

Land between Heatherleigh and Moss Lane - Policy C3 (links with policies D1 and D2)

South of Moss Lane and North of Bannister Lane

Development Statement



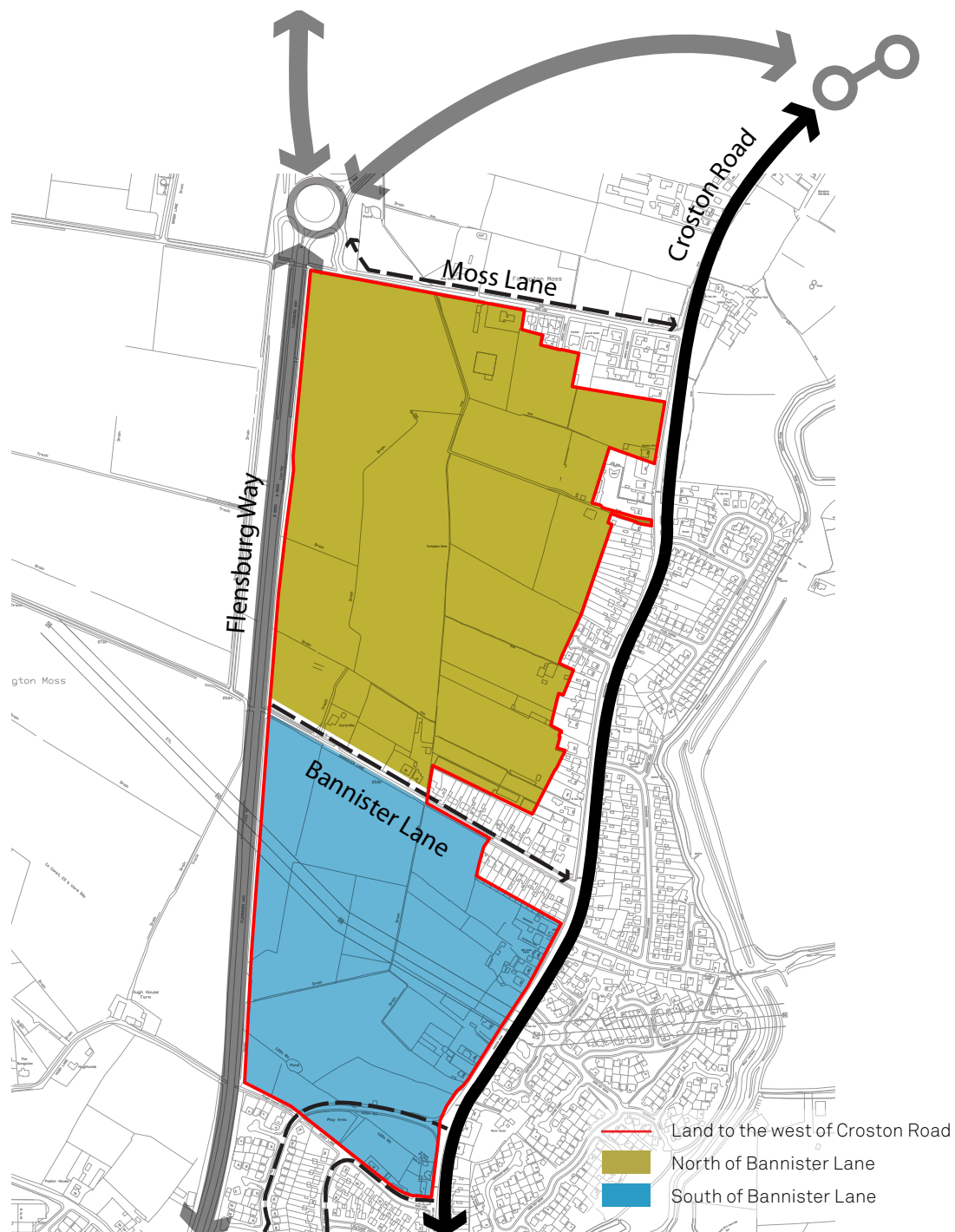


Figure 0.1: Study Area

FOREWORD

The land between Heatherleigh and Moss Lane in Farington (between Hugh Lane to the south and Moss Lane to the north (fig. 0.1) provides a significant, feasible and sustainable residential development opportunity.

The Preferred Options draft of the *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document* (November/December 2011) proposes potential allocation of the southern section of the land for residential development, whilst maintaining the bulk of the northern section as Safeguarded Land.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has a significant ownership interest in the land, including areas within both the southern and northern sections of the site. The HCA is already working with Lea Hough (who represent a consortium of private land owners) to define development potential for that part of the land lying to the south of Bannister Lane, but sees a clear opportunity to drive forward a vision for the comprehensive development of the land as a whole – extending from Hugh Lane in the south to Moss Lane in the north.

In so doing, the HCA advocates the formal allocation of the land as a whole for residential development, and promotes a comprehensive, holistic masterplanning approach to create a flexible disposal and delivery strategy.

Such an approach will bring numerous benefits, as set out within this development statement.

In essence, what it will bring is the opportunity to maximise what could be a very important and high profile development for South Ribble, with the potential to deliver many positive benefits for the area. Development here can, if successfully managed and integrated, enhance quality of place and quality of life for new and existing residents alike.

A comprehensive, holistic approach will ensure that such development aligns with policy objectives, best practice and local distinctiveness. Moreover, it can and will accelerate its delivery by providing certainty, addressing potential practical stumbling blocks and coordinating future action.

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Executive Summary

Land between Heatherleigh and Moss Lane in Farington (stretching from Hugh Lane to the south and Moss Lane to the north) provides a significant residential development opportunity. This could become a very positive, high profile development for South Ribble, and one with the potential to deliver many positive benefits for Central Lancashire and the local communities of Farington Moss.

Comprehensive approach

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) has a significant ownership interest in the land, and is working in partnership with fellow land owners and SRBC to assess the potential of the site. Collectively, it is acknowledged that development opportunities and benefits would be maximised through a comprehensive, coordinated approach.

Our Development Statement demonstrates how comprehensive development of the land would support policy objectives, enhance local distinctiveness and sustainability, and resist piecemeal development. A comprehensive approach can and will accelerate delivery of development, and its associated benefits, by providing certainty and coordinating actions.

Creating a *place*: high quality, green development

Our Development Statement acknowledges that, as a greenfield site, the right balance needs to be struck between maximising the development opportunity, and the need to maintain a high quality approach. Development here can, if successfully managed and integrated, significantly enhance quality of place and quality of life for new and existing residents, deliver high quality sustainable design and construction, and manage environmental impact responsibly.

Our vision is of a development that creates a visually attractive environment; one that is rich, varied and rewarding, with careful thought given to integration of natural features and qualities - from wider landscape character to local features. One key opportunity is to ensure that development creates high quality open spaces as part of a coherent, multifunctional green infrastructure network that is accessible by new and existing residents alike. This could in particular incorporate attractive green corridors which can become a defining feature of the development, picking up the geometry of the existing field system, land drains, hedgerows and trees. A wide variety of spaces could be included - play spaces, wildlife corridors, viewing corridors, shelter planting, amenity space, all of which can provide natural, sustainable drainage solutions that respond to the mossland character.

Illustrative plot plan

An illustrative plan has been produced to articulate development potential of the site, in combination with parallel design studies being undertaken for the land south of Bannister Lane. This is responsive to a number of constraints and influences identified through robust technical assessments. The illustrative plan is, we believe, a compelling representation of a significant, high quality development;

- Structured by a high quality green infrastructure network
- Delivering an optimum site access solution (also helping to maximise benefits for local and strategic networks)
- Successfully addressing practical and technical constraints, including integration of sewer easement
- Embedding a coordinated approach to delivery of physical infrastructure, including a sustainable drainage system
- Maximising opportunities for distinctive development with an overarching, coordinated design ethos
- Helping to coordinate constituent land ownerships, and therefore provide certainty of delivery



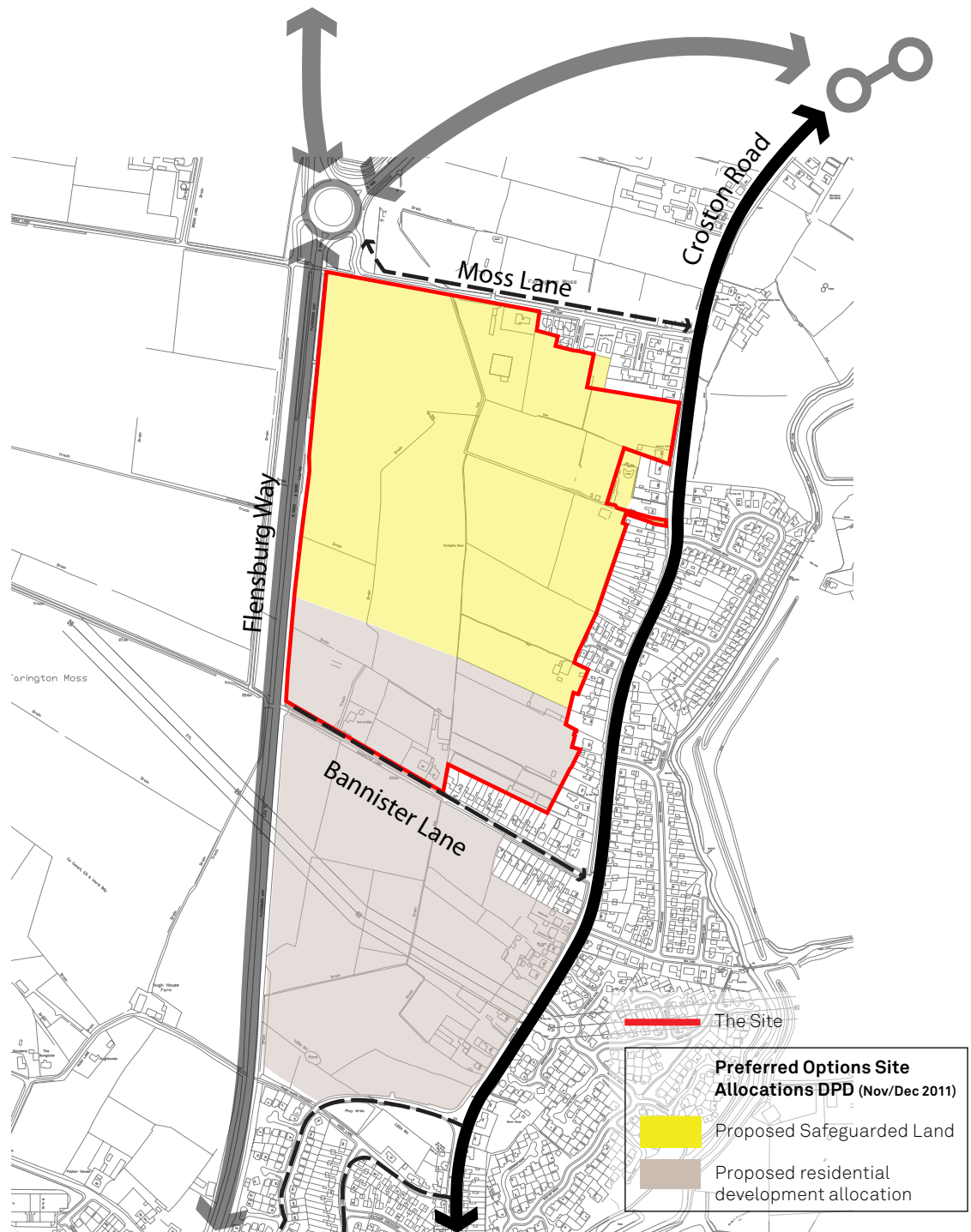


Figure 1.1: The Site - Land north of Bannister Lane

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This development statement has been prepared to demonstrate that the land west of Croston Road represents a development prospect that is not only deliverable and justifiable, but an exceptional opportunity to create positive, sustainable development.

The statement supports and expands upon representations made by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and Lea Hough to South Ribble Borough Council (SRBC) in response to the Preferred Options draft of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (the Site Allocations DPD), on which consultation closed on 22nd December 2011.

The statement mirrors, supports and corresponds with a parallel statement prepared by Lea Hough, in conjunction with the HCA, relating to the land south of Bannister Lane.

1.1 Introducing the Site

The land extending south of Moss Lane and north of Bannister Lane is referred to as the 'site' within this development statement. It extends to approximately 24ha.

The HCA is the majority land owner with a continuous land holding extending from the central part of the site up to the Flensburg Way roundabout. There are parts of the site under third party ownership to the north east (to the rear of existing residential properties at the corner of Croston Road and Moss Lane) and south (abutting Bannister Lane).

The approach advocated within this statement seeks to combine all constituent land ownerships into a single coordinated plan.

1.2 Background

Land to the west of Croston Road has historically been identified as having development potential by virtue of its allocation as Safeguarded Land in the adopted South Ribble Local Plan (2000). The Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD includes a proposal to bring forward the southern part of that Safeguarded Land as a formal allocation for residential development, with an expectation for it to yield 600 dwellings (fig. 1.1).

In making this proposal, SRBC considered that such an allocation proposed at that time would be appropriate on the basis of its location on the edge of the urban area, and recognised that;

*"...Proper planning of the area coupled with the size of the site, means there needs to be a **comprehensive development** and to secure this **a masterplan will be required**. It is intended that access to the site should be from Heatherleigh and/or Croston Road, and that there should be no direct vehicular access from Bannister Lane. Section 106 or CIL contributions from the development would contribute towards local infrastructure improvements..." (paragraph 7.62 (emphasis added))*

1.3 Key aims

Those sections of the draft DPD extract emphasised above highlight where we believe the allocation of a larger area will assist objectives. There can be no doubt of the development

potential here, but this can be maximised, managed and indeed accelerated if articulated as a wider plan with greater opportunities for development.

The HCA is taking the initiative to promote wider potential at this stage of the plan-making process to ensure that every opportunity is taken to realise the best outcome for the council, the community and land owners alike. Allocation of a larger site will bring greater potential to create a coherent and distinctive place; a development that is defined by green space and high quality landscape, integrated with the existing area, and supported by strong social infrastructure.

This statement aims to;

- Demonstrate how development would have a strong strategic fit, complementing a range of strategic objectives and development guidance.
- Put the land north of Bannister Lane and its development potential in context, and to demonstrate how key constraints and opportunities can be addressed.
- Set out some key design principles that should continue to be developed as scheme proposals move forward into detailed stages of design.
- Articulate a potential spatial framework for development that illustrates the potential of a comprehensive approach, showing how development can successfully integrate with its surroundings and in particular deliver a multifunctional green infrastructure network accessible by new and existing residents alike.
- Outline a delivery strategy, showing how careful and responsive planning and phasing can create the optimum development conditions, stimulating accelerated delivery of the opportunities but with quality outcomes.

The statement represents an early vision of future development, and it is a tool to help this become reality. The statement can be used as a means through which to build consensus around the site's potential: building confidence amongst policy makers, decision makers, key stakeholders, statutory consultees and the local community.

1.4 Supporting studies

This development statement has been composed with reference to a number of supporting studies, which the HCA has instructed. These include;

- Site access study (AECOM)
- Drainage strategy report (AECOM)
- Review of statutory undertaker services infrastructure (AECOM)
- Preliminary habitat survey (TEP)
- Review of potential land contamination issues (ATKINS)

2.0 CONTEXT AND CHARACTERISTICS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asserts that good design is an essential part of sustainable development, ensuring that development reflects the character and identity of local surrounding areas.

Thus the importance of understanding the wider context, including the physical character and composition of the local area, is a key starting point to achieving good design, good planning and – ultimately – good development.

Going forward the analysis of contextual influences – of the key constraints and opportunities this reveals – will play a key role in defining development proposals at land west of Croston Road. This will need to be documented through studies which provide the founding rationale for development, and a clear evidence base for decision makers.

The features and characteristics described in this section provide an overview of some of the contextual considerations that create a positive foundation for development.



Croston Road

2.1 Wider area

The site is situated to the north west of the main urban area of Leyland in South Ribble, approximately 1.5km from the town centre. This area has a number of distinctive attributes which support a high quality of life, and that have created a popular and rewarding place to live.

2.1.1 South Ribble and Central South Ribble

South Ribble occupies the area south of the City of Preston. The borough is part of the Lancashire coastal plain bordering the Pennine uplands to the east and its northern boundary is marked by the River Ribble. The site lies approximately 7km to the south of Preston city centre.

The Publication Joint Core Strategy (2010) (the Core Strategy) identifies Leyland as a Key Service Centre with a range of housing and employment opportunities (as well as retail and other services that serve a wide area), and confirms that Farington adjoins and acts as part of the Leyland urban area.

Leyland is a significant settlement with a population of just over 32,500 (2001 Census). The town, and Farington in particular, has a rich industrial heritage, much of it based around the world famous Leyland buses and trucks. The town centre provides a broad range of shops and services and there is a strong local employment base, including a number of major light industrial sites. The Core Strategy confirms that Leyland and Farington have a particularly strong and diverse manufacturing base which is highly significant within the sub-region.

The area immediately north of Farington remains largely undeveloped and in planning policy terms functions as a green gap. Part of this green gap is protected by Green Belt policy, as designated by the adopted South Ribble Local Plan and as proposed to be taken forward by the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD. To the north of this green gap lie Lostock Hall and Bamber Bridge.

In recent times there has been significant development interest and activity in this area, largely driven by its good connectivity and access to transport infrastructure. This trend is continuing, with potentially significant developments 'in the pipeline'. This includes for example proposals to deliver the Pickering's Farm residential-led mixed use development, and the Cuerden Regional Investment Site. The latter is an exciting employment opportunity, envisaged as a high quality business park that will attract quality occupiers.

Further afield, a key feature is the strong, diverse and growing employment offer. This includes the proposed Enterprise Zone at Samlesbury, east of Preston.

2.1.2 Wider connectivity

Leyland, Lostock Hall and Bamber Bridge all provide access to the local rail network, whilst Preston provides access to the West Coast Mainline. The area is notable for its convenient links to the national motorway network, with immediate access to the M6, M65 and M61. This means good sub-regional and regional connectivity, enabling easy access to major

conurbations such as Manchester and Liverpool, and their employment, leisure and cultural attractions (Figure 2.1).

There is also good accessibility to a range of major environmental assets across the region, such as the Lancashire Coast (including Southport and Formby), the Forest of Bowland and West Pennine Moors. More locally, key assets include Cuerden Valley Park and the Ribble Coast and Wetlands Regional Park (which includes the Martin Mere Wetland Centre).

The site itself, lying off Croston Road, is immediately adjacent to a major bus route and enjoys good cyclist and pedestrian links to Farington and onwards into Leyland.

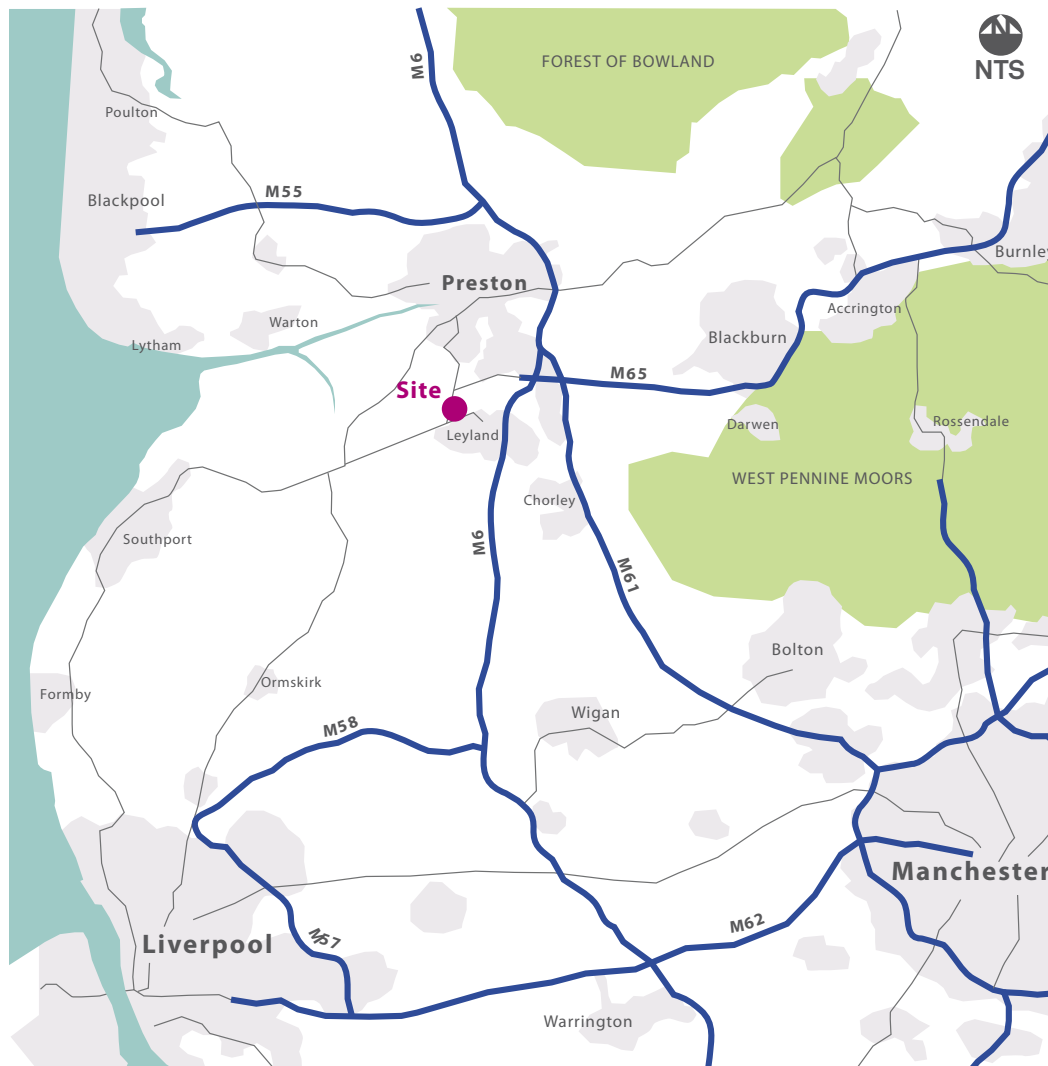


Figure 2.1: Sub-regional connectivity / key relationships

2.2 Site features

The site and surroundings have a number of features which make them distinctive, and which can define future development.

2.2.1 Immediate surroundings

Urban form

This part of Farington Moss has an attractive, high quality built environment, and has become a desirable place to live. Croston Road itself is characteristic of typical historic ribbon development – extending out from the northern edge of Leyland, tracing the course of the River Lostock.

The original form of this ribbon development remains evident along the main street frontage. Although diluted by successive infill development and redevelopments, the general character one perceives along the frontage is lower density development and generous plot ratios – sizeable detached and semi-detached buildings set within large plots. The Croston Road frontage is largely continuous on both sides and this imparts an element of spatial definition and formality on the street space. Properties are predominantly well set back from the road.

The Croston Road area has seen a significant volume of medium scale infill development, between the road and River Lostock. This development consists of typical late 20th century suburban housing development, with modest to large sized dwellings in a variety of typologies, styles, building forms and plot characteristics. These characteristics create an area which is perceived as an extension of Leyland's main urban area, connecting back to the centre.

Landscape character

The site is notable for lying at the junction of the 'Coastal Plain' and 'Mosslands' landscape character types (Joint Lancashire Structure Plans Landscape and Heritage SPG);

- The Coastal Plain is defined by gently undulating or flat lowland farmland, with large fields, open road verges and long views punctuated by small deciduous secondary woodlands. Typically man made infrastructure network is fairly dense; meandering tracks and minor roads connect farms and villages while major roads and motorways cut across the landscape.
- The Mosslands are an extremely flat, low lying landscape. Fields are typically large and geometric, often defined by straight drainage ditches and post and wire fences. There can be long views across this open landscape and this can make man made vertical elements, e.g. electricity pylons, visually prominent. Drainage ditches form an important network of semi-natural wetland habitats across the sub region.

A notable landscape feature within the immediate area is the River Lostock, which provides an attractive green corridor along the eastern edge of Farington Moss separating residential areas to the west from large scale industrial areas to the east. There is an existing pedestrian footpath along the river to the south which links into Mill Lane and Bannister Lane, providing direct access to the site.



Figure 2.2: Immediate surroundings - relationships and features reveal a strongly connected place, including the opportunity for immediate pedestrian / cyclist access to employment areas to the east of the River Lostock

2.2.2 Boundaries

The site boundaries generally follow those of the area allocated as Safeguarded Land in the adopted South Ribble Local Plan (2000). However we acknowledge that - going forward, to define a developable area - precise boundaries will need to be interrogated and verified. Existing boundary conditions vary but all create clear, defined edges to the site.

- To the west, the strong linear form of Flensburg Way cuts through the surrounding mossland to create a 'hard', man-made edge, accentuated by embankments
- To the north, the site is defined by Moss Lane, immediately beyond which is the Flensburg Way roundabout - an important hub in the strategic highway network
- To the east, an irregular boundary is formed by the rear of properties fronting onto Croston Road. There are a variety of different treatments and features, including domestic suburban garden fencing, hedgerows and trees, and there are also instances of non-residential buildings / plots. There are few physical and/or visual connections through this boundary to Croston Road itself.
- To the south, Bannister Lane is predominantly a single fronted street, with a mix of detached and semi-detached houses. The proposed residential development allocation, as defined by the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD, straddles Bannister Lane.

These boundary characters combine to define a site that is contained in physical and visual terms – land that is framed by existing residential development and major road infrastructure. The site is not prominent in the wider landscape.

2.2.3 Site interior

As a greenfield site, it is acknowledged that the right balance will need to be struck between the need to ensure efficient land use, and the need to maintain natural qualities and characteristics such as hedges, trees and water courses.

Historic mapping confirms that the site has remained as undeveloped agricultural land over time. It is currently divided into smaller parcels by mature hedgerows and land drains, the latter being prevalent throughout the area. Mature trees provide attractive features and some appear in linear groups.

Access points are limited, but the site is open to Moss Lane to the north, which links into the Flensburg Way roundabout and on to the strategic highway network within the South Ribble and Preston urban area. Bannister Lane and Moss Lane both provide links to open countryside and existing footpath network, as well as a wider connection through to the River Lostock. There are currently no public rights of way crossing through the site itself.

Sensitivity is needed to retain and enhance features, but with a creative design approach that integrates features into development layout and design, and helps to create a visually distinctive built environment. Retention and enhancement of existing features should also be seen as an opportunity to help address practical constraints (e.g. dealing effectively with surface water drainage).



- Existing tracks and paths
- Existing trees
- Existing drainage ditches
- Existing combined sewer (4m easement to either side)
- ⚡ Traffic noise
- Existing boundary hedges
- Existing built form / plots
- Transmission line
- Existing waterway/body
- Extent of extreme flood (indicative)

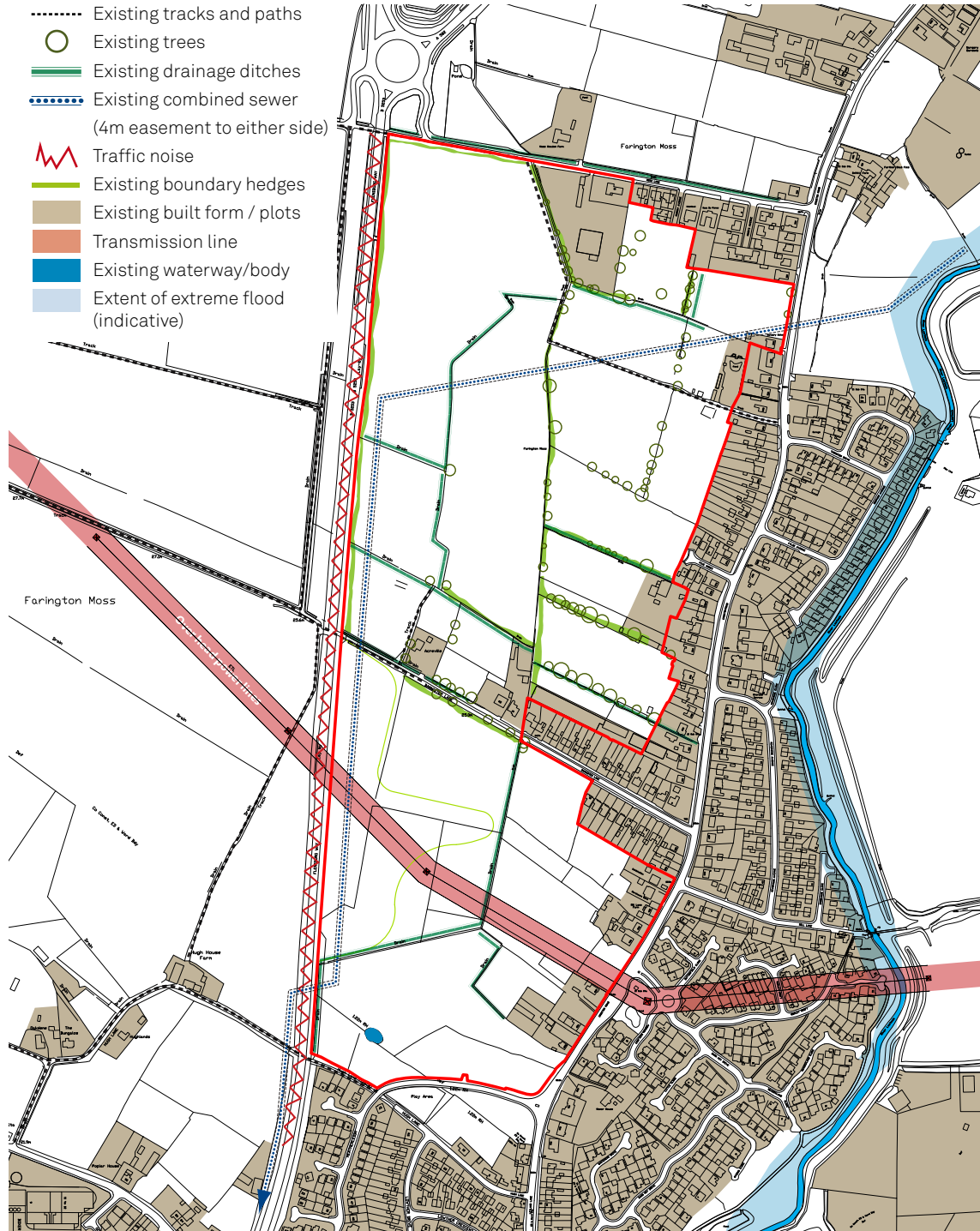


Figure 2.3: Site features

3.0 KEY OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Deliverability

To be considered a deliverable development prospect, sites should be available, suitable and achievable. By bringing forward a larger site allocation to that considered in the preferred options Site Allocations DPD, these attributes of deliverability will be enhanced;

- **“Available”**

From the HCA’s perspective the site is available for development with immediate effect, and can offer land holdings with ready access from Flensbug Way and Moss Lane. A comprehensive, coordinating plan across the whole site will galvanise land owners and create the conditions for all land to become available, in the immediate to short term.

- **“Suitable”**

There can be no doubt that the locational attributes of the site makes this land suitable for development, now. Development would not cause harm to environmental interests and would be accessible via appropriate routes and junctions. Increasing size and potential capacity by bringing forward a larger site to allocation would provide development with sufficient critical mass to help create sustainable, mixed communities and would in particular be able to deliver - and if supported exceed - the Council’s stated objectives to deliver 600 dwellings in this location in the plan period.

- **“Achievable”**

The HCA is the majority land owner and has control over access, therefore ensuring delivery (subject to the requisite assessments and approvals). A comprehensive approach will help achieve development through formulation of a flexible framework; guiding a clear course of action but with the ability for proposals to evolve over time. The HCA will work step-by-step in partnership with the Council, land owners and other stakeholders.

3.1.2 ‘Placemaking’ over ‘development’

The emerging Local Development Framework seeks to commit a large number of dwellings in this location and this needs to be managed in a way which not only delivers ‘units’, but results in the creation of an attractive, sustainable place. In this sense development should be multi-faceted, creating a family-friendly environment which supports a community that can evolve and strengthen over time.

The development approach needs to maximise ‘placemaking’ objectives, helping to enhance the balance of the existing area and the quality of life it offers.

This includes an ability for development (and the new community it supports) to not only make the most of benefits already on offer in the local area (e.g. the strong employment offer), but itself bring benefits to the area and existing residents. One way it can do this is ensure that high quality, high profile open space and landscape become a key characteristic of the development, delivering a wide variety of spaces - play spaces, wildlife corridors, viewing corridors, shelter planting, amenity space, all of which can provide natural, sustainable drainage solutions that respond to the mossland character.

3.2 Coordination underpinning deliverability



Development at Cottam Hall, north of Preston, integrating generous green space provision, enhancing sense of place

To have a positive 'placemaking' impact, a development site needs to be of sufficient size, with advantageous location and good accessibility. Land to the west of Croston Road has all the advantages of location and accessibility, and by including all of the land (from Moss Lane to Hugh Lane) as a residential allocation a development opportunity could be delivered which has substantial benefits beyond its immediate boundaries.

Nevertheless, such a significant development needs to be very carefully managed if opportunities are to be optimised and constraints are to be overcome, as recognised by SRBC in their Preferred Option Site Allocation DPD ("*...proper planning of the area coupled with the size of the site, means there needs to be a comprehensive development and to secure this a masterplan will be required...*").

3.2.1 The Homes and Communities Agency at the forefront

The HCA support SRBC in their view that comprehensive development is the right approach. There needs to be a holistic approach to appreciation of issues and opportunities; one that is responsive to the wider context and driven by strong and experienced leadership. The HCA work in accordance with the planning policies of local authorities and entirely within their aspirations.

The HCA is taking the initiative to show how development opportunity can be maximised. The HCA is a unique organisation with the skills and experience required to understand the complexities of large scale development projects, and with the resources to manage successful delivery on the ground.

This is because the HCA can take a strategic view, adopt a collaborative work ethic, and promote consistent placemaking values from conception to implementation. This makes the involvement of the HCA in this site a compelling advantage; underpinning and asserting the deliverability of the site.

3.2.2 Avoiding piecemeal development

The HCA is the majority landowner, controlling a significant portion of the site. Nevertheless other parts of the site are in multiple ownerships and this could potentially risk delivery of successful, integrated development. Key issues such as access and circulation, and the delivery of physical infrastructure need to be approached holistically and with careful coordination, and so the HCA intend to coordinate the site as a single asset in consultation with 3rd party land owners.

The risk of individual land holdings being pursued as fragmented, unconnected development should be minimised as this would clearly compromise the development opportunity and fail to capitalise on its potential placemaking role. It would in particular restrict delivery of a meaningful, integrated open space network, and would restrict developer contributions to enhanced local infrastructure provision.

By formally allocating the site now, whilst conditions are good and the HCA are taking the initiative, it will be possible to resist any potential 'challenges' to a Safeguarded Land allocation via disjointed planning applications. The HCA has an impressive track record in facilitating development that start out with complex constraints, including where land

ownership is fragmented. We will work with other landowners to coordinate a strong masterplan vision that defines common goals.

3.2.3 Communication and collaboration

Development cannot be delivered successfully and satisfactorily unless there is strong communication throughout the process. Deliverability is defined by the ability to respond positively to policy objectives, generate political will and enthuse the local community.

The HCA can drive forward a holistic approach, coordinate a masterplanning process that helps clear communication and encourages collaborative working. This can be a tool to communicate development benefits to a wide audience, and ensure effective coordination with a diverse range of stakeholders

Community consultation

Although long designated as safeguarded land, we appreciate that the allocation of the site may raise some concerns in the community. Such developments can often draw out heartfelt issues and concerns and it is important therefore that development isn't seen to be 'imposed' on existing residents - every chance should be taken to communicate and consult.

The HCA will take a strong and consistent lead here, and we appreciate the steps needed to manage growth in the right way - to ensure that the benefits of development are promoted, and that physical change helps to transform a place for the better.

A comprehensive public engagement strategy will be undertaken prior to any future potential planning application submission.

3.2.4 Certainty and acceleration

With an allocation for the site in place, the HCA could finalise plans to generate a masterplan which brings key parties together and creates certainty on core principles and parameters. This will facilitate commitment and investment from the private sector.

One of the principles we believe is right for this site is the idea of setting down a flexible framework which sets the general rules for development but allows for a degree of independence for developer partners. Although a clear 'end state' development would be envisaged, the delivery strategy could be based on flexible phasing and land release.

Because of the land ownership patterns and spatial configuration of the site this approach would, we believe, accelerate the development process considerably and create the best possible conditions for delivering the site comprehensively. This would leave no doubt as to the availability and achievability of the site.

3.3 Meeting policy objectives

We would continue to work in partnership with SRBC, key stakeholders and consultees to ensure that development can balance key policy objectives.

3.3.1 Delivering sustainable development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out to ensure that planning decisions reflect genuine national objectives - such as the need to safeguard the natural environment, combat climate change, and to support sustainable local growth. The principle of sustainable development permeates NPPF and touches on a wide range of issues including the need to maintain Green Belt objectives, opening up walking routes, improving biodiversity, strengthening the connection between people and nature, promoting public transport and giving priority to cyclists and pedestrians.

NPPF sets down a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development whilst helping to give communities, developers and investors greater certainty about development. This will shape the development of the site and promotes the need for a holistic, intelligent masterplanning approach to communicate its sustainability credentials.

Development at this site can meet broad sustainability goals, acknowledging the potential for Farington Moss to continue to develop in a way that maximises its wider economic role, and that makes the most of its connectivity / infrastructure advantages. Indeed, development can support the wider Central Lancashire growth agenda - a range of significant developments continue to come forward in the area, the economic base and employment opportunities continue to strengthen, and the delivery of associated social and physical infrastructure becomes reality.

Development here can maximise the inherent connectivity of the area whilst making the most of an attractive setting and promoting its quality of place.

3.3.2 Delivering housing supply

Policy objective SO5 of the adopted joint Publication Core Strategy (Dec 2010) seeks to make available and maintain a ready supply of residential development land over the plan period, helping deliver sufficient new housing to meet future requirements. This is expressed through the emerging Site Allocations DPD, wherein significant housing growth is envisaged within the allocated site (600 dwellings provisionally allocated). This makes a significant contribution to the overall supply for the plan period.

There is however uncertainty about the ability of the allocated site as currently defined to accommodate this number of dwellings whilst staying within the design guidelines outlined in the Core Strategy (e.g. Policy 5: Housing Density). Representations by Lea Hough indicate potential for up to about 320 dwellings on land south of Bannister Lane, just over half of the anticipated yield.

Therefore, a larger allocation will ensure that the policy objective to deliver substantial new housing development in Farington can be met. The land north of Bannister Lane has the potential to deliver about 480 dwellings (refer to section 5 of this statement), bringing the overall capacity of land west of Croston Road to about 800 dwellings. This would take full

advantage of the sustainable location and have significant, positive implications for future allocations of New Homes Bonus.

3.4 Place-making and good design

This high profile and important development opportunity would be devalued if approached simply as a technical exercise (reacting to engineering constraints, and/or seeing it as a yield of units). There is clear opportunity to create a distinctive place here, and this needs layered, rich and creative development.

We recognise that the masterplanning process presents a great opportunity to showcase good design and to demonstrate how this particular development can go “beyond standard”. The site can deliver on many of the design aspirations and objectives set out at national and local level. Broad policy themes in the Core Strategy place good design at the heart of the development agenda, being the key to economic growth, place-shaping, tackling climate change and improving health and well being (p.15). This is followed through into key policies such as Core Strategy Policy 6: Housing Quality.

3.4.1 A design-led framework

Development can capitalise on the prominence of the site, becoming integrated with the existing urban area by connecting into the existing transport network and supporting local services and facilities. Carefully considered, comprehensive masterplanning will naturally help to deliver integrated design and help avoid the risks to design quality that would be posed by disjointed piecemeal development.

As part of this Development Statement we have prepared an indicative spatial framework (see Section 4) to explore some key design concepts. Although this needs to be developed and refined going forward (including with appropriate consultation), such a coordinating framework will ensure a strategic, coordinated response to some key design issues, e.g.;

- ***Density and intensity***

How to create a place with a critical mass population that makes the most of the area's connectivity and creates a vital and vibrant development, but at the same time remains sensitive to context. Density, massing and scale should be organised to impart a legible, permeable structure and a stimulating townscape.

- ***Design quality***

Balancing urban form and function to create a visually attractive environment that is rich, varied and rewarding, with careful thought given to views and integration of natural features (including land drains).

- ***Mix***

Introducing a range of housing into an existing, high quality residential area: a choice of different typologies, densities and tenures. This needs to involve inclusive design of robust and adaptable buildings and spaces.

- ***A safe, managed environment***

Creating public realm – streets and spaces – that is defined, fronted and overlooked by

positive, active building frontages. Good urban design delivers an outward ‘public front’ and a secure ‘private back’ that helps natural surveillance.

- ***Promoting “outdoor life”***

Integrating a range of public, semi-public / communal areas that provide welcoming spaces in which all the family can play and relax.

- ***“Going with the flow”***

Fitting into the existing urban grain and in particular responds to existing properties fronting Croston Road. This also needs to be about ‘designing-in’ and promoting links with established employment opportunities and community facilities.

- ***Practical responses***

How practical aspects of the development, such as access and provision of physical infrastructure can be seamlessly integrated as part of a balanced and attractive design approach. Subtle engineering and joined up thinking on open space/street design is key to creating people-friendly spaces, and avoiding ‘car centric’ development.

- ***Implementation and pace***

How good design and masterplanning facilitates intelligent phasing, having an eye on a bigger picture but ensuring that individual phases can be brought forward to create fully functioning developments in their own right (i.e. create liveable, attractive places even whilst subsequent phases are being implemented).

3.4.2 Landscape and visual impact

The green field character of the site can, if sensitively handled, become a highly positive attribute of the development. Although development would inevitably result in the loss of previously undeveloped land, this would occur in a location with a limited visual envelope that is tightly defined by man-made features to all boundaries.

On a broad level, and in terms of the Natural England recommendations with regards National Character Area 32 ‘Lancashire and Amounderness Plain’, development can come forward in a way that does not harm the key characteristics of the local landscape, for example;

- Development based around the retention and appropriate management of hedgerows
- Scope to create new water bodies that complement wider objective to conserve and manage field ponds
- Conserving and utilising existing on-site field drains as part of a surface water drainage management system
- Limited / negligible loss of loss of lowland mosses, and without harming the integrity of that wider character area or unbalance the landscape types of the region

A key design opportunity is to ensure that development is based around the creation of high quality open spaces within a coherent green infrastructure network. This will create a framework of open spaces within the site itself, whilst also connecting into the wider open space network. This should include structuring development around attractive green corridors picking up the geometry of the existing field system, existing land drains, hedgerows and trees.



Development at Buckshaw Village, Chorley, based on a strong green infrastructure network promoting outdoor life, creating family friendly environments, supporting SuDS and biodiversity

3.5 Social infrastructure

Sustainable development supports local economies, facilities and services - delivering enhancement to services either directly or indirectly. This helps build sustainable communities with high quality services, a good physical environment, a strong economic base and shared values.

Core Strategy objectives include the desire to improve the health and wellbeing of all residents and reduce the health inequalities that affect deprived areas of the Borough. A key aspect of this is to improve access to health care, sport and recreation, open green spaces, and community facilities and services, including access to healthy food.

We believe that these fundamental elements of sustainable communities can and will characterise the comprehensive development approach being promoted in this statement. This will ultimately deliver development that will stand the test of time, where people want to live.

3.5.1 Core services

The site is well located in terms of access to existing core services in terms of education, healthcare and recreation / open space. Furthermore, the location of the site in the context of the wider North Leyland / South Preston growth agenda is important, as the social infrastructure network continues to evolve here.

Development proposed at land west of Croston Road can be complementary to this changing picture, in terms of helping to enhance population density (supporting the viability and sustainability of services, especially public transport) and enhancing developer contributions.

Particular relationships to take into account include the Pickering's Farm development to the north, which is anticipated to incorporate non-residential development / provision of new community facilities, and likewise there is potential for social infrastructure provision at Cuerden Regional Investment Site (in particular recreational open space linking through to Cuerden Valley Park).

Education

There is extensive existing primary school provision locally, including (in order of distance) Farington Moss St Paul's CoE Primary School (1km), Northbrook Primary School (1.5km), Farington Primary School (2km) and New Longton All Saints CoE Primary School (2.5km). Local secondary education provision includes Lostock Hall High School (3km), Leyland St Marys Catholic Technology College (3km) and Balshaw's CoE High School (4km).

The Central Lancashire Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan identifies anticipated need for additional primary provision in the Farington / North Leyland area. Site search and delivery mechanisms are we understand at this stage an ongoing process, but clearly a significant development such as that we propose at land west of Croston Road can make appropriate contributions.

3.5.2 CIL

The Council is moving towards the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy, and this will in time partly replace the current system of payments being made under Section 106 of the Planning Act. We accept that this is a helpful part of the social infrastructure equation that will help people to better understand how the impacts of development can be channelled into benefits for the wider community.

The anticipated introduction of CIL could be in place when the proposed development west of Croston Road is delivered. With our intention to drive forward a comprehensive masterplanning approach for a large site, this development could provide a significant early contribution via the CIL.

Indeed, our proposal to ensure that the development site is maximised, extending north to Moss Lane, will optimise the contributions that CIL can extract. Likewise, it will help maximise future New Homes Bonus allocations.

3.6 Embedding environmental sustainability

With the scale of development possible this can genuinely be a development with high environmental sustainability credentials - expressed through design and construction quality, the conservation of energy / carbon and water, and mitigation of environmental impact. Going forward, detailed proposals will need to demonstrate how standards relevant at the time of reserved matters application can be applied (e.g. Code for Sustainable Homes or its future equivalent, BREEAM and CEEQUAL).

With the green field context and existing mossland landscape character there is particular opportunity to focus on water management through flood risk attenuation / SuDS and water sensitive urban design. Other key aspects, linked to good design, could include;

1. Green spaces that enhanced biodiversity / habitats
2. Energy efficiency through passive design and construction techniques
3. Renewable energy through microgeneration
4. Efficient use of resources through reuse of materials and effective use of land

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure could be a particularly strong element of the development, supporting natural ecosystems, enhancing quality of place and quality of life. Associated sustainability benefits will include controlled drainage, improved microclimate, energy conservation / carbon reduction, enhanced biodiversity, amenity and health. It could also assist noise attenuation (e.g. Flensburg Way). The social and economic benefits of strong green infrastructure would include enhanced local land values and enhanced options for low cost recreation, such as cycle paths and walking routes.

Energy efficiency

The principle of securing energy efficiency through site layout and building design is fundamental. Detailed design of buildings should maximise not only 'technical' solutions but passive techniques inherent in design and layout, such as orientation and use of glazing to maximize solar gain. Orientation of buildings and spaces can make significant contribution to reducing heating and lighting demand. Density and the land-take of highway infrastructure should also be carefully considered as part of this approach.

Renewable energy

The Council has already, in developing an evidence base for the LDF undertaken considerable research into the potential for sustainable design and construction. For example, the report 'Opportunities for Renewable Energy in the Borough' sets out in detail some key concepts and potential locations relating to renewable energy supply, and includes guidance for this particular development site which could be taken forward following allocation (the report recommends for example micro-generation opportunities including wind, solar water and photovoltaics). At this early stage we support the objectives of the study and would wish to help deliver on the opportunities it identifies.

4.0 BUILDING A SPATIAL FRAMEWORK

A coordinated masterplanning approach is as much about promoting the benefits of this development opportunity to a wide audience - a compelling vision of change - as it is about showing how development layout can respond to physical constraints or calculating capacity.

Masterplanning for the Croston Road site will evolve in the future to consider a wide range of physical, environmental, social and economic development influences and proposals. At this early stage, the foundations of a more detailed, sophisticated future masterplan can be expressed through an indicative **spatial framework**, to help articulate some important guiding principles and concepts that will both underpin the deliverability of development and also help to create an attractive, distinctive place.

We have developed an indicative spatial framework to illustrate the components of a holistic design approach that can help bind together the constituent areas of the wider development opportunity into a single whole. It expresses a potential 'bigger picture' vision of development - guided by context, constraints and opportunities. Going forward, the framework will need to be developed alongside the Council and other stakeholders, including the local community.

We have used this process to help communicate some key pillars of development and design, as follows;

- 4.1 Overarching design principles
- 4.2 Access
- 4.3 Movement and transport
- 4.4 Ground conditions and services
- 4.5 Open space and sustainable drainage strategy
- 4.6 Landscape and ecology
- 4.7 Built form, density and character

In section 5 we draw all these elements together into a single plan.

Development 'envelope' and capacity

One of the benefits of undertaking this exercise at this stage is to try and better understand the likely spatial extent of development and gain a realistic representation of likely capacity. The current Safeguarded Land boundary has been considered relative to land ownership patterns, existing built form and land use, and the outcomes of initial technical surveys / assessments, to determine a deliverable development 'envelope'.

4.1 Overarching design principles

In response to site and surroundings we have considered some core design principles that will underpin delivery of a quality development.

Stitching the patchwork together

A consistent, bigger picture vision of development should transcend land ownership. Yet at the same time ownership is a fundamental delivery consideration and it is crucial to demonstrate that design helps to phase comprehensive development in a way that dovetails with different land holdings.

Green corridors

Prominent green infrastructure can define development here, in particular through the creation of green corridors and 'green lanes'. There is clear opportunity to 'bring the countryside in' to this development whilst ensuring that green space is multifunctional and creates recreational value. This could see a wide variety of spaces come forward - play spaces, wildlife corridors, viewing corridors, shelter planting, amenity space and providing drainage solutions that respond to the mossland character and existing land drains.

Bringing the best of urban and rural environments

There is great design potential in responding to both adjacent urban and rural environments – an opportunity to describe a transition from one environment to the other. This approach will complement both the urban and rural context, and help create a place that is responsive to its context but distinctive in its own right.

Creating the right edge conditions

The design approach to edge conditions will be key to successful integration of development. Bespoke responses to each boundary will be required according to specific boundary characteristics and restrictions – from the need to mitigate the 'hard' edge of Flensburg Way, to the need for permeability towards Croston Road.

A defining main street

A central spine, a main street, can be created through the heart of the development in response to the scale and dimensions of the site and create a key structuring element which defines the development. A central spine / main street concept would reflect local context – the Croston Road 'ribbon' and (more generally) the way in which this is often a feature of traditional villages.

4.2 Access

4.2.1 Key issues

There are different access point requirements to the Croston Road site which will in turn influence the nature of internal layout, linking with other factors such as location of power lines, drainage and services to help define plots and developable areas. These can be summarised as;

- Strategic access, including to and from the wider area (Preston, wider South Ribble and employment areas beyond). Undoubtedly the majority of this will continue to be undertaken by private car and therefore strategic site access needs careful planning;
- Local access, including vehicular access for day to day amenities and servicing, such as deliveries and operational vehicles;
- Immediate non-car access points to and from key local points of access, including bus stops, local shops and other nearby amenities.

One of the key considerations with the site is the need to carefully control movement to/ from potential access points from Bannister Lane and Moss Lane. Bannister Lane in particular is not suited to large volume vehicle movements and therefore development proposals here need to be carefully judged. Likewise, Moss Lane is restrictive (Figure 4.1).

A comprehensive development approach needs to show how such restrictions can be overcome, so that the full site opportunity does not become sterilised by access constraints. Similarly, it is important to ensure that developments to the north and south of Bannister Lane do not become severed, e.g. that despite suppressing vehicular access, pedestrian and cyclist links should be maximised.

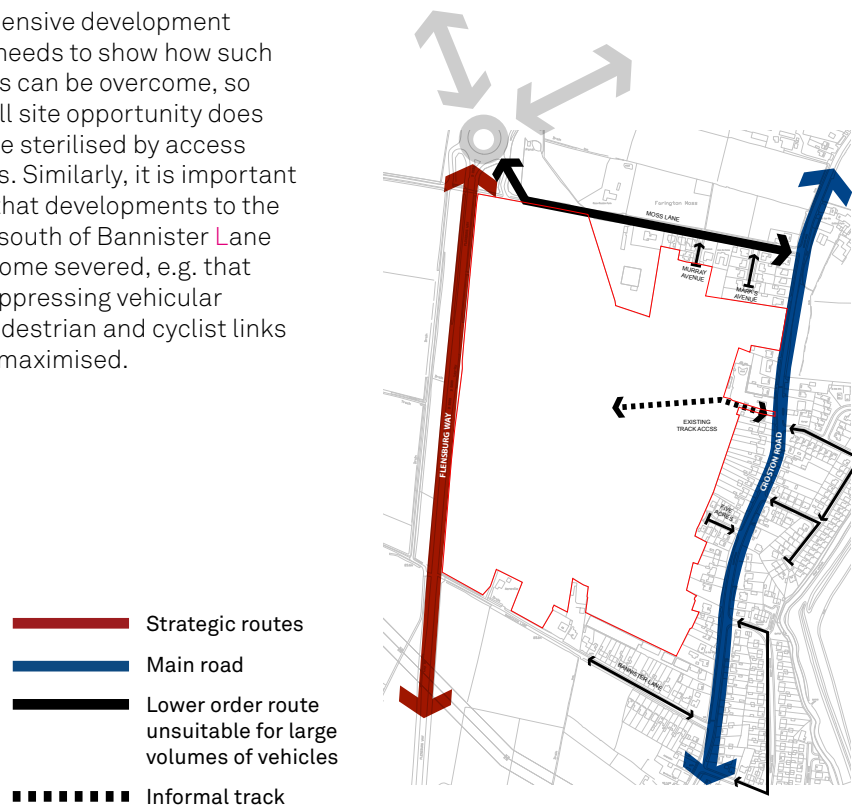


Figure 4.1: Current issues



Flensburg Way roundabout



Bannister Lane

4.2.2 Response

Technically compliant access points can be achieved for a residential development of this size and nature.

Maximising access points

Initial capacity testing suggests that development at the site would be best served by at least one strategic and one local access route. Technically a housing development of this scale could be demonstrated to work effectively using only one access, but in the interests of permeability and integration having more than one option would be preferred.

One feasible way of approaching access would be to consider points of 'primary' and 'secondary' access: e.g. a primary connection direct to Flensburg Way, and a secondary connection to Croston Road. We recognise that such an arrangement would need to be carefully managed to guard against rat running, i.e. ensure that people do not use the development as a means to avoid the established highway 'box' formed by Flensburg Way and Croston Road.

That said, we do not at this stage wish to rule out future options as there is potential for a flexible approach depending on phasing and land assembly.

Figure 4.2 illustrates a proposed access response, with a primary / strategic connection to/from Flensburg Way and secondary / local access to/from Croston Road, layered with pedestrian and cyclist connections.

Bannister Lane

A key aim is to ensure that there is no substantial traffic impact on Bannister Lane. This is an established residential amenity forming the southern boundary.

With Bannister Lane restricted there should be no vehicular through route from north to south. This has been established and agreed with Lancashire County Council, and discussed with SRBC officers. Such a link would not only compromise the amenity offered by Bannister Lane, but duplicate established 'strategic' links (Flensburg Way and Croston Road). It would also be wise to avoid a 'major' road passing all the way through the site (from Flensburg Way to Heatherleigh) given that this would likely sever internal layout and reduce plot scales.

Nevertheless, Bannister Lane should enable through pedestrian and cycle movement along a 'green lane' type route, from north to south, and our indicative spatial framework illustrates this principle. This could potentially include a limited vehicular access for new housing in that particular area, controlled to ensure small volumes of traffic movement.

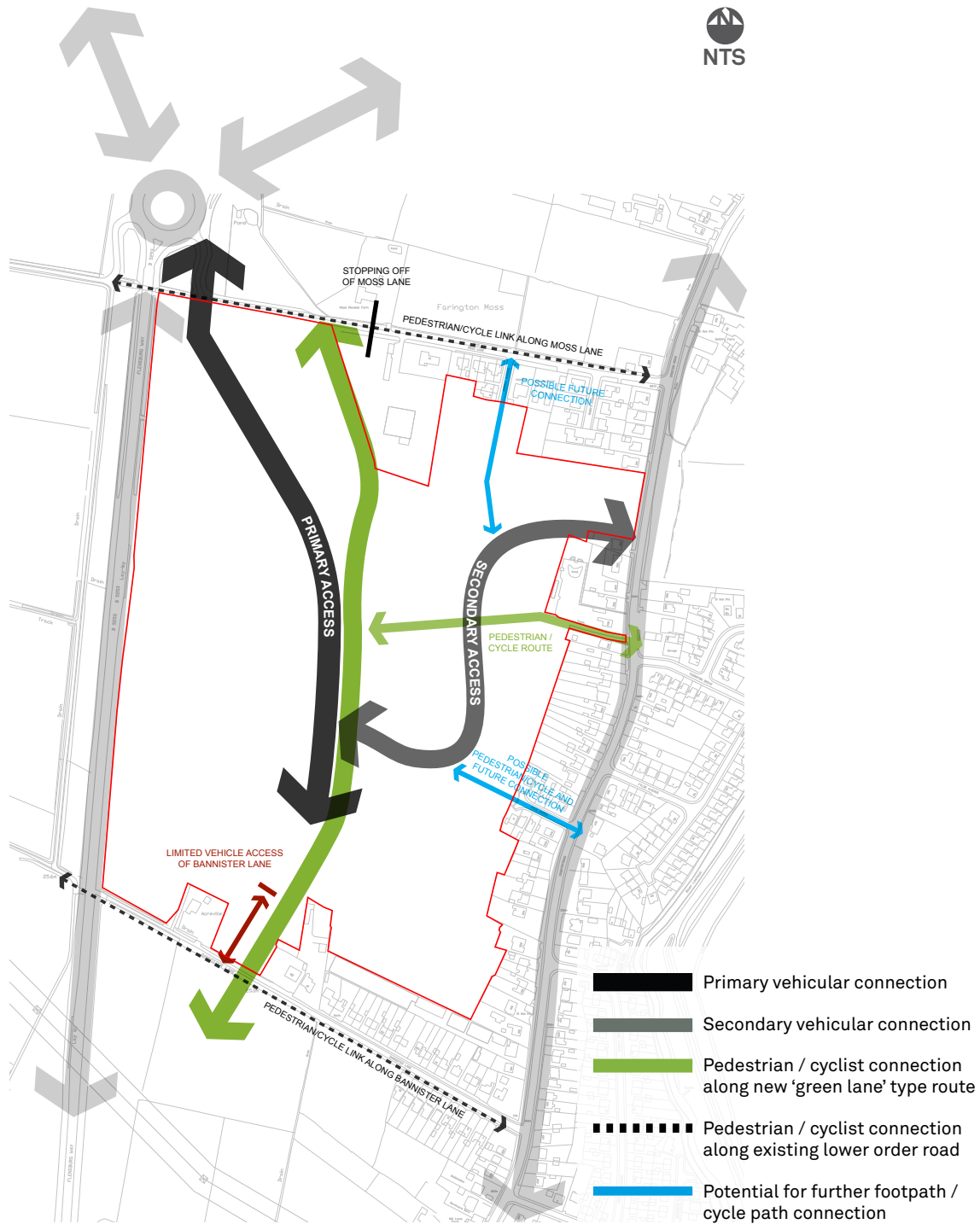


Figure 4.2: Response - Access

Junction feasibility: Flensburg Way

A strategic access point is viable to achieve at the northeast corner of the site linking into the current roundabout where Flensburg Way meets Penwortham Way and establishing connection into key routes to Preston, employment areas of South Ribble and Bamber Bridge, and the M6/M65/M61 motorways.

The advantage of having near immediate access to such a point is the ability for most key traffic generation to not impact directly upon existing residents of the area. Indeed a key attribute would be the ability for alterations to this junction related to accommodating development to be combined into a wider strategic review of the Flensburg Way corridor being undertaken by Lancashire County Council.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) hold ownership over land adjacent to this roundabout between it and Moss Lane and therefore the potential to enable delivery of a revised arrangement in this already established location. At this junction there is an established layout, however our observations highlight potential to reduce speed of vehicle passage and increase control by potential signalisation as part of a wider route strategy for this section of road.

Diagrams provided in Figure 4.3 demonstrate potential for;

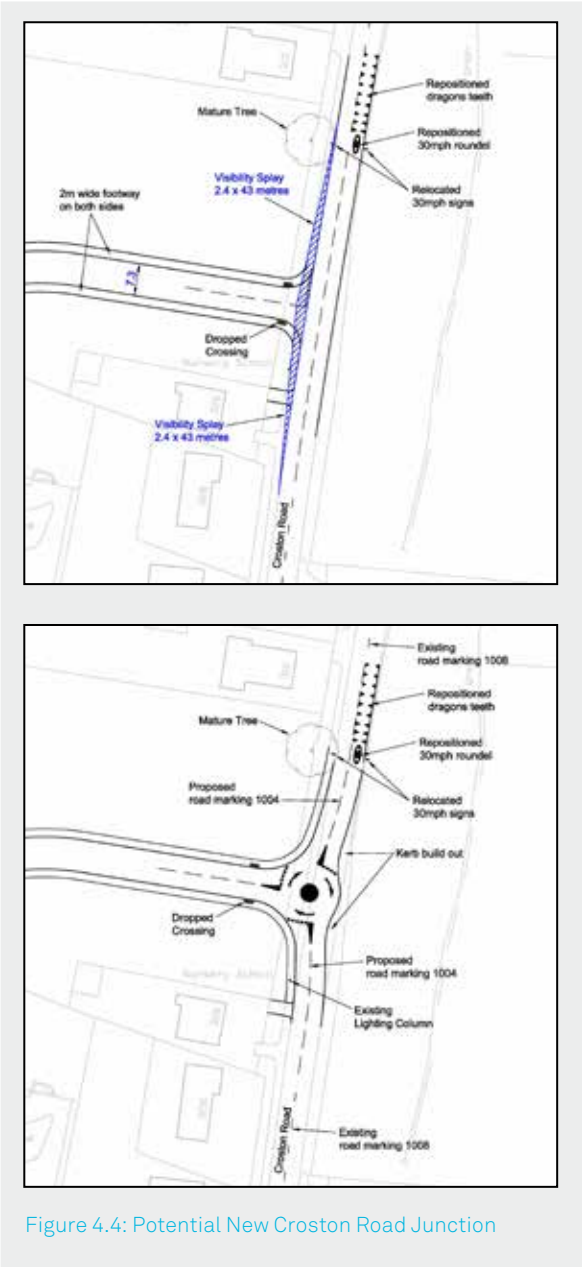
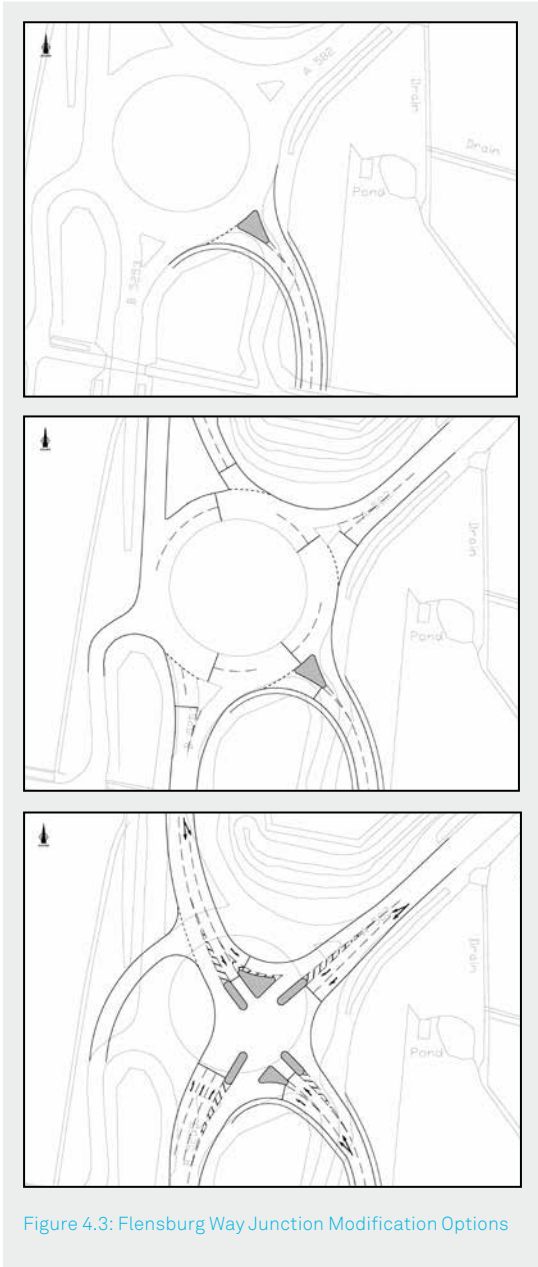
- An upgraded access point
- An upgraded access point within a signalised roundabout and
- The removal of the roundabout and creation of a four arm junction

A further opportunity exists in relation to the provision of an upgraded access point at Flensburg Way/Moss Lane in the potential severing of that road between the roundabout and Croston Road. This would remove the propensity to 'rat run' from the Preston direction through to Croston Road, which is occasionally done to avoid the current double roundabout at the northern end of Croston Road. This could provide enhanced amenity for the current residents and businesses of Moss Lane by reducing through movement.

Junction feasibility: Croston Road

Although not critical to the delivery of development at this site, a second access opportunity could be established to meet more local movement needs onto Croston Road between its junctions with Moss Lane and Thornton Drive.

Diagrams provided in Figure 4.4 demonstrate how either a priority or mini-roundabout option could be created in such a location. This currently unbuilt frontage forms the point at which the 40mph zone to the north changes to a 30mph zone. One advantage of providing a new access point at this location is the ability to create a feature which allows movement of the 40mph limit northwards and therefore establishment of a 30mph section of Croston Road between here and north of Croston Road. This would fit well with the existing traffic calming provision and help ensure 30mph is more viable as a limit outside established residences that are within the current 40mph zone.



The diagrams show the potential layouts of such an access junction from Croston Road demonstrating that they should be capable of being provided with acceptable visibility splays and to help reduce propensity to travel too fast along Croston Road.

Clearly a key influence that a second access must have is that it must not lead to a through route for 'rat running' for current users from areas to the south towards Preston. A major advantage of this site is that it has the capability to include a relatively circuitous internal route from the strategic access point at the Flensburg Way roundabout through to Croston Road, reducing such propensity. Relative distances and time saved by using the site as a cut through can be reduced, meaning that it becomes unattractive to non-residents to use, but accessible for locals from a number of directions. The site depth and length allows formation of such a principle.

Further Options

In terms of further potential access points we do highlight that there could be further opportunities for vehicular access either from Moss Lane or Croston Road using roads such as Five Acres or by establishing an access removing an existing dwelling at a strategic location. Whilst these could be viable these have not been explored since they are likely to require further land ownership discussions.

They also impact more directly on a limited number of local residents and are therefore felt to be 'further options' rather than 'preferred options' to be explored at early stages. We also highlight that there is an established pedestrian route from Croston Road into the site just north of a point opposite the junction with Thornton Drive.

In overall terms, we are at this stage open to further discussions with regards to how development could contribute to wider highway improvements in the area.

4.3 Movement and transport

4.3.1 Key issues

The credentials of the Croston Road site at a strategic level are varied but the main opportunities and response are summarised below. For any housing development, the importance of fitting in with the existing area and creating 'cumulative' value for existing and future communities cannot be underestimated.

4.3.2 Response

Strategic network relationship

The site has the ability as described previously to link directly into the strategic road network of the area, with access points as discussed in 4.2, reducing impact locally. Few established sites have this close strategic proximity combined with the ability to link directly to the established local community, this being a virtue of the fact that the site fits directly behind established residential areas. The site links well with routes to established locations such as Preston City Centre, Leyland Town Centre, South Rings and Lostock Hall for both leisure and employment purposes.

Maximising existing linkages

Minimising number of trips is a key strategic level objective. The site is well placed for easy access to and from existing local amenities from a walking and cycling perspective, and is also within a short trip by bus to amenities such as those in Leyland Town Centre. Development at the site can integrate well into the local area in terms of pedestrian and cyclist connections, and therefore accessibility of local services can be optimised.

At the same time, the site is able to offer direct access into the strategic highways network, thus ensuring that whatever traffic impact there may be has relatively low impact on existing residents. This gives the site a dual benefit of local connectivity and immediate access into the strategic network which few development sites of this size and nature are able to match.

This can add real value to the local area, for example supporting local shops and creating attractive places to live in close proximity to major employment areas.

Creating ‘cumulative value’ through scale

It is important to recognise that comprehensive development will provide cumulative benefit through scale and inter-relationships. For example through and linked footways and combined changes to the highway network provide significant benefit that would not be afforded through one smaller site.

A good example of where the site can add value to existing residents is in relation to bus services. By having additional trip generation here the requirement for public transport can be met by enhancing existing services on Croston Road (i.e. rather than the need to provide a separate, difficult to sustain, new service that would only serve the potential allocated site).

This shows how the site can be both more sustainable economically and environmentally but also provide benefit to existing residents too.

Readily accessible points of access allows focus on quality and wider movement opportunities.

A significant advantage of this site is that it is relatively simple to deliver access points onto relevant roads. The lack of need for wider link roads and access routes allows greater potential to spend money on either enhancing the internal quality of public realm/layout or committing to improving the adjacent relevant network. This is once again an advantage of establishing a site adjacent to a more mature area.

Interior / circulation

Good urban design is based around simple, legible, permeable and connected route networks, which create people-friendly environments that are easy and pleasant to use. This principle has started to shape the indicative spatial framework at this stage; thinking about an urban structure that is formed not by roads, but by a balanced sequence of movement routes that integrate with and bind together green spaces and development parcels in a logical and distinctive way (Figure 4.5).

There is particular opportunity to integrate a green infrastructure network within the network of movement routes – green corridors responding to site features (picking up on existing field boundaries, trees, hedge rows and ditches). This in turn enhances pedestrian and cycle links, promoting walking and cycling as a viable alternative, and linking to bus routes.

This approach represents a clear response to the principles laid down by Manual for Streets (Dft and DCLG 2007) and Manual for Streets 2 (CIHT, 2010) where residential streets must be designed as social, multifunctional public spaces, not simply roads for the movement of cars.

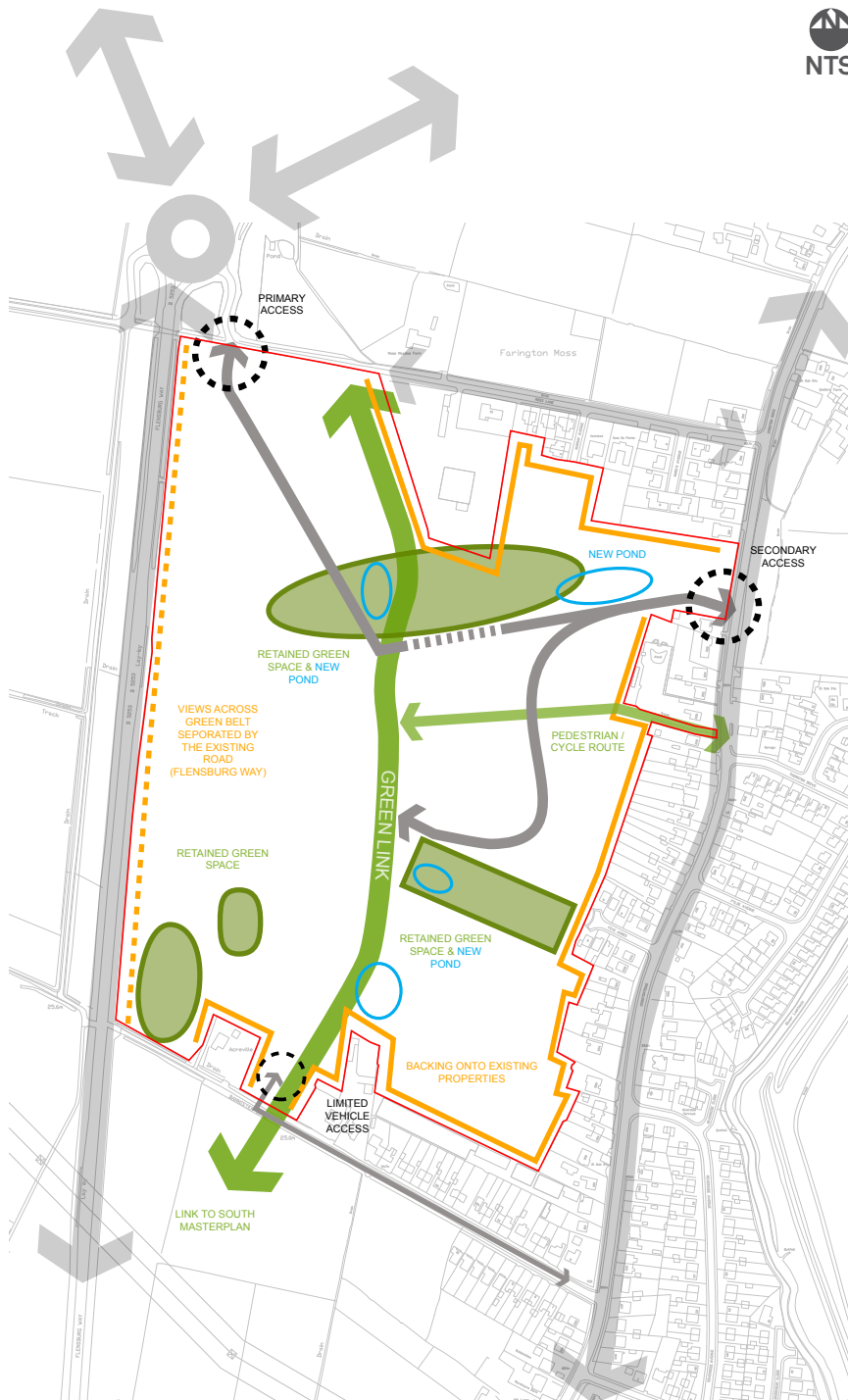


Figure 4.5: Diagram illustrating potential internal circulation principles, providing a permeable and legible route network integrating with open spaces and green infrastructure

4.4 Ground conditions and services

A number of information sources have been used to understand the key issues at this early stage, including;

- Envirocheck Report (ref: 37262118_1_1 dated January 2012)
- British Geological Survey (BGS) maps (Sheet 75, Solid and Drift)
- Coal Authority Mining Report Ref: 37275228 issued on 26th January 2012
- Information from the Environment Agency (EA) website; and
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website

These published sources identify a number of local features. The following commentary is not an exhaustive reflection of this data but provides a summary of some of the main issues.

4.4.1 Key issues

Landfill / waste disposal

Historically no landfill sites, waste management facilities or waste transfer sites are recorded within the site boundaries, but four historical landfill / local authority recorded landfill sites are located within 500m of the eastern and south eastern site boundaries.

A licensed household waste management facility/waste transfer site is located approximately 100m to the north of the site, operated by Sita (Lancashire) Ltd. Its waste transfer licence allows the site to handle asbestos, car batteries, household and commercial waste, household chemical and mineral oils. It is not allowed to handle clinical waste.

Contamination

Information sources confirm no ground contamination that would constrain development.

Geology, hydrogeology and hydrology

The site is not classified for drift deposits and can therefore be considered as non-aquifer (Glacial Till). The site is not located within 1km of any groundwater Source Protection or groundwater vulnerability Zones.

The Envirocheck report indicates the site is not in an area known to be at risk from flooding from the river. The site contains numerous drains that cross the site. Two appear to flow off-site towards Flensburg Way (B5253) to the east, one towards Croston Road in the south east corner and one other towards the north along Moss Lane.

The River Lostock flows between 150m to 200m beyond the eastern site boundary to the east of the site. The river flows from north to south. It is possible that site land drains could discharge into the river, both upstream and downstream of the site but this remains to be verified (e.g. none of the drains appear to be connected directly to the River Lostock on the basis of Envirocheck report maps). The Envirocheck report states the water quality of River Lostock is classified under the General Quality Assessment (GQA) scheme as River Quality A (very good) to C (fairly good) for the stretch adjacent to the site, with a flow of less than 1.25 cumecs (data from 2000).

4.4.2 Response

Ground conditions

Potential contamination sources will continue to be explored through targeted ground investigation and risk assessment. An outline conceptual site model (CSM) has been developed based on currently available information to understand the potential land contamination constraints, and this is provided at appendix C.

A stand-alone desk study report would need to be submitted with any future planning application once the site is allocated. This would need to include a site walkover to further evaluate the potential sources of contamination and general ground conditions and identify potential further constraints which have not been identified from published information. Should outline planning be granted, ground investigation and risk assessment is also likely to be necessary to establish the contamination risk presented by potential sources of contamination.

One key consideration is that three of the four landfill sites identified, and the Shell works, are located on the opposite (eastern) side of the River Lostock, which would “intercept” any contaminants dissolved in groundwater/leachate/gas that might be migrating from the landfills/Shell site. In addition, the underlying geology comprises relatively impermeable clay and mudstone which would restrict the vertical and lateral migration of groundwater (and any dissolved or free phase contaminants) and landfill gas.

Going forward, geotechnical investigation is also likely to be required once the detailed development plans have been drawn up to provide information with regard to foundation design and potential need for ground improvement (if required).

Services

Consultations have been carried out through access to electronic databases and the following statutory undertakers have been consulted at this stage:

- United utilities (water, sewers)
- BT
- National Grid gas mains

Based on the information received from initial searches there would appear to be very limited impact / disruption on existing infrastructure, and there are no identified strategic capacity constraints.

Further detailed consideration will be given to impacts on water distribution mains, surface water sewers, and telecoms chambers / ducts / trenches along Croston Road, Bannister Lane, Moss Lane and Flensburg Way. However, the main consideration in this stage in terms of development layout is the foul sewer and associated easement that runs to the east of Flensburg Way, which traverses the site diagonally towards Croston Road.

4.5 Open space and surface water drainage

Open space and recreation is a key component of social infrastructure, and our proposal to bring forward a larger residential development allocation will enhance opportunities to create an effective, comprehensive green space network.

4.5.1 Key issues

Open Spaces

As the Local Development Framework takes shape, there is a move away from the previous standards based policy approach to provision of open space. A less rigid, more 'design-led' solutions can be much more preferable, whereby working in partnership across agencies and decision makers, a bespoke solution can be arrived at, right for the site and its context.

Nevertheless, the LDF evidence base will continue to develop with regards to open space studies (including standards) and playing pitch strategies, and these will need to feed in to site design concepts.

Given the scale of site and the size of population it could support the functionality of open space will become a key issue, with the need to ensure that recreation value is realised as well as simply 'amenity'. This will include for example solutions for local and neighbourhood play, and thought needs to be given to the balance between on-site and off-site provisions (Figure 4.6).

4.5.2 Response

Integrated green infrastructure

In overall terms, this site has the potential to deliver much more than a 'typical' development. Local site characteristics already provide the foundation of a green infrastructure network, and also stimulate the opportunity for a bespoke drainage solution (see below).

The scale of the proposed site will open up opportunities for generous green space provision, delivering open spaces and play areas on site that help to sustain a family friendly place. In particular, as well as providing green space for recreation and play, the opportunity arises for a development structured by strategic green corridors which provide a range of functions – land drainage / flood water storage, ecology / biodiversity, and passive recreation (e.g. walking and cycling routes). This could open up involvement from local interest groups and partners in the design, delivery and management of open space, e.g. the South Ribble Partnership.

Figure 4.7 illustrates the ability for development to be masterplanned and implemented inclusive of integrated and multi functional open spaces. This should be highly influential over the urban structure and urban form of development as we move forward to the detailed stages of design.



Figure 4.6: Existing characteristics and features

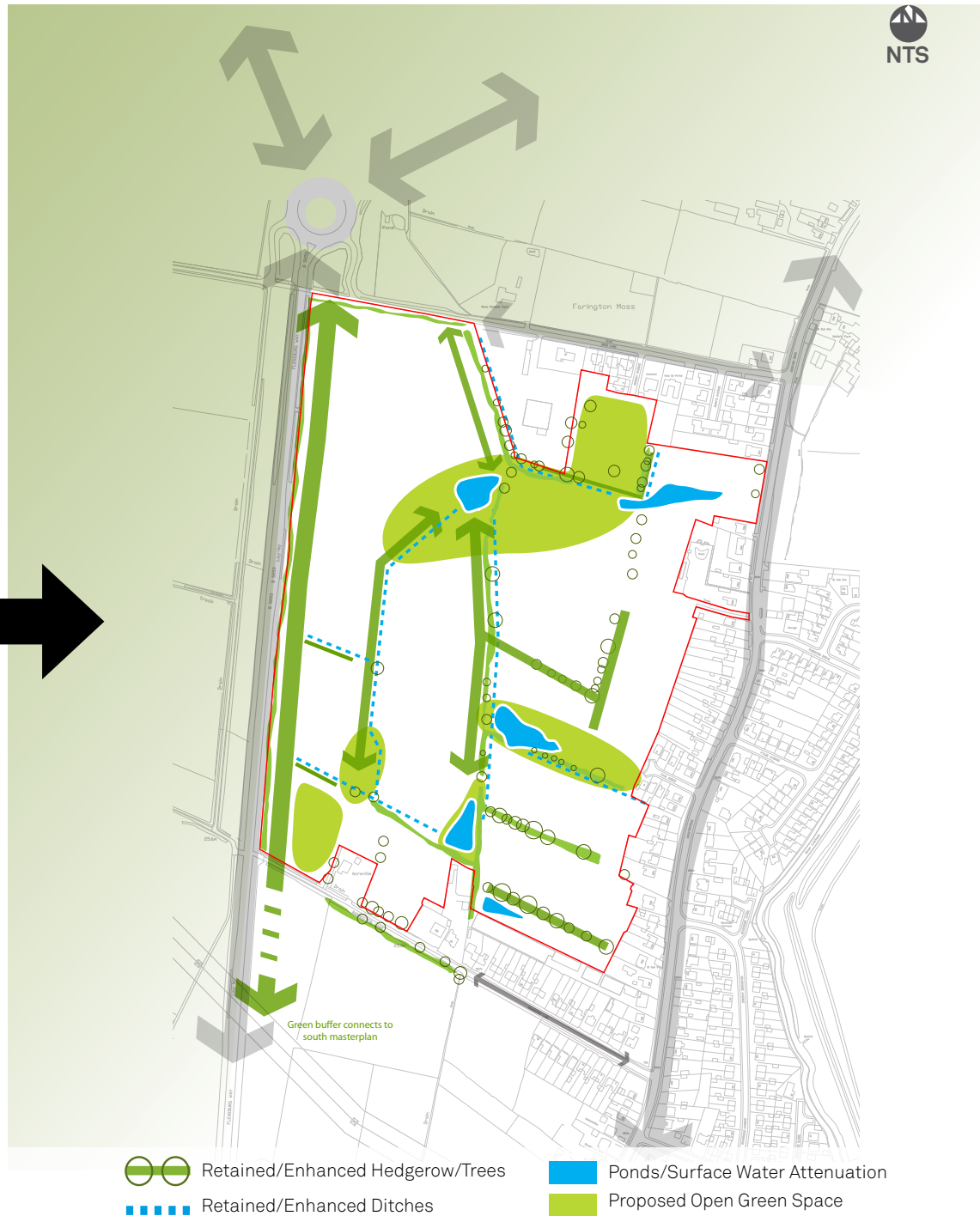


Figure 4.7: Potential development response, seeking to maintain and enhance features, providing integrated green infrastructure at the foundation to development

Recreation open space

Open space for play and recreation can be strategically distributed throughout the site, delivering a structured and legible network. The Local Development Framework is taking local planning policy away from a standardised approach to open space / play space provision, looking instead to assess site suitability and contextual relationships before deciding on appropriate type and quantity of space.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that a larger site allocation we advocate here will maximize opportunities to deliver attractive and valuable recreational open spaces. These can be designed as an integrated part of development, providing a superb amenity asset not only for new residents (both north and south of Bannister Lane) but for existing residents too. We would advocate development designed around a permeable, legible and pedestrian friendly route network that encouraged ease of access to recreation open spaces.

In addition, the significant developer contributions that could be captured through this development will help the Council to direct investment in more 'strategic' forms of recreation open space such as formal sports and leisure.

Surface water drainage

At this stage we envisage that a key function of green infrastructure within the development will be to manage and provide appropriate drainage solutions, retaining and working with existing green infrastructure and in particular existing land drains.

Potential details of such drainage systems are yet to be understood in detail, however what we can say at this stage is that in principle an extensive sustainable drainage system incorporating a network of drainage channels and attenuation ponds could be delivered.

Surface water drainage and water sensitive urban design should go hand in hand here, including incorporation of green roofs, technologies relating to permeable surfaces, and also promotion of efficient fixtures and fittings in homes.

An outline drainage strategy has been produced to inform early stage design, and this will continue to influence development form and layout going forward. An extract from this strategy, setting out a potential SuDS approach is illustrated in Figure 4.8.



4.6 Landscape and ecology

4.6.1 Key issues

Although this site arguably has a limited visual envelope in the context of the wider landscape, issues around landscape and visual impact will remain sensitive and there is a need to design accordingly.

From an ecology / biodiversity perspective, further work will be needed to obtain a clear understanding of environmental constraints and opportunities, through bespoke habitat survey and in particular identifying the potential for protected species including amphibians, water vole, birds and bats.

Early assessments (undertaken by TEP) suggests that the majority of the site is of low ecological interest comprising of a mix of pastoral and arable farmland. Nevertheless there is ecological interest present along the field boundaries in the form of a good network of ditches and hedges/tree lines across the site. These provide potential habitat for a range of species and also green links across the site and to the wider landscape.

4.6.2 Response

Landscape

Appreciation of landscape sensitivities and design concepts is an integral part of a holistic masterplanning approach, helping to creating a distinctive sense of place, uplifting environmental and visual quality, and maintaining sustainability (especially by supporting ecological and biodiversity interests).

Landscape design will have a number of core design functions, and respond to the recommendations relating to Coastal Plan and Mosslands landscape characters, as set out within the Landscape and Heritage SPG. This could include;

- Retaining existing field boundaries to use as a framework for new development.
- Encourage retention and enhancement of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Conserve the network of drainage ditches and bank-side habitats and woodlands as semi-natural habitats.
- Initiate programmes of tree planting using native species (in particular encouraging small-scale planting to help development integrate with the landscape, while framing the characteristic long views.
- Retention of field ponds and promoting their conservation as landscape features.
- Encourage the use of local materials
- Restricting the rate of surface water run-off

Ecology

Going forward, further survey and reporting will be undertaken to inform masterplanning and planning application(s).

However what we have illustrated at this stage how retention of trees, hedges and ditches where possible and that replacement for any habitat lost could be provided. This could include for example planting of native hedges e.g. where hedges are not currently present. Also, the provision of a landscape buffer (in addition to the current hedgerow) along the western edge of the site will help strengthen north south wildlife corridors – this could include native tree and shrub planting and planting of lowland meadow grassland mixes.

The opportunity exists to retain many of the existing hedgerows and trees to ensure existing habitat corridors are retained. We recognise that the majority of the hedges on site qualify as UKBAP priority habitat and as such the indicative framework illustrates how these can be enhanced by incorporating green corridors at the centre of the design concept.

At this stage we have worked on the basis that the unmanaged field in the north of the site could be considered as an area specifically for wildlife (e.g. provision of some wet/marsh habitat, bat and bird boxes etc).

4.7 Built form, density and character

4.7.1 Key issues

Moving forward to detailed design, proposed form and character of residential development will channel policy and guidance – not only national level such as By Design: Urban Design in the Planning System, Urban Design Compendium and Manual for Streets, but more specific opportunities and principles explored by the Council's (draft) design code, Growing Leyland, and the Opportunities for Renewable Energy study.

Getting density right will be one of the key challenges. On the one hand there is a clear need to ensure that the most efficient use possible is made of the site (simply on the basis of it being a rare development 'resource', and in a sustainable location) but on the other the character of the surroundings demands that the form of development shouldn't be incongruously intense.

The Core Strategy reminds us that national policy no longer sets out an indicative minimum density of 30dph but making efficient use of land is a consideration especially in the most sustainable locations (paragraph 8.21). Policy 5: Housing Density states that the density of development should be in keeping with local areas and have no detrimental impact on the amenity, character, appearance, distinctiveness and environmental quality of an area.

4.7.1 Response

Density

By considering a larger site for allocation the opportunity presents itself for a flexible approach to built form design - a sequence of 'character areas' that provide broad direction to appropriate density. This will facilitate a mixed and varied development with enhanced choice and ability to respond sensitively to different contexts at different parts of the site.

That said, approach to density could and should be applied with some degree of structure, used to help improve the legibility and perceived 'logic' in the urban structure. For example, there could be subtle increase in density towards main streets and spaces, providing a greater intensity of enclosure and definition. Secondary and lower order routes on the periphery could be defined by successively lower densities (Figure 4.9).

We recognise that for this site sustainable design should be defined both by efficiency of land use, and recognition of the established urban grain. All things considered, we believe that the overall approach to density here would be justifiably towards the lower end of the scale – 30dph or less – and have tested this through initial design studies.

Further information is included at Section 5.

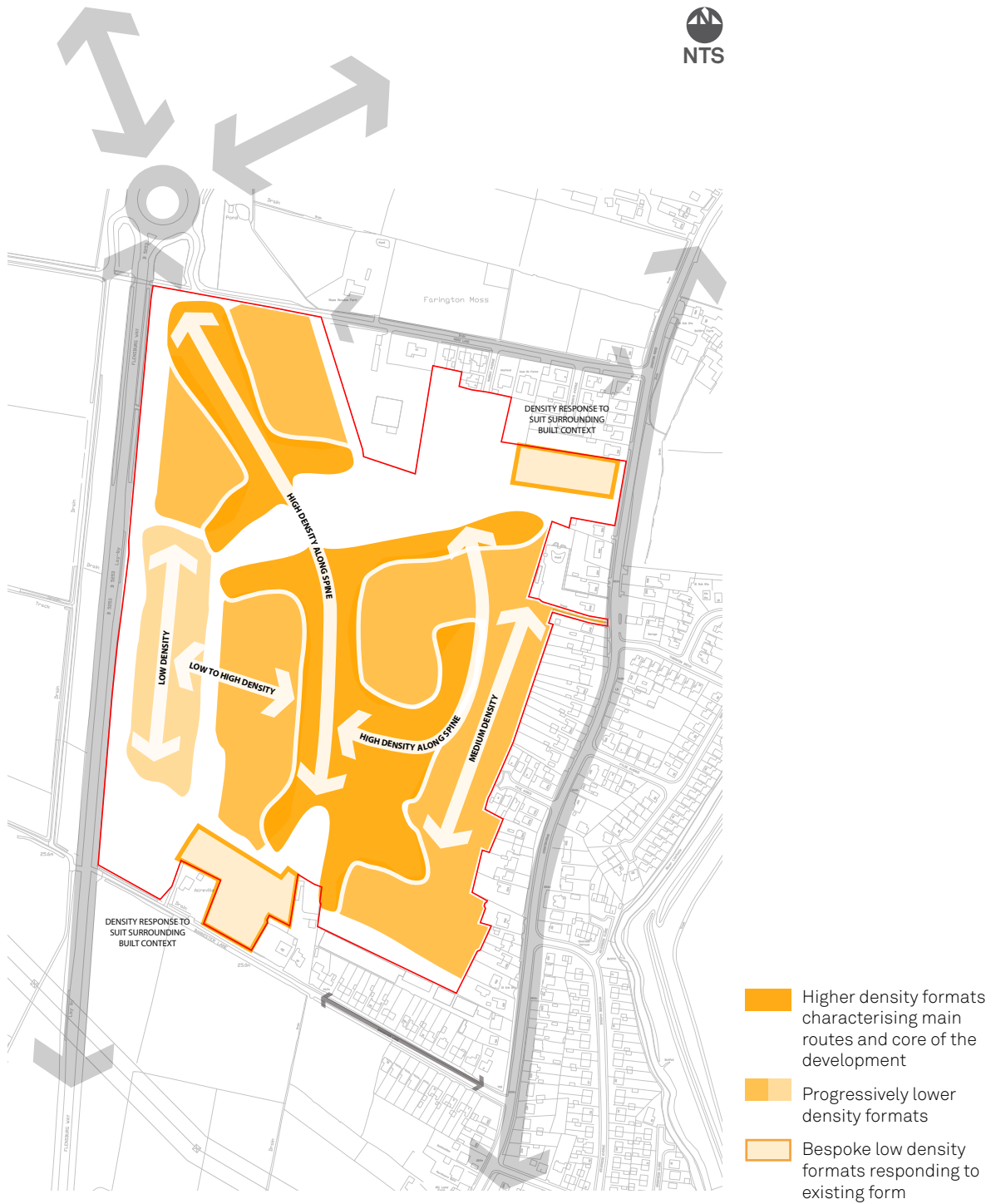


Figure 4.9: Potential density response

Form

The fine grain and flexibility of residential plots will allow the character of residential neighbourhoods to be influenced by the potential surface drainage swales. It is envisaged that swales could take a relatively formal appearance, responding to their current linear / grid-like characteristics. The design and location of swales would help to define character areas within the housing development, helping to structure and provide transition between different densities and typologies whilst at the same time providing the common element that binds them together.

This could be complemented by development being characterised by a high profile 'set piece' green space, which would become a positive, distinctive influence over urban form. Such a space would be an opportunity to provide active, useable open space that is overlooked and integrated.

Although the layout of the residential development area remains to be refined in detail, at this stage a traditional urban grain is imagined, in response to the character of adjacent and surrounding areas and with consideration to the likely market. At this outline stage development is anticipated to be largely defined by traditional two-story houses, but with potential to incorporate some units with living space over three floors to add variety to the offer (but carefully positioned within the layout).

We envisage the urban form creating an attractive informal / organic street layout, with a distinctive semi-rural character. A key objective should be to ensure that residential street design follows the principle that pedestrians and cyclists are at the top of the user hierarchy, i.e. streets designed as 'social spaces' rather than simply 'roads for cars'. The guidance documents *Manual for Streets* (DfT and DCLG 2007) and *Manual for Streets 2* (CIHT, 2010) provide excellent design guidance on which to base more detailed designs. Residential development should be designed in a way that promotes provisions for walking and cycling, including use of shared surfaces.

Guiding quality

Moving beyond this initial stage there is potential for standards of urban design and housing design to be guided through the preparation of a bespoke design guide alongside any further masterplanning work. This could, potentially, describe the principles and parameters that would be demanded from development going forward to detailed stage, and help to control consistency and coherence throughout the site as a whole.

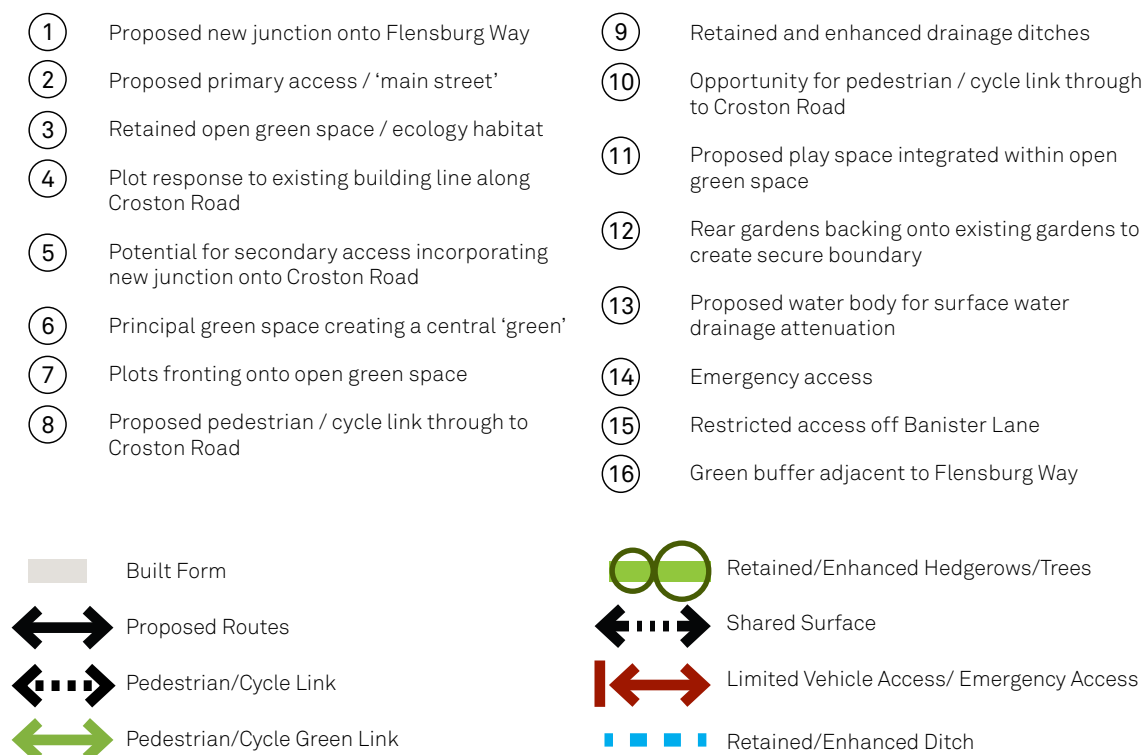


Figure 4.10: Potential arrangement of urban structure responding to site opportunities and context

5.0 Bringing it all together

All the various components of a spatial framework set out in section 4 can be brought together to create a composite plan to define overall development potential of the site. We believe that this presents an exciting prospect for the site – a layered, intelligent comprehensive plan that responds to key issues and could become greater than the sum of its parts (Figure 5.1).

This forms the platform for good design: all concepts combine to create a realistic, practical but creative foundation to future development. Although the intention is to demonstrate a flexible spatial framework, rather than prescribe a narrow or specific development proposal, bringing key concepts together in this way communicates clear placemaking potential.



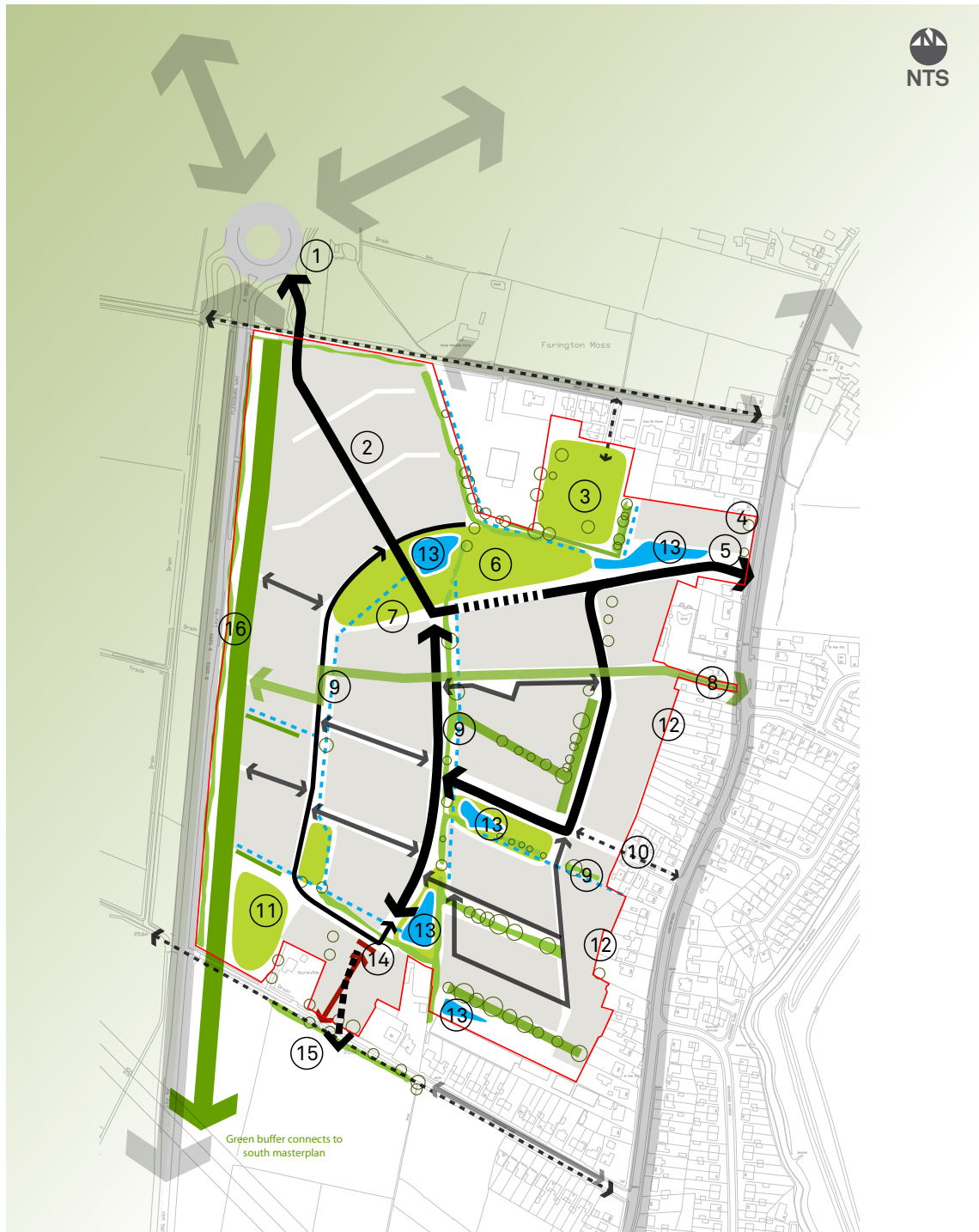


Figure 5.1: Composite of the Indicative Spatial Framework Concepts



Figure 5.2: Illustrative Plot Plan

Principal vehicular access linking to/from Flensburg Way
Main street creating a legible spine to development and creating a 'village' style urban structure
Potential to maintain existing business but integrate as future phase if required
Opportunity to retain existing open space to help enhance biodiversity / habitat value
Potential to create multifunctional green space to provide a focal point to development and responding to alignment of drainage ditches and key routes
Alignment of route from secondary access (Croston Road) responds to need to maintain easement to combined sewer and designed to prevent 'rat running' from Flensburg Way to Croston Road
Potential to allow for pedestrian and cyclist connection to Croston Road
Existing field boundary features, hedges and trees maintained and used to define urban structure
Potential to create series of incidental open spaces throughout the development, incorporating attenuation ponds and - where appropriate - local areas of play
Buffer to Flensburg Way creates green space which would link in with development proposed to the south of Bannister Lane
Red line denotes potential development extents, taking into account existing building forms and land uses
Controlled access through to Bannister Lane allowing pedestrian and cyclist connectivity but limiting vehicular access (although with potential to allow emergency access)

5.1 Illustrative plot plan

The "illustrative plot plan" (Figure 5.2) takes this framework further and intends to express a possible 'end state' outcome for the site – an overarching vision of change. This is, it must be said, an illustration of one way in which development could potentially come forward.

Nevertheless we believe that this plan is a compelling representation of how a larger site allocation could release a significant high quality development, one that;

- Delivers high quality open spaces within a coherent green infrastructure network, including creation of attractive green corridors picking up the geometry of the existing field system, existing land drains, hedgerows and trees;
- Delivers an optimum site access solution, which will also helps to maximise benefits for the wider local and strategic networks
- Successfully addressed practical and technical constraints, including for example integration of sewer easement and ecological features
- Provides a coordinated approach to delivery of physical infrastructure and in particular creates a feasible sustainable drainage system
- Maximises opportunities for a distinctive, consistent development with an overarching, coordinated design ethos
- Helps to coordinate constituent land owners and resist piecemeal development

5.2 Understanding capacity

The illustrative plot plan defines potential relationships between built form and open space in a way that has allowed interrogation of site capacity.

This takes into account layout constraints and the need to reconcile potential ‘conflicts’ between the need to maximise site potential through density, and the need to respond to context in an appropriate way, including provision of ample green space. It reveals early development potential and opportunities in a way that is responsive and rational and as such provides assurances as to the deliverability of development.

The exercise has revealed potential for up to around **480 new homes** on the site.

This assumes an average density of 30dph, incorporating a range of detached, semi-detached and terraced typologies that provide family-orientated homes, with good space provision inside and outside the home.

Similar design exercises for the site to the south of Bannister Lane reveal potential for around **320 new homes** on that site.

Therefore, collectively, an extended site allocation would facilitate delivery of about **800 new homes**. This compares to the yield of 600 anticipated within the Preferred Options Site Allocations DPD.

5.3 Flexible phasing

We will help bring forward development at the right pace and with the right safeguards in place at each phase to ensure delivery of suitable access, physical infrastructure and green infrastructure. The illustrative plot plan has provided a compelling vision of potential ‘end state’ development, but the reality is that it will come forward incrementally, and this needs to be managed carefully.

One of the key benefits of the site is the ability to deal with phasing in a flexible way. Because there are multiple access points (albeit each with their inherent characteristics and constraints) development could potentially commence from different starting points – Flensburg Way, Croston Road, Bannister Lane, either sequentially or simultaneously. The phasing approach could align with the delivery of development of the site to the south of Bannister Lane, working in partnership to time delivery of infrastructure.

With an allocation secured and a masterplan developed, the HCA would seek to take the site to the developer market. Our preparatory work, including the production of this development statement and accompanying technical studies will not only ensure efficient, straightforward transfer but will, we believe, excite the market and provide verification of key development principles, constraints and opportunities, including phasing.

The HCA’s involvement will help provide certainty to both developers and decision makers alike, and will help to move the site forward to development expediently. Although phasing of development can at this stage be inherently flexible, disposal and subsequent development can be managed responsibly through a carefully crafted plan, following future planning consents.

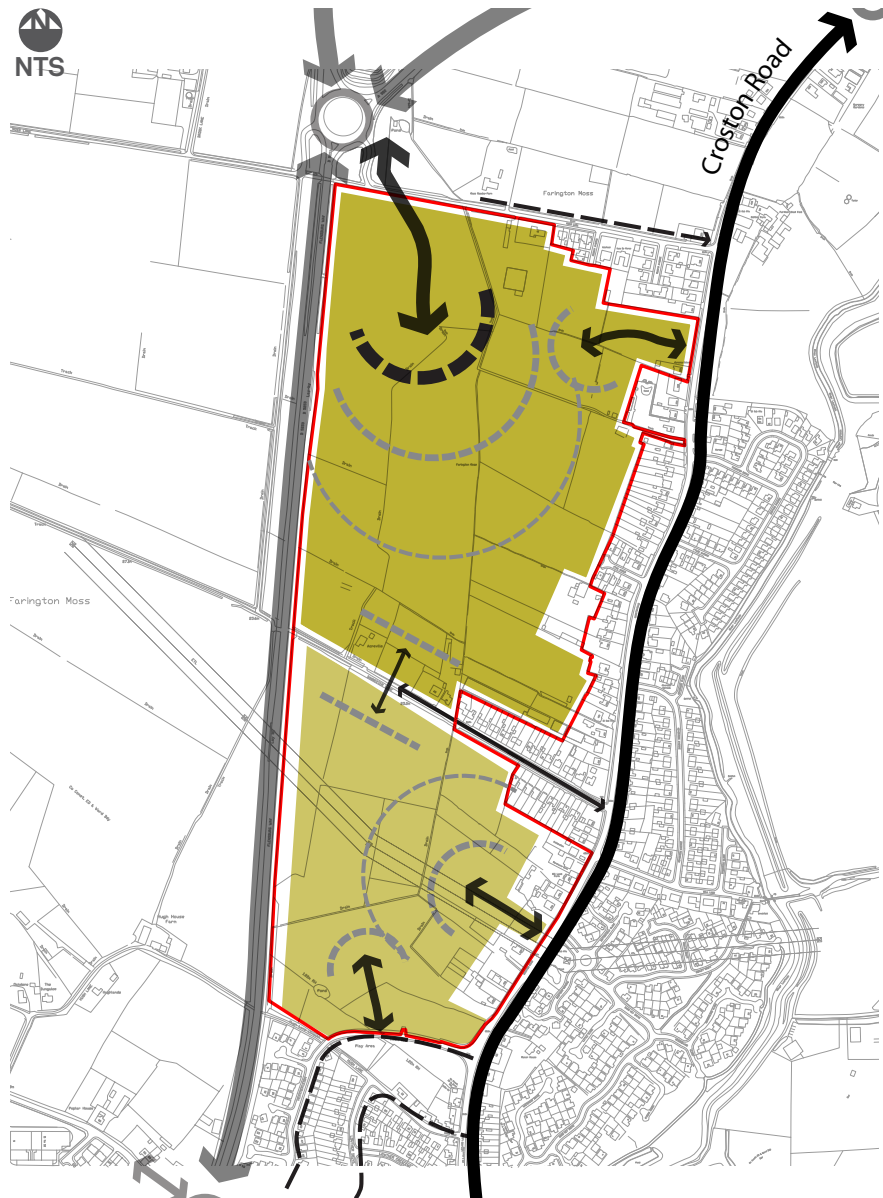


Figure 5.3: Principle of flexible phasing, with the potential for development to come into operation from a variety of starting points

5.4 Key conclusions: summary of key benefits

This statement has set out a logical approach to the development potential of the site, demonstrating strategic fit and deliverability whilst at the same time illustrating inherent potential to deliver a sustainable, characterful development. We have shown how development of land west of Croston Road will help to ensure a smooth delivery process and enable the management of a successful, integrated development – one that;

- Is seamless and unified, structured by an extensive green infrastructure network and high quality open space
- Pools resources to address technical issues, with assurance of no technical impediments to development
- Delivers efficient infrastructure and drainage systems
- Accelerates the pace of delivery and facilitates flexible phasing
- Optimises potential developer contributions and has positive implications for future allocations of New Homes Bonus

Wider relationships

Development will maximise wider relationships and enhance the local area;

- A unique mix of development form and natural environment assets
- A high profile location with superb connectivity, and with opportunity to help deliver strategic highway improvements
- Clear synergies with nearby employment opportunities- both existing and proposed
- Creating a distinctive “blue/green” setting - characterful green spaces and water bodies that draw from the mossland character

Driving design quality

A coordinated development can drive design quality, providing:

- Development which remains connected into the Leyland urban area and fits into the established urban grain
- A desirable place to live – an attractive proposition in particular for families
- High quality homes in a high quality setting, offering a mixture of types and tenures
- An environmentally responsive and responsible development

Access

From an accessibility perspective the site is excellently located for three key strategic reasons;

- Firstly it can link directly onto the strategic network, enabling access to amenities of the sub-region and region;
- Secondly it remains adjacent and integrated with the existing community of west Leyland and has the ability to establish similar loyalties and use of local amenities and the town centre;
- The site combined with other allocated sites, allows the potential for significant economies of scale to be gained.





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