



Nathaniel Lichfield
& Partners

Planning. Design. Economics.

Sefton Consequences Study

Final Report

Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council

30th May 2013

40873/02/JG/RA

Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners
3rd Floor
One St James's Square
Manchester M2 6DN

nlplanning.com

This document is formatted for double sided printing.

© Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd 2012. Trading as Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners.

All Rights Reserved.

Registered Office:

14 Regent's Wharf

All Saints Street

London N1 9RL

All plans within this document produced by NLP are based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright reserved. Licence number AL50684A

Contents

	Executive Summary	3
	Introduction	3
	Guide to the Study	3
	Background	4
	Approach	5
	Baseline Analysis	6
	Development Options	7
	Mitigation Measures and Opportunities	8
	Conclusions	8
1.0	Introduction	1
	Background	1
	Study Requirements	2
2.0	Policy Analysis	6
	National Policy	6
	Local Policy & Evidence Base	7
	Context for Growth	17
3.0	Methodology	23
	STAGE 1 – Baseline Definition and Scoping	23
	STAGE 2 – Assessment of Options	25
	STAGE 3 – Potential Mitigation Measures	30
4.0	Stakeholder Consultation	32
	Introduction	32
	Baseline Consultation	32
	Sub-Regional Consultation	33
5.0	Baseline Infrastructure Position	38
	Introduction and Approach	38
	Existing Infrastructure Pressures by Study Area and Sub-Area – Tipping Points	40
	Overall Messages	70
6.0	Assessment Options	74
	Introduction and Approach	74
	Overall Needs Based Requirement	76
	Spatial Analysis	90
	Summary	130
7.0	Mitigation Measures and Opportunities	132

Introduction	132
Potential Mitigation Measures	132
Mitigation Impacts	137
Cross-boundary issues	145
Conclusions and Implications	147

8.0	Conclusions	149
------------	--------------------	------------

Figures

Figure 2.1	Housing Completions 2003/04 - 2011/12	19
Figure 3.1	Overview of Methodology	23
Figure 5.1	Dwelling Type and Household Tenure, 2011	43
Figure 5.2	Inter-district commuting flows, 2001	45

Tables

Table 2.1	Growth Scenarios for Sefton Borough	20
Table 3.1	Growth Scenarios for Sefton Borough Incorporating Housing Backlog	27
Table 4.1	Summary of Local Authority Stakeholder Responses	36
Table 5.1	JSA Claimants by Sought Occupation March 2013	44
Table 6.1	Household Implications of Option 1: Urban Containment	77
Table 6.2	Economic Benefits – Option 1	78
Table 6.3	Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 1	81
Table 6.4	Household Implications of Option 2: Meeting Identified Need	83
Table 6.5	Employment Benefits	84
Table 6.6	Economic Benefits – Option 2	85
Table 6.7	Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 2	86
Table 6.8	Household Implications of Option 3 - Optimistic Household Growth	87
Table 6.9	Economic Benefits - Option 3	88
Table 6.10	Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 3	89
Table 6.11	Assumed Trip Rates– Peak Hours	90
Table 6.12	Bootle Sites	92
Table 6.13	Netherton Sites	96
Table 6.14	Southport Housing Sites	100
Table 6.15	Formby Sites	109
Table 6.16	Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree Sites	116
Table 6.17	Crosby Sites	124

Appendices

- Appendix 1** Sub-Area Maps
- Appendix 2** Stakeholder Meeting Notes
- Appendix 3** Town, District and Local Centre Definitions Note
- Appendix 4** Current Capacity Tipping Points Tables
- Appendix 5** Tipping Points Tables – Capacity Indicators
- Appendix 6** TRIPS tables
- Appendix 7** Transport Maps
- Appendix 8** Options 1, 2 & 3 Matrices, with scoring information
- Appendix 9** Options 1, 2 & 3 Matrices, with Mitigation Measures

Executive Summary

Introduction

In February 2013, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners [NLP] was appointed by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council [Sefton Council] to undertake a Consequences Study.

The Study assesses the anticipated consequences, in social, economic and environmental terms, of Sefton Council choosing to pursue one of three Local Plan development options. Specifically, the Study addresses the consequences both for Sefton Council and neighbouring local authorities over the Local Plan period to 2030 and beyond, where appropriate.

Guide to the Study

The Study comprises the following key components (with the relevant section of the main report identified in brackets):

- A background review of up to date national policy and guidance as well as local evidence, including the conclusions of the Council's draft Green Belt Study (Section 2.0).
- The methodology adopted to meet the Study's overall objectives (Section 3.0).
- Details of the stakeholder consultation that has taken place with various agencies and infrastructure providers in addition to the local authorities adjoining Sefton to assist in identifying potential constraints and cross-boundary implications of different development options (Section 4.0).
- A baseline assessment of the current social, economic and environmental infrastructure provision in the Study Area, which identifies tipping points or thresholds where existing infrastructure will reach theoretical capacity for each sub-settlement area (Section 5.0).
- An analysis of the implications of the three different levels of growth and the potential options for the location of future housing and employment development (Section 6.0).
- Consideration of how any positive consequences of development could be magnified and how any negative consequences of development might be mitigated, as well as the sub-regional implications (positive or negative) of different development options (Section 7.0).
- The overall conclusions and recommendations (Section 8.0).

It is important to note that this report and its appendices are the outputs of NLP, an independent consultancy, working to the brief set by Sefton Council. NLP has been assisted by TEP and i-Transport consultancies in respect of ecology and highway matters respectively. The report forms part of the evidence base for the Council's emerging Local Plan and will help to underpin the chosen

level of development in the Borough to 2030. For this reason, the report must not be considered in isolation and forms just one input into a wider suite of evidence feeding into the Local Plan.

Background

The role of the Consequences Study is to identify what level of development can be delivered (and in which locations) without irreversibly compromising the environmental, social and economic assets and prospects of the Borough.

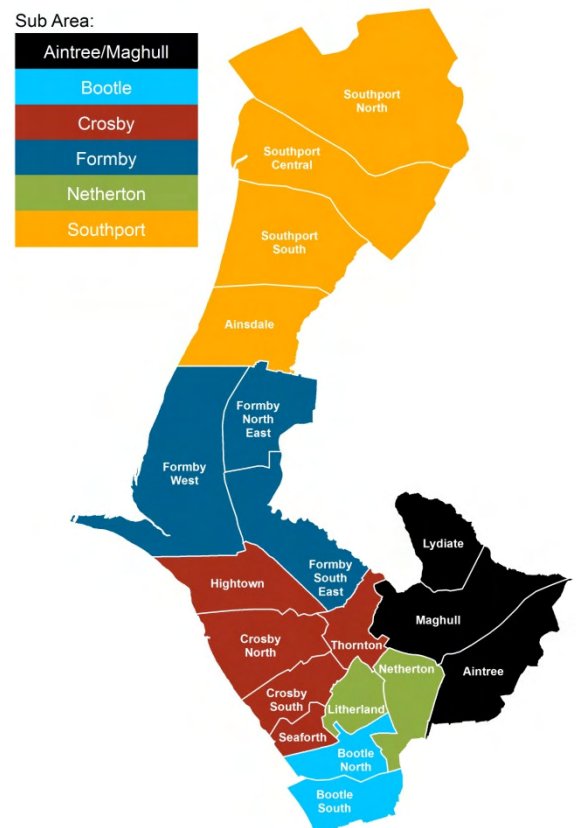
The Consequences Study specifically identifies, assesses the risks and evaluates the key consequences of the following Local Plan Options:

- 1 Option One: **urban containment**. 270 homes per year (this option is constrained by the ability to meet all development needs within the existing built up areas);
- 2 Option Two: **meeting identified needs**. 510 homes per year and new employment sites in both the north and the south of the Borough. It is expected that this option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 5,000 homes in addition to the 2 - 3 new employment sites; and,
- 3 Option Three: **optimistic household growth**. 700 homes per year and the identification of new employment areas in both the north and south of the Borough. It is expected that this option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 8,500 homes in addition to the 2 - 3 new employment sites.

The Study also assesses the potential options for the location of development in Sefton, informed by Sefton Council’s Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the draft Green Belt Study and environmental and other constraints. In doing this it considers the following three options:

- 4 Sites are chosen by how suitable they are, regardless of where they may be;
- 5 Sites are distributed as much as possible across Sefton to meet local needs, even if this means choosing some sites with more constraints;
- 6 Or a combination of the above.

The Study analyses the impact of development across the following six distinct sub-areas: Southport, Formby, Crosby, Maghull/Aintree, Bootle and Netherton. These sub-areas represent the Borough’s main built-up areas and aligns with the spatial approach that Sefton Council is taking with its emerging Local Plan. However, due to



the need to assess the impact of development at a more fine-grained level, it has been necessary to divide the sub-areas into a number of ‘sub-settlement areas’ based on logical settlement divisions and natural/man-made barriers (such as major roads, rivers etc...).

A summary of the broad, Borough-wide implications of the three growth options is presented in the table below.

Growth Scenarios for Sefton Borough

	Low Growth Option 1	Medium Growth Option 2	High Growth Option 3
Annual Provision	270	510	700
Total Provision 2012 – 2030	4,860	9,180	12,600
Backlog/ 5% Flexibility Margin*	n/a	1,628	1,799
Total Housing	4,860	10,808	14,399
Additional Employment Sites	n/a	2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites	2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites
Potential net additional jobs resulting from new Business Parks in the Green Belt	n/a	3,720-3,920	3,720-3,920

Approach

NLP undertook a review of policy and background evidence to establish the strategic context for future housing growth over the period to 2030. This included a review of national and local planning policy documents as well as local evidence base documents that have been prepared to inform the emerging Sefton Local Plan as well as other relevant documents produced by stakeholders and public bodies.

NLP also held discussions with various agencies, infrastructure providers and Sefton’s neighbouring authorities (Liverpool, Knowsley, West Lancashire and Wirral Councils) at key stages throughout the Study. This helped to inform and underpin our knowledge of the existing baseline position and to identify cross-boundary issues where the choice of a development option could have implications for one or more of Sefton’s adjoining authorities. All four adjoining authorities considered that development option 2 (510 homes per year) represented the optimum scenario from their perspective as this was deemed to have the least adverse implications for their own market housing and regeneration priorities). The study has adopted a ‘worst case’ impact assessment approach due to the application of new populations to housing change scenarios and an assumption that no discounting of SHLAA sites occurs.

Baseline Analysis

An audit of the current economic, social and environmental assets of the Study Area (by sub-area) was undertaken in order to establish where the pressures associated with housing growth would be likely to come from. To facilitate the baseline spatial analysis, a number of detailed GIS Spatial Plans covering the whole of Sefton Borough have been produced. These identify key designation constraints and have helped inform the analysis of the potential options for the location of development in Sefton.

The assessment also includes an analysis of the current 'tipping points' for each sub-area, i.e. how much development each sub-area can accommodate without the provision of any new infrastructure/significant adverse impacts.

In general, Sefton benefits from reasonable infrastructure provision. Some areas, particularly the coastal strip and rural areas are less well-served for services such as shops, leisure centres, health services, schools, playing pitches and parks. Overall, however, access to these services is fairly good, with public transport networks covering most of the borough, offering high frequency services in most built up areas. Primary and secondary schools all have capacity, to a greater or lesser degree, presently. As such, some sub-areas are better placed to accommodate additional housing before triggering the requirement for additional investment/provision to be made. In terms of GP provision, surgeries at a sub-area wide level are currently running over capacity.

In terms of protected areas with ecological value, these are mainly clustered around Sefton's coast. Any increase in population may generate additional visitors to these areas, placing increased pressure on sensitive landscapes and habitats. Additional housing would create the need for physical improvement and protection and improved management of these protected spaces.

Regarding economic trends, the number of jobs based in Sefton has decreased since the onset of the recession in 2008. The vast majority of these jobs are based in the service sector with a particularly high over-representation in public administration. Unemployment is around 8.5% (December 2012). Figures suggest that Sefton currently experiences a high level of net out-commuting to adjoining districts for work, a reflection of the economic inter-dependencies of the surrounding districts, the proximity of other major settlements (e.g. Liverpool and Warrington) and the existence of good transport links to other residential locations.

In determining the strategic distribution of growth to best meet the three Local Plan growth objectives, one of the key factors for consideration will be the marginal costs and benefits of required infrastructure provision. This will ensure that growth is focused on where development makes the most efficient use of the infrastructure needed to support it and help to underpin sustainability by providing infrastructure at a localised scale, redistributing existing excess capacity or surplus provision. However, infrastructure is just one of a number of factors determining the scale and location of growth.

Development Options

The extent to which Sefton can accommodate various levels of growth, before the identified tipping points are breached, has been examined.

The various housing sites relating to each of the three options were identified in addition to the potential urban sites and Green Belt releases in the draft Green Belt Study and agreed with Officers. It should be noted, however, that it is not the role of the Study to assess the individual merits of such sites, which is a matter for the emerging Local Plan. As such, individual sites have been clustered within sub-settlement areas where they might be expected to have similar impacts/demands on the environmental, social and economic indicators in order to ascertain the risks and key consequences of each Local Plan option.

To this end, a series of matrices were developed for each sub-area against which the various options could be evaluated individually and in-combination, to determine the relevant merits (and consequences) of each option in terms of scale and location.

It is important to emphasise that the effects of the three different growth options on the Borough's existing physical, social and economic infrastructure have been quantified based upon the total number of homes that could be built under each option. As such, the Study assumes a gross increase in population across Sefton, and therefore a worst case scenario, whereas it is acknowledged that, for example, under Option 1, the population is likely to decrease.

The analysis indicates that, without suitable mitigation:

- Option 1, Urban Containment, can be achieved in all parts of the Borough without too many significant adverse impacts. There are, however, opportunity costs resulting from the missed fiscal, economic and social benefits that additional housing would bring to Sefton. However, this Option would fail to meet identified affordable housing needs in all areas except Bootle.
- Option 2, Meeting Identified Need, could result in all the 'best' Green Belt sites coming forward for development and would almost double the overall level of housing provision and provide additional land for employment. The release of a number of Green Belt sites would result in the loss of some Grades 1 – 3a agricultural land and require land within Flood Zone 2 to be developed. This option could also require significant investment in social infrastructure. However, this option would also provide an additional 46.5 – 49 ha of employment development with the potential to support the creation of just under 4,000 new jobs. It could also generate a large number of direct construction jobs and indirect employment.

- Option 3, Optimistic Household Growth, would rely on a number of large Green Belt 'reserve' sites coming forward for residential development in addition to those required for Option 2. These sites could deliver approximately 1,483 additional dwellings but would be unevenly distributed across the Borough, located predominantly in Formby and Lydiate. In addition, this Option could place substantial strain upon key social infrastructure provision in Formby and add significant congestion to the existing transport network in the Maghull/Lydiate and Aintree area. Option 3 would meet more of Sefton's affordable housing needs but would still fall short of meeting Formby's affordable housing needs. Furthermore, the economic benefits of this option are not substantially greater than those associated with Option 2.

Mitigation Measures and Opportunities

Higher levels of growth are anticipated to result in greater impacts on the majority of the assessed characteristics (not only for the natural environment but also social infrastructure and the built environment). The Study therefore considers whether the adverse impacts and opportunities likely to arise, as a result of the development of some or all of the options, could realistically be mitigated against, or maximised, on an area by area basis. The mitigation options that considered are those which might realistically be offered/sought in support of planning applications, in order to make developments, which might otherwise be refused, acceptable.

The Study concludes that, in most cases, there is potential to mitigate against the impacts of development proposed by each of the Local Plan Options. However, there are a number of areas where it is considered that no realistic mitigation may exist, such that development scenarios selected for the Local Plan may be taken in the knowledge of these consequences.

The locations of the impacts of the various development options primarily relate to environmental effects on international and nationally designated nature conservation sites along the Sefton Coast. Less significantly in environmental terms is the loss of some areas of Grades 1-3 agricultural land, Coastal Parks and land within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

In terms of residual impacts effecting physical and social characteristics of the Borough, the Study identifies these as being the loss of Green Belt land, a lack of affordable housing and limited access to shops and other facilities in town or district centres on foot.

Conclusions

As a general overview of the three Local Plan Options, the Study assessments and, in particular, the stakeholder consultations have identified potentially serious consequences of adopting the levels of housing and economic development in Option 1. This Option would fail to meet objectively assessed local housing needs and employment needs, fall well short of delivering the

required level of affordable housing and create pressure on neighbouring authorities to meet Sefton's unmet housing need through the potential release of Green Belt and other sensitive land within their boundaries.

Option 2 is supported by the neighbouring authorities as being appropriate in the context of their housing and economic objectives, although it will require the development of Green Belt land and, depending on the location of sites, will have consequences on some of the special characteristics of Sefton as defined in this Study.

Option 3 is likely to result in more significant consequences for the characteristics of Sefton's settlement and surrounding countryside, will require greater levels of Green Belt land release in the Borough, but conversely, does not add proportionately to the economic health of the area. Option 3 is not supported by neighbouring authorities, who consider that it is likely to have a detrimental effect on their local housing markets and could contribute to unsustainable patterns of travel to work with resultant pressure on the area's transport network.

The Study sets out what the 'consequences' would be of the Local Plan selecting certain levels of development under the three Options published for consultation and the spatial implications of such decisions. However, it is for Sefton Council, through consultation, to make these spatial development decisions.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 In February 2013, Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners [NLP] was appointed by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council [Sefton Council] to undertake a Consequences Study.
- 1.2 The Study assesses the anticipated consequences, in social, economic and environmental terms, of Sefton Council choosing to pursue one of three Local Plan options. Specifically, the Study addresses the consequences both for Sefton Council and neighbouring local authorities over the Local Plan period to 2030 and beyond, where appropriate.
- 1.3 The Study considers the implications of three different levels of development in Sefton (270, 510 and 700 dwellings per annum (dpa) to 2030 and assesses the potential options for the location of future housing development. The Study also considers the implications of making provision for new employment sites in the north and south of the Borough.
- 1.4 At the time of the public consultation on the Sefton Core Strategy Options Paper, in 2011, the three levels of growth that were being considered were: 270 homes per year (Option 1: urban containment); 480 homes per year (Option 2: meeting identified needs); and 650 homes per year (Option 3: stabilising Sefton's population). New housing and demographic data published since then indicates that Sefton may need to accommodate a slightly higher level of growth than anticipated at that time and these growth options have consequently been revised.
- 1.5 The role of the Consequences Study is to identify what level of development can be delivered (and in which locations) without irreversibly compromising the environmental, social and economic assets and prospects of the Borough. In environmental terms this has been accentuated by the constrained nature of the Borough and the large swathe of Green Belt that covers approximately half of it. It will also help inform the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan.
- 1.6 The Study forms part of the evidence base for the Council's emerging Local Plan and will help to underpin the chosen level of development in the Borough to 2030.
- 1.7 Since August 2011, new housing and demographic data has been published and two further updates prepared to NLP's HEaDROOM report: Review of RSS Housing Requirement Figure (March 2011), analysing the implications of the new data for Sefton Council. As a result, the Council took a report to its Cabinet on 13 December 2012, which recommended the three options be updated to reflect new demographic information that has emerged. The updated figures (of 270 dpa, 510 dpa and 700 dpa) were endorsed and form the basis of the current study.

Study Requirements

- 1.8 The Consequences Study specifically identifies, assesses the risks and evaluates the key consequences of the following Local Plan Options:
- 1 Option One: **urban containment**. 270 homes per year (this option is constrained by the ability to meet all development needs within the existing built up areas);
 - 2 Option Two: **meeting identified needs**. 510 homes per year and new employment sites in both the north and the south of the Borough. It is expected that this option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 5,000 homes in addition to the 2 - 3 new employment sites; and,
 - 3 Option Three: **optimistic household growth**. 700 homes per year and the identification of new employment areas in both the north and south of the Borough. It is expected that this option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 8,500 homes in addition to the 2 - 3 new employment sites.
- 1.9 The Study also assesses the potential options for the **location** of development in Sefton, informed by Sefton Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, the Green Belt Study and environmental and other constraints. In doing this it considers the following three options:
- 1 Sites are chosen by how suitable they are, regardless of where they may be;
 - 2 Sites are distributed as much as possible across Sefton to meet local needs, even if this means choosing some sites with more constraints;
 - 3 Or a combination of the above.
- 1.10 The Study also:
- Identifies any **in-combination** consequences of each of the options and sets out which elements work together;
 - Considers the broader consequences of each of the Local Plan options on the **statutory** planning requirements that the Local Plan should address; and,
 - Clearly distinguishes between positive and negative consequences and, where appropriate, sets out how the positive consequences can be maximised and the negative consequences avoided, minimised and/or **mitigated**.
- 1.11 In this way, the Study takes forward the previous environmental capacity studies (including the Review of Sefton's Housing Requirement (NLP 2012), Draft Green Space Study (2011), Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Capita Symonds 2013) and Draft Green Belt Study (2011)), by introducing a social and economic aspect, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework and other guidance [The NPPF], to more fully assess the three elements of sustainable development.

1.12 In informing the above, the Study includes a background review of up to date national policy and guidance as well as local evidence, particularly the conclusions of the Council's draft Green Belt Study (Section 2.0). Stakeholder consultation has also taken place with various agencies and infrastructure providers in addition to the local authorities adjoining Sefton to assist in identifying potential constraints and cross-boundary implications of different development options (Section 4.0). A baseline assessment of the current social, economic and environmental infrastructure provision in the Study Area, identifying tipping points or thresholds where existing infrastructure will reach theoretical capacity for each sub-settlement area (see below) was used to generate a starting point for identifying the consequences of different development options (Section 5.0).

Mapping

1.13 Sefton's Local Plan will provide defined policy responses for the six sub-areas within the Borough, specifically **Bootle, Crosby, Southport, Formby, Netherton and Maghull/Aintree** dependant on each areas specific characteristics and needs. Whilst it will be for the Local Plan to determine the most appropriate level of development required for each of these sub-areas, NLP's HEaDROOM report and subsequent updates and the Council's Employment Land & Premises Study Refresh provide a context by exploring the potential for spatially allocating the Borough-wide requirement for housing and exploring the economic needs of the Borough respectively.

1.14 The suggested sub-district split of housing provision in the Local Plan options and NLP HEaDROOM Study is simply a proxy indicator of any local distribution of the housing requirement. Any future split within a locally generated housing requirement will ultimately be guided by the spatial strategy set out through the Local Plan documents. Notwithstanding this, some simple indicators were used to guide the likely split of housing between the six sub-areas, based on an appreciation of a number of measures providing a background for making further policy choices:

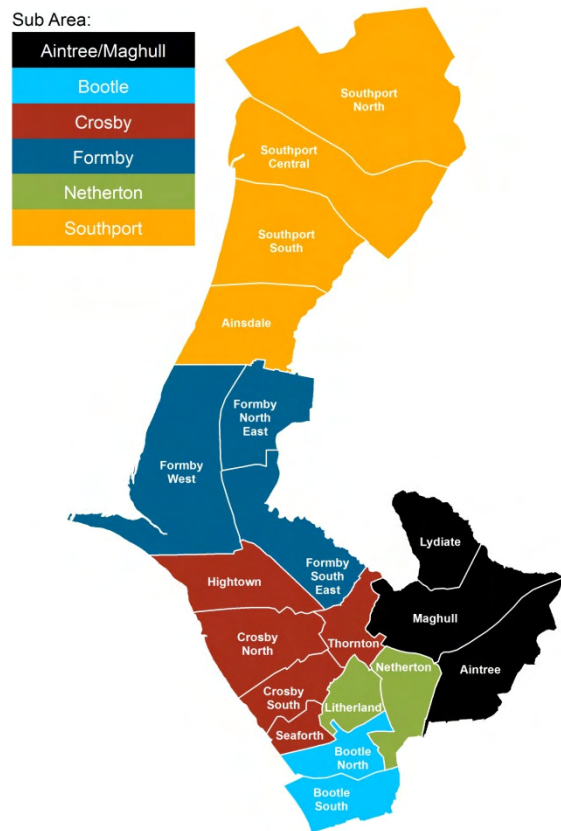
- Current population/household split;
- Past housing delivery rates;
- Forward supply of housing development in the pipeline;
- Affordable Housing Need as defined in the Sefton SHMA; and
- Summary constraints for each area

1.15 The six sub-areas described above represent the Borough's main built-up areas. This division also aligns with the spatial approach that Sefton Council is taking with its emerging Local Plan.

1.16 Due to the need to assess the impact of development at a more fine grained level it has been necessary to divide the sub-areas into a number of 'sub-settlement areas' based on logical settlement divisions and natural/man-made barriers (such as major roads, rivers etc), i.e.:

Figure 1.1 Sefton Sub-Areas & Clusters

- i **Bootle:** Bootle North; Bootle South;
- ii **Crosby:** Hightown; Crosby North; Crosby South; Seaforth; Thornton;
- iii **Formby:** Formby North East; Formby West; Formby South East;
- iv **Maghull and Aintree:** Lydiate; Maghull; Aintree;
- v **Netherton:** Litherland; Netherton;
- vi **Southport:** Southport North; Southport Central; Southport South; Ainsdale



1.17 Figure 1.1 illustrates the boundaries of all the sub-areas and sub-settlement areas in Sefton Borough. Each sub-area also has a set of plans which identifies key designation and environmental constraints as well as social and highways infrastructure (Appendix 1).

Structure of the Report

- 1.18 This report is structured as follows:
- Section 2.0 provides a background review of policy and the evidence upon which the Study has been based;
 - Section 3.0 explains the methodology adopted to meet the Study’s overall objectives;
 - Section 4.0 provides details of the stakeholder consultation that informed the Study;
 - Section 5.0 informs the baseline position and acts as a platform upon which future growth options have been assessed;
 - Section 6.0 analyses the implications of the three different levels of development and the spatial distribution options;

- Section 7.0 considers how any positive consequences of development could be magnified and how any negative consequences of development might be mitigated, as well as the sub-regional implications (positive or negative) of different development options; and,
- Section 8.0 sets out the overall conclusions and recommendations.

2.0 Policy Analysis

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the national and local strategic policy context. It also provides a brief synopsis of the key themes flowing from a review of Sefton Council's Local Plan evidence base.
- 2.2 This Section sets out the context for future housing growth, and scenarios for housing growth to 2030, as the basis for identifying the key social, economic and environmental consequences.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.3 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework [The Framework]. The document sets out the overarching policy priorities for the planning system, providing guidance on the way in which local planning authorities should prepare their Local Plans and make decisions on planning applications.
- 2.4 In the context of plan making, planning authorities are advised to ensure that their Local Plan is based on adequate, up to date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area [NPPF para. 158]. The Framework promotes sustainable growth, stating that Local Authorities are required to seek opportunities to achieve sustainable development through the pursuit of net economic, social and environmental gains. Significant adverse impacts on any of these dimensions are expected to be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts are to be pursued. Where adverse impacts are unavoidable, measures to mitigate the impact should be considered [NPPF para. 152].
- 2.5 The Framework attaches importance to Green Belts, acknowledging that their fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open [NPPF para. 79]. Green Belt boundaries can only be reviewed when a Local Plan is being prepared. Local planning authorities are advised to take account of the need to promote sustainable patterns of development. They are required to consider the consequence, for sustainable development, of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary (although there are no such areas in Sefton) [NPPF para. 84].
- 2.6 Cross-boundary issues are expected to be addressed through the duty to co-operate on planning issues [NPPF para. 178]. This may entail local planning authorities working together to meet development requirements which cannot wholly be met within their own areas [NPPF para. 179].

- 2.7 When the Local Plan reaches the examination stage, it will be tested on whether it has been positively prepared, i.e. based on a strategy which meets objectively assessed development and infrastructure needs [NPPF para. 182].

Regional Policy

North West Regional Strategy

- 2.8 Regional Strategies previously provided a strategic policy framework for planning, transport, economic development, housing, the environment, waste management, culture, sport and recreation and mineral extraction to inform the preparation of local strategies and policies such as Local Plans and Local Transport Plans.
- 2.9 The North West Regional Strategy (2008) recommended that Sefton makes provision for 9,000 new homes (net of clearance) over the period 2003 to 2021. This equates to an average rate of 500 dwellings per annum (dpa), 65% of which should be directed towards previously developed land/buildings.
- 2.10 The document was revoked in May 2013 as a consequence of the Localism Act 2012.

Local Policy & Evidence Base

Sefton Unitary Development Plan and Local Development Framework

- 2.11 The Sefton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted in 2006, with the majority of its policies saved under the direction of the Secretary of State in April 2009.
- 2.12 The Sefton Local Plan, which will eventually replace the UDP, is currently at an early stage of preparation. Public consultation on the Core Strategy Options Paper (together with the draft Green Belt Study and other documents) took place between May and August 2011.
- 2.13 The Core Strategy Options Paper sought feedback on the following three development options, following the recommendations of the HEaDROOM Report and updates (see para. 1.7 of this report):
- 1 Urban Containment: an average of 270 homes per year;
 - 2 Meeting Identified Needs: an average of 480 homes per year; and,
 - 3 Stabilising Sefton's Population: an average of 650 homes per year.
- 2.14 The next stage in the Local Plan process will involve the preparation of the Preferred Option document, based on the Options set out in paragraph 1.8. This will be informed by a number of evidence base documents, including this Consequences Study.

HEaDROOM Update Report

- 2.15 Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP) produced a study for Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council (Sefton Council) in March 2011 that analysed local housing requirements within the Borough. The study set out the potential scale of future housing requirements based upon a range of housing, economic and demographic factors, trends and forecasts to help Sefton Council make informed policy choices through it's Local Plan process.
- 2.16 Taking into account 11 scenarios tested through NLP's HEaDROOM housing framework and the core constraints on development delivery, the analysis suggested a dwelling requirement of around 481 dwellings per annum (dpa) to 2027. This figure was approximate to the demographic projections for the area contained with Scenario A (the Baseline PopGroup model output), and Scenario I (National Rates of Unemployment), set against a variety of balancing factors. This housing requirement informed Development Option 2 of the Core Strategy Options Paper.
- 2.17 Following the subsequent release of more up-to-date demographic data during 2012, the Council recognised that there was a need to undertake a refresh of the previous HEaDROOM work to ensure that the housing requirements are as up-to-date and robust as possible. The December 2012 update considered that a forward requirement of 575 dpa could be appropriate between 2011 and 2031, although if the Council could demonstrate that policy stimuli could reduce vacancy rates appreciably by 2031 as a result of re-occupation, then a lower figure of 510 dpa could potentially be justified. This was considered to provide a realistic level of housing to deliver some economic growth, whilst recognising the challenges ahead. Although this figure took into consideration the need and demand for housing, it did not make a planning or policy judgement on the social, economic or environmental implications of planning for this level of housing development. This is what the current Consequences Study seeks to address.
- 2.18 The updates also explored the potential for splitting the Borough-wide requirement across 6 sub-areas within the Borough and recommended the following breakdown:
- Southport: 35%;
 - Formby: 7.5%;
 - Maghull/Aintree: 12.5%;
 - Crosby: 15%;
 - Bootle: 15%; and,
 - Netherton: 15%

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

- 2.19 The Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment [SHLAA] 2012 [based date 1 April 2012] identifies how much land is suitable and available for

housing development over the period 2012 – 2027. It has been prepared using best practice guidance. As such, it forms a key piece of evidence informing the emerging Local Plan.

- 2.20 Potential housing sites were identified from a number of sources, including:
- Sites with an unimplemented planning permission for housing;
 - Sites that previously had planning permission(s) for housing, which has now expired;
 - Sites promoted by land owners, developers and Registered Providers including Housing Associations, including through the 'call for sites' which was advertised in the local press and on-line;
 - Council-owned sites that are surplus to requirements or will become surplus in the short to medium term;
 - Sites that had been assessed in previous SHLAAs.
- 2.21 In summary, the Study found that 4,992 dwellings could be accommodated in the urban area, after discounting factors, including demolitions. However, the net figure reduced to 3,879 after an under-provision of 1,113 dwellings against the RS housing target of 500 dpa (since 2003) was taken into account.

Draft Green Belt Study

- 2.22 Sefton and Knowsley Councils undertook a joint Green Belt Study in May 2011. The Study identifies land in the Green Belt that has the potential to be developed in order to meet future housing and employment needs. As a separate but complementary task, a review of the Borough's existing Green Belt boundary was also undertaken to assess whether the boundaries were drawn consistently and whether they still remain relevant today.
- 2.23 The purpose of the Green Belt Study was to assist the Council in making informed decisions about which parcels of land could be brought forward for development, depending on which development scenario is pursued by Sefton Council as the 'Preferred Option'. The Study indicates the amount of Green Belt land that would need to be released under each option:
- 1 Option 1: no planned release of land in the Green Belt;
 - 2 Option 2: to accommodate 4,000 homes + at least 25 ha for a new business park; and,
 - 3 Option 3: to accommodate 6,600 homes + at least 25 ha for a new business park.
- 2.24 As part of the Study, approximately 93% of Sefton's Green Belt land was considered as not being suitable for development, leaving a pool of 40 potential sites, all or part of which could be suitable for residential or employment development.

Employment Land and Premises Study - Refresh

- 2.25 The Employment Land and Premises Study [ELPS] was updated by the BE Group in 2012. The Study is a refresh of the Sefton-specific elements on the 2010 Joint Employment Land and Premises Study and is intended to underpin and inform the emerging Local Plan. Its purpose is to assess the supply, need and demand for employment land and premises (B-Class Uses) in Sefton.
- 2.26 The Study acknowledges that Sefton has strong linkages with neighbouring areas and that the Borough is a net exporter of workers to Halton, Knowsley and Liverpool, as well as to Preston, Greater Manchester and Warrington. It considers that in the future, the greatest economic impact will come from Liverpool. Liverpool is promoting expansive economic policies and where the Liverpool Waters scheme is expected to deliver some 300,000 sq. m. of office and business floorspace (close to the Sefton boundary) over the next 30 years, it is expected that a large number of jobs would be created, which could go some way toward supporting population growth in Sefton.
- 2.27 There is a need for a minimum of 30.76 hectares (ha) of additional employment land in Sefton to 2031, over and above the net deliverable supply in brownfield sites in the urban area. The proposed employment allocations in the Green Belt would provide employment land, some of which would be delivered beyond the end of the Plan period.
- 2.28 The Study has regard to the requirements of The Framework, which seeks to encourage and deliver growth through the planning system. Amongst its key recommendations are that:
- The Council should allocate additional employment land for the period 2012 – 2031;
 - The Council should consider options for the release of Green Belt land for future business park developments in both north and south Sefton and potentially also for an industrial estate to the south of Crowland Street, Sefton;
 - The Council should identify a successor to Southport Business Park early in the Local Plan period (from 2016 onwards). There are no appropriate brownfield sites in North Sefton and a successor can only be provided through the release of Green Belt land. The recommended successor site is Formby Moss, north of Formby Industrial Estate. If this site cannot be delivered due to constraints, the Council should explore whether another site in this area can be identified;
 - The Council should identify land at Crowland Street to meet wider employment needs arising in Southport;
 - In south Sefton, a Green Belt release for employment use should be considered post 2020;
 - Both Sefton and Liverpool need to work together to monitor and plan for the sub-regional land needs arising from the Port of Liverpool's expansion plans and the impact of Liverpool Waters.

- The updated ELPS noted that the potential release of Green Belt land for employment should not just match any identified shortfall but should consider additional land as:
 - Infrastructural and other requirements will generate long lead in times to development. There is also a long lead in time for the removal of sites from the Green Belt through the Local Plan process
 - Business parks identified in Green Belt will provide a longer term resource which will potentially last beyond the Plan period
 - Sefton has by far the smallest amount of employment land in Merseyside, and significantly less land identified as Primarily Industrial Areas. The need to identify more land is therefore more pressing to attract investment and deliver growth.

Other Documents

2.29 A detailed review of other relevant documents was used to create an evidence base for informing the baseline work and facilitating positive stakeholder engagement.

2.30 The key themes are summarised below and are discussed in the following order:

- Housing
- Affordable Housing
- Transport
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Natural Resources, Waste, Pollution and Energy
- Retail
- Health and Social Care
- Emergency Services
- Education
- Heritage and Built Form
- Green Infrastructure and Ecology
- Economic Overview

Housing

- The RS recommended that Sefton make provision for 9,000 new homes (net of clearance) over the period 2003 to 2021, a rate of 500 dpa. However, the RS was revoked in May 2013. The emerging Local Plan is currently determining an appropriate housing requirement for the Borough, through a more up-to-date assessment of need;
- The majority of new development will be located in accordance with the emerging Local Plan which will allocate sufficient sites to meet the Council's housing requirement over the Local Plan period;

- The level of housing anticipated by the RS has not been constructed in Sefton, which has resulted in a shortfall of 1,113 homes over the period 2003 – 2012. In part this arises from the Regional Strategy restricting house-building from 2003 – 2008, and subsequently due to the recession;
- The SHLAA 2012 Update identifies that 3,879¹ dwellings can be accommodated in the urban area, once programmed demolitions are taken into account. Most demolitions are associated with the regeneration of sites in the former Housing Market Renewal area;
- The Sefton Housing Search and Expectations Study (August 2010) identified that there were no strong links between Sefton's housing market and those in the adjoining Local Authority areas.

Affordable Housing

- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (June 2009) identifies a net critical need of 246 affordable dwellings per annum in Sefton², with the greatest need for affordable housing being in Southport;
- No need for affordable homes was identified in Bootle;
- Affordable housing provision is failing to keep up with the pace of market housing delivery, even though demand for the former is increasing. Net affordable housing completions for the period 2003/04 to 2011/12 total just 125 dwellings (14 dpa).

Transport

- Various sources of information have been used to build up the background evidence. These have been obtained from various organisations and provide information on the current constraints on the highways network in Sefton as well as details of proposed mitigation that has been considered in order to alleviate these pressures where possible. These documents include the following:
 - A565 Route Management Strategy – Sefton Council
 - Merseyside Highway Journey Times 2010/11 - Mott Macdonald
 - The third Local Transport Plan for Merseyside
 - Access to the Port of Liverpool Study – Various
 - Thornton to Switch Island Link Transport Statement – Various
 - Sefton Accident Reports (various) – Sefton Council

¹ NB: The figure of 4931 dwellings, referenced in Section 6 relates to the urban capacity of sites as of April 2013, to be consistent with the rest of the report (figure from Sefton Council Officers).

² This was calculated on the basis that this would be 5 year requirement.

- Rail and Bus Patronage Information – Merseytravel
- Office of Rail Regulation Station statistics – Office of Rail Regulation

Flood Risk and Drainage

- The use of the Environment Agency’s flood risk maps to identify areas which have a high likelihood of river and tidal flooding, and implementation of a sequential approach to ensuring development is located in areas of appropriate flood risk to their use, is a key spatial constraint to growth. Assessments relating to flooding in the report refer to these Environment Agency Flood Zones. Generally, areas in Flood Zone 3 have been avoided for future development;
- Sefton Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2013 [SFRA] identifies that the principal source of flood risk in Sefton is from surface water flooding and this is a risk across Sefton. Sewer flooding is also considered to be a significant issue across the Borough, largely as a result of sewer systems that generally have insufficient capacity to cope with severe rainfall. Although extensive, the direct risk of groundwater flooding to people and property is considered to be relatively low. The risks of canal and reservoir flooding are localised and also considered to be relatively low. None of these risks alone would affect the choice of development sites but may affect the design of development or where it is built within a site;
- The overarching theme, in relation to flood risk and drainage, is that development proposals should avoid areas of greatest river and tidal flood risk (whilst noting defences including tidal defences for Southport) and should manage, and where possible reduce, surface-water flood risk. Sustainable drainage systems should be incorporated into all development where possible.

Natural Resources, Waste, Pollution and Energy

- A key objective of national, regional and local policy is to reduce the demand for natural resources, reducing the production of waste and increasing the rates of re-use and recycling;
- The Merseyside & Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (2013) assesses waste management capacity at a sub-regional level. The sub-region is the third largest producer of waste in the North West and is of significant interest for new waste management facilities (waste transfer stations, materials recycling facilities, autoclaving gasification and other large scale Energy from Waste facilities);

- With proposals at the planning stage or with planning permission, there is an increasing ability for the sub-region to become self sufficient. However, as some of the facilities will be of regional, if not national significance, their capacity may not be entirely available for Merseyside and Halton's needs. It is anticipated that in order to process municipal waste, an additional materials recycling facility and up to three food waste composting facilities will be required. For commercial waste, the largest capacity shortfall is for non-inert landfill, however, there is also a need for a food composting facility.

Retail

- Policy seeks to promote competitive town centre environments that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer, by directing retail development towards defined town centres. Proposals for main town centre uses that are outside an existing centre, and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, are required to apply a sequential approach to site selection (looking first at suitable town centre sites, then edge of centre locations then out of centre sites only if no suitable sites are available) and provide an impact assessment;
- The Sefton Retail Strategy Review Update (2012) identifies Bootle as the key retail and service sector destination for the south of the Borough and Southport as the primary shopping destination for the north of Sefton. These are supported by four district centres (Waterloo, Crosby, Maghull and Formby) and seven local centres as identified in Sefton's UDP;
- The Retail Strategy Review Update identifies additional need for convenience goods floorspace of 4,100 sq. m. net by 2016 increasing to 4,200 sq. m. (net) by 2021 in the north of the Borough. Although the preferred location would be Southport it could also include some additional provision in and around Formby;
- Regarding the south of the Borough, it is recommended that Sefton Council focuses on securing future investment within both Crosby and Maghull in the short-term and any opportunity to identify further sites for convenience goods provision of a significant scale be reviewed once Tesco Extra at Kirkby is open and trading. In terms of comparison goods, the Study suggests no significant need is likely to arise in the north of Sefton until post-2021 compared to the south of the Borough where this need would not be identified until post-2026. The study noted that additional comparison floorspace provision within centres may be acceptable where it enhances their role.

Health and Social Care

- It is important to conduct regular Health Strategic Needs Assessments in order to understand the growing and evolving needs of a population;

- Sefton's Strategic Needs Assessment (2012) anticipates that demand for services will increase due to rising numbers of older people (particularly in the north of Sefton) and increasing levels of lifestyle related ill health. As a greater number of older people will require palliative care in future, Sefton NHS has identified a need to ensure it has sufficient and appropriate resources to provide the necessary support in hospitals and in the community.

Emergency Services

- There are no standard guidelines for the development of emergency services in line with population growth; however, there are clear strategic drivers for improving the quality of the delivery of emergency services particularly with regard to improving efficiency and meeting defined targets set through Public Service Agreements;
- Whilst emergency services may deliver on efficiency and response targets, an assumption needs to be made that to continue the level of provision in line with housing growth, new infrastructure will also be required. Where specific strategies have not identified a particular need to expand to meet population growth pressures, consideration of how services can be managed in light of this growth is required.

Education

- There were 2,811 surplus primary school places as at October 2012 and 1,831 surplus secondary school places in the Sefton. These surplus places are not distributed equally across the borough.

Heritage and Built Form

- The Framework sets out a clear requirement for local authorities to recognise, protect and sustainably manage the built heritage, archaeological and historic landscape resources;
- There are 25 Conservation Areas, 13 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 5 Registered Parks and Gardens and 560 Listed Buildings containing over 800 individual buildings;
- There is one building within Sefton, which is on English Heritage's 'At Risk Register'. This is Ince Blundell Old Hall, Crosby and is a Grade II* Listed Building;
- The Council intends to prepare a Heritage Strategy in accordance with national guidance.

Green Infrastructure and Ecology

- A strong ecological network exists in Sefton and throughout the Merseyside area. The key focus for nature conservation is along Sefton's coastline, which possesses a multitude of designations with overlapping coverage including Ramsar, Special Protection Area [SPA], Special Area for Conservation [SAC], Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI], National Nature Reserve [NNR], Local Nature Reserve [LNR] and Local Wildlife Site [LWS]. Existing policy has sought to balance the interests of ecology in these areas against the need for development.
- In addition to the nature conservation designations, Sefton contains a range of habitats of conservation concern. These habitats, in addition to the nature conservation designations, form the key ecological assets in Sefton. Agricultural land also occurs across Sefton and this land has the potential to support numerous priority habitats, including linear features such as hedgerows and running water, and priority species. Of particular note, agricultural grasslands are considered an important supporting habitat for the bird species using the coastal nature conservation areas. Several of the potential developable sites included within the study area overlap with, or are in extreme proximity to, these ecological assets or supporting habitats.
- The Council's Green Space and Recreation Study (2009), which assessed green space, accessible nature space, recreation and outdoor sports provision and need in Sefton. The purpose of the Study was to assist the implementation the Green Space Strategy for Sefton (2008) and to inform the Core Strategy and other planning documents, such as the Green Space, Trees and Development SPD. The information in this study, including accessibility information and mapping of the different categories of open space (local, neighbourhood, district and borough parks and accessible nature spaces) was used to identify the varying levels of accessibility to green space throughout Sefton.
- Sefton Council's draft Green Space Study (2011) is a green infrastructure study of Sefton's urban greenspaces. The draft Study forms part of the evidence for the preparation of the Core Strategy and other LDF documents as well as informing the Development Management process. The Green Space Study determines the importance of each urban greenspace in terms of the level of benefits it provides and identifies where urban greenspace should still be protected, and where/whether there is scope for urban greenspaces to contribute to meeting future housing needs. The study found that Sefton's urban greenspaces are not expected to make a significant contribution to meeting housing or other development need, over the next 15- 20 years. The report recommends that most of Sefton's urban greenspaces should be retained / enhanced.

Economic Overview

- Unemployment has increased sharply during the recession. Claimant unemployment is currently estimated at 8,350 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance [JSA], or 4.9% of the working-age population³ (above the North West average of 4.4%). Sefton has the highest level of employment (78.4%) of any Borough in Merseyside although this has decreased significantly during the past 12 months;
- Sefton has a low proportion of residents of working age, and this proportion is expected to decrease further in line with national trends;
- Sefton has less employment land than each of its Merseyside neighbours;
- People in Sefton have high skill levels and a relatively low rate of deprivation compared to other Merseyside authorities, although there are pockets of severe deprivation, particularly in Bootle and Seaforth;
- The economy is strongly dependant on the public and financial sectors and is at risk of further Government cuts in public services.;
- The Visitor Economy is a key component of the Sefton local economy and will be supported whilst future growth is balanced against the interests of ecology;
- The Borough has strong links with neighbouring areas and is a net exporter of workers to Halton, Knowsley and Liverpool and to a lesser degree to Preston, Greater Manchester and Warrington. Large numbers of commuters also travel in to Sefton, especially to Bootle and Netherton;
- The Port of Liverpool is a key economic driver in Sefton and there are plans for its expansion. The growth of the Port of Liverpool will bring major economic benefits for the Liverpool City Region and the wider national economy by increasing opportunities for trade with the rest of the world, including key markets in the Far East and the Americas. This could also have wider implications for economic growth in Sefton and the wider Merseyside area.
- The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership seeks to stimulate economic growth, attract investment and create jobs whilst focusing on the key growth sectors of the Visitor Economy, the Knowledge Economy, the Low Carbon Economy and SuperPort (which is largely located in Sefton).

Context for Growth

2.31 There is a national imperative for growth which is encapsulated in the National Planning Policy Framework. The outputs set out in Sefton's Employment Land

³ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

and Premises Study Refresh demonstrate a need to provide jobs in more traditional industries and to provide new business parks (which is addressed under the high growth scenarios i.e. Options 2 and 3 of this Study).

2.32 There is also the recognition in both The Framework and the ELR of the need to stimulate the construction industry. A boost in business and housing development will not only generate future employment in the construction industry but will also provide future jobs further down the supply chain.

2.33 It is evident from the NLP's recent study of local housing requirements that there is a continued pressure for housing growth within the study area, consistent with national policy and a policy framework for ensuring development can be accommodated in a sustainable manner.

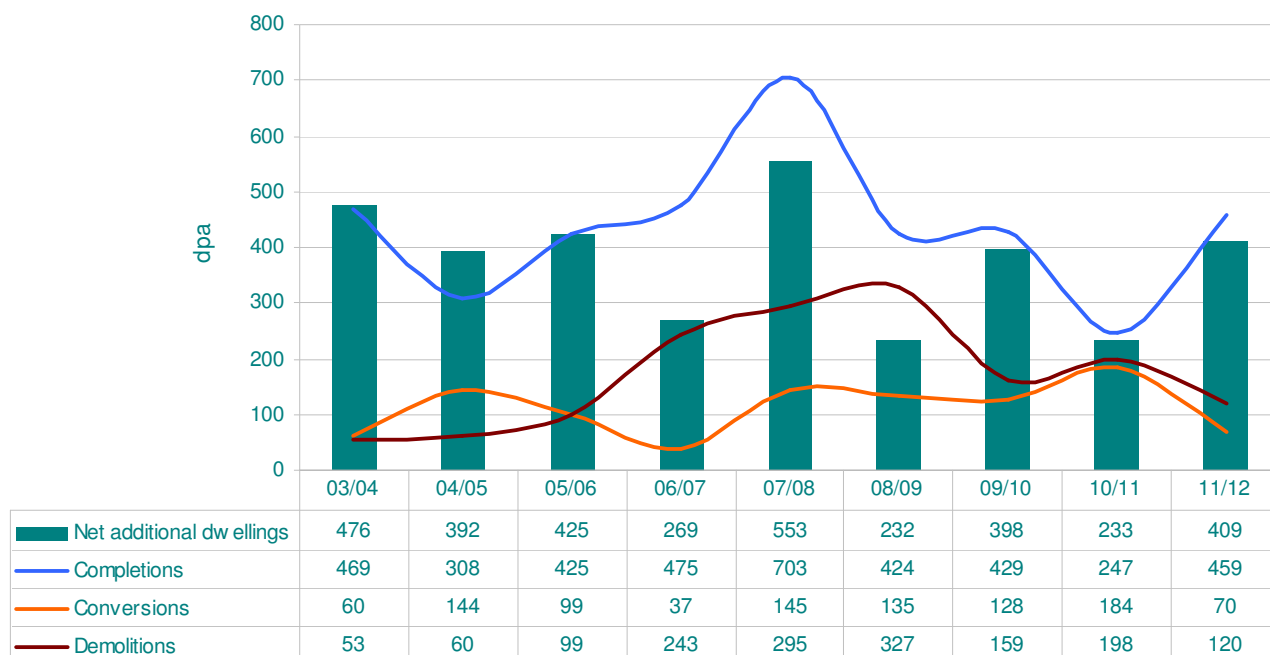
2.34 This Study seeks to identify the consequences of this growth as part of an input to the evidence base for the Local Plan, by firstly establishing an estimate of theoretical social, economic and environmental capacity and the parameters for this, including constraints and policy objectives. These parameters have shaped the approach to the study and enable the development of potential future patterns of development to be considered further by Sefton Council in response to a defined Local Plan Preferred Option, and drawing on the outputs of this, the SHLAA, SHMA and other evidence.

2.35 The levels of growth that have been applied to this assessment are provided below in the form of three scenarios. It should be noted that these scenarios have not represented ceilings for the purposes of identifying potential patterns of development based on environmental and infrastructure constraints (the analysis in Section 6.0).

Housing completions

2.36 Average housing completions and conversions in Sefton over the RS Plan period (i.e. since 2003) have totalled 4,941 dwellings, or 549 dpa; however, the net figure taking away 1,554 demolitions over the nine-year period, totals 3,387 dwellings at a net rate of 376 dpa. Set against the North West Regional Strategy [RS] target of 500 dpa, this indicates a housing backlog of 1,113 dwellings, or 124 dpa.

Figure 2.1 Housing Completions 2003/04 - 2011/12



Source: Sefton Council 2001

Levels of Growth 2012 - 2030

- 2.37 The overall housing requirements for the three development scenarios for the period 2012 – 2030 would require the provision of housing across the Borough equal to 270 dpa, 510 dpa and 700 dpa respectively [see below]. This equates to a difference of 7,740 dwellings between the low and high growth scenarios. To put this into context, around 376 dpa (net) have been delivered since 2003, peaking at 553 in 2007/08 before the onset of the recession. It should be taken into account that during 2003-08 Sefton had a housing restraint policy in place which restricted development below market demand.
- 2.38 The low growth, or urban containment scenario, is effectively supply led, rather than demand led, hence no allowance would need to be made to make up this shortfall, or backlog, of housing under provision over the period 2003-2012. In contrast, the latter two scenarios, i.e. Options 2 (Meeting Identified Need) and 3 (Optimistic Household Growth) are defined on the basis of meeting identified housing needs. As such, an additional allowance would need to be made to make up the 1,113 under-provision of the past 9 years.
- 2.39 Furthermore, it is understood that Sefton Council is seeking to increase the overall housing requirement of these latter two Options by 5% to factor in an element of flexibility to the housing figures to respond to future uncertainties as required by The Framework. The combined effect of these two measures would be to increase the overall requirement by 1,496 under Option 2, and by 1,638 under Option 3.

- 2.40 Table 2.1 also indicates that if the 2-3 new business parks proposed in the Local Plan were to come forward under Options 2 and 3, this could potentially generate between 3,720 and 3,920 new jobs for local residents.

Table 2.1 Growth Scenarios for Sefton Borough

	Low Growth Option 1	Medium Growth Option 2	High Growth Option 3
Annual Provision	270	510	700
Total Provision 2012 – 2030	4,860	9,180	12,600
Backlog/ 5% Flexibility Margin*	n/a	1,628	1,799
Total Housing	4,860	10,808	14,399
Additional Employment Sites	n/a	2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites	2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites
Potential net additional jobs resulting from new Business Parks in the Green Belt	n/a	3,720-3,920	3,720-3,920

Housing Market

- 2.41 Sefton has commissioned a number of housing studies and reports which seek to identify housing need and demand across the Borough; how local residents move through the housing market; and the level of affordable housing that is required. However, Sefton's most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment [SHMA] was completed in June 2009. Some of its findings and conclusions may no longer provide an accurate picture of Sefton's housing market today and therefore need to be interpreted with a degree of caution. The intention is that this study will be refreshed later in 2013.

Existing Housing Stock

- 2.42 Sefton's social housing stock is not evenly distributed throughout the Borough; there is generally little social rented housing in central Sefton, and a very high proportion in Bootle and Netherton.

Future Housing Provision

- 2.43 The SHMA identified that the need for new housing in Sefton is expected to be largely driven by the trend towards smaller average household size, leading to more one and two person households in the years ahead. However, the SHMA anticipates that these households will be mostly seeking housing from within existing stock and that new homes will primarily need to cater for housing types that are currently underprovided for in the existing housing stock (i.e. two, three and four bedroom accommodation).
- 2.44 According to the SHMA, one of the main contributory factors leading to smaller households, alongside social changes, is the increasing aged population -

Sefton has a higher proportion of residents aged 65 and over compared to both Merseyside and the North West generally. There will therefore be a need to also provide some additional specialist elderly persons accommodation, which could take the form of sheltered housing, extra care housing and nursing and residential care homes as well as family housing.

Vacancies

- 2.45 The Council Tax Base for Formula Grant Purposes identifies that in October 2011 there were a total of 4.7 % vacant homes (of which 0.3% were second homes). This compares to vacancy rates of 5.5% in Liverpool, 4.6% in Wirral, 4% in St Helens and 3.6% in Knowsley. As at October 2012, the vacancy rate for Sefton was approximately 4.1%.
- 2.46 The majority of vacant properties in Sefton are located in Bootle and central Southport. However, many vacant homes in Bootle are also awaiting demolition as part of the continuing regeneration in the town.

Affordability

- 2.47 Overall, the SHMA identifies that that there was an increase in Sefton's house price/income ratio from 4.5 in 2002 to 7.4 in 2007. However, between 2007 and 2009, dramatic changes were recorded in the housing market with average prices in the Borough decreasing by 5.1% and the number of property sales falling by 76.2%. Whilst this would theoretically reduce the extent of housing need, the requirement for a deposit to purchase a home means that the net annual need has actually increased.

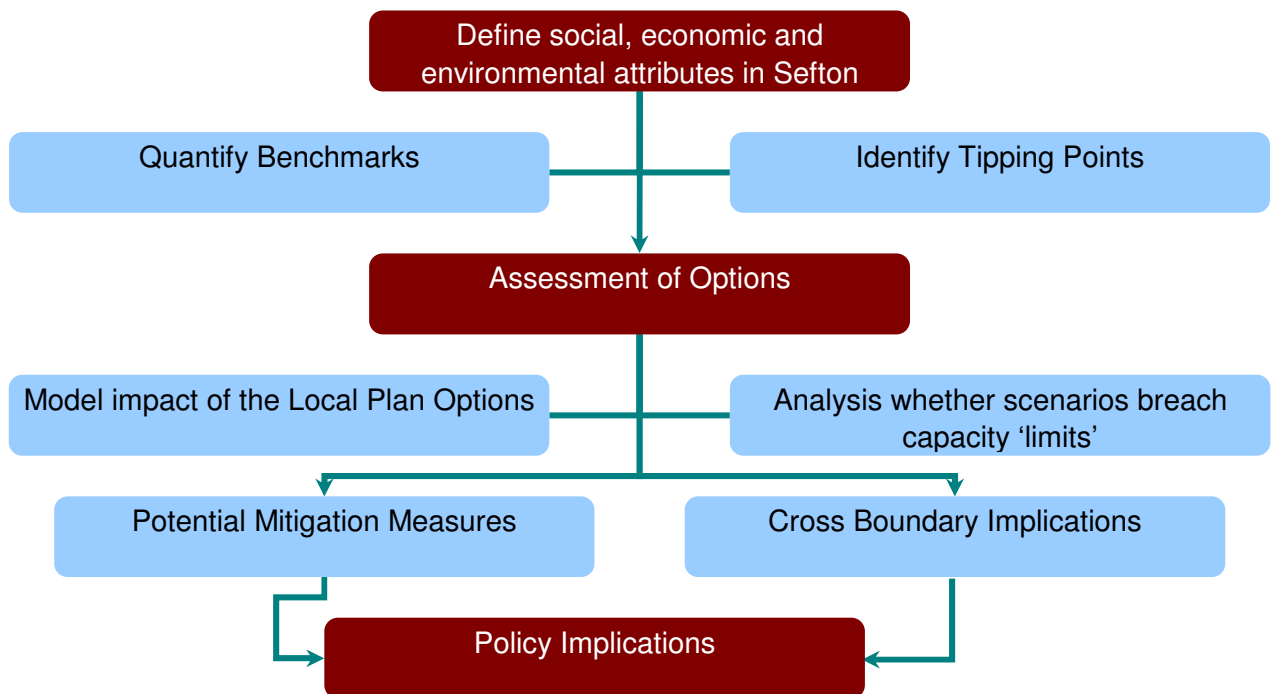
Demand for Social Housing

- 2.48 A large gap between the cost of entry-level market housing and social rent in the more expensive parts of Southport, Formby, Crosby and Maghull means that the majority of Sefton's critical affordable housing needs arise in these areas. In all areas other than Netherton/Bootle, the cost of entry-level market housing (private rented accommodation) is over double the cost of social rent.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 This Section describes the Study’s methodology, setting out the approach used to define the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the Borough, identifying constraints and capacity for further development. Following this, the adopted study methodology was to identify the ‘tipping points’ beyond which resource demands or recreational pressures for example may have a detrimental effect beyond the capacity of a particular borough characteristic to self regenerate. The study then models the likely impact and consequences of the Local Plan options and the potential for mitigation. The process is outlined in Figure 3.1:

Figure 3.1 Overview of Methodology



STAGE 1 – Baseline Definition and Scoping

Task 1.1 - Defining Social, Economic and Environmental Attributes in Sefton

3.2 The starting point for the Scoping exercise was the collation of data and a comprehensive examination of the environmental, economic and social baseline position.

3.3 This involved the following:

- 1 **Environmental baseline:** mapping ecologically designated sites as well as relevant landscape, agricultural land quality, flood risk, conservation, heritage, wildlife and other environmental designations; identifying sensitive habitats; reviewing local, national and regional biodiversity documents; and consulting with statutory environmental bodies (The Environment Agency, Wildlife Trust for Lancashire and North Merseyside and Natural England).
- 2 **Economic baseline:** reviewing current economic conditions and trends in the Borough and beyond; assessing the specific character of Sefton's employment areas as well as their surrounding uses; identifying existing and proposed development schemes; and establishing existing and forecast traffic levels across the transport network, existing network constraints, public transport provision and areas of congestion.
- 3 **Social baseline:** identifying the social composition of the borough and likely future trends, along with the impacts relating to a range of public and private services including parks and recreation facilities and access to these services.

Baseline Outputs

- 3.4 The collection of baseline data culminated in the production of a series of detailed GIS Spatial Plans covering all of Sefton Borough and, where appropriate, adjoining authorities (Appendix 1). These plans allowed key designation constraints to be identified and helped to inform the analysis of the potential options for the location of development in Sefton in subsequent stages of the analysis. It is important to note that there were limitations to the data used in this study and these limitations are set out in Section 4, paragraphs 4.2– 4.9.

Task 1.2: Quantification of Benchmarks

- 3.5 In order to adequately assess the likely social, economic and environmental impacts of the three options, current standards and benchmarks for a number of indicators were analysed. The purpose of this was to establish the extent to which they are currently being achieved in Sefton.
- 3.6 The indicators assessed related to: affordable housing need; local services, travel and infrastructure; existing business; air quality; water quality/flood risk; landscape and conservation; open space; land use and soils; and the historic environment.

Task 1.3: Identification of Tipping Points

- 3.7 All designated sites, habitats, community facilities and infrastructure have a point at which the implications of development, for example recreational pressures or traffic generation, start to have detrimental effect upon them - the 'tipping point'.

3.8 It is recognised that development activity, resource demands and population growth will increase the pressure upon Sefton's resources where human use (coupled with underlying risks such as climate change) pose significant risks.

3.9 Where the baseline assessment indicated that priority habitats or existing community facilities or road junctions are currently over capacity, vulnerable or deteriorating, the analysis identified these capacity issues.

STAGE 2 – Assessment of Options

3.10 The study identifies, assesses the risks and evaluates the key consequences of the following Local Plan Options:

- Option One: urban containment: 270 homes per year, or 4,860 dwellings in total over the period 2012-2030 (this option is constrained by the ability to meet all development needs within the existing built up areas);
- Option Two: meeting identified needs: 510 homes per year (9,180 in total) and new employment sites in both the north and the south of the Borough. This option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 5,000 homes in addition to 2/3 new employment sites; and,
- Option Three: optimistic household growth: 700 homes per year (12,600 in total) and identification of new employment areas in both the north and south of the Borough. This option would require land in the Green Belt to be released to accommodate approximately 8,500 homes in addition to the 2/3 new employment sites.

3.11 Option 1 essentially comprises SHLAA sites as of April 2012 (net of demolitions) including an allowance for 125 dwellings to be developed on backland sites in Southport, i.e. small industrial sites located to the rear of housing), plus a windfall allowance of 1,056 dwellings (established on the basis of past trends. Option 2 comprises SHLAA sites, a windfall allowance and the 'best' Green Belt sites (containing around 5,700 units). Option 3 comprises all of the aforementioned sources of housing plus 'reserve' Green Belt sites (contributing an extra 1,483 units). 'Best' Green Belt sites represent those with the least constraints and therefore the most suitable Green Belt housing sites whilst 'reserve' Green Belt sites have slightly more constraints but are still deemed potentially suitable for housing.

3.12 The figures referenced above do not include the discounting that Sefton Council has applied to account for non-implementation in the 2012 SHLAA (comprising 20% discount to the capacity of all sites without planning permission and 10% discount to all small sites with planning permission but delivering fewer than 20 units). The Study does not take this into account and instead presents a 'maximum delivery' scenario approach for each sub-area. This assumes that all sites identified by the SHLAA will come forward for development.

3.13 The Study does, however, make allowance for the under-provision of dwellings, against the previous RS housing target, that has occurred since 2003. On 1

April 2012 this figure stood at 1,113 dwellings referred to as the 'backlog'. Table 3.1 factors in the backlog to Options 2 and 3 (which, unlike Option 1, are needs driven rather than supply driven) and also incorporates a 5% flexibility factor for the first 15 years.

3.14

In addition to identified sites within the urban areas of the borough, potential exists for other land to come forward for development in the form of currently allocated urban greenspace, which may be re-allocated⁴. However, the potential for this source of land to add to housing supply and the level of housing that could be delivered from this source is not known. Policy decisions would have to be made to secure any re-allocation of existing greenspace land. For the purposes of this Study, this potential source of urban land as a contributor to housing supply has not been considered. However, the potential for this source to contribute to overall housing numbers could be seen as a potential supplement to housing that is not capable of being delivered from these urban sites within the plan period - thus giving more robustness to the housing figures assessed within the urban area under Option 1 and also contributing to supply under Options 2 and 3.

⁴ The capacity of sites potentially available from this source, at a sub-area level, is as follows:

- Southport: 293 homes
- Formby: 40 homes
- Bootle: 198 homes
- Netherton: 138 homes

Table 3.1 Growth Scenarios for Sefton Borough Incorporating Housing Backlog

	Local Plan Options [Housing Requirement]				SHLAA Sites	Wind- falls	Gross Urban Figure ⁵	GB sites ⁶	'reserve' GB Sites ⁶	Option Totals for the Consequences Study ⁷		
	Split	1	2	3						[urban area] All 3 Options	Options 1, 2 & 3	Options 2 & 3
Southport	35%	1,701	3,737	4,983	1,618	589	2,358	1,805	15	2,358	4,163	4,178
Formby	7.5%	365	801	1,068	157	71	244	728	303	244	972	1,275
Maghull / Aintree	12.5 %	608	1,335	1,780	396	58	472	2,334	1,165	472	2,806	3,971
Crosby	15%	729	1,601	2,136	440	192	673	832	0	673	1,505	1,505
Bootle	15%	729	1,601	2,136	840	144	1,649	0	0	1,649	1,649	1,649
Netherton	15%	729	1,601	2,136	487	2	591	0	0	591	591	591
Sefton Total⁸	100%	4,860 [270 dpa]	10,676⁹ [510 dpa]	14,238¹⁰ [700 dpa]	3,937¹¹	1,056	5,987	5,699	1,483	5,987	11,686	13,169

3.15 It is recognised that the level and location of development within each of these three options could potentially generate very different demands on Sefton's social, economic and environmental infrastructure. The aim of the appraisal was therefore to develop a matrix against which the options could be evaluated individually and compared against each other, to determine the relevant merits of each option, both in terms of scale and location.

3.16 Each of these Options have been considered both independently and in combination.

⁵ For the purposes of the Consequences Study all the urban sites have been assessed [i.e. no discounting or demolitions have been applied as with the SHLAA figures]. This is to make sure that all the potential consequences can be explored. Please note these are not Sefton's official housing figures and are used only for the purposes of the Consequences Study.

⁶ Please note these figures were correct at February 2013. The Council has since refined some of its calculations.

⁷ For the purposes of the Consequences Study all the urban sites have been assessed [i.e. no discounting or demolitions have been applied as with the SHLAA figures]. This is to make sure that all the potential consequences can be explored. Please note these are not Sefton's official housing figures and are used only for the purposes of the Consequences Study.

⁸ Please note figures may not total exactly due to rounding errors.

⁹ comprised of: 18 x 510 (9,180), RSS Backlog (1,113), 5% buffer [5% of 15 year supply] (383)

¹⁰ comprised of: 18 x 700 (12,600), RSS Backlog (1,113), 5% buffer [5% of 15 year supply] (525)

¹¹ Figs in this column are 'net', i.e. they take account of demolitions and discounting in line with government guidance. See www.sefton.gov.uk/shlaa for full details.

Task 2.1: Define and model impact of the Local Plan housing options

- 3.17 Once the sensitivity of sites was established and the zones of influence mapped, the environmental, economic and social impacts resulting from the three levels of development, set out in the three options, were modelled.
- 3.18 The various housing sites relating to each of the three options were identified in addition to the potential Green Belt releases, informed by the draft Green Belt study, as outlined in Table 3.1. The amount of development that could potentially be accommodated on each site was based on assumptions previously made by the Council.

Task 2.2: Assessment of risks and consequences of each Local Plan Policy Option

- 3.19 For each of the development options identified above, the relationship of potential development sites (with the capacity to accommodate 10 or more dwellings) to environmental, social and economic indicators and designations were assessed to establish the risks and key consequences of each Local Plan option. Sites with a yield of at least 10 dwellings comprise 96% of all assessed sites (excluding conversions and windfalls).
- 3.20 The assessment concludes whether and where certain levels of growth would be likely to impact on environmental, social and economic resources, and whether these could reasonably be mitigated by design guidance or developer contribution towards, for example, new educational facilities or greenspace creation.
- 3.21 The assessment has been supported by a series of matrices. These matrices provide a snap-shot view of the appropriateness of the various SHLAA and Green Belt sites to meet the scale and location of growth envisaged for the three Local Plan scenarios.

Transport Assessment

- 3.22 The assessment is supported by a travel generation matrix for each of the major land uses, taking account of the scale and location of development within each option. An accessibility matrix was also developed to enable the spatial options to be appraised and compared against each other.
- 3.23 An appraisal of the likely impact of the travel demands associated with the spatial strategy options was undertaken, identifying impacts on key junctions within the study area, and the potential need for infrastructure improvements.

Ecological Assessment

- 3.24 The potential impacts of each option upon the biodiversity resources of Sefton and neighbouring authorities has been determined through the production of a constraints map, which consolidates data gathered during the baseline review.

- 3.25 The risk of impacts arising from each option, or combination of options, was identified relevant to nature conservation designations, priority habitats and priority species, including supporting habitats and potential linkages for these features. Potential impacts were then further investigated to determine in-combination effects of the different individual options.
- 3.26 Impacts arising upon key ecological assets (nature conservation designations and priority habitats) are assessed in terms of:
- 1 direct loss;
 - 2 likely significant effects arising as a result of proximity to a proposed new housing site;
 - 3 fragmentation or isolation of nature conservation designations, priority habitats or components therefore; and
 - 4 strategic effects, including loss of supporting habitats and effects arising as a result of population growth.

Social, Economic and Environmental Assessment

- 3.27 The key consequences of each Local Plan Option with regards to the following were also assessed:
- **Social:** Implications for future provision; population and demographics; housing viability; affordable housing need; and access to local services and infrastructure;
 - **Economic:** Impacts on the local economy; implications for jobs created, the labour force and travel to work implications; implications for existing infrastructure; the impact on wider regeneration initiatives in Sefton; and Council Tax/New Homes Bonus consequences;
 - **Environmental:** Implications for agricultural land quality, food production and security and the rural economy; implications for ecological sites and networks; traffic and highways implications; flood risk implications; and implications for other environmental assets, including heritage, water resources, landscape and open space.
- 3.28 The economic analysis draws upon published Government and local authority statistics, and economic strategy documents relating to Sefton Borough. The latest available data from the 2011 Census, the 2011 Business Register Employment Survey, the 2011 Annual Population Survey and other published national statistics are used.
- 3.29 The risk of the potential impacts with regard to the assessments mentioned above, were then further categorised into positive, neutral or negative effects:
- **Positive effects** include: opportunities for direct expansion or improvement of existing biodiversity resources; potential benefits to the local economy of a larger workforce; creation of new resources; or contribution to specific conservation or regeneration strategies [population profile/workforce].

- **Negative effects** include: the loss of habitats or species populations; fragmentation or isolation; highways congestion; degradation of habitats or long-term disturbance to existing habitats or species populations.

Task 2.3: Analysis of the extent to which Option 1 / Option 2 / Option 3 scenarios breach capacity 'limits' in Sefton

- 3.30 Using the filtering process, the assessment table discussed in Task 2.2 allowed a professional judgement to be made regarding which broad development locations, including combinations of sites, including Green Belt sites, would have the least impact against the various criteria and which bring new opportunities.
- 3.31 It should, however, be recognised that most development has the potential to damage the environment if not carried out to a high quality and if adequate consideration is not given to site specific issues.

STAGE 3 – Potential Mitigation Measures

Task 3.1 Identification of potential mitigation measures

- 3.32 This task analyses whether the adverse impacts likely to arise as a result of some or all of the housing options could realistically be mitigated against on a site-by-site basis. It should be noted, however, that this assessment does not include a full Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) as this would be carried out at the planning application stage, in respect of any particular site.
- 3.33 A range of mitigation methods were explored including identification of the most appropriate (or least harmful) locations.
- 3.34 Potential mitigation includes the enhancement of designated sites as well as new or enhanced habitat throughout the ecological network, new or enhanced green infrastructure provision, or the provision of new community infrastructure such as schools, doctors' surgeries and dentists.
- 3.35 Following identification of potential positive or negative effects upon environmental, social and economic resources, options were identified that could reduce negative effects or enhance a target resource. The baseline review, together with consultation with Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service, Sefton Council and neighbouring authorities, informed the objectives to which enhancement opportunities could contribute.
- 3.36 Where mitigation and opportunities occurred which could be of relevance to neighbouring authorities, these were also identified.

Cross boundary implications

- 3.37 Even when applying mitigation measures, sites identified as being necessary for some or all of the three growth options could have sufficient adverse environmental impacts to restrict their future development.

- 3.38 This part of the assessment therefore concentrated on sub-regional issues and where the choice of an option would have a demonstrable impact on one or more neighbouring authorities.
- 3.39 The extent to which the various options would be likely to result in problems for adjoining authorities necessitated detailed discussions with the relevant Planning Policy Officers. This was supported by modelling the implications using a similar matrix to that described in Task 2.2 but with its scope widened (and detail narrowed) to include adjoining authorities.

4.0

Stakeholder Consultation

Introduction

4.1

Stakeholder discussions have taken place with various agencies, infrastructure providers and neighbouring local authorities at key stages throughout the Study. This was necessary to: inform and underpin our knowledge of the existing baseline position within Sefton; to identify cross-boundary issues where the choice of a development option may have implications for one or more of Sefton's neighbouring authorities; and to demonstrate compliance with the statutory Duty to Co-operate.

Baseline Consultation

4.2

The nature of this Study means that much of the data required to inform the baseline position has been obtained directly from relevant statutory and non-statutory authorities.

4.3

The following agencies have contributed data for the Study:

- **The Environment Agency:** information on historic landfill, this was obtained via Sefton's Contaminated Land Officer.
- **Natural England** – Information on National Nature Reserves (NNR).
- **English Heritage** – local buildings recorded on the Buildings at Risk Register.
- **United Utilities** - Information on mains and waste water supply capacity.
- **Sefton NHS** – Information on GP and Dental Surgery locations and capacity.
- **Sefton Education and Learning** – Information on Primary and Secondary school locations and the latest capacity information as at May 2012, including school place forecasts for the period up to 2019.
- **Families Information Service** – Information on nursery and childcare location and capacity.
- **The Highways Agency** – information on A5036/Switch Island.
- **Mott McDonald** – who undertook the Sefton Local Plan Transport Modelling Option Testing (April 2013).
- **The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire and North Merseyside** - Information on locally designated sites.
- **Merseyside Bio Bank** - Information on protected species
- **NBN Gateway** - information on priority species in the Merseyside area (Sefton, Knowsley and Liverpool).

4.4

We briefly summarise any limitations associated with the baseline data below.

- 4.5 The information requested from Sefton PCT on Dental Surgery Capacity was unavailable. We were advised that this is because dental registration ceased in April 2006. There is now no limit on the maximum number of patients that may receive treatment at an individual dental surgery; the number of patients seen in a practice is determined by the amount of treatment required per patient and popularity of the practice.
- 4.6 In addition to the above, it should be noted that as dental patients are able to choose the practice they attend they will not necessarily visit a dentist within their local area. Any information on patient numbers, if this were available, could not be easily geographically linked, as it can be for GP surgeries.
- 4.7 Information on GP 'list size' – essentially the number of patients on the role at a surgery at the time the survey was taken – was available. However data on the capacity of each surgery was not easily obtainable and required an assumption to be made on the optimum number of GPs which were required to deal with patient lists in each sub-area (1 per 1600 patients), informed by a methodology suggested by the NHS Commissioning Board.
- 4.8 There are also limitations associated with information on childcare provision due to data sensitivity. As many nurseries in the area are privately run, information on nursery capacity could only be supplied at ward level.
- 4.9 With regard to ecology information, no species data was available for West Lancashire. The only species data available from Wirral was that presented in the Wirral Biodiversity Audit. As such, species data could only be displayed for part of the study area.

Sub-Regional Consultation

- 4.10 The Study was asked to consider the key consequences of Sefton Council's different growth scenarios and locational options for adjacent local authorities in the Liverpool City Region (i.e. Knowsley, Liverpool, West Lancashire and Wirral).
- 4.11 As a result of work undertaken at an earlier stage of the Local Plan preparation process, Sefton Council has received letters from all of its neighbouring authorities confirming that none of them had the capacity to assist Sefton with meeting its housing or employment land requirements over the period to 2030. As a result, it would appear that Sefton must look to sites within its own boundaries to meet its development needs over the plan period (2012–2030).
- 4.12 In order to understand the extent to which the various options could potentially affect adjoining authorities, meetings were arranged with other local planning authorities to understand the potential constraints and opportunities therein.
- 4.13 The aim of this part of the Study was to focus specifically on issues of a sub-regional nature and where the choice of an option would have a demonstrable impact on one or more of Sefton's adjoining authorities. The discussions were informed by the strategic issues identified in the Framework [para. 156]. A

questionnaire was also sent to each of the local authorities concerned, at least a week in advance of the stakeholder meetings, to allow them sufficient time to collate responses/data.

4.14 The questionnaire focused on the following issues:

- The extent to which the local authority is relying on neighbouring authorities to meet its emerging development needs;
- Whether there are any extant permissions/sites under construction for major development in close proximity to the Sefton local authority border;
- Whether there are particular areas under development pressure located close to the Sefton border;
- Whether any sites located close to the Sefton border are identified as key locations for future development;
- Whether any infrastructure (including the local and strategic road network, schools and utilities) is under pressure;
- Whether there are any sensitive environmental locations located close to the Sefton border;
- Whether any AQMAs located close to the Sefton border would be affected by development; and,
- The implications of Sefton's three different levels of growth on (i) market housing, (ii) affordable/special housing needs, and (iii) employment land pressure in their own local authority area.

Duty to Co-operate Responses

4.15 Meetings were held with each of the neighbouring Local Authorities to discuss the economic, social and environmental implications of the growth Options put forward by the Study.

4.16 Notes from each of the stakeholder meetings (which have been agreed between the parties) are provided at Appendix 2, with a summary provided in Table 4.1. As the table indicates, all of Sefton's neighbouring authorities anticipate being able to meet their development needs (for housing and employment) within their own local authority boundaries. However, none of them have surplus capacity to help meet Sefton's needs, primarily due to Green Belt constraints alongside a number of important landscape and environmental designations. Knowsley and West Lancashire are undertaking their own Green Belt review.

4.17 Two schemes of sub-regional importance have been granted outline planning permission to the south and west of Sefton - Liverpool Waters and Wirral Waters. Together, these schemes seek to redevelop 110ha of brownfield land and could deliver over 24,000 new homes and a mix of other uses over the long term. The employment developments associated with these schemes have the potential to increase levels of out commuting from Sefton (particularly towards Liverpool, which already experiences high commuting flows from Sefton).

- 4.18 All four of Sefton's adjoining authorities considered that development option 2 (510 dpa) represented the optimum scenario from their perspective. This option was deemed to have the least adverse implications for their own market housing and regeneration priorities. All local authorities expressed concern that option 1 could result in them having to find additional land to help meet Sefton's market housing needs, whilst option 3 could give rise to a significant outflow of residents toward Sefton, potentially destabilising their own housing market.
- 4.19 Regarding the implications of the three development options on adjoining authorities' affordable housing, it was generally considered that social housing needs are very localised and that any failure by Sefton Council to make adequate provision for affordable housing would not, therefore, significantly impact on nearby local authorities.
- 4.20 Finally, the implications of three different growth options on adjoining authorities' employment land pressures were less clear. Liverpool City Council was the only authority to consider that a higher level of housing provision in Sefton would directly be of benefit to them. The City recognised the economic benefits that could accrue from having a large resident population on its doorstep ready to take up the significant job opportunities likely to come forward in Liverpool over the coming years. It would also help to create the middle-class, professional workforce that Liverpool desperately needs. However, this would have to be balanced with the threat of de-population from Liverpool as people move out into Sefton and the radical change in commuting patterns (and congestion) likely to result, which would raise issues over the sustainability of this option from Liverpool's perspective.

Table 4.1 Summary of Local Authority Stakeholder Responses

	Knowsley Council	Liverpool Council	West Lancashire Council	Wirral Council
Are you relying on your neighbouring authorities to meet your development needs	Not at all.	Not at all.	Not at all.	Not at all.
Are there any extant major planning permissions for development close to Sefton	Planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of Kirkby town centre: 31,000 sq. m. of net new retail floorspace.	Liverpool Waters (LW) – redevelopment of 60 ha of disused land for variety of uses incl. up to 9,000 homes.	Planning permission has been granted for 115 homes in the Banks area.	Wirral Waters (WW) – redevelopment of 50 ha of disused land for a variety of uses incl. 15,200 homes (7,500 homes in the Plan period).
Are there any major developments under construction close to Sefton	No.	Only Anfield/ Breckfield – aimed at meeting local housing needs.	No.	No.
Are there areas close to the Sefton boundary under development pressure?	Tower Hill & Bank Lane (Kirkby) as well as Knowsley Industrial & Business Parks.	Not particularly although Stonebridge has been identified as a new Local Centre.	Banks and Halsall.	West Wirral, Bromborough and Noctorum Ridge.
Are any areas, located close to Sefton, identified as a key location for future development	As per the answer to the previous question.	Approx 70% of all new homes will be built in the City & surrounding inner areas.	As per the answer to the previous question.	Birkenhead’s Woodside area will see the transformation of 10 – 12 ha of brownfield land for a mix of uses.
Is any of your local infrastructure under pressure (i.e. local & strategic road network, schools & utilities)?	Hall Road & A506 (Kirkby) experience peak time saturation. Need to ensure development does not worsen flooding in catchment area of River Alt.	Problems on A565 may be exacerbated by LW. Potential capacity issues with Sandon Dock Waste Water Treatment Works.	B5243 & A570 around Ormskirk only. Possible school capacity issues in Burscough & Skelmersdale. Some issues with water supply in Banks & the capacity of Waste Water Treatment Works.	There are a few hotspots on the road network around the urban core, WW & the A41. Possible maintenance issues for Wallasey tunnel. Increased demand for school places expected in the near future.
Are there any sensitive environmental locations close to the Sefton border?	Approx 54% of the Borough is Green Belt land; 5 Conservation Areas in Kirkby.	Mersey Estuary – SSSI, SPA & Ramsar site; Green Belt land – Croxteth, Netherley & Speke; Conservation Areas –Walton-on-the-Hill.	SSSIs, SAC, SPAs, Ramsar Sites, National Nature Reserve, Priority Habitats & Protected Species. There are also 3 Conservation Areas close to the Sefton border & a vast swathe of Green Belt covering a large part of the District.	No details were provided.

	Knowsley Council	Liverpool Council	West Lancashire Council	Wirral Council
Are there any AQMAs close to the Sefton border likely to be affected by future development	There are no AQMAs in Knowsley.	An AQMA covers the entire Liverpool City area	There is an AQMA in Ormskirk.	There is an AQMA in Tranmere, close to the entrance to the Mersey tunnel, which is close to trigger levels.
What are the implications of Sefton's 3 different growth options on your own market housing	270 dpa – would place greater pressure on Sefton's neighbours to help meet its need including pressure for Green Belt release; 510 dpa – comfortable option; 700 dpa – may make Knowsley less attractive to developers.	270 dpa – would reduce attractiveness of Sefton to Liverpool residents; 510 dpa – benign effect; 700 dpa – likely to result in significant outflow of residents to Sefton.	270 dpa – would require an early review of the West Lancs Local Plan; 510 dpa – unlikely to affect West Lancs; 700 dpa – potential implications for infrastructure & traffic in West Lancs. Possible closure of strategic gap between Aughton & Sefton.	270 dpa – the out-migration from Sefton to Wirral would increase. 510/700 dpa – would ease the pressure on Wirral's market housing.
What are the implications of Sefton's 3 different growth options on your own affordable/ special needs housing	Housing needs are very locationally specific.	Affordable housing need is very locationally specific. However, increased affordable housing provision may make Liverpool's affordable housing less attractive.	WLBC already has a backlog in the supply of affordable housing. 270 dpa may place extra pressure on surrounding authorities to help meet Sefton's need.	Housing need is very localised. Any failure by Sefton to make adequate provision for affordable housing would be unlikely to impact greatly on Wirral.
What are the implications of Sefton's 3 different growth options on your own employment land pressure	Of all adjoining authorities, Knowsley has the greatest linkages with Liverpool. Sefton residents are more reliant on Knowsley for employment than vice versa.	270 dpa – may result in higher skilled workforce in Liverpool. 510/700 dpa – would have a positive effect on employment creation & retention in Liverpool. 700 dpa – would result in increased out-commuting for work, placing places on public transport & road network.	270 dpa – would place pressure on West Lancs to release further Green Belt land. 510 dpa – unlikely to have any adverse effects. 700 dpa – may give rise to out-commuting for work & place greater pressure on the transport network between Maghull & West Lancs.	None of Sefton's three options were considered to have serious implications for Wirral.

5.0

Baseline Infrastructure Position

Introduction and Approach

5.1

This section of the report summarises the current economic, social and environmental assets of the Study Area identified, by sub-area, highlighting where the pressures associated with housing growth are likely to come from. This also includes an analysis of the current ‘tipping points’ for each sub-area, i.e. how much development each sub-area can accommodate without the requirement for new infrastructure/significant adverse impacts.

5.2

The following information was collected and assessed:

Environmental Baseline:

- Ecologically designated sites surrounding zones of influence, including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protected Area (SPA), Ramsar sites, National Nature Reserve (NNR), Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Local Wildlife Site (LWS).
- Priority habitats identified on Natural England’s habitat inventory
- Priority species records available to download from the NBN Gateway (comprising records from Sefton, Knowsley and Liverpool only)
- Site citations to identify sensitive habitats and information on current vulnerabilities, identifying sites that are already vulnerable / deteriorating (citations were available for Sefton, Knowsley, Liverpool LWS and historic citations were provided for West Lancashire BHS);
- Local, national and regional biodiversity documents such as the North Merseyside Biodiversity Action Plan; the Sefton Coast Partnership Nature Conservation and Biodiversity Delivery Plan 2007 – 2015; Sefton Coast Partnership’s Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan 2006 – 2011 and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Matrix for Greenspace, trees and development SPD (2008);
- Relevant landscape designations, i.e. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Other environmental designations, including key open spaces, and Air Quality Management Areas AQMAs,
- Relevant designated areas relating to water and flooding i.e. Source Protection Zones (SPZ) and Flood Zones (FZ).
- Relevant heritage and conservation designations, i.e. Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- Existing wildlife and green infrastructure networks (to reflect The Framework and Habitats Directive priorities for restoration of networks);

- The Council's Green Space and Recreation Study (2009), which assessed green space, accessible nature space, recreation and outdoor sports provision and need in Sefton. The purpose of the Study was to assist the implementation of the Green Space Strategy for Sefton (2008) and to inform the Core Strategy and other planning documents, such as the Green Space, Trees and Development SPD. Also used was the accessibility information and mapping of the different categories of open space (local, neighbourhood, district and borough parks and accessible nature spaces), as set out in the 2009 study.
- Sefton Council's draft Green Space Study (2011) is a green infrastructure study of Sefton's urban green spaces. The Green Space Study determines the importance of each urban greenspace in terms of the level of benefits it provides and identifies where urban greenspace should still be protected, and where/whether there is scope for urban greenspaces to contribute to meeting future housing needs.
- Consultations with Council Biodiversity Officers, The Environment Agency, Wildlife Trust for Lancashire and North Merseyside and Natural England;
- Agricultural Land Classifications;
- Flood vulnerability, indicating areas at particular risk of flooding; and,
- Existing and future transport conditions, including details of existing and forecast traffic levels across the key areas of the transport network, identification of existing network constraints, public transport provision and 'hot spots' and details of existing sustainable transport provision.

Social Baseline:

- Current population/household split and how this is forecast to change over the Plan period;
- Current tenure split in Sefton, alongside other indicators on house type, size and vacancy rates;
- Migration trends, both domestic and international;
- Past housing delivery rates;
- Forward supply of housing development in the pipeline;
- Housing Need as defined in the SHMAs (and our own HEaDROOM analyses); and,
- Access to local services and infrastructure, through the GIS mapping of key services available to local residents such as GP surgeries, shops and schools and the extent to which these are successful and/or are currently under/over subscribed.

Economic Baseline:

- Travel to work patterns from 2001 ONS Census data;
- Current unemployment/joblessness in the Borough and economic vulnerabilities arising from current over-reliance on the public sector;

- **Current and proposed regeneration initiatives in Sefton.**

Town / District/ Local Centres and Local Shopping Parades

5.3 Town, District and Local Centres are defined in Chapter 7 of Sefton Council's UDP as follows:

- **Town Centres – Bootle and Southport;**
- **District Centres – Waterloo, Crosby, Maghull and Formby; and,**
- **Local Centres – Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown, Shakespeare Street, Old Roan, Netherton and Seaforth**

In the emerging Local Plan it is proposed that Shakespeare Street and Seaforth will no longer be defined as Local Centres.

5.4 A general definition of the different categories of centre and shopping parades is provided in Appendix 3, although it is important to note that the precise list of services available in each centre will differ and will change as centres develop and as businesses and services move in and out of an area.

Existing Infrastructure Pressures by Study Area and Sub-Area – Tipping Points

5.5 To facilitate the baseline spatial analysis, a number of detailed GIS Spatial Plans covering the whole of Sefton Borough have been produced (Appendix 1). These plans identify: the defined settlement boundaries; Green Infrastructure; community facilities, services and infrastructure; local centres; relevant ecological boundaries; Green Belt boundaries; Flood Zones; and identified deliverable/developable SHLAA and potential Green Belt housing sites.

5.6 The plans identify key designation constraints and have helped inform the analysis of the potential options for the location of development in Sefton.

5.7 To inform the baseline position and to act as a platform upon which to define future development patterns, an audit of existing infrastructure and an assessment of current pressures has been undertaken. This baseline position includes identifying what infrastructure is currently in place and assessing the extent to which it is 'fit for purpose' to support the existing sub-areas. This baseline picture has been constructed through the collation of information on the various infrastructure types from a range of sources and further validation through stakeholder engagement. Together this ensures that the data reflects actual issues within the sub-areas and provides, where applicable, a narrative aspect to the existing pressures.

5.8 The approach taken to assess the baseline involves the use of benchmarking to assess how well served sub-areas (and the settlements within) are for various infrastructure types in comparison with an identified standard. Where this has not been possible stakeholder engagement has been utilised to provide a qualitative baseline and narrative which identifies the key issues within each environmental, social and economic theme. These benchmarks are

used to construct a model which allows ‘tipping points’ for each type to be identified.

- 5.9 Provision of infrastructure in most cases does not represent an absolute constraint but merely represents a cost of mitigating the impact of development through the provision of new or improved infrastructure. Therefore, whilst consideration of this baseline is essential, the spatial distribution of growth will depend on further factors such as the trade-offs between different infrastructure types, the optimal cost implications associated with the provision of infrastructure to support growth as well as sub-area constraints and the environmental capacity to accommodate growth. This approach is adopted through the Study with identification of the environmental, economic and social constraints and an analysis of the potential consequences for the possible growth areas identified.
- 5.10 A summary of each sub-area's overarching infrastructure picture is identified based on the tipping points analysis set out in Appendix 4. The suitability for growth, based purely on the level of infrastructure as a baseline, is analysed for each sub-area and an indication of how much growth the sub-area could currently accommodate, without any further infrastructure improvements (apart from those purely ancillary to the development), is given. This ‘tipping point’ relates to the point where a fundamental or essential infrastructure type will reach capacity. This does not represent the absolute capacity of each sub-area and is not a show-stopper of growth, but provides an indication of how much additional growth the existing infrastructure could accommodate before investment is required.
- 5.11 NLP has not reviewed infrastructure from the perspective of the quality of service provision, particularly where information was not readily available – this is a matter outside the remit of this Study. Assessments of infrastructure provision are based on the application of the benchmark standards identified, information and facts provided by infrastructure and service providers and subsequent feedback from those stakeholders.
- 5.12 A Borough-wide overview is provided below, focusing in particular on those benchmarks that are not available/relevant at a sub-area level.

Sefton - Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.13 To set the initial social and economic baseline context, it is important to note that the ONS (interim) 2011-based Sub-National Population Projections [SNPP] indicate that the Borough is forecast to grow by around 2,800 residents over the period 2011-21 (based on ‘policy-off’ scenario, i.e. not factoring in policy interventions by Local Authority or Government). This growth is primarily driven by domestic and international migration, with net migration figures totalling +4,300 residents over the ten year period, compared to a loss of 1,400 residents due to natural change (i.e. births out-numbering deaths).
- 5.14 Migration moves beyond the Borough boundary are relatively minor, but are most significant between north and central Sefton (i.e. Southport, Formby and

Crosby) and West Lancashire; and south Sefton (including Bootle) and Liverpool¹².

- 5.15 The resultant demographic profile of Sefton is therefore anticipated to change in a number of key demographic cohorts, with proportionately fewer people in the younger age categories (particularly residents in their twenties). The number of residents aged in their mid-forties and fifties is also expected to decline, from 56,820 in 2011 to 55,320 in 2021. In contrast, the number of people aged 60 and above is expected to increase by around 2%, from 84,520 to 86,013¹³.
- 5.16 As a result, whilst Sefton's residents already have a very different demographic profile when compared to the national picture, this divergence is likely to become more pronounced in the years ahead. In particular, 24% of Sefton's residents are expected to be aged 65 and over by 2021, compared to just 18.7% nationally. This is counterbalanced by a lower proportion of residents in the lower age groups (21.5% of residents in Sefton are expected to be aged under 20 years by 2021, compared to 23.8% nationally), with the proportion of residents of working age also lower than across England as a whole.
- 5.17 The CLG's latest 2011-based (interim) household projections incorporate the aforementioned 2011 based SNPP. They suggest a level of household growth some 2% higher than the previous 2008 projections for Sefton Borough, at a rate of 399 additional households annually 2011-21 (3,993 in total). Once suitable allowance has been made for vacant/second homes (equal to around 4.7% - 4.4% vacancy rate, plus 0.3% second homes allowance based on the most recent Council Tax Base for Formula Grant Purposes October 2011), this would indicate a need for around 419 dpa. The rate of household growth between 2011 and 2021 is expected to be around 3.4% which although higher than that of the Merseyside sub-region (2.7%) is some way behind the regional (5.8%) and notably the national (10.0%) rate of growth.
- 5.18 Total household size in Sefton Borough is around 2.29 residents per household, which is comparable to the North West rate of 2.3 (albeit slightly lower than the national rate of 2.4). This represents a fall of around 4% in the past ten years or so (from 2.38 in 2001)¹⁴. This reflects current trends towards smaller households across the country, a trend that is expected to continue in the years ahead. This means that even if the Borough has a stable or even declining population over the coming years, it is likely that there may still be a rise in the number of newly formed households and therefore a need for new dwellings.

¹² Search Patterns Survey, Fordham Research (2010)

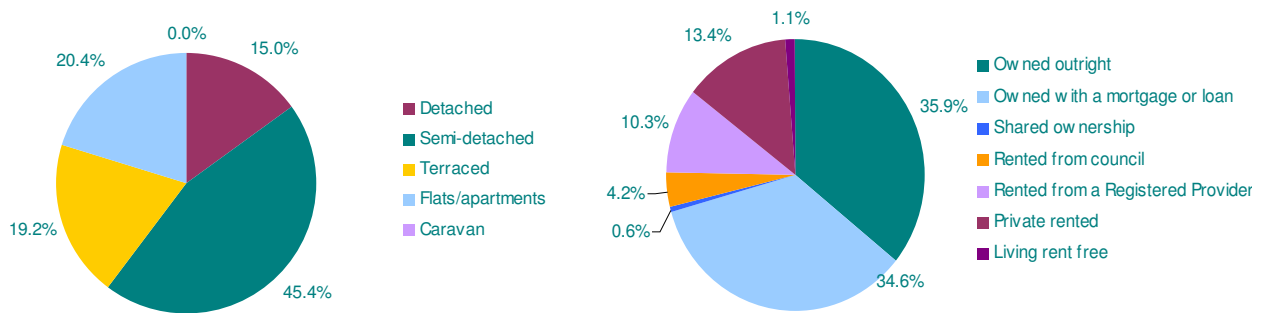
¹³ ONS (2012) Interim 2011 –based sub-national population projections (SNPP)

¹⁴ Source: ONS 2011 Census: comparison between 'total population living in households' and 'household spaces with at least one usual resident'.

5.19 Figure 5.1 presents the dwelling type and household tenure of Sefton Borough as per the 2011 Census. Sefton has a relatively low proportion of detached properties (15% of the total dwelling stock, compared to 18% for the North West region and 22% for England as a whole); a very high proportion of semi-detached dwellings (at a rate 50% higher than the national average) and a lower proportion of terraced properties (19% compared to 30% for the North West as a whole and 25% nationally). However, differences occur within different areas of Sefton [see below].

5.20 In terms of tenure, a very high proportion of Sefton residents own their homes, either outright or with a mortgage or loan: 70.5% of households fall into this category compared to 63.3% nationally. The Borough has a relatively low number of households who reside in social rented accommodation (14.5% compared to 17.7% nationally) or rent privately (14.5% compared to 18.2% in England as a whole). Again there are variances between parts of Sefton [see below].

Figure 5.1 Dwelling Type and Household Tenure, 2011



Source: 2011 Census Data

Economic Trends

5.21 The number of jobs based in Sefton was approximately 90,950 [11] in 2011¹⁵. This is a decrease of over 4,650 jobs from the figure recorded at the onset of the recession in 2008. This is a decrease of over 4,650 jobs from the figure recorded at the onset of the recession in 2008. The vast majority of these jobs are in the services sector, with a particularly high over-representation in public administration (12% of all jobs, compared to 5% both regionally and nationally); health (19% compared to 13% for the North West as a whole); and retail (14% compared to 10% regionally). In contrast, the Borough is poorly represented in certain important sectors such as professional, scientific and technical services, business administration and manufacturing.

¹⁵ Employee Jobs, Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2011

5.22 Claimant unemployment is currently estimated at 8,350 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance [JSA], or 4.9% of the working-age population¹⁶ (above the North West average of 4.4%). However, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) model based unemployment rate, which is a wider and arguably more realistic measure of unemployment based upon the International Labour Organization (ILO) definition which includes all those looking for work and not just those claiming benefit, indicates that unemployment is higher at around 8.5% (as of December 2012, albeit that this is closer to the regional rate for this measure (8.6%)). Past model based unemployment trends show a 6-year average (2007/12) of 7.9% and it is reasonable to assume this may reduce to a comparable level again as the economy stabilises and grows in the future.

5.23 In terms of the type of occupations currently sought by local residents, Table 5.1 provides an indication of the employment sectors within which there is a need for greater employment opportunities to meet local needs. Over half of all JSA claimants are seeking employment in either sales and customer services or elementary occupations. However, of particular relevance to this study is the fact that over 5% of all claimants are seeking employment in the skilled construction and building trades, which has a clear link with housing development over time and indicates there remains substantial slack (or capacity), in the construction industry in Sefton as elsewhere in the country.

Table 5.1 JSA Claimants by Sought Occupation March 2013

	Southport	Formby	Netherton	Crosby	Bootle	Maghull & Aintree	SEFTON TOTAL
Occupation unknown	35	5	10	10	10	15	85
Managers and Senior Officials	105	20	35	40	35	25	260
Professional Occupations	45	15	15	35	30	15	155
Associate Professional and Technical	125	15	60	85	70	35	390
Administrative & Secretarial	170	25	170	155	150	80	750
Skilled Trades	210	20	200	130	205	75	840
<i>OF WHICH: Skilled Construction & Building Trades</i>	90	10	95	70	105	35	405
Personal Services	125	20	135	90	125	35	530

¹⁶ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

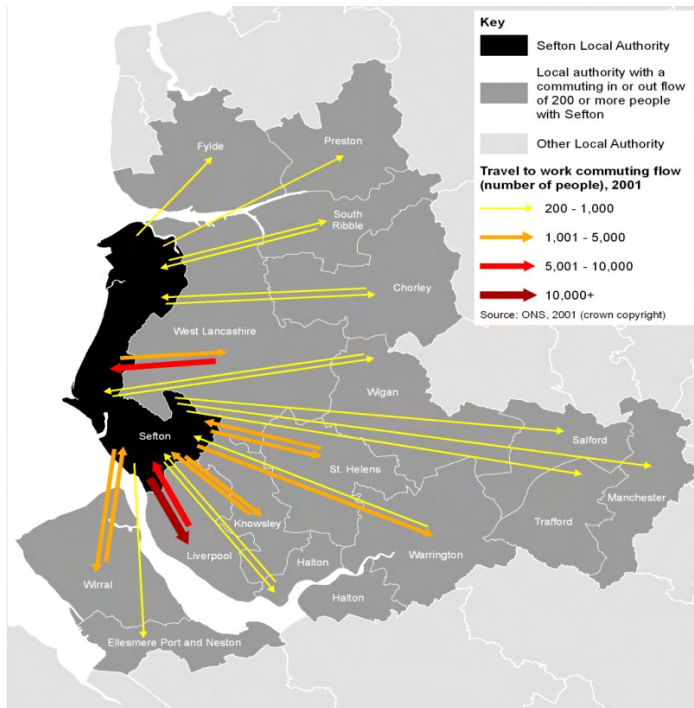
Sales and Customer Service	635	65	565	405	745	185	2,600
Process, Plant & Machine Operatives	135	10	165	100	200	35	645
Elementary Occupations	540	40	435	275	685	100	2,075
ALL	2,125	235	1,790	1,325	2,255	600	8,330

Source: ONS Claimant Count March 2013

5.24

The total economically active population of Sefton was estimated at 130,900 in 2012¹⁷, or around 76.8% of all residents aged between 16 and 64. This is a slightly higher proportion compared to the regional average of 75.4% and is approximate to the national rate of 76.9%.

Figure 5.2 Inter-district commuting flows, 2001



Source: 2001 Census and NLP Analysis

5.25

At the time of the 2001 Census, 46,553 people commuted out of Sefton Borough daily (40% of employed residents) and there were 25,410 in-commuters (accounting for 26.7% of jobs in the Borough), giving a net total of 21,143 out-commuters. As shown in Figure 5.2, these high cross-boundary flows are a reflection of the economic inter-dependencies of the surrounding districts, the proximity of other major settlements (e.g. Liverpool and

¹⁷ ONS Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec 2012

Warrington) and the existence of good transport links to other residential locations.

5.26 More recent (2011) Annual Population Survey (APS) data, coupled with 2011 Business Register and Employment survey (BRES) employment analysis data, indicates that the level of net out-commuting of Sefton residents has increased from 21,143 (as recorded in the 2001 Census) to 26,054 by 2011¹⁸. Although the methodology for the APS/ Labour Force Survey (LFS) is different to that of the 2001 Census, these estimates do suggest that increases in the local labour force have resulted in substantially higher levels of out commuting to adjoining districts.

5.27 The final New Homes Bonus allocation for Sefton Council for 2013 to 2014 is £2.39 million (including previous delivery). This is equal to around £1,925 per 100 dwellings. The New Homes Bonus is likely to assist in the delivery of the remaining stages of the Housing Market Renewal Programme.

Bootle – Infrastructure Tipping Points

5.28 According to the 2011 Census, Bootle had around 35,900 residents (17,520 households), or around 13% of the Borough's total population. Bootle's population has declined by 4.4% since the previous 2001 Census. However, household size in Bootle (with Southport) is the lowest in the Borough, at around 2.22 residents per household, which reflects the larger stock of smaller terraced homes in the sub-area.

Environmental

5.29 Bootle is a highly urbanised area with no open countryside, Green Belt or agricultural land. There are no internationally or nationally significant nature conservation designations within Bootle. The southern tip of Brook Vale LNR [Local Nature Reserve] projects across the north boundary into the sub-area (See 'Bootle Designations' Map ref. G3825.001 in Appendix 1).

5.30 No Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) occur within Bootle. A large proportion of Brook Vale Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is included within the Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS, which lies immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of Bootle. This site is designated largely for its habitats and botanical interest, with numerous nationally scarce, national priority or regionally important features. Water vole and water rail are two notable animal species present. Although located in Netherton, the citation for this site describes it as a "green lung linking Bootle to open countryside at Thornton", which highlights the importance of this site for Bootle in terms of connectivity to the wider countryside.

¹⁸ Based on total workforce-based employment in the Borough (90,946 as recorded in the 2011 BRES) set against the APS total economically active residents in employment in Sefton (117,000 in Jan-Dec 2011)

- 5.31 The Mersey Narrows SSSI [Site of Special Scientific Interest] lies within 100m of north Bootle. This is a composite site, the other part of which is located in Wirral. The two areas are separated by approximately 2km, but considered to be an integral site on the basis of the constant interchange of bird populations. The boundary of the compartment located in Sefton is concurrent with that of Seaforth Nature Reserve LWS. This area is also identified as a proposed Ramsar site and potential SPA [Special Protection Area]. Plant and habitat diversity and rarity are high and habitat present support breeding, over-wintering and passage bird populations.
- 5.32 Almost immediately adjacent to the Mersey Narrows SSSI/Seaforth Nature Reserve in the north lies Crosby Marine Lake and Park LWS. This LWS forms part of the coastal corridor that contains the extensive sites of Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar/SPA and the Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI which are of particular importance for over-wintering and passage bird populations. These local, national and internationally significant designations are located approximately 700m from the northern boundary of Bootle.
- 5.33 The network of priority habitats is fragmented in Bootle, with only small patches scattered across the sub-area (See 'Bootle Priority Habitats' Map ref. G3825.002 in Appendix 1). One of the most significant linear features within Bootle is the Leeds to Liverpool Canal, which runs approximately north-south through the sub-area. The other important linear features in Bootle are the railway lines, which run north-south and east-west. These linear features provide a degree of connectivity between some of the priority habitat areas.
- 5.34 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided.
- 5.35 In terms of flood risk, all of Bootle is located within Flood Zone 1. The exception to this is a very narrow strip of land at Bootle Docks, the majority of which falls within Flood Zone 3. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies significant areas at risk of surface water flooding across Bootle, with 1 in 100 year annual probability. Larger areas include areas along the line of the Rimrose Brook in Seaforth and Litherland and areas east of the town centre. Parts of central Bootle are at risk of groundwater flooding, and the canal is also a source of potential flood risk.

Social

- 5.36 The Bootle sub-area contains a town centre (Bootle) and a local centre (Seaforth), which serves both the areas of Bootle and areas south of Crosby. Bootle Town Centre has a good range of shops and services. The majority of central Bootle and a large part of Bootle north are within 800m of a town/local centre, although this leaves a considerable number of residents (notably towards the eastern boundary of Bootle) slightly beyond these buffers. The local centre of Seaforth to the north of Bootle, has a poor range of services and a vacancy rate of 50%, leading WYG to recommend it be demoted to a local shopping parade (Retail Strategy Review Update 2012).
- 5.37 In terms of deprivation, the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) shows that the majority of 'Lower Super Output Areas' within Bootle are within the top 10% most deprived in England.
- 5.38 Bootle has a significant surplus of primary school places, and a much smaller surplus of secondary school places following the merger of St Wilfrid's secondary school with St George of England to form a new free school (The Hawthorne's). It also has spare capacity across all wards, within existing childcare centres. GP surgeries show a deficit of 6 GPs for a settlement of Bootle's size, hence the tipping point for GPs has been reached even before the Local Plan growth scenarios are factored in. However, additional GPs can often be provided in existing surgeries without the need for substantial investment.
- 5.39 In terms of green infrastructure, the vast majority of Bootle is within 1 kilometre (km) (600m straight line distance / approximately 15-20 minutes walk) of a Borough, District or Neighbourhood Park. There are also a number of reasonably sized 'accessible nature spaces' distributed evenly throughout Bootle and again, the vast majority of Bootle is within 1km walk (600m straight line distance) of one of these nature spaces. The whole of the sub-area is within standard ambulance and fire service response times.
- 5.40 Bootle has seen a high rate of development in the past (110 dpa 1982/3 - 2011/12). Due to a current over-provision of affordable homes in Bootle, [as identified in the 2008 SHMA], no need was identified for additional affordable housing.
- 5.41 In terms of dwelling type (and in contrast to the rest of the Borough), Bootle has a very high proportion of terraced properties – 52% of the total stock compared to 19% in Sefton generally in 2011. Very few properties are detached (3%) or semi-detached (22%) with the remaining 23% of the stock comprising flats/apartments.
- 5.42 Bootle has the highest proportion of social rented properties in the Borough, comprising 36% of all households in 2011 (the Sefton Borough average is 14.5%). As a consequence, the sub-area has by far the lowest proportion of owner occupiers in Sefton – 45% of the total, compared to 70% Borough-wide in 2011. The sub-area also has a relatively high proportion of households who

rent privately (17%). It is anticipated that the recent changes to housing benefit may increase demand in the private rented sector.

Physical Infrastructure

- 5.43 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.
- 5.44 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement may be required in the sub-areas as a result of the various growth Options.
- 5.45 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. United Utilities state that: *“each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”*
- 5.46 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate that, due to the topography of Sefton, additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure, when and if required, will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning permission] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.47 In total, it is estimated that there are around 20,419 jobs based in Bootle (BRES 2011), which represents a fall of around 5.5% (-1,180 jobs) from 2008. Employment is focused in the retail, public administration, education, and social work sectors. It is currently estimated that there are around 2,260 JSA claimants in Bootle, which equates to around 10.1% of the working-age population¹⁹ (well above the Borough average of 4.9% and the North West average of 4.4%). Past trends indicate that this has increased substantially in recent years in line with national macro-economic trends, from a low of 5.5% in March 2005 to a peak of 10.9% in 2012, hence there is a clear need for measures capable of boosting the local economy and improving employment

¹⁹ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

opportunities. The development of additional housing could go some way towards providing this economic stimulus.

- 5.48 The Linacre and Derby wards in Bootle are a national spatial priority for regeneration by virtue of the scale of deprivation (and also opportunity). Recently the target of Housing Market Renewal pathfinder funding, the current regeneration priority in this area, is the delivery of the North Liverpool and South Sefton Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF), which promotes a number of strategic projects including: major new investments in the Port of Liverpool to attract deep sea vessels (located in Bootle and Seaforth); a new purpose for Bootle Town Centre & Office Quarter; completion of housing market renewal in Bedford/Queens and Klondyke; and investment in renewable energy.
- 5.49 Liverpool Waters (one of the biggest waterfront regeneration projects in the world), and its designation as an Enterprise Zone, is also expected to provide a significant stimulus to the regeneration of the wider area, with the potential to create tens of thousands of temporary construction and long-term jobs for local Bootle residents.
- 5.50 Regarding highways issues, a number of pinch points are identified on the network. As Bootle provides the main access routes to Liverpool from the north, links through the area suffer from congestion with delays in journey time witnessed on most strategic links. A567 Stanley Road; A565 Derby Road/A567 Stanley Road; A565 [Millers Bridge]/ A5058 junction; and A567 / A5058 junction. £6 million has recently been secured to fund 'pinch point' improvements to the A5036. The expansion of the Port of Liverpool at Seaforth will also require improved port access and this is likely to be a key challenge in the medium term.
- 5.51 Access to the Port of Liverpool is also a key issue in this area. This has been acknowledged by the Liverpool City Region authorities who are working to deliver transport measures that will improve access by rail, road and water in order to enable the Port to expand. As a result of this, 'Pinch Point' funding has been provided in order to deliver improvements at the A5036 / Bridge Road junction to alleviate some current congestion issues.
- 5.52 Bootle is served by a number of rail stations (Seaforth & Litherland, Bootle New Strand and Bootle Oriel Road). Bootle New Strand experiences the highest weekly passengers compared to other stations in the area. Given the mainly urban and residential nature of Bootle, the area is also well served with frequent bus services. A number of existing cycle routes are provided in Bootle, providing links to the north and south as well as to the east. Cycle routes are also proposed in the area to provide greater interconnectivity for cyclists.
- 5.53 The importance of sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking should not be underestimated given their ability to reduce car use for short journeys in particular. This can be significant when considering the level of local trips that are made in the area.

Netherton – Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.54 Netherton had a total resident population of around 37,230 in 2011 (16,090 households) which comprised around 14% of the Borough's population. The area has suffered from a high rate of population decline in recent years, with the loss of around 2,870 residents, a 7% fall since the previous 2001 Census (the second steepest rate of decline of any sub-area in the Borough). Household size in Netherton is reasonably high at around 2.36 residents per household in 2011, although it has the ward with the highest average household size in Sefton (2.5 in Netherton and Orrell ward).

Environmental

- 5.55 Netherton, like Bootle, is a predominantly urbanised area with no Grade 1 – 3a (best and most versatile) agricultural land.
- 5.56 There are no nationally or internationally significant nature conservation designations in this sub-area. Despite this, the ecological network is reasonably extensive across Netherton. This is due largely to the expanse of LWS in the north. This is most prominent in the form of a number of continuous LWS located near the north and northwest borders of Netherton. The largest of these is Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS. The Leeds Liverpool Canal LWS lies adjacent to this site and continues along the canal corridor. The canal is a strategic linear wetland feature which travels through Netherton parallel to the west and north boundaries, linking LWS in the north with priority habitat areas in the east.
- 5.57 Rimrose Valley and Canal is one of the largest LWS in Sefton not included within areas covered by international or national designations. It extends across the majority of the northern part of Netherton. It possesses a significant botanical species assemblage, one of only 48 sites to have more than 100 species recorded. The extensive wetland and grassland habitats also support important assemblages of breeding birds and dragonflies and water vole is also present.
- 5.58 Also adjacent to the Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS is a much smaller site, Edge Farm Rookery. Brook Vale LNR overlaps with the southern section of the Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS. Pond and Open Space North of Copy Lane is the only other LWS Netherton, located between the north east boundary of Netherton and the eastern tip of the Leeds Liverpool Canal LWS.
- 5.59 Two LWS situated in Maghull lie adjacent to the east boundary of Netherton. These are Switch Island South East Section Maghull and Dismantled Railway Aintree Triangle.
- 5.60 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure

is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided.

- 5.61 With regard to flooding, the whole area lies within Flood Zone 1, with the exception of a very small area to the northeast which falls within Flood Zone 2. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies areas at risk of surface water flooding across Netherton, with 1 in 100 year annual probability. Groundwater flood risk is limited, mainly to northern Netherton, and there is also potential canal flood risk, perhaps more notably to the western side of the canal.

Social

- 5.62 Netherton contains one local centre, although residents to the northeast also benefit from easy access to the Local Centre of Old Roan in neighbouring Aintree. Netherton Local Centre is well served by the usual range of shops and services including two small supermarkets and a health centre. The area also benefits from a library and community centre which are within easy walking distance of the Local Centre. The majority of Netherton dwellings fall outside the recommended 800m walking distance of a local centre but are reasonably well served by local shopping parades.
- 5.63 In terms of deprivation, the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) shows that Netherton contains several 'Lower Super Output Areas', which are within the top 10% most deprived in England and several within the top 20% most deprived.
- 5.64 In terms of Green Infrastructure, Netherton is generally well served. The vast majority of the area is within 1km (15 mins walk) of a borough, district or neighbourhood park and accessible nature spaces. A number of children's play areas are also distributed across the area. Primary schools in the area currently have a large surplus capacity overall although two schools are currently oversubscribed. Significant capacity exists within secondary schools despite the recent merger between St George of England School and St Wilfrid's in nearby Bootle to form The Hawthorne's [free] Secondary. There is also reasonable capacity within existing childcare provision across all wards, ranging from 9% to as high as 40%.
- 5.65 In terms of GP surgery provision, Netherton is running slightly over its recommended capacity at present, with a deficit of 2 GPs. In terms of emergency services, the majority of the sub-area is within standard ambulance and fire service response times.
- 5.66 In terms of dwelling type (and in contrast to the rest of the Borough with the exception of Bootle), Netherton has a relatively high proportion of terraced properties – 38% of the total stock compared to 20% in Sefton generally in

2011. Very few properties are detached (6%) or comprise flats/apartments (15%) with the remaining stock (42%) comprising semi-detached dwellings.

- 5.67 Regarding property tenure, Netherton has the second highest proportion of social rented properties in the Borough, comprising 31% of all households in 2011 (the Sefton Borough average is 14.5%). As a consequence, the sub-area also has the second lowest proportion of owner occupiers in Sefton – 59% of the total, compared to 70% Borough-wide in 2011. There is also an identified annual need for 53 affordable dwellings.
- 5.68 Netherton has delivered an average of 79 dpa over the period 1982/3 – 2011/12.

Physical infrastructure

- 5.69 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.
- 5.70 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement may be required in the sub-areas as a result of the various growth Options.
- 5.71 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. United Utilities state that: *“each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”*
- 5.72 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate that, due to the topography of Sefton, additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure, when and if required, will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning permission] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.73 It is estimated that Netherton accommodates 11,170 jobs (BRES 2011), which represents a fall of around 57% (-670 jobs) from 2008. Employment is focused in the financial services sector, which provides 2,710 jobs alone; followed to a lesser extent education and residential care sectors. It is estimated that there are 1,780 JSA claimants in Netherton, which equates to around 7.4% of the

working-age population²⁰ (the highest proportion of any sub-area in Sefton Borough with the exception of Bootle). This is slightly below the peak of 8.5% in 2012, but is still well above the figure of 4.0% achieved in 2005. As with Bootle, there is a clear need for measures capable of boosting the local economy and improving employment opportunities.

- 5.74 Again, like Bootle, Netherton suffers from pockets of severe and multiple deprivation. Current regeneration priorities in Netherton are focused on bringing forward new employment land along the Dunnings Bridge corridor whilst helping to safeguard and create new jobs.
- 5.75 Regarding highway congestion, the main delays in Netherton occur at Switch Island on all approaches to the junction, including the A59, A5036 and A5207. The B5422 [Gorse Lane] linking the A5207 and the A5036 also experiences delay in journey times at peak times in this part of the Borough.
- 5.76 The proposed delivery of the Thornton to Switch Island Link will assist in alleviating existing severe congestion and delay problems in the area and provide an improved route to the A565 from the strategic road network and enhancing accessibility to the north of the Borough.
- 5.77 No rail stations are located in Netherton; however, Old Roan and Aintree stations are located within close proximity of Netherton. Both stations experience relatively low numbers of rail passengers.

Crosby - Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.78 According to the 2011 Census, Crosby has around 49,100 residents (22,220 households), or around 18% of the Borough's total population – the second largest sub-area after Southport. In contrast to the remainder of Sefton, the sub-area's population actually increased over the past ten years, by just under 1,000 residents (2% of the 2001 total). Household size in Crosby is around 2.31 residents per household, slightly higher than the Borough rate of 2.29.

Environmental

- 5.79 The entire coastline at Crosby is covered by internationally and nationally significant conservation designations, comprising the Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar/SPA and the Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI. Much of these areas of coastline overlap with several locally important sites, including Altcar Firing Ranges LWS (partially within Crosby), Hightown Dunes, Meadow and Saltmarsh LWS, Coastguard Station, Hall Road to Sniggery Farm track and dunes LWS and Crosby Marine Lake and Park LWS. As with the entire Sefton coast, these areas are of primary importance for their habitats, botanical diversity and bird populations, although other notable species such as natterjack toad, great crested newt and sand lizard are also supported in these areas.

²⁰ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

- 5.80 Away from the coast there are seven other LWS contained either entirely (Key Park Blundellsands, West Lancashire Golf Club, Homer Green Sewage Works, Sniggery Farm Wood and Pastures and Flea Moss Wood and Ponds) or partially within (Rimrose Valley and Canal and Ince Blundell and Little Crosby Estates) the sub-area.
- 5.81 Crosby is generally less urbanised than some areas of Sefton, however the ecological network which exists in Crosby's areas is quite fragmented. Despite this, however, there is a greater degree of connectivity between different components of this network (designated sites and habitats) as the majority of these components in Crosby are located along the coast or in relatively open countryside.
- 5.82 Existing development in the Crosby sub-area are concentrated to the south (the town of Crosby) and the north (Hightown). There is a high proportion of the remaining open land included within conservation designations and as such the ecological network in Crosby is more coherent than in, for example, Bootle.
- 5.83 The River Alt terminates in the very north of Crosby. The railway line continues in a north-south direction through Crosby, although this tends to be located in urban areas and does not, therefore, serve to connect many of the other parts of the ecological network found in land away from the coast. The linear habitat features found in-land in Crosby tend to be limited to hedgerows and ditches or drains within the agricultural landscape.
- 5.84 There is a considerable amount of land to the north of Crosby which is Grade 1 – 3a i.e. best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 5.85 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided.
- 5.86 In terms of flood risk, all of the Crosby sub-area is located within Flood Zone 1, except for a narrow strip along some parts of the Coast. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies significant areas at risk of surface water flooding across Crosby, with 1 in 100 year annual probability. Larger areas include areas around College Road, north of Hall Road, west of Liverpool Road and around the Rimrose Valley, and some rural areas. Areas around the Rimrose Valley, north of Crosby and parts of the rural area are at risk of groundwater flooding.

Social

- 5.87 Crosby contains two district centres - Crosby and Waterloo. Waterloo District Centre is split into two areas: South Road and St John's Road. Waterloo District Centre includes a wide range of shops and services, as expected in a centre of this size, and includes a library, small cinema and supermarkets. St John's Road contains a small, basic range of shops and services, whereas South Road has a slightly larger range of services including a post office and supermarket. Crosby District Centre contains a range of shops, including a Sainsbury's, and number of wine bars and pubs. Both centres are currently struggling and have a large amount of vacant units. In terms of access to these centres, the majority of Crosby south is within 800m of a district or local centre. However, areas to the north of Crosby are not within walking distance of a centre or a local shopping parade.
- 5.88 Crosby benefits from two leisure centres, both located near the coast. The Crosby coast is also the location of the Gormley statues : 'Another Place' which is a tourist attraction.
- 5.89 Based on the latest GP capacity figures, the Crosby sub-area is running slightly over recommended capacity with a potential deficit of around 2 GPs.
- 5.90 In terms of the existing provision of green infrastructure, the vast majority of the Crosby urban area is within 1km (600m straight line distance / 15 – 20 minutes walk) of a borough, district or neighbourhood park and of accessible nature space, whilst residential areas to the north (which do not benefit from easy access to these parks), are mostly within 300m of the open countryside (also designated Green Belt), although not all of this offers public access.
- 5.91 Children's play space provision is lacking within central Crosby and most particularly along the coast.
- 5.92 Both primary and secondary schools in the sub-area have a reasonable level of capacity for new pupils with the exception of some Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools which have reached capacity and have an excess demand for places. Whilst data on childcare provision is only available at ward level, all wards appear to have some capacity (between 7% and 25%).
- 5.93 The entire sub-area is within the standard ambulance response time and the majority of the area is also within the standard fire service response time.
- 5.94 Crosby has a relatively high proportion of owner occupiers, comprising 73% of all households in the sub-area. Crosby has a low proportion of social rented properties (13% of all households compared to 18% nationally) and a level of private rented households in 2011 that is equal to the Borough-wide rate of 13%.

Physical infrastructure

- 5.95 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present

and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.

- 5.96 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement may be required in the sub-areas as a result of the various growth Options.
- 5.97 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. United Utilities state that: *“each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”*
- 5.98 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate that, due to the topography of Sefton, additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure, when and if required, will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning permission] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.99 It is estimated that there are around 11,510 jobs based in Crosby (BRES 2011), which represents a fall of around 8.8% (-1,110 jobs) from 2008, the highest (proportionate) fall of any sub-area in the Borough. Employment is focused in the retail, food services, public administration, education, health and social work sectors. It is currently estimated that there are around 1,335 JSA claimants in Crosby, which equates to around 4.5% of the working-age population²¹ (slightly below the Borough average of 4.9% and roughly equal to the North West average of 4.4%). Past trends indicate that the claimant rate has been falling steadily since the peak of 5.2% in 2010, although there is clearly a need to provide new jobs to replace ones lost since the start of the economic downturn in 2008.
- 5.100 In this regard, the east bank of the Port of Liverpool is located at Seaforth (and Bootle). As such this area has the potential to benefit from the proposed SuperPort, which will allow the planned River Berth to process next generation container ships, strengthening and opening up trade and investment to markets such as China, Korea and South America. This local regeneration solution will boost the creation of new employment in the area and provide support for local

²¹ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

businesses. However, the growth of the Port may also bring negative environmental impacts (such as air quality, traffic etc) that will need to be addressed.

- 5.101 There is also potential for Crosby to access the new Coastal Communities Fund. Sefton Council anticipates bidding for Round 2 funding shortly to facilitate the creation of sustainable economic growth and jobs along the Southport to Crosby coast over the next two years. The Rural Development Programme Fund, which supports projects such as farm diversification and the conversion of stables/agricultural buildings, is shortly coming to a close but the Merseyside Rural Economy Group may be a mechanism through which new opportunities for accessing European funding can be sought in future.
- 5.102 Regarding highways, the A565 through Crosby experiences high levels of congestion with high journey time compared to free flow conditions. This is particularly the case along the section of Moor Lane and Liverpool Road which essentially carries all traffic heading south through the Borough that travels towards Liverpool City Centre. The junction at South Road is particularly congested and there is an Air Quality Management Area at this location. A comprehensive study [the A565 Route Management Study] was undertaken to look at congestion on this route. Delays are also prevalent at the A565 / A5207 junction which provides the current access route to Switch Island.
- 5.103 The proposed delivery of the Thornton to Switch Island Link will assist in alleviating existing severe congestion and delay problems in the area and provide an improved route to the A565 from the strategic road network and enhancing accessibility to the north of the Borough.
- 5.104 The area is well served by a number of train stations (Hightown, Hall Road, Blundellsands and Crosby and Waterloo). Currently Hall Road and Hightown experience low weekly passenger numbers compared to Blundellsands and Crosby and Waterloo. Whilst bus services are provided across Crosby, Hightown and Crosby North have relatively low frequency services. An existing and proposed cycle route is located along the coast in Crosby linking to other cycle routes in Bootle.

Formby – Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.105 Formby is the smallest sub-area in population terms, with a total of around 23,850 residents in 2011 (10,270 households), or just 9% of the Borough's total. In common with most of the other areas of the Borough, Formby's population has steadily declined in recent years, by around 1,150 residents since the previous census in 2001 (a fall of 5%). Household size in Formby is reasonably high, at around 2.36 residents per household, slightly above the Borough average of 2.29.

Environmental

- 5.106 The entire Formby coastline is included within internationally and nationally significant conservation designations, comprising Ribble & Alt Estuaries

Ramsar/SPA and the Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI. These designations are a continuation of those present on the coast at Crosby.

- 5.107 Cabin Hill National Nature Reserve [NNR] is located within these coastal designations towards the southern edge of Formby, while Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR is similarly located overlapping the north boundary of Formby. Both of these nature reserves are found in the coastal habitats which support important botanical and bird interest. They also support populations of natterjack toad and sand lizard.
- 5.108 There are several Local Wildlife Sites in Formby including, Cabin Hill National Nature Reserve LWS, Ainsdale National Nature Reserve LWS, Altcar Firing Ranges (partially within Formby), Range Lane to Albert Road, Albert Road to Lifeboat Road, Lifeboat Road to St. Joseph's Hospital, National Trust and Associated Fields and Formby Golf Club, which all overlap parts of various international and national designations on the coast.
- 5.109 A further six LWS are located further in land. Wham Dyke Meadows, Railway – Freshfield Station to Fisherman's Path and Freshfield Dune Heath, Woodvale Airfield and Willow Bank Caravan Park form a continuous area immediately to the north of Formby. These sites are designated primarily for their habitat and botanical interest, although sand lizard are present in the latter two and the latter site also supports a significant bird assemblage. Formby Moss, designated for its botanical and habitat interest, is situated to the east of Formby, between the A565 and the east boundary of Sefton. Further afield, in the southwest extension of Formby, lie Orrell Wood and Canal and Ince Blundell and Little Crosby Estates (the latter overlaps with Crosby). The former site possesses a diverse plant assemblage and supports a population of red squirrel, while the latter site also supports a bat roost.
- 5.110 The ecological network is very coherent within Formby, with large areas of nature conservation designations and priority habitats occurring to the west and north of the town. A few small patches of priority habitats, comprising small areas of woodland, grassland or parkland in the main, are located within the town and are therefore comparatively isolated within the remaining network. A number of these small areas are connected by the railway line, which continues in a northerly direction from Crosby through Formby. Other components to the network to the east and southeast of Formby are generally located in open countryside and are supported in part by the agricultural field systems (hedgerows and drains) and in part by the verges of the A565, many sections of which comprise linear woodlands.
- 5.111 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and

introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided.

- 5.112 There is a considerable amount of agricultural land, including Grades 1 – 3a, within the Formby sub-area. In terms of flood risk, the vast majority of land within the built up urban area falls within Flood Zone 1. However, a large area of land located to the south of Formby and north of Ince Blundell is affected by flooding, most of which falls within Flood Zone 3. Pockets of land located to the east of Formby (between the A565 Formby By-pass and the sub-area area boundary) also lie within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Social

- 5.113 Formby has an excellent network of existing infrastructure for a District Centre of its size. It is particularly well served at present for local shops and services and accommodates three supermarkets and a leisure centre. It is also served by a library and an additional two leisure centres, although these are not within the District Centre's boundary. Around half of the central urbanised area is within 800m of the District Centre. Surrounding central urban areas are reasonably well serviced by local shopping parades. However, large parts of the north, south, east and west of Formby are not within easy walking distance of either the centre or local shopping parades.
- 5.114 School capacity figures from May 2012 show Formby has a small surplus of 33 primary and secondary school places. However, as in Crosby, Catholic primary school places are at capacity with an unmet demand for additional places. There is also significant surplus capacity in childcare provision across both Formby wards.
- 5.115 GP surgeries are currently slightly over the recommended tipping point threshold, with a deficit of 2 GPs. In terms of emergency services, the whole of the sub-area is within standard ambulance and fire service response times.
- 5.116 Formby has the highest proportion of detached properties in the Borough, comprising 42% of the total stock in 2011, almost three times the Borough-wide average. The area also has a high number of semi-detached properties (consisting of 46% of the stock). In contrast, the sub-area has virtually no terraced properties (3% - by far the lowest of any sub-area) and a very low number of flats and apartments (8% of the total stock).
- 5.117 Formby has delivered the lowest level of new housing, by sub-area, over the period 1982/3 – 2011/12 at an average of 37 dpa. There is currently planning permission for an additional 118 dwellings in Formby (of which 8 are under construction).
- 5.118 In terms of tenure, and partly as a reflection of the current housing stock and general affluence of the area, Formby has the highest proportion of owner occupiers in the Borough – 89% of all households fall into this category, with

just 3% occupying social housing and 7% renting their homes privately. Following on from this, the SHLAA identifies sites with sufficient capacity to accommodate a further 78 dwellings in this area over the period to 2027. NLP's HEaDROOM Report (2012) suggested an annual provision of 38 homes in this area (based upon a Borough-wide provision of 510 homes). However, due to a shortage of affordable housing in this area, it also identified an annual need for 65 affordable dwellings.

Physical infrastructure

- 5.119 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.
- 5.120 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement may be required in the sub-areas as a result of the various growth Options.
- 5.121 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. United Utilities state that: *“each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”*
- 5.122 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate that, due to the topography of Sefton, additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure, when and if required, will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning permission] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.123 It is estimated that Formby accommodates just 5,650 jobs (BRES 2011), which represents just 6% of the Borough's total and the lowest proportion of any sub-area in the Borough. This represents a fall of around 5.6% (-335 jobs) from 2008. Employment is focussed in the retail, food services, education and residential care sectors. It is currently estimated that just 240 JSA claimants in Formby, which equates to around 1.8% of the working-age population²² (the

²² ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

lowest proportion of any sub-area in Sefton Borough). This has decreased slightly in recent years, but still represents a rate more than double that achieved in 2005 (0.8% before the recession and subsequent economic downturn).

- 5.124 Whilst there may therefore be a need for more jobs to meet the needs of local residents, Formby clearly benefits from excellent housing and quality of life. Whilst not a priority for targeted physical regeneration, there is some potential for Formby to access the new Coastal Communities Fund and to benefit from the Rural Development Programme Fund or future ERDF European funding aimed at supporting and strengthening the rural economy.
- 5.125 Regarding highway capacity, no detailed information is available for journey times in this area of the Borough. The likely pinch points, however, are the priority junctions with the A565, for example the B5195, which provides an easterly link towards West Lancashire.
- 5.126 The proposed delivery of the Thornton to Switch Island Link will assist in alleviating existing severe congestion and delay problems and provide an improved route to the A565 from the strategic road network and thus enhancing accessibility to the north of the Borough.
- 5.127 The area is served by two rail stations: Formby which experiences high weekly rail passenger numbers and Freshfield, which has a more modest number of weekly rail passengers. Bus operators run a number of high frequency of services. A cycle route is provided through Formby along the A565 and along the coast.

Maghull and Aintree - Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.128 Maghull and Aintree has a total resident population of around 37,340 in 2011 (15,820 households), around 14% of the Borough's total. It has experienced the greatest fall in population since the previous 2001 Census, of around 4,480 residents, a sharp decline of almost 11% in just 10 years. Household size in Maghull and Aintree is the highest in the Borough, at around 2.39 residents per household.

Environmental

- 5.129 Maghull contains no internally or nationally significant designations. There are 10 Local Wildlife Sites in the Maghull area. Lydiat Wood is located in the far north, while a small cluster comprising Land East of Canal, North Wango Lane, Fazakarley Sidings Aintree and Dismantled Railway Aintree Triangle are located adjacent to the south boundary. Switch Island SE Section Maghull LWS is located to the southwest boundary of Maghull by the junction between the M58 and M57 motorways. The remaining five LWS are clustered centrally either to the west side of Maghull or within the urban extent of Maghull.
- 5.130 Despite the minimal extent of nature conservation designations present in Maghull, there is a comprehensive network of priority habitats in the region,

particularly woodlands and grasslands. Key linkages run north-south and east-west, formed by the verges of the motorways which are the most significant linear features within the south of Maghull. The Leeds – Liverpool Canal is a important linear wetland feature in Sefton and runs approximately north-south through the region. The other important linear features in Maghull are the railway lines, which run north-east to south-west. These linear features provide a degree of connectivity between the key components of the ecological network (nature conservation designations and priority habitats).

- 5.131 Those parts of the CBA in the north of Maghull are not as directly connected as those in the south, but they are located in an agricultural landscape in which hedgerows provide linkages.
- 5.132 Large areas of agricultural land surround the urban area, including land designated as Grade 1 – 3a (Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land – BMVAL).
- 5.133 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided
- 5.134 The vast majority of the urban areas in the sub-area are not affected by river or tidal flood risk. However, much of the land around the River Alt - between Maghull and Aintree and west of Maghull falls within Flood Zone 2, while a strip of land to the west of the Maghull urban area lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies significant areas at risk of surface water flooding across the Maghull, Melling and Aintree areas, and rural areas, with 1 in 100 year annual probability. Larger areas include the western fringes of Maghull and parts of Aintree, also northern Maghull and parts of the rural areas notably the Alt valley. A small part of the area- again in the Alt valley, is at risk of reservoir flooding. Western Maghull and most of Melling Village and Aintree are at risk of groundwater flooding, and there is also potential canal flood risk, perhaps more notably to the western side of the canal.

Social

- 5.135 Maghull and Aintree benefits from a District Centre (Maghull) and a Local Centre (Old Roan). As would be expected for a centre of its size, Maghull is well served by a range of shops and services. Old Roan, to the south of Maghull, offers a smaller range of shops and services including a community centre. In

addition, a number of local shopping parades are located throughout the area situated along the two main roads that run through Maghull. The majority of Maghull's urban area is within 800m of a district and/or 400m of a local shopping parade. However, the outskirts of the urban areas, and the more rural areas to the north and east of Maghull, remain outside these recommended distances.

- 5.136 Most of the primary and secondary schools in the area have some capacity for new pupils, although a number of primary schools are close to capacity. There is capacity across all wards in childcare provision. GP surgeries are currently under strain with a deficit of approximately 4 GPs for an area of this size.
- 5.137 In terms of Green Infrastructure, while the majority of Maghull is within 1 km of a borough, district or neighbourhood park, or accessible nature space, there are areas to the north of Maghull and parts of Melling and Aintree where access to these parks is not as easy.
- 5.138 The entire sub-area is within the standard fire service response time and the majority of the area is also within the standard ambulance response time.
- 5.139 Regarding dwelling type, Maghull has the highest proportion of semi-detached properties in the Borough, comprising 70% of the total dwelling stock in 2011 compared to 45% in Sefton generally. Around 15% of the dwelling stock comprises detached properties, which is similar to the Borough-wide rate. However, Maghull has very few terraced properties (8%) and flats/apartments (at 7%, the lowest rate in the Borough).
- 5.140 Maghull and Aintree has delivered an average of 60 dpa over the period 1982/3 – 2011/12.
- 5.141 In terms of tenure, like Formby, Maghull has a very high proportion of owner-occupied properties in the Borough, comprising 88% of all households in 2011 (the Sefton Borough average is 70%). As a consequence, the sub-area had a very low proportion of households in social rented accommodation in 2011 – at 5%, this was the lowest rate in the Borough behind Formby. Maghull also has the lowest proportion of residents in private rented accommodation (6% of all households). There is also an identified need for an annual provision [for a five year period] of 14 affordable dwellings.
- 5.142 The SHLAA identifies sites with sufficient capacity to accommodate a further 62 dwellings in this area over the period to 2027. NLP's HEaDROOM Report (2012) suggested an annual provision of 63 homes in this area (based upon a Borough-wide provision of 510 homes). It also identified a need for an annual provision of 14 affordable dwellings.

Physical infrastructure

- 5.143 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.

- 5.144 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement will be required in Maghull & Aintree under each of the growth Options.
- 5.145 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. United Utilities state that: *“each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”*
- 5.146 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate that due to the topography of Sefton, additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure when and if required will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning permission] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.147 It is estimated that Maghull and Aintree accommodates around 10,220 jobs (BRES 2011), which represents around 11% of the Borough’s total. This represents a fall of 4.3% (-455 jobs) from 2008. Employment is focussed in the retail, food services, public administration, education and notably health sectors. It is currently estimated that just 598 Maghull residents are claiming Job Seekers Allowance, which equates to around 2.4% of the working-age population²³ (the lowest proportion of any sub-area apart from Formby in Sefton Borough). This has decreased slightly in recent years, from a peak of 3.0% in 2010, although it is still significantly higher than the low of 1.5% achieved in 2005.
- 5.148 Whilst not a priority for targeted physical regeneration, there is some potential for Maghull to access the Rural Development Programme Funding or future European (ERDF) funding aimed at supporting and strengthening the rural economy. Proposals also exist to redevelop the retail centre in Maghull and to secure a railway station for North Maghull.
- 5.149 In terms of highway issues, the major pinch point in this area is the Switch Island junction with traffic entering this junction experiencing severe congestion and associated journey time delay on all routes. This junction provides a severe constraint on all movements in this area.

²³ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

- 5.150 Additional traffic pressure are placed in the area by the lack of south facing slips at M58 junction 1.
- 5.151 Maghull, Old Roan and Aintree Stations are located in this sub-area. Maghull experiences high weekly passenger numbers whereas Old Roan and Aintree have lower passenger numbers. There are proposals to provide a second station at Maghull North to help increase capacity in the town. Bus routes in this area offer a high frequency service. A cycle route is provided through Maghull, following the path of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, and one that uses the former Cheshire Lines.

Southport - Infrastructure Tipping Points

- 5.152 Southport is by far the largest sub-area in Sefton, accommodating 90,380 residents (as recorded in the latest 2011 Census data), a third of the Borough's total and almost double the amount recorded in any of the other sub-areas. As a consequence it also has by far the highest number of households in the Borough, at around 42,690. The population has remained virtually constant since the 2001 Census. Household size in Southport is the lowest (with Bootle) in the Borough, at around 2.22 residents per household, with rates particularly low in Cambridge and Dukes' wards (both 1.9 residents per household).

Environmental

- 5.153 The entire coast line of Southport is included within designations of national and international significance. The coast as far north as Princess Park comprises the Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar/SPA and the Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI. North of Princes Park the coast comprises the Ribble & Alt Estuaries Ramsar/SPA and the Sefton Coast SSSI; the SAC designation stops at Princes Park. Between Ainsdale and Birkdale, the Sefton SSSI/SAC designation extends further inland than the Ramsar/SPA designations. Hesketh Golf Course SSSI lies adjacent to the western edge of Southport in the north. Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR overlaps these national and international designations on the coast by Ainsdale. The NNR continues along the coast southwards into Formby. The Ribble Estuary NNR extends a little way into Southport in the north, a slender southern extension of which lies adjacent to the northern edge of the town.
- 5.154 The combination of internationally and nationally significant designations therefore covers significant areas of land between the urban area of Southport and the coastline.
- 5.155 The coverage of Local Wildlife Sites on the coast (comprising 15 individual sites), is contiguous with the international and national designations but also extends further in land to abut almost the whole western edge of the urban area of Southport. Six other LWS are located to the east of Southport and south of Ainsdale.

- 5.156 A large proportion of the remaining land outside of the urban centres not included within the international or national designated areas are therefore located with the LWS network.
- 5.157 The ecological network in Southport is proportionally the most extensive of all of Sefton's sub-areas. In addition to the significant coverage of the designated areas there is a substantial proportion of priority habitats located in the region outside these designations. Several of these habitat areas are found within or on the outskirts of the Southport urban area (for example, at Hesketh Park and land associated with extant or disused railways). A few (very small) areas are located on the eastern fringes of Ainsdale and one small area is present centrally in Birkdale.
- 5.158 There is very little Grade 1 – 3a (i.e. Best and Most Versatile) agricultural land in Southport although what exists is mainly located on the eastern edge of Southport.
- 5.159 In summary, within the sub-area, new development has the potential to impact on the ecological network through a number of channels (e.g. creating physical barriers to wildlife through restricting growth of habitats movement of species, or through an increase in pollution). In addition any increase in population has the potential to impact upon the ecological network, where additional pressure is put on existing assets through increased footfall and visitor numbers. By the same token some development has the potential to enhance /extend the ecological network, through creation of open space in developments and introduction / improvement of management measures. The extent of the impact of development on the ecological network will depend on the extent of the development, its precise location and the level of mitigation (off or on site) which can be provided.
- 5.160 With regard to flooding, the majority of the urban area is within Flood Zone 1 with a strip along the coast, and relatively extensive areas to the north and east, within Flood Zones 2 and 3. The main risk is from tidal flooding for much of this area. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies areas at risk of surface water flooding across Southport, with 1 in 100 year annual probability. Groundwater flood risk is concentrated in the eastern fringes and rural area.

Social

- 5.161 Southport has one Town Centre (Southport) and four local centres (Churchtown, Shakespeare Street, Birkdale and Ainsdale). It also has large out of centre retail parks. As would be expected for a town of Southport's size, it benefits from a very good network of shops and services as well as a wide range of leisure and entertainment uses. Birkdale and Ainsdale both benefit from a good range of shops and services, including a library and a supermarket in each (although the library service is currently under review). Churchtown (split across two locations) is one of the Borough's most vibrant smaller centres, reporting very low unit vacancy rates in 2012 (2.3% compared to 11.9% nationally). Shakespeare Street Local Centre is smaller than the other local centres and has a more basic range of shops and services. In terms of access to these

centres, most of central Southport is within 800m of the Town Centre and /or Shakespeare St and Birkdale local centres.

- 5.162 In terms of deprivation, the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2007) shows that Southport contains one 'Lower Super Output Area', which is within the top 10% most deprived in England and several LSOAs within the top 20% most deprived.
- 5.163 Primary schools in the area have a small surplus of places, although 7 of the 20 schools have a small deficiency in places. Southport's secondary schools have slightly more capacity with just one school currently over-capacity. There is also capacity in childcare provision across all 7 wards, ranging from 7% to 26%.
- 5.164 GP surgeries are currently operating at slightly over capacity, with a deficit of 5 GPs (relatively low for a settlement of Southport's size). In terms of emergency services, the whole of the sub-area is within standard ambulance and fire service response times.
- 5.165 Green infrastructure provision is mixed with northern and central Southport, away from the Seafront, standing to benefit from additional provision. Large parts of these areas are situated beyond the recommended 1km distance from a borough, district or neighbourhood scale park and have relatively poor access to local parks and children's play areas. The picture for access to accessible nature space is similar. In terms of specific facilities, the Southport area includes several Golf Clubs, bowling greens and tennis courts.
- 5.166 Southport has a moderate supply of detached properties, comprising 19% of the total dwelling stock, which at 19% is slightly higher than the Borough-wide average of 15% in 2011), but still lower than is recorded nationally (22%). The sub-area has a reasonably high proportion of semi-detached properties (47%), few terraced properties (6% of the total dwelling stock) and the highest proportion of flats/apartments of any sub-area in the Borough, consisting of 28% of the stock compared to 20% generally.
- 5.167 Southport has a reasonably high level of owner-occupation (73% of all households); a level of social rented properties around half the Borough-wide average of 14% in 2011; and the highest rate of private rented accommodation in Sefton, comprising 19% of all households. However, due to a shortage of affordable housing in this area, it also identified an annual need (for a five year period) for 132 affordable dwellings.
- 5.168 Southport has witnessed high levels of housing growth over the period 1982/3 – 2011/12, delivering an average of 183 dpa.

Physical infrastructure

- 5.169 In terms of energy supply, discussions with National Grid indicated that there are no significant capacity constraints within the network in Sefton at present and that networks generally tend to grow to accommodate new development as and when development takes place.

- 5.170 In terms of utilities, discussions with United Utilities indicated that generally, there are no major wastewater or mains water capacity issues at present. However, with regard to mains water capacity, water supply reinforcement may be required in the sub-areas as a result of the various growth Options.
- 5.171 In addition, each growth Option has the potential to impact upon waste water capacity in the sub-area. With regard to wastewater capacity, United Utilities state that: “each of the options proposed is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the receiving wastewater treatment works; but meeting the needs of the Water Framework Directive and the Environmental Agency’s no deterioration policy, the increase growth may promote the Environmental Agency to issue a new environmental permit and therefore could drive the need for capital investment improvements to meet the needs of the new environment permit..”
- 5.172 In relation to both wastewater and mains water, United Utilities indicate due to the topographic of Sefton additional pumping stations and other supporting infrastructure assets may need to be installed; the number, location and scale of which will depend on the location, scale and timing of development. The construction and delivery of this additional infrastructure when and if required will require statutory and regulatory approval [including planning consent] and will therefore have an impact on development timescales.

Economic

- 5.173 Southport accommodates almost a third of all jobs in the Borough, at 31,960 jobs in 2011 (BRES 2011). This represents a fall of just 2.7% (-894 jobs) from 2008 – the lowest proportionate fall of any sub-area in the Borough. Employment is focussed particularly in the retail and health sectors (contributing around 9,700 jobs collectively in these two categories alone), along with social work and residential care activities, education, public administration accommodation and food and beverage service activities. It is currently estimated that around 2,130 Southport residents are claiming Job Seekers Allowance, which equates to around 3.9% of the working-age population²⁴. This is close to the peak of 4.1% seen in 2012 and is more than double the rate recorded in 2005 of 1.5%.
- 5.174 Southport is an internationally renowned visitor destination with over 11m tourist days a year. As such, one of the main priorities is the delivery of the Visitor Economy Strategy. This includes the £5m restoration of Kings Gardens and a well maintained Lord Street public realm as well as other environmental improvement initiatives. Another priority is the delivery of the Southport Investment Strategy which is broader than just physical regeneration and addresses health, housing, the environment, employment, community and learning. The Sefton Economic Strategy (2012 -22) also identifies scope for a

²⁴ ONS Job Seekers Allowance Claimant Count, March 2013

Business Improvement District in Southport, which would support town centre and visitor economy objectives.

- 5.175 Regarding highways congestion, the main pinch point is located at the junction of the A565 and A570 in Southport Centre, this being the junction of the main routes to the south through the Borough and to the east into West Lancashire. Further pinch points that experience levels of congestion and delay are located at: A565 / A5267 (south of town Centre junction); A565 / A5267 (north of Town Centre junction) and the A570 entering and exiting Southport at Kew. Traffic pressures also exist at the Town Lane / Lew roundabout.
- 5.176 Southport benefits from five rail stations (Southport, Birkenhead, Hillside and Ainsdale on the Liverpool to Southport Line and Meols Cop on the Southport to Manchester line), Southport station being the most heavily used. Birkenhead and Ainsdale have moderate usage and Hillside only low weekly usage figures. Bus routes in the sub-area provide high frequency services. There are also a number of cycle routes in the area. Southport has been a Cycling Town since 2008 and has received Local Sustainable Transport Funding to further increase cycle use in the area.

Overall Messages

- 5.177 As well as identifying individual sub-area development pressures and constraints, consideration has been given to pressures at a Borough-wide basis. The key issues emerging from this analysis are as follows:
- **Education** – There are currently surplus school places throughout the education system in Sefton Borough. This is particularly pronounced in the primary school tier. There are some areas with localised capacity issues, as identified, that will need to be addressed. In particular, Bootle and Maghull have a significant surplus of primary school places, whilst Netherton has significant capacity for both primary and secondary school places. Southport has less spare capacity, with a number of schools currently at or over capacity. Faith schools tend to be over-subscribed in certain parts of the Borough (particularly in Crosby and Formby).
 - **Emergency Services** – The provision of these services is unlikely to be a major constraint on growth. Most parts of the Borough are located within the standard ambulance and fire station response times. Consideration should be given to the likely impacts of development on the continual performance of these services and how additional infrastructure may be required to continue existing levels of performance.

- **Utilities** – Overall utilities provision is currently adequate. The potable water supply is not a constraint across Sefton. Wastewater Treatment works have varying capacities, as do electricity substations; however, for both of these utilities, the current infrastructure was deemed adequate for its current purpose. The key issue will involve assessing local infrastructure networks in the light of specific development proposals as, although future development can be accommodated, there will likely be a requirement for utilities upgrades across Sefton and specifically is an identified need for improvements to the mains water supply network in [Maghull and Aintree].
- **Health** – Overall GP surgeries are currently operating over capacity across all sub-areas. However, this should not impact on achieving the level of growth for any option as additional GPs can often be located in existing surgeries.
- **Transport** – Sefton Borough has a number of transport issues, with reasonably high levels of commuting in many areas, a high level of car usage and significant levels of net out-commuting to other settlements in the Liverpool City region. Whilst the Switch Island capacity and road infrastructure improvements [including the new Brooms Cross Road] will help to reduce congestion on all of its approaches, localised pinch points in the road network have been identified elsewhere. These include strategic links in Bootle (as it provides the main access routes into Liverpool); the A565 through Crosby; and the junction of the A565 and A570 in Southport Centre. Access to the port is also an issue.
- In general, the sub-areas are well served by public transport, both bus and rail. Whilst these issues have been brought out in this Study, specific capacity issues and costs to mediate these issues were not able to be identified. The Council will continue to work with Merseytravel to identify opportunities to improve the transport network to support their Local Plan.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Overall, the Borough is very well served for green infrastructure, with many parks, nature reserves and historic parks and gardens. The vast majority of the existing residential areas are located within 600m of a borough or district park, and those areas beyond this threshold tend to be within 300m of the open countryside contained within the Green Belt (although clearly not all of this land has full public access).
- **Flood risk:** Whilst most of the Borough is located within Flood Zone 1, many areas close to the coast (such as Bootle Docks; areas of land to the south of Formby, North Southport and north of Ince Blundell) are in Flood Zone 3, which would restrict the amount of land capable of coming forward for residential development in the years ahead. Many of these are rural areas. Surface water flood risk extends across Sefton, while groundwater, canal and reservoir flood risk is generally more localised.

- **Environmental assets:** Sefton has recreation and tourism pressures, particularly along the coast, which needs to be managed carefully. An increase in population will add to these pressures. In some areas the ecological network is fragmented with parts, particularly in urban areas, being isolated (for example across Bootle and the urban parts of Crosby and Formby). In such areas, opportunities should be sought to open up and enhance links within the ecological network and care taken, not to further isolate parts of the network. In Netherton and Maghull & Aintree there are no areas of international or national designation however there are important assets designated at a local level. For example, Netherton contains the Rimrose Valley and Canal, one of the largest LWS in Sefton, within which there are a significant number of botanical species and extensive wetland and grassland habitats. The extensive ecological assets within this network and their connectivity should be protected and enhanced, despite the absence of international or national designation. In Maghull & Aintree the ecological network crosses a large area of the sub-area. Important green corridors containing priority habitats run north – south and east-west along key linear habitat features such as the motorway and canal. These linear features provide connectivity between some of the ecological assets. Such links should be enhanced and protected.
- **Access to Shops and Services:** Overall, there is a good level of provision of retail and leisure facilities, focussed primarily in the higher-tier settlements of Southport and Bootle, but supported by a range of district and local centres accessible to the majority of the resident population.
- **Business Support:** Notwithstanding the current economic downturn, the local economy is performing reasonably well, although strong disparities remain between places such as Formby and Bootle, with the latter suffering from high levels of unemployment and joblessness. Significant challenges remain, and the Borough remains particularly vulnerable due in part to its high reliance on employment in the public sector and the relatively low number of jobs in the dynamic knowledge-based industries. A number of initiatives are in place to develop skills and ensure high levels of business support to aid set up and survival of small businesses and there are a number of regeneration initiatives both within and outside Sefton that will offer growth opportunities for local residents in the future. It will be imperative that employment growth keeps pace with growth in the labour force linked to new housing supply. The Employment Land Study Refresh has identified a need for additional employment sites which cannot be provided within the urban area. These are located within the green belt in Southport, Formby and Maghull, with the Southport site identified as a successor to Southport Business Park.

5.178

The key message of this baseline analysis is that the majority of the sub-areas analysed can accommodate only moderate levels of growth without further investment in infrastructure, whether this be new schools, GP surgeries, new wastewater treatment, new roads or other fundamental and essential infrastructure types without tipping points being breached. This highlights that

the level of growth required to meet government requirements across the Study Area will bring requirements for new infrastructure, this is not to say that new development cannot be, in principle, accommodated.

- 5.179 In summary, the physical infrastructure for utilities and transport varies by sub-area. Particularly for utilities, it is apparent that providers often plan on a reactive basis and therefore in some areas there is little headroom capacity to support growth. However, this may be indicative of utility companies not wanting to predict future capacity, but instead to implement a rolling set of upgrades to capacity as and when development comes forward. Similarly, transport issues are varied, with Sefton Council and the Highways Agency highlighting a number of capacity issues that may require larger schemes to mitigate impacts (even taking into account the ongoing improvements at Switch Island).
- 5.180 In determining the strategic distribution of growth to best meet the three Local Plan growth objectives, one of the key factors for consideration will be the marginal costs and benefits of required infrastructure provision. This will ensure that growth is focused on where development makes the most efficient use of the infrastructure needed to support it and help to underpin sustainability by providing infrastructure at a localised scale, redistributing existing excess capacity or surplus provision. Clearly though, infrastructure is just one of a number of factors determining the scale and location of growth. In defining the consequences of the various levels of housing growth we have taken account of the environmental constraints and capacity of each sub-area, as identified in the following sections.

6.0 Assessment Options

Introduction and Approach

- 6.1 Three spatial options have been identified through the Local Plan work undertaken to date – Urban Containment, Meeting Identified Needs and Optimistic Household Growth. The level and spatial distribution of development within each of these three options would generate very different demands on the social, economic and environmental infrastructure of Sefton Borough.
- 6.2 Section 5.0 and Appendix 4 identifies a range of social, economic and environmental criteria and benchmarked key indicators against current standards to analyse the extent to which they are being achieved/breached in Sefton. This is helpful in identifying whether certain parts of the Borough have greater ‘capacity’ to accommodate the pressures of further development than others.
- 6.3 This Section seeks to test the extent to which Sefton can accommodate various levels of growth before the identified tipping points are breached. A matrix has been developed for each sub-area against which the various options can be evaluated individually and in-combination, to determine the relevant merits (and consequences) of each option in terms of scale and location.

Methodology

- 6.4 The potential impacts of the scale of growth proposed in the Local Plan, and particularly the potential Green Belt releases for Options 2 and 3, have been modelled against the themes and quantifiable indicators set out in Section 5.0. Hence for each theme (e.g. Schools or Air Quality), a judgement has been reached concerning the extent to which the various levels of housing development would raise the emissions/impacts closer to identified thresholds/tipping points.
- 6.5 The various housing locations relating to each of the three options have been identified in addition to the potential urban sites and Green Belt releases in the draft Green Belt Study.
- 6.6 In addition to identified sites within the urban areas of the borough, potential exists for other land to come forward for development in the form of currently allocated urban greenspace, which may be re-allocated²⁵. For the purposes of

²⁵ The capacity of these sites, at a sub-area level, is as follows:

- Southport: 293 homes
- Formby: 40 homes
- Bootle: 198 homes
- Netherpton: 138 homes

this Study, this potential source of urban land as a contributor to housing supply has not been considered. However, the potential for this source to contribute to overall housing numbers could be seen as a potential supplement to housing that is not capable of being delivered from these sites within the plan period - thus giving more robustness to the housing figures assessed within the urban area under Option 1 and also potentially contributing to supply under Options 2 and 3.

- 6.7 It is not the role of this study to assess the individual merits of urban sites or potential Green Belt releases, which is a matter for the emerging Local Plan. As such, individual sites have been clustered within sub-settlement areas where they might be expected to have similar impacts/demands on the environmental, social and economic indicators in order to ascertain the risks and key consequences of each Local Plan option.
- 6.8 To this end, a series of matrices have been completed, modelling the likelihood and extent of impact, reversibility of that impact and the potential for mitigation (in Section 7.0) for each of the three Local Plan growth scenarios.
- 6.9 The potential impacts of each option upon the resources of Sefton and neighbouring authorities has also been determined through the production of a constraints map, consolidating data gathered during the baseline review and overlaid with each option to assist determination of potential effects. Potential impacts have been further investigated to determine in-combination effects of the different individual options.
- 6.10 The assessment uses a range of benchmark standards of provision (i.e. published ratios of typical community infrastructure per population), which are outlined in Appendix 5.
- 6.11 The following section draws together the evaluation of the sub-settlement areas and identifies locations where specific constraints may affect suitability and delivery.
- 6.12 This summary includes:
- Conclusions on the sub-areas identified and the extent to which each of the three growth options can be achieved without resulting in significant detrimental harm to Sefton’s environmental, social and economic infrastructure;
 - Issues of environmental capacity which need to be considered as cumulative impacts across the various sub-areas; and,
 - Comments on local facilities provision where relevant.
- 6.13 The analysis is illustrated with reference to mapping, which can be found in Appendix 1.
- 6.14 The housing yields for each sub-area (see Table 6.1, Table 6.4 and Table 6.8 below) have been identified as a method of allowing further consideration of the implications of growth. They are considered at a broad level and represent

maximum values from the physical capacity of land available. Deliverable capacities, therefore, may be less than the figures set out.

- 6.15 It is important to emphasise that the effects of the three different growth options on the Borough's existing physical, social and economic infrastructure have been quantified based upon the total number of homes that could be built under each option. As such, the Study assumes a gross increase in population across Sefton, and therefore a worst case scenario, whereas it is acknowledged that, for example, under Option 1, the population is likely to decrease, resulting in a loss of school pupils and GP patients and the threatened closure of other services due to decreased demand.
- 6.16 It is also acknowledged that new housing and employment development will be phased across the Local Plan period to 2030 and beyond. Consequently, this will allow infrastructure providers to plan for any increased/new provision, and/or any improvements that may need to be put in place to meet the needs of an increased population. It will also allow sufficient time for any necessary mitigation measures to be implemented in order to make development acceptable.

Overall Needs Based Requirement

Option 1: Urban Containment

- 6.17 Table 6.1 identifies the maximum total amount of dwellings potentially deliverable/developable over the plan period in the built-up area. The dwellings to be provided under this option would not meet identified needs, but are constrained to the level of housing land within the existing urban areas. The sites in the urban area comprising option 1 also form part of the housing supply for options 2 and 3.
- 6.18 As can be seen from the Table, this is higher than the 4,860 homes originally identified as required for Option 1 (as set out in Table 3.1). This is the absolute total amount of homes and does not take into account sites that may not be developed for a number of reasons, including prudent discounting as part of the SHLAA methodology. This table does not take account of the potential that not all the land will be developed during the Plan period. However, the Consequences Study will assume (unlikely that it is) that all of these sites will be developed to make sure that all the possible consequences are fully explored. Other sources of land within the urban area may become available through the Plan period, for example, re-allocation of the urban greenspace. These have not been included within the Consequences Study analysis as they were not available/known at the base date of the study.
- 6.19 This option does not make any allowance for the 1,113 under-provision of dwellings against the RS housing target, that has occurred since 2003 as Option 1 is based purely on the supply of urban sites and is not needs driven.
- 6.20 Under this option housing land is not distributed evenly across the Borough with potential sites clustered in Southport and Bootle, reflecting the higher

volume of brownfield sites in these areas and the past history of windfall delivery. In contrast, the amount of brownfield sites that could potentially come forward in Maghull and Aintree is less than two thirds the amount 'needed'. There is a similar undersupply in Formby, Crosby and Netherton.

Table 6.1 Household Implications of Option 1: Urban Containment

	Maximum Capacity in urban areas	Green Belt Sites	Total Dwellings	
			N	%
Southport	2,358	0	2,358	39
Formby	244	0	244	4
Maghull / Aintree	472	0	472	8
Crosby	673	0	673	11
Bootle	1,649	0	1,649	28
Netherton	591	0	591	10
Sefton Total	5,987	0	5,987	100

- 6.21 For the purposes of the Consequences Study, a 'worst case scenario' approach has been adopted, which assumes that all new homes will be occupied by new residents, although this is not likely to happen in practise as many existing Sefton residents will relocate from existing housing in the Borough.
- 6.22 For the purposes of the Consequences Study only, it is assumed that this level of housing (5,987) could be assumed to result in a population increase of 13,690. NLP's HEaDROOM Report (2012), which looked at the entire Borough's population rather than assesses population on new homes alone, identifies that under Option 1 the population would decline by almost 14,000²⁶. The Study therefore models the population related effects of development over the plan period in relation to identified indicators on a 'worst case' basis. This methodology is adopted in the absence of a robust, sub-area sensitive basis for distributing the population changes derived for the NLP HEaDROOM model. The findings the impacts analysis of the Study should be interpreted in this context. Economic issues are assessed in relation to dwelling numbers and are not subject to this limitation.
- 6.23 Assuming the same population growth as above and that all other elements remain constant, the 5,987 dwellings might also be expected to result in an increase in the number of school places required by 2,095, split equally between secondary and primary school places (although the precise number will ultimately depend upon the dwelling types and tenures brought forward). Based

²⁶ Note that the number of dwellings modelled for this option, however, were 196 dwellings p/a rather than 270 dwellings p/a. The population decline, based on a housing delivery figure of 270 dwellings p/a would not therefore be as great.

upon existing school capacity data, it is anticipated that the greatest need for additional primary school places would occur in Southport (under all 3 options) although a significant number of additional places would also be needed in Formby, Crosby and Maghull under options 2 and 3. Whilst there is generally greater capacity at secondary school level, the greatest need for additional places would occur in Southport and Maghull under options 2 and 3.

Economic Issues

- 6.24 It is estimated that under Option 1, the construction cost of delivering 5,987 dwellings and associated localised infrastructure costs (excluding abnormals, s.106 agreements etc) could come to circa **£711 million** over the Plan period²⁷. This would represent a significant amount of investment in the Borough and would be crucial in leveraging in further investment to help deliver a wide range of key direct and indirect economic benefits for Sefton.

Table 6.2 Economic Benefits – Option 1

	Urban Sites + Windfalls	Estimated Construction Cost	Direct Construction FTEs	Indirect Employment (FTEs)	GVA from direct investment
Southport	2,358	£280m	262	395	£21m
Formby	244	£29m	27	41	£2m
Maghull/Aintree	472	£56m	52	79	£4m
Crosby	673	£80m	75	113	£6m
Bootle	1,649	£196m	183	277	£15m
Netherton	591	£70m	66	99	£5m
Sefton Total*	5,987	£711m	665	1,004	£54m

*Note: Total does not sum due to rounding errors

- 6.25 Dividing the total construction cost²⁸ by the average turnover per employee in this sector for the North West region²⁹ could result in 6,650 person years of construction employment over the Plan period. In economic terms, there is an HM Treasury convention that 10 temporary construction jobs are equivalent to 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) job, so that around 665 FTE construction jobs could result across the Borough. Under this option, two-thirds of the jobs would result from homes constructed in the Southport and Bootle sub-areas.

²⁷ Based on a standard build cost of £99,000 per dwelling for the North West region, obtained from local volume housebuilders

²⁸ Note – construction cost increased by 20% to enable a comparison to be made with the construction turnover figures

²⁹ Estimated at £106,965 based on SME Enterprise Directorate: Small and Medium Enterprise Statistics for the UK and Regions 2012, NLP Calculations to FTE

- 6.26 Given that national construction firms sometimes use their own permanent workforce on projects, but also employ contractors with a proportion of construction workers drawn locally, it is difficult to identify the likely sources of workers to fill these construction jobs before contracts are agreed. However, based on experience elsewhere, and practicalities of labour sourcing, it would be reasonable to expect that a proportion of the construction jobs created by this level of development could be taken up by the local Sefton workforce, particularly if measures were put in place to encourage local recruitment and to tap into and/or raise local skills levels.
- 6.27 Major construction projects also involve purchases from a range of supplier firms (e.g. concrete, glass, steel manufacturers), who in turn, purchase from their own suppliers through the supply-chain. The relationship between the initial direct spending and total economic impacts is known as the 'multiplier effect', and reflects that an initial investment can have substantially larger economic benefits as the initial investment is transmitted through the economy.
- 6.28 It highly likely that a number of businesses operating as part of the local economy in each Sefton sub-area would benefit from trade linkages established during the construction of the proposed development. As a result, further indirect jobs would be supported locally across suppliers of construction materials and equipment.
- 6.29 In addition, local businesses would be expected to benefit to some extent from temporary increases in expenditure linked to the direct and indirect employment effects of the construction phase. This might relate to wage spending by workers in local shops, bars and restaurants and other facilities. These are referred to as induced effects.
- 6.30 Recent research indicates that the construction industry has an employment multiplier of 2.51³⁰. Applying this multiplier to the direct construction jobs derived above indicates that an additional 1,005 FTE jobs could be supported under Option 1 (in addition to the 665 FTE direct jobs), although not all of these jobs will be based in Sefton³¹.
- 6.31 The level of construction industry employment to be supported by the development is particularly important because of the impact the recession has had upon the sector. ONS data showing GDP change by industry highlights that the largest contractions in economic output were observed in the construction and manufacturing industries³². For example, during the recession, private

³⁰ Source: CEBR report for National Housing Federation (2013)

³¹ It is assumed that there will not be any significant displacement or leakage of benefits from this construction activity. This is on the basis that there is current spare capacity in the construction industry and it is unlikely that other schemes elsewhere will be cancelled/postponed as a result of this development taking place, for example due to labour shortages.

³² % Change since Q3 2007 to 2009. Source NLP Analysis, ONS 2009

sector housing and commercial construction declined by as much as 40%, contrasting with increases in the public sector.

- 6.32 The development of 5,987 dwellings would make a significant contribution towards ameliorating recent job losses in the sector. The analysis in Section 5.0 indicates that 405 Sefton JSA claimants are currently seeking employment in skilled construction and building trades, hence Option 1 could make a significant contribution to reducing unemployment in this sector. There is a particularly good match in Bootle, a location with 105 JSA claimants seeking employment in the construction industry, with the potential for 665 direct and over 1,000 indirect FTE jobs to be provided over the Plan period should all the housing developments under this option come forward. Clearly Option 1 represents the lowest level of housing for all three options and hence the impacts, whilst positive, would be significantly lower than those arising from the other two options.
- 6.33 New residential development in Sefton offers an opportunity to increase local expenditure. The scale of these benefits will be determined by the expenditure patterns of local residents and the extent to which residents of the new developments will move from elsewhere. At a site level, all residents will be new, but the greater the catchment area, the greater the likelihood that people will have moved locally, and hence do not compromise 'new residents' in the sense that they will change their spending patterns significantly and bring 'new' expenditure to an area. Generally, most people do not move significant distances when they move home.
- 6.34 Therefore, whilst it is estimated that the provision of 5,987 dwellings could accommodate around 13,690 people, many of these residents will relocate from elsewhere in the Borough. As household size is continuing to decline, it is questionable whether there will be little, if any, increase in the Borough's overall population as a result of this option. Therefore whilst there will undoubtedly be some indirect jobs created in the local area as a result of the new residents spending on goods, supplies and services, the net additional employment generated is expected to be low under this option.
- 6.35 Option 1 does not include the allocation of additional employment land, whereas Option 2 and 3 include the release of strategically located employment sites in the north and south of the Borough. The consequence of this is that, with a dwindling employment land supply, the economic competitiveness of Sefton could be affected adversely. Existing patterns and general volumes of travel to work would, however, be broadly retained, although there may be a growth in movements from Bootle and Southport.

Gross Value Added

- 6.36 The amount of construction proposed under Option 1 would also make a positive contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA), which provides a measure of economic productivity.

6.37 Based on 2012 Experian data, the construction sector in the North West region generates an average GVA per FTE worker of £81,260³³. Applying this to the net additional employment impact of the scheme indicates that the capital spending associated with the direct investment from the proposed development could deliver an additional £54m of GVA. It should be noted that not all of this will be retained locally to Sefton, much less the sub-areas identified.

Fiscal Implications

6.38 As noted in Section 5.0, the recent NHB funding round allocated c. £668 million to local authorities, including just under £2.4 million for Sefton Council itself (including previous delivery). Using the standard method of calculation contained within the NHB Calculator, it is estimated that should all 5,987 dwellings come forward (and based on the optimistic assumption that the NHB will continue over the Plan period, which is unknown at this time), this would generate just under £50m of NHB award.

Table 6.3 Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 1

	Urban Sites + Windfalls	Potential NHB Award (full 6-year payment)	Additional Council Tax Receipts per annum
Southport	2,358	£19m	£3.5m
Formby	244	£2m	£0.4m
Maghull / Aintree	472	£4m	£0.7m
Crosby	673	£5m	£1.0m
Bootle	1,649	£13m	£2.5m
Netherton	591	£5m	£0.9m
Sefton Total	5,987	£49m	£8.9m

6.39 This NHB income would also be enhanced by an additional Council Tax income of around £8.9 million per annum in perpetuity³⁴. The above figures represent a best case scenario. However, it is expected that the gross SHLAA figures would be subject to a non-implementation discount, as explained in the SHLAA methodology itself. As the award is for net dwelling completions, given the quality of the housing stock and the weaker market in Bootle, it is likely that this sub-area would make a lower net contribution to housing delivery than is envisaged by Table 6.3.

6.40 The resultant levels of housing are also likely to give rise to either s.106 contributions from the developers and/or tariff charges under the forthcoming

³³ Based on 2008 prices

³⁴Based on Council Tax Band D (£1,489.01) for 2013/14 Council Tax levy for Sefton Borough

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) system³⁵. The precise details of any potential s106 agreement will clearly be negotiated on a site-by-site basis, whilst Sefton Council has yet to agree a CIL schedule.

6.41 For the purposes of this Study, it is assumed that affordable housing will only come forward on sites accommodating 15 dwellings or more and 30% affordable housing will be sought. This reflects the approach which Sefton Council is currently applying and is anticipating adopting in its emerging Local Plan.

6.42 It should be noted that the Study does not make any allowance for discounting to reflect the reasonable assumptions regarding the potential non-implementation of a certain number of planning permissions. Instead, the Study adopts a worst case scenario approach and assumes that every site identified by the SHLAA will come forward for development. As such the potential fiscal benefits associated with each of the Options, as presented in Table 6.3 may appear slightly greater than what might actually be achieved.

Option 2: Meeting Identified Needs

6.43 Table 6.4 sets out the maximum amount of homes that could be provided for Option 2. This is the absolute total amount of homes and does not take into account sites that may not be developed for a number of reasons, including discounting as part of the SHLAA methodology and that not all the land will be developed during the Plan period. This explains why the total number of homes shown below is higher than the number of homes set out in Table 3.1. However, the Consequences Study will assume (unlikely that it is) that all of these sites will be developed to make sure that all the possible consequences are fully explored.

6.44 A key issue is that the housing supply under this option is not distributed evenly across the Borough with potential sites clustered in Southport and Maghull/Aintree and no Green Belt sites in either the Bootle or Netherton sub areas.

³⁵ Government has announced that where a Neighbourhood has a formal Neighbourhood Plan, they will receive 25% share of the CIL revenue resulting from development in their area. Where a Neighbourhood does not have a formal Neighbourhood Plan, they will receive a 15% share of the CIL revenue from development in their area, although this will be capped at £100 per council tax dwelling.

Table 6.4 Household Implications of Option 2: Meeting Identified Need

	Maximum Urban Capacity	Green Belt Sites	Total Dwellings	
			N	%
Southport	2,358	1,805	4,163	36
Formby	244	728	972	8
Maghull / Aintree	472	2,334	2,806	24
Crosby	673	832	1,505	13
Bootle	1,649	0	1,649	14
Netherton	591	0	591	5
Sefton Total	5,987	5,699	11,686	100

6.45 For the purposes of the Consequences Study, a 'worst case scenario' approach has been adopted, which assumes that all new homes will be occupied by new residents, although this is not likely to happen in practise as many existing Sefton residents will relocate from existing housing in the Borough.

6.46 For the purposes of the Consequences Study only, it is assumed that this level of housing (11,686) could be assumed to result in a population increase of 26,724. However, NLP's HEaDROOM Report (2012) indicates that, in reality, there would only be a minor population increase of around 3,380. The Study therefore models the population related effects of development over the plan period in relation to identified indicators on a 'worst case' basis. This methodology is adopted in the absence of a robust, sub-area sensitive basis for distributing the population changes derived for the NLP HEaDROOM model. The findings the impacts analysis of the Study should be interpreted in this context. Economic issues are assessed in relation to dwelling numbers and are not subject to this limitation.

6.47 Assuming the same population growth as above and that all other elements remain constant, the 11,686 dwellings might also be expected to result in an increase in the number of school places required by 4,090, split equally between secondary and primary school places (although the precise number will ultimately depend upon the dwelling types and tenures brought forward).

Economic Issues

6.48 In order to meet future employment needs of the Borough over the Local Plan period, and in response to the recommendations of the Council's Employment Land and Premises Study 'Refresh', a total of three employment sites would also be brought forward under Options 2 and 3. These sites, which are all located in the Green Belt, would respond to the demand for business park developments over the plan period in both north and south Sefton and for an industrial estate in Southport. The sites are as follows:-

1 Land south of Crowland Street, Southport

2 Land north of Formby Industrial Estate, Formby

3 Land bounded by School Lane, M58, Poverty Lane and railway, Maghull

6.49 Under Option 1, no additional employment sites would be delivered. Under Option 3, no further sites would be brought forward other than those that would be delivered as part of Option 2.

6.50 It is anticipated that the employment sites in Southport and Maghull will come forward as part of a larger, mixed-use scheme. Consequently the precise location and land take of the employment element is subject to change.

6.51 However, Table 6.5 provides an indication of the amount of floorspace and additional jobs that these three sites could deliver, based upon a plot ratio of 40% and employment density of 50%. As the ultimate end use of each site is not known at present, Table 6.5 indicates the number of jobs that could be generated should the sites be brought for a combination of B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage or Distribution) uses.

Table 6.5 Employment Benefits

	Employment Land (Gross) (Ha)	Employment Land (Net) (Ha)	B1/B2/B8 Jobs
Southport	7.5 - 10	3 - 4	600 - 800
Formby	14	5.6	1,120
Maghull/Aintree	25	10	2,000
TOTAL	46.5 - 49	18.6 - 19.6	3,720 - 3,920

Source: NLP Research adapted from the HCA's Employment Densities Guide (2010)

6.52 The delivery of these three employment sites is expected to deliver a number of economic benefits, including approximately 4,000 new jobs. However, it is unlikely that the entirety of these sites (and therefore all of the anticipated jobs) will come forward within the Local Plan period. It is expected that the three employment sites may also generate potential disbenefits, including increased journeys on the local road network, possibly leading to congestion during peak times, although this may be counter-balanced by fewer journeys to work outside the Borough.

6.53 The main environmental constraints relating to the three employment sites can be summarised as follows: both the Southport and Maghull sites are on Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land, whilst the latter is also within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone. The Formby site is located primarily within Flood Zone 2, whilst small parts of the site are also within Flood Zones 1 and 3. Ecological constraints are identified within the individual sub-settlement assessment summaries further on in this Section.

6.54 Under Option 2, the construction cost of delivering 11,686 dwellings and associated localised infrastructure costs (excluding abnormals, s.106

agreements etc) could come to around **£1.4 billion** over the Plan period. This is almost double the cost of delivering the level of housing under Option 1 and would represent a step change in the amount of investment injected into the local economy, with a wide range of direct and indirect economic benefits likely to result.

6.55 Following the same methodology as outlined in Option 1 above suggests that this level of investment could result in 12,980 person years of construction employment over the Plan period, or 1,298 FTE construction jobs across the Borough. Under this option, the jobs are weighted more towards Southport and Maghull/Aintree than before due to the absence of Green Belt sites in Bootle.

6.56 Again, local businesses would be expected to benefit to some extent from temporary increases in expenditure linked to the direct and indirect employment effects of the construction phase. It is estimated that some 1,960 indirect FTE jobs could be supported by the direct construction jobs identified for Option 2.

Table 6.6 Economic Benefits – Option 2

	Urban + 'best' Green Belt	Estimated Construction Cost	Direct Construction FTEs	Indirect Employment (FTEs)	GVA from direct investment
Southport	4,163	£495m	462	698	£38m
Formby	972	£115m	108	163	£9m
Maghull/Aintree	2,806	£333m	312	471	£25m
Crosby	1,505	£179m	167	252	£14m
Bootle	1,649	£196m	183	277	£15m
Netherton	591	£70m	66	99	£5m
Sefton Total	11,686	£1,388m	1,298	1,960	£105m

6.57 The development of almost 11,690 dwellings would make a significant contribution towards ameliorating recent job losses in the construction sector. As noted above, whilst there are 405 Sefton JSA claimants currently seeking employment in skilled construction and building trades, Option 2 could provide sufficient direct job opportunities in this sector to provide more than three times this level of demand (although clearly not all the jobs will be taken up by local Sefton residents).

6.58 New residential development will also offer an opportunity to increase local expenditure. Whilst the scale of this net additional expenditure under Option 1 is expected to be minimal due to the very low level of population growth likely to result, the additional 26,720 residents likely to be accommodated in the 11,686 new dwellings are likely to contribute to a significant net increase in population even allowing for internal movement and smaller household sizes. As such, the level of new expenditure available to support local centres, jobs and services is likely to be relatively high and would have a beneficial impact on Sefton's economy.

Gross Value Added

- 6.59 The amount of construction proposed under Option 2 would make a significant contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA). It is estimated that capital spending associated with the direct investment from the Option 2 housing development could deliver an additional £105m of GVA (although again not all of this will be retained locally to Sefton or the sub-areas identified).

Fiscal Implications

- 6.60 Using the standard method of calculation contained within the NHB Calculator, it is estimated that should all 11,686 dwellings come forward, this would generate approximately £95m of NHB award, almost double the amount that would be received compared to the likely allocation under Option 1 at a rate of 5.28m per year (also more than double Sefton's allocation for the latest NHB funding round).

Table 6.7 Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 2

	Urban + 'best' Green Belt	Potential NHB Award (full 6-year payment)	Additional Council Tax Receipts per annum
Southport	4,163	£33.8m	£6.2m
Formby	972	£7.9m	£1.4m
Maghull/Aintree	2,806	£22.8m	£4.2m
Crosby	1,505	£12.2m	£2.2m
Bootle	1,649	£13.4m	£2.5m
Netherton	591	£4.8m	£0.9m
Sefton Total	11,686	£95.0m	£17.4m

- 6.61 This would be weighted towards Southport and Maghull/Aintree to reflect the higher housing delivery levels in these areas.
- 6.62 This NHB income would also be enhanced by an additional Council Tax income of £17 million per annum over the long-term, which would go some way towards ameliorating the Council's enforced spending cuts and representing a valuable fiscal contribution at a very challenging time for the authority. Furthermore, and to an even greater degree than with Option 1, the resultant levels of housing will give rise to beneficial s106 contributions from the developers and/or tariff charges under the forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) system.

Option 3: Optimistic Household Growth

- 6.63 Table 6.8 sets out the maximum number of homes that could be provided for under Option 3. This is the absolute total amount of homes and does not take into account sites that may not be developed for a number of reasons, including discounting as part of the SHLAA methodology and that not all the land will be developed during the Plan period. This explains why the total number of homes shown below is higher than the number of homes set out in Table 3.1. However, the Consequences Study will assume (unlikely that it is)

that all of these sites will be developed to make sure that all the possible consequences are fully explored.

- 6.64 Again, these sites are not evenly distributed across the Borough, with potential sites heavily clustered in Maghull/Aintree and to a lesser extent in Southport and Formby. No additional Green Belt sites are identified in Crosby compared to Option 2 and no Green Belt sites are identified at all in Netherton or Bootle, (there being no Green Belt adjacent to Bootle).

Table 6.8 Household Implications of Option 3 - Optimistic Household Growth

	Maximum Urban Capacity	Green Belt Sites	Total Dwellings	
			N	%
Southport	2,358	1,820	4,178	32%
Formby	244	1,031	1,275	10%
Maghull / Aintree	472	3,499	3,971	30%
Crosby	673	832	1,505	11%
Bootle	1,649	0	1,649	13%
Netherton	591	0	591	4%
Sefton Total	5,987	7,182	13,169	100%

- 6.65 For the purposes of the Consequences Study a 'worst case scenario' approach has been adopted, which assumes that all new homes will be occupied by new residents, although this is not likely to happen in practise as many existing Sefton residents will relocate from existing housing in the Borough.
- 6.66 For the purposes of the Consequences Study only, it is assumed that this level of housing (13,169) could result in a population increase of 30,116. NLP's HEaDROOM Report (2012), however, which looked at the entire Borough's population, identifies that under Option 3 the population would only increase by about 11,300. The Study therefore models the population related effects of development over the plan period in relation to identified indicators on a 'worst case' basis. This methodology is adopted in the absence of a robust, sub-area sensitive basis for distributing the population changes derived for the NLP HEaDROOM model. The findings the impacts analysis of the Study should be interpreted in this context. Economic issues are assessed in relation to dwelling numbers and are not subject to this limitation.
- 6.67 Assuming the same population growth as above and that all other elements remain constant, 13,169 dwellings might be expected, for example, to result in an increase in the number of school places required by 4,610, split equally between secondary and primary school places (although the precise number will ultimately depend upon the dwelling types and tenures brought forward).

Economic Issues

- 6.68 Under Option 3, the construction cost of delivering 13,169 dwellings and associated localised infrastructure costs (excluding abnormals, s.106 agreements etc) could come to around **£1.56 billion** over the Plan period. This is more than double the cost of delivering the level of housing under Option 1, but only 12% higher than that associated with Option 2. As with Option 2, it would represent a step change in the amount of investment injected into the local economy, with a wide range of direct and indirect economic benefits likely to result.
- 6.69 Following the same methodology as outlined in Options 1 and 2 suggests that this level of investment could result in 14,626 person years of construction employment over the Plan period, or 1,463 FTE construction jobs across the Borough. Under this option, the jobs are weighted more towards Maghull/Aintree than before due to the high number of 'reserve' Green Belt sites in this location compared to elsewhere.
- 6.70 Again, local businesses would be expected to benefit to some extent from temporary increases in expenditure linked to the direct and indirect employment effects of the construction phase. It is estimated that some 2,209 indirect FTE jobs could be supported by the direct construction jobs identified for Option 3.

Table 6.9 Economic Benefits - Option 3

	Urban sites + 'best / reserve' Green Belt	Estimated Construction Cost	Direct Construction FTEs	Indirect Employment (FTEs)	GVA from direct investment
Southport	4,178	£496m	464	701	£38m
Formby	1,275	£151m	142	214	£12m
Maghull/Aintree	3,971	£472m	441	666	£36m
Crosby	1,505	£179m	167	252	£14m
Bootle	1,649	£196m	183	277	£15m
Netherton	591	£70m	66	99	£5m
Sefton Total	13,169	£1,564m	1,463	2,209	£119m

- 6.71 The development of 13,169 dwellings would make a significant contribution towards ameliorating recent job losses in the construction sector. As noted above, whilst there are 405 Sefton JSA claimants currently seeking employment in skilled construction and building trades, Option 3 could provide sufficient direct job opportunities in this sector to provide almost four times this level of demand (although clearly not all the jobs will be taken up by local Sefton residents).

6.72 New residential development will also offer an opportunity to increase local expenditure. Whilst the scale of this net additional expenditure under Option 1 is expected to be minimal due to the very low level of population growth likely to result, the additional 30,116 residents likely to be accommodated in the 13,169 new dwellings are likely to contribute to a significant net increase in population even allowing for internal movement and smaller household sizes. As such, the level of new expenditure available to support local centres, jobs and services is likely to be the highest of all the three scenarios and would have a substantial beneficial impact on Sefton's economy.

Gross Value Added

6.73 The amount of construction proposed under Option 3 would make a significant contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA). It is estimated that capital spending associated with the direct investment from the Option 3 housing development could deliver an additional £119m of GVA (although again not all of this will be retained locally to Sefton or the sub-areas identified).

Fiscal Implications

6.74 Using the standard method of calculation contained within the NHB Calculator, it is estimated that should all 13,169 dwellings come forward, this would generate approximately £107m of NHB award, more than double the amount that would be received compared to the likely allocation under Option 1 at a rate of c.£6m per year (also more than double Sefton's allocation for the latest NHB funding round).

Table 6.10 Potential Fiscal Benefits – Option 3

	Urban + 'best / reserve' Green Belt	Potential NHB Award (full 6-year payment)	Additional Council Tax Receipts per annum
Southport	4,178	£34.0m	£6.2m
Formby	1,275	£10.4m	£1.9m
Maghull/Aintree	3,971	£32.3m	£5.9m
Crosby	1,505	£12.2m	£2.2m
Bootle	1,649	£13.4m	£2.5m
Netherton	591	£4.8m	£0.9m
Sefton Total	13,169	£107.2m	£19.6m

6.75 This would be weighted towards Southport and Maghull/Aintree to reflect the higher housing delivery in these areas.

6.76 Furthermore, and to an even greater degree than with Option 1 (and to a lesser extent Option 2), the resultant levels of housing will give rise to beneficial s.106 contributions from the developers and/or tariff charges under the forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) system.

Spatial Analysis

6.77 The remainder of this section analyses the likely impacts of the additional development by sub-settlement area with the exception of the following, where the impacts of the three growth options is considered at a sub-area level:-

- GP provision
- School places (primary and secondary)
- Affordable housing
- Deprivation

In order to compare various levels of growth, the potential impacts of each housing cluster has been graded based on their relationship to identified constraints and infrastructure provision.

Assessment Matrices – Scoring

6.78 For ease of reference the criteria impacts are graded green, orange and red. The colour coding relates to potential risk of impact and whilst this potential should preferentially be kept as low as possible, a high risk does not necessarily mean that development in a particular sub-area or sub-settlement area cannot be delivered. These are identified on the basis of the tipping point analysis in Section 5.0 and Appendix 4, but have been related to each individual sub-settlement area based on the likely scale of development and the extent to which that tipping point is likely to be breached as a result.

6.79 In terms of assessing the implications for highways and public transport, it was important to understand the level and geographic spread of the development options along with the traffic flow generation and distributions associated with these proposals. As such, trip rates have been derived from the TRICS database for peak hours, allowing trip generation for the proposals to be assessed. These trip rates are presented in Table 6.11.

Table 6.11 Assumed Trip Rates– Peak Hours

	AM Peak		PM Peak	
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
Trip Rate (per dwelling)	0.14	0.33	0.34	0.2

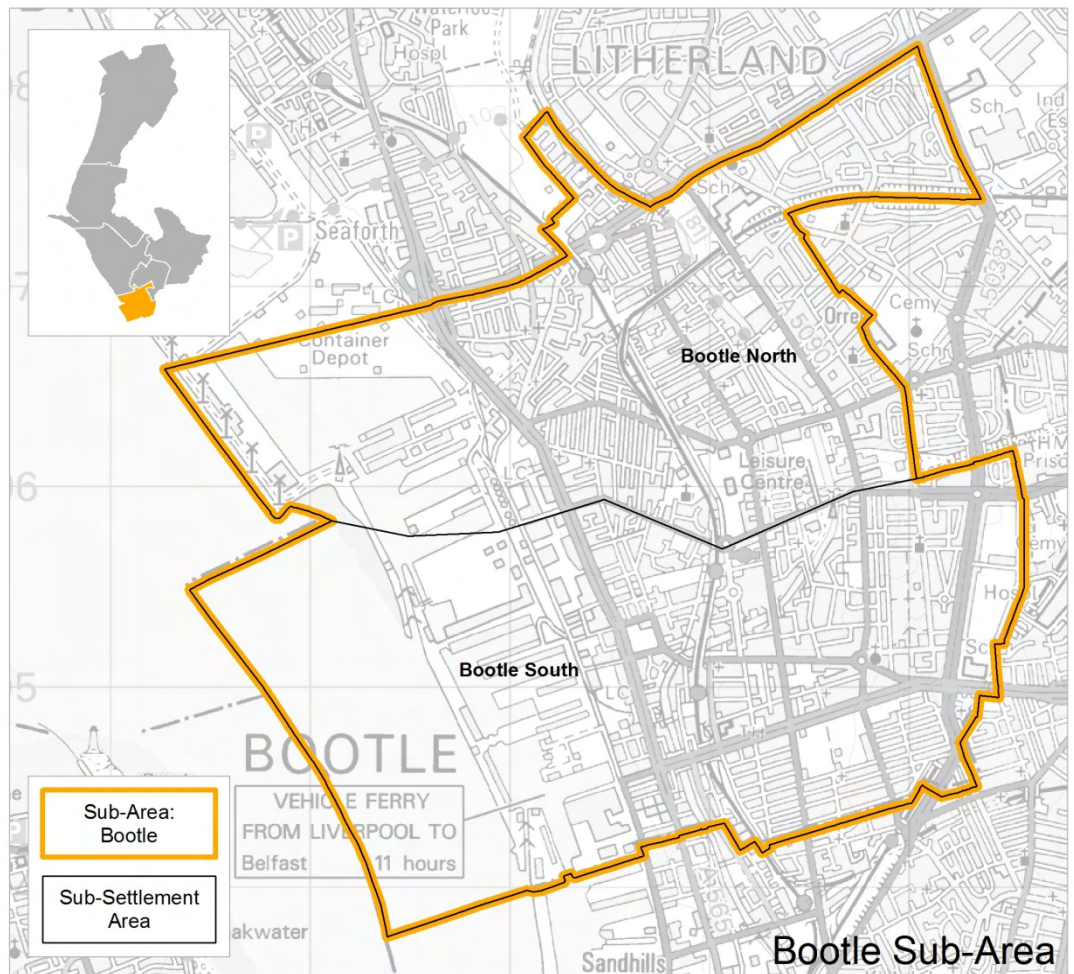
6.80 The trips generated for the proposed sites have been distributed around the network in order to understand the implications across the borough of the proposals. Information obtained from census data for each individual ward in Sefton has been used to distribute the generated traffic based on the current locations of workplaces for each area. The results for each area are summarised below with a full consolidated table provided in Appendix 6. In

addition, a plan showing the key traffic flow pinch-points in the borough is included at Appendix 7³⁶.

6.81

These trip generation figures and distributions have been used to assess the potential impacts of the various option proposals in each sub area to understand the impacts in that area and provided a basis for understanding the potential scale of impacts and the spread of these across the Borough. This has been undertaken in conjunction with the existing conditions of the transport network in the area to allow the scoring matrices to be developed.

Bootle Sub Area



6.82

Bootle is an urbanised area which has seen a high rate of development in the past (average of 110 homes built each year from 1982/3 - 2011/12). Based on 2011 population estimates, it accommodates around 13% of the Borough's

³⁶ Please note this does not cover the Formby area. The impacts of the Options on the whole of Sefton, including Formby, can be seen in 'Sefton Local Plan - Transport Modelling Option Testing' Mott McDonald 2013.

total population. However, due to low house prices in the area and the large proportion of existing social rented properties, limited additional affordable housing will be required over the Plan period.

- 6.83 The area (Bootle North and Bootle South) also suffers from particularly high levels of deprivation. Improving the quality of place, through the provision of new housing, may have a positive impact on social capital and social cohesion and contribute towards enhanced economic vitality. However, achieving these outcomes is usually dependent on a more holistic approach towards regeneration, which also includes people-related, as well as place-related, interventions.
- 6.84 Due to the location of Bootle, there no Green Belt sites adjacent to it. The majority of potential sites considered comprise urban, brownfield sites with the exception of three sites which are identified as greenspace in the Sefton UDP.

Table 6.12 Bootle Sites

	Bootle North	Bootle South	Bootle Total
Urban Sites	1,239 units (51 sites)	410 units (32 sites)	1,649 units (83 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	0	0	0
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,239 units (51 sites)	410 units (32 sites)	1,649 units (83 sites)

- 6.85 As Table 6.12 indicates, Bootle has the potential to deliver 1,649 units on 83 urban sites, which includes 144 dwelling allowance for windfalls to reflect high levels of windfall provision in the area in the past. Of this, the majority (76%) is located in the area defined as North Bootle, with just 410 units (24%) potentially achievable in South Bootle (see Bootle and Netherton 'SHLAA and Green Belt Sites' Map at Appendix 1).
- 6.86 The Assessment Matrix for Bootle (Appendix 8) relates to the individual clusters of residential development in Bootle North and South. As the sites in question for Option 1 are all within the urban area, the consequences will be the same for all three Local Plan options for the Bootle area.
- 6.87 The impact of each Option may give rise to the need for an additional 2 GPs, given that existing surgeries are currently at capacity. This will depend on the change in population in area and can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.
- 6.88 There is adequate capacity within both primary and secondary schools across Bootle and Netherton (which generally accommodate a large number of pupils from each other's area) to accept the additional primary and secondary school pupils that may be generated by this level of growth.

- 6.89 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies two Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within Bootle (CDA 10 and CDA 14), the impact of these upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government's advice is that only river and tidal flood risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Bootle North

All Options

- 6.90 This level of growth would result in the development of a considerable number of previously developed sites within the urban area. A number of these are located adjacent to a main road, where issues such as noise, congestion and the impact of additional traffic upon air quality would need to be taken into consideration. Contaminated land may also be an issue, challenging the viability of redeveloping some of these previously developed sites. However, one potential housing site is currently identified as Accessible Nature Space.
- 6.91 Existing key infrastructure provision is reasonable including access to areas of existing public open space, a local shopping parade and post office. However, a number of new homes would be beyond the recommended walking distance of the Centres at Bootle and/or Seaforth and a leisure centre. There are, however, good public transport links within the area.
- 6.92 Eight housing sites in this area are located within 500m of local nature designations. Five housing sites contain priority habitats. The proximity of new housing to these local biodiversity assets may result in increased public pressure that could lead to habitat degradation, damage or rising disturbance effects. Additionally, population growth in Bootle North has the potential to generate increased visitor use to the coastal areas of Sefton, which could lead to similar effects.
- 6.93 Bootle North has a moderate assemblage of species of conservation priority, based on species density per tetrad across Sefton. None of the sites are used for agricultural purposes, which is of considerable importance for many species groups and of particular significance, as a resource, used by birds using the internationally important coastal areas. The potential effect upon priority habitats and the connectivity within the ecological network, in combination with the species density recorded in Bootle North, may lead to adverse effects upon species.
- 6.94 The transport modelling work undertaken for this option indicates that development would result in a high level of additional local trips; however, given that it is likely that these will generally involve short journey lengths, this means that they can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport. It also means that the additional trips would have a minimal impact on the wider network across the Borough.

6.95 However, should this level of housing development come forward over the Plan period, this would also generate additional car journeys on the A565 and A5036, placing increased pressure on roads that already experience high journey times and potentially increase congestion in the area. Additional rail and bus passengers generated by this option could, however, be generally accommodated on existing services, although trains are often full during peak times.

Bootle South

All Options

6.96 Option 1 would result in the development of a large number of previously developed sites within the urban area. As such, a number of dwellings would be constructed on sites located adjacent to a main road and/or waterway, where issues such as noise, congestion, impact on air quality and flooding would have to be taken into consideration. Contaminated land may also be an issue, challenging the viability of redeveloping some of these previously developed sites.

6.97 No housing sites are located within 500m of any nature conservation designations within Sefton, although four sites are located within 500m of locally designated sites in the neighbouring Liverpool district. One site in Bootle South contains priority habitats (predominantly broadleaved woodland). Although no sites lie in proximity to nature conservation sites, the population growth in Bootle South has the potential to generate increased visitor use to the coastal areas of Sefton, which could lead to disturbance or degradation effects.

6.98 Bootle South has a comparatively low species density. No sites are used as agricultural land. Proportionally small areas of the priority habitats resource are likely to be affected. Option 1 is unlikely to have significant adverse effects upon priority species abundance or distribution.

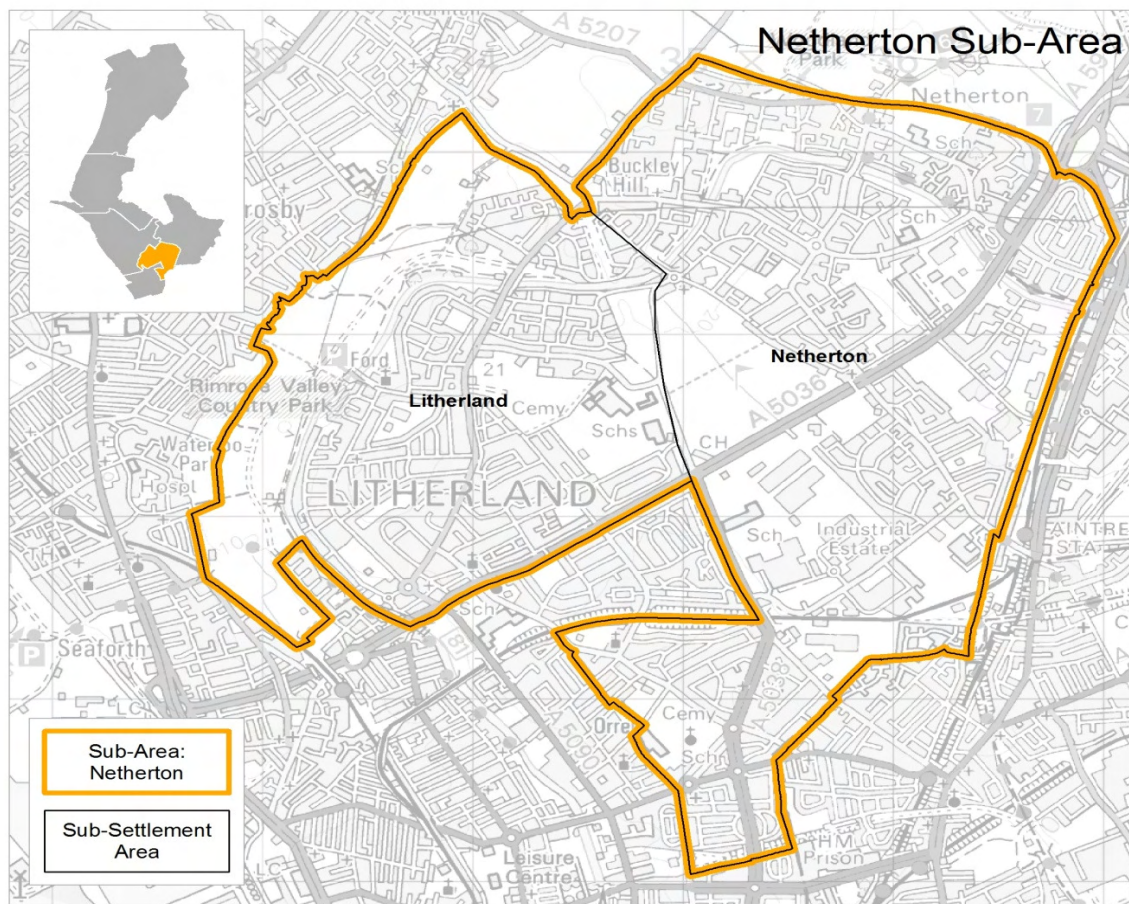
6.99 Sensitive built-form constraints, including Conservation Areas and listed buildings, would need to be taken into consideration, although this does not present a fundamental constraint to potential infill development.

6.100 Existing key infrastructure provision in Bootle South is good. The majority of the potential new housing sites would be located within an acceptable walking distance of local shops and services, as well as public open space, although a large proportion of new dwellings would lie beyond the recommended distance of a leisure centre.

6.101 Based upon journey to work data for the area, predicted trip distributions again indicate that a significant number of generated trips are likely to remain local, in the vicinity of the site, and as such can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths.

- 6.102 However even the residual traffic generated will add further pressures to the A565 corridor and A5036, which already experience congestion and high journey time delays.
- 6.103 Given the urban character of Bootle and the spread of bus routes through the area, pressures on the bus network are likely to be limited and dispersed. Figures for existing bus passenger numbers along the A565 south and A5036 are moderate. Additional rail and bus passengers generated by this option could be generally accommodated on existing services, although trains are often full during peak times.

Netherton Sub-Area



- 6.104 Netherton is a predominantly built up area which has seen a relatively high rate of development in the past (an average of 79 dpa 1982/3 - 2011/12). Based on 2011 population estimates, it accommodates around 14% of the Borough's total population.
- 6.105 Despite low house prices in the area and the likelihood of social rented properties becoming available, additional affordable housing will be required over the Plan period (equal to around 53 dpa). However, the level of housing that would be brought forward under each option in this area would be unlikely to meet identified social housing needs (based on sites comprising of 15 dwellings or more delivering 30% affordable housing).

- 6.106 The area (both Netherton and Litherland) also suffers from particularly severe levels of deprivation. As with Bootle, improving the quality of place, through the provision of new housing, may have a positive impact on social capital and social cohesion and contribute towards enhanced economic vitality. However, achieving these outcomes is usually dependent on a more holistic approach towards regeneration, which also includes people-related, as well as place-related, interventions.
- 6.107 Given the essentially urbanised nature of Netherton, the only areas of Green Belt lie to the west of the area (along Rimrose Valley County Park) and to the north of the Northern Perimeter Road (south of the proposed Switch Island link road). However, Sefton considers that these areas are unsuitable for housing (due to the need to maintain critical gaps between settlements) and therefore no potential Green Belt housing sites have been identified in Netherton.
- 6.108 As Table 6.13 indicates, Netherton has the potential to deliver 589 units on 32 urban sites. A further 2 dwelling allowance for windfalls has been made (reflecting the low levels of windfall provision in the area in the past). Of this, the majority (64%) is located in the sub-settlement area defined as Netherton, with 217 units (36%) potentially achievable in Litherland (see Netherton and Bootle 'SHLAA and Green Belt Sites' Map in Appendix 1).

Table 6.13 Netherton Sites

	Netherton East	Litherland	Total
Urban Sites	374 units (17 sites)	217 units (15 sites)	591 units (32 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	0	0	0
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	0	0
TOTAL	374 units (17 sites)	217 units (15 sites)	591 units (32 sites)

- 6.109 The impact of the new homes may give rise to the need for an additional 1 GP. This will depend on the change in population in the area and can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time. However, there is adequate capacity within both primary and secondary schools across Netherton and Bootle (which generally accommodate a large number of pupils from each other's area) to accommodate the additional primary and secondary school pupils that may be generated by this level of growth.
- 6.110 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies one Critical Drainage Area (CDA) within Netherton (CDA 9), the impact of this upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government's advice is that only river and tidal flood risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Netherton

All Options

- 6.111 As Netherton is primarily an urban area, further growth is mostly dependent on the development of a large number of previously developed sites, a couple of which are located adjacent to a major road or railway line.
- 6.112 There are few environmental constraints limiting potential for expansion in this area, however, a number of sites are within 500m of a local nature conservation designation. Two sites contain priority habitats, one of which also lies partly within the Dismantled Railway Aintree Triangle Local Wildlife Site (LWS) (this housing site and the LWS both overlap into the Maghull and Aintree area). A further site in the north of Netherton is located adjacent to broad-leaved woodland priority habitat. Although no sites lie in proximity to nature conservation sites, the population growth in Netherton has the potential to generate increased visitor use to the coastal areas of Sefton, which could lead to disturbance or degradation effects.
- 6.113 Netherton has a moderate species density. Although none of the sites are used as agricultural land, the potential effect upon priority habitats and the connectivity within the ecological network, in combination with the moderate species density may lead to adverse effects upon species in terms of abundance or distribution.
- 6.114 Despite the urban nature of the area, existing key infrastructure provision could be improved. The majority of new dwellings would be located beyond 800m of Netherton local centre and a post office. Access to a local shopping parade, designated parkland and a leisure centre would also be less than satisfactory for a large number of dwellings although many would be within an acceptable distance of accessible nature space. Public transport in the area does improve access to many of these facilities.
- 6.115 The proposed sites in Netherton are located within existing residential areas, with close proximity to the existing road network. The routes in this area all experience significant delays in journey times, most notably on the A5036. Whilst the proposed Thornton-to-Switch Island Link Road will improve some journey times around this part of the Borough, the additional trips generated under this option are likely to add traffic pressure to an already constrained part of the network. The level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in the vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths. In addition, and given they local nature of these trips, they are unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the wider road network.
- 6.116 The information provided by Merseytravel indicates that frequent bus services are provided around Netherton, along the A5036, A5207, A59 and other routes. As a consequence, additional trips resulting from these new housing developments could be accommodated within the current levels of service provision.

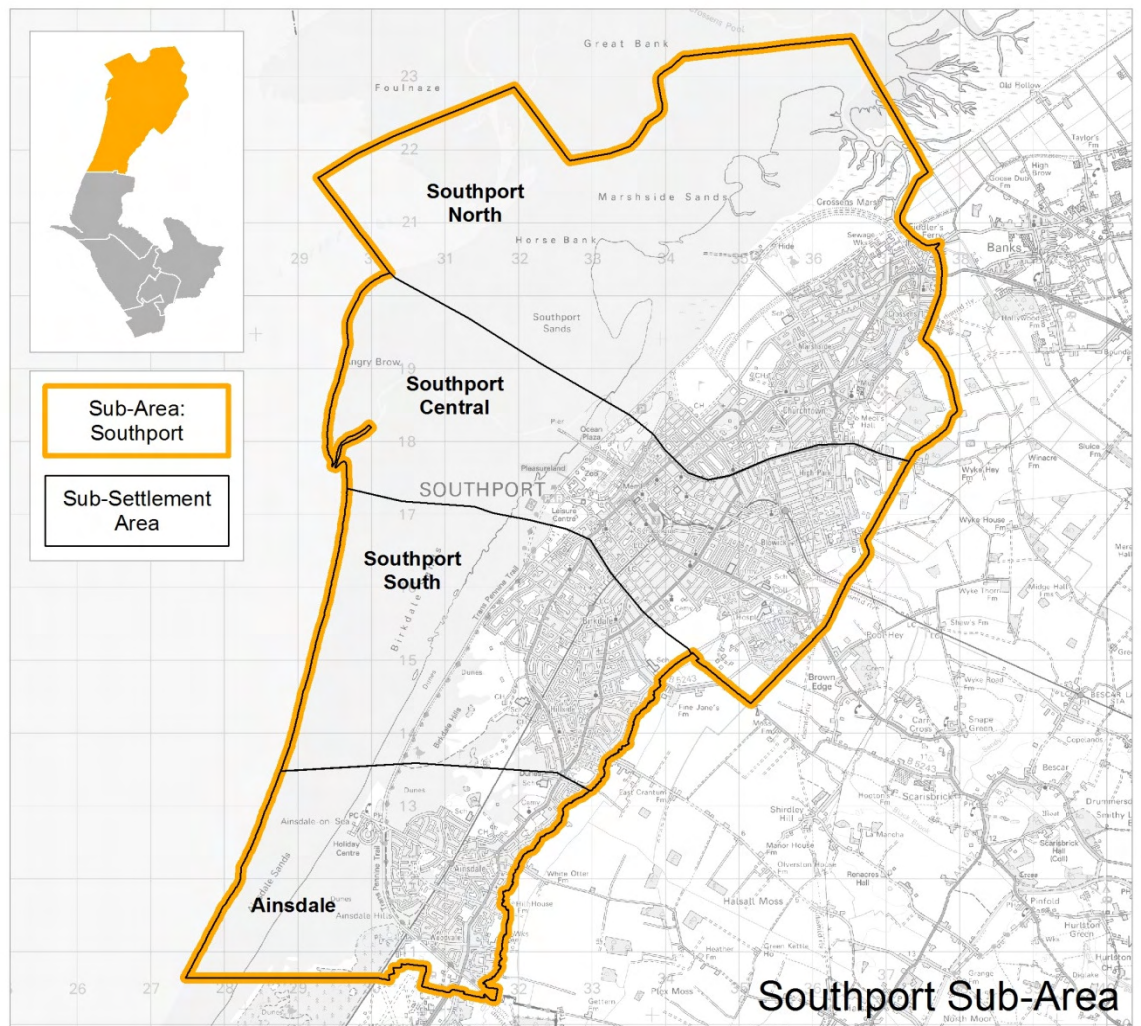
- 6.117 Old Roan and Aintree stations are located towards the edge of Netherton, and as a consequence they are not particularly accessible to many of the potential new housing sites coming forward in this area. The stations have a moderate level of weekly passengers numbers and the additional trips from the sites could be accommodated onto existing services if access were improved.

Litherland

All Options

- 6.118 Given the primarily urban nature of Litherland, all potential housing sites represent previously developed land within the built up area, a small number of which border a main road or waterway.
- 6.119 Access to key Infrastructure provision such as a local centre, post office and leisure centre is less than satisfactory for a large number of sites although the majority of the potential housing sites are within the recommended distance of a local shopping parade and green infrastructure provision.
- 6.120 In terms of effects upon areas of nature value, four of the sites in this area are located adjacent to Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS. A total of 11 sites are within 500m of this or other locally designated nature conservation sites, but none are located within 500m of nationally or internationally significant designations. Although no sites lie in proximity to nature conservation sites, the population increase in Litherland may generate increased visitor use of the coastal areas of Sefton, which could lead to disturbance or degradation effects.
- 6.121 Similar to Netherton, Litherland possesses a moderate species density. Although none of the sites are used as agricultural land, the potential effect upon priority habitats and the connectivity within the ecological network, in combination with the moderate species density, may lead to adverse effects upon the abundance or distribution of priority species assemblages.
- 6.122 The proposed sites in Litherland are within existing residential areas, in close proximity to the existing road network. The derived trip distribution illustrates that the majority of trips will be in the north via the A565. This part of the network currently experiences significant journey time delays, although the number of trips likely to be generated by the level of development proposed is likely to apply only limited pressure to the network. The proposed link road between Thornton and Switch Island will also alleviate some pressures on this part of the network.
- 6.123 The information provided by Merseytravel indicates the presence of high frequency bus services around Litherland along the A5036 and B5422. Seaforth and Litherland rail station is located on the edge of Litherland. This station currently experiences moderate levels of weekly passenger numbers. Additional rail and bus passengers generated by this option could, however, be generally accommodated on existing services, although trains are often full during peak times.

Southport



- 6.124 Southport stretches from the predominantly built-up area of Southport to the north, through Birkdale and down to Ainsdale in the south (see Southport Maps at Appendix 1).
- 6.125 Pockets of Green Belt are located to the northwest and northeast and a large swathe of Green Belt to the southwest, much of which is also a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The boundary with West Lancashire forms much of Southport's eastern boundary.
- 6.126 Southport has seen a high rate of housing development in the recent past (an average of 183 dpa 1982/3 - 2011/12), equivalent to a third of the Borough's total housing provision. Based on 2011 population estimates, it accommodates a similar proportion (33%) of the Borough's total population.
- 6.127 However, due to relatively high house prices in the area (relative to income), and limited affordable housing supply, almost half of the Borough's future affordable housing (132 dpa) will need to be provided in Southport.

- 6.128 Whilst parts of Southport are affluent, other parts (Southport North and Southport Central) also contain some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the Borough. As with Bootle and Netherton, improving the quality of place, through the provision of new housing, may have a positive impact on social capital and social cohesion and contribute towards enhanced economic vitality. However, achieving these outcomes is usually dependent on a more holistic approach towards regeneration, which also includes people-related, as well as place-related, interventions.
- 6.129 Approximately half of the potential sites considered are brownfield urban sites and the other half are Green Belt sites.

Table 6.14 Southport Housing Sites

	Southport North	Southport Central	Southport South	Ainsdale	Southport Sub-Area Total
Urban Sites	296 units (38 sites)	1,598 units (95 sites)	196 units (35 sites)	288 units (25 sites)	2,358 units (193 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	124 units (1 site)	781 units (3 sites)	0	900 units (4 sites)	1,805 units (8 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	0	0	15 units (1 site)	15 units (1 site)
TOTAL	420 units (39 sites)	2,379 units (98 sites)	176 units (35 sites)	1,203 units (30 sites)	4,178 units (202 sites)

- 6.130 Overall, Table 6.14 indicates that Southport could deliver 1,618 units on 193 SHLAA sites, plus a further 589 dwelling allowance for windfalls, reflecting the high levels of windfall provision in the area in the past. Of this, the majority (68%) is located in the area defined as Southport Central, 13% in Southport North, 12% in Ainsdale and 7% in Southport South.
- 6.131 An additional 1,820 dwellings could potentially be delivered on nine Green Belt sites, 50% of which would be located in Ainsdale, 43% in Southport Central and 7% in Southport North.
- 6.132 Whilst there is some capacity within primary and secondary schools at present, this is generally quite limited and insufficient to accommodate the additional number of pupils that may be generated. If all the new homes were to be occupied by new residents, a further 257 primary school places may be required under Option 1, 573 under Option 2 and 575 under Option 3, the equivalent of 1 – 2 additional primary schools. Regarding secondary schools, after existing surplus capacity has been considered, a further 122 additional secondary school places may be required under Option 1, 438 under Option 2 and 440 under Option 3. These figures, however, depend on the actual change in population and pupil roll numbers can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.
- 6.133 Given that existing GP surgeries in Southport are currently operating over capacity, a need may arise for an additional 3 GPs under Option 1 and 6 GPs under Options 2 and 3. Similar to schools, this depends on the actual change

in the local population and can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.

- 6.134 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies five Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within Southport (CDAs: 18 - 22), the impact of these upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government's advice is that only river and tidal flood risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Southport North

Option 1

- 6.135 Southport North is highly constrained by Green Belt land located immediately to the north, east and west of the urban area and the boundary with West Lancashire. Due to its coastal location, much of the land to north and west (including a large proportion of land within the urban area) is within Flood Zones 2 and/or 3.
- 6.136 Several sites in this area lie in proximity to nature conservation sites. Four sites lie within 500m of SPA or Ramsar designations, eight sites are within 500m of a SSSI, one is within 500m of a NNR and 12 are within 500m of a LWS. Two sites also lie within 500m of a locally designated site within West Lancashire. Although no housing sites lie adjacent to or within any nature conservation sites, the proximity of some these sites to the nature conservation areas is such that significant effects may result, for example in the form of disturbance, degradation, fragmentation. The population growth in Southport may also generate increased visitor use to the coastal areas of Sefton, which could lead to disturbance or degradation effects.
- 6.137 Southport North possesses a high species density relative to the rest of Sefton. Although no sites will result in the loss of agricultural land or priority habitats, the high species density and proximity of housing sites to the coastal areas is such that adverse effects upon priority species abundance or distribution are possible.
- 6.138 The majority of potential housing sites are small scale infill sites located adjacent to a main road. As such, a large number of them have also been previously developed.
- 6.139 Access, on foot, to key Infrastructure provision such as shops and services and a leisure centre would be less than satisfactory for a large number of new homes. Public transport, however, improves this. Access to green infrastructure for the majority of sites is good.
- 6.140 The level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in the vicinity of the sites and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths. The predicted additional trips to the east (via the A570)

increase the pressure along this route, which already suffers from some congestion and levels of delay. These vehicles then head out of Sefton into West Lancashire and will impact on the wider regional highways network. Routes into the centre of Southport from the north are generally congestion-free, with only a limited number pinch points along the route. Given the relatively modest housing numbers proposed in this option, any increased traffic pressure will be limited.

- 6.141 The information provided by Merseytravel indicates that all areas of Southport are well served by buses operating frequent services. The numbers of boarders are generally low to the north of Southport town centre, indicating that it is likely that spare capacity on the network can accommodate the additional demand generated by the housing proposed in Option 1. No rail stations are located in Southport North. Access to the main rail station is therefore limited to the northern housing sites; however, there is some potential for linked trips via the extensive bus network.

Options 2 or 3

- 6.142 Under these options, in addition to the urban sites discussed for Option 1 above, an additional (Green Belt) site, with the capacity to accommodate 124 dwellings, would also be brought forward for residential development. However, there are environmental constraints associated with this site. A proportion of dwellings would be built upon Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land located in the Green Belt. The Green Belt site also lies entirely within the North Meols Estate LWS.
- 6.143 There are few physical constraints associated with these options. A small part of the proposed Green Belt site is within flood zone 2. In comparison with Option 1, fewer sites are bordered by a main road (where issues such as noise, congestion and impact upon air quality would be a consideration) but a large number are located adjacent to a waterway. In terms of key infrastructure provision, this is generally similar to Option 1 except the majority of homes would be beyond the recommended distance of a local shopping parade under Options 2 and 3 (in addition to a Town, District or Local Centre) but benefit from adequate access to a post office.
- 6.144 Given the small increase in dwellings under Options 2 and 3, the additional vehicles on the network will not have a material effect other than those described under Option 1. Once more, additional pressures will be placed on the A570 heading out of the borough into West Lancashire, with some isolated pinch points where existing delay occurs only suffering limited negative impacts.

Southport Central

Option 1

- 6.145 The majority of Option 1 housing sites within Southport Central are small sites within the urban area located adjacent to a main road. However one site, with

the capacity to deliver approximately 110 dwellings, is considered to be accessible nature space.

- 6.146 Although none of the housing sites in Option 1 are located within, adjacent to or within close proximity of any nature conservation designations, Option 1 still has potential to adversely affect the ecological network. One housing site contains a significant proportion of priority habitats (fen and grasslands) while a number of other housing sites contain small proportions of priority habitats. Several of the housing sites are also used wholly or partially for agricultural purposes.
- 6.147 Southport Central has a moderate species diversity of recorded species of conservation concern. The loss of agricultural land and priority habitats may result in adverse effects upon species abundance and distribution.
- 6.148 Existing key infrastructure provision is generally reasonable. The majority of dwellings would benefit from adequate access to local shopping parades, post offices and areas of public open space. However, whilst Southport Town Centre is located within this sub-settlement area, access to the centre is poor for the majority of potential dwellings (mainly due to the three large sites towards Town Lane). The majority of dwellings would also be located outside the recommended distance of a leisure centre.
- 6.149 The level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in the vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other, more sustainable, modes of transport given the short journey lengths. This is particularly relevant for the sites located in this sub area given their proximity to the town centre, the rail station and the existing high frequency bus network. The additional trips to the east (via the A570) provide increased pressure along this route within Southport, which already suffers from some congestion and delay. These vehicular trips are then likely to head out of the Borough into West Lancashire and beyond, impacting on the wider regional highways network.
- 6.150 Routes from the centre of Southport to the north are generally congestion free with only limited pinch points along the route. Vehicles heading south along the A565 out of Southport pass through a relatively free flowing and non congested section of the network with again some pinch points located at key junctions. Given the number of homes being considered and the associated trip generations the increased pressures in the area will be dispersed to a degree although impacts will be felt in existing congested locations. Considerations of localised capacity improvements at these junctions will need to be investigated further. In addition to this the Kew roundabouts that currently operate at capacity with some delay will suffer increased pressures.
- 6.151 All areas of Southport are well served by buses providing frequent levels of service. The numbers of boarders are generally low across the majority of the sub-area, which suggests that spare capacity on the network exists capable of accommodating any additional demand generated by the Option 1 housing schemes.

6.152 Southport and Meols Cop rail stations are located in this sub-area. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that Southport Station is very well used with high patronage levels. The additional pressures placed on the rail network by this level of development will need to be assessed in more detail going forward, although the frequency of services at this station shows that it is well served.

Options 2 and 3

6.153 Under these options, in addition to the urban sites under Option 1 above, two Green Belt sites, with the capacity to accommodate 781 dwellings, would also be brought forward for residential development (a site has also been identified for employment purposes). These are all located on Green Belt land directly adjacent to the eastern boundary of Southport Central (adjacent to the administrative area of West Lancashire Borough Council).

6.154 Whilst no sites are situated within 500m of any national or internal designations within Sefton, the northern Green Belt site is immediately adjacent to the north, west and east of locally designated sites in Sefton and West Lancashire. The other two sites are located adjacent to a locally designated nature conservation site found immediately across the border in West Lancashire. A large proportion of these Green Belts site comprises agricultural land while all three contain or lie adjacent to priority habitats (primarily grassland, woodland and/or wetland). Effects upon priority species assemblages (abundance or distribution) are considered to be likely.

6.155 In terms of physical constraints, a large number of dwellings would be located on sites situated adjacent to a major road or waterway.

6.156 All three Green Belt sites are also located within an MoD Consultation Zone where any development proposals over 50 ft in height are to be discussed the MoD prior to the granting of planning permission. Whilst this is unlikely to be irrelevant for most dwelling types, apartment developments and employment developments have the potential to be affected.

6.157 Access to key infrastructure provision (including areas of public open space), under these Options, is broadly similar to Option 1 with the exception that a greater proportion of homes would be located beyond the recommended 400m walking distance of an existing local shopping parade.

6.158 Impacts out of the area along the A570 will again increase for these Options and result in additional pressures along these routes and on into West Lancashire and the wider regional highways network beyond. Given the increase in vehicle movements over and above Option 1, vehicles heading south along the A565 out of Southport will apply increased pressure to the highways network. Also the increased number of units being considered for these Options and the associated trip generations will apply additional pressures in the area and exacerbate problems at existing congested locations. Consideration of localised capacity improvements at these junctions will need to be investigated further with the scope of assessment above that for Option 1 sites and may require some route improvements.

6.159 The information provided by Merseytravel indicates that all areas of Southport are well served by buses with frequent services. The numbers of boarders are generally low across the majority of area indicating that it is likely that spare capacity on the network exists to accommodate the additional demand generated by the proposals for Options 2 and 3. The points made above regarding the presence of Southport and South Meols Rail station in this sub-area also remain valid for this Option.

Southport South

All Options

6.160 Southport South (Birkdale) is highly constrained by Green Belt land located to the southwest of the urban area. Potential housing sites under this option are small and comprise a mix of Greenfield (Site Refs: 847 and S0115) and previously developed infill sites.

6.161 Eight sites lie within 500m of internationally designated areas, nine within 500m of a SSSI, 7 within 500m of a LNR and 12 lie within 500m of a LWS. A number of these sites lie adjacent to these locally designated areas and some contain substantial areas of priority habitats. None of the sites are used as agricultural land but this area possesses moderate species density. Effects upon priority species are possible.

6.162 Sensitive built form constraints include two Conservation Areas (West Birkdale and Birkdale Village) and a Grade II listed building, which would need to be taken into consideration although they do not represent fundamental constraints to development.

6.163 The majority of housing sites in this Southport South benefit from good access to Southport Town Centre. However, access to a local shopping parade, post office, leisure centre and existing green infrastructure, on foot, is less than adequate for a number of dwellings.

6.164 Given the relatively low number of homes proposed in this area, the effects of the associated trip generations will be limited across the network, with no material impacts felt.

6.165 Birkdale and Hillside rail stations are located in this sub zone. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that these stations have moderate and low weekly patronage levels respectively and given the low numbers of development proposed the additional pressures placed on the rail network will be minimal.

Ainsdale

Option 1

6.166 Ainsdale is surrounded by Green Belt land immediately to the north, west and south, the vast majority of which is affected by international, national and local environmental designations. Within Ainsdale, the majority of land is either developed or included with designated nature conservation sites. Numerous

housing sites lie within 500m of international, national and local designations, three of which lie almost adjacent to these designations. Eight of the sites in Ainsdale also lie within 500m of locally designated sites in West Lancashire.

- 6.167 Species density in Ainsdale is high, with some sites representing agricultural land. In combination with the effects upon the ecological network, a detrimental effect upon the priority species in Ainsdale is possible.
- 6.168 Potential housing sites are clustered towards the centre and east of this sub-settlement area and comprise a mix of urban greenspaces and previously developed sites, the majority of which are infill and located adjacent to a main road. In terms of key infrastructure provision, the majority of new dwellings would benefit from adequate access to a local shopping parade and public open space but would be located over 800m walking distance from Ainsdale Local Centre, a post office and leisure centre and outside of an 8-minute ambulance response time.
- 6.169 Under this Option, the majority of dwellings would be located within an MoD Consultation Zone where the implications of any development over 50 ft in height should be discussed with the MoD. Whilst this is unlikely to be relevant for most dwelling types, apartment developments have the potential to be affected.
- 6.170 Journey to work data indicates that currently 22% of trips remain local. This level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths. Given the relatively low number of homes proposed in this area the effects of the associated trip generations will be limited across the network with only limited impacts felt along the A565 corridor.
- 6.171 The information provided by Merseytravel shows that all areas of Southport are well served by buses with frequent services. The numbers of boarders are generally low across the majority of area indicating that it is likely that spare capacity on the network exists that accommodate the additional demand generated by the proposals for Option 1. Ainsdale rail station is located in this sub-area. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that this is a reasonably well used station. Given the low quantum of development proposed, the additional pressures placed on the rail network will be minimal and the increased usage is likely to be accommodated on the existing rail network.

Option 2

- 6.172 Under Option 2, in addition to the urban sites above, Green Belt sites with the capacity to accommodate 900 dwellings would also be brought forward for residential development. Three of these are located to the south of the Ainsdale area and one to the north (Ainsdale Hope). Two of these sites lie directly adjacent to internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation areas. The remaining sites are within 500m of these areas. Three of the sites entirely comprise, or contain a significant proportion of, agricultural

land. A small area of priority habitats is also found within some of the sites. These additional Green Belt sites have the potential to increase possible adverse effects upon species assemblages in Ainsdale.

- 6.173 Under this option, the majority of housing would be delivered on sites that have not previously been developed. A large proportion of dwellings would also be provided on sites located adjacent to a railway line. The majority of additional sites would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a local shopping parade and Local Centre but would benefit from adequate access to areas of green open space.
- 6.174 As with Option 1, the main physical constraint to note under this option is the MoD Consultation Zone. Two of the sites are within an area where consultation with the MoD is necessary for development exceeding 50 ft in height whilst the other two sites are within a 0 ft consultation zone. This may not prevent development but would require liaison with the MoD prior to any development.
- 6.175 Option 2 provides a significant increase in the number of houses and associated trips when compared to Option 1. Impacts out of the area along the A570 will again increase significantly for Option 2 and provide additional pressures along these routes and on into West Lancashire, impacting on the wider regional highways network, along with the unclassified roads that again allow journeys to the east. In order to access these routes, additional pressures will also be felt through the north of Ainsdale and through Southport along Carr Lane/Guildford Road with this route currently suffering from delays and congestion at pinch points. Given the increase in vehicular movements over and above Option 1 levels, vehicles heading south along the A565 out of Ainsdale will also apply increased pressure to the highways network.
- 6.176 The information provided by Merseytravel shows that all areas of Southport are well served by buses providing frequent services. The number of boarders is generally low across the majority of area indicating that spare capacity on the network exists which can accommodate the additional demand generated by the development proposals for Option 2. As noted above, Ainsdale rail station is located in this sub-area and the above commentary applies also to Option 2.

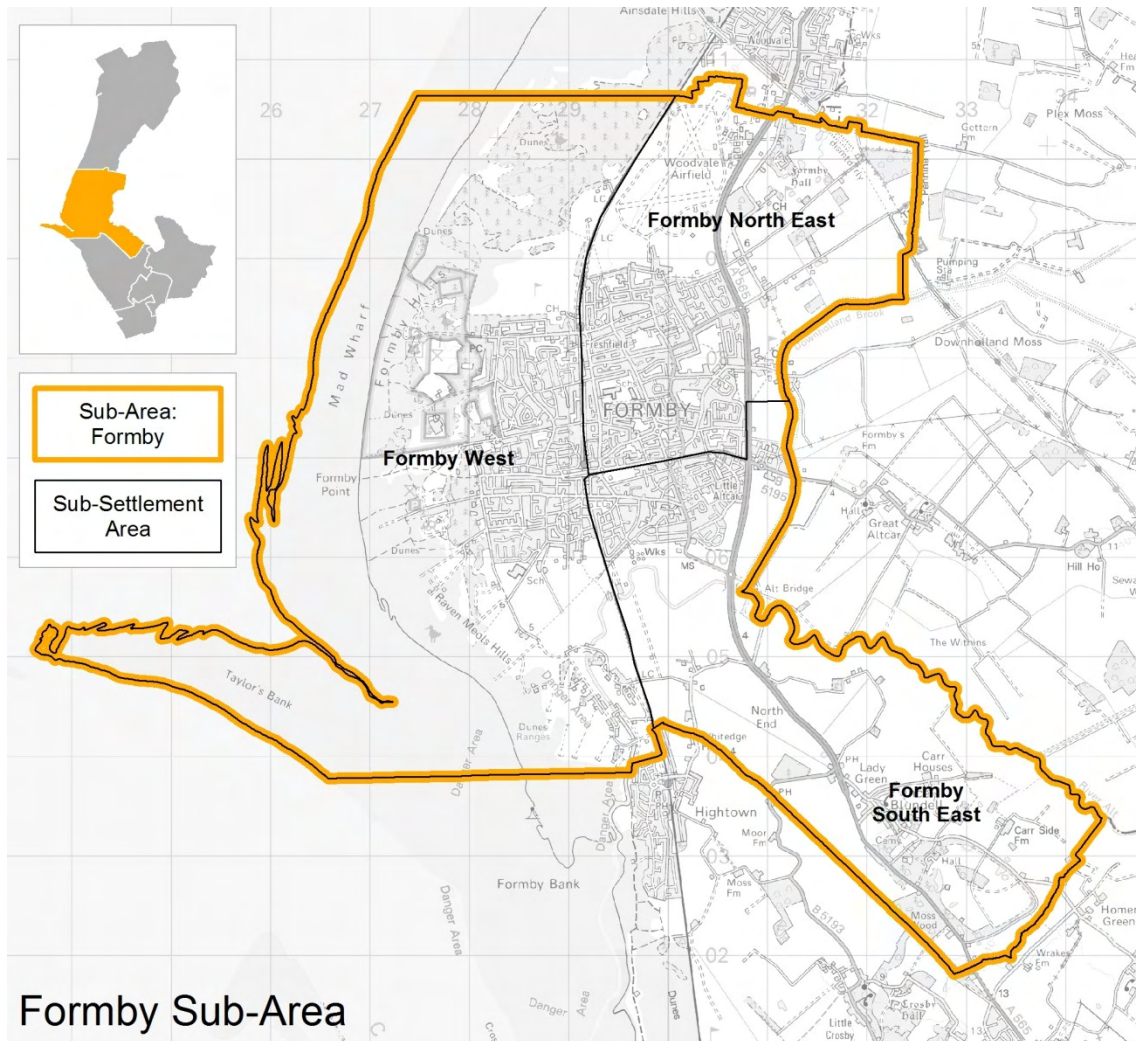
Option 3

- 6.177 In addition to the sites that will be required for Options 1 and 2, one additional Green Belt site (located towards the southeast of the area) would be brought forward for housing. The site has the capacity to accommodate 15 dwellings and is located within 500m of a locally designated site (Freshfield Dune Heath Woodvale Airfield and Willow Bank Caravan Park). The site also lies within 500m of a locally designated site in a neighbouring authority (West Lancashire). This small site is entirely used for agricultural purposes, but its size is such that it is unlikely to introduce significantly greater effects upon species assemblages than those brought about by Option 2.
- 6.178 This site is also within the MoD Consultation Zone where consultation with the MoD is necessary for development exceeding 50 ft in height.

6.179

Due to the very small increase in dwellings under this option, the social and physical implications of option 3 are broadly similar to option 2 for Ainsdale. In terms of highway impacts, the commentary provided under option 2 remains relevant, with additional vehicle pressures along Carr Lane/Guildford Road heading towards the A570 and also heading south along the A565 out of Ainsdale.

Formby Sub-Area



6.180

Formby is a free-standing settlement located by the coast. Land around the town is designated as Green Belt, which extends as far south as Crosby and Southport and into West Lancashire. The area has seen an average development rate of 37 dpa over the period 1982/3 - 2011/12. This represents the lowest rate of development, by sub-area, for the whole of the Borough, although this is expected given that the area accommodates just 8.8% of the Borough's total population (based on 2010 population estimates).

6.181 Due to relatively high house prices in the area and the low level of existing provision, a large proportion of Sefton's critical affordable housing needs arise in Formby (23%), i.e. 328 homes. However, none of the options considered would deliver sufficient social housing (based on sites comprising of 15 dwellings or more delivering 30% affordable housing) to meet this critical need although Option 3 would provide the closest amount. Formby is a highly affluent area, containing some of the least deprived wards not only of the Borough but the entire country.

6.182 As Table 6.15 indicates, Formby has the potential to deliver 244 homes in the urban area. Approximately 80% of these would come forward in the northeast and southeast of the sub-area. An additional 1,031 dwellings could potentially be delivered on 7 Green Belt sites, 84% of which would be located in the west and southeast (see Formby 'SHLAA and Green Belt Sites' Map in Appendix 1).

Table 6.15 Formby Sites

	Formby North East	Formby South East	Formby West	Formby Sub-Area Total
Urban Sites	96 units (24 sites)	107 units (10 sites)	41 units (15 sites)	244 (49 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	169 (1 site)	439 units (3 sites)	120 units (1 site)	728 (5 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	20 units (1 site)	283 units (1 site)	303 (2 sites)
TOTAL	265 units (25 sites)	566 units (14 sites)	444 units (17 sites)	1,275 units (56 sites)

6.183 Whilst there is some capacity within primary and secondary schools at present, this is very limited. If all the new homes were occupied by new residents, a further 10 primary school places may be required under Option 1, 137 under Option 2 and 190 under Option 3. Sufficient capacity exists within secondary schools to accommodate the 43 secondary pupils that may be generated by Option 1. However, an additional 119 places may be required under Option 2 and 172 under Option 3. These figures, however, depend on the actual change in local population and this can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.

6.184 Given that existing GP surgeries in Formby are currently operating just over capacity, a need may arise for an additional 1 GP under Option 2 and 2 GPs under Option 3 if all the new homes were occupied by new residents (the additional population potentially created by Option 1 would not, in itself, create the need for an additional full-time GP). The requirement for additional GPs can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.

6.185 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies five Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within Formby (CDAs: 11 and 15 - 18), the impact of these upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government's advice is that only river and tidal flood

risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Formby North East

Option 1

- 6.186 Under Option 1, the majority of housing would be located on small infill sites within the urban area, comprising a mix of previously developed and greenfield land.
- 6.187 Three sites are situated within 500m of the Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI as well as a number of LWS that are found within the Sefton Coast designations. A further six sites are within 500m of other LWS. Two housing sites lie within 500m of locally designated sites outside of Sefton. Some of the housing sites comprise agricultural land, although none contain priority habitats. Species density is high in the north east of Formby. Adverse effects upon priority species assemblages are possible.
- 6.188 The key issue in this area is the MoD Consultation Zone, which concerns two sites with the combined capacity to accommodate 23 dwellings. Any development exceeding 50 ft in height on these sites must be approved by the MoD. Whilst this is unlikely to be unnecessary for most dwelling types, apartment developments have the potential to be affected.
- 6.189 Access to existing key infrastructure is generally poor. A large number of new homes in this area would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, local shopping parade, post office and leisure centre. However, access to existing green infrastructure is good.
- 6.190 Due to the relatively small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is likely to be negligible.

Options 2 and 3

- 6.191 In addition to the urban sites identified under Option 1, one Green Belt site (near Brackenway), with the capacity to accommodate 169 dwellings, would also be brought forward for residential development under Options 2 and 3. Given the location of this site (on the northern periphery of the urban area) the majority of homes in this area would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, local shopping parade, post office, leisure centre and designated parkland. However, these homes would benefit from reasonable access to accessible nature space.
- 6.192 Environmental constraints are also present which will need to be addressed if the potential northern expansion of Formby is promoted. Under this option, the majority of dwellings would be located completely within the the Wham Dyke Meadows LWS. They would also be located within 500m of the internationally and nationally important nature conservation sites at the Sefton Coast which incorporate priority habitats and agricultural land. As such, the Green Belt sites

have the potential to adversely affect priority species. The sites are also located comprise accessible nature space and are located partially within Flood Zone 2.

- 6.193 The free-standing nature of Formby is borne out by the potential distribution of private vehicle trips to the south via the A565. Due to the dispersed nature of development sites within Formby, the four main routes to the A565 are likely to be able to accommodate the dispersed traffic increases. Given the relatively modest housing yields envisaged under these options, any traffic increases are expected to be accommodated within the existing road network without requiring significant improvement.
- 6.194 The information provided by Merseytravel shows that all areas of Formby are well served by buses with frequent services and as such it is likely that spare capacity on the network exists that can accommodate the additional demand generated by the proposals. Formby and Freshfields Rail Stations provide rail service access to Southport and Liverpool. Recently annual trips passenger usage has declined as reported by the Office of Rail Regulation. The potential scale of rail trips arising from the development is likely to be able to be accommodated based upon previous potential capacity within the rail network. This should assist in reducing longer distance private vehicle trips to the destinations served by rail, particularly Liverpool.

Formby South East

Option 1

- 6.195 The majority of this area is open countryside. Housing sites, under this option, are mostly small sites located within the urban area. As such, none of the sites are located within proximity of any international or national nature conservation sites. However, the resultant population growth may have a detrimental effect upon the ecological network, particularly the coastal areas, as a result of increased public pressure. One site (the Powerhouse site) is located at the southern extent of the town and is almost completely composed of priority habitats (grassland, woodland and wetland habitats). The entire site is also used for agricultural purposes. The loss of agricultural and priority habitats, in this area of high species density, could result in adverse effects upon priority species.
- 6.196 This large southern site is also partially within an area affected by historic landfill and bordered by a railway line to the west and a waterway to the south.
- 6.197 Existing key infrastructure provision in this area is fairly poor. The majority of new dwellings would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, local shopping parade, leisure centre and green infrastructure provision.
- 6.198 However, due to the relatively small number of additional units in this area, the impact on the highway network would be negligible.

Option 2

- 6.199 In addition to the urban sites included under Option 1, this option would result in two additional (Green Belt) sites, with the combined capacity to accommodate 439 dwellings, being brought forward for residential development. A third site (to the east of Formby bypass and the north of Formby Industrial Estate) would also be brought forward for employment purposes. The two residential sites are located immediately to the south of the Formby urban area whilst the employment site is situated to the east.
- 6.200 Few additional environmental constraints precluding the expansion of Formby's residential area towards the south would be introduced under Option 2. However, the employment site is located wholly within the southern half of Formby Moss LWS. Situated adjacent to the boundary with West Lancashire, it lies adjacent to Downholland and Associated Brooks BHS and in close proximity to Downholland Moss BHS. Downholland Moss SSSI lies further to the west, encompassed within the West Lancashire NCS. Although the majority of the Green Belt sites do not directly affect nature conservation designations, the number of dwellings that could be delivered by this Option (and the resulting population) could increase pressure upon the ecological network, particularly along the coast.
- 6.201 The sites included in Option 2 at least partially incorporate agricultural land (not Grade 1 – 3a). The areas in which the sites are located possess moderate to high density of priority species. The potential loss of resources and high species density will most likely result in detrimental impacts upon species assemblages within this area.
- 6.202 Impacts on key infrastructure provision under Option 2 are similar to Option 1 although the majority of dwellings would benefit from acceptable access to a local shopping parade and accessible nature space.
- 6.203 In terms of physical constraints, whilst the two large Green Belt sites are located adjacent to a major road (A565) and within a MoD Consultation Zone (where development proposals which exceed 150 ft in height would be referred to the MoD prior to planning permission being granted), these are not considered to represent fundamental issues which would limit the further development of this area.
- 6.204 Even with the increased development numbers proposed in this option the level of additional traffic associated with this is unlikely to exceed link operating capacities. The additional traffic increases may create modest additional delays for side road traffic along the A565 Formby Bypass junctions. The issue of how this additional traffic would impact upon the existing capacity constrained radial corridor routes along the A565 into Liverpool will need to be considered. The Thornton to Switch Island Link Road improvement will provide additional capacity and provide some relief to parallel routes which could accommodate additional southbound traffic flows resulting from this option.

6.205 This option would result in generally greater potential bus patronage demand than Option 1. However, the likely scale of increases is again likely to be able to be accommodated within the existing timetable of services without significant impacts. The reduction in annual rail passenger numbers during recent years creates spare capacity that the demands for this option are unlikely to exceed. No specific rail service enhancements are considered necessary to accommodate the increased demand.

Option 3

6.206 Under this option, one additional Green Belt site, located to the south of the Formby urban area, would be brought forward for housing in addition to the sites identified under Options 1 and 2. This site is located close to the boundary of Formby West. This site does not lie within 500m of any designated nature area but is comprised entirely of priority habitat (primarily neutral grassland). Additional housing, under Option 3, has the potential to give rise to increased public pressure upon nature conservation assets in Sefton.

6.207 The Option 3 scenario impacts are considered to be only moderately greater than the Option 2 impacts due to the very small additional development yield between options. As such similar impacts will be experienced with additional pressure on the A565 corridor south of Formby.

Formby West

Option 1

6.208 None of the housing sites under this option have sufficient capacity to accommodate 10 dwellings or more. The impact of this option on specific designations, has not therefore been assessed, as set out in the methodology. However, the cumulative impact of this level of housing provision, on sub-area wide resources (i.e. education, ecology, the highway network and public transport) has been calculated, with a brief summary below.

6.209 The majority of housing sites in West Formby lie in close proximity to coastal nature conservation designations, two of which are situated immediately adjacent to these locally, nationally and internationally designated areas. One is located partly within Formby Golf Club LWS. A second site also directly affects the ecological network due to the majority of it comprising priority habitats (grasslands and woodland habitats). Formby West possesses a high diversity of priority species. Proximity to, and loss of priority habitats, may contribute to adverse effects upon species diversity or distribution.

6.210 The majority of housing sites in West Formby lie in close proximity to coastal designations, two of which are immediately adjacent to the designated areas.

6.211 Due to the relatively small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

Option 2

- 6.212 In addition to the urban capacity sites considered under Option 1, Option 2 would result in the development of one Green Belt site located to the south of the Formby urban area. This site has the capacity to accommodate approximately 120 dwellings.
- 6.213 It is considered that the level of growth identified under option 2 would have some environmental implications: the majority of houses would be developed on Green Belt land, which is also currently designated as a Coastal Park.
- 6.214 The Green Belt site also contains priority habitats and is used for agricultural purposes (though not Grades 1 – 3a). The additional loss of habitat resources, and further population increase in this area of Formby, could compound the effects upon nature conservation areas (as a result of increased visitor pressure) and may contribute towards adverse effects upon priority species assemblages.
- 6.215 Sensitive built form constraints including a Grade II listed building, and the proximity of development to a railway line, would need to be taken into consideration although these do not present a fundamental constraint to development.
- 6.216 Access to key infrastructure provision for new homes would be less than satisfactory under Option 2; the majority of new dwellings would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, local shopping parade and leisure centre but would benefit from adequate access to green infrastructure provision.
- 6.217 In terms of highway implications, the overall number of additional houses proposed is not significant. The impact on major routes in the vicinity of Formby is therefore likely to be negligible.

Option 3

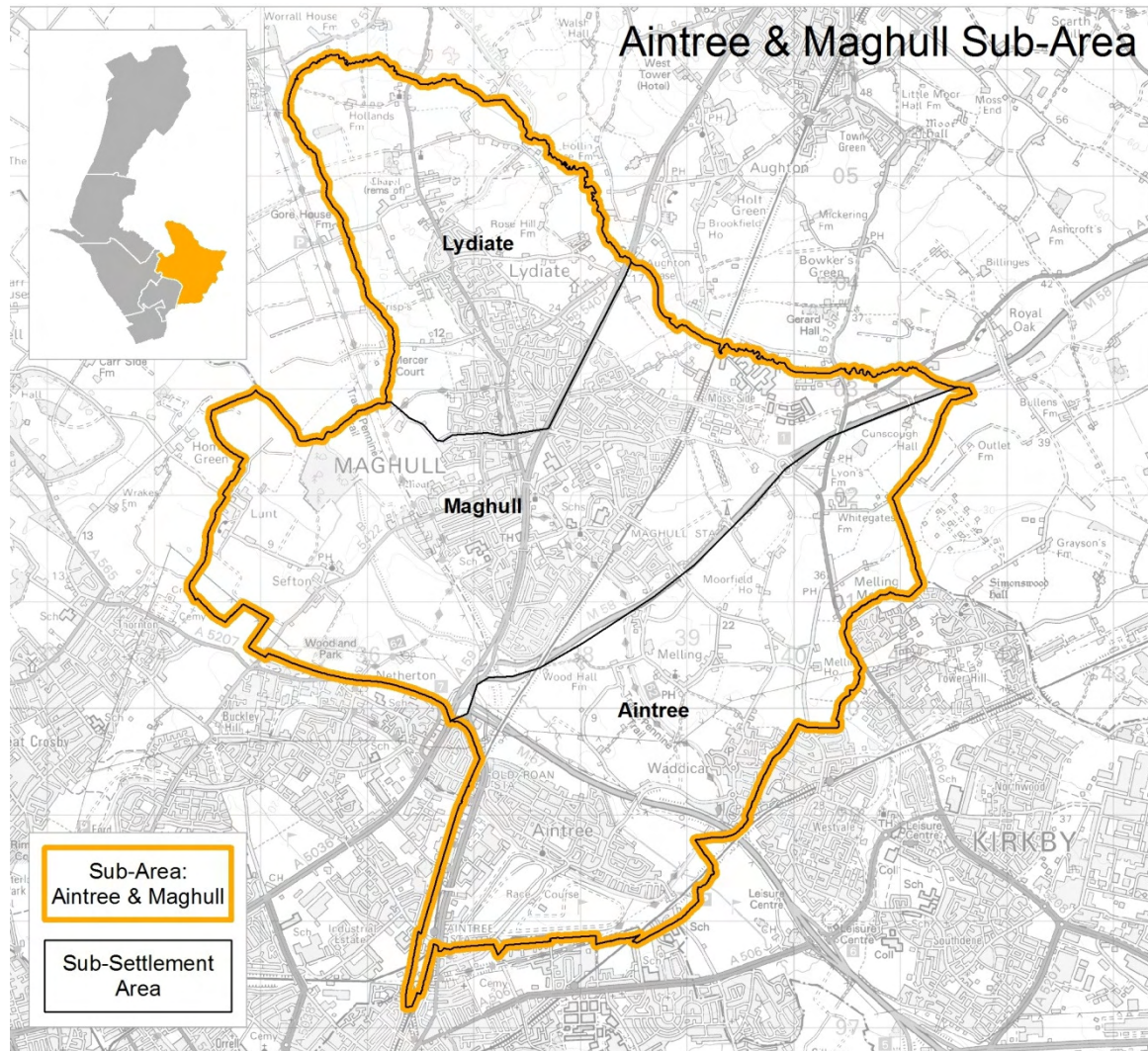
- 6.218 Under Option 3, one additional Green Belt site located to the southwest of the Formby urban area would also be brought forward for the development of approximately 283 dwellings.
- 6.219 This site is situated within 500m of the coastal designated nature conservation sites. The entire site represents agricultural land in an area with high species density. Increases to the population, loss of agricultural land (not Grade 1 – 3a) and proximity to coastal sites may increase the risk of detrimental effects upon the designated areas and possibly upon priority species assemblages.
- 6.220 Compared with Option 2, a smaller proportion of dwellings would be affected by physical constraints (i.e. Grade II Listed Building and a railway line). In terms of social infrastructure, however, a large number of new homes located beyond the recommended walking distance of public open space.
- 6.221 Given the large increase in dwellings associated with this option, some traffic impacts will occur. This level of additional traffic increase is unlikely to exceed

link operating capacities. The additional traffic increases may create modest additional delays for side road traffic along the Formby Bypass junctions. Additional pressure will be placed on the A565 corridor to the south of Formby on approach to Liverpool with increased traffic using Switch Island.

6.222

This option would result in generally greater potential bus patronage demand than Option 2. However, again, the likely scale of increases is likely to be able to be accommodated within the existing timetable of services without significant impacts. Similarly this option is unlikely to exceed under the additional rail mode share demands resulting from this option, although it should be noted that trains are often full at peak times. No specific rail service enhancements are considered necessary to accommodate the increased demand.

Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree Sub-Area



6.223

The Maghull and Aintree sub-area is a mixture of urban and rural, with the urban area of Maghull and Lydiat located towards the centre and Aintree towards the south. The area has seen an average development rate of 61 dpa over the

period 1982/3 - 2011/12 and accommodates around 11.1% of the Borough's total population. The area is generally quite affluent and it is anticipated that a fairly low level of additional affordable housing will be required over the plan period (14 dpa) notwithstanding the low amount currently available. However, only Options 2 and 3 would meet the area's social housing requirements.

6.224 The vast majority of urban sites to be considered are previously developed. As Table 6.16 indicates, the Magull/Lydiat and Aintree sub-area has the potential to deliver 472 units on urban sites (incorporating a 58 dwelling allowance for windfalls) plus a further 300 units on a Green Belt site with planning permission. Of this, the majority (83%) of housing would be located in Maghull area.

6.225 However, there is substantial pressure to release Green Belt in order to adequately meet future housing needs. Green Belt sites without planning permission have the potential to deliver an additional 3,499 dwellings (on 9 sites), 59% of which would be located in Maghull, 31% in Lydiat and 10% in Aintree and Melling (see Maghull and Aintree SHLAA and Green Belt Sites' Map in Appendix 1). One is a brownfield site (the site of the proposed prison which is no longer being pursued by the Ministry of Justice), which is now likely to be promoted for housing.

Table 6.16 Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree Sites

	Aintree	Lydiat	Maghull	Maghull / Aintree Sub- Area Total
Urban Sites	56 (14 sites)	23 (11 sites)	393 (13 sites)	472 (38 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	344 (3 sites)	0	1,990 (3 sites)	2,334 (6 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	1,076 (2 sites)	89 (1 site)	1,165 (3 sites)
TOTAL	400 units (17 sites)	1,099 units (13 sites)	2,472 units (17 sites)	3,971 units (47 sites)

6.226 A reasonable level of surplus capacity currently exists within primary and secondary schools within the Maghull/Aintree sub-area. This is sufficient to accommodate the additional primary and secondary school pupils that may be generated by Option 1 but could require additional provision to be made under Options 2 and 3. Under Option 2, an additional 61 primary school places may be needed and 247 secondary school places if all the new homes are occupied by new residents. Under Option 3, there may be a requirement for 265 primary school places (broadly equivalent to a new school) and 451 secondary school places, again if all the new homes are occupied by new residents. These figures, however, depend on the actual change in population and can be monitored and planned for at the appropriate time.

6.227 Given that existing GP surgeries in Maghull are currently operating slightly over capacity, a need may arise for an additional GP under Option 1, 4 GPs under

Option 2 and 6 GPs under Option 3 if all the new homes are occupied by new residents. As with schools, this can be monitored and additional GPs can be provided at the appropriate time.

- 6.228 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies eight Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within the Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree area (CDAs: 1 - 8), the impact of these upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government advice is that only river and tidal flood risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Maghull

Option 1

- 6.229 Maghull is significantly constrained by Green Belt land, which envelops the urban area. Potential housing sites under this option are primarily small previously developed infill sites with the exception of one large Green Belt site with capacity to accommodate approximately 300 dwellings (land at Ashworth Hospital). The location of the site within a groundwater source protection zone (SPZ) and on Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land would need to be taken into consideration.
- 6.230 Environmental constraints in the area are fairly limited. One site lies adjacent to priority habitats and one contains priority habitats. A few sites are located within 500m of a LWS. Despite a relative paucity of sites designated for nature conservation, compared to other areas in Sefton, the ecological network in Maghull is extensive due to the rather patchy network of priority habitats found across the area. The distribution of sites under Option 1 is unlikely to significantly constrain opportunities to enhance or extend the ecological network in Maghull. Species density is generally moderate, although the loss of priority habitats and agricultural land could lead to adverse effects upon priority species assemblages.
- 6.231 The majority of new dwellings would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre or Local Centre, local shopping parade, post office, leisure centre and existing green infrastructure.
- 6.232 Given the low number of homes proposed in this area, the effects of the increased traffic will be limited across the network with only some minor impacts felt across the area. Additional pressure will be placed on Switch Island given the small increase in traffic flows but, compared to current levels of traffic, these increases are minimal.
- 6.233 All areas of Maghull are well served by buses with frequent services and the numbers of boarders are low across the majority of Maghull. Given the amount of development, additional pressures will be placed on the bus network although this should be accommodated. Maghull station is situated in the Maghull sub area. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that this is a well-

used station. The additional pressures placed on the rail network by this limited level of development will apply pressures to this station although the frequency of services at this station shows that it is well served with statistics showing some decline in patronage in recent years indicating that spare capacity exists. Merseytravel is proposing (in the LTP and Sefton's UDP) to provide a new station at Maghull north which is convenient for the Ashworth sites).

Option 2

- 6.234 Large Green Belt sites are included for consideration under Option 2 (three for approximately 1,990 dwellings and one for employment purposes). These sites are located to the east of the Maghull urban area, between the M58 and the railway line.
- 6.235 Environmental considerations should be addressed under this option, with parts of the area representing amongst the best and most versatile agricultural land and affected by flooding. Any development proposals should seek to avoid these areas if other sites are available. A large number of dwellings would also be developed on Grade 1 - 3a agricultural land and all dwellings within a groundwater source protection zone.
- 6.236 With regard to ecology, each of the Green Belt sites also contains a small amount of priority habitat. One of the sites is located adjacent to a LWS, associated with the railway corridor, while another site is located virtually adjacent to a LWS associated with the canal. The development of these sites would result in the loss of a large area of agricultural land between the existing development edge of Maghull and the M58. This could potentially result in fragmentation of the ecological network and compound adverse effects upon priority species assemblages. A significant increase in population may result in greater pressure on remaining natural resources.
- 6.237 Access to a local shopping parade, post office and green infrastructure provision is slightly easier for a larger number of dwellings under option 2 compared with option 1.
- 6.238 Given the significant increases in development in the Option 2 scenario, impacts across the network will be more widespread. The level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths. This is particularly relevant for the sites located in this sub area given the proximity to the local centre, rail station and the high frequency bus network that exists linking across the area.
- 6.239 The location of Maghull in relation to the highways network and in particular Switch Island will lead to additional pressures on this already constrained junction. Given that the trip distribution indicates that over 60% of traffic generated by development will impact on Switch Island it is clear that, given this level of development, severe effects on an already constrained area of the network will occur. However, a benefit accruing from the development of this site will be the provision of the missing link roads to and from the southern

side of Junction 1 of the M58. Further to this, the car trips generated by this level of development will have potential impacts on local pinch points and congested routes in the area.

- 6.240 The information provided by Merseytravel shows that all areas of Maghull are well served by buses with frequent services. The numbers of boarders are low across the majority of Maghull. Given the amount of development, additional pressures will be placed on the bus network although this should be accommodated on the bus network although these services will likely be subject to traffic delays caused by additional car journeys. Maghull station is situated in the Maghull sub area. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that this is a well-used station. The additional pressures placed on the rail network by this level of development will need to be assessed in more detail going forward although the frequency of services at this station shows that it is well served with statistics showing some decline in patronage in recent years indicating that some spare capacity exists. Merseytravel is proposing (in the LTP and Sefton's UDP) to provide a new station at Maghull north, which is convenient for the Ashworth sites.

Option 3

- 6.241 In addition to the sites identified under Options 1 and 2, one additional Green Belt site, with the capacity to accommodate 89 dwellings, would be brought forward for housing under Option 3. This site is located to the southeast of the Maghull urban area, adjacent to the M58. It contains priority habitats and is within 500m from a LWS. Development of this site could increase fragmentation and pressure effects arising on nature conservation sites, priority habitats and species or species assemblages.
- 6.242 Given the relatively small increase in the number of dwellings, under this option, the social and physical implications of option 3 are very similar to those identified under option 2.
- 6.243 Scenario impacts will also be similar and the traffic generated by development will impact on Switch Island. Again given this level of development will generate significant traffic levels, severe effects on an already constrained area of the network will occur.

Aintree (including Melling)

Option 1

- 6.244 None of the housing sites in the existing built-up area have sufficient capacity to accommodate 10 dwellings or more under Option 1. The impact of this development option on those sites has not therefore been assessed. However, the cumulative impact of this level of housing provision on sub-area wide resources (i.e. education, ecology, the highway network and public transport) has been calculated, with a brief summary below.

6.245 One site (land south of the Aintree Curve) lies partly within Netherton. This site contains a Local Wildlife Site within the Aintree side of the site. None are located within 500m of a nationally or internally designated area.

6.246 Due to the relatively small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

Options 2 and 3

6.247 In addition to the urban sites considered under Option 1 above, three Green Belt sites are included for consideration within Options 2 and 3. These have the combined capacity to accommodate 344 units. Two relatively large sites are located adjacent to Melling. The third, smaller site is located adjacent to Aintree.

6.248 Due to the heavy reliance on Green Belt land to facilitate further growth in the Aintree sub-settlement area, the vast majority of dwellings would be developed on Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land.

6.249 There are no significant ecological constraints affecting the additional sites. However the two northernmost sites both lie adjacent to areas of priority habitat, one of which is also located within 500m of a LWS that straddles the Sefton-Knowsley border. These two sites are also used for agricultural purposes. The southern Green Belt site, located on the eastern periphery of the Aintree urban area, is located almost adjacent to 'Land East of Canal North of Wango Lane LWS part of which also lies in Knowsley. This site is also close to Fazarkely Sidings LWS, which straddles the Sefton - Liverpool border. Under Option 2 the proximity of sites to designated areas, together with a population increase, could contribute to increasing visitor pressure upon nature conservation areas, particularly the coast. Additionally, the loss of habitats and agricultural land together with the moderate species density of the area means that Option 2 may also have adverse effects upon priority species assemblages.

6.250 In terms of key infrastructure provision, the majority of new dwellings would be well served by designated areas of public open space. Whilst most of them would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, and also leisure centre, they would benefit from reasonable access to a local shopping parade. The majority of dwellings, however, would not be accessible within an 8-minute ambulance service response time.

6.251 Given the limited increase in development under Option 2, impacts across the highway network will be limited. The level of trips that stay in the local sub area is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport such as walking or cycling given the short journey lengths involved. Additional pressures will be placed on the A59, A5036 and also Switch Island given the small increase in flows. These will still, however, add further pressure to these severely constrained areas of the

network. Further to this the car trips generated by this level of development will have potential impacts on local pinch points and congested routes.

- 6.252 All areas of Maghull are well served by buses with frequent services. The numbers of boarders are low across the majority of Aintree. Given the amount of development additional pressures will be placed on the bus network although this should be accommodated on the bus network. Old Roan and Aintree stations are situated in the Aintree sub area. Figures provided by Merseytravel indicate that these are moderately used stations. Given the low level of development proposed, the additional pressures placed on the rail network will be minimal with the increased usage likely to be accommodated on the existing network.

Lydiate

Options 1 and 2

- 6.253 Lydiate is significantly constrained by Green Belt land that surrounds the urban area. Potential housing sites under these options are very small previously developed infill sites, which benefit from extant planning permission for residential development, with the exception of one larger site which has the capacity to accommodate 10 dwellings. This site is also located adjacent to a major road, although this would not represent a fundamental constraint to development.
- 6.254 There are no significant environmental constraints associated with this option. Sites are generally confined to urban areas and will not result in fragmentation or loss of nature conservation sites or priority habitats. A small population increase is unlikely to result in increased visitor effects, although any such growth would need to be considered in combination with population growth in other areas. Whilst species density in Aintree is moderate, the small scale nature of the housing sites, and their location within the existing urban environment, is such that there is low risk of Option 1 resulting in any significant adverse effects upon priority species assemblages.
- 6.255 Due to the relatively small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

- 6.256 There are no Green Belt sites to be considered under Option 2 within Lydiate.

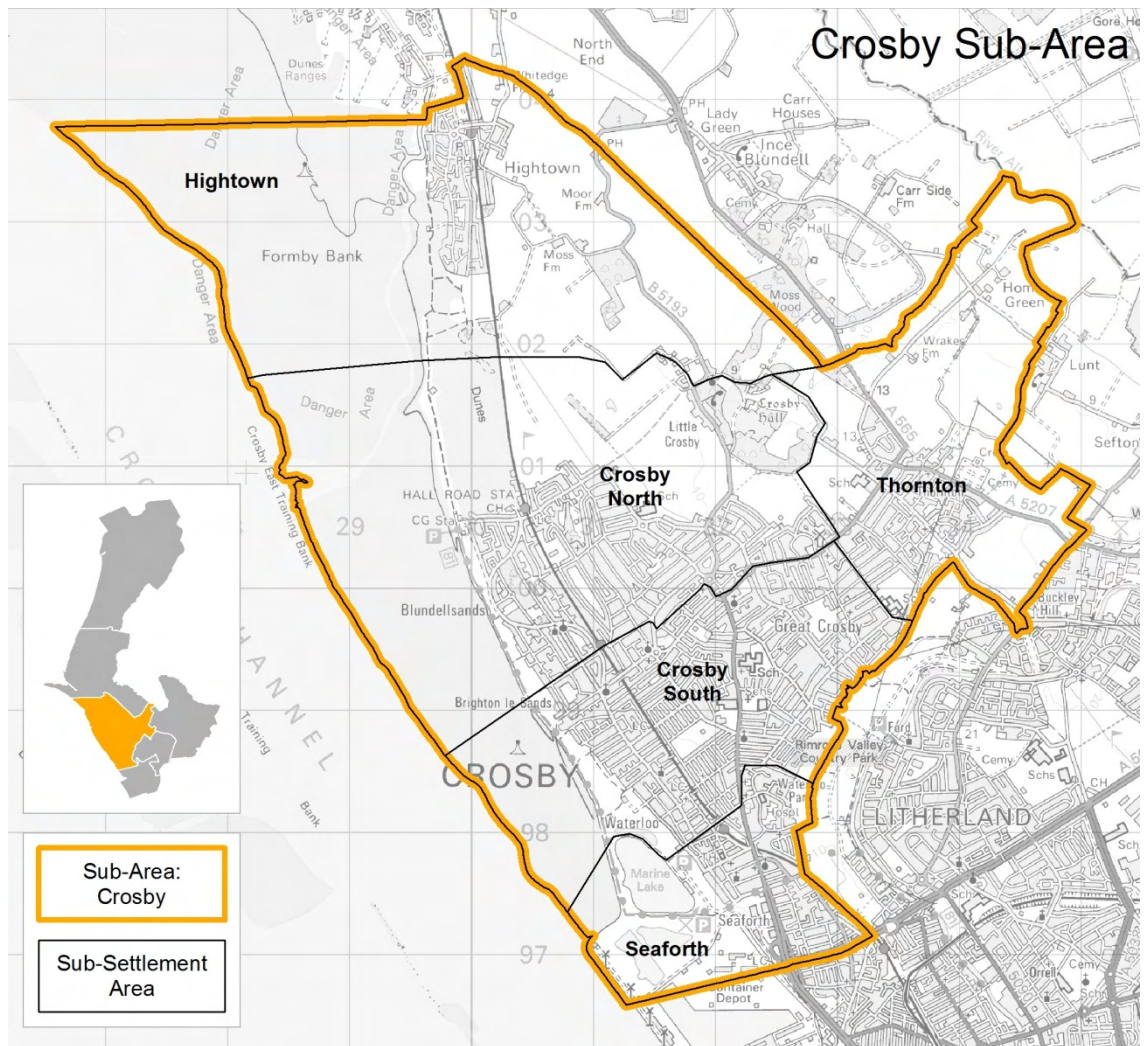
Option 3

- 6.257 Under Option 3, two Green Belt sites would be brought forward for residential development in addition to the urban sites considered under Options 1 and 2. These sites have the combined capacity to accommodate 1,076 dwellings and are located to the north of the Lydiate urban area on opposite sides of Liverpool Road.
- 6.258 To deliver the level of housing proposed by this option, it would be necessary to develop land which falls within a groundwater source protection zone and represents the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1 – 3a).

However, there are generally few other environmental constraints: neither of the sites is located within 500m of any national, national or local designations, either in Sefton or neighbouring authorities, although they do contain a small amount of priority habitats. Species density in Aintree is moderate, but the scale of sites and their use for agricultural purpose, is such that there is potential for this option to result in adverse effects upon priority species assemblages. Similarly, the population increase that may result from Option 3, could result in significant effects upon nature conservation assets (as a result of increased visitor pressure).

- 6.259 Access to a District Centre would be less than satisfactory for the majority of dwellings under Option 3. However, in contrast to Option 1, a larger number of dwellings would be within an acceptable distance of a local shopping parade and a park.
- 6.260 Given the significant increases in development under Option 3, the impacts across the road network will be more widespread. The level of trips that stay in the local sub area is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport such as walking or cycling given the short journey lengths involved. The geographic location of Lydiate in relation to the highways network and in particular Switch Island will lead to additional pressures on this already constrained junction. Given that the trip distribution indicates that potentially approximately 60% of traffic generated by development will impact on Switch Island further exacerbating the problems already felt at this junction.
- 6.261 The information provided by Merseytravel shows that all areas of Maghull are well served by buses with frequent services. The numbers of boarders are low across the majority of Maghull. Given the level of development additional pressures will be placed on the bus network although this should be accommodated on the bus network. No rail stations are located in Lydiate. Access to the main rail station is therefore limited to the southern housing sites however there is potential for linked trips via the extensive bus network. The additional pressures placed on the rail network by this amount of development will need to be assessed in more detail going forward although the frequency of services at this station shows that it is well served with statistics showing some decline in patronage in recent years indicating that spare some capacity exists

Crosby Sub-Area



- 6.262 The Crosby urban area is located north of Bootle on the Sefton coast, with a vast swathe of Green Belt land to the north and east, which envelops Hightown and a number of smaller villages and hamlets. The area has seen an average development rate of 74 dpa over the period 1982/3 - 2011/12 and accommodates 16.7% of the Borough's total population (based on 2010 population estimates). Due to the relative affordability of housing in this area and low level of need, it is anticipated that a fairly low level of additional affordable housing will be required over the plan period (17 dpa). Notwithstanding this, only Options 2 and 3 would meet (and, in fact, could exceed) the area's social housing requirements. Whilst many parts of Crosby are fairly affluent, the southern area (north Seaforth and parts of Crosby South) contains more deprived neighbourhoods.
- 6.263 As indicated by Table 6.17, Crosby has the potential to deliver 673 units on 73 urban sites (this figure incorporates a 192 dwelling allowance for windfalls, reflecting the high level of historic windfall provision in the area). Approximately 46% of these would come forward in Seaforth north and 40% Crosby South (see Crosby 'SHLAA and Green Belt Sites' Map in Appendix 1).

- 6.264 An additional 832 dwellings could potentially be delivered on 7 Green Belt sites, 89% of which would be located in Thornton. Two of these are brownfield sites (one in Crosby and the other in Thornton).

Table 6.17 Crosby Sites

	Crosby North	Crosby South	Hightown	Seaforth	Thornton	Crosby Sub-Area Total
Urban Sites	53 (16 sites)	266 (25 sites)	6 (4 sites)	311 (19 sites)	38 (9 sites)	673 (73 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Best)	29 units (1 site)	0	58 units (2 site)	0	745 units (5 sites)	832 units (7 sites)
Green Belt Sites (Reserve)	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	82 units (17 sites)	266 units (25 sites)	64 units (6 sites)	311 units (19 sites)	783 units (14 sites)	1,505 units (80 sites)

- 6.265 A reasonable level of surplus capacity currently exists within primary and secondary schools within the Crosby sub-area. This is sufficient to accommodate the additional primary school pupils that may be generated by Option 1 and all of the secondary school pupils that may be generated under Options 1 and 2 (there is no Option 3 for Crosby). However, taking into account existing surplus capacity, there may be a need to provide an additional 119 primary school places under Option 2 if all new homes are occupied by new residents. The amount of pupils in the local area will be monitored and school places provided, if required, at the appropriate time.
- 6.266 Given that existing GP surgeries in Southport are currently operating over capacity, a need may arise for an additional 1 GP under Option 1 and 2 GPs under Option 2 if all new homes are occupied by new residents. As with schools places, patient numbers can be monitored and additional capacity be provided at the appropriate time.
- 6.267 Whilst Sefton Council's Surface Water Management Plan (2011) identifies five Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within the Crosby area (CDAs: 11 - 15), the impact of these upon the development options being considered has not been assessed. This is because Government's advice is that only river and tidal flood risk should influence the location of development sites and the impact of surface water flooding is capable of mitigation by taking into account the design of the development or where exactly it is built within a site.

Hightown

Option 1

- 6.268 None of the housing sites under this option have sufficient capacity to accommodate 10 dwellings or more. The impact of this development option, on those sites, has not therefore been assessed. However, the cumulative impact

of this level of housing provision, on sub-area wide resources (i.e. ecology and the highway network) has been calculated, with a brief summary below.

- 6.269 There are four urban sites in the built up area of Hightown. All four are located within 500m of internationally, nationally and locally significant nature conservation designations. Although these housing sites are individually of a small scale, proximity to the coastal sites is such that their development may result in impacts upon these designated areas.
- 6.270 Due to the extremely small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

Options 2 and 3

- 6.271 Options 2 and 3 would result in the development of two small Green Belt sites with the capacity to accommodate 58 units, in addition to the urban capacity sites identified under Option 1.
- 6.272 These two Green Belt sites are within 500m of internationally, nationally and locally significant designations along the coast. The southern site contains a significant proportion of priority habitat. Both sites are currently used for agricultural purposes. Given their proximity to the coastal sites, the fact that the sites contain priority habitats and comprise agricultural land in an area with high species diversity, development of these sites is likely to result in adverse effects upon designated areas, habitats and species.
- 6.273 Physical constraints are limited to the presence of a railway line, which dissects the Hightown village and would abut the western boundary of the southern parcel of Green Belt land.
- 6.274 Existing key infrastructure provision is generally less than adequate to meet the needs of the additional population generated by this Option, although this is perhaps not surprising given the rural nature of the area. The majority of dwellings would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a Local Centre, local shopping parade and leisure centre and outside of an 8-minute ambulance response time but would benefit from an acceptable level of access to a post office and existing green infrastructure.
- 6.275 In terms of highway impacts, as the overall level of development proposed is not significant, the impact on major routes in the vicinity of Hightown is likely to be negligible.

Thornton

Option 1

- 6.276 Thornton is significantly constrained by Green Belt land, which surrounds the urban area. The four potential housing sites under this option (excluding conversions) are small infill sites, only one of which has capacity to accommodate at least 10 dwellings.

6.277 It is considered that the very low level of growth identified under this option would not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts. Although the small scale nature of development is unlikely to have significant effects upon natural resources in Thornton, cumulatively, these sites may contribute to a level of population growth across Sefton that could increase pressure upon nature conservation assets.

6.278 Existing key infrastructure provision is fairly good, including access to areas of public open space. However, the majority of dwellings would be beyond the recommended walking distance of a District Centre and leisure centre.

6.279 Due to the extremely small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible. Public transport provision is good but the rail network currently suffers from an element of congestion.

Options 2 and 3

6.280 In addition to the urban capacity sites considered under Option 1, five Green Belt sites would be brought forward for development under Options 2 and 3. These sites have the combined capacity to accommodate 745 units. Two of them are located to the north of Thornton village and three to the east.

6.281 Whilst one of the five Green Belt sites has been previously developed, the level of growth identified under this option would result in the majority of dwellings being built on land identified as the best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 1- 3a). A number of sites identified under these options also include designated parkland and accessible nature space.

6.282 In terms of ecological constraints, none of the sites are situated within 500m of internationally or nationally designated areas, although three are located within 500m of a LWS. Two of the sites contain priority habitats. The other three sites are located adjacent to areas of priority habitat. Thornton has a moderate density of priority species compared with other areas in Sefton. The size of these sites is likely to result in increased pressure upon natural resources in Thornton and this may contribute to increasing pressure upon those resources elsewhere in Sefton, particularly the coast.

6.283 Other physical constraints include nearby Grade II listed buildings and the proximity of a major road to four of the Green Belt sites. The role of the Green Belt in preventing the coalescence of settlements would also need to be considered in relation to these options, particularly the impact that development would have on the 'strategic gap' between Thornton and Netherton. In addition, all five Green Belt sites lie within a MoD Consultation Zone. The height at which consultation should take place with the MoD on development proposals is 300ft for all of the sites except one site (with the capacity to accommodate 235 dwellings) where this is 0ft, which would potentially restrict the development of this site.

6.284 Whilst the majority of homes would benefit from reasonable access to areas of green infrastructure, they would be located beyond the recommended walking distance of a District or Local Centre. Access to a local shopping parade and

leisure centre would also be less than satisfactory for a large number of dwellings.

- 6.285 The geographic location of Thornton in relation to the highways network and in particular Switch Island will lead to additional pressures on this already constrained junction. The trip distribution indicates that over 30% of traffic generated will utilise the A5207 impacting on Switch Island and this will further exacerbate the severe problems already felt at this junction.
- 6.286 The information provided by Merseytravel shows bus services around the proposed sites are provided at a moderate frequency as a result the number of passengers is not as high other parts of Thornton, therefore an increase in patronage could be accommodated on existing services along the A5027. The proposed link road will also help enhance bus connectivity to other parts of Sefton. The proposed sites are located away from any rail stations and as such the use of this mode of transport is limited.

Crosby North

Option 1

- 6.287 None of the housing sites under this option have sufficient capacity to accommodate 10 dwellings or more. The impact of this development option, on these sites, has not therefore been assessed. However, the cumulative impact of this level of housing provision, on sub-area wide resources (i.e. education, ecology, the highway network and public transport), has been calculated, with a brief summary below.
- 6.288 Although the sites included under Option 1 are small, there is a cluster close to the coastal areas. In total, ten sites lie within 500m of a LWS, two of which also lie within 500m of the locally, nationally and internationally designated coastal nature conservation sites. One site is located adjacent to the West Lancashire Golf Club LWS. One site lies adjacent to priority habitats, while another contains priority habitats. The combination of these sites, and their proximity to the coastal areas, may place additional pressure on these coastal designations in addition to potentially having an adverse effect on the species assemblages in the locality.
- 6.289 Due to the extremely small number of potential units in this area for this option, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

Options 2 and 3

- 6.290 In addition to the urban sites considered under Option 1, this option would bring forward one brownfield Green Belt site for residential development (Hall Road rail sidings). The site has the capacity to accommodate 29 dwellings and is located immediately to the west of a railway line.
- 6.291 The only environmental constraint associated specifically with this option is the fact that the Green Belt site is located adjacent to West Lancashire Golf Club LWS which has priority habitats present within it. However, as with the sites

included under Option 1, proximity to the designated areas on the coast means that Option 2 has the potential to affect designated sites and create additional pressure on the natural resources in Crosby.

- 6.292 The majority of homes would be outside the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, local shopping parade, post office, leisure centre and designated parkland but would be within a reasonable distance of accessible nature space.
- 6.293 Due to the relatively small number of potential units in this area for Option 2, the impact on the highway network is negligible.

Crosby South

All Options

- 6.294 Under this scenario, the majority of housing would come forward on previously developed sites in existing residential areas. Whilst most of these are fairly small sites, one site has sufficient capacity to accommodate 43% of the area's future housing (83 dwellings).
- 6.295 In terms of environmental constraints, one site (with capacity to accommodate 12 dwellings) is within 500m of an internationally, nationally and locally designated nature conservation site. Five additional sites are within 500m of a Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS. This part of Crosby is highly urbanised. A potential increase in population, and the loss of open space due to infill development, may result in increased public pressure on designated areas, particularly along the coast, and result in a squeeze on remaining natural resources.
- 6.296 The majority of sites benefit from adequate access to existing green infrastructure and a local shopping parade. However, the majority of dwellings are outside the recommended walking distance of a District Centre, post office and leisure centre.
- 6.297 As the proposed housing sites in Crosby South are within existing residential areas, they are also within close proximity to the existing road network. Based upon the current journey to work data for the area the traffic distribution indicates that the majority of traffic associated with these sites will impact on the A565 corridor. Whilst the amount of development is low, and the generated trips minimal, this part of the network along the A565 corridor experiences significant delay in journey time and congestion and as such the additional development will increase pressures on this area. Notwithstanding this however, the high level of local trips is of particular significance given that these represent the trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths and thus reduce the effects on the wider network.
- 6.298 The information provided by Merseytravel shows high frequency bus services are provided along the A565 through Crosby South with a good spread of services. As a result of this it is likely the additional trips from these sites

could be accommodated within the current services. Blundellsands and Crosby and Waterloo stations are both located on the edge of Crosby South and are accessible from the proposed sites. Whilst both stations currently experience a high numbers of passengers the size of the sites and likely passenger generations is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the rail services in the area, therefore the additional capacity is likely to be accommodated using current services.

Seaforth

All Options

- 6.299 Under Options 1, 2 and 3, the majority of housing would be located on three previously developed sites, all of which are located adjacent to a main road where issues such as noise, traffic congestion and impact on air quality would need to be taken into consideration.
- 6.300 Of the ten sites, eight are within 500m of Brook Vale LNR and Rimrose Valley and Canal LWS. Seaforth is relatively urban in the east, but due to the presence of the coastal designations, including Mersey Narrows SSSI and part of the Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore candidate SAC and Ramsar site, there is a high species density in this area. The sites included in Option 1 may not directly affect priority species assemblages in terms of loss of habitats resources but increased public pressure on coastal sites could have consequences for the species assemblages supported by them.
- 6.301 Existing key infrastructure provision is fairly good: the vast majority of sites are within recommended distances of local retail provision, services (including a library and post office) and public open space but beyond the recommended walking distance of a leisure centre.
- 6.302 It is predicted that the majority of traffic associated with these sites will impact on the A565 and A5036. Whilst the number of trips generated by the amount of development proposed is likely to be low, this part of the network and currently experiences significant congestion and journey time delay. As such additional pressures will be placed on an already congested area of the network. The high level of local trips predicted for Seaforth is of particular significance given that these represent trips that stay in vicinity of the site and can be more effectively transferred to other more sustainable modes of transport given the short journey lengths and thus reduce the adverse effects on the wider network.
- 6.303 The information provided by Merseytravel shows high frequency bus services are provided along the A565 and A5036 through Seaforth. Therefore additional trips from these sites could be accommodated within the current services. Seaforth, Litherland and Waterloo stations are both located in Seaforth and are accessible from the potential sites. Waterloo station experience a high number of weekly passenger numbers, while Seaforth and Litherland has a moderate level of weekly passengers. The size of the sites is unlikely to have a

detrimental impact on the rail services in the area; therefore the additional capacity can be accommodated in the current services.

Summary

6.304 The above analysis, together with the mapping in Appendix 1 and Assessment Matrices in Appendix 8, represent a baseline of fundamental constraints and opportunities for discussion and further analysis through the planning process.

6.305 The analysis indicates that, without suitable mitigation:

- Option 1, Urban Containment, can be achieved in all parts of the Borough without too many significant adverse impacts. However, development may impact upon sites of international and national environmental importance in most parts of Southport in addition to areas in Formby and Crosby. Priority species in Southport, Formby and the Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree areas could also be highly affected by development in these locations. In addition, there are clear opportunity costs resulting from the missed fiscal, economic and social benefits that additional housing would bring to Sefton. Due to the relatively low level of housing proposed by this Option, it would fail to meet identified affordable housing needs in all areas except Bootle, where there is currently an over-provision of affordable homes.
- Option 2, Meeting Identified Need, could result in all the 'best' Green Belt sites coming forward for development and would almost double the overall level of housing provision and provide additional land for employment. The release of a number of Green Belt sites would result in the loss of some Grades 1 – 3a agricultural land in parts of Southport, Crosby and Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree and require land within Flood Zone 2 to be developed. This option could also require significant investment in social infrastructure, in particular: additional school places; GP surgeries; retail services and green infrastructure. However, this option would also provide an additional 46.5 – 49 ha of employment development across Southport, Formby and Maghull with the potential to support the creation of just under 4,000 new jobs. It could also inject a significant economic boost to the Borough, in addition to generating a large number of direct construction jobs and indirect employment.

- Option 3, Optimistic Household Growth, would rely on a number of large Green Belt 'reserve' sites coming forward for residential development in addition to those required for Option 2. These sites could deliver approximately 1,483 additional dwellings but would be unevenly distributed across the Borough, located predominantly in Formby and Lydiate. In addition to the impacts identified under Option 2 above, this Option could place substantial strain upon key social infrastructure provision in Formby and add significant congestion to the existing transport network in the Maghull/Lydiate and Aintree area. Option 3 would meet more of Sefton's affordable housing needs but would still fall short of meeting Formby's affordable housing needs. Furthermore, the economic benefits of this option are not substantially greater than those associated with Option 2.

7.0

Mitigation Measures and Opportunities

Introduction

- 7.1 As the assessment matrices indicate, higher levels of growth are likely to result in greater impacts on the majority of the assessed characteristics (not only for the natural environment but also social infrastructure and the built environment).
- 7.2 This section analyses whether the adverse impacts and opportunities likely to arise as a result of the development of some or all of the options could realistically be mitigated against, or maximised, on an area by area basis. It also considers the deliverability of the mitigation required to deliver a particular scenario. A range of mitigation methods are explored, with deliverable and effective options presented.
- 7.3 The mitigation options that are presented in this section are those which might realistically be offered/sought in support of planning applications, in order to make developments, which might otherwise be refused, acceptable. These forms of mitigation might typically be provided through developer contributions (such as Community Infrastructure Levy or a Section 106 legal agreement) or by service providers. Potential mitigation is considered not to rely on public funding, which is acknowledged not to comprise a significant element of infrastructure delivery for the foreseeable future.
- 7.4 In order to demonstrate the effect that mitigation would have upon the three different development options in each of Sefton's sub-settlement areas, the assessment matrices that accompanied Section 6 have been reproduced. This time the scores reflect the impact of development once potential mitigation is taken into account (Appendix 9).

Potential Mitigation Measures

- 7.5 Whilst mitigation methods can be applied to a range of constraints, in order to make development more acceptable, there are a number of areas where no realistic and affordable form of mitigation would reduce a high impact to a moderate impact, for example, or a moderate impact to a low impact. These are listed below:-

Environmental

- International and national environment designations (SACs, SPAs, Ramsar Sites, SSSIs, NNRs);
- Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land;
- Substantial areas of land within Flood Zone 3;

Physical

- Greenfield land;

- Land within an MoD Safeguarding Zone;

Social

- Affordable housing;
- Access to a Town, Local or District Centre on foot.

7.6 In respect of all other environmental, physical, social and economic constraints examined (the results of which are summarised in the assessment matrices), it is considered that various mitigation measures have the potential to minimise the adverse impacts associated with the different levels of development being considered.

Environmental

Ecology

7.7 The aims of mitigation³⁷ are firstly to ensure development results in no net loss of biodiversity, both locally and sub-regionally, and secondly to increase the extent and resilience of biodiversity assets. Mitigation is necessary to minimise adverse effects on biodiversity at or near a development site, but distant and cross-boundary receptors also have to be considered. For Sefton, the most critical is the Sefton Coast Natura 2000 site and the farmland east and north of Sefton's main settlements which is used for feeding and roosting by internationally important bird populations associated with the coast, as well as having its own wetland interest.

7.8 Ecological mitigation measures that can be delivered on development sites and their immediate environs include:

- Avoidance of harm through design, layout, protection and programming;
- Compensatory or replacement habitat creation on or near a site;
- Design measures to manage pressures arising from development e.g. recreational activity, wastes, emissions, hydrological change.

7.9 The above measures can be delivered through policy and development control powers. However, in some cases there will be an adverse residual effect, either from losses that cannot be mitigated on site, or from indirect and diffuse effects such as disturbance and fragmentation of ecological networks. For these, a broader approach is needed.

7.10 Mitigation measures appropriate at a broader scale include:

- Creation of new habitats or connective corridors to offset residual adverse effects of development;

³⁷ Refer to NPPF paragraph 118

- Enhanced management or restoration of existing nature conservation sites;
- Creation and/or enhancement of accessible greenspaces to absorb recreational pressures and divert visitors from vulnerable nature areas.

7.11 Habitat creation is not the only tool for mitigation. For example, on the Sefton Coast, financial contributions towards enhanced management of visitors and habitats may be appropriate.

7.12 Mitigation (in its broadest sense, including enhancement and broad-scale interventions defined above) delivers other benefits to Sefton and neighbouring authorities. It increases capacity for growth, improves resilience to climate change, assists with management of surface water quality and flood risk, increases carbon sequestration, and contributes to people's health and well-being.

7.13 Mitigation will help Sefton and neighbouring authorities meet their obligations under the Habitats Directive (to maintain favourable conservation status of the Sefton Coast and Mersey Estuary Natura 2000 sites) and the Water Framework Directive (to achieve ecological quality objectives for the River Alt, the Rimrose Valley and coastal waters).

Other Environmental Mitigation Measures

7.14 Other environmental mitigation measures that might be employed to minimise the potential adverse effects of development on the environment include:-

- The designation of new areas as Urban Greenspace;
- The creation of new Borough, District or neighbourhood parks;
- The implementation of strict controls during construction to minimise the risk of contamination to water resources from construction-related activity. This can be achieved through the inclusion of appropriately worded planning conditions on any planning permission granted for new development in a Groundwater Source Protection Zone;
- Seeking opportunities to reduce the overall level of flood risk in an area through the layout and form of the development and the appropriate application of sustainable drainage systems.

Social

7.15 The primary form of mitigation here is likely to include the provision of new and improved access to community infrastructure, such as:

- Additional school places and nurseries;
- Increased capacity at doctors' surgeries and dentists; and,
- Improved access to leisure centres and plays spaces.

7.16 Other mitigation will likely include the provision/designation of new parks and Sustainable Accessible Natural Greenspace (SANGS) as well as the

enhancement of existing designated sites. In order to ensure the majority of future residents benefit from adequate access to local shops and services, it may be necessary to make provision for, or improve access to, local shopping parades where there is currently a lack of such facilities.

- 7.17 In terms of the road network and public transport infrastructure, larger mitigation schemes might be considered alongside smaller individual pinch point improvements across the Borough. However, the phasing of future development, together with the geographic spread of sites, will have an effect on the type of mitigation that can be delivered. This is because the cumulative impact of development is a far more significant issue than the impacts associated with the development of individual sites. As the Sefton Local Plan Transport Modelling Option Testing Report identifies, no matter which Option is taken forward there will be potential adverse impacts - many roads in Sefton will have a volume capacity ratio of over 85% in the morning and evening peak periods. As such, it is important to consider the cumulative impact of development.
- 7.18 Notwithstanding this, sub-area specific mitigation schemes have been identified which may affect the deliverability of sites identified in specific sub-areas (see Mitigation Impacts section below). Whilst some of these are area-specific, others have wider strategic impacts. However, the actual nature, costs and trigger for each of the schemes would need to be considered in more detail at the appropriate time.

Physical

- 7.19 There are limited mitigation measures that can be applied to minimise the harm caused by physical constraints to development. However, in order to conserve and enhance the historic environment (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), particular regard should be paid to the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Opportunities may also be sought to draw upon the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Highways and Transport

- 7.20 Due to the number of additional homes that would be delivered under Options 2 and 3, these have the potential to impact on certain areas of the network, when considered in isolation, and on an area by area basis. It is therefore important to understand what the cumulative impacts of development are likely to be.
- 7.21 It is important to note that different organisations have different responsibilities for transport in Sefton. The Highways Agency are responsible for the trunk road network, Sefton has responsibility for other highways, Merseytravel and the bus companies have responsibility for public transport and Network Rail have responsibility for rail infrastructure.

- 7.22 As previously indicated, whilst the impacts of the development are spread throughout Sefton, the impact on certain corridors and junctions is particularly acute. These include the following key areas:
- A565 corridor;
 - A5036 Dunning's Bridge Road; and,
 - A59 corridor.
- 7.23 Whilst the proposed Thornton to Switch Island Link will provide some immediate mitigation to the existing problems, the delivery of large scale development across the Borough, and in particular in Maghull, will add further pressures to this constrained junction. This may therefore require further mitigation in the future together with the A5036 Dunning's Bridge Road corridor, which currently experiences congestion and delays.
- 7.24 Similarly, the cumulative impacts of developments, from the north of the Borough along the A565 corridor, will increase pressures along the whole route. These are focused in the southern section through Crosby and Bootle. Similar effects can also be seen along the A59 south corridor which again provides a key link into Liverpool.
- 7.25 In order to mitigate these potential impacts, both individual pinch point improvements and holistic corridor improvements will be required. Considerable further design and business case work will need to be undertaken in order to fully understand the type of schemes that could be delivered. However, Option 3 would generate the greatest potential for increased revenues for mitigation given it would deliver the highest level of development. This would allow major interventions to the highway network, particularly along the A5036, A565, A59 and at Switch Island.
- 7.26 The Sefton Local Plan Transport Modelling Option Testing Report (Mott MacDonald, April 2013) also supports these findings and notes that issues will exist along the A565 corridor with specific hotspots around Crosby. It also notes that there will be potential network issues regardless of which Option is taken forward. Indeed it notes that where increases in flows are greater than 5% in the peak hours, both Options 2 and 3 generally have little additional impact on the capacity remaining on these routes.
- 7.27 The modelling report states that the hot spots, in terms of additional impacts on the highway performance of Options 2 and 3, are likely to be limited to particular areas of the Borough and are unlikely to have wider impacts.
- 7.28 Given the level of development being considered, the delivery of the following larger mitigation schemes could be considered alongside smaller individual pinch point improvements across the Borough. The actual nature, costs and trigger for each of the schemes would have to be considered in more detail at the appropriate time:
- A565 Corridor Improvements addressing congestion, safety, accessibility and local environmental conditions;

- A5036 Corridor Improvements addressing congestion, safety, accessibility and local environmental conditions;
- A59 Corridor Improvements addressing congestion, safety, accessibility and local environmental conditions;
- Switch Island junction Improvements addressing congestion, safety, accessibility and local environmental conditions; and,
- Enhancements to Borough Wide Public Transport Services

Economic

- 7.29 As new housing and employment development is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy, it is important that Sefton seeks to maximise these benefits by seeking to:-
- Encourage developers to fund the training/up-skilling of local residents so they are suitably qualified to apply for new construction jobs; and
 - Encourage developers and housebuilders to employ local people on the construction of new developments.
- 7.30 Economic development can itself represent a form of mitigation for adverse effects of development, for example securing a reversal in out commuting from particular sub areas or from Sefton to surrounding districts.

Mitigation Impacts

- 7.31 This section identifies the possible residual impact of development (i.e. the impact that occurs following the implementation of mitigation measures where this is feasible) across each of Sefton's 6 sub-areas. Impacts have been graded as green, orange and red (see Appendix 9). The mitigation measures that might be applied are identified above. However, where locational and option specific mitigation can be applied (particularly in relation to ecology and highways), we have identified these under the relevant section below.
- 7.32 It should be noted that whilst the potential impact of development, for environmental, physical and social indicators, should preferably be kept as low as possible, a high impact risk would not necessarily result in development being considered unacceptable. In all instances, a high level of residual impact occurs where no realistic or affordable form of mitigation can be provided.
- 7.33 However, with regard to economic indicators, we have indicated where benefits can be maximised. In this context, a high impact is positive and a low impact is negative.

Bootle

All Options

- 7.34 In terms of impacts and mitigation on travel and highways, locationally specific mitigation that might be implemented under Option 1 include a range of

measures to improve congestion, junction capacity and HGV movements on the A5036. Many of these are linked to the City Region Port Access work. Whilst no sites in Bootle are identified under Options 2 and 3, the cumulative impact of nearby development would require specific additional mitigation to be implemented in Bootle to accommodate the level of housing and employment floorspace anticipated. Under the level of growth proposed by Option 2, it is considered that a package of measures would be required to improve access to the Port of Liverpool for all transport modes. Under Option 3, it may be desirable to complete the dualling of the remaining A565 single carriageway, south of Miller's Bridge into Liverpool, and to reinstate passenger services on the Bootle Aintree rail line.

- 7.35 Virtually no high residual impacts are expected to occur in Bootle North or Bootle South as a result of the identified growth. However, as the majority of homes in Bootle North are expected to be built adjacent to a major road, where issues such as noise, congestion, highway safety and impact upon air quality would need to be considered, a high level of impact is anticipated here.
- 7.36 In terms of ecological impacts and mitigation, mitigation will be required to offset small losses of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature should be created in appropriate areas. Habitat creation or restoration may be delivered directly by developers or through contributions. Any arrangements regarding tariffs or programming of such measures should not be overly restrictive or prescriptive although creation or restoration measures should be habitat specific and locally appropriate.
- 7.37 Mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species (such as bats) should they occur within the site.
- 7.38 Additional effects will arise in the form of increased visitor pressure upon the coastal Natura 2000 sites. Proportionate contributions towards ongoing management and maintenance of the Sefton Coast may be appropriate.
- 7.39 Finally, this option also has the potential to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, subject to suitably worded planning condition(s) attached to any planning permission for new housing development.

Netherton

All Options

- 7.40 In terms of impacts and mitigation on travel and highways, locationally specific mitigation that should be considered includes:
- [A5758 Broom's Cross Road: a new single carriageway way road link between the A565 Southport Road in Thornton and Switch Island;](#)
 - [A565 route management strategy to improve conditions along the A565 route between Thornton and Seaforth addressing: congestion; safety; accessibility; air quality; and local environmental conditions; and](#)

- A5036 Improvements – a wide range of measures to tackle traffic congestion, junction capacity, port access and HGV movements,

- 7.41 Virtually no residual impacts are anticipated in Netherton, however, due to the location of housing sites that are likely to come forward under this option, the majority of dwellings in Netherton and Litherland would be located beyond 800m walking distance of a Town, District or Local Centre.
- 7.42 With regard to ecological impacts and mitigation, mitigation will be needed to avoid impacts upon locally designated sites, where housing sites lie adjacent to or within influence (e.g. hydrologically connected) to those local designations.
- 7.43 Mitigation will be required to offset small losses of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature could be created in appropriate locations. Habitat creation or restoration may be delivered directly by developers or through contributions. Contributions might also be utilised to assist strategic habitat creation or restoration schemes (multiple contributors for a single large habitat area).
- 7.44 Mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species such as bats, should they occur within the site.
- 7.45 Additional effects will arise in the form of increased visitor pressure upon the coastal Natura 2000 sites. Proportionate contributions towards ongoing management and maintenance of the Sefton Coast may be appropriate. There is also potential for increased visitor use of Knowsley Park as result of new housing in Netherton. Contributions towards the management of Knowsley Park or other suitable off-setting scheme within Knowsley may be required.

Southport

Option 1

- 7.46 With regard to Option 1, a number of impacts are anticipated. In terms of access a Town, District or Local Centre and meeting affordable housing need, high impacts are expected across all sub-settlement areas as it is considered that no realistic mitigation can be provided.
- 7.47 A high level of impact is also anticipated with regard to the impact on internationally designated nature conservation sites, the loss of some Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land; and the level of development situated adjacent to a main road. In terms of ecological impacts, mitigation will be required to offset losses of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature could be created in appropriate locations. There is limited opportunity within Southport for implementing these measures. Areas around Sandy Brook, Fine Jane's Brook and Boundary Brook, Meols Park and Birkdale Hills may provide some capacity for mitigation. Strategic mitigation outside of Southport may also be appropriate. In addition, mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species including, but not limited to, bats, reptiles, amphibians and birds, should any occur within the site.

7.48 However, this option also has the potential to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, investment and GVA.

Option 2

7.49 With regard to highways and travel impacts, local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 2 include:

- **Kew Roundabout:** modification of existing five arm roundabout to improve traffic management, safety and accessibility; and,
- **Norwood Road:** measures to improve traffic flow and address accessibility for pedestrians along busy local roads

7.50 Beyond the high level residual impacts identified under Option 1 above, Option 2 is likely to result in a high adverse impact on a National Nature Reserve and development sites within an MOD Consultation Zone. Under this option, the majority of development within Southport North and Ainsdale, in addition to Southport South, would also be situated on greenfield (i.e. Green Belt) land.

7.51 With regard to ecological mitigation, the loss of priority habitats, where unavoidable, will need to be mitigated through habitat creation schemes elsewhere in Sefton as the opportunity to provide mitigation within Southport, under Option 2, is limited. With regard to impacts on nature designations, see paragraph 7.47 above.

7.52 However, this option also has the potential to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, economic investment and GVA as well as sufficient indirect employment to contribute towards reducing local unemployment levels.

Option 3

7.53 In terms of highways and travel impacts, local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 3 (in addition to those under options 1 and 2) includes:

- **Burscough Curves:** reinstatement of rail lines allowing a direct connection from Southport and Ormskirk to the Preston Line (this would be dependent on Lancashire County Council and Network Rail)
- **Meols Cop Station improvements:** upgrade of existing station facilities to include new waiting facility and enhanced security.

7.54 Due to the small amount of additional housing development proposed by Option 3, no additional high impacts, beyond those identified under Option 2 above, are anticipated.

7.55 However, this option also has the potential to provide a higher level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, economic investment and GVA, and sufficient indirect employment to contribute towards reducing local unemployment levels.

Formby

Option 1

- 7.56 In terms of ecological impacts, with regard to Option 1, some impact is anticipated on SACs (Formby North East and Formby West), Ramsar sites (Formby West) and SSSIs (Formby North East and Formby West). Mitigation will also be required to offset losses of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature could be created in appropriate locations.
- 7.57 Mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species including, but not limited to, bats, reptiles, amphibians and birds, should any occur within the site.
- 7.58 Residual effects may also arise in the form of increased visitor pressure upon the coastal Natura 2000 sites. Proportionate contributions towards ongoing management and maintenance of the Sefton Coast may be appropriate.

Option 2

- 7.59 Beyond the high level residual impacts identified under Option 1 above, Option 2 is likely to result in a high adverse impact across all sub-settlement areas with regard to Green Belt land take, biodiversity assets and the number of dwellings located further than 800m walking distance from within the level of development within a Coastal Park a Town, or District Centre. With regard to specific measures relating to ecological mitigation, see above.
- 7.60 However, this option also has the potential to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, economic investment and GVA.

Option 3

- 7.61 Beyond the high level residual impacts identified under Option 2 above, Option 3 is likely to result in a higher impact on a National Nature Reserve. Again, with regard to specific measures relating to ecological mitigation, see paragraphs above.
- 7.62 However, this option also has the potential to provide a higher level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, economic investment and GVA, and sufficient indirect employment to contribute towards reducing local unemployment levels.

Maghull/Aintree

Option 1

- 7.63 In terms of highway and travel impacts, local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 1 includes:

- Delivery of isolated junction improvement schemes at existing pinch points across the network to improve capacity where possible; and,
- Delivery of route improvement schemes in constrained areas, in particular A59 south and A5036 Dunnings Bridge Road.
- A59 Ormskirk Road Improvements.

7.64 Relatively few high residual impacts are expected to occur across the Maghull sub-area as a result of Option 1 with the exception of Green Belt land take and the number of dwellings located beyond 800m from a Town, or district Centre (Maghull sub-settlement area and Lydiate).

7.65 With regard to ecological mitigation measures, mitigation will be required to offset small losses of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature could be created in appropriate locations. Creating new connectivity between components of the ecological network in the north of Lydiate or east of Mahgull could provide benefits. For the largest site in the east of Maghull, strategic habitat creation or restoration within the River Alt corridor may also be appropriate.

7.66 Mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species such as bats, should they occur within the site.

7.67 Additional effects may arise in the form of increased visitor pressure upon the coastal Natura 2000 sites. Proportionate contributions towards ongoing management and maintenance of the Sefton Coast may be appropriate. There is also potential for increased visitor use of Knowsley Park as result of new housing in Aintree or Maghull. Contributions towards the management of Knowsley Park or other suitable offsetting scheme within Knowsley may be required.

7.68 In economic terms, this option also has the potential to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs.

Option 2

7.69 Local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 2 (in addition to those under option one) includes:

- Potential delivery of an enhanced public transport system with increased bus frequencies; and
- Maghull Town Centre Bus Station/Interchange
- Maghull North Station on the Merseyrail Ormskirk Line;
- M58 J1 Access, northbound off slip and southbound on slip;

7.70 Option 2 is likely to result in a high a impact on: biodiversity assets; Green Belt land take; the loss of Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land; congestion within the existing transport network and the number of dwellings located beyond 800m from a Town or district Centre (Aintree).

7.71 In terms of specific ecological mitigation measures, see paragraph 7.63 above.

7.72 In terms of economic impacts, this option also has the potential to deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet identified needs. It is also likely to provide a high level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, economic investment and GVA, and sufficient indirect employment to contribute towards reducing local unemployment levels.

Option 3

7.73 Local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 3 (in addition to those under options 1 and 2) includes:

- Delivery of isolated junction improvement schemes at Switch Island where possible.

7.74 Beyond the high level residual impacts identified under Option 2 above, Option 3 is likely to result in a greater impact on the amount of Green Belt land take and the loss of more Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land.

7.75 In addition to the comments on specific ecology mitigation measures mentioned above, Option 3 would bring forward two large sites in Lydiate. Mitigation may be achieved within the site boundary, through reducing housing density, allowing habitat retention or creation and maintain connectivity. Contributions might also be made towards creating and managing habitats off-site in any strategic habitat mitigation area that may be established.

7.76 With regard to economic impact, this option also has the potential to deliver sufficient affordable housing to meet identified needs. It is also likely to provide a higher level of direct construction employment in response to local residents' needs, fiscal incentives, investment and GVA, and sufficient indirect employment to contribute towards reducing local unemployment levels.

Crosby

Option 1

7.77 In terms of impacts on highways and travel, local highway mitigation that should be considered under option 1 includes:

- A5758 Broom's Cross Road: a new single way road link between the A565 Southport Road in Thornton and Switch Island;
- A565 route management strategy, to improve conditions along the A565 route between Thornton and Seaforth, addressing: congestion; safety; accessibility; air quality; and local environmental conditions; and,
- Crosby Road South/Haigh Road/South Road junction improvements;

7.78 Few high residual impacts are expected to occur across the Crosby sub-area as a result of Option 1. However, potential impacts are anticipated on designated nature sites. The number of dwellings located on land adjacent to a main road (Thornton and Seaforth); and the number of dwellings located beyond 800m

from a Town or district Centre (Hightown and Crosby South) may also give rise to negative impacts.

7.79 In terms of specific ecological mitigation measures, mitigation will also be required to offset the loss of priority habitats. Where priority habitats are lost to development, new habitats of a similar nature could be created in appropriate locations.

7.80 Mitigation may be required on a site specific basis for protected species including not limited to bats, reptiles, amphibians and birds, should any occur within the site.

7.81 Residual effects may arise in the form of increased visitor pressure upon the coastal Natura 2000 sites. Proportionate contributions towards ongoing management and maintenance of the Sefton Coast may be appropriate.

7.82 With regard to economic impacts, this option has the potential to deliver sufficient affordable housing and direct construction employment to meet identified needs.

Options 2 and 3

7.83 Local transport mitigation that should be considered under option 2 includes:

- [Sefton Coastal Path: provision of a long-distance walking and cycling route from Waterloo to Southport.](#)

7.84 Beyond the high level residual impacts identified under Option 1 above, Option 2 is likely to result in a greater loss of Green Belt land, the loss of Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land and impacts upon biodiversity assets. The number of dwellings on sites located adjacent to a railway line and the number of dwellings located beyond 800m of a Town, District or Local Centre (Hightown and Crosby North) may also give rise to negative impacts.

7.85 With regard to specific ecological mitigation measures, in addition to those measures outlined for Option 1, additional strategic habitat creation might also be considered. Habitat creation, enhancement or restoration within the larger sites of Options 2 & 3 (particularly in Thornton and to a lesser degree in Hightown) should also be delivered where possible.

7.86 Greater contributions may also be required to offset the visitor effect upon the Natura 2000, through enhancing the Sefton Coast Management Scheme, focussing on particular pinch-points along the coast that are most likely to be affected by specific larger developments or clusters of development.

7.87 This option has the potential to deliver sufficient affordable housing and direct construction employment to meet identified needs as well as significant fiscal incentives.

Cross-boundary issues

- 7.88 The Study also considers the key consequences of Sefton's growth options for the Council's neighbouring local authorities (i.e. Knowsley, Liverpool, West Lancashire and Wirral). In order to understand the potential constraints and opportunities associated with the three development options, meetings were held with Planning Officers of these authorities.
- 7.89 There was a clear concern amongst all of Sefton's neighbouring authorities, that Option 1 would not adequately meet Sefton's own development needs and, as a result, pressure would be placed on surrounding authorities to compensate for this. This would quite likely necessitate an early review of their adopted/emerging Local Plans and potential Green Belt release (to accommodate additional development) given the very limited capacity of their own urban areas. SMBC has also previously been advised, by neighbouring authorities, that none of them had the capacity to assist Sefton with meeting its housing or employment land requirements over the period to 2030 and that it should therefore look to sites within its own boundaries to meet its development needs.
- 7.90 Whilst Option 2 would meet most of Sefton's identified housing needs it may not necessarily meet its wider affordable housing needs in full. There is a general consensus amongst adjoining authorities that this represents the most appropriate Option for Sefton and would have the least adverse impact upon their own housing and employment land pressures.
- 7.91 In terms of Option 3, there was some concern that by failing to make provision for additional employment land, in line with an increased number of dwellings, that there would be greater pressure placed on the highway network and public transport with SMBC residents out-commuting for work. There was also concern that this Option could make adjoining authorities, with a lower housing requirement, less attractive to developers. Some authorities also considered that Option 3 could give to an outflow of households towards SMBC, thereby decreasing the attractiveness of their own housing market.
- 7.92 However, the level of development proposed by Option 3 is unlikely to be delivered in Sefton taking into account the current identified supply of SHLAA and Green Belt Sites. This is particularly the case once the Council's housing backlog has been taken into consideration and a 5% buffer applied. Consequently, Option 3, like Option 1, is likely to place pressure upon adjoining authorities to meet Sefton's development needs.
- 7.93 Taking all of the above factors in the round, it is clear that neighbouring authorities could not meet Sefton's needs if Option 1 was chosen. Option 3 would also potentially lead to an outflow of residents from neighbouring areas. In view of this, the preferred option, from their perspective, is Option 2.
- 7.94 A summary is also provided below in relation to how Sefton's three development options may impact upon ecology, highways and public transport within adjoining authorities.

Ecology

- 7.95 West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC) has several locally designated sites along its boundary with Sefton. Several of the Southport sites, under Options 2 and 3, are near Brook Farm Bridge Drains and Martin Mere Mosslands BHS and development may be hydrologically connected to a number of other designated sites in West Lancashire. Similar effects may occur as a result of Option 2 and 3 sites in Formby, some of which may affect Downholland Moss, Downholland and Associated Brooks and Altcar Withins BHS. Mitigation will need to avoid hydrological changes to these sensitive wetland sites in addition to consideration of other detrimental indirect effects.
- 7.96 Few designated sites are found adjacent to Sefton in Liverpool, Knowsley and Wirral and these tend to be small. The potential for physical change arising within neighbouring designated sites in these authorities is significantly lower than in West Lancashire. Additionally, the southern extent of Sefton is intensely urbanised so there are fewer pathways for adverse detrimental effects on distant sites.
- 7.97 The most likely effect upon Knowsley's natural areas is likely to arise from Options 2 or 3. These options have sites which are directly connected by existing infrastructure to Knowsley Park Local Wildlife Site, which may attract visitors from Sefton and from Aintree, Maghull and Netherton in particular. Options 2 or 3 would likely increase public pressure upon Knowsley Park. Mitigation from developments in Aintree, Maghull and Netherton for Knowsley Park may need to consider management and maintenance of the park, which is the largest locally designated site in the region.
- 7.98 Although most land in south Sefton and north Liverpool is urbanised, reducing potential pathways for detrimental impacts upon Liverpool's designated biodiversity assets, the Leeds-Liverpool Canal LWS may be indirectly affected by development of housing sites in Bootle, a number of which are located adjacent to the canal. Mitigation for the designated section of Leeds-Liverpool Canal would need to include measures to prevent polluting effects upon sections of the canal in Bootle.
- 7.99 Wirral shares estuarine national and international conservation designations with Sefton. There is unlikely to be any direct pathway through which any of the Options would have a detrimental impact upon the Wirral components of these designated areas (although the HRA will be required to confirm this position).
- 7.100 In summary, it is unlikely that any of the options will affect national or international sites in neighbouring authorities. Potential effects upon locally designated sites may arise in the form of physical change or through increased public pressure. These effects are likely to be readily mitigated through scheme design and (occasionally) developer contributions to site management.

Highways and Public Transport

- 7.101 Given the nature of the highways network in the area, and in particular access to the strategic route network from the north of the Borough, it is anticipated that further development in Sefton will adversely affect roads in West Lancashire. This has been highlighted in the assessment of the Southport sites where journey to work information indicates that over 20% of trips actually leave the Borough through West Lancashire.
- 7.102 West Lancashire has long-term aspirations to deliver the A570 Ormskirk bypass. This is subject to review and a study from Lancashire County Council is awaited. This will assist in alleviating the issues that currently occur through Ormskirk and will assist in mitigating the cross boundary issues that may develop with the delivery of the various housing options.
- 7.103 The Liverpool Waters development to the north of Liverpool lies in close proximity to Sefton. The interaction of the proposed housing in Sefton promoted by the various options and the delivery of the full Liverpool Waters scheme will undoubtedly increase traffic pressures in that area and in particular on the A565 both in the south of Sefton and past the site.
- 7.104 The delivery of development within the following sub areas is of particular concern when considering cross boundary implications given the predicted traffic generation, distribution and geographic location of the potential development sites:-
- Southport - Options 2 and 3;
 - Formby – Option 3; and,
 - Maghull – Options 2 and 3
- 7.105 The mitigation highlighted earlier will only have limited benefits to neighbouring Boroughs give the nature of the highways schemes and the relatively confined benefits provided.

Conclusions and Implications

- 7.106 In most cases, there is potential to mitigate against the impacts of development that would be proposed under each of the Local Plan Options. However, there are a number of areas where it is considered that no realistic mitigation may exist, such that development scenarios selected for the Local Plan may be taken in the knowledge of these consequences.
- 7.107 The location of the impacts of the various development options are set out above. In general terms, these primarily relate to environmental effects on international and nationally designated nature conservation sites along the Sefton Coast. Less significantly in environmental terms is the loss of some areas of Grades 1-3 agricultural land and the potential development of Coastal Parks and land in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

7.108

In terms of residual impacts effecting physical and social characteristics of the borough, the Study identifies these as being the loss of Green Belt land, a lack of affordable housing and limited access to shops and other facilities in town or district centres on foot.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 This Study, prepared by NLP and commissioned by Sefton Council in February 2013, assesses the consequences in economic, social and environmental terms of the three Local Plan options for development in the Borough to 2030. The purpose of the Study is to broadly outline the potential consequences of decisions regarding development (housing and employment) locations in the context of determining future growth locations in Sefton's emerging Local Plan.
- 8.2 The three options considered by the Study are:
- **Option 1:** Urban Containment – 270 dwellings per year;
 - **Option 2 :** Meeting Identified Needs – 510 dwellings per year plus 2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites; and
 - **Option 3:** Optimistic Housing Growth – 700 dwellings per year plus 2/3 new Green Belt release employment sites.
- 8.3 The Consequences Study has been undertaken in the context of current national planning policy and with reference to existing evidence base work undertaken to support Sefton Council's Local Plan preparation. The Study builds on a comprehensive baseline assessment of current social, economic and environmental conditions in Sefton and in areas immediately adjoining the borough boundary and includes the results of stakeholder consultations with neighbouring local planning authorities and statutory or key service providers. The baseline assessment identifies thresholds (tipping points) beyond which levels of development may begin to adversely impact on the economic, social or environmental characteristics (or assets) of the Borough.
- 8.4 The population and related effects of the three Local Plan options or identified criteria represent worst case scenarios due primarily, to the application of a 'new resident' assumption to housing development (in the absence of a model to calculate sub-area household formation). Economic issues assessment is not subject to this constraint due to the economic effects being dwelling-related. An additional worst case scenario constraint relates to the maximum housing delivery assumption without discounting of SHLAA sites, for example.
- 8.5 The baseline analysis and assessment of consequences is aligned to the sub-areas of Sefton contained in the Local Plan Core Strategy Options Paper, which have also been used as sub-areas for the purposes of the housing needs analysis undertaken by NLP. For the purposes of analysis, these sub-areas have been further broken down to sub-settlement areas, in order to identify more locally specific consequences of each Local Plan Option. The Study does not assess individual sites within any particular sub-settlement or sub-area and should not be relied upon for this purpose.
- 8.6 The baseline assessment has identified a number of locations where existing environmental, social or economic assets are 'stressed'. In particular, this relates to the transport network and social infrastructure such as healthcare

provision. Inter-district baseline issues relate again, to transport. The travel-to-work relationship of Sefton to neighbouring areas places particular pressure on certain directional flows, in particular, Sefton-Liverpool, Sefton-West Lancashire and, to a lesser extent, Sefton-Wirral and Sefton-Knowsley. Sensitive characteristics of Sefton are identified, including and notably, the Special Protection Area along the Sefton Coast, which is vulnerable to change, particularly as a result of substantial development introducing new populations into the area.

- 8.7 The key message of this baseline analysis is that the majority of the sub-areas analysed can accommodate moderate levels of growth without further investment in infrastructure, whether this be additional school places, GP surgeries, new wastewater treatment, new or improved roads or other fundamental and essential infrastructure types without tipping points being breached. This highlights that the level of growth required to meet government requirements across the Study Area will bring requirements for new infrastructure; this is not to say that new development cannot, in principle, be accommodated.
- 8.8 In summary, the physical infrastructure provision for utilities and transport varies by sub-area. Particularly for utilities, it is apparent that providers often plan on a reactive basis and therefore in some areas there is little headroom capacity to support growth. However, this may be indicative of utility companies not wanting to predict future capacity, but instead to implement a rolling set of upgrades to capacity as and when development comes forward. Similarly, transport issues are varied, with Sefton Council and the Highways Agency highlighting a number of capacity issues that may require larger schemes to mitigate impacts (even taking into account the ongoing improvements at Switch Island).
- 8.9 In determining the strategic distribution of growth to best meet the three Local Plan growth objectives, one of the key factors for consideration will be the marginal costs and benefits of required infrastructure provision. This will ensure that growth is focused in areas where new development makes the most efficient use of the infrastructure needed to support it and help to underpin sustainability by providing infrastructure at a localised scale, redistributing existing excess capacity or surplus provision. Clearly though, infrastructure is just one of a number of factors determining the scale and location of growth. In defining the consequences of the various levels of housing growth we have taken account of the environmental constraints and capacity of each sub-area, as identified below
- 8.10 The analysis indicates that, without suitable mitigation:

- **Option 1** (Urban Containment), can be achieved in all parts of the Borough without too many significant adverse impacts. However, development may impact on sites of international and national environmental importance in many parts of Southport in addition to areas in Formby and Crosby. In addition, there are clear opportunity costs resulting from the missed fiscal, economic and social benefits that additional housing would bring to Sefton. Due to the relatively low level of housing proposed by this Option, it would fail to meet identified social housing needs in all areas except Bootle, where there is currently an over-provision of affordable homes.
- **Option 2 (Meeting Identified Need)**, could result in all the ‘best’, or most sustainable, Green Belt sites coming forward for development and would almost double the overall level of provision. The release of a number of greenfield sites would result in the loss of some Grade 1 – 3a agricultural land in parts of Southport, Crosby and Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree. This option could also require investment in social infrastructure, in particular: additional school places; more capacity at GP surgeries; retail services and green infrastructure. However, this option would also provide an additional 46.5 – 49 ha (although some potentially beyond the Local Plan period to 2030) of employment development in Southport, Formby and Maghull with the potential to support the creation of almost 4,000 new jobs. It could also inject a significant economic boost to the Borough, in addition to generating a large number of direct construction jobs and indirect employment.
- **Option 3 (Optimistic Household Growth)**, would rely on a number of large Green Belt ‘reserve’ sites coming forward for residential development. These additional sites could deliver approximately 1,483 additional dwellings than Option 2 but would be unevenly distributed across the Borough, located predominantly in Formby and Lydiat. In addition to the impacts identified under Option 2 above, this Option could place substantial strain upon key social infrastructure provision in Formby and add significant congestion to the existing transport network in the Maghull/Lydiat and Aintree area. Even allowing for the increase, Furthermore, the economic benefits of this option are not substantially greater than those associated with Option 2.

8.11 In most cases, there is potential to mitigate against the impacts of the levels of development that would be proposed under each of the Local Plan Options. However, there are a number of areas where it is considered that no realistic mitigation may exist, such that development scenarios selected for the Local Plan may be taken in the knowledge of these consequences.

8.12 The locations of the impacts of the various development options primarily relate to environmental effects on international and nationally designated nature conservation sites along the Sefton Coast. Less significantly in environmental terms is the loss of areas of Grade 1-3 agricultural land.

- 8.13 In terms of residual impacts effecting physical and social characteristics of the borough, the Study identifies these as being the loss of Green Belt land, MOD safeguarding zones, the lack of affordable housing and access to retail and other facilities in town or district centres.
- 8.14 As a general overview of the three Local Plan Options, the Study assessments and, in particular, the stakeholder consultations have identified potentially serious consequences of adopting the levels of housing and economic development in Option 1. This Option would fail to meet objectively assessed local housing needs, falling well short of delivering the required level of affordable housing and create pressure on neighbouring authorities to meet Sefton's unmet housing need through the potential release of Green Belt and other sensitive land within their boundaries. Option 2 is supported by the neighbouring authorities as being appropriate in the context of their housing and economic objectives, although it will require the development of Green Belt land and, depending on the location of sites, will have consequences on some of the special characteristics of Sefton as defined in this Study. Option 3 is likely to result in more significant consequences for the characteristics of Sefton's settlement and surrounding countryside, will require greater levels of Green Belt land release in the Borough, but conversely, does not add proportionately to the economic health of the area. Option 3 is not supported by neighbouring authorities, who consider that it is likely to have a detrimental effect on their local housing markets and could contribute to unsustainable patterns of travel to work with resultant pressure on the area's transport network.
- 8.15 The purpose of this Consequences Study has been to set out what the 'consequences' would be of the Local Plan selecting certain levels of development under the three Options published for consultation and the spatial implications of such decisions.
- 8.16 It is for Sefton Council, through consultation, to make these spatial development decisions. The Consequences Study sets out what the implications of these decisions may be and should be read and understood in that context.