Knowsley Council

Knowsley BETTER TOGETHER



KNOWSLEY'S

LOCAL PLAN

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING AND SCOPING REPORT 2026

Knowsley Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Scoping Report

November 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required to be carried out alongside the preparation of local plans. This report aims to ensure that legal requirements of the SEA Directive and Regulations are complied with and to avoid or minimise any potential adverse impacts of the plan.

1.2. A SEA is only required to consider the environmental effects of a plan, however, within this assessment we have also considered the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts. This approach ensures that this assessment meets all of the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, as well as considering the impacts of the Plan in terms of its contribution to the achievement of sustainable development

1.3. The local planning authority (LPA) is responsible for ensuring that the SEA has been carried out in accordance with the relevant planning and environmental assessment legislation.

1.4. This Screening and Scoping report represents the first stages of the SEA process. It undertakes a screening exercise to determine if the SEA is required, then it provides a description of the baseline information and key environmental and sustainability issues of relevance to the borough, and identifies other relevant plans, programmes and policies that may influence the development of the Local Plan. The scoping report also establishes an appraisal framework that will be used to examine the environmental and sustainability impacts of implementing the Local Plan policies and objectives. The scoping stage must identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SEA report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental issues and objectives.

1.5. The term 'baseline information' refers to the existing environmental characteristics of the area likely to be affected by the plan, and their likely evolution without implementation of new policies. It provides the basis against which to assess the likely effects of alternative proposals in the draft plan. The area which could be affected may sometimes lie outside the LPA's administrative boundary and plan makers may need to obtain information from other local planning authorities.

1.6. The preparation of a SEA is an iterative process alongside the preparation of the Local Plan, it will be used to test options and proposals for the Local Plan.

Knowsley Local Plan

1.7. The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough, it will cover the period through to 2045. The Local Plan will set out a vision for Knowsley, and a strategy for the future development of the area.

Legal Requirements

1.8. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026[1] requires local planning authorities to set out details as to how they have met any obligations arising from the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004[2].

1.9. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004[3] requires the responsible authority to carry out, or to secure the carrying out of, an environmental assessment during the preparation of a Local Plan. Where this environmental assessment is required the responsible authority must prepare an environmental report which describes and evaluates the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Local Plan and reasonable alternatives.

1.10. The requirement for a SEA arises from the European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment" (SEA Directive). This Directive was transposed in UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). This legislation places an obligation on local authorities to undertake a SEA on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes and which sets the framework for future development consent of certain projects. Guidance on the SEA process is provided in Planning Practice Guidance and A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005).

1.11. Article 1 of the Directive states that its objective is "to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development". These aims are consistent with a range of Government policies on the environment and sustainable development.

[1] The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026
[2] The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004
[3] The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

1.12. The Directive does not prescribe who is to carry out an SEA, but normally it is the task of the Responsible Authority, i.e. the body which prepares and/or adopts the plan. In this case, that is Knowsley Council.

1.13. The Directive requires consideration of the significant environmental effects of the plan, and of reasonable alternatives that take into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme.

Environmental Outcomes Reports

1.14. In 2023 the Government published Environmental Outcomes Reports: A new Approach to Environmental Assessment[4]. The consultation sought views on a proposed new system of environmental assessment to replace SEA and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

1.15. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA)[5] provides powers to the Government to bring forward a new framework such as Environmental Outcomes Reports (EORs) to replace SEA and EIA, this is to be done through secondary legislation. At present this secondary legislation has not come forward. However, it remains the intention of Government to move towards an outcomes-based approach, that will ensure that all likely significant effects of development are assessed and help to simplify and streamline the assessment process.

1.16. The Government propose to prepare guidance and templates to support the new EOR framework, as well as utilising a transition period to assist in moving to this new system.

1.17. As the secondary legislation, regulations, guidance and templates have not yet been provided, at this time, the Council have chosen to assess the emerging Local Plan through the SEA process to ensure that the requirements of the Environmental legislation are met.

Other Appraisals and Assessments

1.18. Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a process that seeks to ensure that equality and fairness are achieved in the delivery of services and how proposed policies could improve the way we serve all members of the community fairly.

[4] Environmental Outcomes Reports: a new approach to environmental assessment - GOV.UK
[5] Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

1.19. Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a process used to evaluate the significance of the potential health effects of a physical development, proposed changes to service delivery, a policy or a strategy. It helps to inform choices about actions to prevent ill-health, promote good health and reduce health inequalities. When applied in the planning system, an HIA seeks to address the barriers and opportunities for creating healthy places.

1.20. Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) seeks to identify and assess any aspects of a local plan that would cause any adverse effect on the integrity of the most important biodiversity designations; special areas of conservation (SACs), special protection areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites.

2. The SEA Process

2.1. The SEA is required by The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes, Regulations 2004, Schedule 2, which sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These are used to ensure that all policies and programmes are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

2.2. The objective of SEA as defined in the Government's guidance on SEA is: "To provide for a high level of protection of the environment and contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development".

2.3. The Screening Report is the first stage of the SEA process and is undertaken to determine if a plan requires an SEA. A Scoping Report is the second stage in the SEA process.

2.4. The Regulations specify the issues that should be considered in SEA as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape.

2.5. This Screening and Scoping Report will set the context and objectives, establish the baseline and decide the scope of the SEA. It will:

- Determine if the Local Plan requires an SEA.
- Identify other relevant plans, programmes and objectives.
- Collect and develop relevant environmental baseline data and define the character of the area.
- Identify key environmental issues for the Local Plan to address.
- Develop the SEA Framework, consisting of objectives, indicators and targets.
- Consult on the scope of the SEA with statutory consultation bodies.

2.6. Government guidance on the new plan-making system confirms the expectation that new Local Plans will need to carry out SEA if certain criteria set out in the screening questions are met.

3. SEA Screening

3.1. Environmental assessment is required for certain categories of plans and programmes only where they are determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects. The following flow chart is provided to help determine if the Local Plan will require an SEA, it determines that the Local Plan is required to undertake SEA.

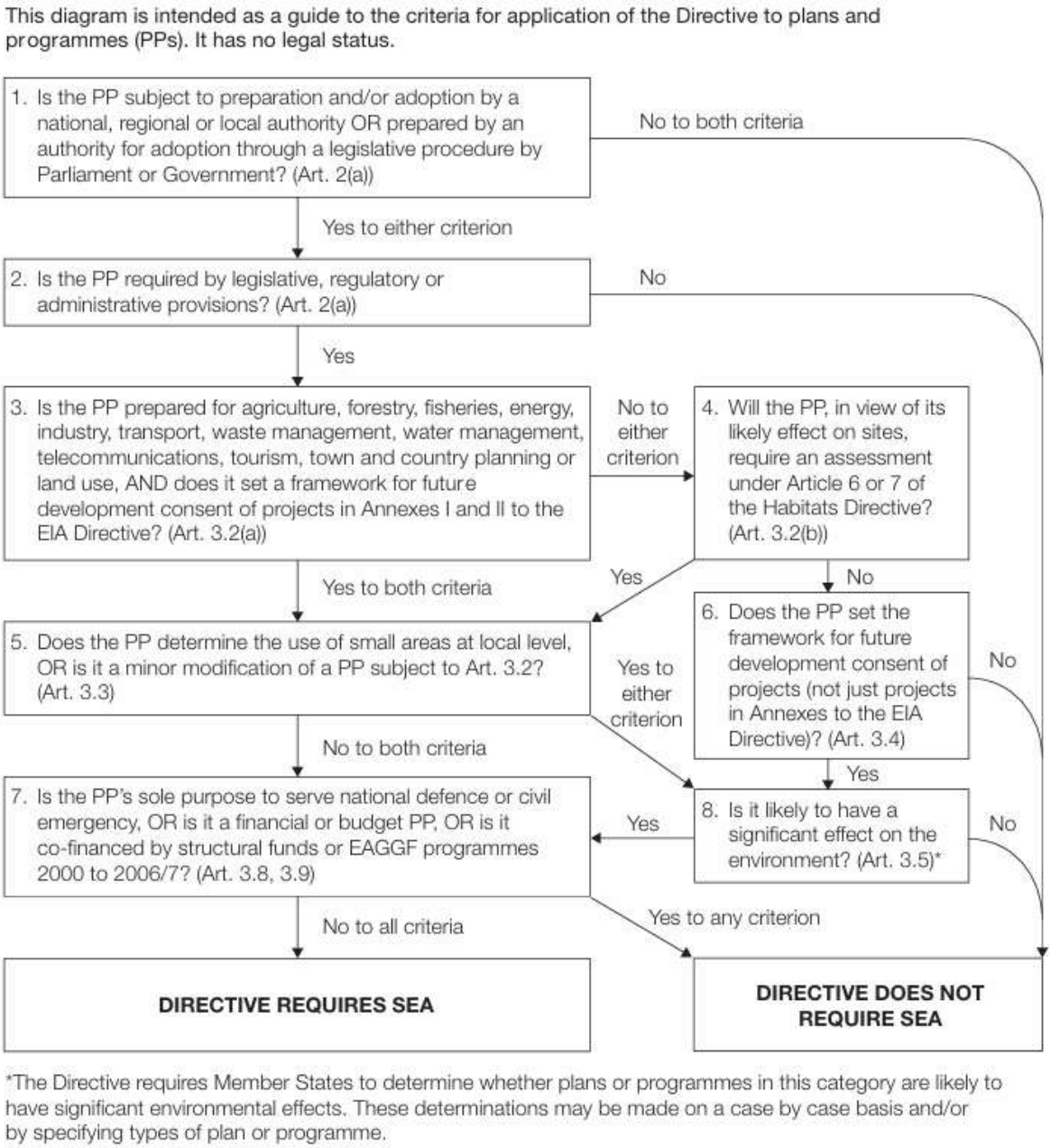

Figure 3.1 Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes (taken from the practical guidance)

3.2. Taking this into consideration Knowsley Council has determined that SEA will be required for the new Local Plan. As set out in the considerations of the questions and criteria below (where the flow chart refers to PP – it is short of plan and programme – in this case the new local plan).

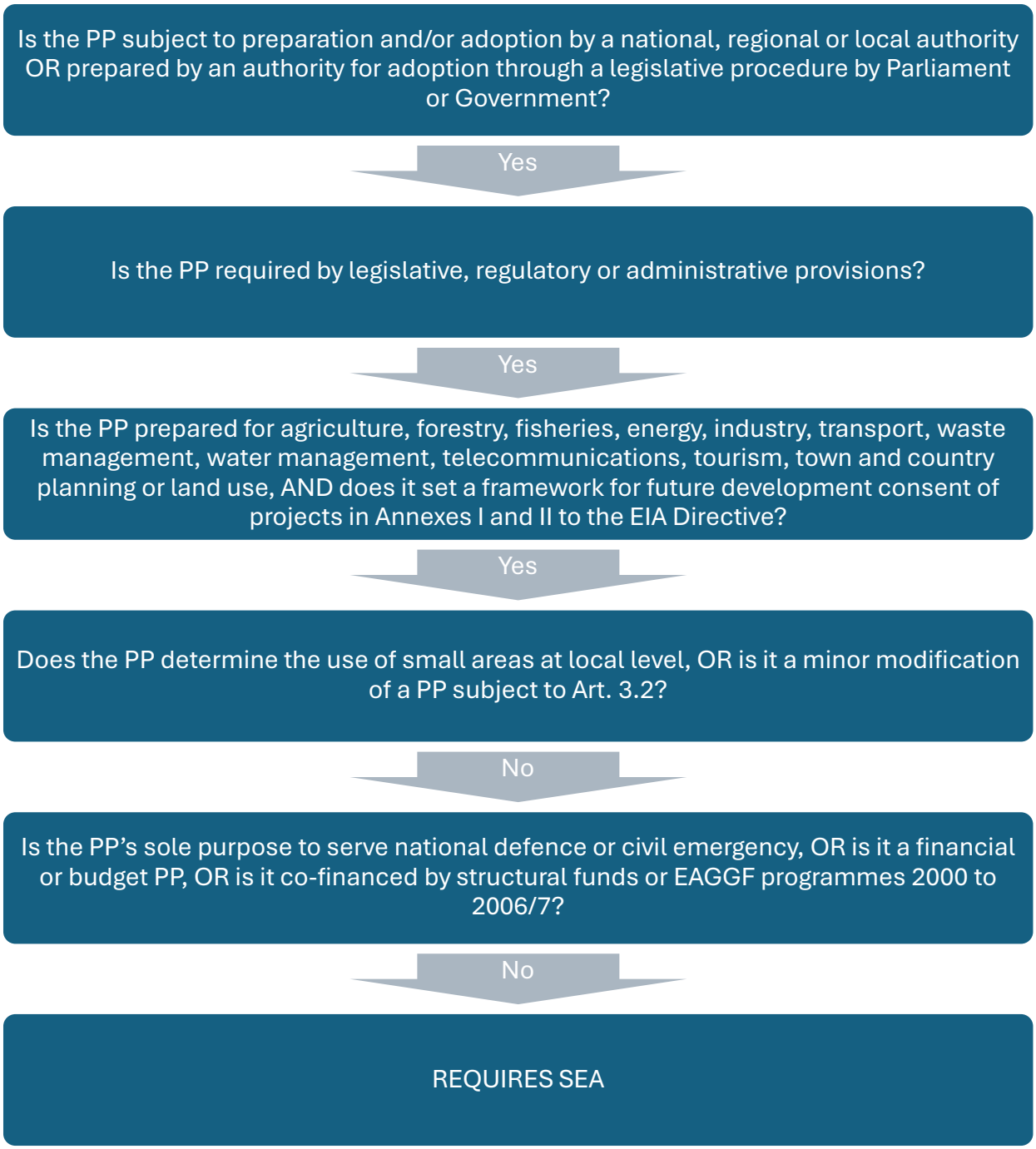

Figure 3.2 Consideration of the Knowsley Local Plan through the Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes (taken from the practical guidance)

4. Review of Relevant Plans, Policies and Programmes

4.1. The scoping stage needs to identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the strategic environmental assessment report. It should set out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identify relevant environmental, economic and social issues and objectives.

4.2. The SEA should consider the relationships between the Local Plan and other relevant policies, plans and programmes, these include policies, plans and programmes at the international, national, regional and local scale. This has been undertaken to establish how the Local Plan is affected by outside factors, to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed and to help identify SEA objectives. However, in some cases, the review has identified where other plans and programmes already address certain sustainability issues, and therefore these will not need to be addressed further in the Local Plan.

4.3. The purpose of this review is to:

- Identify any external social, environmental or economic objectives that should be taken into account in the SEA.
- Identify other external factors, including sustainability issues, which might influence the preparation of the Local Plan.
- Determine whether other policies, plans and programmes might give rise to cumulative effects, either positive or negative, when combined with the Local Plan.
- Make sure that the Local Plan and its SEA are in line with the requirements of relevant policies, plans and programmes and through this identify inconsistencies or constraints that will need to be addressed.
- Identify environmental objectives, key indicators, and baseline data that should be reflected in the SEA.
- Suggest ideas as to how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify the sustainability objectives.

Review of Plans and Programmes

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
SEA Directive (transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)	The directive concerns the SEA procedure, which is as follows: an environmental report is prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment and the reasonable alternatives of the proposed plan or programme are identified. The public and the environmental authorities are informed and consulted on the draft plan or programme and the environmental report prepared.	The directive sets out the topics against which the likely effects of a plan or programmes should be assessed. The Local Plan and SEA Framework must comply with the requirements of the Directive.
European Landscape Convention (2006)	The UK signed the European Landscape Convention in 2006. It aims to encourage the protection, management, and planning of all landscapes, rural and urban, large, and small, coastal and inland, protected or degraded. The Convention defines landscape as 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.	The Local Plan should seek to manage the current and future landscape sustainably, protecting the character of landscapes, in harmony with changes brought about by social, economic, and environmental processes.
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change – Copenhagen Accord	This recognizes the need to limit global temperature increases to below 2°C and establishes voluntary emission pledges from both developed and developing nations, though it is not legally binding.	Local Plan policies should support overall objectives and requirements of the Convention.

[6] It is noted that when the UK left the EU, the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (EUWA) saved EU rights and obligations and turned them into domestic law.

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
The Paris Agreement	The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. Its overarching goal is to hold "the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels" and pursue efforts "to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels." By 2020 countries should submit their plans for climate action known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). NDCs are mandatory and outline the actions a country will take to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and to increase resilience to climate change. The NDC commits the UK to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 68% compared to 1990 levels by 2030.	The Local Plan should be informed by climate resilience and adaptation considerations.
UN Convention on Biological Diversity	The convention set the following three main objectives: • The conservation of biological diversity. • The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity. • The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. Parties agreed to translate this into revised national biodiversity strategies within 2 years, which in the UK resulted in the Defra publishing 'Biodiversity 2020'.	Local Plan policies to reflect Biodiversity 2020.
Ramsar Convention	The Convention's mission is 'the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and	Local Plan policies need to protect and manage wetland areas of biodiversity, and

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world'.	areas of special habitat and ecological importance.
Berne Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	The convention has three main aims: • To conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats. • To promote cooperation between states. • To give particular attention to endangered and vulnerable species including endangered and vulnerable migratory species. The obligations of the Convention are transposed into national law by means of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended).	The Local Plan should have regard to the conservation of wild flora and fauna.
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	Particular objectives set out for the involved Parties are that they shall: • Promote, co-operate and support research relating to migratory species. • Endeavour to provide immediate protection for migratory species. • Endeavour to conclude Agreements covering the conservation and management of migratory species.	The Local Plan will need to give consideration to the conservation of migratory species, this may be of particular note when considering development that may utilise critical staging areas or lead to the loss and fragmentation of their habitats or the infrastructure relating to renewable energy schemes.
UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of World	The UK adheres to the convention as a member state of UNESCO. The convention defines cultural and natural heritage and sets out a framework for the identification and designation of cultural or natural heritage sites of	The Local Plan should protect valued cultural and natural heritage.

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Cultural and Natural Heritage	'outstanding universal value' as World Heritage Sites. In the UK, World Heritage Sites are considered designated heritage assets under the NPPF.	
Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe	This defines 'architectural heritage', and each signatory promises to maintain an inventory and to take statutory measures to protect such heritage. It also includes a promise to provide funding, within budgetary limitations, and to promote the general enhancement of the surroundings of groups. Signatories (including the UK) also promise to adopt integrated conservation policies in their planning systems and other spheres of government influence that promote the conservation and enhancement of architectural heritage and the fostering of traditional skills.	The Local Plan should consider how it can conserve and manage architectural heritage through appropriate Policy.
Valletta Convention on Protection of Archaeology	This defines archaeological heritage and the signatories promise to make and maintain an inventory of such heritage and to legislate for its protection. The emphasis is on protection of sites for future study, the reporting of chance finds, the control of excavations and the use of metal detectors. Signatories (including the UK) also promise to allow the input of expert archaeologists into the making of planning policies and planning decisions.	The Local Plan should consider archaeology where appropriate within the Plan and ensure the involvement of expert archaeologists where needed.

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
United Nations Millennium Declaration	This identifies fundamental values including freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. It seeks to free people from the scourge of war; combat poverty, hunger, disease, and illiteracy; prevent environmental degradation, including conservation of forests, stopping the unsustainable exploitation of water resources and reducing the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters; and respect for human rights including eliminating discrimination against women.	Local Plan policies should support the overall objectives and requirements of the declaration.
Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	This sets 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, which seek to realise the human rights of all, to achieve gender equality and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. The 17 goals are: • End poverty in all its forms everywhere. • End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. • Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. • Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning and opportunities for all • Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.	The Local Plan should take account of the sustainable development goals.

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	• Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. • Ensure access to affordable, reliable sustainable and modern energy for all. • Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. • Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation. • Reduce inequality within and among countries. • Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. • Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. • Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. • Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development. • Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. • Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for	

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. • Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.	
Universal Declaration on Human Rights	This contains 30 articles for human rights, including: • All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. • Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, poli- tical or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. • Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. • Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. • Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay. • Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness,	The Local Plan should include policies that promote equality and redress inequalities related to age, gender, race, disability, faith, location, and income.

International[6]		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control. • Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.	
European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights	The ECHR was directly inspired by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It contains an overall obligation to respect human rights and then a further 17 articles in relation to rights and freedoms, including: • The right to life • Prohibition of torture • Prohibition of slavery and forced labour • The right to liberty and security • The right to a fair trial • No punishment without law • The right to respect for private and family life • Freedom of thought, conscience and religion • Freedom of expression • Right to marry • Right to effective remedy where their rights and freedoms are violated • Prohibition of discrimination • Prohibitions of abuse of rights	The Local Plan should include policies that promote equality and redress inequalities related to age, gender, race, disability, faith, location, and income.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the latest version of which was published in August 2026, and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is the key document that must be considered when preparing development plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.	The NPPF includes policies that set out what should be included in the Development Plan including the Local Plan. It also sets out policies for use in determining planning applications which do not need to be repeated.
National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)	The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which is a suite of policy papers covering a broad range of topics.	The Local Plan will be expected to utilise the guidance provided in the PPG, including following the appropriate methodologies for calculating the housing need, viability, determining grey belt and economic need.
National Policy Statements	There are National Policy Statements in relation to Energy, Transport, Water, Waste Water and Waste. They set out the Government's policies on particular types of nationally significant infrastructure projects.	The Local Plan does not need to repeat any of the information provided in the NPS.
National Model Design Code (2021)	Sets out clear design parameters to help local authorities and communities decide what good quality design looks like in their area.	The Local Plan will need to consider any specific design related requirements such as provision of a design code, this may be for the whole plan or for specific sites.
The Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023	The three main aims of the Act were to make changes with national and local government to achieve levelling up, devolve power to mayoral authorities to allow more locally led regeneration, change the planning system to support	To comply with UK legislation, the Local Plan should consider the implications of this Act, on the Local Plan content and preparation.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	local communities regeneration. The heritage provisions which give World Heritage Sites, Scheduled monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens the same legal protections as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are yet to come into force.	
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004	Makes provisions relating to spatial development and town and country planning, and the compulsory acquisition of land. It sets out a number of legislative requirements for the production of Local Plan documents.	The Local Plan should comply with the provisions of the Act.
Planning Act (2008)	The Act created two changes to the functioning of the planning system: The establishment of an Infrastructure Planning Commission to make decisions on nationally significant infrastructure projects and the creation of the Community Infrastructure Levy.	The Local Plan should take account of, and be in conformity with, the Act.
Planning and Infrastructure Act (2025)	This Act includes regional and sub-regional planning through spatial development strategies. It also provides legislation in relation to development and nature recovery including environmental delivery plans and a nature restoration levy.	The Local Plan should take into account the establishment of Spatial Development Strategies and Environmental Delivery Plans.
Localism Act (2011)	Created Assets of Community Value and abolished Regional Strategies. It provided more details in relation to Local Development Schemes, neighbourhood planning, national policy statements and CIL.	The Local Plan should take account of, and be in conformity with, the Act.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Land Use Framework for England (2026)	This sets out a coherent national vision for how we use land. It demonstrates clearly that there is enough land to build the homes needed to address the housing crisis, maintain domestic food production, restore nature at scale, and build clean, homegrown power to provide energy security.	The Local Plan should have regard to the provisions of the framework.
Agricultural Act 2020	The legislative framework for replacement agricultural support schemes moving towards prioritising nature recovery and ecosystem services. It provides a range of powers to implement new approaches to farm payments and land management.	The Local Plan should take account of, and be in conformity with, the Act, where appropriate.
Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 years on	This original report was published in 2010 to create fair employment and good work for all. The report was reviewed in 2020 to see what changes had been made in the ten years since its publication. Findings included: • The stalling of life expectancy • Life expectancy follows the social gradient • Life expectancy is spatial • The amount of time people spend in poor health has increased • Funding cuts have affected social determinants • The national government has not prioritised health inequalities	The Local Plan should consider the health of the local community and seek to address health inequalities.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Building for a Healthy Life (2026)	Building for a Healthy Life is a design tool for creating places that work better for both people and nature. It includes 12 considerations these are: natural connections; getting around; facilities, services and stewardship; homes for everyone; making the most of what's there; a memorable character; well-defined streets and spaces; easy to find your way around; healthy streets; cycle and car parking; green and blue infrastructure; and back of pavement, front of home.	The Local Plan may want to give consideration to these 12 elements when preparing policies.
Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)	This strategy sets out this Government's long-term plan to end the UK's domestic contribution to man-made climate change by 2050. They propose four key principles: work with the grain of consumer choice; ensure the biggest polluters pay the most for the transition; ensure that the most vulnerable are protected through Government support and work with businesses to continue to deliver deep cost reductions in low carbon tech. Policies within the strategy relate to Power; Fuel Supply and hydrogen; industry; heat and buildings; transport; natural resources, waste and F-gases; greenhouse gas removals; green investment and local climate action.	The Local Plan should consider the pathway to net zero.
Clean Growth Strategy (2017)	This report emphasises the need to provide growth at a national scale which is clean. Protecting our built and natural environment is of paramount importance for the	The Local Plan must protect and enhance the district's natural and built environment.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	future of the country. Protecting our environment is beneficial for our economy and should be seen as an opportunity rather than a constraint.	
The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (November 2025)	The Industrial Strategy is a 10-year plan to increase business investment and grow the industries of the future in the UK.	The Local Plan should reflect the main aims of the Industrial Strategy and seek to achieve economic growth.
The Enterprise Act (2016)	The Enterprise Act includes measures to: • Establish a Small Business Commissioner to help small firms resolve issues. • Extend the Primary Authority scheme to make it easier for businesses to access tailored and assured advice from local authorities, giving them greater confidence to invest and grow. • Protect and strengthen apprenticeships by introducing targets for apprenticeships in public sector bodies in England, and establish an Institute for Apprenticeships – an independent, employer-led body that will make sure apprenticeships meet the needs of business.	The Local Plan should take account of, and be in conformity with, the Act, where appropriate.
Northern Growth Strategy: Case for Change (2026) and Northern Growth Strategy: Next Steps (2026)	This sets out the Government's policy agenda for the North of England, it seeks to address the long-standing productivity gap, to support national growth. It is looking to: • Improve connectivity within and between city regions, including surrounding towns.	The Local Plan will need to give consideration to its contribution to helping to narrow the productivity gap and potentially to the route of the new NRP line.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	• Increase effective city size and density, and investing in towns. • Support business investment and innovation. • Invest in skills and human capital. • Bring forward northern powerhouse rail (NPR). It proposes that the government will take forward a new route between Liverpool and Manchester as predominantly a new line, running via new stations at Manchester Airport and Warrington Bank Quay.	
The Equality Act (2010)	This includes the public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities. It identifies protected characteristics, the duty to make adjustments and what is considered discrimination.	The Local Plan should be prepared in conformity with the Act.
Housing and Planning Act (2016)	The Act made widespread changes to housing policy at the national level. Measures introduced in the Act relate to starter homes, and permitting the sale of higher value local authority homes. The overarching aim of the Act is to promote home ownership and increase levels of house building.	The Local Plan and SEA need to consider future policies to address issues in the act.
Housing Act (2004)	The Act sets standards for housing conditions and home information packs in connection with the sale of residential properties. The Act also covers the right to buy scheme and the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers with	The Local Plan should have regard to the provisions of the Act.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	particular regard to mobile homes. It also includes licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).	
Homes England Strategic Plan	The Homes England Strategic Plan identifies the steps that Homes England are taking over the 5-year period 2025 to 2030 to help more people in England access better homes in the right places.	The Local Plan should allocate land for housing in appropriate locations according to an identified need.
UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy (2025)	The 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy sets out the government's growth mission. It sets a new approach to infrastructure to drive growth; encouraging private investment; unlocking growth across regions; becoming a clean energy superpower; delivering high quality social infrastructure; and improving the environment.	The Local Plan should consider the provision of infrastructure, and where appropriate ensure it is in line with the National Infrastructure Plan.
Decarbonising Transport, A better Greener (2021)	This sets out the government's commitments to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK, and actions needed to achieve this. This includes an outline of the pathway to net zero transport in the UK, the wider benefits net zero transport can deliver, and the principles that underpin the approach to delivering net zero transport.	The Local Plan should consider the pathway to net zero transport.
Climate adaptation strategy for transport (2025)	The climate adaptation strategy for transport includes actions to: • Set long term strategic direction for adapting the transport sector to the impacts of climate change. • Support transport operators to mainstream climate adaptation.	The Local Plan should consider the impacts of transport on climate change.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	• Help strengthen the evidence base which underpins decision making.	
Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking (2020)	This strategy looks for a change in travel modes to active forms of travel to support health and environmentally benefits. It provides four key themes to do this: better streets for cycling and people; cycling at the heart of decision-making; empowering and encouraging Local Authorities; and Enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do.	The Local Plan should give consideration to the promotion of more active forms of travel.
Third Road Investment Strategy (RIS3) (2026)	This is Government's multi-year investment plan for operating, maintaining, renewing and enhancing the Strategic Road Network (SRN). RIS3 supports the cross-Government commitment to unlocking growth in nationally significant corridors. The RIS3 set six objectives these are: • Grow the economy. • Improve safety for all. • A level of network performance that meets customers' needs. • A technology enabled and enabling network. • A resilient network that is planned and managed for the long-term. • Deliver improved environmental outcomes.	The Local Plan should give consideration to this strategy in relation to the strategic road network in the area.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Clean Air Strategy (2019)	This strategy sets out the actions required all parts of Government and society to improve air quality.	The Local Plan should consider specific actions relating to the key objectives of the clean air strategy.
Air Quality (Standards) Regulations (2010)	These regulations seek to control human exposure to pollutants in outdoor air to protect human health and the environment by requiring concentrations to be within specified limited values.	The Local Plan and SEA need to be in conformity with the regulations.
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018)	The 25 Year Environment Plan outlines the Government's ambition to leave our environment in a better state than we found it and the steps proposed to take to achieve that ambition.	Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change and policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.
Climate Change Act (2008)	Through the Climate Change Act, the UK government has set a target to significantly reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a path to get there. The government amended the Act in 2019 to change the reduction target from 80% to 100% by 2050.	The Local Plan will need to contribute to the target for 100% reduction by 2050.
Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act (2006)	The act provides provisions relating to: • Microgeneration. • Reporting on greenhouse gas emissions. • Carbon emissions reduction obligation. • Community energy and renewable heat.	Planning policies will need to promote the use of microgeneration systems where possible, and that new development will be powered by renewable sources. New

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
		development should be encouraged to use community energy and heat sources.
Environment Act (1995)	This seeks to halt the decline of species by 2030, clean up the air and protect the health of rivers in the UK, as well as reform the way in which waste is dealt with and resources are used.	The Local Plan should align with the UK's environmental objectives in the preparation and assessment of the Plan to help safeguard the area and resources for future generations.
Environmental Protection Act 1990	The Environmental protection Act (1990) brought in a system of integrated pollution control for the disposal of wastes to land, water and air. The act included objectives to: • Establish integrated pollution control and give Local Authorities new powers to control air pollution from a range of prescribed processes. • Improves rules on waste disposal, including a waste duty of care and illegal dumping prevention. Local Authorities are required to inspect the area they cover for statutory nuisances and investigate complaints of statutory nuisances.	The Local Plan needs to consider measures to control pollution.
Environmental Improvement Plan (2023) and 2025	Sets out the Government's plan to improve the environment over at least the next 15 years and flows from the requirements of the Environment Act.	Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change and policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
		communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts.
Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)	The Act is the principal mechanism for legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. It deals with the protection of birds, other animals and plants. The Act provides for the notification of SSSI and their protection and management.	The Local Plan should avoid any adverse impacts on SSSIs and should seek to enhance them.
Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)	Safeguards public access by foot to specified lands. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CROW Act) gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. These areas are known as 'open access land'.	The Local Plan must ensure that potential development does not impede on rights of way and include policies to enhance people's experience and access to rights of way.
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)	This Act creates the duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, it suggests that the SoS must issues guidance to LPAs as to how they are to comply with their duty.	The Local Plan should have regard to this act and the duty in preparing policies in relation to biodiversity.
The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	One of the pieces of domestic law that transposed the land and marine aspects of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and certain elements of the Wild Birds Directive (Directive 2009/147/EC).	Local Plan policies and SEA objectives need to consider the impact on protected sites and species.
England Trees Action Plan (2021)	This is the Government's long term vision for trees and woodland, it sets out how they will achieve their ambition of planting, protecting and managing trees to deliver more for society, nature, climate and the economy.	The Local Plan should consider how trees may be planted and managed and secured via developer contributions such as Biodiversity Net Gain. Policies should

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
		generally seek to protect and enhance the area's tree provision.
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (2022)	This sets out the Government's policy for ancient and native woodland and ancient and veteran trees in England. It recognises their value, commits to evaluating the threats that face these habitats ad set out the principles and objects to protect and improve these habitats for future generations.	The Local Plan should have regard to this policy, particularly when considering policies and sites that may impact on ancient and veteran trees.
UK Geodiversity Action Plan	The UKGAP sets out a framework for geodiversity action across the UK. It covers six broad themes these are: • Furthering our understanding of geodiversity. • Influencing planning policy, legislation and development design. • Gathering and maintaining information on our geodiversity. • Conserving and managing our geodiversity. • Inspiring people to value and car for our geodiversity. • Sustaining resources for our geodiversity.	The Local Plan should consider the potential to include references to geodiversity where appropriate in policy.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	The Act provides the legal basis for planning powers relating to listed buildings and conservation areas. It provides the definition of a listed building and legislation as to the control of works in respect of listed buildings, and legislation governing the designation of conservation areas and the control of works within them.	The Local Plan and policies within need to ensure adequate protection of listed buildings and their settings, and conservation areas.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Ancient Monuments & Archaeological Areas Act 1979	An Act relating to ancient monuments; to make provision for the investigation, preservation and recording of matters of archaeological interest and (in connection therewith) for the regulation of operations or activities affecting such matters.	The Local Plan must provide appropriate protection for archaeological assets, and ensure proper provision for recording of these, where appropriate, in the relevant policies.
Waste Management Plan for England (2021)	This Plan aims to bring current waste management policies together under one national plan.	The Local Plan should look to promote and help achieve the objectives of the Waste management plan and contribute to the minimisation and recycling of waste.
The Air Quality Strategy: Framework for Local Authority Delivery (2023)	This framework underscores the importance of collaborative efforts, setting out strategies for reducing air pollution through measures such as promoting sustainable transportation, enhancing public awareness, and implementing local policies. By providing a comprehensive approach, the strategy aims to empower local authorities in mitigating air quality challenges and fostering healthier environments for communities, aligning with broader national and international goals for cleaner air and public health.	The Local Plan should give consideration to air quality and take proactive action to improve air quality.
The British Energy Security Strategy (2022)	Outlines the UK government's plan to ensure long-term energy security, support the transition to net-zero, and try to protect consumers from volatile energy prices. The aims include significantly increasing electricity production from low carbon sources, improving energy efficiency in the built	The Local Plan should give consideration to energy efficiency.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	environment, develop a hydrogen economy, strengthen energy storage and grid infrastructure, support the oil and gas industry through transition to net zero, support innovation and workforce skills, collaboration internationally, and consumer protections.	
The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017	The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a comprehensive river basin management planning system which aims to protect and improve the ecological health of waterbodies across Europe. In the UK, the EA is the authority charged with implementation of the Directive, and must meet certain targets aimed at restoring water bodies towards good condition.	The priorities of the River Basin Management Plans should be considered when developing the strategic priorities of the Local Plan.
National Framework for Water Resources 2025: water for growth, nature and a resilient future (2025)	This provides the framework for the protection, use, development, conservation, management and control of water resources for the country as a whole.	The Local Plan should take account of the water resources available and how future development will impact upon these resources.
Water stressed areas – 2021 classification	The Environment Agency has looked across the current and future water usage and climate change scenarios, to provide a water stress situation for each water company area. United Utilities is currently determined to be not seriously stressed.	The Local Plan will need to consider the use of water as a resource but will need further evidence if it is to utilise the optional water standards as a policy.
Flood and Water Management Act (2010)	Led to the creation of Lead Local Flood Authorities, with responsibilities for identifying and addressing flood risk	The Local Plan should be developed using the latest flood

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	alongside the Environment Agency. There are a number of objectives such as ensuring the use of sustainable drainage systems in new development.	zones.
Green Infrastructure Framework Guidance (2022)	The Green Infrastructure (GI) Framework is a commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. It supports the greening of our towns and cities and connections with the surrounding landscape. It includes recommended core standards for green infrastructure within local authority areas.	The Local Plan should consider standards for green infrastructure.
Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England	This strategy looks for: • Agricultural soils to be better managed and threats to them addressed. • Soils to play a greater role in the fight against climate change and in helping us to manage its impacts. • Soils in urban areas to be valued during development, and construction practices will ensure vital soil functions can be maintained. • Pollution of soils is prevented, and the historic legacy of contaminated land is being dealt with.	The Local Plan should consider the impact of development on soil, and consider the effective use of land.
Planning for Sport Guidance	This sets out 12 planning for sports principles these include: • Recognise and give significant weight to the benefits of sport and physical activity.	The Local Plan should recognise the importance of sports facilities and physical activity to the health of the population and seek to protect and enhance the current offer in relation to identified needs.

National		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	• Undertake, maintain and apply robust and up to date assessments of need and strategies for sport and physical activity provision, and base policies, decision and guidance upon them. • Protect and promote existing sport and physical activity provision and ensure new development does not prejudice its use. • Support new provision including allocating new sites for sport and physical activity which meets identified needs.	
Playing fields policy and guidance	The playing fields policy and guidance sets out that Sports England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of (subject to several exceptions): • all or any part of a playing field, or • land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or • land allocated for use as a playing field.	The Local Plan should seek to protect the existing provision of playing pitches and improve the provision where there is an identified need.
Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024)	This policy sets out the government's planning policy in relation to Traveller Sites, in conjunction with the NPPF.	The Local Plan and SEA consider the implications of the policy throughout the Plan making process.
National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)	Sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management through positive planning.	The Local Plan should include policies to consider waste generation and management in the Borough, including minimising waste.

Regional		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy	The SDS sets the framework for building and development for the LCR over the next 20 years. It identifies strategic areas for growth and infrastructure provision.	The Local Plan is required to be in general conformity with the SDS.
Liverpool City Region Pathway to Net Zero	This document sets out how the LCR is going to tackle the challenges to get to Net Zero, it looks specifically at housing, neighbourhoods, journeys and workplaces. It suggests that it is a call to action for everyone to engage, encourage and educate.	The Local Plan will consider how the location and design of development can contribute to net zero.
Liverpool City Region Climate Action Plan 2023-2028	This Plan sets out actions for the Combined Authority to 2028. These actions will be critical in helping ensure that the City Region achieves its 2040 net zero carbon emissions target. The Plan has five pillars – Transport, Buildings, Industry, Clean Energy and Natural Environment.	The Local Plan can help to deliver some of the actions set out in this plan including embedding net zero and climate change mitigation into planning and supporting the delivery of the LNRS.
Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan	The SEAP provides a single co-ordinated programme of action across the City Region to support the transformation to a low carbon economy through the identification and delivery of a variety of interventions in the energy sector.	The Local Plan can contribute to the action in relation to developing an agreed City Region approach to energy planning – taking forward recommendations in the Plan and conforming with national policy.
Liverpool City Region Local Nature Recovery Strategy	This is an evidence-based, locally led, spatial strategy, designed to provide a joined-up, regional approach to nature recovery. It identifies and maps opportunities for habitat enhancement, restoration and creation, where the biggest benefit will be felt to both nature and people.	Ther Local Plan should reflect the wider benefits to natural capital and ecosystems by using the LNRS and supporting nature recovery.

Regional		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
State of Nature Report for the Liverpool City Region (2022)	This report provides an environmental baseline and strategic policy approach to shape local nature recovery.	
North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)	The Plan comprises of 44 habitat and species action plans; each one describing the current status of the habitat or species, issues affecting its well-being, conservation objectives & targets and actions to meet them.	The Local Plan will give consideration to the relevant habitats and species.
Liverpool City Region Plan for Prosperity (2022)	This has been prepared to support the delivery of the LCR Corporate Plan, it is intended to provide a long-term, high-level, economic and place-based vision for the city region. It sets the strategic direction for policies in relation to the economy, business environment, skills, transport, housing, planning and net zero.	The Local Plan can help to deliver this Plan through policies to support employment opportunities, active travel, support for renewables, increasing supply and choice of housing, and supporting thriving high streets and town centres.
Liverpool City Region Growth Plan 2025-2035	This is a 10-year strategy for growth and productivity. Economic forecasts show that this ambitious Plan could add upwards of £10bn GVA to the LCR economy, and create tens of thousands of jobs. Its mission is to improve productivity, supported by ambitions in relation to inclusive growth, the use of AI for good and to be net zero by 2035.	The Local Plan can help with the delivery of employment opportunities, and by helping to make the city region an attractive place to live and invest in.
Liverpool City Region Economic Opportunities Framework	This framework seeks to articulate the scale of opportunity in the city region.	The Local Plan can help to identify opportunities for development.
Liverpool City Region Local Transport Plan	The Local Transport Plan outlines our plans for transport in Liverpool City Region up to 2040. Its goals include	The Local Plan can work alongside the Liverpool City Region to support the Local

Regional		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	supporting good, clean job growth and opportunity for all; achieving net-zero carbon and an improved environment; improving health and safety and quality of life; transport infrastructure that is well maintained and resilient; and the ability to plan and respond to uncertainty and change whilst still being innovative.	Transport Plan's Visions and Goals through a vision-led approach to transport.
North West River Basin Management Plan	This document sets out the current state of the water environment, pressures affecting the water environment, environmental objectives for protecting and improving the waters, and a programmes of measures and action to achieve the objectives.	Knowsley is included in the Mersey Lower Management Catchment area.
All Together Fairer: Health equity and the social determinants of health in Cheshire and Merseyside	Created a "Marmot" Community across Cheshire and Merseyside setting out measurable actions for the sub-region to reduce health inequalities by working collaboratively across public, private and third sector organisations. The report's recommendations encompass all the key wider determinants of health and the Marmot 8 principles.	This report includes Cheshire as well as Merseyside, which could skew the measurable outcomes and determinants of health that the Local Plan can seek to remedy.
The Mersey Forest Plan 2025	This plan is a long-term guide for the work of the Mersey Forest Community Forest's team and partners, extending to 2050 and beyond. The plan keeps abreast of the national and local policy context, staying alert to changes and reacting to new policy drivers, helping shape policy development to ensure ongoing support for ongoing work	The Local Plan will set out policies and development principles for development in and around forest areas with the objective of protecting them.

Regional		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	with partners. It contributes to place making, new development, regeneration, and restricting, by securing recognition to the Mersey Forest Plan within Local Plans.	
Liverpool City Region Ecological Network Report	This LCR collaboration evidence base can be used to help inform the preparation of the district's Local Plans and is well placed to support the wider partnership of local authorities, statutory agencies and developers to consider ecology and biodiversity at plan, project, programme and land management levels. The network comprises of a core biodiversity area, linear features, stepping stone sites, and a nature improvement area.	The Local Plan will utilise this report as an evidence base to help implement policies and development principles to ensure Knowsley's ecological networks are protected and enhanced.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Knowsley Council Plan 2025 – 2030	Provides a clear vision of 'Supporting Knowsley's People and Communities to Thrive' and is focused on three key priorities: 1. Effective support for those in need. 2. Encourage growth that benefits everyone. 3. Deliver targeted support to encourage fairness and opportunity.	The Local Plan will seek to deliver the spatial elements of the Council's Plan.
Knowsley 2030	The strategy focuses on five strategic outcomes which set out that, by 2030, Knowsley will be a place: • where strong and safe communities can shape their future; • where people are active and healthy and have access to the support they need; • where people of all ages are confident and can achieve their full potential; • with a thriving, inclusive economy with opportunities for people and business; and, • with welcoming, vibrant, well-connected neighbourhoods and town centres.	The Local Plan will look to support the Knowsley 2030 Plan.
Knowsley Air Quality Strategy 2024-2027	This strategy outlines the clear priorities for the borough to improve air quality. Its priorities include supporting the reduction of domestic, commercial and industrial emissions; supporting the reduction of emissions from	The Local Plan can support the use of active travel, low emission vehicles and energy efficient dwellings and developments.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	transport; raising public awareness of air quality and encouraging behaviour change and supporting improvements to indoor air quality.	
Knowsley Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020)	The Action Plan outlines a number of actions under the following themes: (1) Green spaces for carbon offsetting and climate resilience; (2) Reducing carbon emissions from street lighting; (3) Reducing carbon emissions from fleet vehicles, maintenance plant and equipment; (4) Reducing carbon emissions from energy and water use in Council buildings; (5) Reducing carbon emissions from waste from Council services; (6) Reducing carbon emissions from staff travel on council business (7) Sustainable energy generation; (8) Reducing carbon emissions through council commissioning and procurement; (9) Reducing carbon emissions through communication and staff behaviour change; and (10) Embedding carbon reduction and climate action across the Council's plans, policies and services.	The Local Plan will give consideration to the declared Climate Emergency and the Action Plan.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
Net Zero Delivery Plan 2026-2030	The Councils Net Zero Delivery Plan 2026-2030 focuses on key actions that will be taken to work towards becoming Net Carbon Zero by 2040. The plan covers four key priorities: (1) Transport – reduce emissions from fleet vehicles and support a modal shift towards more sustainable staff travel, including greater use of active travel and public transport; (2) Buildings – delivery of decarbonisation projects secured for Council buildings and an increase in renewable energy generation; (3) Clean Energy – transition to clean, renewable energy through utilising solar PV and low carbon energy solutions; (4) Natural environment – to maintain greenspaces and maximise their use for both education, engagement and active travel as well as increasing green infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of climate change.	The Local Plan will give consideration to this net zero delivery plan and how it can help to contribute to the Council's works.
Knowsley Place Climate Delivery Plan 2025-2030	The Council's key priorities are (1) Transport - To reduce car dependency, encourage a shift to active travel and public travel, and increase the uptake of electric and net zero fuel vehicles. (2) Buildings - To decarbonise buildings across the borough through insulation and installing low carbon	The Local Plan will give consideration to the declared Climate Emergency and the Delivery Plan.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	technologies and sustainable energy generation systems. (3) Clean Energy - To support Knowsley and the wider Liverpool City Region to move to a low carbon energy supply position as quickly as possible. (4) Industry - To reduce emissions generated from industry and businesses across the borough. (5) Natural Environment - To mitigate the effects of climate change by strengthening the boroughs green spaces and built environment.	
Knowsley Economic Growth Plan 2025-2030	The vision for this plan is that by 2030 Knowsley will be an even more thriving, inclusive economy with opportunities for people and businesses.	The Local Plan will give consideration as to how it can contribute to economic growth.
Knowsley Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Statement 2026-2030	This Statement looks for Knowsley's policy, strategy and decision-making procedures should: • Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues are considered in the development of all policies and strategies. • Develop policies and strategies to reduce the inequality faced by whole communities or individuals. • Ensure the Council is fully aware of any adverse impacts that may occur because of decisions made, and actively seek to mitigate any negative impact.	The Local Plan will consider equality, diversity and inclusion when preparing policies.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	• Regularly evaluate the impact of our policies and strategies with regard to equality, diversity and inclusion issues.	
Knowsley Healthier Weight Strategy 2025-2030	The vision for this strategy is that Knowsley residents and their future generations are able to live longer, healthier lives by achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. One of the priority areas for this is healthy places through planning, design and management of places and spaces to promote good health, improve access to services and reduce inequalities.	The Local Plan will give consideration to the health of the local community.
Highways Asset Management Strategy 2025-2030	The strategy looks to achieve a safe, serviceable and sustainable network.	The Local Plan will give consideration to the creation of a safe and sustainable highway network.
Knowsley Local Cycling and Walking and Infrastructure Plan	Outlines Knowsley's ambition to enable more residents to be able to walk, wheel and cycle for everyday journeys, capitalising on the 44.4% of Knowsley's residents who have a commute of less than 10km.	The Local Plan can help identify which parts of the borough can be connected through cycling, wheeling and walking routes.
Knowsley Public Health Annual Report 2022/23 - Why the Cost-of-Living Crisis is a Public Health Issue	The report addresses what the cost of living is and its severity for Knowsley's residents. It describes why it is such a big issue for public health; who is most vulnerable to the cost-of-living crisis; the 'poverty premium'; the impact of living in cold homes on health, food insecurity, accessibility to affordable transport. Finally, the report recommends	The Local Plan can partially help improve access to food security, affordable housing and public transport. However, it cannot completely fix these issues, especially not in a short period of time.

Local		
Policy or Programme	**Summary**	**Implications**
	ways to combat the cost of living and its impact on health and wellbeing	

5. Baseline

5.1. The SEA Regulations identify a range of environmental and sustainability topics that must be considered during the assessment process. SEA core topics encompass biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage, and landscape. A desk study was performed to identify the key baseline environmental, social, and economic characteristics of Knowsley.

5.2. The information used to characterise the baseline environment is broadly proportional to the scale and nature of the Local Plan. At this stage the baseline information has been obtained from a broad range of sources and no new investigations or surveys have been undertaken as part of the scoping process. The baseline information will be required throughout the SEA process and may require updating as the Local Plan is developed and further and new information becomes available. This information will be used to provide an evidence base for environmental concerns, to help to predict effects and to help establish areas for future monitoring and the creation of the SEA objectives and SEA Framework.

Natural Environment – Biodiversity, fauna, flora, soil and landscape

5.3. Biodiversity refers to the variety of life on the planet, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi. Biodiversity makes an essential contribution to human life and sustainable development.

5.4. Knowsley comprises of a mosaic of farmland, scattered urban centres, industrial sites and derelict industrial sites. Many previously redundant industrial sites have now been reclaimed, either naturally or through restoration programs. These sites can be extensive and can provide important wildlife sites providing strongholds for many species as well as providing locally valuable recreational amenity and bringing local communities in close contact with nature, including areas such as Stadt Moers Country Park. Whilst the River Alt and Netherley and Ditton Brook also provide vital wildlife corridors.

5.5. In the area between St. Helens and Kirkby are the remnants of peatbogs of which only one site, Acornfield Plantation, is still a functioning peat bog, the other areas being either drained for agriculture or historic plantation woodland.

5.6. There are no internationally or nationally designated sites, no biological or geological Sites of Special Scientific Interest or National Nature Reserves in the

borough. There are designated sites in the wider area including the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) / Ramsar site, Manchester Mosses Special Area of Conservation (SAC), River Dee & Bala Lake SAC, Sefton Coast SAC, Liverpool Bay SPA, and the Dee Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar site.

5.7. There is one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) located solely within Knowsley this is Acornfield Plantation Local Nature Reserve, this LNR holds a prestigious Green Flag Award. There are 64 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in Knowsley, these include Acornfield Plantation, Aker's Pits, Alder Brook, Carr Lane Lake, Halewood Triangle, Pex Hill Country Park, Stadt Moers and Tushingham's Quarry Pond.

5.8. A Tree Preservation Order (TPOs) is an order which protects trees from harm by prohibiting the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the consent of the local planning authority. There are 149 TPOs in Knowsley including Thingwall Hall, Roby and on land at Archway Road, Huyton.

5.9. The Priority Habitat Inventory is a spatial dataset that maps priority habitats identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and listed as being of principal importance for the purpose of conserving or enhancing biodiversity, under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). There are almost 600 habitats identified in Knowsley. These are mainly deciduous woodland but also include lowland fens, lowland meadow, lowland raised bog and traditional orchards which are considered to be priority habitats and good quality semi-improved grassland which considered a non-priority habitat.

5.10. The Liverpool City Region Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) identifies Core Local Nature Sites, and Opportunities for Nature Recovery. Core local nature sites are existing protected nature sites (such as local wildlife sites and national nature reserves) and irreplaceable habitat (those which are very difficult to restore once lost, such as ancient woodland). Opportunity areas are places where the LNRS think there is a potential opportunity to enhance, restore or create habitat. These sites and opportunity areas are shown on the map below (Figure 5.1).

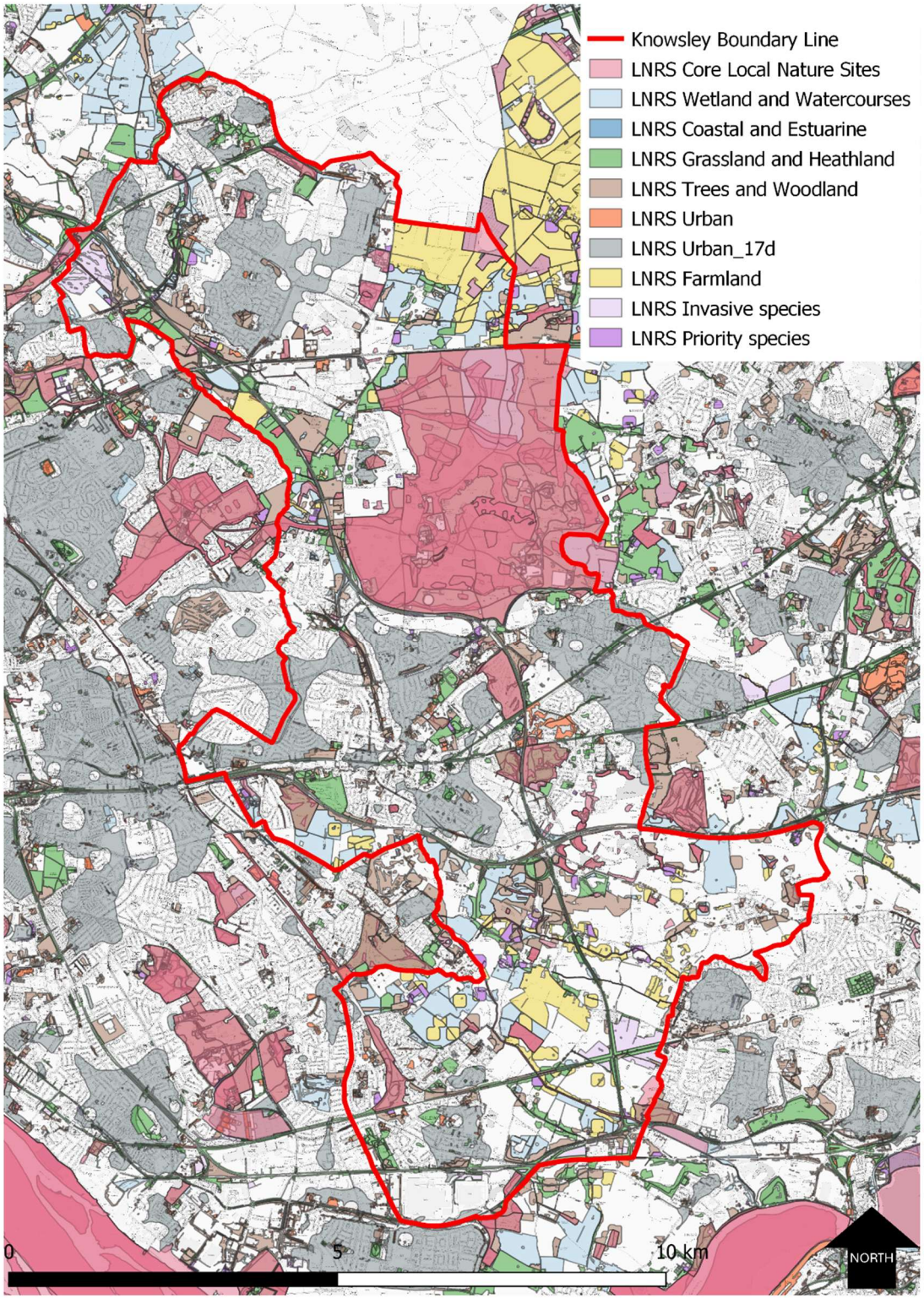

Figure 5.1: Liverpool City Region Local Nature Recovery Strategy Local Habitat Map

5.11. The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system. Agricultural land classified into five grades. Grade one

is best quality and grade five is poorest quality. A number of consistent criteria are used for assessment which include climate (temperature, rainfall, aspect, exposure, frost risk), site (gradient, micro-relief, flood risk) and soil (depth, structure, texture, chemicals, stoniness). Figure 5.2 below shows the agricultural land classification for the whole district.

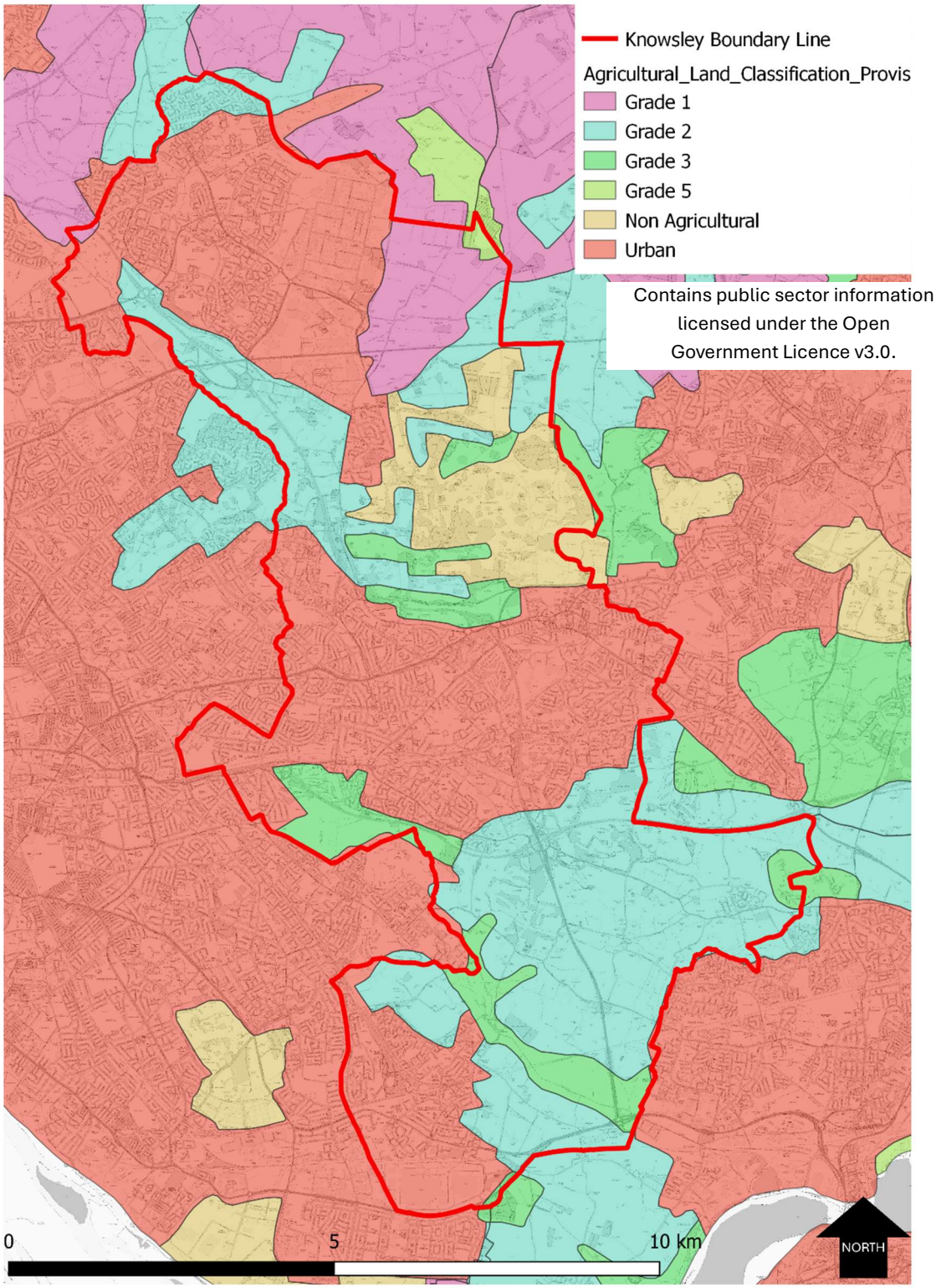

Figure 5.2: Agricultural Land Classification

5.12. The NPPF defines previously developed land, also known as brownfield land, as '*land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Previously developed land excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape'*. Knowsley Council maintains a register of previously developed brownfield sites suitable for residential development, complying with government regulations and facilitating efficient housing delivery, and known as the Brownfield Register. The Brownfield Register for 2026 includes 129 sites, 41 of these have now been developed or removed from the register, leaving 88 sites still on the register of those 46 sites are considered to have potential to be developed. If each of these sites were developed for residential development, and to their full capacity there could be potential for 5,056 dwellings on brownfield sites.

5.13. Landscape character means the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how these are perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape. There are no nationally designated landscapes in the borough. National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, cultural and economic activity. The NCA boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape, not county or district boundaries. Knowsley is covered by four NCAs these are the Merseyside Conurbation, Lancashire and Amounderness Plain, Lancashire Coal Measures and the Mersey Valley.

5.14. The Merseyside Conurbation NCA is a predominantly urban and suburban landscape, based around the settlements of Liverpool, Birkenhead, Bootle, Kirkby, Maghull, Huyton, Bebington and Wallasey. The NCA sits on a low-lying but gently rolling platform punctuated by low sandstone ridges and bisected by the lower

estuary of the River Mersey. There is a dense settlement pattern of housing and large-scale industry focusing on the city of Liverpool and Birkenhead/east Wirral, with their diverse historic and cultural centres. Many of the city edge settlements function as commuter settlements. There is a large proportion of industrial land use, with docks, warehouses and associated commercial land, interlinked by an extensive transport infrastructure. The Lancashire and Amounderness Plain is an area of high-grade agricultural land, bounded by Morecambe Bay in the north and Liverpool in the south. The eastern boundary is contained by the Bowland Fringe. The plain is made up of a series of low-lying landscape types: in the east, undulating lowland farmland on the highly productive coastal plain, and in the west, the former mosslands and their remnant sites, and the coastal marshes and dunes. The Lancashire Coal Measures NCA surrounds the towns of St Helens and Wigan, and extends from the Mersey Valley NCA in the south to the Lancashire and Amounderness Plain NCA in the north-west. Rocks from the Carboniferous Coal Measures underlie most of the area, giving rise to a varied topography of gentle hills and valleys, with patchy layers of glacial deposits. Whilst the Mersey Valley NCA consists of a wide, low-lying river valley landscape focusing on the River Mersey, its estuary, associated tributaries and waterways. It is a varied landscape that extends from the mosslands near the Manchester Conurbation NCA in the east, to the Merseyside Conurbation NCA and the wide estuary with intertidal mudflats/sand flats and salt marsh in the west. The area encompasses a complex mix of extensive industrial development and urban areas, with high-quality farmland in between.

Summary of Key Issues

- The pressure on land for development purposes with potential for habitat losses and / or losses of agricultural land.
- Threats to species, habitats and designated sites through risk of pollution such as noise, light and water run-off.
- Increased recreational pressure on designated sites as a consequence of development and new local inhabitants.
- Potential adverse impacts to habitats and species as a consequence of climate change.

Population and Community

5.15. The ONS estimate the population in Knowsley was 163,723 people in mid-2025; this is a 5.6% increase since 2021. The largest contribution to population change in the year to mid-2025 was from net internal migration (people moving to and from other areas in the UK). There are approximately 1,879 people per square kilometre in Knowsley, and the median age of the resident population is 39.2 years

old. Almost 20% of the population is aged 0 to 15 years old and 17.7% are aged 65 and over[7].

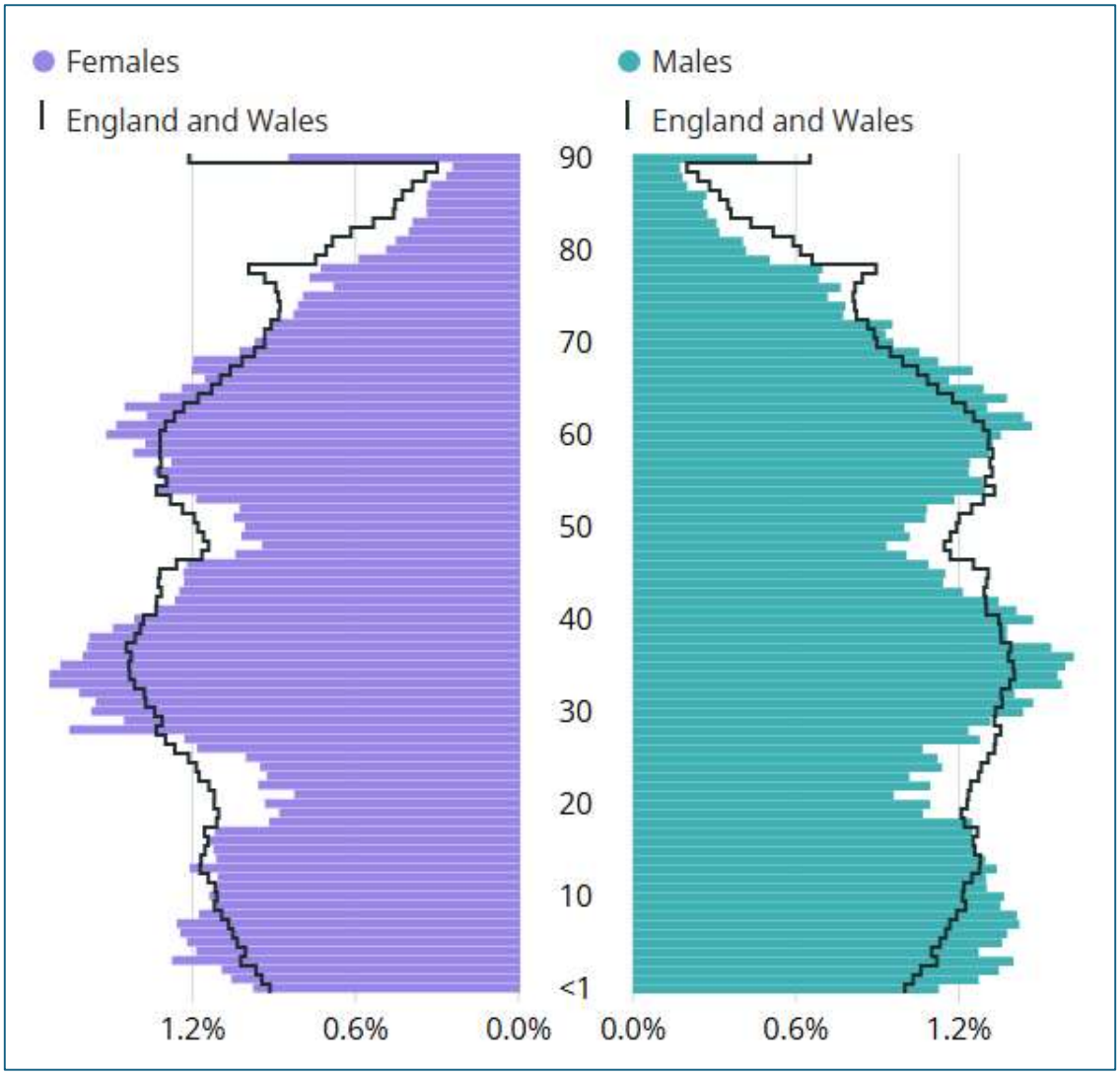

Figure 5.3 Population age structure by single year of age and sex for Knowsley 2025

5.16. The Census 2021 identified that 94.8% of Knowsley residents were born in the UK, and 97.5% were born in Europe (including the UK and Ireland), with 0.7% born in Africa, 1.3% born in the Middle East and Asia and 0.5% born in the Americas and the Caribbean.

5.17. The ONS annual population survey (Jan 2025-Dec2025) identifies that 24.2% of the population are economically inactive, this is the proportion of people aged between 16 and 64 years who are not in employment but do not meet the internationally accepted definition of unemployment, they may be students, looking after family, retired or sick. It also identifies that 72.1% of people are in

[7] Population estimates for England and Wales - Office for National Statistics

employment, 9.9% are self-employed and 4.6% are unemployed. ONS identifies an average gross disposable income household income of £19,519, and suggests that gross median weekly pay is £660.

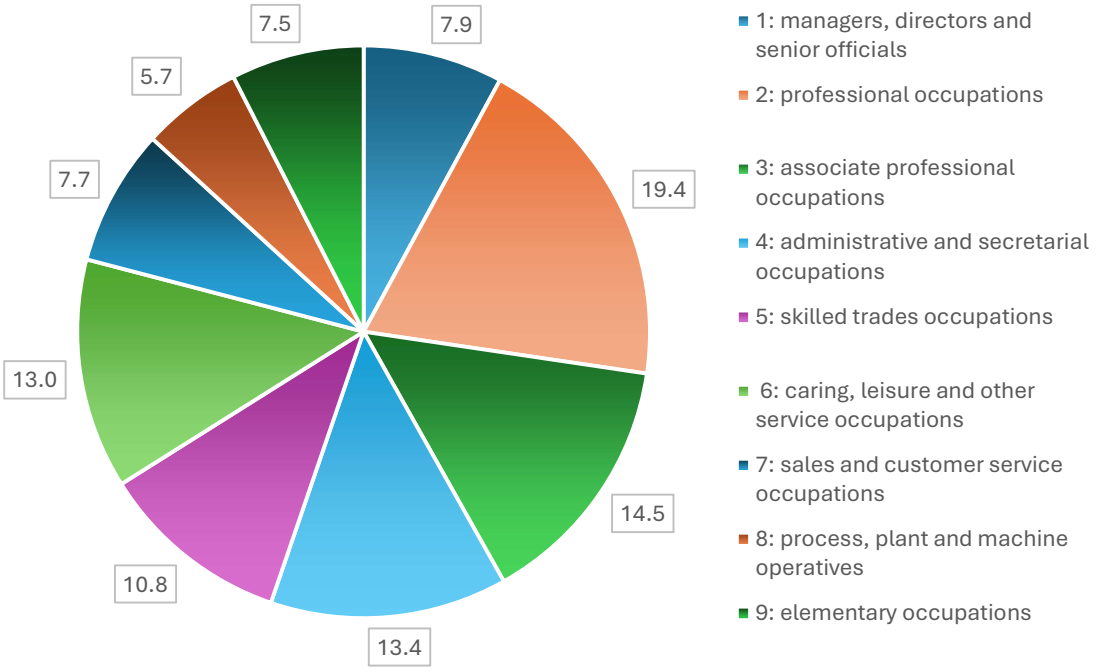

Figure 5.4: Employment by occupation (Jan 2025 – Dec 2025) (ONS)

5.18. There were 72,058 homes in Knowsley in 2025, MHCLG data shows that there were 6 net additions to the housing stock in 2024/25 per 1,000 of existing homes, this is lower than the average local authority. The average house price in Knowsley in June 2026 was £189,116[8], whilst the England average was £293,000[9]. The housing affordability ratio is currently identified as 5.2, meaning that you would need 5.2 times the gross annual residence-based earnings to afford an averagely priced home.

5.19. The Census 2021 identified that 28.6% of households in Knowsley own their home outright, 31.7% own a home with a mortgage or a loan or shared ownership, 25.3% social rent and 14.5% private rent or live rent free. The Census also identified that 15% of households live in a detached house, 43.1% live in a semi-detached house, 31.5% live in a terrace house, 9.1% live in a purpose-built block of flats and 1.2% live in another form of accommodation. Data from MHCLG identifies 1.99 households were assessed as homeless per 1,000 households in Knowsley, it also suggests that on average each month during 2025 15 people were rough sleeping.

[8] http://landregistry.data.gov.uk/id/region/knowsley
[9] Private rent and house prices, UK - Office for National Statistics

Whilst data from LG Inform suggests that 2.6% of all dwellings in Knowsley were vacant in 2024/25.

5.20. In 2024/25, 52.3% of people in Knowsley achieved GCSEs in both Maths and English, this is lower than the Liverpool City Region average of 67.9%, and the North West average of 71.1%. Level 3 qualifications include A-Levels, T-Levels, BTEC Nationals, Advanced Apprenticeships and Access to Higher Education Diplomas, 54.5% of people in Knowsley have a Level 3 qualification, again this is lower than the Liverpool City Region where 64.6% of people have a Level 3 qualification. In 2025, 6.5% of 16 to 18 years olds were not in education, employment or training[10].

5.21. There are 50 Primary Schools in Knowsley from Blacklow Brow Primary School in Huyton, to Yew Tree Primary School in Halewood, offering more than 14,000 places for children aged 5 to 11 years old. 90% of these settings have been judged to be outstanding or good by Ofsted. There are six secondary schools across Knowsley these provide 6,450 student places and include All Saints Catholic High School and Kirkby High School in Kirkby, Halewood Academy in Halewood, Lord Derby Academy in Huyton, The Prescot School in Prescot, and St Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic Academy in Whiston.

5.22. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD25) is the official measure of relative deprivation in England. It follows an established methodological framework in broadly defining deprivation in relation to a wide range of an individual's living conditions. There are seven domains of deprivation, which combine to create the IMD25, these are Income, Employment, Education, Health, Crime, Barriers to Housing and Services and living Environment. The IMD25 ranks Knowsley as the 11th most deprived local authority in the country and identifies that there are considerable challenges and inequalities in Knowsley with regards to income, employment, education and skills, and health and disability, as shown in the chart below. 54% of LSOAs in Knowsley are in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs nationally based on the IMD, 40% are in the 10% most deprived and 26% are in the 5% most deprived. However, it should be noted that this is an improvement from the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation, with a decrease in deprivation.

[10] Headline Report for Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council - Bar Chart View | LG Inform

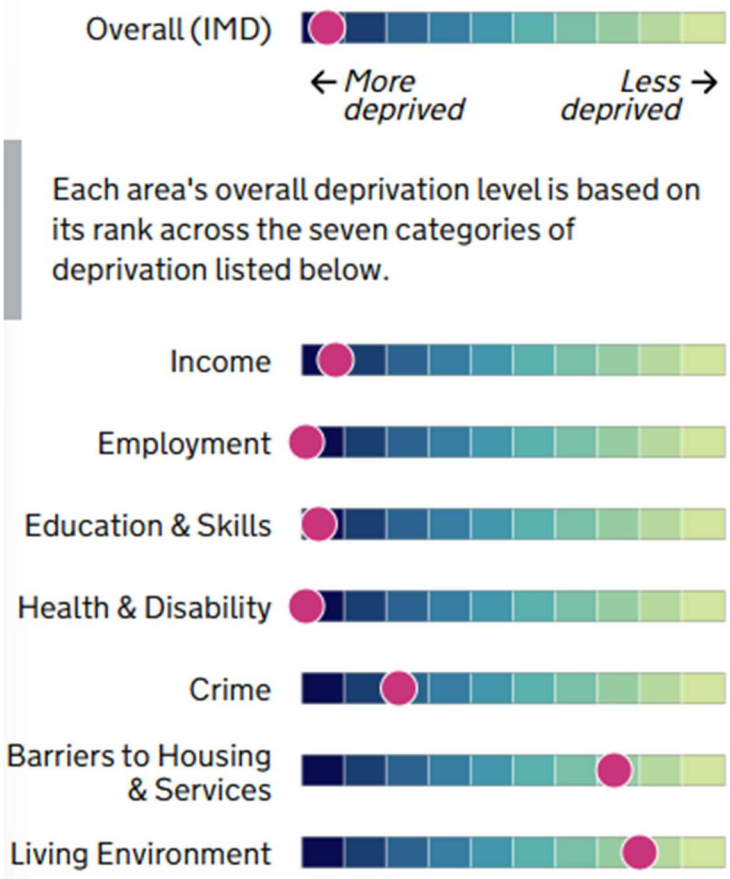

Figure 5.5: English Indices of Deprivation 2025 – Types of Deprivation

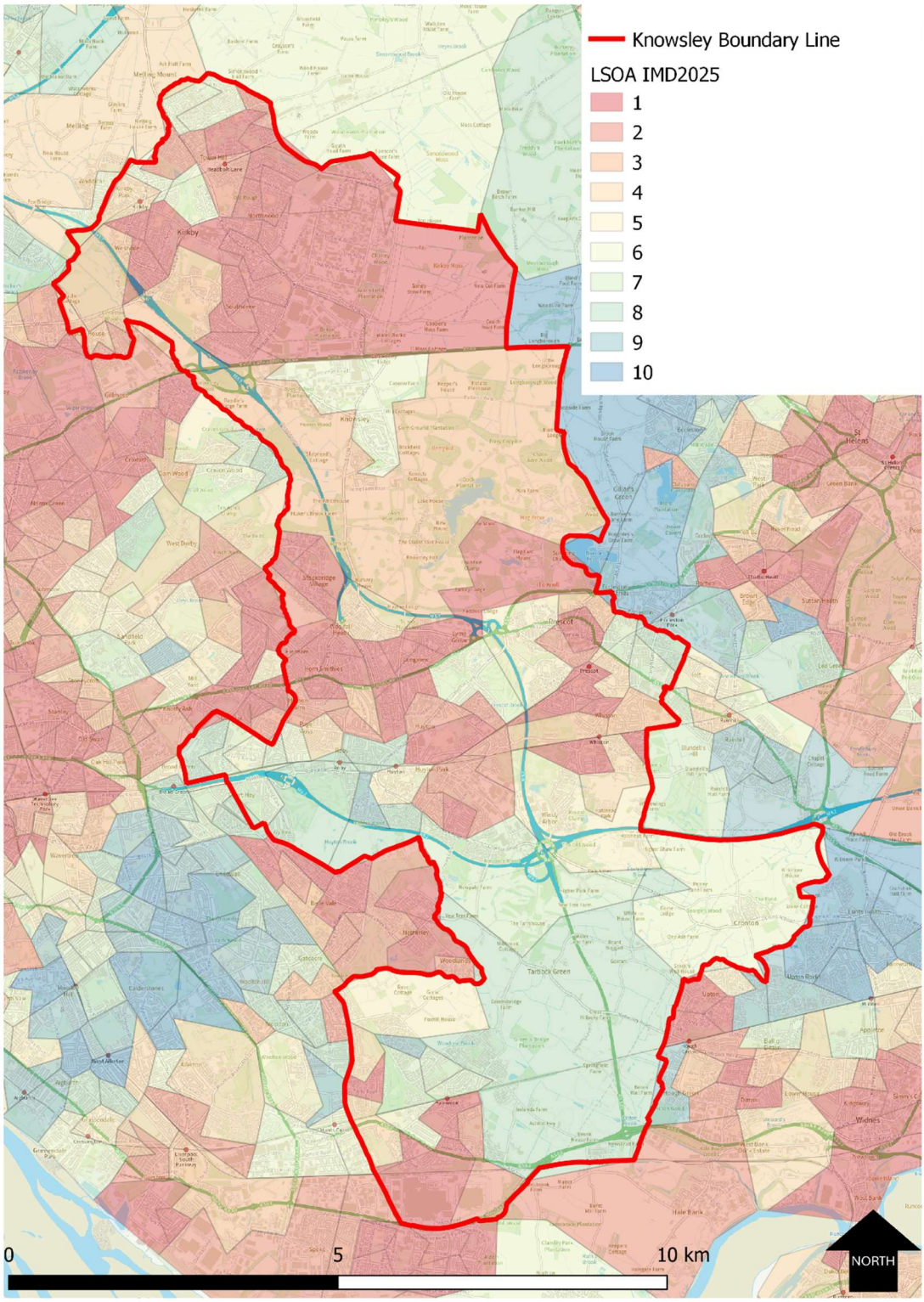

Figure 5.6: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 by LSOA

5.23. The Core Strategy identifies that within Knowsley there are three town centres and three district centres that support a range of retail as well as a mix of leisure, services and office spaces. There are also a number of local centres and parades throughout Knowsley, that support more localised shopping patterns. There are

265 retail enterprises in Knowsley, this is a decrease since a peak of 280 retail enterprises in 2023, and there are 380 retail units.

Summary of Key Issues

- The pressure of a growing population on demand for housing, services, and infrastructure to be provided in the district.
- Meeting the Government's requirements for housing numbers in a sustainable way and delivering appropriate housing for specific groups within the community.
- The impacts of deprivation and inequalities impacting life expectancy, health, opportunities and prosperity.
- Supporting residents within Knowsley to access a range of employment opportunities.
- Protecting and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres as well as local centres and parades.

Water

5.24. Demand for water and the quality of water resources have become important local, national and international issues.

5.25. The North West river basin district (RBD) river basin management plan describes the challenges that threaten the water environment and how these challenges can be managed.

5.26. The current health of the water environment is assessed in terms of its status. Surface waters are assessed for ecological status and chemical status. There are a number of water bodies within Knowsley these include:

- Simonswood Brook
- Croxteth / Knowsley Brook
- The River Alt
- Prescot Brook (Logwood Mill Brook)
- Dog Clog Brook (including Mill Brook)
- Ditton Brook (Halewood to Mersey Estuary)
- Netherley Brook

Which are all considered to have a moderate ecological status. Ecological status can be classed as high, good, moderate, poor or bad.

5.27. United Utilities provide water and wastewater services to residents in Knowsley. Their Annual Report states that 2024 saw almost 20,000 fewer spills than 2023

and a 31% reduction in duration, whilst spills per overflow are down 39% since 2020.

5.28. Groundwater supplies a third of our drinking water. The Environment Agency must protect groundwater sources used to supply drinking water from pollution. Sources include wells, boreholes and springs. Source Protection Zones (SPZ) are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction.

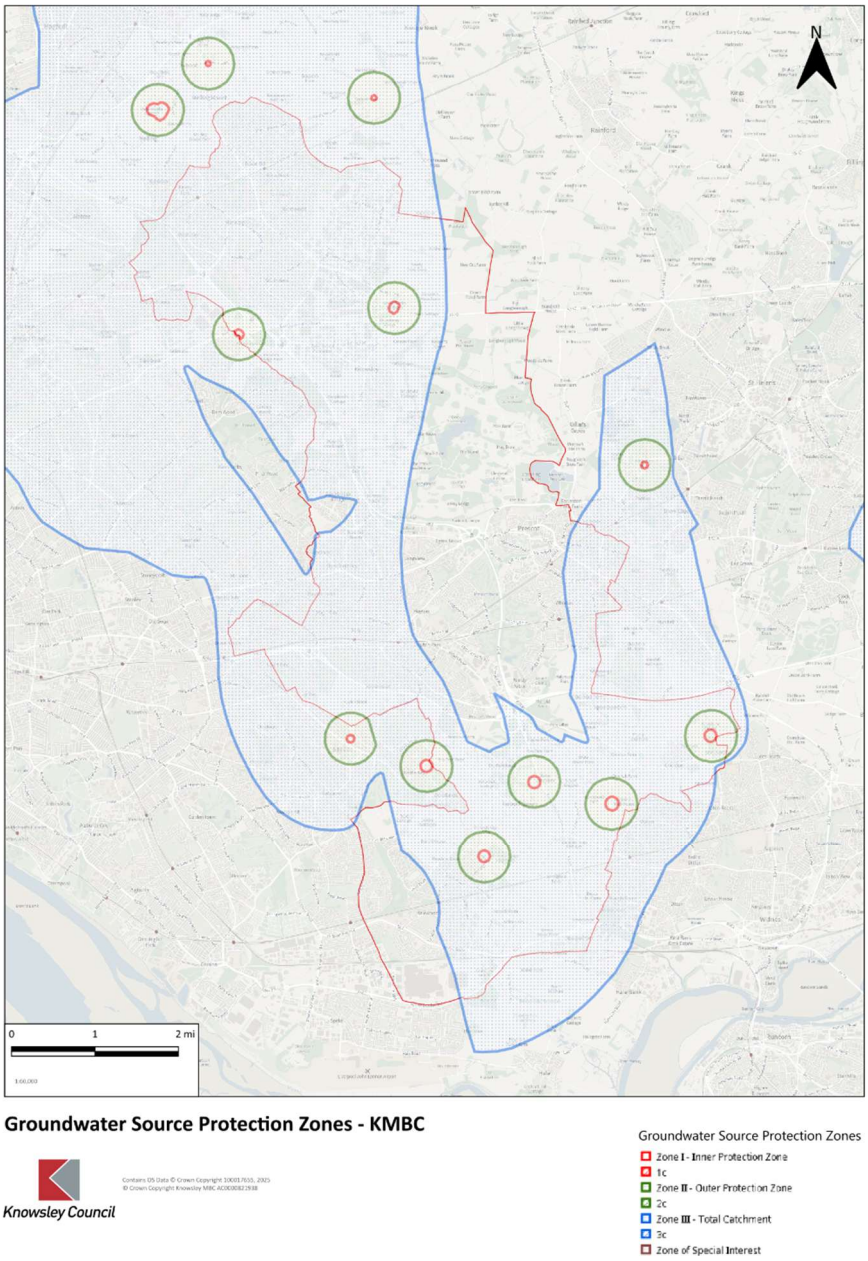

Figure 5.7: Map of groundwater Source Protection Zones

5.29. Flood zones are used in the planning system in England to identify land that may be at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea. They form part of the national planning framework for managing flood risk and are defined through national planning policy and guidance. These zones are shown on the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, which is shown below. Flood zones describe the probability of flooding, not whether flooding will definitely occur. They are therefore a planning tool used to guide development decisions and determine when further assessment may be required.

- Flood Zone 1 – Low Probability, this means land with less than a 0.1% annual probability of flooding from these sources.
- Flood Zone 2 – Medium Probability, this incudes land with between 0.1 and 1% annual probability of river flooding or 0.1 and 0.5% annual probability of sea flooding.
- Flood Zone 3a – High Probability, this includes land with a high probability of flooding.
- Flood Zone 3b – Functional Floodplain, this is land where water is expected to flow or be stored during flood events.

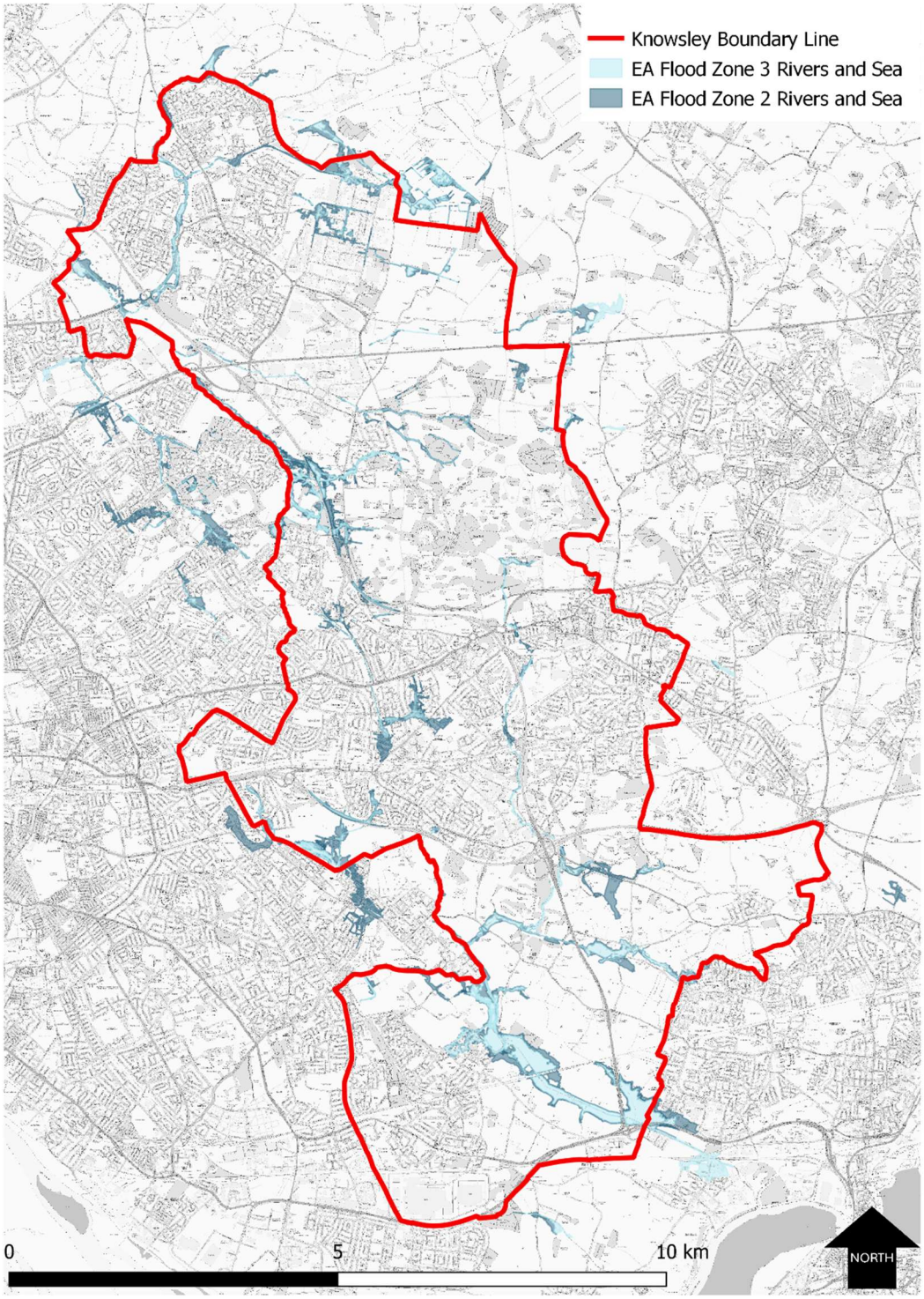

Figure 5.8: Flood Risk Map

Summary of Key Issues

- The need to manage water quality.
- The need to manage flood risk and minimise risks to development from flooding.
- The need to manage water as a resource.

Air quality

5.30. Poor air quality has a direct effect on public health, habitats and biodiversity. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions.

5.31. Knowsley Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) (2025)[11] identifies that the main sources of air pollution in Knowsley, as identified from previous air quality reviews and assessments, as well as the work carried out in the Merseyside Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, are from industrial sources and road traffic vehicle emissions.

5.32. All Local Authorities must assess air quality within their district on to see whether levels set by the Government are being exceeded. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are designated where national air quality objectives are not being achieved or are not likely to be achieved. Knowsley currently does not have any declared AQMAs and therefore the air quality is currently considered appropriate.

5.33. One source of emissions is road traffic and therefore one of pollutants of potential concerns is nitrogen oxide (NO_2). NO_2 is measured using multiple diffusion tubes, during 2024, all diffusion tube monitoring sites reported NO_2 values compliant with the NO_2 AQS objective.

Summary of Key Issues

- The need to maintain and improve air quality.
- The challenge of delivering sustainable transport options.

Health and Wellbeing

5.34. The Census 2021 categorised 77.4% of residents in Knowsley as identifying with very good or good health, 14% identified as having fair health and 8.6% identified as having bad or very bad health.

5.35. Healthy life expectancy, this is the average number of years expected to be lived in good health, for females in Knowsley is 53.7 years and for males is 54 years, this compares to England average of 61.3 years for females and 60.9 years for males.

5.36. In 2021 Knowsley had a Health Index Score of 83, a score of 100 represents average levels of health in England in 2015, a number higher than a 100 means better health and a lower number means worse health. Knowsley ranked in the bottom 10% of local authorities in England for health in 2021. The health score is

[11] Knowsley ASR 2025.pdf

made up of sub-domains of health, Knowsley has scores above 100 for living conditions, access to green space, crime and access to services, however, it has lower scores for all of the other domains.

5.37. In 2024/25, 35.8% of adults, were classified as living with obesity, this is significantly above the England average of 26.6%, and an increase from 32.9% in the previous year[12].

5.38. Sport England data suggests that in 2024/25 69% of adults in Knowsley were active for 30minutes or more each week, with 57% active for at least 150 minutes a week, this is lower than the North West average, but higher than the previous year[13].

5.39. In the Annual Population Survey, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) asks people to rate their well-being through four measures: life satisfaction, feeling things in life are worthwhile, happiness, and anxiety. For life satisfaction this shows the average rating of those that feel satisfied about their lives, where 0 is 'not at all satisfied' and 10 is 'completely satisfied', for adults aged 16 years and over in the UK. The average score for Knowsley in 2022-23 (the latest data available) was 7.2, this is lower than the UK average score of 7.5 and lower than the previous year which had an average score of 7.4. With the feeling life things in life are worthwhile element the average rating is based on 0 meaning that things are not at all worthwhile whilst 10 means that they are completely worthwhile. The average score for Knowsley in 2022-23 is 7.5, this is lower than the UK average score of 7.7 and lower than the previous year's score of 7.6. For happiness the average rating shows those that felt happy yesterday where 0 is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'. In 2022-23 the average score for Knowsley was 7.2 this was lower than the UK average score of 7.4 and the same as the previous years. For anxiety the indicator shows the average rating of those that felt anxious yesterday where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious'. The average score for Knowsley in 2022-23 (the latest data available) was 3.5, this was above the UK average of 3.2, and an increase from the previous year which had an average score of 3.1.

5.40. LG Inform data suggests that in April-June 2026 there were 0.037 doctor/GP locations in Knowsley per 1,000 population, equating to approximately 6 doctor/GP locations. There is one NHS hospital located in Knowsley – Whiston Hospital, it includes an accident and emergency department and a number of other services.

[12] Adult obesity prevalence - ONS
[13] Active Lives | Results

5.41. Information from the ONS suggests that there were 1.9 supermarkets per 10,000 population in Knowsley in 2023, that there were 11.3 sports facilities per 10,000 population and 0.7 museums. Whilst 86% of the population live within a 30minute walk of a library.

5.42. Police.uk statistics show that in the year ending December 2025, the crime rate in Knowsley (88.58 police recorded crimes per 1,000 population) was lower than average for the Merseyside area (96.56). In the quarter ending December 2025, the crime rates were down in Knowsley, but up in the Merseyside force area compared with the corresponding quarter in 2024. The most common crimes include violence against the person, stalking and harassment offences, criminal damage and arson offences, public order offences and drug offences.

Summary of Key Issues

- Low healthy life expectancy and low health scores compared to national averages.
- Rising obesity levels increasing health issues and adding pressure to health services.
- Low levels of activity.
- The need to ensure the delivery of health and social care provision in line with growth.
- Promotion of, and support for, health lifestyles.

Heritage

5.43. Knowsley has 105 listed buildings, these include one Grade I listed building, the Church of St Mary, Prescot, four Grade II* listed buildings which are Knowsley Hall, the Church of St Chad, Church of St Mary (Knowsley), and the Church of St Michael. The majority of the listed buildings are listed at Grade II and these include a variety of buildings and structures which are found throughout the Knowsley area.

5.44. There are 15 Conservation Areas in Knowsley, these are Prescot Town Centre; Old Hall Lane, Ingoe Lane, Ribblers Lane, North Park Road and South Park Road in Kirkby; St Michael's Church, Huyton, The Orchard, Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road, Roby, Halewood Village, Knowsley Village, Tarbock Village, Tarbock Green and Town End, Cronton.

5.45. Within Knowsley there are two historic parks on the national register these are Knowsley Park, which is Grade II and Croxteth Hall Park, which is also registered at Grade II though is mostly sited within Liverpool City Council's area.

5.46. There are many historic buildings and places in Knowsley that do not meet the criteria for formal designation but which are also of local historic interest. Knowsley has begun the process of creating a Local List to identify the best of these, but this project is currently paused.

5.47. There are currently two heritage assets on the national Heritage at Risk Register, which records Grade I and II* listed buildings, these are Church of St Chad, Old Hall Lane and Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area. While Knowsley does not regularly maintain a local 'at risk' register, there are also a further number of grade II listed buildings which are additionally 'at risk' of loss through neglect or decay, meaning the rate of listed buildings at risk in Knowsley is over 10%.

5.48. Historic landscape characterisation (HLC) is a method of identification and interpretation of the varying historic character within an area that looks beyond individual heritage assets as it groups understanding of the whole landscape and townscape into repeating HLC Types.

5.49. The Merseyside Historic Characterisation Project (MHCP) was undertaken by National Museums Liverpool in 2012, it suggests that the only known medieval town in the district is Prescot, which is an old market town which follows the traditional medieval grid pattern. Much of the plot layout and street pattern of medieval Prescot survives virtually intact. It goes on to suggest that there are few early settlement cores in the district. Whilst the industrial revolution generated unprecedented urban growth - much settlement from this period does survive, particularly in Roby and Prescot. Gridiron terraced housing developments are limited, but are present around Prescot, whilst middle class villa and detached housing is most common in Huyton with Roby, probably representing overspill from Liverpool following the line of the Liverpool-Manchester Railway. The communities within Knowsley are, probably more so than almost any other metropolitan area, a creation of the 20th century.

Summary of Key Issues

- Protecting, conserving and enhancing the historic environment, including all heritage assets and their settings.
- Restoring and repairing heritage assets that are at risk.
- Delivering high-quality design that respects local character.
- Considering the creation of a Local List.

- Updating conservation area appraisals and management plans

Material Assets, including Minerals and Waste

5.50. Mineral resources are defined as natural concentrations of minerals or bodies of rock that have the potential to be of economic interest. As minerals are a non-renewable resource, minerals safeguarding is used to ensure that non-minerals development does not needlessly prevent (or sterilise) the future extraction of mineral resources.

5.51. Knowsley has a history of coal mining and clay extraction (e.g. for brick manufacture). There are still reserves of coal and brick clay, together with the potential for oil and gas exploration, and for extraction of methane from former coal workings. A small part of the Borough contains silica sand deposits which are suitable for special industrial uses. Knowsley is (as is typical of metropolitan areas) a net importer of minerals and aggregates.

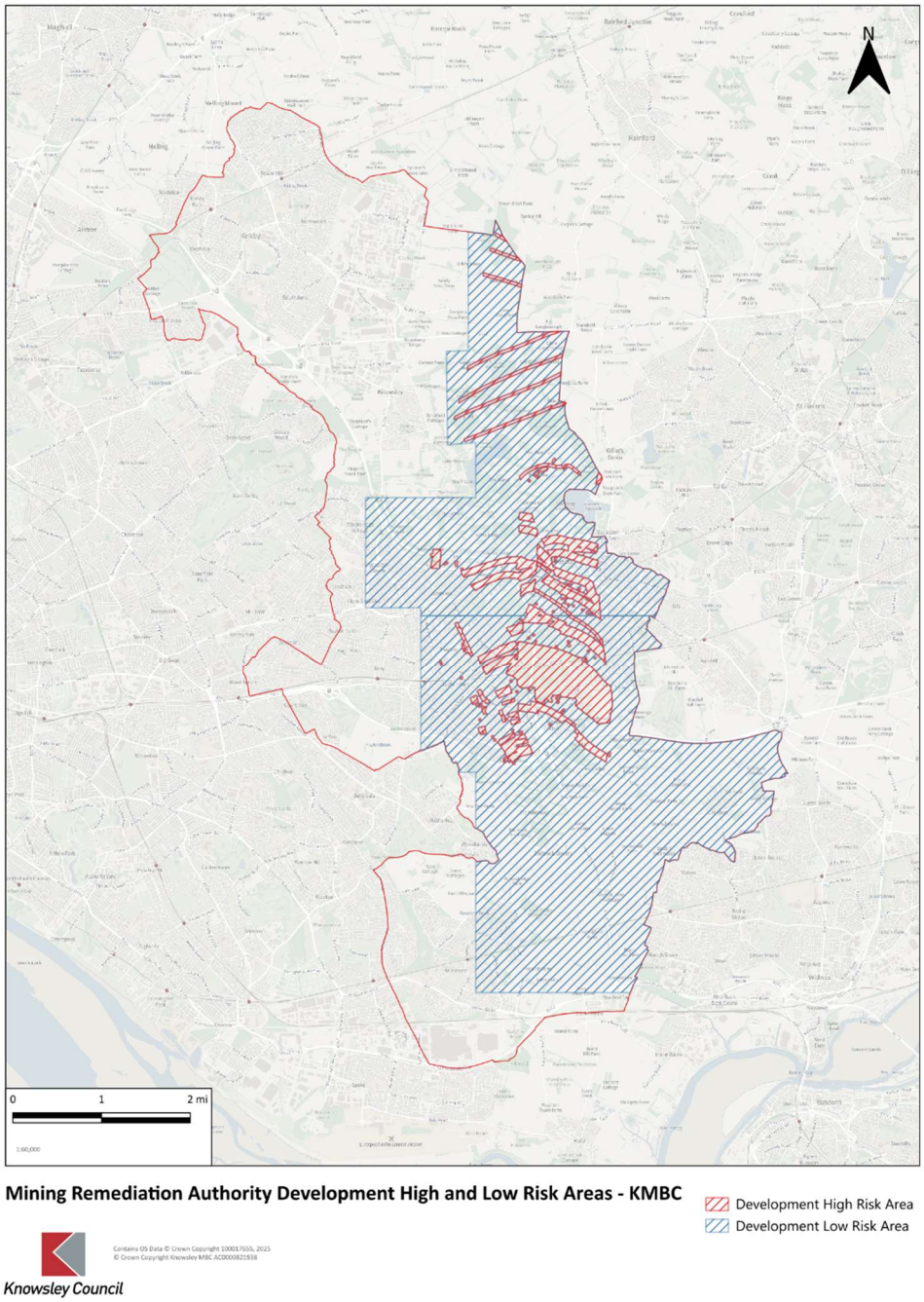

Figure 5.9: Mining – Development High and Low Risk Areas

5.52. The Waste Needs Assessment 2024 estimates a total of 3,314,399.86 tonnes of overall waste arose within the Liverpool City Region in 2022. This comprises of 1,339,112.89 tonnes (40.40%) commercial and industrial wastes, 1,187,178.10 tonnes (35.82%) construction, demolition, and excavation wastes, 628,120.15 tonnes (18.95%) local authority collected waste and 159,988.72 tonnes (4.83%) hazardous waste arisings. Projections have estimated that total arisings could reach 3,572,372.94 tonnes by 2027.

5.53. Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority (MRWA) is a strategic waste and resource management authority, leading on the recycling and management of municipal waste across the Liverpool City Region. The Authority provides 16 household Waste Recycling Centres across the City Region. The Annual Report from the MRWA (2024/25) suggests that the regions overall recycling and composting rates stayed steady at 35%. However, there was an increase in total household waste, which grew from 709,5689 tonnes to 719,575 tonnes.

5.54. The Waste Data Interrogator is formulated by the Environmental Agency (EA) using returns from operators of waste management sites who under environmental permits have a requirement to submit annual returns to the EA. It suggests that there were 62,000 tonnes of inert waste input into landfill in 2024 in Merseyside, there has been a general decline in landfill input over the last ten years. It also identifies a landfill capacity of 274,000 cubic metres in 2024.

Summary of Key Issues

- Protecting mineral resources where appropriate.
- Promoting waste minimisation and encouraging the re-use of materials.

Climatic Factors

5.55. The climate is affected by the release of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere. Greenhouse gas emissions result from both natural processes and human activities. Human activities which result in greenhouse gas emissions include transport, energy generation and use, industrial activities, waste management, and agriculture; activities which can help to reduce or stabilise greenhouse gas emissions include afforestation, restoring forests, grasslands and soils, and other increases in biodiversity.

5.56. DESNZ data show that greenhouse gas emissions were 4.7 Tco2E per capita in Knowsley in 2023. Using the Central Government's 2022 figures on regional emissions, in Knowsley, 84% of emissions came from three sources: transport (42%), domestic (22%) and industry (20%). The remainder came from waste management (6%), the commercial (5%), public sector (3%) and agriculture (1%).

5.57. DESNZ identified average domestic electricity consumption in Knowsley as 2,356.4kWh in 2024/25, and 8,808kWh for domestic gas consumption, these are both lower than the England averages.

5.58. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DfESNZ) publishes local authority renewable energy statistics yearly[14]. The latest 2024 data can be seen in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Energy Source, Capacity and Generation in Knowsley, 2024			
Energy Source	**Number of Installations**	**Capacity (MW)**	**Generation (MWh)**
Photovoltaics	4,854	17.4	12,741
Onshore Wind	3	0.5	852
Sewage Gas	1	0.2	Not disclosed
Plant Biomass	1	0.1	Not disclosed
Total	**4,859**	**18.2**	**13,592**

5.59. The Climate Change Committee highlight that periods of high temperature are becoming more common and intense across the UK. A Well-Adapted UK[15] published by the Climate Change Committee suggests that by the middle of the century, the UK's climate will be much more extreme than today. Whilst hotter heatwaves could see 92% of existing homes overheat. Peak river flows will be up to 45% higher, last longer, and be seen more frequently, driving increased flooding. Drier summers will mean shortfalls in water supply could reach over five billion litres per day, making drought more widespread. Without global emissions reductions, these risks may go past the point where the UK can protect itself with adaptation measures. Increasingly extreme and frequent heatwaves are the greatest risk to health in the UK from climate change. Annual heat-related excess deaths in heatwave periods already range from 1,400–3,000 each year, overwhelmingly concentrated among the elderly.

Summary of Key Issues

- There is a need to transition to a low carbon energy.
- More frequent extreme weather events are likely which increases the chances of flooding events, as well as periods of hot dry weather and the impact that can have to health and wellbeing.
- The need to ensure that the built environment adapts to the impact of climate change and extreme weather events.

[14] Regional Renewable Statistics - GOV.UK
[15] A Well-Adapted UK - Climate Change Committee

Transport and Accessibility

5.60. Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the travel to work topic. The Census 2021 identifies that 21.4% of people aged 16 years and over, in employment in Knowsley work mainly at or from home. This is lower than the English average at 31.5% of working mainly at or from home in 2021.

5.61. The estimated percentage who drove a car or van to work was greater in Knowsley (51%) than in England (44.5%). After driving a car or van, the next selected mode of travel to work was on foot (7%). The remaining responses for method of travel to work were: 6.7% travelled by bus, minibus or coach; 1.7% travelled by bicycle; 2.5% travelled by train; 0.1% travelled by underground, metro, light rail, or tram; 1.9% travelled by taxi; 0.2% travelled by motorcycle, scooter or moped and 1.2% travelled by another method of travel to work.

5.62. Respondents aged 16 years and over who were in employment and stated that their main place of work was a workplace or a depot were asked for their workplace address, from which we calculated the distance they travelled to work. Of those travelling to a workplace or depot 44.4% of people travelled short distances to work (less than 10km). Whilst just 2.7% travelled 30km or more.

5.63. The Census 2021 identified that 31.2% of households in Knowsley do not own a car or van, and 41.2% own one car or van, 22.2% own cars or vans and 5.4% own 3 cars or vans.

5.64. 94.9% of premises in Knowsley have coverage from a gigabit-capable services with download speeds of 1,000Mbps or more as at July 2025, this is above the England proportion. There is 100% coverage from at least one service operator providing 5G signal outdoors across Knowsley.

5.65. All homes and communities in Knowsley are located within approximately 400 metres (about a 5-minute walk) of a bus route. There are four main bus interchanges in the borough – Huyton, Kirkby, Prescot, Halewood linking the Borough with Liverpool city centre, St Helens, Widnes, and Warrington.

5.66. There are two motorways within Knowsley the M62 runs east to west and the M57 runs north to south. There are also other key a-roads including the A58, the East Lancs (A580) and Speke Road (A562), which all run east to west across Knowsley.

5.67. Knowsley is well served by seven train stations, located in Halewood, Headbolt Lane, Huyton, Kirkby, Prescot, Roby and Whiston. With lines running from:

- Liverpool through Kirkby and Headbolt Lane on to Rainford, Wigan and Manchester;
- Liverpool through Roby, Huyton and Whiston to Manchester, Manchester Airport and beyond;
- Liverpool through Roby, Huyton and Prescot on to Wigan; and
- Liverpool through Halewood on to Widnes, Warrington Bank Quay and Manchester.

There is also the potential for an additional line to be introduced as part of Northern Powerhouse Rail.

5.68. The Knowsley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan details cycling and walking throughout Knowsley and provides recommendations about future improvements. The maps below (Figure 5.9) set out the existing and proposed cycle network as recommended by the Infrastructure Plan.

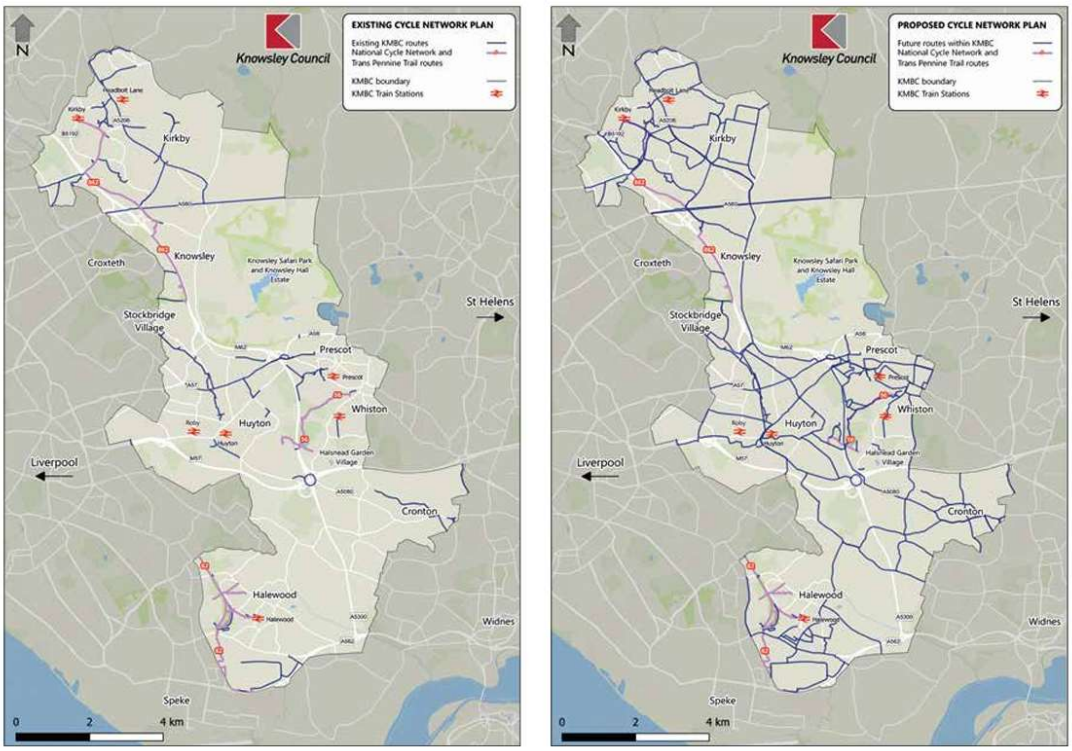

Figure 5.10 existing and proposed cycle network

5.69. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are legally protected paths that the public has the right to use for walking, running, cycling or horse riding. These pathways, spanning approximately 53 kilometres across Knowsley, provide access to diverse landscapes, from peaceful woodlands to scenic country trails, offering a haven for walkers, runners, cyclists, and horse riders.

Summary of Key Issues

- Reducing the need to travel by vehicles and supporting active travel.
- The need for improvements to the walking and cycling network to encourage active travel modes.
- Access to sustainable transport modes serving key locations including education, employment, retail and services.

6. SEA Framework

6.1. Defining a set of SEA objectives (the SEA framework) is an established way of assessing the likely environmental effects of a Local plan and any reasonable alternative options. This provides a mechanism to describe, analyse and compare the effects of the Local Plan while ensuring that environmental effects are taken into account in decision making.

6.2. Schedule 2 of the SEA regulations prescribes the topics against which the likely effects of a plan or programmes should be assessed, these are biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage; and landscape.

	SEA Objective	Potential Appraisal Questions	SEA Topic	Potential Indicator
1	To protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity	• Does the proposal support conservation and enhancement of protected sites? • Will the proposal support and enhance ecological networks? • Will it avoid disturbance to protected species and their habitats? • Will it contribute to the delivery of the LNRS priorities? • Will it protect and enhance sites, features and areas of geological value? • Does it provide opportunities for the mitigation of recreational impacts?	• Biodiversity • Fauna • Flora • Soil • Water • Landscape	• Sites delivering BNG • Local Wildlife Site Audits • Delivery of the LNRS
2	To support a strong and	• Will the proposal support new local	• Human Health	• Employment completions

	SEA Objective	Potential Appraisal Questions	SEA Topic	Potential Indicator
	diverse economy that provides accessible employment opportunities for all	employment opportunities? • Will the proposal improve access to employment opportunities? • Will the proposal support the viability and vitality of town and local centres?	• Population	• Business start ups • %age economically active
3	To protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings.	• Will historic character be protected? • Will the proposals have a positive impact to the heritage asset or its setting?	• Cultural heritage	• Listed Buildings • Buildings at Risk
4	To adapt and improve resilience to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events, including flooding and increased periods of heat	• Does the proposal consider flood risk from all sources and steer development away from the higher risk areas? • Will it ensure suitable adaptation to climate change? • Will it reduce energy consumption?	• Biodiversity • Population • Human Health • Water • Air • Climatic Factors	• SuDS provision • Flood risk • Energy certification
5	To protect and enhance the distinctiveness of local landscapes and townscapes and ensure efficient use of land	• Will it protect and enhance local landscapes and townscapes? • Will it make use of previously developed land or underutilised land? • Will it minimise loss of best and most versatile agricultural land?	• Soil • Climatic Factors • Flora • Fauna • Cultural Heritage • Landscape	• Use of PDL • Loss of BMVL

	SEA Objective	Potential Appraisal Questions	SEA Topic	Potential Indicator
6	To conserve natural resources and promote sustainable management of waste	• Will the strategy or policy minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land? • Will it minimise the loss of peaty soils? • Will it promote effective use of land, including encouraging use of previously developed land? • Will it safeguard and support sustainable use of minerals? • Will it reduce waste and/or increase recycling? • Will it promote the sustainable use of minerals? • Will it help to reduce or avoid land contamination?	• Biodiversity • Human Health • Soil • Water • Air • Climatic Factors • Material Assets • Landscape	• Loss of BMVL • Use of PDL • Secondary minerals • Recycling • Waste facilities • Contaminated land
7	Ensure efficient use of water, whilst protecting water resources and quality.	• Will it protect and improve the quality of waters? • Will it promote sustainable use of water? • Will it support the provision of sufficient water resources?	• Biodiversity • Population • Human Health • Fauna • Flora • Soil • Water • Climatic Factors • Landscape	• Water quality • Water stress

	SEA Objective	Potential Appraisal Questions	SEA Topic	Potential Indicator
8	To maintain and where possible improve air quality	• Will it protect air quality?	• Biodiversity • Human Health • Air • Climatic Factors	• AQMAs • EV Charging points
9	Reduce the need to travel, and improve access to key services and facilities	• Will it improve accessibility to key local services and facilities? • Will it support travel by active and/or sustainable modes? • Will it contribute to the provision of public open spaces?	• Human Health • Population • Climatic Factors • Air	• Sustainable transport modes • Proximity to bus or train services • Open space provision / proximity
10	To provide high quality, sustainable housing to meet the needs of the whole community	• Will it provide sufficient housing to meet need and demand? • Will it provide well-designed, energy efficient and sustainable housing? • Will it provide a mix of housing according to local need and affordability? • Will it increase the affordability of housing? • Will it support the delivery of homes that can be adapted to support independent living for older and disabled people?	• Population • Human Health • Water • Air • Climatic Factors • Material Assets • Cultural Heritage • Landscape	• Number of homes • Affordable homes • M4(2) and M4(3) • Future Homes Standard • House type and mix • Specialist provision

	SEA Objective	Potential Appraisal Questions	SEA Topic	Potential Indicator
11	To improve the health and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities	• Will it help to improve the health of the community? • Will it encourage active lifestyles? • Will it improve access to health and social care facilities?	• Human Health • Population	• Access to health services • Healthy life expectancy • Open space provision or proximity
12	To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport.	• Will it encourage sustainable patterns of development? • Will it support the ability to achieve sustainable communities? • Will it support connectivity to and promote opportunities to enhance services and facilities? • Will it support access to and promote opportunities to use active and public modes of transport? • Will it support connectivity to and promote opportunities to enhance the open space and green/blue infrastructure network?		• Proximity and access to services • Sustainable transport modes

6.3. The SEA framework will be applied to assess the Local Plan. The assessments will 'score' the options against each of the objectives and provide a brief explanation of the score. The scoring will be set out as follows:

Score	Effect
+ +	Significant positive effect
+	Minor positive effect
0	Neutral or negligible Effect
-	Minor negative effect
- -	Significant negative effect
?	Uncertain or Unknown effect

7. Next Steps

7.1. This SEA Screening and Scoping report accompanies the Local Plan Scoping Consultation. The draft scoping report will be subject to a consultation with the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency). Consultation at this stage should help to ensure that the SEA Report will be robust enough to support the Local Plan during the later stages of consultation.

7.2. Once this consultation has closed, the Council will consider the responses received in relation to both this SEA Scoping report and the Local Plan Scoping Consultation. These will feed into the preparation of the next iteration of the SEA report and the next stage of the Local Plan preparation.

7.3. The next steps in the preparation of the SEA will see the Local Plan objectives tested against the SEA Objectives, testing the Local Plan and any reasonable alternatives, predicting the effects of the Plan, evaluating the effects and considering ways of mitigating any adverse effects. The SEA Report will also propose measures to monitor the environmental effects of the Local Plan.

7.4. The next steps in the preparation of the Local Plan will see the Council undertake the Gateway 1 assessment and prepare and publish a summary of the responses to the Scoping consultation. This will then be followed by the preparation of, and consultation on, the Local Plan Content and Evidence document.