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**Warburton
Neighbourhood Development Plan
2023 - 2037**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment
Screening Report**

Kirkwells

The Planning People

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kirkwells Planning Consultants have prepared this screening report on behalf of Warburton Parish Council to support the Parish Council in determining whether the contents of the proposed Warburton Neighbourhood Plan are likely to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 1.2 The requirement to undertake environmental assessment of plans and programmes was established in the EU Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive), transposed into English law in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations SEA is required where a plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. The assessment provides the main mechanism for ensuring that the environmental implications of decisions are considered before decisions are made and should be an integral part of plan preparation where potential for significant effects on the environment have been identified.

2. Background

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Planning gives local communities the opportunity to prepare planning documents for their area, enabling them to shape the future of where they live and giving them greater ownership of the plans and policies that affect them. Introduced under the Localism Act in 2011, Neighbourhood Plans provide a relatively new tier of planning policy.
- 2.2 Planning policy for the district is contained in the [Trafford Local Plan: Core Strategy Development Plan Document, adopted January 2012 and Saved Policies from the Revised Unitary Development Plan, 2006](#). Most of the UDP policies are no longer operational as they have been superseded by other Local Plan documents including the Core Strategy. Consideration of the compliance of the local plan policies with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019) was published in 2019¹ and the NDP only refers to those policies not considered to be out of date.
- 2.3 In line with good practice (see Planning Practice Guidance – [‘Can a neighbourhood plan come forward before an up-to-date local plan or spatial development strategy is in place?’](#)) the Warburton NDP has also been prepared taking into account the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process for the new [Trafford Local Plan up to 2037, February 2021](#) (Regulation 18 Consultation Draft) and [Places for Everyone \(PfE\)](#) – the strategic plan of nine Greater Manchester local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes, and sustainable growth (formerly known as the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework or GMSF) which was submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in February 2022 and is at examination stage.
- 2.4 Warburton Parish was designated as a neighbourhood area by Trafford Council on 4th March 2019. The most up to date version of the Draft NDP (v6A) has been

¹ [A Review of Local Development Plan Policies](#)

prepared following an informal consultation on a Vision, Objectives and key planning themes document in late 2021 / early 2022 and has been informed by a range of background and supporting documents including a masterplan and design guidelines and a historic environment report. The relevant background documents can be found on the NDP pages of the Warburton Parish Council website.

- 2.5 Trafford Council has confirmed to the Parish Council that they cannot undertake the SEA and HRA Screening Assessments for the NDP. However, the Council has been consulted on drafts of the two documents and has provided advice and support during the preparation of the Plan policies and proposals.

3.0 Warburton Draft NDP

- 3.1 Warburton parish has a low lying, rural character and includes a number of working farms. There are several areas of woodland (including ancient woodland) and some traditional orchards. The boundaries of the Parish are delineated by the water courses of Red Brook to the north and the River Bollin to the south. The Manchester Ship Canal forms the boundary to the west and part of the old course of the River Mersey lies to the north and west of the village. There are also numerous ponds, many dating from medieval times. Most of the area, apart from an area to the north near Partington, is washed over by the Green Belt.
- 3.2 Development is concentrated in the village of Warburton and the smaller settlement of Mossbrow. There are two churches. The old church of St Werburgh dates from Saxon times and is located close to the toll bridge. The newer church of St Werburgh is on Bent Lane, about half a mile from the medieval church and includes the Parish Room. The Saracen's Head public house is located just outside the village on Paddock Lane.
- 3.3 There are 22 listed buildings including Grade I Old Church of Saint Werburgh and a Conservation Area in Warburton village. A list of Non designated Heritage Assets (NdHAs) is in the process of being adopted by Trafford Council. There is evidence that a large area of the northwest of the parish around Warburton Park was occupied by a medieval deer park, believed to date from the 1200s. This is a significant heritage asset with potential for further archaeological interest.
- 3.4 The NDP Review document comprises a Vision and 9 Objectives. The Objectives are:
- Objective 1: To conserve and enhance the distinctive landscape, buildings and heritage assets of the Parish, ensuring that any development is sympathetic, sensitively designed and high quality which is keeping with local character and respects the Village Design Statement.
 - Objective 2: To develop green credentials and promote conservation, allowing wildlife to flourish in woods, hedgerows, fields and watercourses.
 - Objective 3: To encourage the further development of Green Infrastructure throughout the Parish, linking up to neighbouring Parishes where possible and further developing the informal recreational facilities of the Parish.
 - Objective 4: To promote the legacy/history of the village and its setting as social capital, publicising its importance so that it becomes more widely known.

- Objective 5: To encourage safe and sustainable transport and improve opportunities for walking and cycling.
- Objective 6: To maintain a diverse, cohesive, safe and healthy local community, maintaining the character and vitality of the Parish.
- Objective 7: To plan for local infrastructure and digital connectivity improvements and their enhanced resilience which meet the existing and future requirements of residents and respects the local landscape.
- Objective 8: To integrate farmers and agriculture in the broader community through supporting diversification / more sustainable land use and encouraging local production and consumption.
- Objective 9: To ensure a greener future by maximising energy and resource efficiency, creating a low-carbon neighbourhood.

3.5 The Draft NDP includes emerging, draft local planning policies which aim to:

- Conserve and enhance local and historic landscape character and promote enhancements to wildlife and habitats (Policies W1 Conserving and Enhancing Local Landscape Character, W2 Warburton Deer Park, W3 Protecting and Enhancing Wildlife and W4 Warburton Moss).
- Conserve and enhance built heritage assets and promote high quality and sustainable design in new development (Policies W5 Protecting Heritage Assets and Responding to Local Character, W6 Warburton Conservation Area, W7 Archaeology, W8 Non designated Heritage Assets, W9 Warburton Masterplan, W10 Sustainable Design and Climate Change).
- Promote walking and cycling as part of active and sustainable travel (Policy W11 Walking and Cycling),
- Protect areas of Local Green Space (Policy W12 Local Green Space) and
- Support rural employment opportunities and renewable energy schemes and protect local community facilities (Policies W13 Rural Diversification, W14 Energy Proposals and W15 Community Facilities).

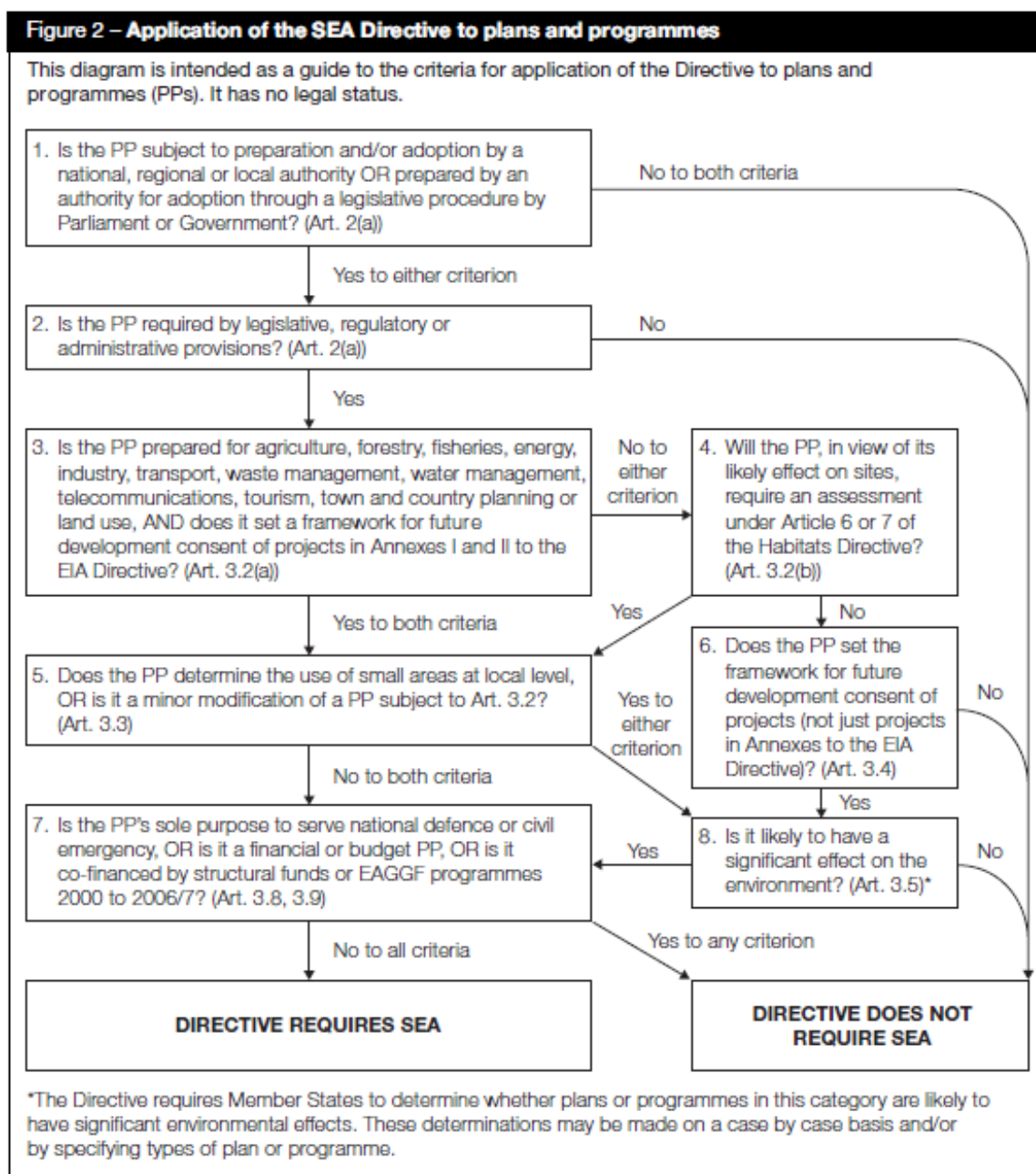
3.6 The emerging Draft Warburton NDP has been published for informal consultation until the end of June 2023. The current version of the Draft Plan (v6A), Draft Masterplan and Design Guide and other background documents can be found on the neighbourhood plan pages of Warburton Parish Council's website – see <https://www.warburtonparishcouncil.org/neighbourhood-plan> .

3.7 Following this period of informal consultation, the Draft Plan will be finalised for formal (Regulation 14) public consultation later in 2023.

4. SEA Screening

4.1 The emerging draft Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed using guidance provided in the Department of the Environment 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (September 2005) (Figure 2). This describes the process through which plans and programmes should be assessed.

Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



4.2 The Parish Council has followed this process with the findings of the assessment described in Table 1.

Table 1: SEA Assessment

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority or prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (ART. 2 (a))	Y	The Neighbourhood Plan is not a Development Plan Document, however if the document receives 50% or more 'yes' votes through a referendum it will be 'made' (adopted) by Trafford Council.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions (ART. 2 (a))	N	<p>Communities have a right to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, however they are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce one.</p> <p>The Plan however if adopted would form part of the Development Plan and as such it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine further if SEA is required.</p>
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, and does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2 (a))	Y	The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for town and country planning and land use and will when adopted set out a framework for future development in the Neighbourhood Plan designated area. This could potentially include uses detailed in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effects on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art 3.2 (b))	N	<p>The proximity of four European sites (2 SACs and 2 Ramsar sites) within approx. 15 km of the NDP area boundary indicates that there could be potential for the plan to have a significant adverse effect on European sites. (In addition, the Mersey Estuary (a Ramsar Site and SPA) is just over 20km away to the west.)</p> <p>The existence of part of a proposed strategic site allocation for housing within Warburton NDP area in the NDP is considered to make this possible, alongside other NDP policies which support other appropriate development (subject to Green Belt policies).</p> <p>However, the proposed strategic site allocation is included in a higher-level plan (Places for Everyone) which has undergone HRA and Integrated Assessment and is</p>

Stage	Y/N	Reason
		<p>referred to in the emerging Trafford Local Plan which has undergone HRA.</p> <p>The NDP does not propose significant development over and above that set out in the higher-level strategic plan PfE. Three options for the Warburton Masterplan have been prepared for informal consultation and the preferred option proposes a lower quantum of development and a lower density with a stronger focus on protection of natural heritage assets and built heritage / archaeology than higher-level plans. The NDP policies taken together seek to mitigate adverse effects arising from the proposed development of the strategic site.</p> <p>This is confirmed in the initial HRA screening of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, or is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan has potential to determine the use of small areas at a local level, whether that is through the application of detailed criteria or the allocation of land.</p> <p>However, the Warburton NDP does not include any additional site allocations for development and does not propose to significantly increase the quantum of development already planned for in PfE.</p> <p>Several areas of land are identified for Local Green Space designation.</p>
<p>6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (ART 3.4)</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan contains policies through which planning applications within the designated area will be determined.</p>
<p>7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget PP, or is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/07? (Art 3.8, 3.9)</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will need to have regard to national planning policy and be in general conformity with local planning policy. This includes policies contained in the Local Plan.</p>

Stage	Y/N	Reason
		<p>Built heritage assets in the NDP area include Warburton conservation area and 22 listed buildings. There are also numerous non designated heritage assets including the site and features associated with a medieval Deer Park.</p> <p>A masterplan is being prepared for that part of the neighbourhood area within the proposed strategic site allocation in PfE. This has been informed by the natural and built heritage assets within and close to the site and requires development to protect and enhance these assets wherever possible.</p> <p>The draft Masterplan sets out 3 options for development and design principles for that part of the proposed strategic site within the neighbourhood area and design guidelines for the parish as a whole. These are referred to in policies in the Plan which aim to protect local character and built and natural heritage.</p> <p>The policies within the Plan are criteria based and place a strong focus on protecting the natural environment and the historic environment.</p> <p>Given the nature of the Plan the Parish Council would conclude that the Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment. Confirmation on this is requested from the three statutory bodies.</p>

4.3 Further analysis on the likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in relation to Schedule 1 of the Regulations is provided in Table 2 on p9.

Table 2: Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

SEA Requirement	Comments
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The Neighbourhood Plan has potential to determine the use of small areas at a local level, whether that is through the application of detailed criteria or the allocation of land.
b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The Plan sits in a hierarchy and must be in conformity with strategic policies in the development plan. It is unlikely to influence other plans and programmes.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The Neighbourhood Plan promotes sustainable development. It has a strong focus on environmental protection and ensuring natural and built assets are protected. This includes protection of non-designated heritage assets.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	There are known problems related to air and water quality of European sites in close proximity of the neighbourhood area. However these are being addressed through higher level plans and programmes led by GMCA including the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan and River Basin Management Plans for the North West and Places for Everyone has a role in addressing water and air quality.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The Neighbourhood Plan has no relevance to the implementation of Community legislation.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to -	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan covers a 14-year plan period and seeks to balance development with the protection of the natural and historic environment. The need to maintain the landscape character, biodiversity and built heritage of the Parish is given a strong focus.</p> <p>The Plan places a strong emphasis on protecting the environmental qualities, historic assets and local community needs of the area.</p>

SEA Requirement	Comments
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	
	<p>The proposed strategic site allocation makes it possible that significant effects will occur, but these are addressed in higher level strategic policies and plans.</p>
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	<p>The Plan has regard to emerging plans Places for Everyone and Trafford Local Plan. These higher-level policies and proposals will ensure the protection of environmental assets and there is not considered to be a requirement to consider any cumulative impacts of development.</p> <p>The proposed strategic site allocation makes it likely that negative significant environmental effects will occur either individually or cumulatively with other development and decisions.</p> <p>The protective criteria however will assist with mitigating any negative significant environmental effects individually or cumulatively with other development and decisions.</p>
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	<p>There are no transboundary effects. The Plan applies to the Neighbourhood Plan only.</p>
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	<p>The Plan poses no risk to human health.</p> <p>In fact, the Plan is likely to improve human health by supporting sustainable and active travel such as walking and cycling and encouraging better access to the countryside.</p>
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	<p>Warburton is a small parish with an area of 796 hectares.</p> <p>Effects are considered to be limited to the Neighbourhood Plan area only.</p>
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to - (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use; and	<p>The Parish is mostly washed over by the Green Belt and enjoys attractive countryside with a historic village, farmsteads and landscape. There are 22 listed buildings within the Parish including a Grade I Church, and numerous archaeological and other built heritage</p>

SEA Requirement	Comments
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	
	<p>assets with potential for others to be discovered.</p> <p>Natural heritage assets within the Parish include areas of ancient woodland, ponds and water courses. There are areas of former mossland which may have potential for restoration.</p> <p>Whilst there is potential for impacts on environmental and heritage assets the wording of the plan and strong focus on protection and enhancement make this unlikely. The Plan is very much focussed on ensuring that the special qualities of this area are protected.</p> <p>The plan contains specific policies for the protection of these assets including their settings.</p>
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The Plan is very much focussed on ensuring that the special qualities of this area are protected.

5. Masterplan Options

- 5.1 Three options for the Warburton Masterplan are currently published for informal consultation until the end of June, alongside the Draft Warburton NDP.
- 5.2 Screenshots of the 3 Options from the Warburton Masterplan & Design Guide document are provided on p12, p13 and p14.
- 5.3 The Preferred Masterplan Option 3 minimises the potential developable areas and reduces the impact on the local environment. A large number of small pocket green spaces are proposed. Development would be at a lower level than in PfE and layouts and designs would respond to the character of the rural area of Warburton.

Screenshots of Masterplan Option 1

4.5 Masterplan Options

The illustrative plan provided in this section demonstrates one potential solution to achieving the design principles. However, it should not be seen as prescriptive but more as a guide to achieving a layered, comprehensive solution that responds to key issues.

We suggest three masterplan options in this study. All of them share some common urban design principles, including:

- Wide landscape buffer along southern boundary with a minimum depth of 30m;
- Site access from Warburton Lane; A well-connected Green Infrastructure network throughout the site;
- Non-vehicular access to the Red Brook valley and its footpath will require extremely careful design to avoid damage to ancient woodland and extant medieval landscape features;
- Residential communities to reflect local character;
- A series of open space and amenity areas are distributed throughout the development;

- Well-screened landscape buffer zones to protect Listed Buildings settings; and
- A well-connected footpaths/cycle routes network to be provided throughout the site to reduce the use of private cars.

Masterplan Option 1

Option 1 masterplan considers maximizing the potential developable areas and applying higher density to some areas close to Warburton Lane. This option may require careful consideration of mitigations to reduce impacts on local identity and rural characters. The consideration points which are different from the other two options include:

- Longer new roads are provided to reach development parcels which are far away from the site access from Warburton Lane;
- The site has an average density of 30 units per hectare. This density reflects Trafford's current policy of achieving 40% affordable housing in Warburton, but it is significantly higher than elsewhere in Warburton, which may not be appropriate for its rural setting.

Option 1 Land uses

Total residential areas:	27.4 ha
Total units at 30 DPH:	822
Parcel A area:	3.5 ha
Parcel A units:	105
Parcel B area:	3.5 ha
Parcel B units:	105
Parcel C area:	7.9 ha
Parcel C units:	237
Parcel D area:	0.5 ha
Parcel D units:	15
Parcel E area:	3.2 ha
Parcel E units:	96
Parcel F area:	1.3 ha
Parcel F units:	39
Parcel G area:	1.4 ha
Parcel G units:	42
Parcel H area:	0.6 ha
Parcel H units:	18
Parcel I area:	2.1 ha
Parcel I units:	63
Parcel J area:	3.4 ha
Parcel J units:	102



Figure 25: Warburton masterplan option 1

Screenshots of Masterplan Option 2

Masterplan Option 2

Option 2 masterplan considers a balance between maximizing the potential developable areas and reducing the impact on the local environment. The consideration points which are different from the other two options include:

- Fewer development parcels which are far away from the site access from Warburton Lane;
- An average density of 25 units per hectare is applied to the site.

Option 2 Land uses

Total residential areas:	19.9 ha		
Total units at 25 DPH:	498		
Parcel A area:	3.5 ha	Parcel D area:	0.5 ha
Parcel A units:	88	Parcel D units:	13
Parcel B area:	3.5 ha	Parcel E area:	3.2 ha
Parcel B units:	88	Parcel E units:	80
Parcel C area:	7.9 ha	Parcel F area:	1.3 ha
Parcel C units:	198	Parcel F units:	33

Prepared for: Warburton Parish Council

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Option 3 Preferred Masterplan

4.6 Preferred Masterplan

Option 3 masterplan considers minimizing the potential developable areas and reducing the impact on the local environment. The consideration points which are different from the other two options include:

- No development parcels which are far away from the site access from Warburton Lane;
- An average density of 14 units per hectare is applied to the site, as would be found in a country village; and
- A large number of small pocket green spaces.

Option 3 Land uses

Total residential areas: 19.9 ha			
Total units at 14 DPH: 279			
Parcel A area:	3.5 ha	Parcel D area:	0.5 ha
Parcel A units:	49	Parcel D units:	7
Parcel B area:	3.5 ha	Parcel E area:	3.2 ha
Parcel B units:	49	Parcel E units:	45
Parcel C area:	7.9 ha	Parcel F area:	1.3 ha
Parcel C units:	111	Parcel F units:	18

- Overhead power cable
- Possible HS2 corridor
- Strategic green space
- Screening landscape
- Residential area
- Potential new road
- Indicative key building frontage
- Pocket green space



Figure 27: Warburton masterplan option 3

6. Screening Outcome

- 6.1 Internal screening of the Neighbourhood Plan concludes that it is likely that the Neighbourhood Plan would not result in a significant environmental effect due to the distance of the neighbourhood area from the nearest European sites and the strong focus of the Neighbourhood Plan on the protection of the natural environment and built heritage assets which should help to mitigate any significant effects.
- 6.2 The Parish Council is satisfied that the Plan is unlikely to result in significant negative effects and policies and proposals may lead to positive effects.
- 6.3 Under its 'duty to support', Trafford Council reviewed the first version of the SEA Screening Assessment and agreed that, based on the preparation of the August 2022 emerging Draft Version of the NDP, the NDP did not require a full Environmental Report. Trafford Borough Council confirmed that it agreed with the HRA screening conclusion based on that the plan aims to protect and does not propose development beyond the New Carrington site, which was subject to PfE screening. There are heritage assets and a conservation area, but no additional sites are proposed for development in the NDP. However, there was a caveat that the scope of the proposed masterplan was not yet known at that time.
- 6.4 The HRA and SEA screening assessments have been reviewed and updated to take into account the policies and proposals in the latest version of the Draft Plan together with the options in the draft Warburton Masterplan.
- 6.5 The most up to date version of the emerging Draft Plan is V6A and this is currently published for informal consultation alongside the draft Warburton Masterplan and Design Guide until the end of June 2023. Three options for the Masterplan have been prepared including a Preferred Option. The Draft Warburton Neighbourhood Development Plan (v6A), Warburton Masterplan & Design Guide 2023 and other supporting documents are published on the neighbourhood plan pages of the Parish Council's website <https://www.warburtonparishcouncil.org/neighbourhood-plan>.
- 6.6 The Preferred Masterplan (Option 3) minimises the potential developable areas and reduces the impact on the local environment. A lower level of development is proposed than in PfE and layouts of development would be sensitive to the rural context. The consideration points which are different from the other two options include:
- No development parcels which are far away from the site access from Warburton Lane;
 - An average density of 14 units per hectare is applied to the site, as would be found in a country village; and
 - A large number of small pocket green spaces.
- 6.7 The views of the three statutory bodies are requested before the screening opinion can be confirmed. Please respond by the end of Friday 28th July 2023.

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