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## Appendix 1

### National and Regional Planning Policy Context





# 1 National Planning Policy Context

This section sets out the National, Regional and Local Planning Policy Context.

There are a number of National planning policy documents which are of relevance to the use of previously-developed land. We summarise these below.

## Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005)

PPS1 details the UK Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development, a core principle underpinning planning. It explains that planning should facilitate and promote sustainable patterns of development by contributing to sustainable economic development, protecting and enhancing the natural environment and quality and character of the countryside and supporting existing communities.

Paragraph 27 provides a list of principles which Planning Authorities should take into account to deliver sustainable development. This includes the following:

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“(vii) Promote the more efficient use of land through higher density, mixed use development and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings. Planning should seek actively to bring vacant and underused previously developed land and buildings back into beneficial use...”

## Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing (2006)

PPS3 defines the national planning policy framework for delivering housing. This document should be read in conjunction with the principles of PPS1 as sustainable development is at the heart of this framework.

Paragraph 10 describes a key outcome of the planning system to be “flexible, responsive supply of land – managed in a way that makes efficient and effective use of land, including re-use of previously-developed land, where appropriate.” Therefore, like PPS1 it supports the re-use of previously developed land.

According to national targets at least 60 per cent of new housing should be provided on previously developed land. Nevertheless, PPS3 also advises that there is no presumption that land that is previously-developed is necessarily suitable for housing development nor that the whole of the curtilage should be developed (paragraph 41).

The Statement goes on to outline further advice on setting brownfield targets:

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“At the regional level, Regional Spatial Strategies should set a target for the proportion of housing development that will be on previously-developed land over the plan period...taking into account evidence from Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments and sustainability appraisals.” (Paragraph 42)”

“At the local level, Local Development Documents should include a local previously-developed land target and trajectory and strategies for bringing previously-developed land into housing use. Where appropriate, this could also include dividing up the trajectory to reflect the contribution expected from different categories of previously developed land, for example, vacant and derelict sites, in order to deliver the spatial vision for the area in the most sustainable way.” (Paragraph 43)

PPS3 also advises that “in producing previously-developed land strategies, Local Planning Authorities should consider a range of incentives to ensure that previously developed land is developed in line with the trajectory/ies. It states that this should include:

- Planning to address obstacles to the development of vacant and derelict sites and buildings, for example, use of compulsory purchase powers where that would help resolve land ownership or assembly issues.
- Considering whether sites that are currently allocated for industrial or commercial use could be more appropriately re-allocated for housing development.
- Encouraging innovative housing schemes that make effective use of public sector previously-developed land.” (Paragraph 44)

### **Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS4): Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009)**

This document sets out the national policies for economic development. Economic development, as defined by this policy document, includes development within B Use Classes, public and community uses and main town centre uses. The Government's overarching aim is to achieve sustainable economic growth, through a number of measures including building prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of local areas, reducing the gap in economic growth between regions, delivering more sustainable patterns of development and promoting vitality and viability of town and other centres.

The document details a number of policies for consideration in achieving economic development. Policy EC5.1: Site Selection and Land Assembly for Main Town Centre Uses state that in identifying appropriate sites Local Planning Authorities should complete a number of actions including:

“[Considering] the degree to which other considerations, such as any physical regeneration benefits of developing on previously developed landsites....may be material to the choice of appropriate locations.”

### **Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22): Renewable Energy (2004)**

PPS22 sets out a framework of key policies and targets for renewable energy. According to the document the Government has set targets to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050. The implementation of renewable energy solutions will be a central contributor to achieving this.

PPS22 lists eight key principles for regional planning authorities to take into account in achieving renewable energy targets. It also provides a national target on renewable energy: by 2010 at least 10% (and at least 20% by 2020) of the electricity which is supplied should be provided from renewable energy sources.

In terms of Biomass Projects and Energy Crops, PPS22 states the following:

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“For biomass projects, the need to transport crops to the energy production plant does have the potential to lead to increases in traffic. Local planning authorities should make sure that the effects of such increases are minimised by ensuring that generation plants are located in as close a proximity as possible to the sources of fuel that have been identified.

But in determining planning applications, planning authorities should recognise that there are other considerations (such as connections to the Grid and the potential to use heat generated from the project) which may influence the most suitable locations for such projects.”

### **Planning Policy Statement 23 (PPS23): Planning and Pollution Control**

This document provides the core policies and principles on pollution control in land use planning. The overall aim of the document is to ensure the sustainable and beneficial use of land (in particular encouraging reuse of previously developed land in preference to greenfield sites). It advises that opportunities should be taken wherever possible to use the development process to assist and encourage the remediation of land already affected by contamination (paragraph 26).

# Regional Planning Policy

The key regional planning policy is outlined in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West.

## RSS North West

With effect from September 2004, when the relevant provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act were implemented, RPG13 became the statutory Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (RSS). A Partial Review Consultation ended in June 2008 and the final document was published in September 2008.

The NW RSS provides a framework for development and investment in the North West over the next fifteen to twenty years. It sets out a broad vision for the region and its sub-regions, priorities for growth and regeneration and policies to achieve sustainable development. Within this there is specific guidance in relation to the Halton area, as well as policies on land use and previously-developed land.

## Halton Area Specific Policies

Policy RDF1 sets out the spatial priority areas for development. The third priority is described as towns / cities in the three city regions and includes Runcorn and Widnes within the list. Under this it states that development should be focused in and around centres of the towns and cities.

Halton lies within the Outer Area of the Liverpool City Region. Policy LCR1 Liverpool City Region Priorities includes:

- “Focus on environmental improvements where they are most needed and will have the greatest benefit to facilitate the sustainable development of the Regional Centre and Inner area. This includes the remediation of contaminated land and provision of high quality green infrastructure as part of comprehensive regeneration schemes.”
- Policy LCR3 on the Outer Area of the City Region states that strategies for this area should focus economic development in the priority areas set out in RDF1, should expand choice and quality of housing and maintain and enhance the role of regional towns, key service areas and local centres. It goes on to advise that the River Mersey provides opportunity to develop a strategic spatial approach that maximise the river frontages’ commercial potential.

Policy LCR2 Outer Part of the Liverpool City Region provides a guide for the focus of local plans and strategies in these outer areas. Focuses include expanding the

quality and choice of housing and maintaining and enhancing the roles of regional towns and other centres.

Policy EM4 Regional Parks identifies three areas of search for regional parks including the Mersey basin, which incorporates the Halton / Widnes area. These areas are described as those where positive planning and management in line with the principles of the RSS will assist urban and rural renaissance in the North West as a whole. It will also contribute to developing a Green Infrastructure (Policy EM3) in the region.

## Land Use

One of the key regional spatial principles is to “make the best use of existing resources and infrastructure” (Policy DP4). It advises that a sequential approach to development should be taken with previously developed land as the first priority for development. However, further explanation in paragraph 4.5 acknowledges that not all areas of previously developed land will be suitable for built development.

Policy DP 7 Promote Environmental Quality lists a number of ways in which this should be achieved including:

- reclaiming derelict and remediating contaminated land for end-uses to improve the image of the region and use land resources efficiently;
- maximising opportunities for the regeneration of derelict or dilapidated areas; and
- promoting policies relating to green infrastructure and the greening of towns and cities.

In terms of remediating previously developed land the RSS provides guidance under Policy EM2 Remediating Contaminated Land. This advises that plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should encourage the adoption of sustainable remediation technologies. Where soft end uses (including green infrastructure, natural habitat or landscape creation) are to be provided on previously developed sites, appropriate remediation technologies should be considered which reduce or render harmless any contamination that may be present.

## Employment Land

Policy W3 Supply of Employment Land sets out guidance on the provision of employment land. It focuses on allocation for B1, B2 and B8 land use. However, it recognises that a wide range of other types of land use provide significant employment opportunities, including leisure, retail and tourism.

It also states that LPA's should secure a portfolio of sites to ensure:

- The most appropriate range of sites, in terms of market attractiveness and social, environmental and economic sustainability, are safeguarded for employment uses; and
- the amount of brownfield land used for employment purposes is maximised reflecting the likely increases in the amount available as a result of economic restructuring.

The table below shows the provision of employment land 2005-2021, according to the RSS, and also details the current future needs of employment land supply within the Borough.

Merseyside and Halton	
2005 Supply	1234
Current take up per annum	76
Projected inc in take up	18.5%
Projected take up per annum	90
Needs 2005 – 21	1440
Extra allocation required	206
Flexibility factor	20%
Needs 2005-21 (incorporating flexibility factor)	1728
Extra allocation required (incorporating flexibility factor)	494

Comment [RABoyle3]: Inconsistent tables and figures throughout.

Policy W4 Release of Allocated Employment Land states that if Local Authorities are minded to release sites they should be satisfied before doing so that:

“If required, there are replacement sites available of equal or better quality, or that alternative means of incorporating employment land needs have been identified. This might mean considering mixed-use developments, greater intensity of land use or the availability of sites in adjacent authorities.”

### Housing Land Supply

Policy L3 Regional Housing Provision states that the location of housing should be determined through the LDF process, using a sequential approach. The data shown within the table below indicates housing targets for Halton. This information has been extracted from the distribution of regional housing provision 2003-2021 data from the RSS. This shows that the target for Halton is for at least 65% of housing provision to be situated on brownfield land.

	Total Housing Provision 2003 – 2021 (Net of Clearance Rate)	Annual Average Rates of Housing Provision (Net of Clearance Rate)	Indicative target proportion of housing provision to use brownfield land & buildings
Halton	9,000	500	At least 65%

### Energy

The NW RSS also contains a number of policies relating to power generation and energy. Policy EM17 Renewable Energy states that in line with the North West Sustainable Energy Strategy, by 2010 at least 10% (rising to at least 15% by 2015 and at least 20% by 2020) of the electricity which is supplied within the Region should be provided from renewable energy sources.

According to the policy, plans should seek to promote and encourage, rather than restrict the use of renewable energy sources. LPAs should give significant weight to

the wider environmental, community and economic benefits of proposals for renewable energy schemes.

In seeking opportunities to identify proposals and schemes for renewable energy, Policy EM17 lists a number of criteria which should be taken into account including:

- Anticipated effects on local amenity;
- acceptability of the location/scale of the proposal and its visual impact in relation to the character and sensitivity of the surrounding landscape;
- effect of development on nature conservation features, biodiversity and geodiversity;
- maintenance of the openness of the Region's Green Belt;
- potential benefits of development to the local economy and the local community;
- accessibility (where necessary) by the local transport network;
- effect on agriculture and other land based industries;
- ability to make connections to the electricity distribution network which takes account of visual impact;
- integration of the proposal with existing or new development where appropriate;
- proximity to the renewable fuel source where relevant – e.g. wood-fuel biomass processing plants within or in close proximity to the region's major woodlands and forests; and
- encourage the integration of combined heat and power (CHP), including micro CHP into development.

