 20% flexibility allowance and projected this forward. Such a long term trend, which covers peaks and troughs in the property market, provides a more robust basis than the higher take up rate over more recent years. The reason for this is that it is not certain whether the short term trend is prompted by the development of 'one off' schemes such as the 3MG site and is thus unlikely to be maintained or whether it is a sign that Halton has become a focus for land hungry logistics and distribution facilities.

62. However, the very fact that the employment requirements in the submitted Plan are based on a long term average that takes account of previous periods of low growth, means that it is unnecessary to include, as is done in the submitted version of Policy CS4, a further reduced rate of take up to cover the current economic downturn. This aspect of the submitted Plan is not, therefore, justified and is unsound. This element of unsoundness would be remedied by deleting this reduced rate of take up as is recommended in main modifications **MM1g, MM1i, MM2 & MM4-MM8**.

*Remodelling and regenerating sites within existing employment areas.*

63. Approximately one third of the supply of employment land (130ha or so) consists of what are described as opportunities for remodelling and regenerating sites within existing employment areas. These sites were identified through the Joint Employment Land and Premises study but these are no more than opportunities for development.
64. It was made clear at the hearings that a full review of the deliverability and suitability of these sites will be carried out as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and while it is likely that some of them will be allocated others will not. If a shortfall in employment land supply is identified then further sites will be allocated. However, these important points are not specified in the submitted Plan which is, therefore, ineffective and hence unsound. This unsoundness would be rectified by including reference to these points as is recommended in main modification **MM9**.

*Widnes Town Centre*

65. The submitted version of Policy CS9 is not entirely clear as to the extent of Widnes Town Centre and is equivocal as to the degree to which retail and leisure facilities will be focused on it. The policy is therefore ineffective and thus unsound. This unsoundness would be resolved by removing any ambiguity on these matters as is recommended in main modifications **MM10-MM14** and **MM16**. To be consistent these modifications include changes to Policies CS5 and CS10 insofar as these deal with retail matters.

*Conclusions*

66. Subject to the main modifications recommended above the Plan makes appropriate provision for employment and economic development.

**Issue 5 – Development in the plan period will be focused on four Key Areas of Change at 3MG, South Widnes, West Runcorn and East Runcorn. Is the selection of these areas justified and are they deliverable?**

*3MG, South Widnes, West Runcorn*

67. One of the aims of the Plan is to renew Halton's urban landscape. That being so the sites at 3MG, South Widnes and West Runcorn are obvious candidates as Key Areas of Change as each of them contains sizeable areas of previously developed land, some of it derelict and some of it contaminated.
68. The 3MG site is based on the established rail freight interchange at Ditton where there is scope for further employment development particularly that associated with logistics and distribution. South Widnes and West Runcorn are both areas where previous regeneration initiatives have been undertaken, both are areas which will benefit from the construction of the Mersey Gateway Bridge – work on which will start in 2013 with the bridge due to open in 2016 - and both are suitable for a mix of employment and residential uses.
69. While all three of these areas are close to the river none of them suffer from insurmountable flooding problems and the justification for their selection as Key Areas of Change has not been seriously challenged nor has their ability to deliver the development expected of them. The correction regarding the SA of CS10 (West Runcorn) is recommended in main modifications **MM14a**.

*East Runcorn*

70. However not all of the development required over the plan period can be accommodated on previously developed land, hence the need to identify greenfield land suitable for development. East Runcorn was selected because it is on the edge of Runcorn, it is not in the Green Belt, it represents a continuation of the policy of developing housing at Sandymoor and, by incorporating the currently free standing employment areas at Daresbury Park and Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus, it creates the opportunity to expand them. The logic of selecting this site has not been seriously questioned. However, there are questions about its deliverability. Alterations to the text at 14.11 referring to land uses around the main vehicular route are recommended in main modifications **MM18**.

*Highway Improvements*

71. The scale and location of the East Runcorn Key Area of Change is such that substantial highway improvements within and around the site will be required. These improvements, together with details of when they will be provided and how they will be funded, are set out in summary form in the Plan. More detail as to major junction improvements proposed is found in the East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study.
72. There is, however, one potential flaw in this programme which is of considerable significance and this relates to improvements to Junction 11 of the M56, one of the main entrances to East Runcorn. This junction is predicted to operate at capacity by 2015 even without the proposed development of East Runcorn and if such development proceeds as planned it will have exceeded capacity by that time.

73. A complex series of improvements, including the widening of approach roads, improvements to slip roads and the widening of sections of the circulatory carriageway, are needed to upgrade this junction. Currently planning obligations are in place which assign the cost of these measures primarily to the developers of Daresbury Park. However these payments will not be triggered until this scheme delivers 76,500 square metres of employment floorspace, something that is now estimated will not occur before 2015 – indeed the East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study predicts that this will not occur before 2025. Clearly this is undesirable as it is accepted that the proposed improvements would be necessary not only to provide adequate capacity for the forecast traffic flows but also to ensure safe operating traffic conditions for all traffic streams on the roundabout at Junction 11<sup>19</sup>.
74. The submitted Plan is, therefore, ineffective and hence unsound because East Runcorn, one of its Key Areas of Change, is potentially undeliverable in the manner envisaged. This element of unsoundness would be removed by the Plan making clear that alternative methods of funding that would enable the identified improvements to Junction 11 to be carried out as a matter of priority will be explored as recommended in main modifications **MM17** and **MM19**.
75. Other than the major highway improvements, a number of smaller roads will also be affected by the proposed development. Dealing successfully with any highway problems created on these roads will be vital if the development at East Runcorn is to be integrated with the local community but it is not for the Plan, which is concerned with the broad principles of development, to set out a programme of improvement for these minor roads.

#### *Other Infrastructure*

76. While the provision of highway infrastructure at East Runcorn is spread across the plan period, other facilities such as the Daresbury Local Centre are programmed to occur only in the final phase of development. Consequently, as with many large developments of this type, there will be a period when houses and employment have been provided but, for example, the shops that will serve them have not. However this approach simply recognises the fact that retailers will tend to open shops when the catchment population needed to support them is in place. While it may have been open to the Council to require the provision of shop units earlier in the plan period in the hope that this would encourage retailers to occupy them, there is nothing unsound in the approach adopted by the Council.
77. As to education provision, the evidence indicates that existing schools in the area, supplemented by the proposed Free School at Sandymoor, have the capacity to accommodate the increased number of children resulting from the proposed development at East Runcorn.

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<sup>19</sup> East Runcorn Sustainable Transport Study. Paragraph 9.2.1

78. Reference is made in the Plan to the aspiration to deliver a railway station at Daresbury. However, it became apparent during the Examination that Network Rail did not intend to provide this station. This aspect of the Plan is, therefore, not deliverable and hence unsound. This unsoundness would be remedied by deleting reference to this station as proposed in main modifications **MM29-MM31**.

#### *Conclusions*

79. Subject to the main modifications recommended above the selection of four Key Areas of Change at 3MG, South Widnes, West Runcorn and East Runcorn is justified and these sites are deliverable

#### **Issue 6 – Is the proposed expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport soundly based?**

80. The bulk of Liverpool John Lennon Airport is in Liverpool rather than Halton but a proposed runway extension and an associated road extend into the Borough on land within the Green Belt. This extension, which is referred to in Policy RT5 of the Regional Strategy, would require a minor change to Green Belt boundaries and the possibility of this is anticipated in Policy RD4 of the Regional Strategy. Liverpool City Council is making provision for the necessary changes to Green Belt boundaries through its Core Strategy. Halton is doing likewise through Policy CS6 of the Plan.
81. Passenger and cargo traffic at the airport are predicted to increase and there is a need for a longer runway to cope with larger planes. The airport, which is in an area of severe deprivation, is a major employer and its expansion would enable other businesses in the area to flourish.
82. Consequently Policy CS17 of the Plan supports the extension in principle but, when read in conjunction with paragraph 20.10 of the supporting text, makes clear that any negative environmental and social impacts that may be identified will need to be addressed.

#### *Conclusions*

83. The proposed expansion of Liverpool John Lennon Airport is, therefore, soundly based.

#### **Issue 7 – Are the Waste and Minerals policies in the Plan well founded?**

84. The Plan deals only in general terms with the matters of Waste (Policy CS24) and Minerals (Policy CS25). However, the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan has been going through its consultation stages and was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012. This document aims, amongst other things, to provide for the identified waste management needs of the Borough through identifying site specific proposals and through setting out development management policies. There is, therefore, no need for these matters to be dealt with in detail in the Plan.
85. As to the matter of minerals, this is not a strategic issue in the Borough which contains only four small potential mineral sites the largest of which is mainly in St Helens and the others are potentially sterilised by existing development. In

these circumstances it is appropriate for Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Minerals Areas of Search to be identified, if this proves to be justified, through the Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

*Conclusions*

86. The Waste and the Minerals policies in the Plan are, therefore, well founded.

**Issue 8 – Is the Sustainable Development and Climate Change policy in the Plan sound?**

87. Policy CS19 makes compliance with the Code for Sustainable Homes and the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method a requirement - even though compliance is voluntary. There is no evidence of local circumstances in Halton that warrant this. This aspect of the Plan is, therefore, not justified and is unsound. This unsoundness would be remedied by making clear that compliance with these standards will be encouraged rather than required as is proposed in main modifications **MM24 to MM28**.

*Conclusions*

88. Subject to the main modifications recommended above the Sustainable Development and Climate Change policy in the Plan is sound.

**Issue 9 – Is there a need for a separate policy in the Plan dealing with contaminated land?**

89. While the Plan does not have a separate policy dealing with contaminated land the matter is dealt with in strategic terms in Policy CS23: Managing Pollution and Risk and in more detail in saved Policy PR14 of the Halton UDP. The Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan will consider allocating contaminated sites for commercially viable end uses – in the meantime Policy CS23 makes clear that development will only be permitted where land has or will be made suitable for the proposed use. While the policy refers to such sites being used for 'soft end' or green uses it makes clear that this would be a last resort.

*Conclusions*

90. There is, therefore, no need for a separate policy in the Plan dealing with contamination.

**Issue 10 – Is the Plan consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework?**

91. The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that plans should be based on and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development and contain clear policies that guide how that presumption should be applied locally. While the Plan contains implicit support for the presumption this is not made explicit. In this respect, therefore, the Plan is unsound in that it is not consistent with national policy. This would be remedied by the inclusion of a policy which specifically set out the presumption in favour of sustainable development as is proposed in main modifications **MM32-MM38**.

92. The priority which the Plan places on urban regeneration is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework which at paragraphs 17 and 111 encourage the effective use of land that has been previously developed provided it not of high environmental value.
93. Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework deals with need for a five year supply of deliverable housing sites plus either a 5% or 20% buffer. The matter of 5 year supply was not a main issue at the Examination but the Council has indicated that it is not in a position at this time to demonstrate such a supply plus a 20% buffer. However, this is a matter to be dealt with through the updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and through the emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.

### Conclusions

94. Subject to the main modifications referred to above the Plan is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

## Assessment of Legal Compliance

95. The examination of the compliance of the Plan with the legal requirements is summarised in the table below. The Plan meets them all.

<b>LEGAL REQUIREMENTS</b>	
Local Development Scheme (LDS)	The Halton Core Strategy is identified within the approved LDS March 2009 which sets out an expected adoption date of October 2011 although this is now more likely to be late 2012. The Core Strategy's content and timing are, therefore, broadly compliant with the LDS.
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and relevant regulations	The SCI was adopted in July 2006 and consultation has been compliant with the requirements therein.
Sustainability Appraisal (SA)	SA has been carried out and is adequate.
Appropriate Assessment (AA)	Habitats Regulations Assessment, including Appropriate Assessment (November 2010/May 2011) has been carried out and is adequate.
National Policy	The Halton Core Strategy complies with national policy except where indicated and main modifications are recommended.
Regional Strategy (RS)	The Halton Core Strategy is in general conformity with the RS.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	Satisfactory regard has been paid to the SCS.
2004 Act and Regulations (as amended)	The Halton Core Strategy complies with the Act and the Regulations.

## **Overall Conclusion and Recommendation**

- 96. The Plan has a number of deficiencies in relation to soundness for the reasons set out above which mean that , in accordance with Section 20(7A) of the Act, its adoption as submitted is not recommended. These deficiencies have been explored in the main issues set out above.**
- 97. The Council has requested that main modifications to make the Plan sound and capable of adoption be recommended. It is concluded that with the recommended main modifications set out in the Appendix the Halton Core Strategy Local Plan satisfies the requirements of Section 20(5) of the 2004 Act and meets the criteria for soundness in the National Planning Policy Framework.**

*RJ Yuille*

Inspector

This report is accompanied by the Appendix containing the Main Modifications.

**Schedule of Main Modifications to the Submitted Halton Core Strategy Local Plan  
September 2012**

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1</b>	CS1 Policy wording	To achieve the Vision for Halton to 2028, new development should deliver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>A minimum of 9,000 9,930</u> net additional dwellings</li> </ul>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1a</b>	CS1 Policy wording Point 3	<p><del>In addition to</del> The <u>housing</u> land supply position <del>may warrant a general</del> <u>indicates that a partial</u> review of Green Belt boundaries to serve <u>the</u> development needs <del>arising in of</del> <u>Widnes and Hale will be required in the early part of the plan period prior to 2028.</u> <u>Additionally, An</u> area of search for a possible minor amendment of the Green Belt boundary is proposed in the west of the Borough to facilitate the planned runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.</p> <p><u><i>More detail regarding Halton's Green Belt is set out in CS6.</i></u> <u><i>Specific proposals relating to Liverpool John Lennon Airport are set out in CS17.</i></u></p>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1b</b>	CS1 Para 4.2	Development over the plan period <del>will predominantly be</del> <u>should</u> <del>focused</del> on renewing Halton's urban landscape through the re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land, including derelict sites and those with a history of contamination particularly at South Widnes and West Runcorn.																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1c</b>	CS1 Para 4.4	Additional last sentence: <u>However, the Examination into this Plan concluded that the land supply position was such that the preferred approach be modified to include the provision for further greenfield extension(s) to meet the needs of Widnes / Hale through an early partial Green Belt review as part of the subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.</u>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1d</b>	CS1 Para 4.5	Additional last sentence: <u>Similarly, the housing land supply evidenced in the SHLAA 2010 (as summarised in Table 1 below) details that just over a quarter of the Borough's potential supply lies in Widnes/Hale. This supply is to be bolstered by the identification and release of additional land for development currently within the adopted Green Belt. The scale and location of this release will be determined in a partial Green Belt review as part of the subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.</u>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1e</b>	CS1 Table 1	<p><b>Table 1: Distribution of Identified Development Potential as at April 2010</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="554 1227 1562 1372"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th rowspan="2"><u>Greenfield / Brownfield land</u></th> <th colspan="3">Potential Housing Supply (SHLAA 2010)</th> <th colspan="3">Identified Employment Land Supply 2010</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Dwellings</th> <th>Halton %</th> <th>Area %</th> <th>Ha.</th> <th>Halton %</th> <th>Area %</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>Greenfield / Brownfield land</u>	Potential Housing Supply (SHLAA 2010)			Identified Employment Land Supply 2010			Dwellings	Halton %	Area %	Ha.	Halton %	Area %								
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Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)							
		3MG	Green	--0		0%	24.8		26%
			Brown	--0		0%--	70.0		74%
				0	0%		94.8	48%	
		South Widnes	Green	--0		0%	15.8		61%
			Brown	876 741		100%	9.9		39%
				876 741	8% 7%		25.7	13%	
		Widnes / Hale (ALL)	Green	1,466		48% 50%	40.6		32%
			Brown	1,595 1,460		52% 50%	86.8		68%
				3,061 2,926	27%		127.4	64%	
		East Runcorn	Green	3,024		100%	49.2		100%
			Brown	--0		0%	--0		0%
				3,024	27% 28%		49.2	25%	
		West Runcorn	Green	75		4%	--0		0%
			Brown	2,058 2,013		96%	0.3		100%
				2,133 2,088	19%		0.3	0%	
		Runcorn (ALL)	Green	5,409 5,276		66% 67%	7.0		10%
			Brown	2,798 2,653		34% 33%	63.4		90%
				8,207 7,929	73%		70.4	36%	
		HALTON (ALL)	Green	6,875 6,742		61% 62%	47.6		24%
			Brown	4,393 4,113		39% 38%	150.2		76%

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)																																																			
				11,268 10,855	100%		197.8	100%																																													
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1f</b>	CS1 Para 4.8 and 4.9	<p>4.8 The Council <del>has</del> commissioned a number of research studies to quantify the demand and need for different classes of development across the Borough. <del>For housing, these indicate that demand for additional</del> <u>These demonstrate that the provision of new housing can have wider benefits than simply providing accommodation and that</u> over the plan period <del>new supply is likely to be skewed to</del> <u>should favour</u> Runcorn, <del>which should account for about</del> <u>at</u> 57% of the total with Widnes and Hale <del>accounting for</del> <u>accommodating the remaining</u> 43%.</p> <p>4.9 <u>A total of 3,602 dwellings have been constructed over the initial Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) policy period from 2003 to 2010, with 1,040 demolitions / losses leaving a net gain of 2,562 units against the RSS requirement of 3,500. To be compliant with RSS this shortfall in delivery needs to be made up over the remaining Core Strategy period, with 5,660 units to be provided in Runcorn and 4,270 in Widnes / Hale. The requirement for new housing in Widnes / Hale is higher than the identified potential supply as shown in Table 1, requiring the identification of additional development land through a review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale.</u></p>																																																			
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1g</b>	CS1 Table 2	<p><b>Extract from Table 2: Anticipated Distribution of Development / Development Land 2010 to 2028</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="548 852 1974 1274"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="3"></th> <th colspan="4">WIDNES / HALE</th> <th colspan="4">RUNCORN</th> <th rowspan="3">TOTAL</th> </tr> <tr> <th colspan="2">Key Area of Change</th> <th rowspan="2">Other *</th> <th rowspan="2">TOTAL</th> <th colspan="2">Key Area of Change</th> <th rowspan="2">Other *</th> <th rowspan="2">TOTAL</th> </tr> <tr> <th>3MG</th> <th>South Widnes</th> <th>West Runcorn</th> <th>East Runcorn</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Housing (net dwelling gain)</td> <td>--</td> <td>400</td> <td><del>3,500</del> <u>3,870</u></td> <td><del>3,900</del> <u>4,270</u> (43%)</td> <td>1,500</td> <td>2,800</td> <td><del>800</del> <u>1,360</u></td> <td><del>5,100</del> <u>5,660</u> (57%)</td> <td><del>9,000</del> <u>9,930</u> (100%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Employment (Ha)</td> <td><del>99</del> <u>103</u></td> <td><del>30</del> <u>54</u></td> <td><del>28</del> <u>32</u></td> <td><del>189</del> <u>(61%)</u></td> <td><del>27</del> <u>26</u></td> <td>66</td> <td><del>45</del> <u>32</u></td> <td><del>124</del> <u>(39%)</u></td> <td><del>295.0</del> <u>313</u></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>											WIDNES / HALE				RUNCORN				TOTAL	Key Area of Change		Other *	TOTAL	Key Area of Change		Other *	TOTAL	3MG	South Widnes	West Runcorn	East Runcorn	Housing (net dwelling gain)	--	400	<del>3,500</del> <u>3,870</u>	<del>3,900</del> <u>4,270</u> (43%)	1,500	2,800	<del>800</del> <u>1,360</u>	<del>5,100</del> <u>5,660</u> (57%)	<del>9,000</del> <u>9,930</u> (100%)	Employment (Ha)	<del>99</del> <u>103</u>	<del>30</del> <u>54</u>	<del>28</del> <u>32</u>	<del>189</del> <u>(61%)</u>	<del>27</del> <u>26</u>	66	<del>45</del> <u>32</u>	<del>124</del> <u>(39%)</u>	<del>295.0</del> <u>313</u>
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<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1h</b>	CS1 4.23	<p>The rural character and setting of the Borough's villages and areas of open countryside will be maintained with limits on new development. In order to achieve this, the Green Belt will continue to be <u>largely</u> protected in accordance with national planning policy to prevent uncoordinated expansion of urban areas which result in the loss of strategic gaps between settlements. <del>In addition, should the</del> <u>The existing housing</u> land supply within the</p>																																																			

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)						
		<p>Borough <del>warrant it indicates that</del> a partial review of the extent of the Green Belt <del>may will</del> be required during the plan period, <del>particularly</del> to ensure adequate land to meet development needs of the communities <del>north of the river of Widnes/Hale</del>. It is proposed that <del>Any</del> such a review will be undertaken <del>in the early part of the Core Strategy plan period</del> as part of <del>the a subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management DPD Local Plan</del>. <del>Further detail on the future role of Halton's Green Belt is detailed in policy CS6</del>. In addition, <del>Minor</del> changes to the Green Belt boundary at the western extent of the Borough will be considered to facilitate the proposed runway extension at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, and this issue will be addressed in a later <del>DPD Local Plan</del>. <del>Greater detail on the development of the airport is provided in policy CS17</del>.</p>						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM1i</b>	CS1 Policy Framework	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 574 768 727"><b>Policy Framework</b></td> <td data-bbox="774 574 1598 727"> <del>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (CLG, 2005); PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2010); PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (CLG, 2009)</del>            NPPF (Particularly paras 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 28, 29, 42, 47, 50, 79, 151, 154 and 156)         </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 732 768 885"><b>SA Objectives</b></td> <td data-bbox="774 732 1598 885">           10 - Housing            11 - Accessibility            13 - Education            14 - Economy            16 - Town Centres         </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 889 768 1065"><b>SA Outcome</b></td> <td data-bbox="774 889 1598 1065">           Overall, the SA considers this policy to be significantly positive in sustainability terms. Although the level of development set out within some of the policies could have <u>significant</u> negative impacts on some environmental factors, these are sufficiently mitigated by other policy content.         </td> </tr> </table>	<b>Policy Framework</b>	<del>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (CLG, 2005); PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2010); PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (CLG, 2009)</del> NPPF (Particularly paras 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 28, 29, 42, 47, 50, 79, 151, 154 and 156)	<b>SA Objectives</b>	10 - Housing 11 - Accessibility 13 - Education 14 - Economy 16 - Town Centres	<b>SA Outcome</b>	Overall, the SA considers this policy to be significantly positive in sustainability terms. Although the level of development set out within some of the policies could have <u>significant</u> negative impacts on some environmental factors, these are sufficiently mitigated by other policy content.
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<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM2</b>	CS1 Policy wording	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately <del>295-313</del> ha (gross) of land for employment purposes</li> </ul>						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3</b>	CS3 Policy wording Bullet 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>A minimum of 9,000-9,930 net additional new-homes (net of demolitions)</u> should be provided between 2010 and 2028 at <del>a minimum-an average</del> rate of <u>552 per annum, with the following overall distribution:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Runcorn = about 5,660 dwellings</u></li> <li><u>Widnes = about 4,270 dwellings</u></li> <li><del>400 units per annum for the period Apr 2010-Mar 2015</del></li> <li><del>600 units per annum for the period Apr 2015-Mar 2020</del></li> </ul> </li> </ul>						

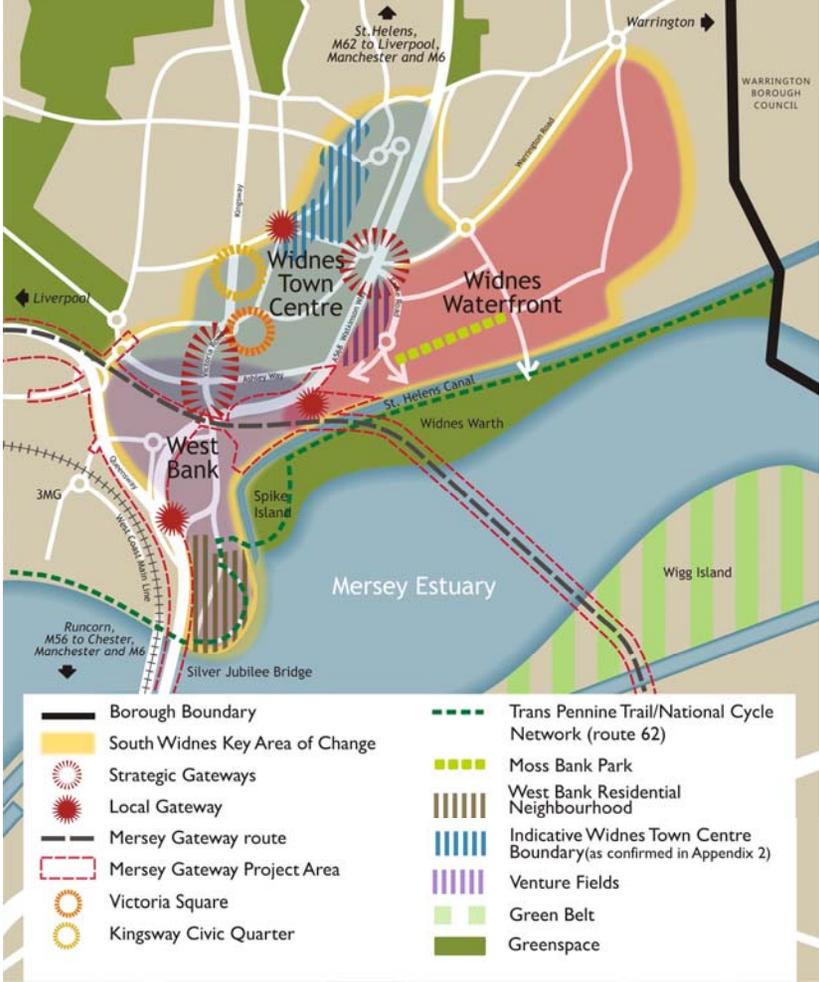
Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>500 units per annum for the period Apr 2020-Mar 2028</del></li> <li>• Beyond 2028, development should continue at a minimum rate of 500 units per annum (net gain) unless this is superseded by a change to policy.</li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3a</b>	CS3 Para 6.2	As indicated in both Halton's Story of Place and the Spatial Strategy, over the Borough's history, development has taken place in distinct waves of urban <u>expansion with large scale</u> regeneration <u>schemes</u> often involving the replacement of unsuitable New Town estates. <del>coupled with growth of the Borough onto expansion land at the edges of the urban area.</del> Whilst this pattern of development will continue to a certain extent, housing renewal projects <u>are likely to</u> <del>will</del> play less of a role in the future and the Borough will be more dependent on delivering housing on <u>Halton's</u> remaining greenfield sites at the periphery of the urban area. <u>In Runcorn this will be achieved by the delivery of an extension to the east of Runcorn on greenfield land within the existing settlement boundary. In Widnes and Hale the existing Green Belt boundaries are tight to the built-up area and any further outward expansion will necessitate a review of the Green Belt to identify additional deliverable and developable land, whilst not undermining the continued priority to regenerate the Borough's urban areas.</u>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3b</b>	CS3 Policy wording Bullet 2	Delete final bullet under "New homes will be delivered a variety of sources, including:" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Areas of Search within the Green Belt (subject to identification in a Strategic Green Belt Review)</del></li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3c</b>	CS3 Policy wording Bullet 3	Insert additional bullet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>A partial Green Belt Review will be necessary during the early part of the plan period to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of deliverable development land to meet the housing requirements of the Borough's separate communities as set out in CS1 and CS6</u></li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3d</b>	CS3 Policy wording	Maintaining a 5 year supply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>In accordance with the relevant annual target(s) for housing delivery, t</del>The Council will <u>seek to</u> maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing land across the Borough <u>in accordance with Government guidance.</u></li> <li>• <del>In addition, the Council will seek to maintain a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites to meet the identified needs of Runcorn and Widnes / Hale-</del></li> <li>• <del>If the Council is unable to identify an ongoing 5 year supply of sites for residential development, there will be a presumption in favour of the development of suitable 'windfall' sites and if necessary, the Council may undertake a Strategic Green Belt Review to inform a Site Allocations DPD in line with the provisions in Policy CS6-</del></li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3e</b>	CS3 Para 6.3	<del><b>Setting a housing target</b></del> <b>Housing Requirement</b> The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West set a housing policy target for Halton of 500 <u>units (net dwelling gain)</u> per annum <del>for over</del> the period 2003 to 2021 <u>and for any period thereafter until such time as the policy is reviewed.</u> <del>The Government has indicated its intention to abolish Regional Strategies, however, until</del>

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)
		<p><u>such time as RSS for the North West is legally revoked, it remains part of the Development Plan and the Halton Core Strategy must be in general conformity with its provisions. In the initial RSS period to 2010, Halton had delivered a total of 2,562 units (net gain) representing a shortfall of approximately 930 dwellings against the RSS requirement of 3,500 (500 x 7 years). In order to comply with the RSS, Halton will need to deliver 9,000 dwellings (500 x 18 years) plus the pre-existing shortfall, equating to an annual average of 552 (9,930 / 18 years) dwellings (net gain).</u></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3f</b>	CS3 New para after 6.3	<p><del>Whilst this RSS remains part of the Development Plan for Halton at May 2011, the Coalition Government has indicated its intention to revoke all regional strategies with</del> <u>After the abolition of RSS,</u> the role of determining an appropriate number of homes to be built within each district <del>will fall</del> <u>ing</u> to the local authority through the Core Strategy <u>or Local Plan. This policy, together with CS1 may therefore be subject to an early review dependent on the date and circumstances at the time the powers to revoke RSS are enacted.</u> <del>Local housing targets are necessary to help deliver the required level of house building to meet local needs whilst giving certainty for residents and the development industry in terms of how much residential development a local area should accommodate in future years.</del></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3g</b>	CS3 Para 6.4	<p><del>The housing target of 9,000 new homes at an average rate of 500 homes per year in Halton over the Core Strategy plan period to 2028 has been determined by considering data and research from a variety of sources, including predicted population, household and economic growth. The process for reaching this target is set out in the supporting document "Housing Topic Paper".<sup>3</sup></del></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3h</b>	CS3 Para 6.6	<p>New final sentence: <u>Whilst sufficient land to accommodate the bulk of this growth exists in Runcorn, the Examination into this Plan concluded that an early review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale is required to meet the needs of these populations.</u></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3i</b>	CS3 Para 6.7	<p><del>Housing delivery and demand is strongly correlated with the state of the economy. Economic forecasts vary in their predictions for when the economy will recover from the effects of the 'credit crunch' and resultant economic downturn, and for when capacity within the house building industry will return to pre-recession levels. In setting the housing targets, the effects of the economic downturn have been acknowledged with a lower target set for the initial 5 years (in line with the approach for employment land as set out in CS4), before increasing in the following period to deliver the overall quantum required to 2028.</del></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3j</b>	CS3 Para 6.8	<p>The <u>2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) indicates that there is identified land in the Borough with the capacity to deliver 11,268</u> <del>10,855 dwellings (gross).</del> <u>Whilst this is in excess of the (net) policy requirement to 2028, it allows little flexibility to accommodate changes in demolition rates or identified sites not coming forward as forecast. Whilst the SHLAA process seeks to provide a robust 'snap-shot' estimate of potential housing supply. This appears sufficient to meet the Borough's housing requirement to 2028 and potentially for a number of years beyond, however the distribution is heavily skewed to south of the river and it must be</u> <del>accepted</del> <u>noted</u> that not all of the <u>identified</u> sites <del>in the SHLAA</del> will be delivered for housing or come forward in the timeframes indicated. Indeed, it may <del>not</del> be desirable for certain sites to be developed for <u>housing uses other</u></p>

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)						
		<p><del>than</del> <del>rather than other uses</del> housing. The identified supply is heavily skewed towards Runcorn, particularly due to the Key Area of Change at East Runcorn which includes Sandymoor and Daresbury.</p>						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM3k</b>	CS3 Policy Framework	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 391 772 483"><b>National Policy</b></td> <td data-bbox="779 391 1612 483"> <del>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (CLG, 2005); PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2010) NPFF (Particularly paras 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 28, 29, 42, 47, 50, 79, 151, 154 and 156)</del> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 488 772 672"><b>SA Objectives</b></td> <td data-bbox="779 488 1612 672">           4 – Climate Change            5 – Flood Risk            7 – Land Quality            10 – Housing            12 – Health            17 – Transport         </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 677 772 794"><b>SA Outcome</b></td> <td data-bbox="779 677 1612 794">           The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms. Although development is likely to have <del>negative</del> <u>significant</u> impacts on some environmental factors these can be managed / mitigated.         </td> </tr> </table>	<b>National Policy</b>	<del>PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (CLG, 2005); PPS3: Housing (CLG, 2010) NPFF (Particularly paras 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 28, 29, 42, 47, 50, 79, 151, 154 and 156)</del>	<b>SA Objectives</b>	4 – Climate Change 5 – Flood Risk 7 – Land Quality 10 – Housing 12 – Health 17 – Transport	<b>SA Outcome</b>	The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms. Although development is likely to have <del>negative</del> <u>significant</u> impacts on some environmental factors these can be managed / mitigated.
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<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM4</b>	CS4 Policy wording	Approximately <del>295</del> <u>313</u> hectares of land will be made available over the plan period 2010-2028 to facilitate the sustainable growth of Halton's economy.						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM5</b>	CS4 Para 7.4	<del>Given that the JELPS was produced using a base date of April 2008, before the effects of the current period of economic downturn were felt, it has been necessary to amend the recommended employment land requirement to take account of reduced take up rates over the period of downturn. Current estimations suggest that the current period of economic downturn in the UK will continue until 2015, before the economy will experience significant growth as prior to 2008.</del> The JELPS considered employment land requirements for the Borough to 2026, however given that the study advocated the use of long term average take-up rates to predict future requirements, it therefore followed that the same method be applied to generate the additional employment land requirement for the Core Strategy plan period to 2028. <u>Estimations at 2011 suggest that the period of economic downturn in the UK being experienced at the start of the plan period will continue until 2015, before the economy will experience significant growth as prior to 2008.<sup>3</sup> The use of long term average take up rates dating back to 1992 are felt to make adequate provision for periods of both economic downturn and growth that are likely to be experienced over the length of the plan period.</u>						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM6</b>	CS4 Para 7.5	Table 3 below sets out the <u>calculations which determine the overall requirement for employment land provision to be made over the Core Strategy plan period.</u> <del>revised calculation of an annual requirement for employment land, assuming demand at 80% of the long term average take up rate, for the period from 2010-2015, therefore</del>						

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MAIN MODIFICATION MM7	CS4 Table 3	<p data-bbox="552 305 1659 329"><del>giving a slightly lower requirement for employment land than included within the JELPS:</del></p> <p data-bbox="552 334 1396 358"><b>Table 3: Summary of Employment Requirement Calculations</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="552 363 1675 1388"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="552 363 1428 404"></th> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="1434 363 1675 404">Hectares</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 409 1428 433"><del>Long term average take-up rate (1998-2008)</del></td> <td data-bbox="1434 409 1549 433">14.47</td> <td data-bbox="1556 409 1675 433"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 472 1428 529"><del>Requirement during period of economic slowdown 2010/11-2014/15</del></td> <td data-bbox="1434 472 1549 529"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 472 1675 529"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 534 1428 591"><del>Reduced rate of take-up during period of economic downturn (@ 80%)</del></td> <td data-bbox="1434 534 1549 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<tr> <td data-bbox="552 953 1428 977">Sites with planning permission for employment uses at April 2010</td> <td data-bbox="1434 953 1549 977"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 953 1675 977">28.31</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 982 1428 1039">Additional land allocated for employment purposes at East Runcorn (through Policy CS11)</td> <td data-bbox="1434 982 1549 1039"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 982 1675 1039">17.62</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 1044 1428 1068"><b>Total available employment land at April 2010</b></td> <td data-bbox="1434 1044 1549 1068"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 1044 1675 1068"><b>209.26</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 1073 1428 1097" style="text-align: right;"><b>Total perceived employment land undersupply</b></td> <td data-bbox="1434 1073 1549 1097"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 1073 1675 1097"><del>85.93</del></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="552 1102 1428 1127"></td> <td data-bbox="1434 1102 1549 1127"></td> <td data-bbox="1556 1102 1675 1127">103.29</td> </tr> <tr> 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		<b>Total potential surplus*</b> <b>58.62</b> <span style="color: blue;">41.26</span>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM8</b>	CS4 Para 7.6	The current supply situation in table 3 indicates an apparent undersupply of approximately <del>85</del> <u>103</u> hectares of land for employment purposes.
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM9</b>	CS4 Para 7.7	<p>In order to ensure that an adequate supply of employment land is available for development at any one time, a minimum of a 5 year supply of sites should be maintained. This equates to 72.35 hectares of suitable and available land. Annual surveys of employment land<sup>6</sup> and planning applications will allow the supply of employment land to be assessed. <u>A full review of the deliverability and suitability of the remaining Halton UDP employment allocations and the identified regeneration and remodelling opportunities will be undertaken as part of the first Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan and will be kept under review thereafter.</u> Should a shortfall in employment land supply be identified over the plan <del>period (for instance if, regeneration and remodelling do not come forward as envisaged)</del>, sites will be allocated through a <del>Site Allocations DPD</del><u>subsequent Local Plans</u> in order to increase the overall supply of land available for employment development.</p> <p><sup>6</sup> <u>HBC – Annual Employment Baseline Reports</u></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM10</b>	CS5 Policy wording - Fourth and fifth paras	<p>New retail or other town centre uses should be located within or on the edge of a defined <u>Primary Shopping Area or Local Centre</u>, appropriate to the scale of the proposal.</p> <p>Retail and leisure proposals in excess of 2,000 sqm (gross) floorspace not located within a defined <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> <del>Town or District Centre</del>, or allocated in <del>the LDF</del> <u>a Local Plan</u> will be subject to sequential and impact assessments. Retail and leisure proposals in excess of 200 sqm (gross) not within or <u>adjacent to</u> a defined centre, or allocated in <del>the LDF</del> <u>a Local Plan</u> will be subject to sequential assessment.</p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM11</b>	CS9 Policy wording	<p>b) Directing up to about 25,300 sqm (gross) of convenience / comparison retail provision to <u>Widnes Town Centre in accordance with Policy CS5.</u> <del>the main retail area (Widnes Town Centre Boundary) with small scale provision across the wider area.</del></p> <p>c) Directing up to about 19,000 sqm (gross) of retail warehousing <u>provision to Widnes Town Centre in accordance with Policy CS5.</u> <del>across South Widnes with a particular focus on the main retail area within the Widnes Town Centre Boundary.</del></p> <p>d) Focusing new leisure facilities <u>into</u> Widnes Town Centre <u>in accordance with Policy CS5</u>, with <u>an particular</u> emphasis on the enhancement of the evening economy in the Victoria Square area, and complementary leisure uses in Widnes Waterfront.</p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION</b>	CS9 Figure 9	Changes to Figure 9 – South Widnes Diagram: Delete <del>Main Retail Area</del> from diagram and key. Add hashed area to the diagram showing Widnes Town Centre

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)
MM12		<p>Boundary (as per Proposed Submission Document, Nov 2010) and add to key <a href="#">‘Indicative Widnes Town Centre Boundary (as confirmed in Appendix 2)’</a>.</p>  <p>The map illustrates the geographical context of Widnes, including the Mersey Estuary, St. Helens Canal, and Silver Jubilee Bridge. It highlights several key areas and infrastructure projects, such as the South Widnes Key Area of Change, Strategic Gateways, and the Mersey Gateway Project Area. The legend provides a detailed key for the symbols used, including Borough Boundary, South Widnes Key Area of Change, Strategic Gateways, Local Gateway, Mersey Gateway route, Mersey Gateway Project Area, Victoria Square, Kingsway Civic Quarter, Trans Pennine Trail/National Cycle Network (route 62), Moss Bank Park, West Bank Residential Neighbourhood, Indicative Widnes Town Centre Boundary (as confirmed in Appendix 2), Venture Fields, Green Belt, and Greenspace.</p>

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)								
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM13</b>	CS9 Para 12.5	Widnes is the largest town centre within the Borough and has the greatest retail offer in terms of range and floorspace. Widnes Town Centre's retail role will be maintained and enhanced, in accordance with CS5: A Network of Centres, <del>prioritising new retail opportunities and improvements within the Town Centre Boundary</del> . This will include the potential to enhance or redevelop the Albert Square Shopping Centre. Leisure facilities will <u>also</u> be focused on <u>Widnes Town Centre in accordance with CS5: A Network of Centres</u> , with Victoria Square remaining as the focus for evening entertainment given the attractive public realm and heritage assets in the locality. The Venture Fields site on the Widnes Waterfront will provide complementary leisure facilities for the South Widnes area.								
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM14</b>	CS10 Policy wording	a) <del>Improving Runcorn Old Town's retail offer, f</del> ocusing up to about 5,200sqm (gross) of convenience / comparison goods retailing to <u>Runcorn Old Town District Centre in accordance with Policy CS5</u> , <del>the main retail area within the Town Centre Boundary and</del> <u>improving the retail offer and</u> supporting its role as a <del>District Centre and a</del> cultural and leisure destination.								
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM14a</b>	CS10 Policy Framework	<b>SA Objectives</b>          <b>SA Outcome</b>	<table border="1"> <tr><td>3 – Water <u>Quality</u></td></tr> <tr><td>6 – Energy Efficiency</td></tr> <tr><td>7 – Land Quality</td></tr> <tr><td>10 – Housing</td></tr> <tr><td>11 – Accessibility</td></tr> <tr><td>14 – Economy</td></tr> <tr><td>16 – Town Centres</td></tr> </table> <p>The focus of this policy is bringing large areas of previously developed land back into beneficial use. Development will be designed with sustainability in mind. This policy will contribute positively to sustainability principles. <del>However, development in the area could potentially have a negative impact on water quality.</del></p>	3 – Water <u>Quality</u>	6 – Energy Efficiency	7 – Land Quality	10 – Housing	11 – Accessibility	14 – Economy	16 – Town Centres
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<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM15</b>	CS10 Policy wording	b) The delivery of 1,500 dwellings across West Runcorn with a particular emphasis on the Runcorn Waterfront site to accommodate <del>1,330</del> <u>1,360</u> dwellings, with the potential for additional residential development, subject to appropriate access.								
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM16</b>	CS10 Figure 10	Changes to Figure 10 – West Runcorn Diagram: Delete <del>Main Retail Area</del> from diagram and key. Add hashed area to the diagram showing Runcorn Old Town District Centre Boundary (as per Proposed Submission Document, Nov 2010) and add to key <u>'Indicative Runcorn Old Town District Centre Boundary (as confirmed in Appendix 2)'</u> .								

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		 <p>The map illustrates the Runcorn area with various zones and infrastructure. Key features include the Mersey Estuary, Runcorn Waterfront, Mersey Gateway Port, Runcorn Old Town, and several industrial and residential estates. A legend identifies the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Runcorn Key Area of Change (Yellow)</li> <li>Heath Road Industrial Estate (Purple diagonal lines)</li> <li>Picow Farm Road Industrial Estate (Blue diagonal lines)</li> <li>Dukesfield Residential Neighbourhood (Brown vertical lines)</li> <li>Canal Quarter (Blue horizontal lines)</li> <li>Halton Riverside College (Blue circle with radiating lines)</li> <li>Runcorn Railway Station (Red circle with radiating lines)</li> <li>Strategic Gateway (Red circle with radiating lines)</li> <li>Brindley Arts Centre (Blue starburst)</li> <li>Runcorn Promenade (Green dashed lines)</li> <li>Mersey Gateway Project Area (Red dashed rectangle)</li> <li>Indicative Runcorn Old Town District Centre Boundary (as confirmed in Appendix 2) (Blue horizontal lines)</li> <li>Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar (Blue wavy lines)</li> <li>Mersey Estuary SSSI (Blue wavy lines)</li> <li>Greenspace (Green)</li> </ul>
<p><b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM17</b></p>	<p>CS11 Para 14.11</p>	<p>After the existing text which reads: "The study revealed that under a "Do Nothing" scenario (where no uncommitted development takes place), the M56 Junction 11 in 2015 is predicted to operate at capacity in both the AM and PM peak periods", insert the following:</p> <p><a href="#">The Highways Agency are fully aware of the issues at this junction and the Council will continue to work with them and the developers involved in bringing forward the Strategic Site to consider the alternative funding options necessary to prioritise necessary improvements at this junction.</a></p>
<p><b>MAIN</b></p>	<p>CS11</p>	<p><b>SA Objectives</b>   2 – Biodiversity</p>

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MODIFICATION MM17a	Policy Framework	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="558 302 800 521"></td> <td data-bbox="806 302 953 331">3 – Water <a href="#">Quality</a></td> <td data-bbox="959 302 1094 331">6 – Energy Efficiency</td> <td data-bbox="1100 302 1234 331">10 – Housing</td> <td data-bbox="1241 302 1375 331">11 – Accessibility</td> <td data-bbox="1381 302 1516 331">14 - Economy</td> <td data-bbox="1522 302 1656 331">16 – Town Centres</td> <td data-bbox="1663 302 1797 331">17 – <del>Sustainable</del> Transport</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="558 526 800 764"><b>SA Outcome</b></td> <td colspan="7" data-bbox="806 526 1976 764"> <p><a href="#">Overall this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some minor negative environmental effects.</a></p> <p><del>Overall this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some negative environmental effects, however these can be managed / mitigated, particularly if suggested mitigation measures are incorporated into the policy.</del></p> </td> </tr> </table>						3 – Water <a href="#">Quality</a>	6 – Energy Efficiency	10 – Housing	11 – Accessibility	14 - Economy	16 – Town Centres	17 – <del>Sustainable</del> Transport	<b>SA Outcome</b>	<p><a href="#">Overall this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some minor negative environmental effects.</a></p> <p><del>Overall this policy is positive in sustainability terms. There may be some negative environmental effects, however these can be managed / mitigated, particularly if suggested mitigation measures are incorporated into the policy.</del></p>						
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MAIN MODIFICATION MM18	CS11 Para 14.11	<p>After the existing text which reads: "It will entail at least one additional canal crossing suitable for vehicles", insert the following:</p> <p><a href="#">The proposed land uses immediately adjacent to the indicative line of the main vehicular route as depicted on Figure 12 are therefore also subject to minor changes once the exact alignment is determined. The quantum and role of the area of greenspace south of the existing homes on Delph Lane close to the junction with the A56 should however remain.</a></p>																				
MAIN MODIFICATION MM19	CS11 Table 8	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="558 1013 772 1284">Rows 4 and 5</td> <td data-bbox="779 1013 953 1284">Further improvements to Junction 11 of M56 <a href="#">in accordance with the ERSTS<sup>12</sup></a></td> <td data-bbox="959 1013 1094 1284">Junction 11 of M56</td> <td data-bbox="1100 1013 1234 1284">Over the plan period</td> <td data-bbox="1241 1013 1375 1284">All sites will create pressure on junction 11 of the M56</td> <td data-bbox="1381 1013 1516 1284">Pooled developer contributions <a href="#">from all development sites</a> with potential for funding from the Highways Agency</td> </tr> </table>					Rows 4 and 5	Further improvements to Junction 11 of M56 <a href="#">in accordance with the ERSTS<sup>12</sup></a>	Junction 11 of M56	Over the plan period	All sites will create pressure on junction 11 of the M56	Pooled developer contributions <a href="#">from all development sites</a> with potential for funding from the Highways Agency										
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Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)				
		Improvements to the <u>principal primary</u> road network surrounding the development site <u>in accordance with the ERSTS<sup>12</sup></u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>A5568</del> and /A56</li> <li>• <u>DSIC/A55 8 Junction</u></li> <li>• <u>A558 Pitts Heath Roundabout</u></li> <li>• <u>Widening of remainder of A558</u></li> </ul>	Over the plan period	All sites will create pressure on the <u>principal primary</u> road network used to access the site	Pooled developer contributions from all development sites
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM20</b>	CS13 Policy wording	<p>Affordable housing provision will be sought <u>at 25%</u> <del>as up to 35%</del> of the total residential <u>units floorspace</u> proposed. The Council will seek to <u>ensure secure 50% of new provision as a 75:25 split between social and affordable</u> rented <u>tenures and 50% intermediate affordable</u> housing tenures across the Borough.</p> <p>The provision of affordable housing must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>address the identified housing needs as quantified in the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment unless it is agreed that it is preferable for the provision to be</u> of a similar size and type to the overall mix on site, <del>unless it is agreed with the Council to target a specific identified category of greatest housing need in the locality;</del> and</li> </ul>				
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM21</b>	CS13 Para 16.5	<p>Unmet need for affordable housing is far in excess of the proposed housing delivery targets as set out in policy CS3: Housing Supply and Locational Priorities and above the level of total completions achieved in any year since before 1994. It is therefore essential to seek to maximise the contribution to new affordable units from new housing developments. The Economic Viability Assessment has considered the realistic contribution that can be secured from new housing development across different housing areas of the Borough north and south of the river and under different market conditions. <u>This shows that under the Mid Market Position, 25% affordable housing is deliverable at a 50% social rented and 50% intermediate housing tenure split. Although a higher percentage of affordable housing could be delivered in the Improved Market Position (40% with a 34% social rented and 64% intermediate tenure split) it is acknowledged through the assessment that it is difficult to predict whether the improved market scenario will ever be met. It is however, considered likely, based on previous cycles of the property market, that the mid market position will be reached during the Core Strategy Plan period.</u> <del>This shows that in the market conditions prevailing in 2010 the economic viability of housing developments in</del></p>				

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)
		<del>some areas of the Borough were marginal and that these could not realistically support an affordable housing contribution, however, in other areas and during more 'normal' market conditions, developments could realistically deliver up to 35% as affordable.</del>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM22</b>	CS13 Para 16.6	Taking into account <del>the</del> <u>the viability of residential development, the</u> policy target for affordable housing contribution has been set <u>at 25% of the total residential units</u> <del>as 'up to 35%'</del> , which will be applied to all qualifying residential developments, being those on sites capable of providing a net gain of 10 or more units or on 0.33 hectares or more. Affordable housing provision at a rate lower than the target range will only be acceptable where it is demonstrated through a financial appraisal that prevailing market conditions, abnormal physical on-site constraints resulting in extraordinary costs, or higher competing use value would render the development unviable when the affordable housing contribution is taken into account.
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM23</b>	CS13 Para 16.7	The Council will seek to achieve delivery of an appropriate tenure split between social rent, <u>affordable rent</u> and intermediate housing across the Borough as informed by the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) <u>and Economic Viability Assessment</u> (or replacements). The <del>initial</del> target will be <u>to secure 50% of new provision across the Borough as social and affordable rented tenures and 50% intermediate housing tenures. split 75:25 between these tenures, with</u> <del>the</del> <u>actual</u> size, <del>and type and tenure</del> of affordable supply sought on individual sites <u>will be being</u> dependent on the <u>most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment, taking into consideration the</u> site location, local housing mix and identified priorities to meet local needs within the sub-area. Affordable housing provision as infill development within 'washed over' Green Belt villages may be appropriate in certain circumstances, subject to local need, character and Green Belt considerations.
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM24</b>	CS19 Policy wording Bullets 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="590 878 1976 943">• The Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 will be <del>required</del> <u>encouraged</u> as a minimum standard for new residential development, rising to Level 4 in 2013 and to Level 6 in 2016.</li> <li data-bbox="590 959 1976 1024">• The BREEAM 'Very Good' standard will be <del>required</del> <u>encouraged</u> as a minimum standard for new non-residential development, rising to 'Excellent' standard in 2013.</li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM25</b>	CS19 Policy wording Final bullet point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="590 1062 1976 1159">• <del>Where it is not considered to be viable or feasible for development to meet sustainability standards, exceed baseline energy targets or connect to an existing or scheduled district heating network, developers will be required to make a financial contribution in accordance with CS7: Infrastructure Provision.</del></li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM26</b>	CS19 Para 22.3	To ensure Halton achieves high standards of sustainability, development <del>should</del> <u>is encouraged to</u> meet the appropriate CSH and BREEAM standards <u>where it is viable and feasible to do so.</u> <del>unless it is proven that this would cause the development to become unviable.</del>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM27</b>	CS19 Para 22.5	To support the new Building Regulations and to ensure the planning system contributes to reducing carbon emissions, development is <del>expected</del> <u>required</u> to show how improvements to CO <sub>2</sub> emission savings can be made over the contemporary Building Regulations (Part L) baseline <sup>7</sup> with a focus on reducing the demand for energy as

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)										
		a first priority and then utilising renewable and low carbon energy. Where minimum standards cannot be exceeded, developers <del>are required to</del> <u>should</u> provide evidence that all options have been investigated and that further CO <sub>2</sub> emissions savings are not feasible and / or viable.										
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM28</b>	CS19 Para 22.10	<del>Financial contributions from development will be sought where it is proven unviable and / or unfeasible to meet the required CSH or BREEAM standard, exceed baseline energy targets in line with the successful implementation of the revisions to Part L of the Building Regulations, or connect to an existing or scheduled district heating network. This financial contribution will be sought in accordance with CS7: Infrastructure Provision and will be used to contribute to wider renewable and low carbon energy initiatives across the Borough.</del>										
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM29</b>	CS11 Policy wording	3. The whole of the development should be served by public transport, to connect the employment, housing and retail/leisure areas. The public transport network at the site should include the provision of <del>a</del> transport <u>interchange</u> facilities <del>sited to</del> <u>serve the entirety of the site</u> . <del>maintaining the long term aim of delivering a railway station in the long term.</del>										
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION 30</b>	CS11 Para 14.14	The provision of <del>a</del> public transport <u>facilities interchange at within</u> the <del>intersection of the two railway lines which run through the Strategic</del> <u>Site will improve the area's connectivity via sustainable transport</u> . <del>It is envisaged that</del> <u>This will initially provide bus interchange facilities to serve the employment and residential areas, with bus services serving the local centre to ensure its viability. Bus provision should improve connections to the Strategic Site from surrounding residential areas and key transport nodes including Runcorn Old Town, Runcorn East station and Warrington town centre. with the aspiration of delivering a railway station to serve either one or both of the railway lines in the longer term. The precise location of a public transport interchange has not yet been determined but will be largely dependent on the outcome of the current Guide to Railway Investment Projects (GRIP) Study, which is being progressed by Network Rail on behalf of Halton Borough Council. Should this study find that the practicality and feasibility of a railway station at Daresbury is limited, a wider area will be available for a bus-based interchange. In the circumstance where there is clear evidence to suggest that a railway station cannot be delivered or it can be proven that the entirety of the safeguarded land is not needed for public transport facilities, the applicable land will be considered for the corresponding land uses shown on Figure 12.</u>										
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION 31</b>	CS11 Table 8	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="554 1070 772 1385">Public Transport facilities <del>Interchange – including bus interchange facilities with the potential for a new railway station</del></th> <th data-bbox="779 1070 947 1385"><u>Within the Strategic Site, capable of serving the entire area</u> <u>At the intersection of two railway</u></th> <th data-bbox="953 1070 1087 1385">Over the plan period</th> <th data-bbox="1094 1070 1312 1385">DSIC <del>Joint Venture</del> and <del>central</del> <u>Central Housing Area</u></th> <th data-bbox="1318 1070 1558 1385">Private residential developer and DSIC <u>Joint Venture</u> <u>It is likely that public funding will be required to deliver this key piece of infrastructure</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 1070 772 1385"></td> <td data-bbox="779 1070 947 1385"></td> <td data-bbox="953 1070 1087 1385"></td> <td data-bbox="1094 1070 1312 1385"></td> <td data-bbox="1318 1070 1558 1385"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Public Transport facilities <del>Interchange – including bus interchange facilities with the potential for a new railway station</del>	<u>Within the Strategic Site, capable of serving the entire area</u> <u>At the intersection of two railway</u>	Over the plan period	DSIC <del>Joint Venture</del> and <del>central</del> <u>Central Housing Area</u>	Private residential developer and DSIC <u>Joint Venture</u> <u>It is likely that public funding will be required to deliver this key piece of infrastructure</u>					
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Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)				
			lines within Daresbury Strategic Site			
MAIN MODIFICATION MM32	CS2 Policy Title	CS2: <u>PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</u> <b>PRINCIPLES</b>				
MAIN MODIFICATION MM33	CS2 Policy wording	<p><b>Policy CS2: <u>Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development</u> Principles</b></p> <p><u>When considering development proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.</u></p> <p><u>Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan<sup>1</sup> (and, where relevant, with polices in Halton's other Local Plans and neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</u></p> <p><u>Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or</u></li> <li>• <u>Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.</u></li> </ul> <p><del>Over the lifetime of the Halton Core Strategy, development in the Borough should:</del></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>contribute towards the delivery of mixed and balanced communities;</del></li> <li>• <del>increase the quality of life for the Borough's communities, contributing to long term improvements in health and well-being, educational attainment and skill development;</del></li> <li>• <del>contribute towards a strong, stable and more competitive economy, responsive to Halton's needs and building upon Halton's strengths;</del></li> <li>• <del>be located to minimise the need to travel, increase accessibility and support sustainable transport options;</del></li> <li>• <del>regenerate and remediate Halton, bringing noticeable improvements to the Borough's urban areas and green spaces;</del></li> </ul>				

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>• conserve and enhance the character and quality of Halton's natural and historic environment and green infrastructure network;</del></li> <li><del>• minimise factors which contribute to climate change and plan for the potential effects of a changing climate on the Borough's communities and environments;</del></li> <li><del>• minimise energy and water use and make efficient use of natural resources including through sustainable waste management and maximising the re-use of recycled products; and;</del></li> <li><del>• ensure that the infrastructure needs of the Borough are met.</del></li> </ul>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM34</b>	CS2 Para 5.2	<p>'Sustainable development' is defined as "development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"<sup>9</sup>. <del>The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>3</sup> (NPPF) National guidance in the form of PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup> states that emphasises the three dimensions to</del> sustainable development, <del>these being should be delivered through achieving:</del></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><del>• social progress which recognises the needs of everyone</del> Economic – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy;</li> <li><del>• protection and enhancement of the environment</del> Social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and,</li> <li><del>• prudent use of natural resources; and</del> Environmental – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.</li> <li><del>• sustainable economic development.</del></li> </ul> <p><sup>3</sup> CLG (2012) National Planning Policy Framework</p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM35</b>	CS2 Para 5.3	<p>The NPPF introduced the presumption in favour of sustainable development which emphasises the Government's positive attitude to development that is sustainable, impressing on Local Planning Authorities the importance of expediting planning applications which are in conformity. The whole of the NPPF sets out the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practical terms for the planning process. The Core Strategy (as part of Halton's development plan) is the first reference point for those involved in the determination of planning applications. The NPPF makes it clear that local planning documents should reflect the presumption and hence the above policy fulfils this requirement. In accordance with other policies in the NPPF, it should be noted that the presumption does not apply to development where Appropriate Assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directive is required or for development proposals on land designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Green Belt, Local Green Space, designated heritage assets or locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion. <del>To achieve sustainable development across Halton a number of principles have been agreed. These sustainable development principles are informed by the Borough's drivers of change and respond to Halton's challenges as set out in Halton's Story of Place. As a result the Sustainable Development Principles reflect the current social, economic and environmental needs of the Borough whilst building upon the aims of sustainable development at</del></p>

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<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM36</b>	CS2 New para after 5.3	<p><del>the national level:</del></p> <p><u>The aims of the NPPF will be delivered through development in Halton:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>contributing towards the delivery of mixed and balanced communities;</u></li> <li>• <u>increasing the quality of life for the Borough's communities, contributing to long term improvements in health and well-being, educational attainment and skill development;</u></li> <li>• <u>contributing towards a strong, stable and more competitive economy, responding to Halton's needs and building upon Halton's strengths;</u></li> <li>• <u>being located to minimise the need to travel, increasing accessibility and supporting sustainable transport options;</u></li> <li>• <u>regenerating and remediating Halton, bringing noticeable improvements to the Borough's urban areas and green spaces;</u></li> <li>• <u>conserving and enhancing the character and quality of Halton's natural and historic environment and green infrastructure network;</u></li> <li>• <u>minimising factors which contribute to climate change and plan for the potential effects of a changing climate on the Borough's communities and environments;</u></li> <li>• <u>minimising energy and water use and making efficient use of natural resources including through sustainable waste management and maximising the re-use of recycled products; and,</u></li> <li>• <u>ensuring that the infrastructure needs of the Borough are met.</u></li> </ul>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM37</b>	CS2 Para 5.4	<p>In order to achieve sustainable development in Halton over the plan period, all development <u>proposals</u> <del>, where appropriate,</del> will be assessed against <u>the above policy and against the</u> <del>these</del> <u>principles in the NPPF. The other policies in the Core Strategy set out how the NPPF will be applied locally. The Sustainable Development Principles are therefore integral to the delivery of the Core Strategy and are amplified throughout the plan.</u></p>																						
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM38</b>	CS2 Policy Framework	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td data-bbox="745 998 1115 1307" rowspan="9" style="vertical-align: top;"> <b>SA Objectives</b> </td> <td data-bbox="1121 998 1465 1031">1 – Cultural Heritage</td> <td data-bbox="1472 998 1787 1031">10 – Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1036 1465 1068">2 – Biodiversity</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1036 1787 1068">11 – Accessibility</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1073 1465 1105">3 – Water Quality</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1073 1787 1105">12 – Health</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1110 1465 1143">4 – Climate Change</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1110 1787 1143">13 – Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1148 1465 1180">5 – Flood Risk</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1148 1787 1180">14 – Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1185 1465 1218">6 – Energy Efficiency</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1185 1787 1218">15 – Leisure and Tourism</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1222 1465 1255">7 – Land Quality</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1222 1787 1255">16 – Town Centres</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1260 1465 1292">8 – Air Quality</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1260 1787 1292">17 – Transport</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1121 1297 1465 1330">9 – Waste</td> <td data-bbox="1472 1297 1787 1330"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="745 1334 1115 1385" style="vertical-align: top;"> <b>SA Outcome</b> </td> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="1121 1334 1787 1385" style="vertical-align: top;">           The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms as it has positive benefits for all of the SA objectives. <u>However, the NPPF has</u> </td> </tr> </table>	<b>SA Objectives</b>	1 – Cultural Heritage	10 – Housing	2 – Biodiversity	11 – Accessibility	3 – Water Quality	12 – Health	4 – Climate Change	13 – Education	5 – Flood Risk	14 – Economy	6 – Energy Efficiency	15 – Leisure and Tourism	7 – Land Quality	16 – Town Centres	8 – Air Quality	17 – Transport	9 – Waste		<b>SA Outcome</b>	The SA considers this policy to be positive in sustainability terms as it has positive benefits for all of the SA objectives. <u>However, the NPPF has</u>	
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		<p><a href="#">removed the national brownfield target for housing development, which could pose a threat to soil and land resources in the longer term. However, this is partly mitigated by the Core Strategy emphasis on the use of previously developed land to meet housing and employment needs.</a></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM39</b>	CS6 Para 9.1 Additional last sentence	<p><a href="#">Land within the Green Belt will come under pressure to be released for development over the plan period and it is for the Core Strategy to ensure any release happens in a co-ordinated and sustainable manner.</a></p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM40</b>	CS6 Policy wording	<p><del>The general extent of the Green Belt surrounding Halton, broadly following the line of the built up area as indicated on the Key Diagram, and as defined on the Proposals Map, will remain largely unchanged over the initial plan period. This is with the exception of the area to the east of Liverpool John Lennon Airport where an area of search is identified within which minor alterations will be considered as part of an Allocations DPD in accordance with CS17.</del></p> <p>A partial Green Belt review <del>may</del> <a href="#">will</a> be necessary during the <a href="#">early part of the</a> plan period to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of deliverable development land to meet the requirements of the Borough's separate communities as set out in CS1, CS3 and CS4. <del>Any</del> <a href="#">This</a> review <del>is likely to</del> <a href="#">will</a> be limited to meeting the identified needs of Widnes / Hale <del>and would be undertaken in support of a subsequent Site Allocations DPD. The development of any land released from the Green Belt will be phased towards the latter part of the plan period with the release of land for development strictly phased</del> <a href="#">in line accordance</a> with the prioritisation of urban <del>renewal</del> <a href="#">regeneration</a> as set out in CS1. <a href="#">In addition, an Area of Search is identified to the east of Liverpool John Lennon Airport within which minor alterations will be considered in accordance with policy CS17. Green Belt boundary changes will be defined in the subsequent Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan.</a></p> <p><a href="#">The general extent of the Green Belt surrounding Runcorn, broadly following the line of the built up area as indicated on the Key Diagram, and as defined on the Halton UDP Proposals Map<sup>1</sup>, will remain unchanged over the plan period.</a></p> <p>Small scale development amounting to minor infilling within the 'washed over'<sup>2</sup> Green Belt settlements of Daresbury, Moore and Preston on the Hill may be permitted where it can be shown to be necessary to meet <del>identified</del> <a href="#">specific</a> local needs.</p> <p>Insert Footnote:  <sup>1</sup> <a href="#">For the purposes of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012, at the date of adoption of</a></p>

Ref	Policy / Section / Paragraph	Change proposed to Revised Proposed Submission Document (May 2011)
		<p><del>this Core Strategy the 'Halton UDP Proposals Map' was the 'Adopted Polices Map'</del>  Delete Footnote:  <del><sup>2</sup>CLG (2001) Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts</del></p>
MAIN MODIFICATION MM41	CS6 Para 9.5	Additional last sentence: <a href="#">The proposed Green Belt Review will have full regard to these principles.</a>
MAIN MODIFICATION MM42	CS6 Para 9.9 - 9.11	<p><del><b>Potential</b> Need for Green Belt Review</del></p> <p><del>9.9 In 2010, a study was undertaken across the Liverpool City Region (LCR) in respect of cross-boundary employment and housing land development issues.<sup>4</sup> The aim of the study was to determine if there were land supply issues in individual authorities, and whether unmet development needs of one area could reasonably be met within the urban extents of other authorities within the sub-region, avoiding the need for a strategic review of the Green Belt. Emerging findings indicate that in relation to housing land supply there is no need for a strategic review of Green Belt across the three districts comprising the LCR Eastern Housing Market Area (Halton, St Helens and Warrington), though a number of neighbouring authorities in the Northern Housing Market Area are embarking on reviews. In relation to employment land supply, whilst the study found there to be a potential shortfall in Halton's supply in the medium to long term (to 2031), this did not take into account the remodelling and regeneration opportunities highlighted though the JELP Study<sup>5</sup> and referred to in CS4. If these sites are taken into account, the study recognised there is a much more balanced position in the longer term.</del></p> <p><del>9.10 The study considered land supply within local authorities as a whole and did not look at the adequacy of supply to meet future needs in separate communities within an individual authority's area.</del></p> <p><del>9.11 The land supply position as detailed in CS1: Halton's Spatial Strategy and in the evidence base accompanying the Core Strategy<sup>6</sup> indicate that overall Halton has an adequate supply of land to meet anticipated development needs over the plan period for both housing and employment purposes, however, this assessment of the whole Borough masks a mismatch in supply north and south of the river.</del></p> <p><del><sup>4</sup>GVA (2011) Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study for Liverpool City Region Partners</del>  <del><sup>5</sup>BE Group (2010) Joint Employment Land and Premises Study</del>  <del><sup>6</sup>HBC (2011) Housing Topic Paper</del></p>
MAIN MODIFICATION MM43	CS6 New paras after 9.6	<a href="#">The housing policy figure for Halton as set out in CS1 and CS3 conforms with Policy L4 of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West which required that Halton plan to provide a minimum of 500 units (net dwelling gain) over the period from 2003 to 2021 and for any period after until such time as the policy is reviewed. As highlighted in policy CS3, the Government has indicated its intention to abolish Regional Strategies, however, until such time as RSS for the North West is legally revoked, it remains part of the Development Plan and the Halton Core Strategy must be in general conformity with its provisions.</a>

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		<p><a href="#">Analysis of the identified supply of deliverable and developable land for residential development (at 2010)<sup>7</sup> suggests that the total, whilst sufficient to meet the RSS housing requirement 'rolled forward' seven years to cover the Core Strategy plan period to 2028, has little margin or flexibility to cope with increased demolitions or projected supply not coming forward as anticipated.</a></p> <p><a href="#">Insert Footnote</a>  <sup>7</sup> HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010</p>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM44</b>	CS6 Para 9.12	Runcorn has sufficient identified land to meet its anticipated housing needs, with the supply of land for employment purposes sufficient in the short term with <a href="#">regeneration /</a> redevelopment opportunities within existing protected employment areas expected to bolster long term supply. <a href="#">As such the previous Green Belt boundaries are reconfirmed.</a>
<b>MAIN MODIFICATION MM45</b>	CS6 Para 9.13 - 9.16	<p><del>9.13 Widnes / Hale have sufficient identified land (at 2010) to meet their anticipated housing development needs<sup>7</sup> in the period up to 2022<sup>8</sup> with a potential shortfall of supply of around 600 units to 2028, (see Appendix 1; Monitor Line Chart) with land for employment purposes sufficient in terms of overall supply for the plan period but limited in terms of range and quality. These limitations in the range of employment sites available within Widnes together with potential contamination issues limit the scope to reallocate employment land for residential purposes. Therefore at 2010, Widnes / Hale had a potential shortage of identified land for residential development in the region of around 20 Ha. (i.e. 600 units delivered at a density of 30 dph).</del></p> <p><del>9.14 The Core Strategy seeks to ensure a sufficient ongoing supply of development land to meet the needs of Halton's individual communities. Policies CS3 and CS4 define 'sufficient' supply as equating to 5 years at the prevailing policy target(s). Analysis of the position in 2010 showed that Widnes / Hale are forecast to be able to demonstrate a 5 year supply for residential development in each year until 2018 based on current build rates. Runcorn is forecast to have in excess of a 5 year supply for residential development throughout the plan period.</del></p> <p><del>9.15 Changes to build rate assumptions (reviewed annually) and new, previously unidentified or unavailable 'windfall' sites have the potential to boost supply, possibly addressing the minor shortfall at 2010, negating the need for specific policy intervention including Green Belt review. An assessment of windfall rates is contained within the 'Halton Housing Topic Paper' paper.<sup>18</sup></del></p> <p><del>9.16 The land supply and demand situation across Halton's communities will be kept under regular review with annual monitoring to ensure a continuing 5 year supply of developable land in line with Policies CS3 and CS4. If the situation arises where it is apparent that an ongoing 5 year supply of development land from within the existing urban extents cannot be identified for the subsequent three years and alternative solutions are not forthcoming, a strategic Green Belt review will be triggered to inform the content of a subsequent Site Allocations DPD to ensure the future prosperity of the Borough and the wider sub-region. Housing Land supply information</del></p>

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		<p><del>at 2010 suggests this may be necessary around 2015. Employment land supply information at 2010 suggests that a 5-year supply can be demonstrated for the entirety of the plan period.</del></p> <p><del><sup>8</sup> GL Hearn / JG Consulting (2011) Mid-Mersey Strategic Housing Market Assessment</del>  <del><sup>9</sup> HBC (2010) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2010</del>  <del><sup>10</sup> HBC (2011) Housing Topic Paper</del></p>												
MAIN MODIFICATION MM46	CS6 Para 9.13	<p><u>Housing supply is constrained in Widnes / Hale, with the likelihood that the identified supply (at 2010) will not be sufficient to meet the defined policy requirement throughout the full plan period. The Examination into this Plan concluded that this constituted the exceptional circumstances, as required to be demonstrated by the National Planning Policy Framework, to warrant an early partial review of the Halton Green Belt around these settlements.</u></p>												
MAIN MODIFICATION MM47	CS6 Para 9.17	<p><del>PPG2 National planning policy</del> states that Green Belt boundaries should have a degree of permanence and should endure beyond the timeframe of normal development plans. As such, <del>any the planned</del> review of Green Belt boundaries <del>as may be necessary around Widnes / Hale</del> during the <del>life of this early part of the</del> Core Strategy <u>plan period will</u> <del>would</del> need to look beyond 2028, addressing not only any <u>known</u> shortfall in development land to 2028 but also taking into account foreseeable development requirements beyond this period, <u>and ensuring that the boundaries will last and will not come under undue pressure.</u> <del>As such, it is not possible at this time to identify the total quantum of land potentially affected by any review as this will be influenced by the degree of any shortfall and the timing of the review.</del></p>												
MAIN MODIFICATION MM48	CS6 Policy Framework	<table border="1" data-bbox="554 870 1587 1380"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 870 772 1027"><b>SA Objectives</b></td> <td data-bbox="772 870 1587 899">1 – Cultural Heritage</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 899 772 928"></td> <td data-bbox="772 899 1587 928">2 – Biodiversity</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 928 772 958"></td> <td data-bbox="772 928 1587 958">7 – Land Quality</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 958 772 987"></td> <td data-bbox="772 958 1587 987">10 – Housing</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 987 772 1027"></td> <td data-bbox="772 987 1587 1027">14 – Economy</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="554 1027 772 1380"><b>SA Outcome</b></td> <td data-bbox="772 1027 1587 1380"> <p>Overall, this policy highlights the importance of protecting Green Belt land over the plan period. <del>This will have a positive impact on the relevant SA objectives.</del></p> <p><u>However, policies CS1, CS3 and CS6 (Green Belt) all set out that there will be a requirement to undertake an early partial review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale. This indicates that there will potentially be a need for new development on Green Belt land over the plan period within Halton.</u></p> <p><u>This could potentially have a significant negative impact on SA</u></p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<b>SA Objectives</b>	1 – Cultural Heritage		2 – Biodiversity		7 – Land Quality		10 – Housing		14 – Economy	<b>SA Outcome</b>	<p>Overall, this policy highlights the importance of protecting Green Belt land over the plan period. <del>This will have a positive impact on the relevant SA objectives.</del></p> <p><u>However, policies CS1, CS3 and CS6 (Green Belt) all set out that there will be a requirement to undertake an early partial review of the Green Belt around Widnes and Hale. This indicates that there will potentially be a need for new development on Green Belt land over the plan period within Halton.</u></p> <p><u>This could potentially have a significant negative impact on SA</u></p>
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