



**Draft Employment Technical Report**

**“Planning for Employment Growth in Knowsley”**

**Knowsley MBC**

**June 2011**

# **Planning for Employment growth in Knowsley**

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## **Executive Summary**

This Draft Technical Report is one of a number of reports produced by Knowsley MBC to help ensure that the Borough's Local Development Framework's Core Strategy is supported by 'robust and credible' evidence. It will be used to inform the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (LDF) about the current land supply position and the future provision of land for employment development.

The purpose of this technical report is to inform and establish an approach which accounts for the void created by the proposed abolition of regional planning policy. In particular it focuses on establishing what would be an appropriate level of employment land provision that will be required to meet the Borough's needs for employment growth. Although it is accepted that other land uses such as retail and leisure contribute to employment in the Borough; in this report employment uses refer to the uses within the 'B use classes' in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Included in the 'B use classes' are offices, light industry, general industry, and warehousing. Provision of Town Centre uses are dealt with in the Town Centres and Shopping Study<sup>1</sup>.

This Draft Technical Report:

- considers national, regional, sub-regional and local policy together with their relevant evidence bases (chapter 2);
- identifies the Borough's employment land supply (chapter 5);
- assesses future employment land need (chapter 6); and
- assesses how this need can be met (chapters 7 and 8).

## **Knowsley's Economy**

Knowsley contains several major industrial and business parks including one of the largest in Europe (Knowsley Industrial Park) and provides employment for 56,000 people<sup>2</sup> many of whom live outside the Borough. It is therefore a major location for employment in the City Region. Around 49,000 of the Borough's residents work in the City Region; it is therefore also an important source of workforce. The number of working age population, however, is projected to fall significantly in the next 15 years.

The Borough's employment role has developed since 1945 and has traditionally been provided by manufacturing industries. These have primarily been located in the Borough's Industrial and Business Parks and the Ford (now Jaguar / Land Rover) car plant at Halewood. During the late 1970s and 1980s, however, over 20,000 jobs were lost from Knowsley Industrial Park alone and thousands of local people faced unemployment. Since the 1990s employment levels have increased again but are still short of the former levels. In the initial part of this period the Borough contained a lot of vacant

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<sup>1</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework: Town Centres and Shopping Study (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>2</sup> 2008 Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis (ONS, 2009)

industrial land and take-up was high. As the choice of available sites diminished so did the take-up.

Since 1998 major new employment developments on the Borough's industrial and business parks together with development in town centres and at Whiston Hospital has facilitated the creation of substantial numbers of new jobs. This has included a growing role for the business services, ICT, creative, tourism, leisure, financial services, health care, communications, logistics and distribution sectors. The Borough, however, still has a significant manufacturing sector with concentrations in the automotive industry and its supply chain, as well as advanced manufacturing and engineering sub-sectors.

Although there have been improvements in the Borough's economic performance, it still lags behind the UK and North West average. Relatively low levels of business start up rates are considered to be a major issue.

Knowsley is making progress in raising educational attainment but its performance still lags significantly behind performance at the national level. The percentage of 16 – 18 year olds not in education, employment or training is also high. Worklessness and deprivation is also among the worst in the Country.

### **Employment Land Supply**

In April 2008 the Council identified what it considered to be the land available for employment development. The sites were spread across the main industrial and business parks in the Borough and included:

- sites allocated in the UDP<sup>3</sup> for employment development (Policy EC2) that have not been developed;
- vacant sites allocated within Primarily Industrial Areas (Policy EC3); and
- sites with extant planning permission for employment purposes.

As part of the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>4</sup>, each site identified by the Council was assessed to see how likely it was that the site would be developed. The study concluded that the Borough contained sites totalling 150.91 ha<sup>5</sup> that had a realistic prospect of being developed. Over half of this (82.38 ha) was considered to be available or would be available within the following three years.

Following the study the Council updated the “realistic supply” to a base date of 1 April 2010. At that date the “realistic supply” of employment land was considered to be **151.6 ha**. This included 122.4 ha of land allocated for employment purposes but without planning permission; 11.1 ha of other land in the Primarily Industrial Areas, 15.6 ha of land with planning permission but

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<sup>3</sup> Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

<sup>4</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>5</sup> Mathematical error led the BE Group to report 151.14 ha as being the realistic supply figure.

where development has not commenced, and 2.5 ha of land where construction has started.

### Quality of sites

The Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>6</sup> categorised sites as being suitable for Offices (generally the higher quality sites) and Industrial (generally the lower quality sites). It was considered that, of the sites that they considered to have a realistic probability of being developed, 7 sites could be developed for office use only, 27 for industrial use only, and 16 could be developed for either office or industrial or both. For both office and industrial sites it was considered that the Borough has at least a five year supply in a range of sizes. This assessment is based on the historic trend based projection of 12.73 ha per year.

The Core Strategy's Issues and Options Paper<sup>7</sup> considered if the use of some employment sites should be restricted to specific employment types such as office and knowledge based industries. This would encourage similar types of uses to be located in close proximity to each other which may engender competition. This approach would, however, be less flexible and therefore less responsive to changing market conditions. This report considers that, generally, this approach should not be supported. High density jobs such as office uses should be located in the most accessible locations such as town centres and the major employment centres of Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks, Huyton Business Park, and Kings Business Park.

### Employment Land Need

In order to identify the amount of employment land needed in the future, seven scenarios were developed. Three of these used historic take-up of employment land and four used jobs forecasting (see chapter 5). The three methods that used historic take-up were based on the Regional Spatial Strategy<sup>8</sup> requirement and evidence from the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>9</sup>. Evidence from preparation for the Regional Strategy<sup>10</sup> and from the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>11</sup> provided data for the four methods which used jobs forecasting. For these methods, jobs forecasting was then translated in to land requirement by minimum and maximum limits being put on floorspace per job to allow for different type of job, and plot ratios to allow for different industry needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>7</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (Knowsley MBC, 2009)

<sup>8</sup> North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 Employment Land Implementation Note – April 2009 (4NW, 2009)

<sup>9</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>10</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>11</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

## **Historic Trends (methods 1, 5 and 6)**

The continuation of historic trends is a straightforward employment land forecasting method. It takes account of the evidence of past take-up and creates an average building rate. It assumes that the rate of building that has occurred in the past will continue into the future.

### Regional Spatial Strategy Requirement (method 1)

In 2008, the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) set a requirement for the supply of employment land for each of the sub-regions across the North West. The requirement was grounded in the findings of the 2005<sup>12</sup> Regional Employment Land Study (RELS). 'Merseyside and Halton' was required to provide an additional 494 ha of land for employment purposes between 2005 and 2021. This was based on historic trends but included an additional 18.5% above the actual take-up of employment land to reflect a projected increase in take-up plus an additional 20% buffer. The additional 20% was included in recognition that special circumstances, such as the expansion requirements of a particular business or the realisation of significant inward investment potential, may require additional land to be provided.

The RSS did not set specific targets for individual districts. Using the method applied at the regional level in the RELS study, including the 20% flexibility factor, the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>13</sup> suggested that Knowsley's proportion of the 494 ha sub regional requirement should be 95 ha of additional land<sup>14</sup>. The RSS target will be removed if the Localism Bill is enacted in its current form.

### Long-term Historic trends (method 5)

The long-term take-up of employment land in the Borough was reported in the Employment Land and Premises Study and was based on the average build rates between 1995 and 2008. During this period 165.52 ha of land was developed averaging 12.73 ha per year. The study suggested that in deciding future employment need the average take-up per year be uplifted by 20% to be consistent with the RSS methodology. Although the recession will obviously affect any future employment growth, the study considered that, after a two to three year downturn, trends would revert to their long term averages.

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<sup>12</sup> Regional Employment Land Study Phase 1 and 2 (Arup for North West Regional Assembly, April & June 2005)

<sup>13</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>14</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

### Short-term Historic trends (method 6)

The short-term take-up of employment land used the average build rates of land in the Borough between 2003 and 2008. It was reported in the Employment Land and Premises Study. At 6.72 ha per annum this was significantly below the long-term trend. The Employment Land and Premises Study gave two reasons for this; there was a shortage of immediately developable employment sites following the major investment in the Borough in the years before 2003; and the recession in the UK economy formed a larger part of the period used to determine the trend.

### **Economic Forecasting (methods 2, 3, 4, and 7)**

Economic forecasting relies on an understanding of the macroeconomic context, exploring past trends, and applying economic relationships. It makes assumptions about Government strategic policy and moves to different types of employment. Government strategic policy might include, for example, provision of grants in areas of high unemployment.

This technical report considers four jobs forecasting methodologies including an Oxford Economics forecast and three forecasts that were considered as part of development of Regional Strategy employment policy.

### Preparatory work for the Regional Strategy 2010 (methods 2,3, and 4)

National policy<sup>15</sup> requires regional planning authorities to set regional job targets and then disaggregate minimum job targets to local authority level. Local authorities should then identify a range of sites to facilitate a broad range of economic development. Before the Government expressed its intent to abolish Regional Strategies, a technical background paper<sup>16</sup> was produced by the former 4NW setting out the initial technical work undertaken for housing provision and job growth figures for the North West. Although five different scenarios were modelled, only Runs A, B & C set out job growth figures. The runs were informed by the published Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (REFP) long term baseline forecast for the region as a whole<sup>17</sup>. The forecast developed by the REFP considered forecasts from three economic forecasting houses (Cambridge Econometrics, Oxford Economics and Experian) but did not align directly with any of them. It was a 'policy off' forecast and did not take into account any aspirations or policy interventions.

The runs produced job targets for districts. They did not produce land supply targets. This was to be done later in consultation with the districts. The removal of the regional tier of planning means that this will no longer be undertaken. The methodology used in the three runs do not take any account

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<sup>15</sup> Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (DCLG, 2009)

<sup>16</sup> Technical Background Paper Initial Technical work on Housing Provision and Job Growth Figures for the North West July 2010 (4NW, 2010)

<sup>17</sup> Regional Economic Forecasting Panel State of the Northwest Economy: A Long-term Forecast for the Northwest 2010 – 2030 (NWDA, 2010)

that some districts are predominantly employment areas while others are predominantly commuter areas. They also do not take account of future policy initiatives.

#### Run A – Current RSS<sup>18</sup> (method 2)

As stated above, the Regional Spatial Strategy set out sub-regional employment land targets rather than job growth figures. The method for producing the land targets did however include economic modelling for the sub-region.

Run A used the job growth figure for the North West between 2005 and 2021 of 245,921 and distributed in proportion to the RSS housing target for each district. This produced a projected job increase of 266 per annum for Knowsley.

#### Run B – Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (method 3)

Run B was based on work produced by Cambridge Econometrics for the former 4NW and North West Development Agency. It was based on population, projected Gross Value Added of the economy, and current employment levels. Run B forecast that in Knowsley, 44 new jobs would be created each year up to 2015, after which 227 new jobs would be created each year.

#### Run C – ONS Population and CLG Household Forecasts (method 4)

Run C<sup>19</sup> calculated the relationship between jobs and population and applied them to the ONS population forecasts using job density rates. If the population were to increase by 5% then the number of jobs would also increase by 5%. Run C produced, for Knowsley, a projected job increase of 206 per annum.

#### Translating regional work on job growth forecasts into employment land figures (methods 2,3, and 4)

Initial work for the former 4NW to translate job growth to employment land requirement<sup>20</sup> suggests that an office worker will need on average 16 m<sup>2</sup> while an industrial or warehouse worker will require on average 61 m<sup>2</sup>. It also suggested that for industrial and warehousing development and for out-of-centre offices, a reasonable plot ratio assumption is around 35%.

Using the Regional Strategy methodology<sup>21</sup> and for the Regional Spatial Plan period of 2006 to 2030, Knowsley will require between 8.0 and 78.8 ha of

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<sup>18</sup> RS2010 Part 2 housing provision and job growth figures summary and background data Final version July 2010, sheet 13

<sup>19</sup> RS2010 Part 2 housing provision and job growth figures summary and background data Final version July 2010, sheets 10, 14 and 15,

<sup>20</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>21</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

employment land under Run A, between 5.2 and 51.3 ha under Run B, and between 6.2 and 61.0 ha under Run C (see methods 2, 3 and 4 above).

### Oxford Economics Forecast

The Oxford Economics forecast was produced for the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>22</sup>. In 2008 there were 60,774 jobs in the Borough, under this model this was projected to rise to 62,303 in 2026. The study concluded that the 1,529 new jobs would require a further 9.3 ha of land for office use. It also suggested, however, that 7.4 ha of land would be surplus from industrial use. The net additional requirement would therefore be 1.9 ha. The future land requirement was estimated using average floorspace requirement for different type of jobs and plot ratios.

### **Comparing scenarios**

The methodologies considered in this technical report cover a variety of timescales. The following Table shows a range of methods of estimating future required provision of employment land for the common time period of 2010 to 2027. They are calculated by producing an annual requirement of land based on the total land requirement of the scenario and dividing by the number of years covered the method. In the Regional Spatial Strategy's (RSS) case this was a land requirement of 278.5 ha divided by the number of years covered by the RSS (16 years). This annualised requirement was then applied to the period 2010 to 2027 to give an employment land requirement (in the RSS case this was 17.4 ha per year for each of the 17 years). The employment land supply at 2010 (151.6 ha) was then deducted to provided an updated additional land requirement for the period 2010 to 2027 (in the RSS case this was 144.3 ha).

<b>Range of Employment Land Requirements</b>						
Method	Time period	Land required	Amount required per year	Equivalent land required for 2010 to 2027	Land Supply 2010	Equivalent Additional Land required in ha for 2010 to 2027 (over supply in brackets)
Method 1 - Regional Spatial Strategy requirement (2005-2021)	16	278.5	17.4	295.9	151.6	144.3

<sup>22</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

Range of Employment Land Requirements						
Method	Time period	Land required	Amount required per year	Equivalent land required for 2010 to 2027	Land Supply 2010	Equivalent Additional Land required in ha for 2010 to 2027 (over supply in brackets)
<b>Method 2 - RS2010 Run A - Current RSS (2006-2030)</b>						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	20.7	0.9	14.7	151.6	(136.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	78.8	3.3	55.8	151.6	(95.8)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	8.0	0.3	5.7	151.6	(145.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	30.6	1.3	21.7	151.6	(129.9)
<b>Method 3 - RS2010 Run B - Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (2006-2030)</b>						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	13.5	0.6	9.5	151.6	(142.1)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	51.3	2.1	36.3	151.6	(115.3)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	5.2	0.2	3.7	151.6	(147.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	20	0.8	14.2	151.6	(137.4)
<b>Method 4 - RS2010 Run C - ONS Population and CLG Household Forecasts (2006-2030)</b>						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	16	0.7	11.3	151.6	(140.3)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	61	2.5	43.2	151.6	(108.4)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	6.2	0.3	4.4	151.6	(147.2)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	23.7	1.0	16.8	151.6	(134.8)

<b>Range of Employment Land Requirements</b>						
Method	Time period	Land required	Amount required per year	Equivalent land required for 2010 to 2027	Land Supply 2010	Equivalent Additional Land required in ha for 2010 to 2027 (over supply in brackets)
<b>Method 5 - Joint Employment Land Study Long-term trend</b>						
1995-2008	13	165.5	12.7	216.4	151.6	64.8
1995-2008 with 20% uplift	13	198.6	15.3	259.7	151.6	108.1
Updated to 1995-2010	15	171.6	11.4	194.5	151.6	42.9
Updated to 1995-2010 with 20% uplift	15	205.9	13.7	233.4	151.6	81.8
<b>Method 6 - Joint Employment Land Study Short-term trend</b>						
2003-2008	5	33.6	6.7	114.2	151.6	(37.4)
2003-2008 with 20% uplift	5	40.3	8.1	137.0	151.6	(14.6)
Updated to 2005-2010	5	32.8	6.6	111.6	151.6	(40.0)
Updated to 2005-2010 with 20% uplift	5	39.4	7.9	133.9	151.6	(17.7)
<b>Method 7 - Joint Employment Land Study Study econometrics method (2008-2026)</b>						
	18	1.9	0.1	1.9	151.6	(149.8)
Note: The RS2010 runs A, B and C did not produce existing employment land supply figures. The base date for these runs was 2006. In these instances the initial land required figure of 111.86 ha from the 2005 based Regional Spatial Strategy has been used.						

### **Preferred Methodology for estimating employment land need**

Of the seven methods estimating employment land requirement described above, four are based on econometric projections and three are based on historic trends. The different approaches to quantifying employment land requirements produce significantly varying results. According to the

Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>23</sup>, this is because econometric projections only represent the absolute minimum amount of land needed while historic trends based projections show what actual need has been in the past. The preferred methodology of the Employment Land and Premises Study was long-term historic trends forecasting plus an uplift of 20%. .

In order to explore the extent to which any excess employment land supply in one or more local authority area(s) could meet the needs / demands of neighbouring local authorities, the Liverpool City Region local authorities commissioned an "overview" study. The draft Overview Study<sup>24</sup> concluded that the demand figure identified within the Employment Land and Premises Study is a high estimate of requirements and the undersupply, therefore should also be treated as a maximum. The draft Overview study, however, found that commercial office floorspace (B1 use) grew by 82.3% factory floorspace (B2 uses) grew by 53% and warehouse floorspace (B8 use) grew by 64.6% between 1998 and 2008<sup>25</sup>. The study suggested that although a continuation of this level of increase is unrealistic, it does show a general trend.

The conclusion of this technical report is that long-term historic take up of employment land is the most robust means of determining the future level of employment land provision needed to ensuring the Borough's economic growth. This is because econometric forecasting only produce a minimum land need and does not take account of policy aspirations or the flexibility to deal with changing circumstances. Short-term historic trends are considered to be too strongly influenced by major investment or lack of investment in an individual year.

Both the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the Employment Land and Premises Study included a 20% buffer above the actual historic trends although in the RSS case, a subsequent guidance note<sup>26</sup> stated that local authorities must use their own judgement as to whether to apply the flexibility factor in supply calculations. The draft Overview Study<sup>27</sup> notes that while an allowance for choice and churn is not a specific requirement of government guidance it is standard practice to include a buffer for flexibility within the preferred requirements. This allowance recognises that a proportion of employment land may be lost to non-employment uses over the plan period, and that there will be requirements resulting from movements within the economy (i.e. business relocations) that do not necessarily generate additional jobs but require additional land.

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<sup>23</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>24</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>25</sup> Valuation Office Agency (VOA, 2010)

<sup>26</sup> North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 Employment Land Implementation Note – April 2009 (4NW, 2009) (Paragraph 3.2)

<sup>27</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

The draft Overview Study<sup>28</sup> concluded that historic trends forecasting often result in high requirements over plan periods when projected forward. This report therefore concludes that the 20% buffer recommended by BE Group should not be applied. Any net losses through changes of employment land to other uses should, however, be replaced by a site or sites of similar size.

This report recommends that the long-term historic land supply should be used to project employment land need for the period 2010 to 2027; that is 12.73 ha per year x 17 years = **216.5 ha**.

### **Employment land shortfall**

In April 2010 the Borough had 151.6 ha of land available for employment purposes. This was 65 ha short of the Borough's projected employment land need. This situation could be further exacerbated if sites currently in the employment land supply are developed for other purposes. For example it is now considered that approximately half of a 29.4 ha site in South Prescott that is currently allocated for employment purposes may be developed for housing. If part of this site is developed for residential purposes, the shortfall will be increased.

### **Options to address shortfall**

The Issues and Options paper<sup>29</sup> identified several options that were available to the Council in identifying how some additional employment land provision could be made over the Plan period. These included:

- Remodelling of Industrial Parks
- Development in neighbouring districts
- Development in sustainable locations in the Green Belt.

Remodelling of Industrial Parks - A Strategic Framework and Delivery Plan<sup>30</sup> estimates that the equivalent of 24.6 hectares of new employment land could be created through the development of opportunity areas within the Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks. It would, however, require significant funding as a range of actions would be required including amalgamating land holdings and sites. The draft Overview Study<sup>31</sup> suggests that in the current market climate it would be optimistic to assume 100% delivery of the 37 hectares borough-wide reported in the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>28</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>29</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (Knowsley MBC, 2009)

<sup>30</sup> Delivering a New Future for Knowsley Industrial Park - Strategic Framework (DTZ/Taylor Young/Arup, 2010)

<sup>31</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>32</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

Development in adjacent districts – The Overview" study<sup>33</sup> concluded that Knowsley has a key functional relationship with Liverpool but that Liverpool has insufficient capacity in employment land supply to realistically meet Knowsley's employment land need. It was considered that, in the long term, St. Helens may be able to meet some of Knowsley's B8 employment land need if the rail freight terminal at Parkside is delivered. There was, however, little support for development to be located in adjacent authorities during the Issues and Options consultation. The Council considers that this approach would be contrary to the Sustainable Community Strategy as it would fail to support a diverse and prosperous economy in the Borough. It is also seen to be less effective than the other options in facilitating Knowsley's future regeneration and economic development.

Development on sustainable sites within the Green Belt - The Issues and Options consultation prompted a mixed response to this option. Some comments acknowledged the benefits of preserving Green Belt land while others supported its release in order to ensure that sufficient land would be available for employment growth. Under national policy, significant changes to Green Belt boundaries can only be made under exceptional circumstances. If the Borough is to meet the land requirements to 2027 within the Borough, however, some changes to Green Belt will be required. The location and timing of delivery would need to be carefully assessed and controlled in order to ensure that regeneration measures in existing industrial areas are not jeopardised. The draft Overview study<sup>34</sup> supports the need to recognise that in the medium / long term Green Belt land release may be required.

The following Table shows that potentially Knowsley's shortfall in employment land supply is 65 ha. This could fall to **40.4 ha** or be as high as **79.7 ha** depending on the extent of loss of employment land and increase through remodelling / regeneration opportunities. This shortfall is taken forward in the Core Strategy's Preferred Options Report and will be required to be met either in adjacent authorities or on sites in Knowsley that are currently in the Green Belt.

<b>Employment Land Short-fall</b>		
	Minimum (ha)	Maximum (ha)
Projected Employment Land Need	216.5	216.5
Employment Land Supply 2010	151.6	151.6
Short-fall	65.0	65.0

<sup>33</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>34</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<b>Employment Land Short-fall</b>		
	Minimum (ha)	Maximum (ha)
Loss of employment land through development for non-employment purposes	0	14.7
Potential Short-fall	65.0	79.7
Potential capacity from remodelling Knowsley Industrial Park	24.6	0
<b>Revised potential Short-fall</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>79.7</b>

This report does not recommend that the shortfall be met in adjoining local authorities for the following reasons:

- The overview study concluded that there was little redistribution potential because of shortages of land supply in local authorities where the Borough has a functional relationship;
- it would undermine the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy aspiration of increasing economic activity and encouraging inward investment;
- it would increase the need to travel for residents.

Knowsley Council, along with neighbouring authorities, has undertaken a study to assess the capability of areas currently within the designated Green Belt that may be able to accommodate residential and / or employment development. Consultation on the Green Belt study will coincide with consultation on the Preferred Options Report. It is not the purpose of this report to determine where these sites should be or indeed that employment land should be given priority over Green Belt principles.

There is clear national planning policy in place which defines the role and functions of the Green Belt. It clearly states that development within the Green Belt would only be considered appropriate in exceptional circumstances. It will be for the LDF to argue that exceptional circumstances exist if the Green Belt boundary is to be amended. It is the conclusion of this report that in order to ensure employment growth some Green Belt release will be required.

Development on Greenfield sites is often less expensive than development on land that has previously been developed and hence more attractive to developers. Unconstrained release of Green Belt land could undermine regeneration priorities within the existing urban area. It is therefore recommended that land that is currently in the Green Belt be safeguarded until such time as the Borough no longer has sufficient land to have a five year supply.



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Draft Technical Report is one of a number of reports produced by Knowsley MBC to help ensure that the Borough's Local Development Framework Core Strategy is supported by 'robust and credible' evidence. It will be used to inform the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (LDF) about the current land supply position and the future provision of land for employment development.
- 1.2 The Core Strategy is the key overarching document for the LDF; it will, therefore, heavily influence subsequent LDF documents including the Site Allocations and Development Policies Development Plan Document. The Core Strategy is expected to be adopted in 2012 and will set the strategic framework for the growth and development of Knowsley for 15 years.

### Background

- 1.3 Although Knowsley is described as being in the outer part of the Liverpool City Region<sup>35</sup>, it plays an important role within it. It contains several major industrial and business parks including one of the largest in Europe (Knowsley Industrial Park) and provides employment for 56,000 people<sup>36</sup>. It is therefore a major location for employment in the City Region. Around 49,000 of the Borough's residents work in the City Region; it is therefore also an important source of workforce.
- 1.4 Since 1998 major new employment developments on the Borough's industrial and business parks together with development in town centres and at Whiston Hospital has facilitated the creation of substantial numbers of new jobs. This has included a growing role for the business services, ICT, creative, tourism, leisure, financial services, health care, communications, logistics and distribution sectors. The Borough, however, still has a significant manufacturing sector with concentrations in the automotive industry and its supply chain, as well as advanced manufacturing and engineering sub-sectors.
- 1.5 Development in Knowsley is currently guided by the Borough's Unitary Development Plan<sup>37</sup> and the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)<sup>38</sup>. Policy W1 of the RSS requires all plans and strategies to promote opportunities for economic development. This includes providing appropriate sites and premises that build on the region's economic strengths. In the Liverpool City Region this in particular focused on promoting advanced manufacturing and engineering, financial and professional services, media, creative and cultural industries, biomedical, high value added knowledge based industries, ICT / digital, tourism, maritime and communications.

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<sup>35</sup> North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (DCLG, 2008)

<sup>36</sup> 2008 Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis (ONS, 2009)

<sup>37</sup> Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

<sup>38</sup> North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (DCLG, 2008)

## **Proposed revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies**

- 1.6 Following the 2010 general election, the Government signalled its intention to abolish adopted Regional Spatial Strategies<sup>39</sup>. On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010, the formal revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies was confirmed by the Government<sup>40</sup>. In November 2010, however, the revocation decision was subject to legal challenge, and was subsequently overturned in a High Court decision<sup>41</sup>.
- 1.7 Following this decision, the Government has signalled its intention to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies using primary legislation within the Localism Bill<sup>42</sup> (published in December 2010). Regional Spatial Strategies will therefore remain part of the Borough's development plan until removed by enactment of the Localism Bill.
- 1.8 The proposed deletion of the regional tier of planning policy will leave a policy void covering a wide range of topics and issues including the provision of employment land. In order to ensure that a sound and robust local development plan is produced there is a need to ensure that the LDF covers all of the critical policy elements previously provided at the regional level.
- 1.9 It should be noted that the Regional Spatial Strategy and the evidence which underpinned it will remain in the public domain as evidence base. This includes work undertaken towards a replacement Regional Strategy, which was progressed in the North West by 4NW and partner organisations during 2009 and 2010.
- 1.10 The Government has also taken steps to change aspects of national planning policy, and proposes to publish a new National Planning Framework, which will replace the existing system of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes. Some smaller scale changes to national policy have already been made.
- 1.11 It is within this context of change that this report has been written. The previous iteration of the document (the Issues and Options Paper) was heavily influenced by the regional policy. This report is therefore particularly important when considering the need to make timely progress on the Knowsley Core Strategy.

## **What advice has been issued?**

- 1.12 Subsequent to the revocation announcement made by the Government in July 2010, some brief advice was issued to local authorities regarding how they should deal with the policy void left by the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategies. Although this advice was issued prior to the successful legal

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<sup>39</sup> See letter from the Secretary of State to Chief Planning Officers (CLG, May 2010)

<sup>40</sup> See letter from the CLG Chief Planner to Chief Planning Officers (CLG, July 2010)

<sup>41</sup> See Cala Homes (South) Limited vs. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government High Court decision at

<http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2010/2866.html>

<sup>42</sup> See Localism Bill at <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.html>

challenge, it remains a useful source of guidance<sup>43</sup> for local authorities in progressing their LDFs without the regional tier of planning policy. Part of the guidance is reproduced in Figure 1.1.

<p><b>Figure 1.1: Advice to Local Authorities from CLG</b></p> <p><b>7. What if my LDF document is still being prepared?</b>          Where local planning authorities are currently bringing forward development plan documents they should continue to do so. Authorities may decide to review and/or revise their emerging policies in the light of the revocation of Regional Strategies. Where authorities decide to do this they will need to ensure they meet the requirements for soundness under the current legislation. When undertaking consultation and sustainability appraisal on their draft policies, authorities should take an approach that considers the stage reached, the extent of work already undertaken and the scope of the policy changes they are making.</p> <p>Source: CLG Chief Planner letter, July 2010</p>
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- 1.13 The guidance gave clarification on some policy issues including the setting of housing targets. It did not, however, provide guidance on setting employment land targets.
- 1.14 In the light of this advice, and of the position of the Council in wishing to make timely progress on LDF production, it is considered appropriate to commence early work to attempt to fill the future policy void including the provision of employment land.

**Purpose of this report**

- 1.15 The purpose of this technical report is to inform and establish an approach which accounts for the void created by the proposed abolition of regional planning policy. In particular it focuses on establishing what would be an appropriate level of employment land provision that will be required to ensure the Borough’s continued employment growth. Although it is accepted that other land uses such as retail and leisure contribute to employment in the Borough; in this report employment uses refer to the uses within the ‘B use classes’ in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended). Included in the ‘B uses classes are offices, light industry, general industry, and warehousing. Provision of Town Centre uses are dealt with in the Town Centres and Shopping Study<sup>44</sup>.
- 1.16 This Draft Technical Report:
  - considers national, regional, sub-regional and local policy together with their relevant evidence bases (chapter 2);
  - identifies the Borough’s employment land supply (chapter 5);
  - assesses future employment land need (chapter 6); and
  - assesses how this need can be met (chapters 7 and 8).

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<sup>43</sup> CLG Chief Planner letter, July 2010

<sup>44</sup> Knowsley Local Development |Framework: Town Centres and Shopping Study (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

- 1.17 It sets out potential scenarios for employment land growth in Knowsley. It seeks to establish a preferred level of employment land provision for Knowsley which is justifiable, deliverable and supported by robust and up-to-date evidence. It also considers whether the existing supply of employment land should be protected.
- 1.18 The content of this report will form part of the evidence available for the Council to draw on in determining, and if necessary justifying and defending, its planning policies for employment growth.
- 1.19 Subsequent to the consultation period and / or in the light of new evidence or guidance, the Council may wish to review and / or amend the content of this report.

## 2. Context

- 2.1 This chapter considers the context in which the Local Development Framework is to be developed. It outlines national, regional, sub-regional and local policy together with their relevant evidence bases.

### National Policy

- 2.2 PPS1<sup>45</sup> sets out the Government's overarching policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. One of its key objectives is to maintain high and stable levels of economic growth and development and contribute towards sustainable economic development. It states that in preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to bring forward sufficient land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations to meet the expected needs for industrial development.
- 2.3 PPS4<sup>46</sup> defines economic development as development within the B Use Classes<sup>47</sup>, public and community uses and main town centre uses, as well as any other development that generates employment opportunities, wealth or an economic output or product. It requires regional planning authorities to set minimum job targets to local authority level and then local planning authorities to identify a range of sites that will facilitate a broad range of economic development, including mixed use. Where necessary, Councils should safeguard land from other uses. If there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated economic use then PPS4 requires that the allocation not be retained and alternative uses for the site be considered.
- 2.4 PPS12<sup>48</sup> states that Core Strategies should be based on robust evidence and consultation feedback. They should also be:
- consistent with national policy and in general conformity with regional policy; and
  - aligned with the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

### Regional policy and evidence

#### Regional Spatial Strategy<sup>49</sup>

- 2.5 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) policy W3 sets out the supply of employment land across the region, focusing on B1, B2 and B8 use classes. The figures were disaggregated to sub-regions with 'Merseyside and Halton' requiring an additional 494 ha of land to be identified for employment purposes between 2005 and 2021. This was in addition to 1,234 ha of land allocated for employment uses in development plans across the North West together with

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<sup>45</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM, 2005)

<sup>46</sup> Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (DCLG, 2009)

<sup>47</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

<sup>48</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning (DCLG, 2008)

<sup>49</sup> North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (DCLG, 2008)

land that had planning permission for employment uses<sup>50</sup>. The requirement was based on the assumption that there would be an 18.5% increase above the historic take-up of employment land. It also included a further 20% increase in recognition that there may, exceptionally, be a need to provide additional land to take account of special circumstances, such as the expansion requirements of a particular business or the realisation of significant inward investment potential. A subsequent guidance note<sup>51</sup> states that local authorities must use their own judgement as to whether to apply the flexibility factor in supply calculations. The RSS did not set specific targets for individual districts.

- 2.6 Although the Government have announced the intention to abolish Regional Strategies, of which the Regional Spatial Strategy now forms part, the evidence base that underpinned its development is considered to be still relevant to the preparation of Knowsley's Core Strategy. Before the Government announced its intention to abolish Regional Strategies, 4NW (the successor to the North West Regional Assembly) and the North West Development Agency commenced evidence base work for a new Regional Strategy (branded as RS2010). This included a Technical Background Paper<sup>52</sup> that outlined the initial work undertaken by 4NW to inform the development of housing provision and job growth figures for the North West region for the period to 2030. The paper set out five different scenarios that would have provided a starting point for further work and discussion.
- 2.7 Three of the scenarios related to job growth targets. These were:
- Run A – Current RSS
  - Run B – Regional Economic Forecasting Panel
  - Run C – ONS Population, and CLG Household, Forecasts
- 2.8 Runs D & E did not set out job growth targets or employment land provision.
- 2.9 Chapter 6 contains details of the job growth targets of Runs A, B, and C together with how the figures translate to employment land requirement.

#### Regional Economic Strategy

- 2.10 The North West Regional Economic Strategy<sup>53</sup> (RES) set the overall strategic priorities for the region. It contains a number of specific references to the Knowsley including:
- the Borough was defined as an under-performing area for enterprise and a focus for start-up and survival action;
  - the Borough was identified as an area for business start-up support;
  - the Borough was one of nine local authority areas earmarked for action to ensure that numbers of people without qualifications is reduced;

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<sup>50</sup> Regional Employment Land Study Phase 1 and 2, Arup, 2005 and Regional Employment Land Study Phase 3 (Arup, 2005)

<sup>51</sup> North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 Employment Land Implementation Note – April 2009 (4NW, 2009) (Paragraph 3.2)

<sup>52</sup> Technical Background Paper Initial Technical work on Housing Provision and Job Growth Figures for the North West July 2010 (4NW, 2010)

<sup>53</sup> North West Regional Economic Strategy 2006 (NWDA, 2006)

- the Borough was identified as a priority for action to reduce the numbers of people in receipt of incapacity benefit;
- the Borough was highlighted as an area for measures to encourage local employment creation;
- King's Business Park was identified as a key regional strategic investment site.

## **Sub-regional policy and evidence**

### Multi-Area Agreement

- 2.11 The Liverpool City Region Multi-Area Agreement<sup>54</sup> (MAA) is a common set of goals agreed by Knowsley and the other constituent authorities of the Liverpool City Region. It is made up of four platforms - Economy, Employment and Skills, Housing, and Transport - with the aim of creating a thriving international City Region. Each platform sets out how the City Region will work together to compete for jobs and investment. The platforms are supported by a Story of Place document that sets out the area's key opportunities and challenges. The MAA suggested that the Liverpool City Region entered the recession later than some other areas because of Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture in 2008 together with its relatively high public sector employment and substantial public / private sector investment (e.g. Whiston Hospital rebuild).

### Liverpool City Region Development Programme

- 2.12 The Liverpool City Region Development Programme<sup>55</sup> set out a comprehensive framework for the economic growth of the area. It contained five strategic priorities to make the City Region:
- a creative and competitive City Region;
  - a premier destination for culture, tourism, and sports;
  - a well connected City Region;
  - a talented and able city region driving up skill levels; and
  - a sustainable community.

### Mersey Partnership Economic Review<sup>56</sup>

- 2.13 The latest Mersey Partnership Economic Review (2011) found that the Liverpool City Region's economy had grown but remained well below the national average. It reported that recovery from the recession was underway with Knowsley's economy being mentioned as seeing impressive growth. Cuts in Government spending, however, are likely to have a significant effect on the City Region's economy. The review concluded that the reduced reliance on the public sector will need to be mitigated against by jobs in the private sector. It suggested that the key sectors for growth are the Liverpool Superport, low carbon economy, knowledge economy, and visitor economy.

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<sup>54</sup> Liverpool City Region Multi-Area Agreement (TMP and local authorities, 2009)

<sup>55</sup> Liverpool City Region Development Programme Report 2006 (TMP, 2006)

<sup>56</sup> The Mersey Partnership Economic Review 2011 (TMP, 2011)

### Local Enterprise Partnership

- 2.14 Local Enterprise Partnerships are partnerships between local authorities and businesses. Their purpose is to determine local economic priorities and undertake activities that drive economic growth and create local jobs. In October 2010 the Government announced the approval of the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LCRLEP). The LCRLEP plan<sup>57</sup> seeks to create a thriving international city region based upon global trade, science & innovation, manufacturing and tourism. The plan includes major opportunities to create economic growth and jobs within the private sector through major projects such as Liverpool SuperPort, the Mersey Gateway, Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus, Liverpool Waters and Wirral Waters. It also emphasises the importance of business start-up, support for small firms and accelerated business development.

### Draft Overview Study<sup>58</sup>

- 2.15 In order to explore the extent to which any excess employment land supply in one or more local authority area(s) could meet the needs / demands of neighbouring or other local authorities, the Liverpool City Region local authorities commissioned an "overview" study. The study evaluated the methodologies used in each authorities' employment land studies and established a composite picture of the demand for land across the City Region.

### **Local policy and evidence**

### Knowsley Sustainable Communities Strategy<sup>59</sup>

- 2.16 Despite recent progress, the Borough's economic performance still lags behind the UK and North West average. It is described in the Sustainable Communities Strategy as being a challenge. The Borough has 3,200 businesses of which about 1,900 are VAT registered. The Strategy identified a need for an additional 233 VAT registrations per year to bring the number of businesses in the Borough up to the UK average. It also identified a need for an additional 2,900 businesses to be located in the Borough by 2023 and that 15% of business premises be designated for office use.

### Knowsley Economic Regeneration Strategy<sup>60</sup>

- 2.17 The Borough's Economic Regeneration Strategy identified the key challenges as:
- falling working age population;
  - economic inactivity;
  - an enterprise gap;

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<sup>57</sup> Response of Liverpool City Region to consultation on Local Enterprise Partnerships / Regional Growth fund (TMP, 2010)

<sup>58</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>59</sup> Knowsley The Borough of Choice – Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 –2023 (Knowsley Partnership, 2008)

<sup>60</sup> Knowsley MBC Economic Regeneration Strategy: Final Report (Regeneris Consulting Ltd, 2008)

- low rate of self employment;
- lower than average incomes;
- continued need to improve educational attainment;
- high level of deprivation;
- life chances / child poverty; and
- risk of economic downturn.

- 2.18 The Strategy contained an action plan with two main components:
- A focused set of actions intended to position the Borough in the Liverpool City Region and the wider North West economy; and
  - Internally focused actions to deliver key projects in the Borough which will maximise their benefits to residents.

#### Knowsley Unitary Development Plan<sup>61</sup>

- 2.19 As part of the statutory development plan for Knowsley, the saved policies of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the evidence collated for the plan are considered to be still relevant. This is particularly so when considering whether existing employment land allocations should continue. The Proposals Map is also relevant as it indicates the extent of the Borough's urban and Green Belt areas as well as existing employment areas and allocations.

#### Knowsley Local Development Framework

- 2.20 It is a requirement of national policy that the views of stakeholders be taken into consideration when formulating policy in Core Strategies<sup>62</sup>. Between November 2009 and January 2010 the Council sought the views of stakeholders on a total of 32 issues which the Council had highlighted as key questions to be addressed in planning for the future of Knowsley<sup>63</sup>. As part of the consultation, three distinct Strategic Spatial Options for the development of Knowsley were presented. They were:
- Option A - "Urban Concentration" under which future development up to 2027 would be focussed in the Borough's existing urban areas with no release of land from the Green Belt. Under this option there would be insufficient land to meet the Borough's future employment land need.
  - Option B - "Focused Urban Regeneration" under which future development would also be focussed Borough's existing urban areas but greater emphasis would be given to focusing new development in locations which are either within or easily accessible from the Borough's most deprived neighbourhoods, or which require regeneration. Under this option there would be a more active approach to remodelling and redeveloping key regeneration areas than would be the case with option A. There would, however, still be insufficient land to meet the Borough's future employment land need.

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<sup>61</sup> Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

<sup>62</sup> Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning (DCLG, 2008)

<sup>63</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (Knowsley MBC, 2009)

- Option C - "Sustainable Urban Extensions" would initially focus development within the current urban area. In order to meet the Borough's development needs in the latter part of the plan period, the urban area would be enlarged into areas currently defined as Green Belt. No locations for expansion into Green Belt areas were identified at the Issues and Options stage as further work was needed to identify the sites.
- 2.21 The Council's report of consultation<sup>64</sup> reported that Option C - "Sustainable Urban Extensions" received the highest number responses where it was preferred option (32%). This was followed by Option B - "Focused Urban Regeneration" (19%) and Option A - "Urban Concentration" (18%). 31% of respondents expressed no overall preference or preferred a combination of options. Concern was expressed about the extent to which neighbouring authorities would be able to meet the Borough's housing and employment land needs if Options A or B was chosen. There was also concern over increased travelling distances, carbon emissions, and cost to employees if neighbouring authorities were to meet some of Knowsley's employment land need. Concern was also expressed about loss of green spaces impacting of wildlife / the environment. Option C was seen to be the only option that would accommodate the Borough's housing and employment needs. There was significant amount of opposition to Green Belt release but some acknowledged that it would also likely to result in less loss of urban greenspace. The phasing of Green Belt release was seen as important. This option would require the greatest investment in new infrastructure.
- 2.22 In addition to the three spatial options, the consultation also considered fifteen Strategic Issues of which two directly related to economic development needs. These were:
- the amount of additional employment land that was needed in the Borough (Issue ST5). Stakeholders were asked if they agreed with the findings of the draft Economic Land and Premises study that an additional 95 to 111 hectares of employment land would need to be provided in Knowsley up to 2026. This was in addition to land that had already been identified<sup>65</sup>.
  - the approach that should be taken to meet Knowsley's economic development requirements (Issue ST6). Three suggested options were given:
    - re-modelling of Knowsley's industrial parks;
    - development in sustainable locations within the Green Belt; and
    - development in neighbouring districts.
- 2.23 67% of respondents agreed with the findings of the draft Economic Land and Premises study that an additional 95 to 111 hectares of employment land would need to be provided. Most respondents (50%) believed that any shortfall should be met by allowing development in sustainable locations within the Green Belt. This was followed by re-modelling of Knowsley's industrial parks (40%) and development in neighbouring districts (10%). The

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<sup>64</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options: Report of Consultation (Knowsley MBC, 2010)

<sup>65</sup> Land allocated or with planning permission for employment use or within an existing industrial park.

number of respondents in both cases, however, was very low (6 and 10 respectively).

- 2.24 The consultation also considered seventeen Thematic Issues of which two directly related to economic development needs. These were:
- Issue TH1 - if the Sustainable Urban Extensions option (Option C) was pursued, should Green Belt land:
    - be released in the early years of the Plan period; or
    - be released on a phased basis with Green Belt locations only being considered after employment land in the existing urban area have been developed.
  - Issue TH2 – should sites which are currently allocated for employment development:
    - be reserved for employment use;
    - be reserved for employment use but restrict some sites to specific employment types for example offices or knowledge based industries; or
    - be allowed to be used for other uses, for example housing, if the site is outside of the main industrial parks.
- 2.25 The number of respondents to both Issues was again very low. Four respondents thought that Green Belt land should be released in the early years of the Plan period while four thought that it should be released on a phased basis. Two respondents believed that sites which are currently allocated for employment development should be reserved for employment use while three respondents believed that sites could be allowed to be used for other uses, for example housing, if the site is outside of the main industrial parks. There was no support for restricting some sites to specific employment types for example offices or knowledge based industries.

#### Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>66</sup>

- 2.26 A key piece of evidence on future employment land need is the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study. This study considered the supply and future need for employment land in Knowsley, Halton, Sefton, and West Lancashire and covered the period 2008 - 2026. In order to determine future need, the study considered economic forecasting and historic take-up of employment land over the long and short-term. The study concluded that if the economic forecasting is correct then the Borough already has too much employment land for what will be required over the Core Strategy period. The BE Group believed that the theoretical employment forecasts contradict what is happening in practice. The study concluded that if the short-term historic take-up is correct then the Borough already has too much land for employment purposes but the excess is less than identified by economic forecasting. The BE Group believe that the short-term historic take-up produces a requirement figure that is too low because of the shortage of immediately available land following major investment and the recession. The long-term historic take-up concluded that the Borough will require a significant

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<sup>66</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

amount of additional employment land. The study's recommended figure did, however, include an additional 20% above the actual historic take-up. This was included to make the methodology consistent with the RSS methodology.

Delivering a New Future for Knowsley Industrial Park - Strategic Framework<sup>67</sup>

- 2.27 In 2010, the Council, in partnership with the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA), commissioned DTZ in conjunction with ARUP and Taylor Young to review the role of Knowsley Industrial Park (KIP) and Business Park. The overall aim of the study was to provide a clear physical development and investment framework to drive future increased business growth at KIP, reinforcing its role as a major city region and regional business and employment hub.
- 2.28 The main findings of the report included that:
- while Knowsley Industrial Park (and Business Park) remains a positive asset there are some key gaps and weaknesses that need to be addressed.
  - linkages to Kirkby Town Centre in terms of physical, business and employment links need to be strengthened.
  - significant financial investment is required to modernise some key areas of the KIP
  - opportunities to attract growth sector businesses including 'green businesses' must be pursued to enhance the breadth of businesses on KIP and broaden its appeal as an inward investment location.

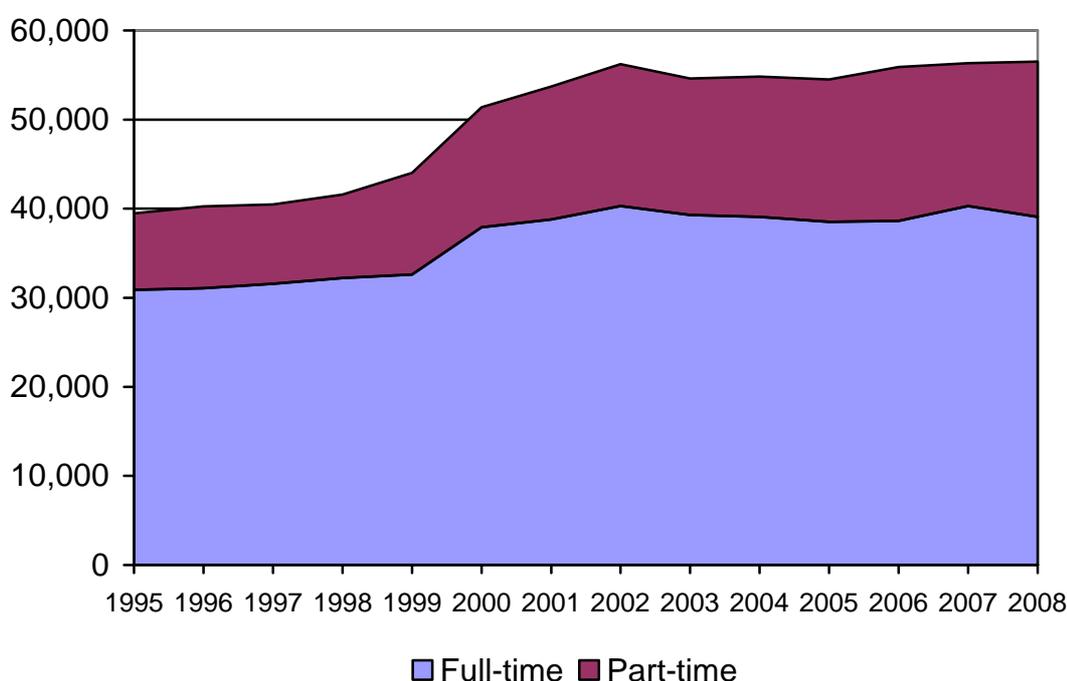
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<sup>67</sup> Delivering a New Future for Knowsley Industrial Park - Strategic Framework, (DTZ / Taylor Young / Arup, 2010)

### 3. Knowsley's Economy

3.1 The Borough's employment role has developed since 1945 and has traditionally been provided by manufacturing industries. These have primarily been located in Borough's Industrial and Business Parks and the Ford (now Jaguar / Land Rover) car plant at Halewood. During the late 1970s and 1980s, however, over 20,000 jobs were lost from Knowsley Industrial Park alone and thousands of local people faced unemployment. Since the 1990s employment levels have increased again but are still short of the former levels.

**Figure 3.1 - Employment Change 1995 to 2008**



Source: ONS Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis

3.2 Between 2000 and 2009, the Borough's Job Density (the numbers of jobs per resident aged 16-64) rose by over 10% while nationally it fell by 1.2%<sup>68</sup>. The recent strong growth in employment reflects efforts by public and private sector partners to expand the business base and promote enterprise in the Borough resulting in substantial numbers of jobs being created. Key successes have been high profile inward investments by companies such as QVC, Vertex, and Sonae.

3.3 Figure 3.2 shows the take-up of employment land between 1995/6 and 2009/10. In the initial part of the period the Borough contained a lot of vacant

<sup>68</sup> Nomis Job Density [accessed 18 May 2011]

industrial land and take-up was high. As the choice of available sites diminished so did the take-up.

Year	Hectares
1995/96	21.85
1996/97	0.00
1997/98	18.21
1998/99	29.54
1999/00	10.12
2000/01	19.02
2001/02	15.38
2002/03	17.81
2003/04	6.88
2004/05	0.00
2005/06	12.95
2006/07	6.88
2007/08	6.88
2008/09	6.10
2009/10	0.00
Mean	11.44

3.4 Table 3.3 shows the amount of industrial properties that were marketed for sale or let in 2006/7.

	Size Band (sq. m.)							Total
	0 - 100	101 - 200	201 - 500	501 - 1000	1001 - 2000	2001 - 5000	5001 +	
Floorspace (sq. m.)	250	2,330	5,950	15,971	24,367	20,781	169,135	238,784
Number of Properties	3	15	17	23	19	8	9	94

Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

3.5 Tables 3.4 and 3.5 shows the number of enquiries that Knowsley Council received from businesses looking for land and premises (reported in the JELPS study). They show that demand is heavy for small premises and for smaller sites.

<b>Table 3.4 – Number of Premises Enquiries 2006 - 2007</b>							
	Size Band (sq. m.)						Total
	0 - 100	101 - 500	501 - 1000	1001 - 3500	3501 - 5000	5001 +	
Industry	48	95	31	47	10	15	246
Office	104	38	8	2	1	0	153
Total	152	133	39	49	11	15	399
Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)							

<b>Table 3.5 – Number of Land Enquiries 2006 - 2007</b>							
Size (ha)							
0 - 0.40	0.41 - 1.20	1.21 - 2.00	2.01 - 4.00	4.01 - 8.00	8.01 - 12.00	12.01+	Total
27	22	18	12	3	1	3	86
Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)							

- 3.6 Around 56,500 people are employed in the Borough<sup>69</sup>. Over the last decade the main growth sectors have been in public services with, in 2008, the Public Administration, Education and Health sector accounting for over one third of all employment<sup>70</sup>. The main employers in this sector were the local authority and Whiston Hospital. New investment has also expanded the employment base in the business services, ICT, creative, tourism, leisure, financial services, communications, logistics and distribution sectors.
- 3.7 The Sustainable Communities Strategy<sup>71</sup> identified, however, that Knowsley's economic performance still lags behind the UK and North West average. It identified the need for a larger proportion of business premises to be designated for office use.
- 3.8 The Council's Core Evidence Base Report<sup>72</sup> identifies the relatively low levels of business start up rates as being a major issue.

<b>Table 3.6 - Employment (2008)</b>				
	Knowsley		North West	GB
	Number	%	%	%
Total employee jobs				

<sup>69</sup> 2008 Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis (ONS, 2009)

<sup>70</sup> Knowsley MBC: Core Evidence Base Report (Regeneris Consulting Ltd, 2007)

<sup>71</sup> Knowsley The Borough of Choice – Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 –2023 (The Knowsley Partnership, 2008)

<sup>72</sup> Knowsley MBC: Core Evidence Base Report (Regeneris Consulting Ltd, 2007)

Full-time	39,100	69.2	69.1	68.8
Part-time	17,400	30.8	30.9	31.2
Manufacturing	11,200	19.8	11.6	10.2
Construction	3,000	5.2	5.2	4.8
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	9,900	17.5	23.5	23.4
Transport & communications	2,800	4.9	5.8	5.8
Finance, IT, other business activities	9,200	16.4	19.7	22
Public administration, education & health	18,100	32.1	28.2	27
Other services	2,100	3.8	4.9	5.3
Source: ONS Annual Business Inquiry employee analysis				

- 3.9 The manufacturing sector (which accounts for 10% of businesses and 20% of total employment) has declined as a proportion of total jobs in recent years but still accounts for a higher proportion of jobs in Knowsley than it does at the national level<sup>73</sup>. This is reflective of the Borough's role in the automotive industry and its supply chain, as well as advanced manufacturing and engineering sub-sectors.
- 3.10 The sectoral shift has resulted in major issues for Knowsley's industrial areas where existing premises and associated infrastructure are no longer suitable resulting in high vacancy levels. Knowsley Industrial Park is a particular example of this<sup>74</sup>.
- 3.11 The Public Administration, Education and Health sector forms a large part of the Borough's economy but this is expected to reduce due to public sector spending cuts.

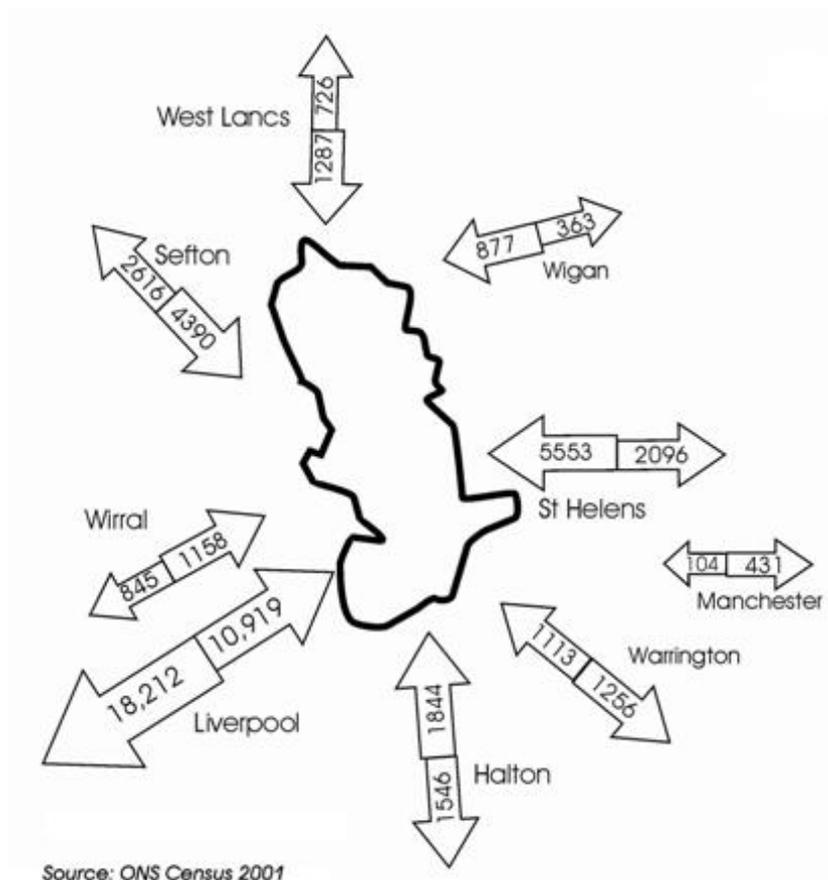
### Workforce

- 3.12 In 2001, 54,840 of the Borough's residents were in employment, of whom 43% worked in Knowsley, and 47% worked in the rest of Greater Merseyside. The Borough is therefore also an important source of workforce for the City Region. It is also a major location for employment in the City Region. 53,102 people worked in Knowsley in 2001, of whom 44% also lived in the area, and 48% lived in the remainder of Greater Merseyside. The Borough's links with Liverpool are particularly strong with around 18,000 of Knowsley's residents commuting to work each day.

<sup>73</sup> Knowsley MBC: Core Evidence Base Report (Regeneris Consulting Ltd, 2007)

<sup>74</sup> Delivering a New Future for Knowsley Industrial Park: A Strategic Framework (DTZ, Arup and Taylor Young, 2010)

**Figure 3.6 - Knowsley's Daily Commuting Flows**



3.13 Table 3.8 shows that Knowsley is under represented in managerial and professional occupations. It has the lowest representation in Greater Merseyside in these occupations. Professional occupations are at a level of less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the rate for Great Britain.

	Knowsley		North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
	Number	%		
Managers and senior officials	6,700	10.8	14.6	15.7
Professional occupations	5,200	8.5	12.6	13.6
Associate professional & technical occupations	7,900	12.8	14	14.7
Administrative and secretarial occupations	8,900	14.4	11.5	11.2
Skilled trades occupations	6,500	10.5	10.4	10.4

Personal service occupations	6,400	10.3	8.9	8.6
Sales and customer service occupations	6,600	10.7	8.6	7.4
Process, plant and machine operatives	5,600	9	7.6	6.7
Elementary occupations	7,700	12.4	11.4	11.3
Source: Annual Population Survey April 2009 to March 2010				

- 3.14 The Borough has low average wage levels for residents and mismatch in wages between local residents and those working in the Borough. Although Knowsley residents receive the lowest average weekly wage on Merseyside, people who work in Knowsley receive the highest average weekly wage (£584)<sup>75</sup>. At £489, Knowsley residents receive £100 less than the average weekly wage for Great Britain.

<b>Table 3.9 - Residents Pay</b>			
	Knowsley	North West	Great Britain
	(£)	(£)	(£)
<b>Gross weekly pay</b>			
Full Time Workers	488.9	543.2	590.4
Male Full Time Workers	530.7	592.8	646.9
Female Full Time Workers	434.9	470.5	503
<b>Hourly Pay</b>			
Full Time Workers	12.6	13.96	15.13
Male Full Time Workers	13.25	14.79	16.12
Female Full Time Workers	11.71	12.65	13.47
Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis			
ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 17 September 2010]			

<sup>75</sup> ONS [from Nomis on 17 September 2010]

### Worklessness

- 3.15 The Borough has high levels of worklessness. In March 2011, the number of persons claiming Job Seeker's Allowance was 6,087. This represented 6.3% of the residents of working age; a fall of 0.1% from March 2010. The number of claimants aged 18-24 fell by 6.2% during the same period. The number of persons claiming benefit for twelve months or more fell by 155 to 790, while the number of persons claiming for six months or more fell by 180. This means that 35% of persons claiming benefit have been claiming for 6 months or more.
- 3.16 The Borough also has a high number of people claiming incapacity benefit or employment and support allowance. In December 2010, there were 3,440 residents in receipt of these benefits<sup>76</sup>.

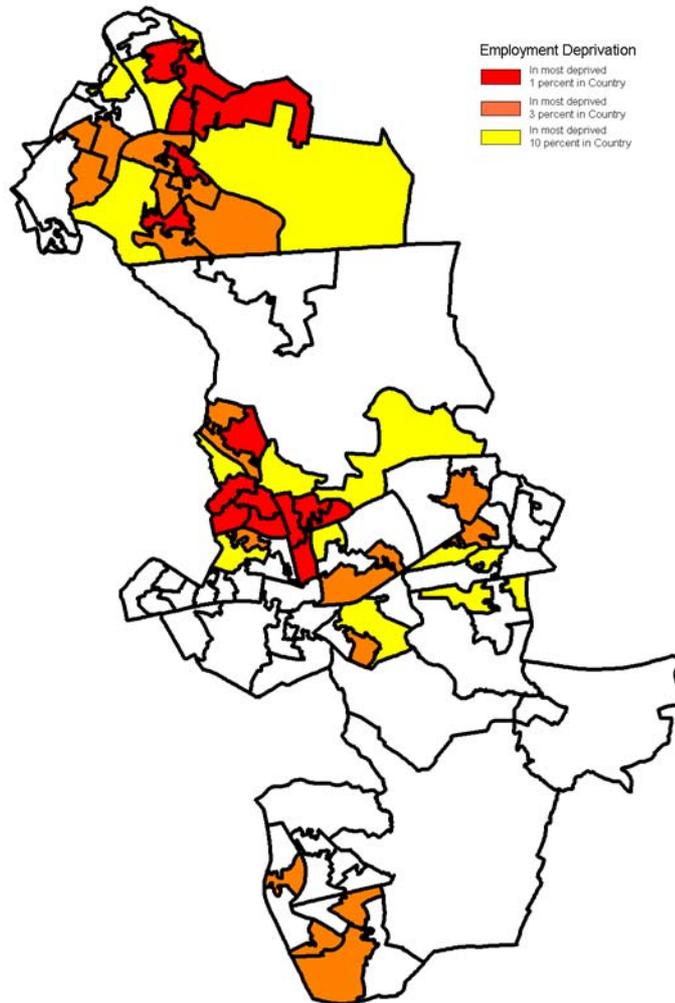
### Deprivation

- 3.17 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is produced for the Government to identify the distribution of deprivation across the nation. Information is analysed at Super Output Area (SOA) lower level. SOAs are subdivisions of wards.
- 3.18 In order to identify different types of deprivation, six measures of deprivation (called domains) have been produced. The Employment Deprivation Domain measures involuntary exclusion of the working age population from the labour market.
- 3.19 Figure 3.10 shows, for the employment domain, the SOAs within Knowsley that are within the 10% most deprived in the Country. It shows that Kirkby, North Huyton, and Stockbridge Village have particularly high levels on employment deprivation.

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<sup>76</sup> ONS [from Nomis on 18 May 2011]

**Figure 3.10 - Areas of Employment Deprivation**



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The English Indices of Deprivation 2010 - Employment Domain, DCLG, 2010

### Education

- 3.20 Knowsley is making progress in raising educational attainment but its performance still lags significantly behind performance at the national level. It has the second highest proportion of working age population in the North West that do not have any qualifications<sup>77</sup>. Table 3.11 shows the proportion of students achieving 5+ A\*-C grades, including English and maths, at GCSE level. Last year Knowsley had its largest improvement on record and for the third year in a row the attainment gap between Knowsley and the national

<sup>77</sup> Annual Population Survey January 2008 - December 2008 (ONS, 2010)

average was narrowed. Knowsley, however, was still ranked 151 out of 151 local authorities nationally.

	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10
Knowsley	26.1	26.5	29.9	33.5	37.8
England	45.6	46.3	47.6	49.8	53.1
Gap between Knowsley and England	19.5	19.8	17.7	16.3	15.3

Source: Directorate of Children and Family Services, Knowsley MBC

- 3.21 In Knowsley, there is a significant difference between the proportion of girls and boys achieving 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths (40.0% for girls and 35.9% for boys)<sup>78</sup>.
- 3.22 A key element of the Council's drive to address attainment issues is in the Future Schools programme, where 11 secondary schools were replaced by 7 new learning centres. The programme provides an improved range of educational opportunities and also provides broader uses of school premises for the community. Knowsley's primary and special schools are also receiving significant investment which will result in some new schools being built and some merging.
- 3.23 There continues to be improvements in the percentage of 16 – 18 year olds in education, employment or training. This is in part due to the significant increase in the percentage of young people who are now in learning. Knowsley, however, still has the fourth highest proportion of 16 to 18 year olds in the Country who are not in education, employment, or training (10.6%)<sup>79</sup>. There are also significant variations across the Borough with less than 1% in Halewood North while in St. Gabriel's (South Huyton) it is 15.2%.
- 3.24 A further improvement in educational attainment is needed in Knowsley if it's future workforce is to be equipped to meet needs of employers.

#### Access to Employment

- 3.25 In 2001, 41.8% of households in Knowsley did not have access to a car. This was above Merseyside (37.6%), and significantly above North West (30.2%) and national (26.8%) averages<sup>80</sup>. Residents of the Borough are therefore less able to access job opportunities that are only realistically accessible by car and where hours of operation (e.g. shift work) make it difficult. It is therefore essential that employment opportunities are accessible by modes of travel other than the car, such as walking, cycling or public transport.

#### Future Workforce

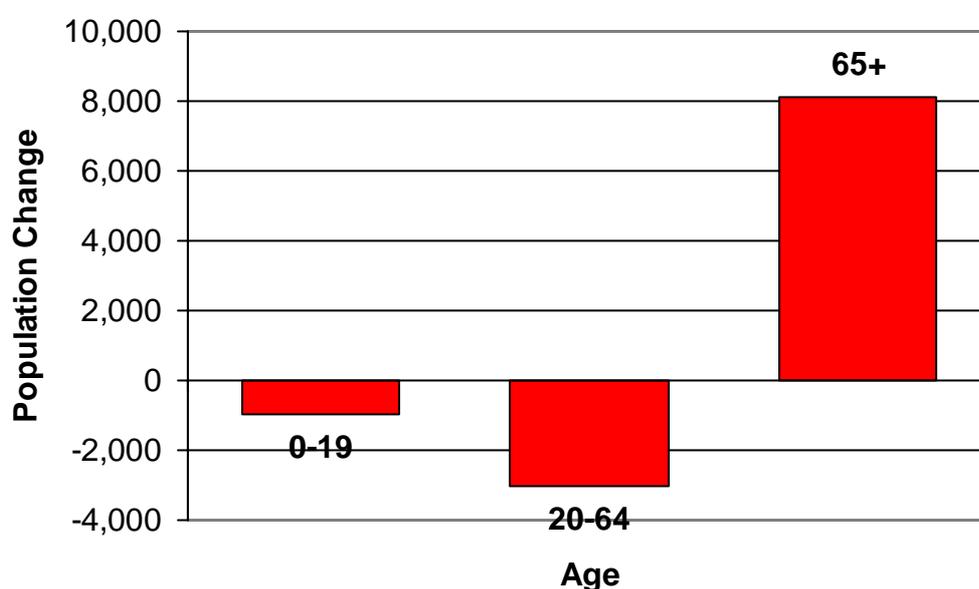
<sup>78</sup> Directorate of Children and Family Services, Knowsley MBC

<sup>79</sup> NEET Figures for Local Authority Areas (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009)

<sup>80</sup> 2001 Census

- 3.26 The Borough saw a large population decline in the 1970s and 1980s followed by a smaller loss in the 1990s and a stabilisation since 2000. Population projections indicate what will happen if past trends continue. The Borough's population is expected to increase by 4,100 between 2008 and 2027<sup>81</sup>. This is due to it being projected that there will be 10,700 more births than deaths and that there will be a net migration loss of 6,500 people<sup>82</sup>.
- 3.27 Population loss can make it more difficult to attract new employment to an area. The most mobile people are often the young, skilled and qualified and it is these types of person who have left in the past. The high levels of out-migration is considered to be a threat to the attractiveness of the Borough to employers.

**Figure 3.12 - Knowsley Projected Population Change 2008 - 2027**



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2010

- 3.28 Figure 3.12 shows that it is expected that the structure of the population will continue to move to a more ageing population. It is projected that by 2027 the number of persons age 20 to 64 is projected to fall by 3,000.

#### The Borough's Strengths

- 3.29 The Borough has several key assets including:
- being a key employment location – the Borough's business parks provide substantial employment in manufacturing, distribution and services. They have good access to employment locations along and around the Liverpool-Manchester corridor and excellent transport linkages;

<sup>81</sup> Table 2a: 2008-based Subnational Population Projections by sex and quinary age, Subnational Statistics Unit (ONS, 2010)

<sup>82</sup> 2008-based Sub-national Population Projections (ONS, 2010)

- A growing business base - between 1995 and 2008 employment rose by 41%. Between 2000 and 2005, job density rose by over 10%. This compares to a 1.2% drop nationally; and
- Businesses in priority sectors - There are a wide range of companies operating in the Borough which operate in priority sectors for both the Liverpool City Region and the wider North West (e.g. automotive).

#### Key Challenges for the Borough

3.30 The Borough faces several key challenges including:

- a falling Working Age Population – the Borough’s working age population is set to fall over the Core Strategy’s plan period;
- worklessness – the Borough has high levels of worklessness;
- lower than average incomes – the incomes of the Borough’s residents are lower than those of residents in surrounding districts, while many higher paid jobs appear to be taken by people who live outside the area;
- continued need to improve educational attainment – the educational attainment of many of the Borough’s young people is below the national and regional averages. Raising attainment levels will enable more people to enter work and better equip the Borough’s workforce for more knowledge intensive economic activity.
- high level of deprivation – many of the challenges faced by residents of the Borough stem from a high level of deprivation and the multiple disadvantages which are associated with it. Knowsley remains one of the most deprived areas of the country both in the intensity and extent of deprivation in the Borough; and
- risk of economic downturn – the Borough has made progress in strengthening its economy but its gains can easily be offset by continuation of the current economic downturn. It remains to be seen the extent to which public sector spending cuts will effect the Borough’s economy.

#### **4. Methodology of identifying land requirements**

4.1 In order to identify the amount of employment land needed to ensure continued economic growth, the following process has been used:

- Step 1 – identify current employment land supply. This was accomplished by the Council initially identifying a land supply and external consultants assessing the extent to which the sites have a realistic prospect of development. Step 1 is contained within chapter 5.
- Step 2 – assess a full range of reasonable scenarios for deriving future jobs and employment land targets. This includes the uses of forecasting by using short-term and long-term historic take-up of employment land and jobs forecasting. Historic take-up was obtained from Regional Spatial Strategy<sup>83</sup> requirement and evidence from the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>84</sup>. Evidence from preparation for the Regional Strategy<sup>85</sup> and from the Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>86</sup> is used for jobs forecasting. Jobs forecasting has been translated in to land requirement by minimum and maximum limits being put on floorspace per job to allow for different type of job, and plot ratio to allow for different industry needs. Step 2 is contained within chapter 6.
- Step 3 – assess strengths and weaknesses of methodologies and decide on preferred methodology for determining employment land need. This includes consideration of the draft Overview study<sup>87</sup>. Step 3 is contained within chapter 6.
- Step 4 - assess potential net gains (through remodelling / regeneration opportunities) and losses through changes of employment land to other uses. Step 4 is contained within chapter 7.
- Step 5 – determine overall level of employment land need and how this can be met. The Issues and Options paper suggested that, in event of additional land being required some of it could be met in adjoining districts or on land in the Borough that is currently within the Green Belt. Step 5 is contained within chapter 8.

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<sup>83</sup> North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 Employment Land Implementation Note – April 2009 (4NW, 2009)

<sup>84</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>85</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>86</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>87</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

## 5. What land is available for employment in Knowsley?

- 5.1 Knowsley has four main locations in which employment is located:
- Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks form one of the largest industrial estates in Europe, covering 377 hectares and 120 hectares respectively, they contain almost 1,000 companies (Source: Knowsley MBC). The site benefits from its proximity to the M57 and M58 motorways, and to Knowsley's rail freight terminal.
  - Huyton Business Park, Huyton covers around 102 ha. The site benefits from its proximity to the M57 and M62 motorways.
  - Kings Business Park, Huyton covering 20 ha was designated as a Regional Strategic Employment Site in previous versions of the North West Regional Economic Strategy. It is a mixed use site combining high spec office space and leisure facilities with planning permission for a hotel. It benefits from its proximity to the M57 motorway.
  - Jaguar / Land Rover plant, Halewood covers 139 ha of land. It contains a 19 ha identified in the UDP as being suitable for B1, B2, and B8 uses. The site could accommodate suppliers to the firm, as well as the company's own operations. The site benefits from its proximity to the M62 motorway.
- 5.2 In order to evaluate if the Borough contains a sufficient quantity of employment land to meet its future need, it is first necessary to identify the amount of land that is currently available for employment purposes.
- 5.3 In April 2008, the Council identified 156.77 ha of land that it considered to be suitable for future employment use. The sites were spread across the main industrial and business parks in the Borough and included:
- sites allocated in the UDP<sup>88</sup> for employment development (Policy EC2) that have not been developed;
  - vacant sites allocated within Primarily Industrial Areas (Policy EC3); and
  - sites with extant planning permission for employment purposes.
- 5.4 As part of the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>89</sup>, the BE Group evaluated each site identified by the Council. The BE Group considered that, of the 156.77 ha of land identified by the Council for future employment use, five sites covering 5.86 ha were unlikely to be developed for employment purposes.
- 5.5 The BE Group therefore considered 150.91 ha<sup>90</sup> of land to have a realistic prospect of being developed. This included land being held by businesses to enable them to extend their premises which, although not currently available, BE Group considered could play a part in accommodating company growth or come forward for development in the future. Table 5.1 contains the reasons why the BE Group considered that it was unrealistic to expect development for employment purposes on the five sites.

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<sup>88</sup> Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

<sup>89</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>90</sup> Mathematical error led the BE Group to report 151.14 ha as being the realistic supply figure.

<b>Table 5.1 – Sites considered not have a realistic prospect of development for employment purposes.</b>				
Reference	Site	Location	Area (ha)	Reason
37	Land to East of Cross Huller, Randles Road / Gellings Road / School Lane	Knowsley Business Park	1.00	Owner intending to use for a car park for adjacent complex.
127	Premises to the rear of Robcliffe Ltd, Ellis Ashton Street	Huyton Business Park	0.14	Site in use for storing vehicles
133	Hooper's Insurance Assessors, Admin Road	Knowsley Industrial Park	0.47	Site is in use as a customer car park
167	County Road / Arbour Road	Knowsley Industrial Park	0.62	Likely to be developed for non-B class uses
184	Kipling Avenue	Huyton Business Park	3.63	Poor access. Owner pursuing residential use on residue of site
<b>Total</b>			<b>5.86</b>	
Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010) (Table 97 and Appendix 22)				

5.6 Table 5.2 shows a summary of BE Group evaluation of the sites that it considers to have a realistic prospect of future employment development. It shows that over half (82.38 ha) was considered to be available or would be available within the following three years. It also shows that approximately half of the realistically available land (75.53 ha) is or will be available for office and industrial uses, with 63.59 ha being available for solely industrial use and 11.79 ha available solely for office use.

<b>Table 5.2 – Realistic Land Supply</b>								
Type	Within 3 years		3-5 years		5+ years		Total	
	Number of sites	Area of sites (ha)	Number of sites	Area of sites (ha)	Number of sites	Area of sites (ha)	Number of sites	Area of sites (ha)
Industrial less than 1ha	12	7.51	2	1.36	2	0.83	16	9.70
Industrial 1ha to 5ha	5	11.90	0	0.00	2	4.20	7	16.10

Table 5.2 – Realistic Land Supply								
	Within 3 years		3-5 years		5+ years		Total	
Industrial more than 5ha	2	14.05	0	0.00	2	23.74	4	37.79
Total Industrial	19	33.46	2	1.36	6	28.77	27	63.59
Industrial / Office less than 1ha	3	1.93	1	0.22	0	0.00	4	2.15
Industrial / Office 1ha to 5ha	6	13.88	3	8.80	0	0.00	9	22.68
Industrial / Office more than 5ha	3	21.32	1	29.38	0	0.00	4	50.70
Total Industrial / Office	12	37.13	5	38.40	0	0.00	17	75.53
Office less than 1ha	1	0.22	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.22
Office 1ha to 5ha	3	4.98	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	4.98
Office more than 5ha	1	6.59	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	6.59
Total Office	5	11.79	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	11.79
Total	36	82.38	7	39.76	6	28.77	49	150.91

- 5.7 The latest Annual Monitoring Report<sup>91</sup> contains an updated position of what the BE Group considered to be the Borough's realistic supply. It shows that on 1 April 2010 the Borough had **151.6 ha** of land that has a realistic prospect of development for employment purposes. This included 122.4 ha of land allocated for employment purposes but without planning permission; 15.6 ha of land with planning permission, but where development has not commenced, 11.1 ha of land in the Primarily Industrial Areas, and 2.5 ha of land under construction.
- 5.8 It is this figure of 151.6 ha of employment land supply that will be used in chapter 6 to assess whether the Borough has a sufficient quantity of employment land to meet its future need. Individual site details of the supply are contained within Appendix 1.

<sup>91</sup> Annual Monitoring Report 2010 (Knowsley MBC, 2010)

## 6. How much employment land is needed in Knowsley up to 2027?

6.1 This chapter identifies the amount and type of land that will be required for employment purposes in the Borough from a base date of 2010 up to 2027. It does so by considering a range of methods:

- the Borough's requirement set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy<sup>92</sup> (paragraphs 6.2 to 6.4);
- evidence that was gathered in preparation for the production of the North West's Regional Strategy (paragraphs 6.5 to 6.22); and
- evidence that was gathered in preparation for the production of the Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>93</sup> (paragraphs 6.23 to 6.32).

### Method 1 - Regional Spatial Strategy requirement

- 6.2 RSS policy W3 set out the supply of employment land for each of the sub-regions across the North West. 'Merseyside and Halton' required an additional 494 ha of land for employment purposes between 2005 and 2021. The requirement was grounded in the findings of the 2005 Regional Employment Land Study (RELS)<sup>94</sup> which identified 111.86 ha of available land in the Borough. The study, however, was limited in that it only identified sites in excess of 5 ha.
- 6.3 The RSS did not set specific targets for individual districts. The BE Group estimated the district level requirement by updating the RELS land supply data to 2008 using known land take-up figures, new allocations and new planning permissions to produce an updated sub-area land requirement. This was then disaggregated to districts in proportion of the supply of land that each district had in 2005. Including the 20% flexibility factor, BE Group suggested that Knowsley's proportion of the 494 ha sub regional requirement should be 95 ha of additional land<sup>95</sup>. Based on the 2008 data, the Borough's total employment land requirement was **278.5 ha**.
- 6.4 The Regional Spatial Strategy requirement will be removed if the Localism Bill is enacted in its current form.

### Evidence from Regional Strategy (RS2010) preparation - Runs A, B, and C

- 6.5 PPS4<sup>96</sup> requires regional planning authorities to set regional job targets and then disaggregate minimum job targets to local authority level. Local authorities should then identify a range of sites to facilitate a broad range of economic development.

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<sup>92</sup> North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (DCLG, 2008)

<sup>93</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>94</sup> Regional Employment Land Study Phase 1 and 2, Arup, 2005 and Regional Employment Land Study Phase 3 (Arup, 2005)

<sup>95</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>96</sup> Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (DCLG, 2009)

- 6.6 In January 2010, the former 4NW commissioned Roger Tym and Partners to undertake a scoping study<sup>97</sup> to develop a preferred methodology for developing district level job targets. The recommendations of the final report (April 2010) were for 4NW to use job growth forecasts, provided by the Regional Economic Forecasting Panel, as a starting position. 4NW were then to work with local authorities to “reality test” the forecasts and factor in policy targets and aspirations. A dissemination event held with officers from local authorities in the North West confirmed that the Regional Strategy would set job targets and then work would commence on an authority by authority basis to translate the job targets into a requirement for employment land. 4NW then commenced work to implement this methodology.
- 6.7 In July 2010 a technical background paper<sup>98</sup> was produced by the former 4NW setting out the initial technical work undertaken for housing provision and job growth figures for the North West. Although five different scenarios were modelled only Runs A, B & C set out job growth figures. The runs were informed by the published Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (REFP) long term baseline forecast for the region as a whole<sup>99</sup>. The forecast developed by the REFP considered forecasts from three economic forecasting houses (Cambridge Econometrics, Oxford Economics and Experian) but did not align directly with any of them. It was a ‘policy off’ forecast and did not take into account any aspirations or policy interventions.
- 6.8 The runs produced job targets for districts. They did not produce land supply targets. This was to be done later in consultation with the districts. The removal of the regional tier of planning means that this will no longer be undertaken.

#### Method 2 – Run A – Current RSS<sup>100</sup>

- 6.9 Background data for producing the RSS requirement was based on modelling work at sub-regional level by Experian. It included modelling three scenarios – long term growth, recent trends and aspirational growth. The aspirational growth scenario was disregarded as being too optimistic. The long-term scenario suggested that, between 2005 and 2021, there would be an increase of 120,000 jobs in the region while the recent trends scenario suggested that it would be 306,000. Using the long and recent trends for both jobs and housing, a job growth figure for the North West of 245,921 was predicted between 2005 and 2021.
- 6.10 The regional job growth figure was then distributed to district level using a percentage distribution equal to the RSS district level distribution of the RSS’s housing growth targets. An annualised figure was then produced for each district and applied to the period 2006-30. Run A produced, for Knowsley, a projected job increase of 266 per annum (6,384 between 2006 and 2030).

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<sup>97</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>98</sup> Technical Background Paper Initial Technical work on Housing Provision and Job Growth Figures for the North West July 2010 (4NW, 2010)

<sup>99</sup> Regional Economic Forecasting Panel State of the Northwest Economy: A Long-term Forecast for the Northwest 2010 – 2030 (NWDA, 2010)

<sup>100</sup> RS2010 Part 2 housing provision and job growth figures summary and background data Final version July 2010, sheet 13

Between 2010 and 2027, Run A forecasts that the Borough will see a **4,522** increase in jobs.

- 6.11 Jobs growth in Run A is, however, assumed to be directly linked to housing growth. It does not take any account that some districts are predominantly employment areas while others are predominantly commuter areas. It also does not take account of future policy initiatives.

#### Method 3 - Run B – Regional Economic Forecasting Panel

- 6.12 Run B was based on work produced by Cambridge Econometrics for the former 4NW and NWDA. This work provided indicative Local Authority forecasts of population (total and by age bands), GVA (total and by sector), and employment (total and by sector, occupation and status). These were developed using Cambridge Econometrics Local Economic Forecasting Model, and therefore reflect the assumptions within that model. The outputs were constrained, however, to the overall regional long-term baseline forecast published by the Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (REFP)<sup>101</sup>. This was based on the assumption, by the RFP, that the recession would continue to 2015, after which there would be a return to long-term growth rates.
- 6.13 The work by Cambridge Econometrics forecast that in Knowsley, 44 new jobs would be created each year up to 2015, after which 227 new jobs would be created each year. Under this scenario, between 2010 and 2027 there would be a **2,944** increase in jobs in the Borough.
- 6.14 The methodology does not take any account that some districts are predominantly employment areas while others are predominantly commuter areas. It also does not take account of future policy initiatives.

#### Method 4 - Run C – ONS Population and CLG Household Forecasts

- 6.15 The 2006-based sub-national population projections were published in June 2008 by ONS and fed through into the 2006-based sub-national household projections published in March 2009<sup>102</sup>. Although the ONS has produced population forecasts, it has not produced employment forecasts.
- 6.16 Run C<sup>103</sup> calculated the relationship between jobs and population within the indicative Local Authority forecasts and applied them to the ONS population forecasts using job density rates. Run C produced, for Knowsley, a projected job increase of 206 per annum. Under this scenario, between 2010 and 2027, there would be a **3,502** increase in jobs in the Borough.
- 6.17 Run C is directly linked to population numbers; it had no regard to employment commuting patterns such as some districts are predominantly employment areas while others are predominantly residential areas. It also

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<sup>101</sup> RS2010 Part 2 housing provision and job growth figures summary and background data Final version July 2010, sheet 14 and 15

<sup>102</sup> The 2008-based sub-national population projections have subsequently been produced. The revised population projections are significantly lower than the 2006-based projections reflecting changes to assumptions around migration.

<sup>103</sup> RS2010 Part 2 housing provision and job growth figures summary and background data Final version July 2010, sheets 10, 14 and 15

does not appear to reflect structural change in the economy, or take account of future policy initiatives.

Methods 2, 3, and 4 - Translating regional work on job growth forecasts into employment land figures.

- 6.18 A report prepared by Roger Tym and Partners for the former 4NW<sup>104</sup> suggests that an office worker will need on average 16 m<sup>2</sup> net floorspace while an industrial or warehouse worker will require on average 61 m<sup>2</sup> net floorspace. It also suggested that for industrial and warehousing development and for out-of-centre offices, a reasonable plot ratio assumption is around 35%.
- 6.19 The draft “Overview” study<sup>105</sup> found a fairly consistent approach in the employment land and premises studies across the sub-region to the amount of space needed for workers in office accommodation (19.1 m<sup>2</sup> to 20.1 m<sup>2</sup>). The space required for each factory worker, however, varied from 30 m<sup>2</sup> to 60.5 m<sup>2</sup> while for warehouse workers it varied between 40 m<sup>2</sup> and 65 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 6.20 The draft “Overview” study<sup>106</sup> also found that plot ratios varied across the sub-region. The biggest variance was for office use with 33% in St. Helens and 100% in Liverpool. Factory plot ratios varied from 33% in St. Helens to 45% in Liverpool. Warehouse plot ratios varied from 40% to 50%.
- 6.21 Table 6.1 identifies the area of land required for Regional Strategy runs A, B, and C from 2006 to 2030 under a range of scenarios. These figures are translated into 2010 to 2027 in Table 6.2.

<b>Table 6.1 Employment land needed for Runs A, B, and C for 2006 to 2030</b>				
Run A - Jobs for plan period 4522 (266 jobs per year)				
Jobs for plan period	Floorspace per job (m2)	Floorspace needed (m2)	Plot Ratio (%)	Site area required (ha)
4,522	16	72,352	35	20.7
4,522	61	275,842	35	78.8
4,522	16	72,352	90	8.0
4,522	61	275,842	90	30.6
Run B - Jobs for plan period 2944 (44 jobs per year for 5 years followed by 227 jobs per year for 12 years)				
Jobs for plan period	Floorspace per job (m2)	Floorspace needed (m2)	Plot Ratio (%)	Site area required (ha)
2,944	16	47,104	35	13.5
2,944	61	179,584	35	51.3
2,944	16	47,104	90	5.2
2,944	61	179,584	90	20.0

<sup>104</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>105</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>106</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

Run C - Jobs for plan period 3502 (206 jobs per year)				
Jobs for plan period	Floorspace per job (m2)	Floorspace needed (m2)	Plot Ratio (%)	Site area required (ha)
3,502	16	56,032	35	16.0
3,502	61	213,622	35	61.0
3,502	16	56,032	90	6.2
3,502	61	213,622	90	23.7

- 6.22 Using the Regional Strategy methodology<sup>107</sup>, Knowsley will require between **8.0 ha and 78.8 ha** of employment land under Run A, between **5.2 ha and 51.3 ha** under Run B, and between **6.2 ha and 61.0 ha** under Run C.

#### Joint Employment Land and Premises Study

- 6.23 The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>108</sup> (JELPS) is considered to be a key piece of employment land evidence for the Borough. It was produced in 2010 and considered the supply and future need of employment land in Knowsley, Halton, Sefton, and West Lancashire.
- 6.24 In order to determine future need, JELPS considered long and short-term historic land take-up and economic forecasting.

#### Method 5 - Long-term take-up of employment land

- 6.25 The long-term take-up of employment land (12.73 ha per year) used the average build rates between 1995 and 2008. BE Group suggested uplifting this by 20% to be consistent with the RSS methodology. This was the BE Group's preferred method for predicting future employment land need. Although the recession will affect future employment growth, the BE Group considered that, after a two to three year downturn, trends would revert to their long term averages.
- 6.26 Using the 1995 to 2008 long-term trend **216.4 ha** would be required between 2010 and 2027. This would be increased to **259.7 ha** if the 20% uplift was applied.
- 6.27 The BE Group considered the 1995 to 2008 trend with the 20% uplift was the best method of determining projected need as it is dependant on actual completions. It does, however, assume that the scale and nature of development in the future will be the same as what was required in the past.
- 6.28 If the long-term trend was updated to 2010 then the required amount of land per year would be 11.44 ha or 13.8 ha if the 20% uplift was applied. This would mean that **194.5 ha** and **233.4 ha** respectively would be required between 2010 and 2027.

<sup>107</sup> 4NW Setting Employment Land Targets For North West England (Roger Tym and Partners, 2010)

<sup>108</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

### Method 6 - Short-term take-up of employment land

- 6.29 The short-term take-up of employment land used the average build rates of land between 2003 and 2008. At 6.72 ha per annum this is significantly below the long-term trend. There are two factors that may have contributed to this; there was a shortage of immediately developable employment sites following the major investment before 2003; and the recession in the UK economy formed a larger part of the period used to determine the trend. If the 2003 to 2008 short-term trend was applied then 114 ha would be required between 2010 and 2027 or 137 ha if the 20% uplift was applied.
- 6.30 If the short-term trend was updated to 2010 then the required amount of land (based on 6.6 ha per year) for 2010 to 2027 would be **111.6 ha** or **133.9 ha** if the 20% uplift was applied.

### Method 7 - Economic forecasting

- 6.31 The economic forecast was produced for BE Group by Oxford Economics. It used a demand-based modelling technique which included the move to different types of employment particularly the shift from industrial to office-based employment. The basic principle is that less space is needed to accommodate higher job density employment such as office space than in traditional manufacturing industries. The Oxford Economics methodology suggests that 1,529 new jobs will be created between 2008 and 2026. This method estimated that a further 9.3 ha was required for office use but that 7.4 ha of land was surplus for industrial use. An additional **1.9 ha** would therefore be required overall.
- 6.32 The BE Group found, however, that the theoretical forecasts contradict what was happening in practice when compared to Valuation Office data. The BE Group is of the opinion that there will be a move to higher density employment. Counter to this, however, they believe that there will be an increasing need for employment land because of an increase in numbers of small businesses who will want better quality, more spacious accommodation. BE Group also feel that more 'service sector employment' will be in light industrial premises rather than offices than is generally predicted.

### Summary of Findings

- 6.33 Methodologies 1 to 7 above considered cover a variety of time-scales. Table 6.2 shows a range of scenarios of future provision of employment land for the common time period of 2010 to 2027. They are calculated by producing an annual requirement of land based on the total land requirement of each method and dividing by the number of years covered by each. In the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) this was a land requirement of 278.5 ha divided by the number of years covered by the RSS (16 years). This annualised requirement was then applied to the period 2010 to 2027 to give an employment land requirement (in the RSS case this was 17.4 ha per year for each of the 17 years). The employment land supply at 2010 (151.6 ha) was then deducted to provide an updated additional land requirement (in the RSS case this was 144.3 ha).

**Table 6.2 – Range of Employment Land Requirements**

Method	Time period	Land required	Amount required per year	Equivalent land required for 2010 to 2027	Land Supply 2010	Equivalent Additional Land required in ha for 2010 to 2027 (over supply in brackets)
Method 1 - Regional Spatial Strategy requirement (2005-2021)	16	278.5	17.4	295.9	151.6	144.3
Method 2 - RS2010 Run A - Current RSS (2006-2030)						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	20.7	0.9	14.7	151.6	(136.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	78.8	3.3	55.8	151.6	(95.8)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	8.0	0.3	5.7	151.6	(145.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	30.6	1.3	21.7	151.6	(129.9)
Method 3 - RS2010 Run B - Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (2006-2030)						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	13.5	0.6	9.5	151.6	(142.1)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	51.3	2.1	36.3	151.6	(115.3)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	5.2	0.2	3.7	151.6	(147.9)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	20	0.8	14.2	151.6	(137.4)
Method 4 - RS2010 Run C - ONS Population and CLG Household Forecasts (2006-2030)						
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	16	0.7	11.3	151.6	(140.3)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 35%	24	61	2.5	43.2	151.6	(108.4)
Floorspace 16m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	6.2	0.3	4.4	151.6	(147.2)

**Table 6.2 – Range of Employment Land Requirements**

Method	Time period	Land required	Amount required per year	Equivalent land required for 2010 to 2027	Land Supply 2010	Equivalent Additional Land required in ha for 2010 to 2027 (over supply in brackets)
Floorspace 61m <sup>2</sup> / worker Plot Ratio 90%	24	23.7	1.0	16.8	151.6	(134.8)
Method 5 - Joint Employment Land Study Long-term trend						
1995-2008	13	165.5	12.7	216.4	151.6	64.8
1995-2008 with 20% uplift	13	198.6	15.3	259.7	151.6	108.1
Updated to 1995-2010	15	171.6	11.4	194.5	151.6	42.9
Updated to 1995-2010 with 20% uplift	15	205.9	13.7	233.4	151.6	81.8
Method 6 - Joint Employment Land Study Short-term trend						
2003-2008	5	33.6	6.7	114.2	151.6	(37.4)
2003-2008 with 20% uplift	5	40.3	8.1	137.0	151.6	(14.6)
Updated to 2005-2010	5	32.8	6.6	111.6	151.6	(40.0)
Updated to 2005-2010 with 20% uplift	5	39.4	7.9	133.9	151.6	(17.7)
Method 7 - Joint Employment Land Study Study econometrics method (2008-2026)	18	1.9	0.1	1.9	151.6	(149.8)

Note: The RS2010 runs A, B and C did not produce existing employment land supply figures. The base date for these runs was 2006. In these instances the initial land required figure of 111.86 ha from the 2005 based Regional Spatial Strategy has been used.

#### Preferred Methodology for estimating employment land need

- 6.34 Determining future land requirement is not an exact science and each of the methods considered will have pros and cons. Of seven methods of estimating employment land requirement, four are based on econometric projections and three are based on historic trends. As can be seen in Table 6.2, the different

approaches used to quantify new employment land requirements produced significantly varying results.

- 6.35 Economic forecasting is dependant on a number of factors including the performance of the economy and consequently the number of jobs over a long period. It is also dependent on a range of assumptions including assumed space required per job and plot ratios. They do not provide for choice of site and are not responsive to changing circumstances. They do not take account of policy aspirations or policy interventions. The economic forecasting that takes account of housing growth does not take account that some districts are predominantly commuter areas nor that there are employment structural differences between local authorities. According to the BE Group<sup>109</sup>, econometric projections only represent the absolute minimum amount of land needed.
- 6.36 Historic take-up rates assume that the scale and nature of development will remain unchanged. They are believed to reflect what demand could be released if supply is made available<sup>110</sup>. A weakness of rolling forward historic trends forecasting is that they can be skewed by significant development levels in certain years or, as shown in the short-term trends, years of low activity. The draft Overview Study<sup>111</sup> suggested that although a continuation level of historic trend is unrealistic, it does show a general trend. It concluded that the demand figure identified within the Employment Land and Premises Study (long-term historic trend plus 20% uplift) is a high estimate of requirements and the undersupply should therefore be treated as a maximum.
- 6.37 The conclusion of this technical report is that long-term historic take up of employment land will provide the most robust means of determining the future level of employment land provision that will be needed to support the Borough's economic growth. This is because econometric forecasting, for the reasons given in paragraph 6.35, is not considered likely to provide a sufficient quantity of land. Also short-term historic trends are too strongly influenced by major investment or lack of investment in an individual year.
- 6.38 The Regional Spatial Strategy was a historic trend based projection. It did, however, include an increase of 18.5% above the trend plus a 20% flexibility factor. The flexibility factor was included in recognition that there may, exceptionally, be a need to provide additional land to take account of special circumstances, such as the expansion requirements of a particular business or the realisation of significant inward investment potential. A subsequent guidance note<sup>112</sup> states that local authorities must use their own judgement as to whether to apply the flexibility factor in supply calculations. The Regional Spatial Strategy is not considered robust because an increase of 18.5%

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<sup>109</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>110</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>111</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>112</sup> North West of England Plan – Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 Employment Land Implementation Note – April 2009 (4NW, 2009) (Paragraph 3.2)

above historic trends plus a 20% uplift is likely to produce an excessive surplus of employment land.

- 6.39 The Joint Employment Land Study long and short-term trends included the provision of a buffer above the trend. BE Group included a buffer in order to maintain a choice (by quality, size, type and location) of sites on a continuing basis beyond the Core Strategy's end date. BE Group chose 20% as a buffer to be consistent with the Regional Spatial Strategy flexibility factor.
- 6.40 The draft Overview Study<sup>113</sup> notes that while an allowance for choice and churn is not a specific requirement of government guidance it is standard practice to include a buffer for flexibility within the preferred requirements. This allowance recognises that a proportion of employment land may be lost to non-employment uses over the plan period, and that there will be requirements resulting from movements within the economy (i.e. business relocations) that do not necessarily generate additional jobs but require additional land.
- 6.41 The draft Overview Study<sup>114</sup> concluded that historic trends forecasting often result in high requirements over plan periods when projected forward. This report therefore also concludes that the 20% buffer recommended by BE Group should not be applied. Any net losses through changes of employment land to other uses should, however, be replaced by a site of similar size.
- 6.42 This report recommends that the long-term historic land supply (1995 to 2008) should be used to project employment land need (12.73 ha per year x 17 years = 216.5 ha). This is 65 ha above the 151.6 ha identified in Chapter 5 as being the employment land supply in 2010. Some of this short-fall can be met by remodelling / regeneration opportunities in the Borough's industrial parks. The shortfall, together with net gains through remodelling / regeneration and net losses through changes of employment land to other uses, will be considered in chapter 7.
- 6.43 This report recommends that the long-term historic land supply updated to 2010 should not be used to project employment land need. This is because the economic downturn resulted little development between 2008 and 2010 and the BE Group considers that, after a two to three year downturn, trends will revert to their long term averages. Long-term historic trends (1995 to 2010) is therefore is not considered likely to provide a sufficient quantity of land to meet the Borough's future employment land need.

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<sup>113</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>114</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

## 7. Securing employment growth – setting an annual employment land target for Knowsley

### Introduction

- 7.1 In order to secure the Borough's employment growth, it is essential to ensure that a sufficient quantity of land will be available for employment purposes when it is required. Chapter 5 shows that, in April 2010, the Borough had 151.6 ha of land that was available or would become available during the plan period of the Local Development Framework's Core strategy and had a realistic prospect of development. Chapter 6 concludes that the Borough will require 216.4 ha of land to accommodate its employment land needs up to 2027. The Borough therefore has an unmet need of 64.8 ha over this period. This situation could be further exacerbated if sites currently in the employment land supply are developed for other purposes.

### Employment Land Shortfall

- 7.2 The Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>115</sup> recommended that the former Pirelli site in south Prescott be protected for employment purposes. It did, however, suggest that, as the site was also considered suitable for housing in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, it may make a significant contribution to meeting the Borough's housing need. It is now considered that approximately half of the 29.4 ha former Pirelli site may be developed for employment purposes with the other half being developed for housing. If part of this site is developed for residential purposes, the shortfall will be increased.
- 7.3 Table 7.1 shows that the Borough's employment land potential shortfall of employment land is 65.0 ha but could potentially rise to 79.7 ha if the former Pirelli site is used on a 50/50 basis for housing and employment.

	Minimum (ha)	Maximum (ha)
Projected Employment Land Need	216.5	216.5
Employment Land Supply 2010	151.6	151.6
Short-fall	65.0	65.0
Loss of employment land through development of former Pirelli land for non-employment purposes	0	14.7
Potential Short-fall	65.0	79.7

<sup>115</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

7.4 The shortfall could be affected by the loss of other employment sites to housing. The scope for this, however, is limited due to the nature of Knowsley's industrial areas and that they contain several hazardous installations.

#### Options to address shortfall

7.5 The Issues and Options paper<sup>116</sup> identified several options that were available to the Council in identifying how some additional employment land provision could be made over the Plan period. These included:

- Remodelling of Industrial Parks
- Development in neighbouring districts
- Development in sustainable locations in the Green Belt.

7.6 In response to the Issues and Options consultation, a wide variety of views were expressed on these issues. Having regard to the consultation responses received, sustainability appraisal findings and the evidence collated to date, the following factors are considered to be relevant:

- **Remodelling of Industrial Parks** - A Strategic Framework and Delivery Plan<sup>117</sup> has recently been completed which assessed options for the future use and development of Knowsley Industrial Park. The study estimates that the equivalent of 24.6 hectares of new employment land could be created through the development of opportunity areas within the Park. It would, however, require significant funding as a range of actions would be required including amalgamating land holdings and sites. The Employment Land and Premises Study<sup>118</sup> identified 37 ha of additional employment land that could be created through remodelling / regeneration of the Borough's industrial parks. The draft Overview Study<sup>119</sup> study suggests that in the current market climate it would be optimistic to assume 100% delivery of this land.
- **Development in adjacent districts** – In order to explore the extent to which any excess employment land supply in one or more local authority area(s) could meet the needs / demands of neighbouring or other local authorities, the Liverpool City Region local authorities commissioned an "overview" study<sup>120</sup>. The study evaluated the methodologies used and established a composite picture of the demand for land across the City Region. The study concluded that Knowsley has a key functional

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<sup>116</sup> Knowsley Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Paper (Knowsley MBC, 2009)

<sup>117</sup> Delivering a New Future for Knowsley Industrial Park - Strategic Framework (DTZ/Taylor Young/Arup, 2010)

<sup>118</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

<sup>119</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

<sup>120</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

relationship with Liverpool but that Liverpool has insufficient capacity in employment land supply to realistically meet Knowsley's employment land need. It was considered that, in the long term, St. Helens may be able to meet some of Knowsley's B8 employment land need if the rail freight terminal at Parkside is delivered. There was little support for development to be located in adjacent authorities during the Issues and Options consultation. The Council considers this option to be contrary to the Sustainable Community Strategy as it would fail to support a diverse and prosperous economy in the Borough. It is also seen to be less effective than the other options in facilitating Knowsley's future regeneration and economic development.

- **Development on sustainable sites within the Green Belt** - The Issues and Options consultation received a mixture response to this option. Some comments acknowledged the benefits of preserving Green Belt land while others supported its release in order to ensure that sufficient land would be available for employment growth. Under national policy, significant changes to Green Belt boundaries can only be made under exceptional circumstances. If the Borough is to meet the land requirements to 2027 within the Borough, however, some changes to Green Belt will be required. The location and timing of delivery would need to be carefully assessed and controlled in order to ensure that regeneration measures in existing industrial areas are not jeopardised. The phasing of site release is also likely to need to take account of the wider Liverpool City Region context where adjoining districts are also seeking to regenerate their industrial areas. The draft Overview study<sup>121</sup> recognises that in the medium / long term Green Belt land release may be required.

7.7 Table 7.2 shows that potentially Knowsley's shortfall in employment land supply could fall by 24.6 ha as a result of remodelling opportunities in Knowsley Industrial Park but as noted above, this would require significant funding. This shortfall would be required to be met either adjacent authorities or on sites that are currently in the Green Belt.

	Minimum (ha)	Maximum (ha)
Potential Short-fall	65.0	79.7
Potential capacity from remodelling in Knowsley Industrial Park	24.6	0
Potential Short-fall	40.4	79.7

7.8 This report does not recommend that the shortfall be met in adjoining local authorities for the following reasons:

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<sup>121</sup> Draft Housing and Economic Development Evidence Base Overview Study (Liverpool City Region Partners, 2011)

- The overview study concluded that there was little redistribution potential because of shortages of land supply in local authorities where the Borough has a functional relationship;
  - it would undermine the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy increasing economic activity and encouraging inward investment;
  - it would increase the need to travel for residents.
- 7.9 In order to address the shortfall in employment land need, the Employment Land Study recommended areas of search for additional land to meet the need. The suggested areas of search were to the north east of Junction 6, M62 at Windy Arbor Road, Whiston, and the south west extension of the Knowsley Business Park. The Study also identified a need for a successor site to the successful King's Business Park. The Study recommended that the successor site should be in close proximity to the Business Park and suggested that it could be accommodated on land in Knowsley Lane, Huyton. All three of the suggested areas of search are, however, in the Green Belt.
- 7.10 At the Issues and Options stage, the Council identified that some Green Belt land would be needed to meet development needs and identified (in issue ST10) some draft criteria which could inform the choice of locations. The suggested criteria gave rise to a mixture of views and some useful suggestions were made about the criteria themselves.
- 7.11 Knowsley Council, along with neighbouring authorities, has commissioned a study to assess the capability of areas currently within the designated Green Belt that may be able to accommodate residential and / or employment development. The Council is consulting on the Green Belt study<sup>122</sup> at the same time as the Preferred Options Report and this technical report.
- 7.12 It is not the purpose of this report to determine where these sites should be or indeed that employment land should be given priority over Green Belt principles. Chapter 8 will consider the implications for developing on sites currently within the Green Belt.

#### Quality of sites

- 7.13 The BE Group made an evaluation of the quality of sites and the employment types that the sites could be put to. Assessing the quality of sites is subjective and can be interpreted in a number of ways. Businesses may not always want a high quality site as they are often more expensive to purchase or rent. The BE Group categorised sites as being suitable for Offices (generally the higher quality sites) and Industrial (generally the lower quality sites). They concluded that, of the sites that they considered to have a realistic probability of being developed, 7 sites could be developed for office use only, 27 for industrial use only, and 16 could be developed for either office or industrial or both. Tables 7.3 and 7.4 show that the Borough has a good supply of sites for Offices and Industry for at least five years. It should be noted that the former Pirelli site in south Prescot is considered to be suitable for both Offices

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<sup>122</sup> Green Belt Study (Envision for Knowsley and Sefton Councils, 2010)

and Industrial despite it also being considered for residential use. It is therefore included in Tables 7.3 and 7.4

	Less than 1 year	1 - 3 years	3- 5 years	5 years and over
Number of sites less than 1 ha	2	2	0	0
Number of sites between 1 ha and 5 ha	3	5	3	1
Number of sites over 5 ha	1	2	1	0
Total	6	9	4	1

Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

	Less than 1 year	1 - 3 years	3- 5 years	5 years and over
Number of sites less than 1 ha	4	12	2	1
Number of sites between 1 ha and 5 ha	3	8	3	4
Number of sites over 5 ha	1	3	1	1
Total	8	23	6	6

Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010)

#### Five-year Employment Land Supply

- 7.14 The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study recommended that local authorities should seek to ensure that there is always a five year supply of land that is available<sup>123</sup>. This report recommends that the Core Strategy should, subject to monitoring of economic trends and land take up, make provision for 12.73 ha of land per annum to be provided for employment development over the period from 2010 to 2027. This equates to a minimum five year target of 64 ha. At April 2010, the Borough had at least 151.6 ha of land available of which 116.8 ha was considered to be available or will be available within five years.

<sup>123</sup> Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010) page 306

- 7.15 This report recommends that the Core Strategy identifies not only a sufficient quantity of employment land but also a range of different sizes of site. Table 7.2 shows that Borough has a balanced portfolio of different sizes of site.

Size of Site	Availability									
	Years 0 to1		Years 1 to 3		Years 3 to 5		Over 5 Years		To be evaluated	
	No. of sites	Area (ha)	No. of sites	Area (ha)						
less than 1ha	4	3.0	13	6.5	2	1.4	1	0.5	3	0.7
1ha to 5ha	3	8.2	10	22.6	3	8.8	3	5.2	2	4.8
more than 5ha	1	8.3	4	28.6	1	29.4	2	23.7	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>57.7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29.4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5.5</b>
<p>Note: this table includes the former Pirelli site in south Prescott. It is considered that the site of 29.4ha will be available for development in 3-5 years. Part of this site may, however, be developed for residential purposes.</p> <p>Source: Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010) and KMBC</p>										

- 7.16 The Core Strategy's Issues and Options Paper considered if the use of some employment sites should be restricted to specific employment types such as office and knowledge based industries. This would encourage similar types of site to be located in close proximity to each other which may engender competition. This approach would, however, be less flexible and therefore less responsive to changing market conditions. This report considers that, generally, this approach should not be supported. High density jobs such as office uses should be located in the most accessible locations such as town centres and the major employment centres of Knowsley Industrial and Business Parks, Huyton Business Park, and Kings Business Park.

## Conclusions

- 7.17 The Borough had, at April 2010, 151.6 ha of land that was considered to have a realistic prospect of development for employment purposes. It has a good choice of size of site for all employment types.
- 7.18 It is recommended that the Core Strategy should ensure that, at all times, a sufficient quantity of deliverable sites and premises is available to meet the needs for employment development over the following five year period. The five year supply is defined as 5 X the annual average required to meet the overall need for the plan period; that is 63.7ha (5 X 12.73 ha). This should be monitored on an annual basis.

- 7.19 Although the Borough has in excess of 5 years supply of sites, the supply is less than required for the full Core Strategy period. If the Borough's employment growth is to be ensured, an additional 65.0 to 79.7 ha of land may need to be identified. This being dependent on the amount of land that can be released through remodelling / regeneration opportunities in the Borough's industrial parks.
- 7.20 The Council, in addition to there not being robust evidence that adjoining districts could accommodate Knowsley's future employment land need and the increased need of residents to travel, believe that it would undermine the Borough's Sustainable Community Strategy.
- 7.21 In order to ensure that the Borough continuously has at least five years employment land supply for the whole plan period, land may be required to be removed from the Green Belt to ensure that it's available when required. In order to ensure that regeneration objectives and Brownfield priorities are not undermined it may be necessary to safeguard land currently in the Green Belt until the latter part of the Plan period. This will require a robust release mechanism based on of supply and take-up rates.
- 7.22 It is recommended that the Core Strategy facilitate the remodelling of the Borough's industrial parks in order to reduce the need for take-up of land currently in the Green Belt. For the same reason, the Core Strategy could safeguard existing employment land from development for other uses. The only exceptions being where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for economic purposes or when there is clear evidence that it would bring over-riding benefits and contribute to the regeneration of the area.

## **8. Implications for the Green Belt**

- 8.1 It is evident from chapter 7 that if the continued economic growth of Knowsley is to be ensured, there will be a need to identify sites in the Green Belt for employment purposes which it is estimated should total between 40 and 80 ha. It is not the purpose of this report to determine where these sites should be or indeed that employment land should be given priority over Green Belt principles. The Green Belt study<sup>124</sup> also will not identify specific sites, it will however provide evidence for the on the most appropriate area to be considered for Green belt release.
- 8.2 This chapter will consider the implications should the decision be made to release land from the Green Belt for employment purposes.
- 8.3 The use of Green Belt land for employment development is a potentially controversial matter and one which needs to be dealt with sensitively. There is clear national planning policy in place which defines the role and functions of the Green Belt and contains policies to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. National policy clearly states that development within the Green Belt would only be considered appropriate in exceptional circumstances. This policy position is supported by that in the Regional Spatial Strategy and indeed at the local level within the existing adopted Knowsley UDP. It will be of critical importance to consider these policy issues when formulating policy positions concerning the Green Belt within the LDF. This has been considered as a central element of the work undertaken towards the Green Belt Study, which strongly reflects the constraints of national policy. It will, however, be the content of documents within the LDF which will seek to argue that exceptional circumstances exist, relating to demand for employment growth.
- 8.4 The land that remains within the Green Belt will still need to conform to national policy, particularly the five purposes of PPG2<sup>125</sup>:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
  - to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
  - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
  - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
  - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 8.5 A further issue is that the unconstrained release of Green Belt land could undermine regeneration priorities within the existing urban area.
- 8.6 Development on Greenfield sites is often less expensive than development on land that has previously been developed and hence more attractive to developers. To ensure that this does not happen, land that is currently in the Green Belt could be safeguarded until such time as the Borough no longer has sufficient land to have a five year supply.

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<sup>124</sup> Green Belt Study (Envision for Knowsley and Sefton Councils, 2010)

<sup>125</sup> Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts, (ODPM, 1995)

## 9. Glossary

Core Strategy	The overarching development plan document of the local Development Framework. It sets out the long term spatial vision for the local planning authority area, as well as the spatial objectives and the strategic policies to deliver that vision.
Development Plan Document	The documents, together with the Regional Strategy that, that make up the development Plan for the Borough. They include the core strategy, site specific allocations of land, and area action plans (if considered necessary) and other documents deemed necessary by the council to deliver the spatial strategy.
Employment Land	Although in the wider context land uses such as retail and leisure contribute to employment, in this Draft Technical Report employment uses refer to those within the B use classes in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).
Employment Land Supply	Land considered suitable for employment use whether or not it has a realistic prospect of being developed for such use.
JELPS	The Joint Employment Land and Premises Study Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire (BE Group, 2010) was a study undertaken by the BE Group for Halton, Knowsley, Sefton and West Lancashire Councils to assess existing supply and future need of employment land.
Local Development Framework	The name given to the local development documents and other documents that provide the framework for delivering the spatial strategy for a council area.
Liverpool City Region	The Liverpool City Region covers the boroughs of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St Helens, Sefton and Wirral.
Plan Period	The period between 2012 and 2027.
Regional Strategy	Document that sets out the region's policies in relation to the development and use of land. It forms part of the development plan.
Realistic Employment Land Supply	Land with a realistic prospect of being developed for employment purposes.
Use Classes Order	The Town & Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 lists 16 classes of use. A change from one use to another use within the same Class does not normally require planning permission.

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Appendix 1 – Employment Land Supply April 2010

Reference	Status	Address	Site Area	Employment Type
<b>BE Group Availability 0-1 years</b>				
38	Allocated for Employment Development	Land north of Kodak, Acornfield Road	3.3	B1/B2/B8
41	Allocated for Employment Development	Land adjacent to BASF Coatings and Inks Ltd, Ellis Ashton Street	0.9	B1/B2/B8
103	Primarily Industrial Area	Land between St. Ivel And Yorkshire Metals, located off East Lancashire Road, Kirkby	8.3	B1/B2/B8
169	Primarily Industrial Area	Wilson Road / Brickfields	0.6	B1/B2/B8
40	Full Planning Permission Granted	Part of Yorkshire Imperial Metals off Coopers Lane.	3.2	B1/B2/B8
40.2	Under Construction	Part of Yorkshire Imperial Metals off Coopers Lane.	1.7	B1/B2/B8
183	Under Construction	Esselte Ltd, Wilson Road Huyton Wilson Road, Huyton	0.8	B2, B8
28	Full Planning Permission Granted	Land at junction of Gores Road / Acornfield Road	0.7	B8
Total Available 0-1 Years			19.5	
<b>BE Group Availability 1-3 years</b>				
2	Allocated for Employment Development	Roscoe's Wood, Cronton Road, Huyton	7.9	B1/B2
6	Allocated for Employment Development	Perimeter Road / Acornfield Road	7.7	B1/B2/B8
8	Allocated for Employment Development	Marl Road	0.5	B1/B2/B8
9	Allocated for Employment Development	Arbour Lane	1.4	B1/B2/B8
10	Allocated for Employment Development	Hornhouse Lane	3.0	B1/B2/B8
12	Allocated for Employment Development	Britonwood	6.4	B1/B2/B8
13	Allocated for Employment Development	Moss End Way (East)	2.1	B1/B2/B8
14	Allocated for Employment Development	Moss End Way (West)	4.2	B1/B2/B8

Reference	Status	Address	Site Area	Employment Type
17	Allocated for Employment Development	School Boys Plantation, Randles Road	0.5	B1/B2/B8
18	Allocated for Employment Development	Ainsworth Lane / Penrhyn Road	0.5	B1/B2/B8
20	Allocated for Employment Development	Davis' Pits, Randles Road	0.3	B1/B2/B8
23	Allocated for Employment Development	Land at junction of Penrhyn Road / School Lane	0.6	B1/B2/B8
24	Allocated for Employment Development	Land Between Randles Road and School Lane	1.2	B1/B2/B8
27	Allocated for Employment Development	Penrhyn / Villiers Road	2.1	B1/B2/B8
32	Allocated for Employment Development	Land adjacent to Ethel Austin Site, Ainsworth Lane	2.3	B1/B2/B8
36	Allocated for Employment Development	Land between Villiers Court and Overbrook Lane	0.5	B1/B2/B8
166	Primarily Industrial Area	Woodward Road	0.9	B1/B2/B8
170	Primarily Industrial Area	Rear of Garage, Wilson Road	0.7	B1/B2/B8
176	Primarily Industrial Area	Randles Road	0.3	B1/B2/B8
177	Primarily Industrial Area	Ainsworth Lane, Knowsley Business Park	0.4	B1/B2/B8
182	Regional Investment Site	Kings Business Park	6.6	B1/B2, C1
178	Full Planning Permission Granted	Land Fronting D Evans Electrical, Wilson Road, Huyton	0.2	B1
118	Regional Investment Site	Kings Business Park, Liverpool Road, Prescot	1.4	B1(a)
20.2	Full Planning Permission Granted	Davis' Pits, Randles Road	0.2	B1/B2
174	Allocated for Employment Development	Pirelli North, Prescot	2.3	B1/B2/B8
19	Full Planning Permission Granted	Gellings Lane / Randles Road	0.9	B1/B2/B8
168	Outline Planning Permission	Rear of Moorgate Point, Moorgate Road	2.6	B1/B2/B8
Total Available 1-3 Years			57.7	

Reference	Status	Address	Site Area	Employment Type
<b>BE Group Availability 3-5 years</b>				
25	Allocated for Employment Development	Part of Dairy Crest / Kraft site, A580	3.6	B1/B2/B8
33	Allocated for Employment Development	Land at corner of A580 / Moorgate Lane	3.3	B1/B2/B8
35	Outline Planning Permission	Land adjacent Delphi Delco, Hornhouse Lane, adjacent to junction with South Boundary Road	1.9	B1
4.1	Allocated for Employment Development	Land to North of CDMS, Fallows Way, Whiston	0.9	B1(c),B2,B8
175	Allocated for Employment Development	Pirelli South, Prescott	29.4	B1/B2/B8
4	Full Planning Permission Granted	Plot 5, Whiston Enterprise Park, Fallows Way	0.6	B2
Total Available 3-5 Years			39.6	
<b>BE Group Availability 5+ years</b>				
1	Allocated for Employment Development	Ford/Jaguar Expansion Land, Speke Boulevard, Halewood	18.4	B1/B2/B8
7	Allocated for Employment Development	Depot Road	3.2	B1/B2/B8
15	Allocated for Employment Development	North Perimeter Road / Moss End Way	5.3	B1/B2/B8
31	Allocated for Employment Development	Land adjacent to Knowsley rail freight terminal, Depot Road	1.0	B1/B2/B8
37	Allocated for Employment Development	Land to the east of Cross Huller, Randles Road / Gellings Road / School Lane	1.0	B1/B2/B8
42	Allocated for Employment Development	Land adjacent 2 Gladeswood Road, Kirkby Industrial Park	0.5	B1/B2/B8
Total Available 5+ years			29.4	
<b>Permissions since BE Group Study</b>				
191	Full Planning Permission Granted	All Seasons Construction, 1 Adastra Works, Birchill Road, Knowsley Industrial Park, Kirkby	0.1	B1(a)
192	Full Planning Permission Granted	Plot G3, Deltic Way, Knowsley Industrial Park, Kirkby	0.1	B1/B2/B8
187	Full Planning Permission Granted	Land Between And Including Units 1-9 Interchange Motorway Estate, Wilson	3.6	B2

Reference	Status	Address	Site Area	Employment Type
		Road, Huyton		
188	Full Planning Permission Granted	Batleys Cash And Carry, Fallows Way, Whiston	1.2	B8
189	Full Planning Permission Granted	Batleys Cash And Carry, Fallows Way, Whiston	0.5	B8
Total Permissions since BE Group Study			5.5	