REPORT TO:	Planning Committee Cabinet
DATE:	9th February, 2011 17th February 2011
SUBJECT:	**Core Strategy for Sefton – Options Paper**
WARDS AFFECTED:	All
REPORT OF:	Andy Wallis Planning and Economic Development Director
CONTACT OFFICER:	Steve Matthews Telephone 0151 934 3559
EXEMPT/ CONFIDENTIAL:	No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To ask Members to approve the Core Strategy Options Paper for public consultation.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To ask Members to approve the Options Paper for consultation

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That **Planning Committee:**
(1)   notes the contents of the draft Core Strategy Options Paper, including the implications for meeting Sefton's housing and employment land requirements to 2027;
(2)   notes the arrangements for consulting on the draft Options Paper
(3)   requests Cabinet to approve the draft Options Paper for consultation.

That **Cabinet:**
(1) approves the Core Strategy Options Paper for consultation; and
(2) delegates to the Planning and Economic Development Director the authority to make minor editorial changes to the draft Options Paper, including making sure that it is in Plain English, and other presentational changes

KEY DECISION:	Yes
FORWARD PLAN:	Yes
IMPLEMENTATION DATE:	Following expiry of call in period after Cabinet meeting on 17th February 2011.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

The only alternative option would be not to have prepared the Options Paper. This is a key stage in the preparation of a Core Strategy for Sefton which is a statutory requirement.

IMPLICATIONS:

Budget/Policy Framework:
N/A

Financial:

The only costs at this stage are to do with consultation - preparing and printing documents and leaflets, room hire, holding focus groups etc. These costs are unlikely to exceed £5,000 and will be contained within the Local Plans budget held by Planning Department. There are expected to be other future costs associated with the independent examination of the Core Strategy into 2012/13, and these are, as yet, unquantifiable but will be discussed in further reports to Members over the coming 12 months. It is acknowledged however, that such costs would need to be managed from within Planning Department's existing budgets.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	2010/ 2011 £	2011/ 2012 £	2012/ 2013 £	2013/ 2014 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
REVENUE IMPLICATIONS				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: No comments

Risk Assessment: Without an Options Paper it will not be possible to make progress in preparing a Core Strategy for Sefton which is a statutory requirement.
This is an overarching strategy which is meant to tie in to various other strategies (Sustainable Community Strategy and others), and so represents a great

opportunity to improve places in Sefton and to promote a better quality of life for all. Not to prepare the Core Strategy would mean foregoing that opportunity.

Asset Management: N/a

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

The Interim Head of Corporate Finance & Information Services has been consulted and his comments have been incorporated into this report.
FD631/2011
The Legal Services Director has been consulted and has no comments.

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

Corporate Objective		Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability	√		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy		√	
8	Children and Young People	√		

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (February 2010) and draft update (February 2011).
- Statement by the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Minister for Decentralisation. (13th September 2010).
- Joint Employment Land and Premises Study (January 2010).
- Liverpool City Region Development Land Needs and Supply Overview Study draft (Feb 2011).
- Green Belt Study draft (September 2010)
- Review of the Former Regional Spatial Strategy Housing Requirement for Sefton draft (Feb 2011).

1. Background

1.1 The Options Paper is a key stage in preparing a Core Strategy for Sefton. The Core Strategy will help to shape development and guide investment decisions in Sefton up to 2027, and so is a critical document for the future of Borough. It provides the strategic framework within which all of the other development plan documents will be produced.

1.2 The Government agenda for planning and the way it is delivered is evolving quickly, with changes to the regional tier and proposals for neighbourhood plans. However, the Government remains committed to the place of the Local Plan in the form of the Core Strategy (and the Local Development Framework of which it is part). The will provide the context both for preparing neighbourhood plans and against which national planning policy will be interpreted.

1.3 Whilst the Core Strategy is principally concerned about the use of land, it is also concerned with anything which has an impact on places and communities e.g. unemployment, health, air pollution, safety. It is closely linked with the Sustainable Community Strategy, for which it is meant to be the 'spatial' expression (i.e. deals with those aspects relating to specific places).

1.4 In early summer 2009 there was extensive consultation on the issues facing the Borough. Following this the Council was advised that it would have to indicate how it could meet the Borough's needs for land for new homes and jobs for the entire period of the plan, up to 2027. Properly planning for both is crucial to the future welfare and economy of the Borough.

1.5 While the Options Paper identifies a range of issues which it considers are important to Sefton and need to be tackled, two matters have a particular implication for the use of land. These are the need to find land for new homes and for new jobs. And of these two, land for new homes affects each community in Sefton.

1.6 As the evidence has shown, based on a number of studies, there is only enough land in the built-up area to meet anticipated needs for a few years, it was agreed to carry out a detailed study of the Green Belt. The conclusions of the draft Study were reported to Planning Committee and Cabinet in September. Cabinet deferred consultation on the Study until it had been considered by Area Committees.

1.7 This consultation has now taken place and the findings of the Study have been taken into account in preparing this Options Paper. (See further report on agenda: 'A review of the evidence supporting the Core Strategy Options').

2. Key issues

2.1 The 2009 consultation included debate at focus groups, discussions with many organisations and groups, and meetings with individuals. The main purpose was to discover what people thought were the main issues facing the

Borough. This extensive and exhaustive approach has provided a rich source of information, and has anticipated the current focus on 'localism'. In addition, over the past 4 months, we have given presentations to all Area Committees and most Parish Councils. The current Paper has been able to take proper account of these local views.

2.2 Added to this, studies have been carried out on a range of topics, either by Sefton alone, or with some or all of the Merseyside authorities. A great deal of knowledge and understanding has been built up of a wide variety of factors which influence life in Sefton. These studies include an assessment of:

- how much land is needed for new homes and jobs
- what types of homes, including affordable homes, are needed
- what are the implications of flood risk on development
- which areas should be protected for their ecological value
- which areas have potential for renewable energy.

2.3 We have also taken account of the priorities in published in the strategies of our partners e.g. on matters such as regeneration, health, transport, economy. There is also much published information which reveals a great deal about Sefton e.g. from the Office of National Statistics.
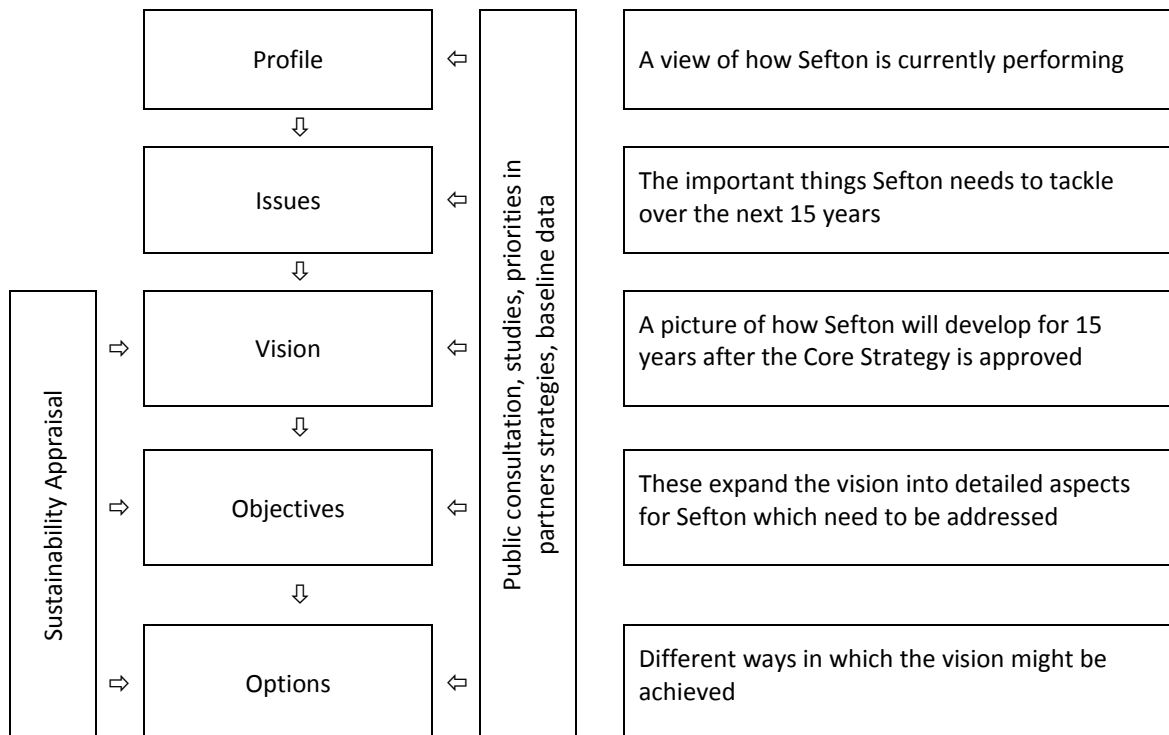
2.4 All of these sources have helped us to identify a number of key issues and challenges which the borough faces, and which it is considered should be tackled by the Core Strategy. These are listed in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1   Suggested key issues and challenges to be addressed by the Core Strategy

◊ Where should we provide new homes to meet our needs up to 2027, making sure that we avoid the risk of flooding, and conserve and enhance Sefton's high quality natural environment

◊ How can we meet the need for affordable homes, in particular in Southport and Formby (where the need is greatest)? How can we provide more private housing in the south of Sefton to make sure there is more choice? And how can we reduce the number of empty homes?

◊ Given that Sefton has a much older population than the north west or national average, especially in Southport, what are the implications for providing the right kind of homes, and for health and social care?

◊ How can we make sure more people get around without having to rely on the car, and have better access to key services and facilities?

◊ How can we support the local economy whilst seeking to increase enterprise, develop skills & sustain business growth to reduce the percentage of people who are not in education, employment or training?

◊ How can we enable the Port to grow whilst ensuring that amenity is not harmed and that appropriate compensation is provided for any impact on protected wildlife sites?

◊ How can we ensure that our local centres remain competitive and viable, and continue to perform a valuable role within their communities?

◊ How can we ensure that we provide for the right kind of shops in the right locations to meet the needs of our communities ?

◊ How can we meet the challenge of climate change, making the most of the opportunities for renewable energy, sustainable design and efficient use of resources.

3.   How the Options Paper is laid out

3.1   The following diagram shows the different elements of the Options Paper, as recommended in Government guidance.

Profile	⇦	A view of how Sefton is currently performing
⇩		
Issues	⇦	The important things Sefton needs to tackle over the next 15 years
⇩		
Vision	⇦	A picture of how Sefton will develop for 15 years after the Core Strategy is approved
⇩		
Objectives	⇦	These expand the vision into detailed aspects for Sefton which need to be addressed
⇩		
Options	⇦	Different ways in which the vision might be achieved

Sustainability Appraisal

Public consultation, studies, priorities in partners strategies, baseline data

4.   The Options

4.1   The Options set out different possible ways of achieving the vision and objectives. The main difference between them relates to the number of homes which it is intended to provide over the period of the Plan.

4.2   The options proposed in the Paper are based on meeting different levels of need for new homes and jobs.

4.3   This uses information derived from six key studies:

1.   Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)
       This study of the capacity of Sefton's urban area to accommodate new housing development was first carried out in 2008, and was updated in 2010. The original study included a street by street analysis of opportunities for development over a 15 year period concluded that there is capacity for around 4,850 dwellings in the urban area.

2. Housing requirement
   - A study has just been completed of what the housing requirement should be for Sefton for the period of the Core Strategy. It proposes that the appropriate figure is 480 dwellings a year. This updates the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) figure of 500 dwellings. The attempt by Government to abolish RSS in July 2010, has since been held to be unlawful, but is expected to be finally abolished when the Localism Bill is enacted later in 2011.
   - Greg Clark, Minister of State, said in 2010 (when RSS was first abolished) that local authorities could "reintroduce their own assessment of the housing need in their area. But it needs to be rigorous. They can't just pick a number and put it in and regard that as being the end of it. They need to make an assessment … and justify that, in their plans". This housing study does exactly that.

3. Joint Employment Land and Premises Study
   This study recommended that Sefton should accommodate jobs over the Core Strategy period in two key ways:
   - protecting its existing employment land and ensuring that current employment sites and premises are redeveloped to meet new demands, and
   - providing a new site in the north of Sefton (recommended to be to the east of Southport) of about 20 hectares as a replacement to the Southport Business Park when it has been mainly developed (i.e. likely to be from the early 2020s onwards).

4. Liverpool City Region Development Land Needs and Supply Overview Study (Overview Study)
   One possibility for meeting our needs for land for homes and jobs is to investigate whether adjoining local authorities can help us. An Overview Study commissioned by all the local authorities in Greater Merseyside has investigated the potential for this.

   This is still to be completed but we understand that it will conclude that West Lancashire and Knowsley face a similar shortage of land for housing as Sefton does; Liverpool could make a very modest contribution to meeting needs in south Sefton i.e. only in relation to Bootle and Netherton, but only if the housing market altered radically and people were prepared to change their current housing aspirations.

5. Green Belt Study
   The urban area is so tightly bound by the Green Belt (which has been in place, unaltered, since 1983) that any land which is not in the built-up area is necessarily in the Green Belt. Releasing land for development in the Green Belt is a last resort, however it is to be noted that Green Belt boundaries have now endured for 28 years without needing to be substantially altered.
   A study has identified possible locations for development in the Green Belt which would cause least harm to the purpose of the Green Belt. Obstacles to development such as flood risk, and nature and heritage value were taken into account, but no consultation has taken place yet

with land owners. An update on this study is reported elsewhere on this agenda.

6. <u>Review of the Former Regional Spatial Strategy Housing Requirement for Sefton</u>
Nathanial Lichfield and Partners (NLP) have been appointed to undertake a review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) housing requirement figure for Sefton of 500 dwellings a year, in order to establish what the 'right' housing requirement should be for Sefton for the period of the Core Strategy to 2027. This study is nearing completion and will be reported, in full, to the next meeting of Planning Committee. Initial findings of the study are reported in a separate report on this agenda. It proposes that a new housing figure of 480 dwellings a year is appropriate for Sefton, taking account of all demographic, housing and economic information currently available. The anticipated abolition of RSS when the Localism Bill is enacted later in the year, amongst other reasons, provides a clear justification for undertaking an early review of the RSS housing figure for Sefton.

4.4 Three options are proposed. These are explained in brief first, then their implications are explained, including how they address take account of the conclusions of the above studies.

- **Option One - Urban containment:** new housing will only be permitted within the built-up area and no Green Belt land will be released for development , even if that means some needs cannot be met;

- **Option Two - Meeting identified needs:** this will meet Sefton's needs for homes and jobs, based on a combination of the anticipated growth in the number of households, existing need for affordable housing, need for local labour supply and the recommendations of the employment land study;

- **Option Three - Stabilising Sefton's population:** this will identify a much greater amount of land in the Green Belt, mainly for new homes, but also for new jobs.

4.5 <u>None of these options involve a growth in Sefton's population although the third will achieve a stable population</u>.
Option One will mean a faster decline in population than the current rate of decline;
Option Two will mean that the population will continue its current slow decline;
Option Three will mean that the population will hold steady at its 2010 level (ie 272,100).

Housing Land Supply

4.6 Our housing study (the 'SHLAA' – referred to in 4.3 above) shows that we only have enough housing land in the urban area to last for around 9 years (assuming 480 homes a year. As part of this assessment, we have considered further the potential of the urban area to accommodate more dwellings e.g.
   ◊ building at higher densities

◊ building on employment land
◊ developing on underused or undervalued greenspaces
◊ bringing empty homes back into use.

4.7 The potential from these sources is very limited:
◊ the apartment market is likely to be flat for the foreseeable future, and members have been quite clear that they do not want higher densities
◊ we have a clear shortage of employment land, and whilst a limited number of mainly free-standing employment premises within primarily residential areas may transfer into housing uses over time, this potential is limited
◊ members have said that greenspace should generally be protected – Planning Committee will be considering a report (elsewhere on this agenda) on a greenspace study showing some limited potential from this source
◊ empty homes – this is a difficult and costly issue to resolve; in any event the advice that we have been given (which we are checking) by government is that whilst we should endeavour to bring back vacant homes into use, they are existing dwellings and cannot add to the supply of new homes [Cabinet will be considering a separate report on this].

4.8 Option One would be based on building only within the existing urban area. This could be achieved by building 285 homes a year to 2017. Whilst this Option would not involve the loss of any Green Belt, it would severely limit our ability to meet affordable housing needs, especially over the medium to longer term and it would lead (because of our declining and ageing population) to a significant fall in the size of the Sefton's local labour supply. Nor would it meet the requirements of the employment land study, as a site of the size required (20 ha) could only be provided in the Green Belt.

4.9 Conclusion on Option One: This option would promote regeneration initially by concentrating development within the built-up area. However, people would be likely to move away to find homes and jobs, especially those with skills, and this would be likely to damage the Borough's economy. This option would not meet many of our housing needs, either for general or affordable housing.

Option Two - Meeting identified needs
4.10 This option is based on meeting needs for homes and jobs, and would result in around 4,850 dwellings being built in the urban area, and approximately 3,700 in the Green Belt. [To give an idea of the likely landtake, Hightown has around 900 homes. It is built at relatively low density, so the area needed would be in the order of around 4 times the size of Hightown]. This would be likely to mean development in the Green Belt around most of our communities though the priority would be to build in the urban area first.

4.11 Conclusion on Option Two: This Option will meet anticipated needs for both homes and jobs. It is based on up-to-date information about the need for new homes. It would provide for more affordable homes, but will still only meet a proportion of Sefton's total need. This approach would be likely to mean developing on some grade 1 agricultural land. It would help to sustain existing

services and facilities, though new infrastructure would also have to be provided to service the new sites.

4.12 Under this option, the number of people living in Sefton would continue to decline, although the number of households would remain constant. The local labour supply would also be lower, as a result of the older population, so more people would commute to work in Sefton, which could add to congestion.

Option Three – Stabilising Sefton's population

4.13 This option would require 7,750 dwellings to be built in the Green Belt, in addition to 4,850 in the urban area. This would allow for the stabilisation of the Borough's population at the current level.

4.14 This would mean more and larger sites being released from the Green Belt adjoining each of Sefton's communities (again with the exception of Bootle and Litherland). There would be a much greater impact on areas of Grade 1 agricultural land and areas with local nature value. This option would more than meet anticipated needs for both homes and jobs.

4.15 Conclusion on Option Three: This option would be able to provide the greatest number of homes, including affordable homes and specialist accommodation (e.g. for elderly people), and would be able to provide most infrastructure. A stable population would help to justify existing levels of services and facilities (e.g. schools), and would also result in a greater proportion of people of working age. This option would anticipate homes being built at levels which have not been achieved within Sefton for the past 30 years. It would also mean a substantial encroachment into the Green Belt.

Conclusions on Options

4.16 Although Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is likely to be abolished before the Core Strategy is published, Option Two most closely matches the housing requirement it proposes for Sefton (500 homes a year) and which our Core Strategy ought to be consistent with.

4.17 Option One has the advantage of not involving any Green Belt release, but would come with significant risks. As mentioned in section 4.3 above, government advice is that local authority make an assessment of housing need, and justify that, in their plans. If we did not comply with national planning guidance, this Option would leave the Core Strategy at serious risk of being found 'unsound'.

4.18 This would mean that we would have to start the Core Strategy again from scratch, which would be costly. It would also mean that we would soon not be able to have a five year supply of land. We would be vulnerable to challenge by developers wanting to build in the Green Belt. Whilst we could refuse such planning applications, a developer could then lodge an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate on the basis that we were not meeting local housing

needs. If granted, this could lead to a number of unplanned housing developments being allowed in Green Belt on appeal, against the wishes of the Council.

4.19   Option Two offers the best balance between meeting Seftons' needs and keeping the impact on the Green Belt to the minimum.

5.   Which land is considered suitable for new homes and jobs?

Land for homes

5.1   It is suggested that a key principle governing which sites should be identified for new homes is that, as far as possible, sites should be located close to the community where the need arises.

5.2   Traditionally Southport and Bootle have been the main source of development over the past 30 years and this is where future needs are likely to be greatest. Now land is running out in these areas, and there is no Green Belt immediately adjacent to Bootle.

5.3   The main areas of search in the Green Belt are next to the settlements in central Sefton – Crosby, Maghull, Aintree, Formby and the villages. There are also a few areas around Southport.

5.4   The ability of settlements to accommodate new development is important – do they have the appropriate infrastructure? This ranges from roads, water, sewerage, gas and electricity to shops, schools, health, green spaces and other community facilities. In general the larger settlements are well provided with these facilities and services, while the villages lack many of them.

5.5   If new development is able to bear the cost of new facilities, then this may be a reason for recommending an extension to a town or village. In some circumstances, the existing settlement could benefit by much needed new services being provided.

5.6   As a result, development is not proposed adjacent to the smaller villages, such as Ince Blundell, as these would not be sustainable locations for new development, and the amount of development required to support the provision of any services that are lacking would not be proportionate in relation to the size of the village.

5.7   The Options Paper indicates the amount of land which would be needed to meet Options Two and Three which require release of land in the Green Belt. It also identifies those sites the development of which would cause least harm to the Green Belt.

Land for jobs

5.8 In relation to land for jobs, the Employment Land study recommends a site of approximately 20ha in the north of the borough. A sufficient size of site could only be found in the Green Belt. The most suitable locations would be east of Southport or north of the Formby Business Park, with a preference for land to the east of Southport..

6. When might we need to develop land in the Green Belt?

6.1 Our housing land study (SHLAA) suggests there is enough land within the built-up area to meet the Borough's housing needs for around nine years. This would appear to suggest that there is no requirement to release land from the Green Belt for some time, except under option three.

6.2 However, the Government requires local authorities to have a five years' supply of housing land at all times. Such sites have to be "suitable, available and deliverable". Not all sites which identified in the housing land study meet these tests.

6.3 This strict requirement means we must make sure that at least some (though not all) land identified in the Green Belt would be available for development soon after the Core Strategy is approved in 2012, since by then or soon after we may start to struggle to achieve a five year supply.

7. What happens next?

7.1 It is proposed to consult on the Options Paper for 12 weeks from mid March to the end of May. It is aimed to reach a wide variety of groups and people, through drop-in events, focus groups and displays.

7.2 Sefton East Parishes Area Committee has asked to receive the views of the parishes before it comments. Other parishes have indicated that they would like to receive presentations. It would seem appropriate to report to Area Committees after consultation with the parishes. Following this a report will be brought back to Planning Committee and Cabinet in the summer.

7.3 The next stage is to identify our preferred option and prepare and consult on detailed policies for the Core Strategy. Following this the draft Core Strategy will be published which will set out the Council's preferred approach. It is anticipated that the final Core Strategy will be submitted for independent examination in late spring 2012, and adopted in late 2012.

7.4 In view of the number of stages still to be completed before the Core Strategy is adopted, it is important that progress is maintained. If there are delays, the Borough's five year land supply will be under threat. The Council is likely to receive applications for development on other sites within the Green Belt,

which could be granted permission at appeal. This would mean that the Council would lose control over which sites within the Green Belt would be developed.

7.5   Any delay would create a further problem. The preparation of the Core Strategy must be based on up-to-date evidence. A large number of studies have already been completed and these provide the basis of the policy approach on a wide variety of matters. If there is delay, this evidence will get out of date and will not be able to defended at examination. Updating the studies will be costly and time consuming.

Annex A

Core Strategy for Sefton

Draft Options Paper

January 2011

Contents

Introduction

What is the Core Strategy and how can you get Involved?

The Core Strategy is the key plan that will help shape how our towns and villages, our coast and countryside, will look up to 15 years ahead. It will also set out the priorities for investment and will help us make decisions on planning applications.

The Core Strategy will help us address a number of important challenges and opportunities over the plan period to 2027. The Government says we must prepare a Core Strategy. We must do this with people who live and work in Sefton. This is your chance to influence how the Core Strategy will shape Sefton's towns, villages and countryside in the future.

What have we done so far?

We consulted widely in summer 2009 to find out what people think are the important issues the Borough will face over the next 15 years.

We have carried out a range of studies to give us up to date evidence on key areas:
* How many new homes do we need and where should they go?
* What size and type of homes are needed (e.g. for families, elderly people, single people)?
* Where will people work?
* How can we make sure development takes account of flood risk?
* How can we make the most of our greenspaces?
* Which areas contribute most to the overall purpose of our Green Belt?

We have also had discussions with our partners such as NHS Sefton, the Environment Agency, utility providers (e.g. road, water, gas), the Port of Liverpool and local businesses. This has helped us to take account of their priorities in this early stage in preparing the Core Strategy.

What decisions do we need to make and who will make them?

This document is the Options Paper. We have set out three options based on different numbers of people who will live in Sefton in the future in Section 5, and what each will mean for the different parts of our area. Once we have obtained your views, whether as a member of the public, or an interested group or organisation, we will identify a Preferred Option to take forward in our draft Core Strategy.

Although this decision will be made by the Council's Planning Committee and Cabinet, it will only be made after extensive public consultation.

How can you get involved?

We want to hear your views on the different options.

We will be holding events in each of the seven Area Committee areas and in some of the parishes and other areas that will be most affected by the Options. Please see our website (www.sefton.gov.uk/corestrategy) for further details.

We will also be discussing the Options with a wide range of other local interest groups and organisations.

Please refer to our website for up to date information on how you can comment, and events you can attend where you will be able to discuss your views and ask questions.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of this Options Paper, please contact us in one of the following ways:

Planning Policy
1st Floor Magdalen House
30 Trinity Road
Bootle
L20 3NJ
 core.strategy@sefton.gov.uk
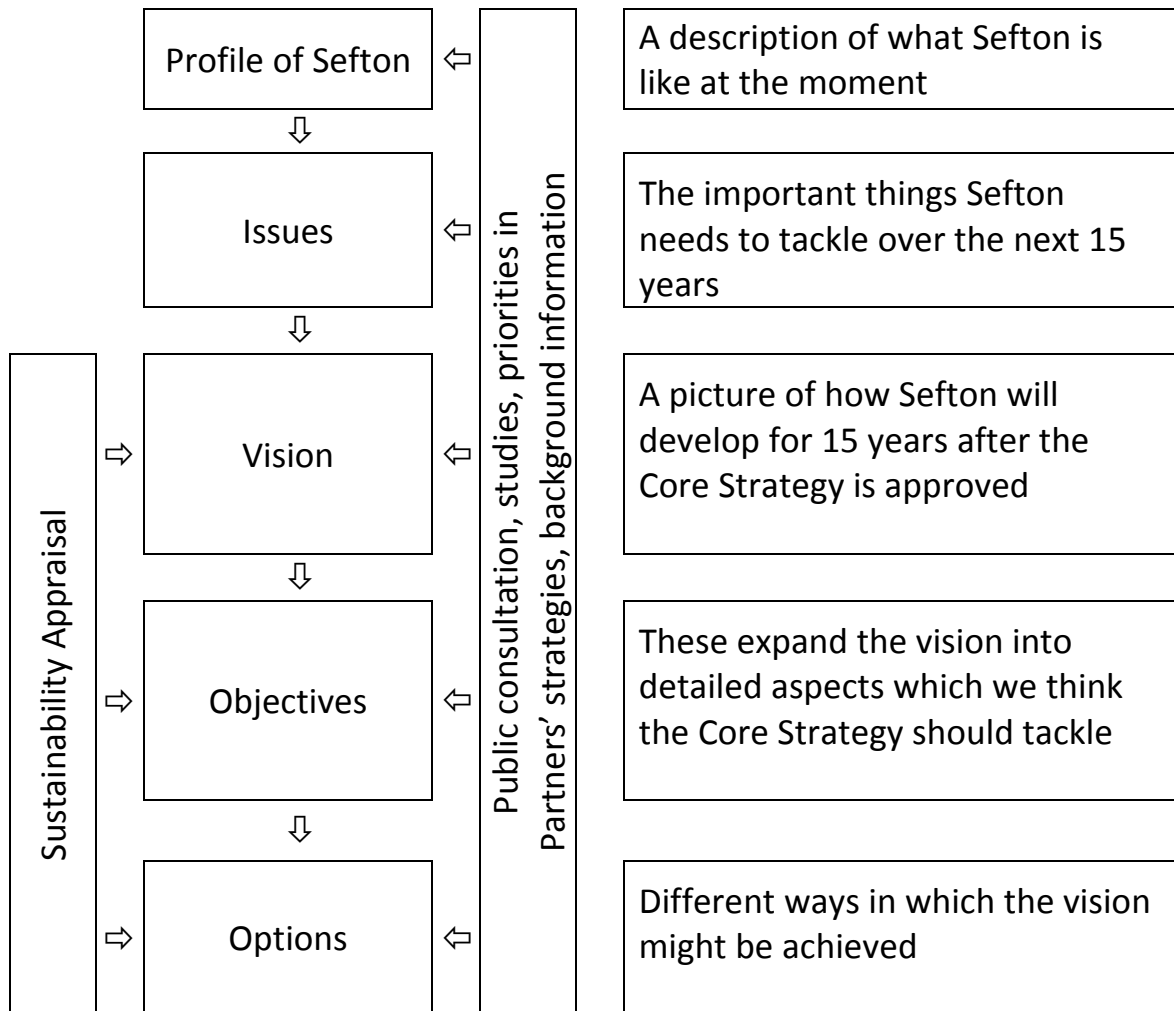
(0151) 934 3558

Understanding the Options Paper

Profile of Sefton ⇦	Public consultation, studies, priorities in Partners' strategies, background information	A description of what Sefton is like at the moment
⇩		
Issues ⇦		The important things Sefton needs to tackle over the next 15 years
⇩		
Sustainability Appraisal ⇨ **Vision** ⇦		A picture of how Sefton will develop for 15 years after the Core Strategy is approved
⇩		
⇨ **Objectives** ⇦		These expand the vision into detailed aspects which we think the Core Strategy should tackle
⇩		
⇨ **Options** ⇦		Different ways in which the vision might be achieved

Figure 1: The main sections of the Options Paper, and what they mean.

1   Context

1.1 The Core Strategy will help shape Sefton over the next 15 years, and aims to make Sefton a better place for all our communities.

National context

1.2 The Core Strategy is being prepared at a challenging time when the national economy is declining and there is less 'public' funding available to implement our proposals. It will be even more important for the Council, other agencies and the communities of Sefton to work together, and make the most of the limited resources available.

1.3 Sefton has benefited from a variety of national and European initiatives for many years, which have assisted in the regeneration of south Sefton and the central area of Southport. Much of this funding is now tailing off and new approaches will be required.

> **Regeneration has been a key priority of Sefton Council for more than 30 years and will continue to be a major focus of our efforts.**

1.4 We think it is important for our communities to be as sustainable as possible – that is, this means trying to improve the quality of life which people can enjoy. This is a key priority of the Government. Our approach in the Core Strategy is based on a number of themes from the Government's definition of sustainable communities, and these will help us to promote sustainable development.

- Healthy, inclusive and safe;
- Environmentally sensitive;
- Quality homes and neighbourhoods;
- Well connected; and
- Thriving.

1.5 These themes run through the Options Paper, and provide a checklist for all that we propose to do.

Changing regional context

1.6 Major changes are proposed to the regional tier of government, which the Localism Bill proposes to abolish. As part of these changes, the Government intends to revoke the Regional Strategy (RSS).

1.7 Many of the regional bodies that have traditionally supported regeneration at a local and sub-regional level are also changing. The Regional Development Agency will be replaced with a Local Enterprise Partnership for Merseyside. This will play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.

1.8 Sefton is not an island! It is an integral part of the Liverpool City Region with which it has close ties at a number of levels. There is a shared policy approach on a wide variety of matters. This means that the approach which Sefton takes on a variety of matters needs to reflect :

- Many people choose to live in Sefton and work in the Liverpool City region – the two areas have close economic, cultural and transport ties

- The Merseyside authorities work closely in developing policy and agreeing Merseyside wide priorities e.g. agreeing priorities for economic growth, promoting sustainable transport, managing the disposal of locally produced waste, and identifying potential for renewable energy.
- In particular, south Sefton & north Liverpool both share high levels of deprivation; a joint study has led to a Strategic Regeneration Framework and a commitment to tackle these issues together.

Linking with other local initiatives

1.9 At a local level, the Core Strategy must tie in with the Sustainable Community Strategy. This aims to make Sefton 'a great place in which to live, work, learn, visit and do business'. Through this strategy the Council and the Sefton Borough Partnership are also committed to the Government's vision of delivering sustainable communities.

1.10 Within Sefton, the Council and other organisations produce plans for regeneration, improving healthcare, learning and schools, and local and neighbourhood plans. As far as possible, these priorities are reflected in the Core Strategy, and it is essential that these organisations work together closely in implementing the Core Strategy.

1.11 Many of the Parish Councils are currently producing Parish Plans for their communities. These need to largely conform with our Core Strategy and other plans we produce, but will also reflect other local priorities and issues. These will take on a more formal role following the enactment of the Localism Bill in 2011/2012.

Keeping the focus on sustainability

1.12 Local authorities are required to carry out a **Sustainability Appraisal[1]** (SA) of their Core Strategies to make sure they are as sustainable as possible. This is carried out at each stage in the preparation of the Strategy. As part of developing the options for the Core Strategy we have carried out two initial stages of sustainability appraisal, the key findings of which are set out in the relevant parts of the Options Paper.

1.13 The Core Strategy has also been assessed under the **Habitats Regulations Assessment** process, which is designed to protect the integrity of internationally important nature sites.

1.14 In Sefton these internationally important nature sites are the Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, and the Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore potential SPA and proposed Ramsar site.

1.15 The 'screening' carried out under this process recommends that specific policy wording (for example relating to recreational green space and habitat creation in relation to Green Belt sites) is needed to protect the integrity of the network of those sites which are internationally important for nature.

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[1] This also covers the Strategic Environmental Assessment requirements

2   Profile of Sefton

2.1 Sefton is a coastal borough with a population of 273,303 (2009 mid year population estimates). It lies in the northern part of the Liverpool City Region with which it shares close economic, social, cultural and transport links. It also has important links to Preston and West Lancashire. Sefton adjoins the boroughs of Liverpool to the south, Knowsley to the east, and rural West Lancashire to the east and north.

2.2 Sefton has a number of famous features that help make it distinctive, these include the 'classic' resort of Southport, an outstanding natural coast, the home of the Grand National at Aintree, England's 'golf coast' including Royal Birkdale and Antony Gormley's Iron Men on Crosby beach. Most of the Port of Liverpool and the Freeport are situated in the south of the Borough. Sefton is therefore an important gateway for trade with Ireland, America and the Far East.

2.3 Sefton is a borough of contrasts. In the south, Bootle, Seaforth and Litherland share the metropolitan character of Liverpool. The other main settlements are Crosby, Maghull and Formby in the centre of the borough and the Victorian resort of Southport in the north.   These built-up areas comprise about half of the area of the Borough and are where 95% of Sefton's residents live.

Community Areas in Sefton

- Southport
- Formby
- Crosby
- Bootle and Netherton
- Sefton East Parishes

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2.4 The other half of Sefton is rural, including a number of villages, and is covered by the Merseyside Green Belt. This is tightly drawn around Sefton's towns and villages and has helped channel regeneration and development into the built-up areas, notably Bootle and Southport.

South Sefton

2.5 The south of Sefton shares a boundary with north Liverpool and has many of the same characteristics. Bootle, Seaforth and Litherland form the older urban core of Sefton and are characterised by high density terraced housing dating from the Victorian period. While benefiting from many regeneration initiatives in the past, the area remains one of the most deprived communities, not only in Sefton, but nationally. Netherton was developed in the 1960's as an overspill town for Liverpool.

2.6 The area contains a large tract of active dockland including the modern Seaforth container terminal and the Liverpool Freeport. The Port of Liverpool is expanding rapidly and a number of major investments have recently been attracted to the area. Bootle's industrial past has left large areas of contaminated and derelict land in areas that already have low land values. This legacy places the area at a further disadvantage due to the investment required to remediate vacant sites and make them suitable for new development. But this land also presents opportunities - for housing and commercial development and bringing new life to an area which already has a strong sense of community. The whole of South Sefton continues to be a priority for regeneration.

2.7 Most recently, much of the area has been designated as part of the Merseyside 'Housing market renewal area'. This has begun to change the housing type and tenure available in the area, and there is an on-going need for further investment to ensure that this area continues to improve. The housing market in this area is distinct from that operating in the rest of Sefton, and despite the proximity of north Liverpool, there are also very few links across the border.

Southport

2.8 Southport is the one of North West's 'classic' coastal resorts and its seafront is crucial to the economic success of the town. Southport's traditional, quality image, which is reflected in much of its architecture, has enabled it to endure changing holiday patterns. There has been significant investment in the town centre and seafront in recent years, but both its leisure and retail areas continue to need to be revitalised.

2.9 Approximately 40% of the population of Southport (including Birkdale and Ainsdale) is over 55 (a percentage which is expected to increase significantly). This brings specific challenges for housing and health care. The town also has a relatively large migrant population, many of whom work in West Lancashire.

2.10 Southport comprises areas of both deprivation and relative wealth, with part of the central area containing some of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Sefton. By contrast, parts of Churchtown, southern Birkdale and Ainsdale are some of the least deprived areas in Sefton and nationally.

2.11 Unlike the rest of Sefton, Southport has a relatively self-contained labour market. Most people living in Southport work in the local area, although a considerable number of people commute to other areas. This means that future employment needs should be met in the north of Sefton (Southport or Formby).

Central Sefton

2.12 The central area of Sefton contains the free-standing towns of Crosby, Maghull and Formby. These are distinctive settlements in their own right, and all function as commuter settlements for Liverpool.

2.13 Much of central part of Sefton is parished, and contains the bulk of Sefton's Green Belt. The area includes both larger settlements like Formby, Maghull, Thornton, Hightown and Aintree and smaller villages like Melling, Sefton, Lunt and Ince Blundell. These areas face problems of infrequent and irregular public transport to services such as shops, schools and health care.

2.14 Formby enjoys a high quality environment with easy access to the coastal dunes and pinewoods well known for their Natterjack toads and red squirrels.

2.15 Crosby and Waterloo mark the edge of the older built up area of the 'Greater Liverpool' conurbation. These popular residential districts have a mixture of large Regency, Victorian and Edwardian housing. This area is well known for Antony Gormley's beach sculpture of iron men called 'Another Place'. The coast remains a strong element in this part of the Borough and the Marine Park and coastal zone are in the process of being upgraded.

2.16 Maghull is a large town in the east of Sefton. It has mainly grown throughout the second half of the twentieth century and similar to the other settlements in Central Sefton it acts primarily as a commuter settlement. Maghull is tightly surrounded by Green Belt on all sides, much of which is the highest quality agricultural land. The Leeds and Liverpool canal passes through Maghull before it heads to Bootle and Liverpool.

2.17 The Green Belt, together with the areas designated as having international, national or local nature conservation importance and the areas which are classified as being the best and most versatile agricultural land means that much of our area is of high environmental importance and should be protected from

development. In addition, extensive areas have been identified as having a risk of flooding and are therefore also unsuitable for development. These constraints limit our potential for meeting our future needs.

Sustainable communities

2.18 In section 1 we introduced five themes which illustrate some of the features of communities which are sustainable:

◊ Quality homes and neighbourhoods
◊ Environmentally sensitive
◊ Well connected
◊ Thriving, and
◊ Healthy, inclusive and safe.

We will use those as headings to describe various characteristics of Sefton.

Quality Homes & Neighbourhoods

2.19 Sefton comprises a largely self-contained housing market - most people who live in Sefton want to continue to live in Sefton (a recent study indicated that eight out of every ten people would choose to stay in Sefton if they moved house). Within this overall pattern, there is a north-south divide. There is a higher proportion of owner occupiers outside Bootle and house prices are generally much higher in central and north Sefton than in the south of the Borough. There is a greater need for affordable housing in the north. Those households in the south of the borough who have rising incomes often wish to move to higher-quality, private, housing in Crosby, mid-Sefton and Southport, as there is relatively little choice of private housing in the south.

**Figure: Proportion of owner occupied housing in Sefton**
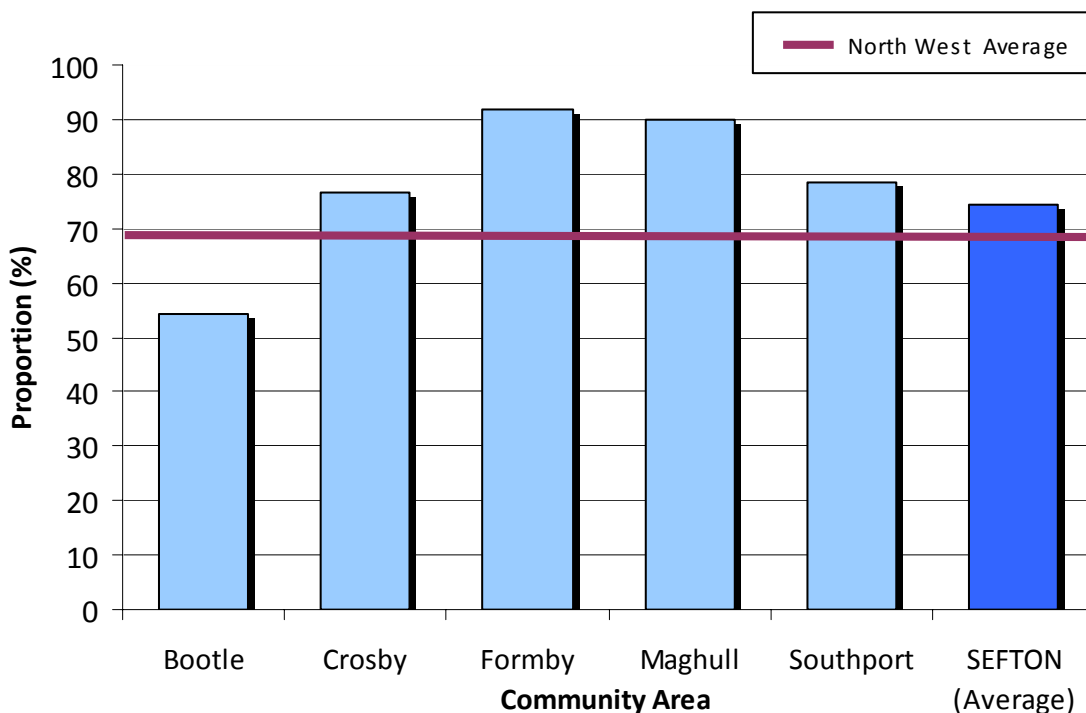
2.10 The number of empty homes in Sefton is almost 6,000, about 4.8% of the total stock. Of these almost 3,000 are classed as long-term vacant, i.e. vacant for more than six months. These vacancies are concentrated in south Sefton and central Southport.

Environmentally Sensitive

2.11 Sefton's coast is an important part of its identity. It stretches the length of the borough and contains a number of internationally important nature reserves and the most extensive dunes in England. There is a

real sense of local pride and interest in this natural heritage. This ecological, environmental and recreational resource is highly valued by local residents and attracts many visitors to the area. Most of our coast has been designated a Special Area of Conservation under the European Union Habitats Directive, a Special Protection Area under the EU Birds Directive and a Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention. The borough is home to three national and four local nature reserves, and four Sites of Special Scientific Interest. There are more than 250 parks and open spaces which play an important part in the lives of people who live in and visit Sefton. Parts of Sefton are within flood zones 2 and 3 (see below). We need to ensure that the most sensitive areas continue to be protected from development.

Figure: Flood Zones in Sefton
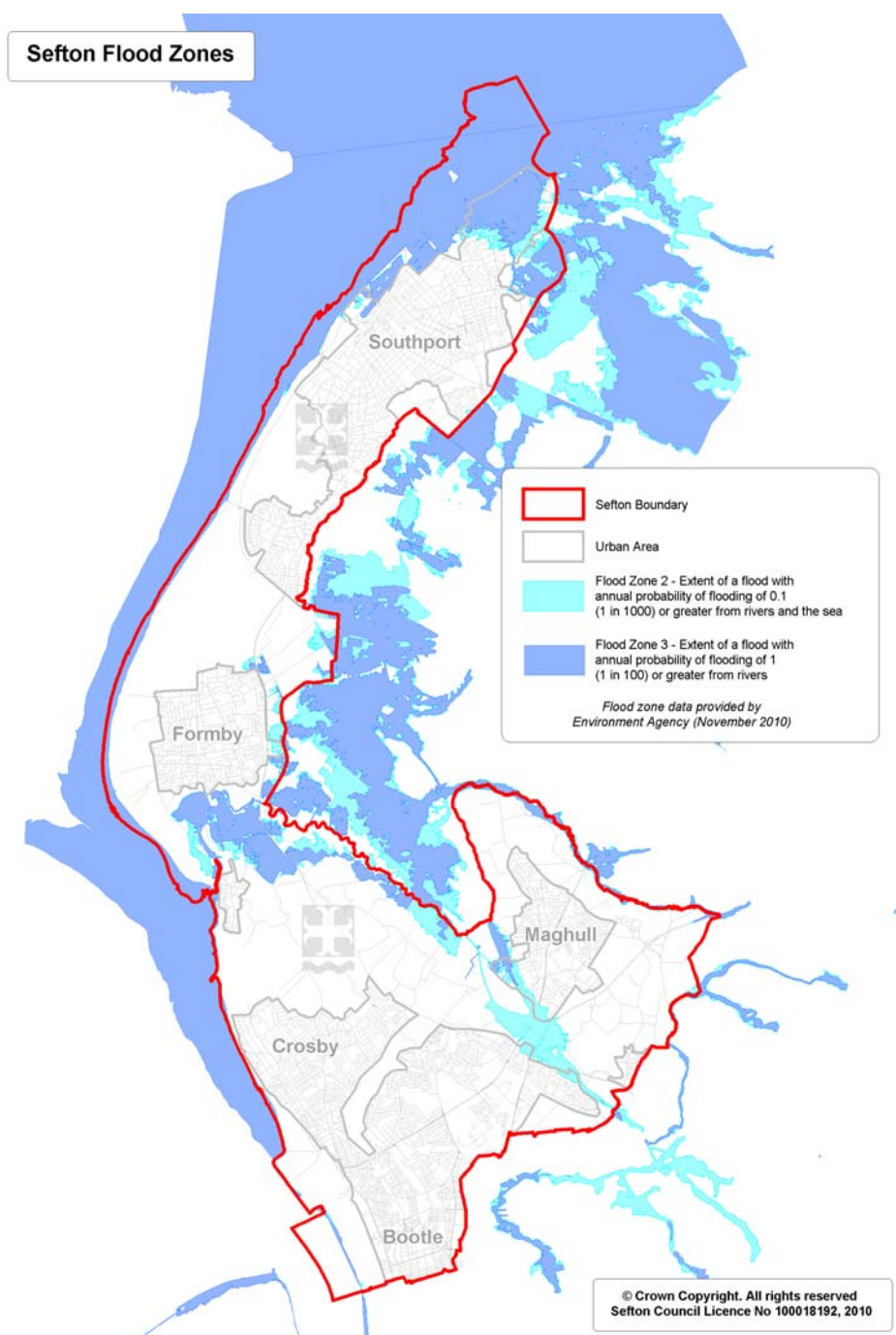

Well Connected

2.12 Sefton has an extensive, well developed and well used transport network. Most of the urban areas are within easy reach of the bus network. There are high frequency local rail services running from the north to the south of the borough, and an increasing number of people use the train to travel to work. Despite this, most people travel to work by car (57.7%), with public transport accounting for one-fifth of journeys (20.8%).

2.13 People in some parts of the borough find the bus network inadequate, particularly for east-west trips in the south of the borough and in the rural areas. East-west rail links are also poor. It is difficult for many people to get to health and leisure facilities, especially in the evenings and at weekends.

2.14 Our roads are under increasing pressure as traffic flows continue to increase. This leads to local congestion within the A565 corridor through Crosby/Waterloo, between Thornton and Switch Island, and, in the summer, on the roads leading into Southport. The traffic congestion in these areas can result in problems with noise and air quality. The proposed Thornton to Switch Island link road, work on which is due to commence in the next year or so, will help alleviate some of these problems.

2.15 A 2008/9 study of how people enter Merseyside's main towns during the morning rush hour show that Bootle (77%) and Southport (81%) have the highest private car use. The average is 57% and Liverpool City Centre is just 38% [source Mott Macdonald for LTP3]. In 2006 30% of people travelled to work by sustainable methods (walking, public transport and cycling) a decrease from 38% in 2001.

Figure: Road and rail network in Sefton
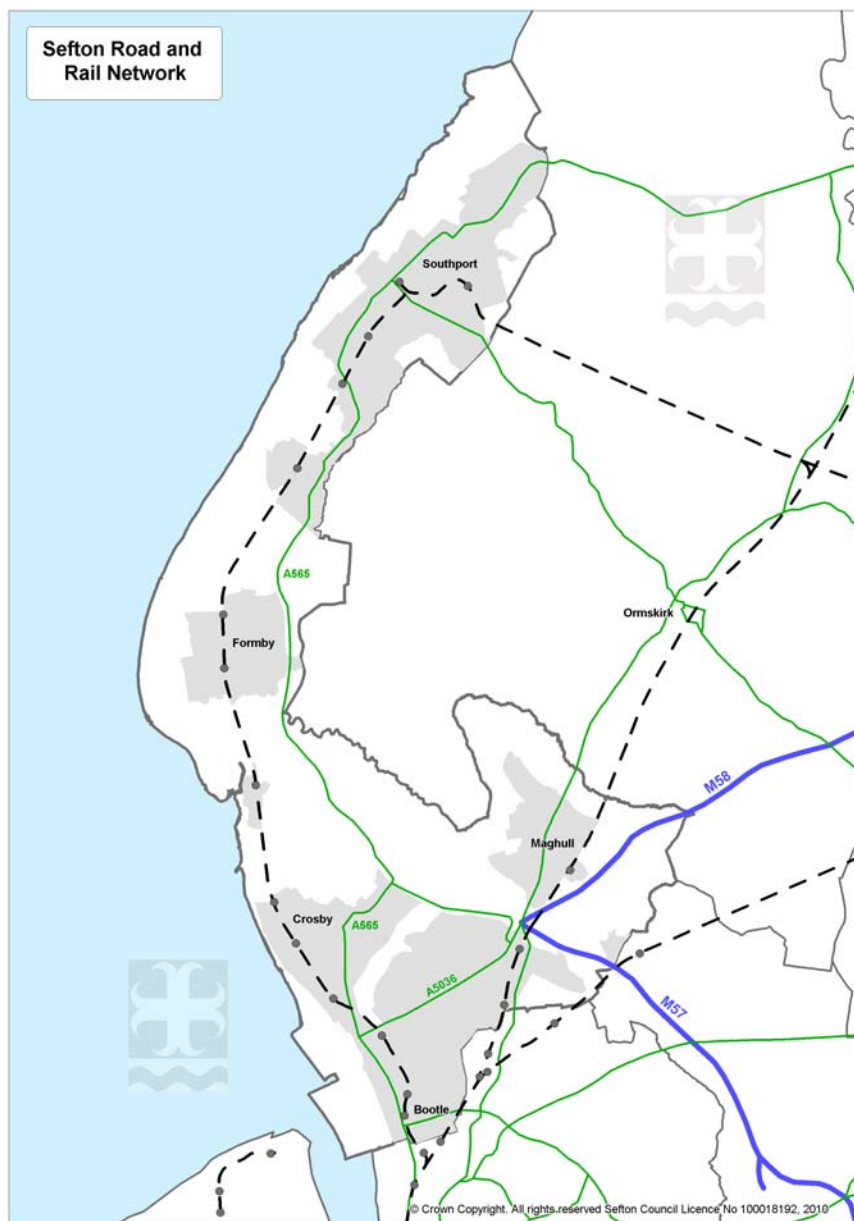
Thriving

2.16 Economically, Sefton is an integral part of the Liverpool City Region, with the exception of Southport which operates as a largely self-contained employment market. Two out of every five of Sefton's working population commute outside the Borough, many of these to Liverpool and elsewhere within the City Region. Sefton has an industrial heritage in the south of the borough, but there are now only low levels of manufacturing, and little of this is of high value. There is a general shortage of employment land in north Sefton.

2.17 Two out of every five jobs in the borough are in the public sector (including the Department of Work and Pensions, the Health and Safety Executive, Sefton Council and the health service). However, this is likely to decrease significantly as a result of reductions in funding for this sector. Many of these jobs are based in the Bootle area which has a large amount of office space, much of which is being improved. 45% of the working population living in central Sefton work in the public sector (compared to 36% of Bootle's working residents and 40% of Southport's). Sefton has fewer businesses (21 per 1000 working age population) than the North West and national average.

2.18 Whilst Sefton compares well with other districts in Merseyside, too few of our population have qualifications at NVQ levels 3 and 4 compared to the country as a whole. This makes it more difficult for them to gain employment, or better paid employment. Unemployment levels, linked to poor skill levels, have been historically high in the most disadvantaged parts of the south of the borough.

2.19 Sefton's town and villages centres perform an important economic role, both in terms of providing shops and services but also as locations for jobs. Southport and Bootle centres remain the main town centres in Sefton with district centres at Waterloo, Crosby, Maghull and Formby. Each centre faces competition from new development outside the borough, as well as out of centre and internet shopping. As a result vacancy levels are currently high (17% of shops in Bootle Town Centre in 2009, 14% in Southport Town Centre in 2010).

Healthy, inclusive and safe

2.20 The population of Sefton has declined slowly over the last few decades and is projected to continue to decline to about 265,000 by 2033.

2.21 The borough has an ageing population and it is projected that by 2013 the number of residents aged 65 and over will exceed the numbers of people under 20 for the first time. More than one in every five of Sefton's residents are now over 65; this is predicted to be close to one in three by 2033.

Figure: Sefton population 2008-2033

2.22 Sefton is ranked as the 83rd most deprived borough nationally (from 354 English Local Authorities), though it is improving (it was the 78th most deprived in 2004) but this conceals a wide diversity within the Borough. Generally, the more affluent areas of Sefton are in the north, with the exception of central Southport.

2.23 About 1 in 4 of Sefton's residents live in the 20% most deprived areas in the country and 1 in 10 lives in the 20% least deprived areas in the country. This diversity leads to some major inequalities across the borough, for example major variation in health and life expectancy within a short distance.

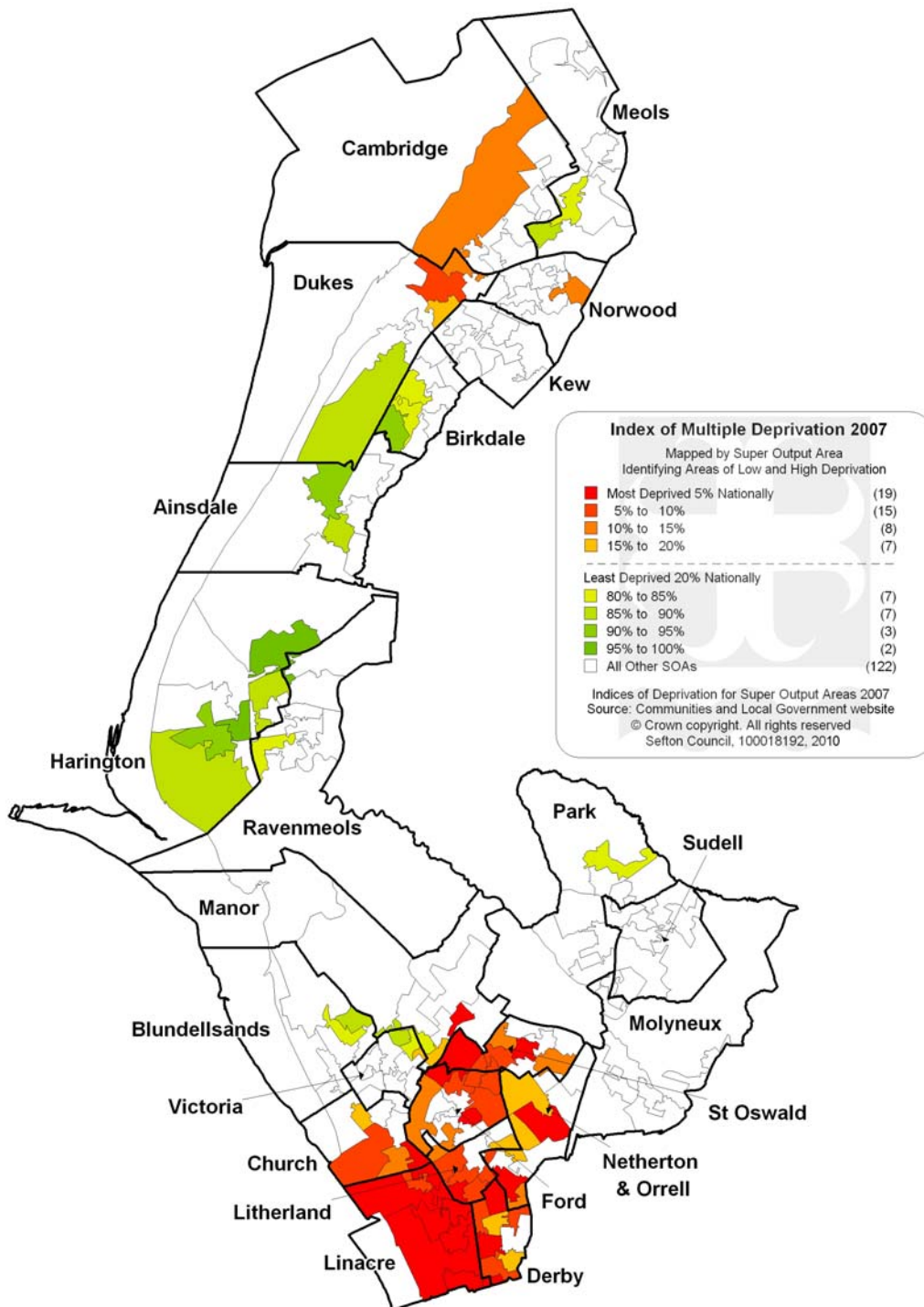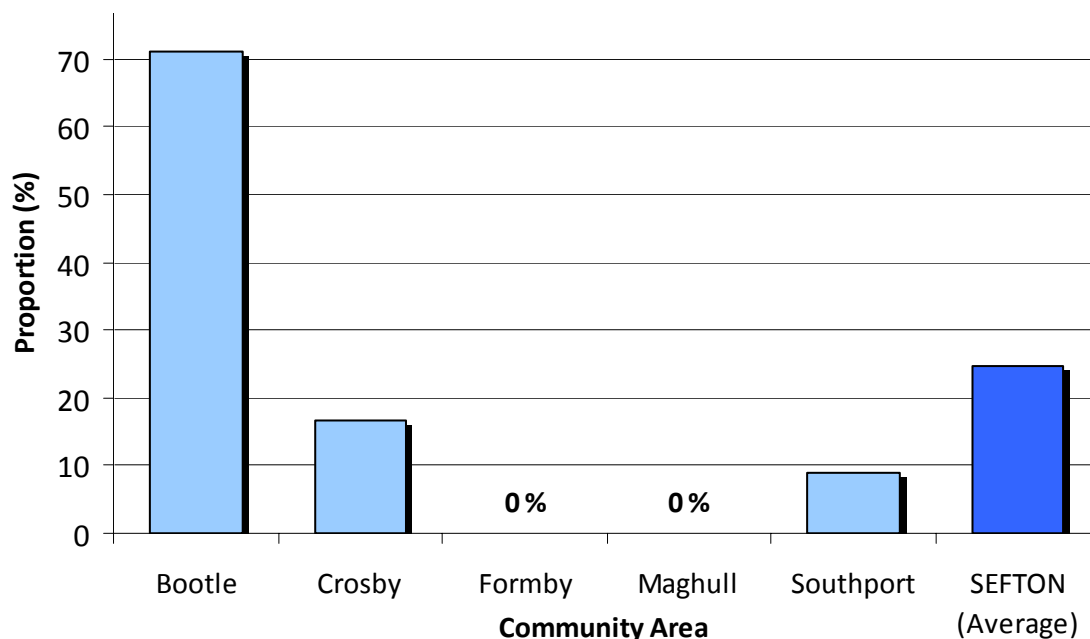**Figure: The 20% most and least deprived areas in Sefton**

Figure: proportion of population living in the 20% most deprived areas

2.24 Average life expectancy levels for both men and women across the borough have improved over the past ten years. However it is still below the average life expectancy for England. Significantly, the rate of improvement has not been as great in the most disadvantaged parts of the borough. This is particularly true for women. People living in the poorest parts of Sefton die at younger ages than in the rest of the borough. Men living within two miles of each other can have a difference in their life expectancy of more than eleven years. As our population continues to age there are increasing issues with health and the number of households with someone living with a long-term disability continues to grow.

2.25 Sefton is a safe place to live compared to England as a whole. However there are variations within Sefton. In 2008 the areas that had the highest recorded levels of crime were south Sefton and central Southport, with parts of Bootle having five times as much crime reported than parts of Formby (Linacre ward 1054, Ravenmeols ward 193).

Summary

2.26 Sefton is a diverse place with number of distinctive communities. It contains areas that enjoy wealth, a high standard of living and an attractive environment. However, there are also areas in Sefton that are amongst the most deprived nationally whose residents are significantly disadvantaged by where they live. In many ways it is this diversity and range of settlements that help give Sefton its identity. Sefton's other defining feature is its coastal location and the benefits this brings in term of the environment and the economy. The features and characteristics of Sefton described above underlie the issues and challenges set out in the next section.

3 Issues & challenges

3.1 The following key issues have been identified as needing co-ordinated action by the Council and other agencies within the lifetime of this plan. They have come to light in the course of discussions with many local people and organisations and through an assessment of Sefton's current performance across a range of issues. They have been consistently identified as important issues. These priorities are supported by studies and other evidence.

3.2 As explained in Section 2, the issues are listed under a number of characteristics of 'sustainable communities':
1. Quality homes and neighbourhoods
2. Environmentally sensitive
3. Well connected
4. Thriving
5. Healthy, inclusive and safe

3.3 In addition, there are a number of key priorities that cut through all of the sustainable community characteristics. The main priority is the continued focus on regeneration. This is because there are large differences in living standards and life chances between different areas of Sefton. Parts of Bootle and central Southport are amongst the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The solutions to these inequalities are long term and involve a whole host of measures including, better housing, more educational and job prospects, improving the quality of the built and natural environment and addressing health and crime problems.

1. Quality homes and neighbourhoods

Meeting needs for new homes
3.4 Our study on housing land (Strategic Housing Land Availability Study, 2010) tells us that about 4850 of the homes can be provided within the urban area, assuming we don't build at very high densities or on green space or important employment land.

3.5 Whilst there is a mix of house types and tenures across most of Sefton, there is less choice in south Sefton where there are more terraced houses, and more homes owned by housing associations.

Issue
How can we meet the need for new homes, ensure they are of the right type and built at the right time?

Providing affordable homes
3.6 Our study on housing needs (Strategic Housing Needs Assessment, 2009) reveals that there is a need for affordable housing in most parts of the Borough, but particularly in the north. The planning system has not been able to provide much new affordable housing and funds for direct provision through housing associations are declining.

Issue
Where and how can we provide more affordable housing, particularly in parts of the Borough where housing is least affordable and where there is the greatest need?

Homes for older people
3.7 Sefton has an ageing population, and there is an increasing need for more specialist accommodation for older people and for gypsies and travellers.

How can we meet specialist housing needs?

Existing Housing Stock
3.8 4.8% of the Borough's homes are empty, which is higher than the regional average. Bringing these back into use could help meet the need for affordable homes and also help to improve the local neighbourhood. Many homes, both vacant and occupied, are also of a poor quality and need improving.

Issue
How can we reduce the number of empty homes and improve the condition of the ageing housing stock?

Local distinctiveness
3.9 Sefton contains many distinctive towns and villages that have different characters often linked to their buildings and open space. New development has not always recognized this distinctiveness and there is a view that in some areas the standard of development of development has not been high enough. We need to protect those areas which are a local asset, and improve other areas.

Issue
How can we ensure that future development is designed to integrate well with existing communities and be of a high standard of design?

In summary: how can we provide homes for all sections of our population in a way which recognizes the different character of different parts of the borough?

2. Environmentally sensitive

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
3.10 Sefton includes many areas valued for its environment which are popular with visitors. New development could also put more pressure on these sites which are often have international and national nature conservation importance.

3.11 Most of Sefton has a variety of green spaces, but not all are maintained to the highest standard. A greater variety of green areas can make places more attractive, contribute to people's health and reduce the effects of climate change.

Issue
How can we meet our development needs without harming the quality of the environment in Sefton?

3.12 A legacy of former manufacturing and industrial uses in Sefton has left a large number of sites contaminated and costly to bring back into use.

Issue
How can we make better use of our former industrial sites?

Meeting the challenge of climate change
3.13 A study on flood risk in Sefton [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, 2009] identifies a number of sources of flooding within Sefton including from the sea, from rivers and surface water flooding. Much of Sefton is low-lying, which makes it potentially vulnerable to flooding form a variety of sources, and also necessitates pumped drainage systems which are expensive to maintain.

Issue
How do we make sure so that development which would be vulnerable to flooding is steered away from areas at risk wherever possible?

3.14 High levels of car use leads to pollution, and in some areas adds to the amount of carbon emissions.

Issue
How can we reduce the reliance on the car and make other forms of travel more attractive in order to reduce the use of carbon and improve air quality?

In summary: How can we best look after the high quality parts of our environment, improve those parts which are poor, and take steps to face the challenge of climate change?

3.   Well connected

Improving access
3.15 There are a number of challenges to improving access in the Borough e.g.
◊   east-west links across the Borough
◊   access for our rural communities
◊   access to key services (e.g. to hospitals)
◊   frequency of public transport at evenings and weekends
◊   Southport's links to national rail & motorway networks.

Issue
How do we improve access to facilities and services, particularly for those in rural areas?

Traffic congestion
3.16 Increased car use has led to problems with congestion on many of Sefton's roads, particularly in the Crosby area. This is not only bad for the environment (see xx above) but also for the economy and the ability for people accessing services.

Issues
How do we reduce traffic congestion?
How can we ensure that new development is built in accessible locations?

Infrastructure
3.17 Many areas in Sefton are poorly served by essential infrastructure (such as roads, water, electricity, sewers and gas) services and facilities. Often new development has not contributed enough to resolving these issues and in some cases has made the problem worse by increasing demand in areas with restricted capacity.

Issue
How can we make the most of our existing infrastructure and make sure that we can co-ordinate all the new infrastructure the Borough needs?

In summary: How can we improve access where it is poor, and make sure that appropriate access and services are integrated with new development?

4.   Thriving

Worklessness & the employment market
3.18 Sefton has a high level of worklessness and some areas, particularly south Sefton, have unemployment rates which are twice as high as the national average. Sefton has the lowest number of

businesses per 1,000 population of any authority in Merseyside and relies very heavily on the public sector for many of its jobs.

Issue
How can we increase enterprise, develop skills & sustain business growth to reduce the number of people who are not in education, employment or training?

Employment land
3.19 Sefton has a limited supply of employment land and needs to be able to identify sufficient land to meet future employment needs.

Issue
How do we make sure that land currently used for employment is protected for that purpose? Where do we find new land which will be suitable for employment when the current supply of land comes to an end?

3.20 The Port is critically important to the economy of the Liverpool City Region and provides a significant number of jobs for people in Sefton, either directly in the Port or in the associated maritime economy. The expansion of the port is restricted by a lack of available land. Land that is available has nature value. Activity associated with the Port can have an impact on local communities through traffic, and noise and air pollution, and this needs to be carefully considered in any proposals for expanding the Port's operations.

Issue
How can we enable the Port to grow whilst ensuring no unacceptable harm to amenity and that appropriate compensation is provided for any impact on protected wildlife sites?

Promoting Sefton's centres
3.21 Our centres are changing in character as they adapt to changing patterns of retailing and many are showing signs of struggling to adapt. Centres may have to change their role in order to compete and survive. This is likely to mean different things for different centres.

Issue
How can we ensure that our local centres remain competitive and viable, and continue to perform a valuable role within their communities?

In summary: What can we do to help Sefton's economy grow and promote good quality jobs and training for local people?

5. Healthy, inclusive and safe

Improving health
3.22 The ageing population will increase the number of people living with long-term illnesses and disabilities. The types, amount and location of essential services and facilities will also be an important factor as more focus will be placed on how accessible these are.

3.23 There are major inequalities in health across the Borough. In particular, there is a difference in life expectancy of 10 years between parts of the borough which are only 2 miles apart and in parts of Bootle many more households include someone with a limiting long-term illness.

Issue
How can we address the causes of deprivation in order improve health and raise the quality of life within Sefton's the most deprived households?

Perception of crime

3.24 Although crime levels in Sefton as a whole are lower than the Merseyside average, some concentrations of crime exist in south Sefton and central Southport. There is also a perception that there are high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. This prevents people from enjoying a sense of community, prevents open spaces and facilities being used, particularly in the evenings, causes stress and illness and leads to areas becoming undesirable places to live.

Issue
How can we help make sure development contributes to neighbourhoods that are safer and feel safer and will be used by everyone?

In summary: How can we help to make Sefton healthier and safer?

Questions:

1. Do you agree with the issues and challenges listed above?

2. Is there anything else you would like to add?

3. Have we included anything you think is not a key issue for Sefton?

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4   Vision

4.1 Sections 1 to 3 have provided us with a baseline of how Sefton is now and enabled us to identify the key issues that the Core Strategy will focus on. From this we have derived a **vision** which sets out the we would want Sefton to look at the end of the Core Strategy period, i.e. at 2027. To support to vision (set out in paragraphs 4.2 – 4.9 below) we have also identified four overall **aims** for the Core Strategy, and a set of **objectives** based on specific issues to help implement these.

Vision

4.2 Sefton has retained all that makes it special – its varied and distinctive communities, and an outstanding natural environment in a coastal location. Sefton has become a much more sustainable place to live for all by promoting development that achieves a balance between the environmental, economic and social needs of the borough. In particular the regeneration of Bootle and central Southport has continued to improve the lives of residents in these areas and provide better prospects for those in most need. Sefton continues to contribute and benefit from being an integral part of the Liverpool City Region.

4.3 Residents in all our towns and villages are able to enjoy healthier lifestyles as a result of better housing, safer neighbourhoods, less pollution, improved opportunities for recreation and better access to services. This has helped to reduce the problems of health inequalities associated with Bootle and respond to the issues associated with an ageing population.

4.4 Sefton has helped to reduce the causes of climate change through limiting the amount of carbon from its own activities and those activities which it can influence, and by accommodating new forms of renewable energy. New development has been located and designed to adapt to problems associated with climate change, such as the increased risk from flooding and, where practicable, defences have been strengthened against coastal erosion.

4.5 We have made better use of our built and natural resources by giving priority to bringing underused land and buildings back into use. There has been a particular focus on bringing back into use vacant industrial land in Bootle, and vacant homes in Bootle and central Southport. This has helped us to limit our use of undeveloped land and to protect land which has natural, recreational and cultural value. Opportunities to enhance the natural environment have been taken where appropriate and we have balanced the recreation, tourism and other economic pressures on these areas, particularly the coast, with their natural value.

4.6 New homes have been well integrated into our towns and villages and have helped to provide more choice in terms of size, tenure and type. These have been designed to a high standard and in many cases are suitable and adaptable for those with a specialist need. We have provided more accommodation in Southport and Formby able to meet the specific needs of our increasing number of older people.

4.7 It is easier to get around in Sefton both because new homes are located close to existing facilities and services and new services and facilities are provided in places which are easy to get to. This means that people do not have to depend so much on the car and has helped reduce congestion. In some areas development has helped to provide new services.

Improvements to the existing transport network, such as the Thornton to Switch Island link and a station at Maghull North, have helped reduce local congestion.

4.8 While traditional employment areas in Sefton, such as manufacturing and the public sector, have continued to decline, new job opportunities have been provided in the private sector. These are linked to tourism, recreation and leisure, broadening the rural economy and developing renewable energy. These changes have been encouraged by the protection and improvement of our employment areas, by growth in local entrepreneurship and improvements in the education and skills of our local people. The Port continues to play a key part in Sefton's economy. The economic growth in Sefton has been balanced with the impact on local communities and the environment.

4.9 Our individual communities are served by thriving town and local centres which meet a range of needs including shopping, leisure, employment and culture. Southport and Bootle provide a wider range of services and facilities that attract people from outside Sefton. Maghull and Crosby centres have attracted a wider range of facilities and are now better able to meet the needs of their own residents. A new role has been found for Seaforth centre so that it is better able to serve its local community, and new uses have been secured for former shops in the many shopping parades located in our area.

4.10 The **Aims** of the Core Strategy are:

1. To support urban regeneration in Sefton, especially in Bootle and central Southport

2. To support sustainable development

3. To maintain and enhance the distinctiveness of Sefton and its individual communities

4. To make sure Sefton contributes and benefits from its place within the Liverpool City Region

4.11 The **Objectives** of the Core Strategy are:

1. To ensure that development is designed to a high quality and respects local character.

2. To manage new housing provision to meet the needs of a changing population.

3. To meet the affordable and special housing needs of Sefton's residents.

4. To make sure that development integrates and enhances essential infrastructure, services and facilities

5. To make sure that everyone has easy access to services, facilities and jobs without having to rely on the car.

6. To support Sefton's town and local centres so they are able to meet local and wider needs for shopping, leisure and other services.

7. To promote a wider based economy in terms of job type, skills and the local labour supply, and support existing businesses and small start-up businesses.

8. To make the most of the value of the Port to the local economy, while making sure that the impact on the environment and local communities is kept to a minimum.

9. To enable people living in Sefton to live a healthy life and in safe and secure environments.

10. To preserve and enhance Sefton's natural and built environment.

11. To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and to reduce Sefton's carbon footprint.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

This considered the draft vision and objectives of the Core Strategy and sought to measure how compatible these were with Sefton's sustainability objectives. It led to a number of minor changes of emphasis. Whilst we needed to provide more detail about some issues, the SA did not recommend a substantial change to the focus of the Core Strategy.

Questions

◊   Do you agree that the Vision is appropriate and relevant to Sefton?

◊   If not, what changes do you suggest?

◊   Do you agree that the Objectives are the right ones we should focus on for Sefton?

◊   If not, what changes do you suggest?

5.   Options

5.1 Having determined the Core Strategy vision and objectives through an assessment of the issues, the next stage is to consider the options for implementing these.

5.2 For the past 30 years, Sefton's development needs have been able to be met within its built-up area.

5.3 However, the urban area has now filled up to the point where we need to consider looking beyond the urban area in order to meet needs over the period of the Core Strategy. This is particularly important as all the land outside the built-up area of Sefton lies within the Green Belt. The Government says that existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless there are exceptional circumstances.

5.4 There are two types of development which our studies tell us will be difficult to meet within the built-up area for the period of the Plan. These are the need for new homes and jobs.

Land for new homes

5.5 The need to find land for new homes is particularly pressing:
- a 'housing land availability' study has identified the number of dwellings we think we will be able to provide within the built-up area over the period of the Core Strategy;
- a 'housing requirement' study has looked at the number of houses Sefton is likely to require over the same period.

5.6 If we continue to build enough new homes to meet our emerging housing needs, we will not have enough supply to meet the demand. Supply would be likely to run out just after halfway through the period of the Core Strategy period.

Can we increase the supply of homes?

5.7 We have looked at the potential of the following to provide new homes:
  ◊   building at higher densities
  ◊   making the most of unused or underused land e.g.
      o   land last used for industry
      o   former school sites
      o   green spaces which are not valued by the local community
  ◊   making the most of underused buildings e.g. empty homes and unused upper floors above shops.

5.8 We have looked at these carefully, but there is little scope for more than a modest amount of additional development from all these sources. The greatest potential is from land designated as green space. However, even where the green space has few obvious benefits, it is often valued by the local community, and so we don't anticipate that this will provide many dwellings.

Could other authorities help us meet our needs?

5.9 Another study (a Greater Merseyside Overview Study) is currently being carried out to assess whether other local authorities could help meet some of our needs. However, initial conclusions are that West Lancashire and Knowsley are in a similar position to ourselves, and cannot meet all their housing needs within their own built-up areas. Liverpool may be

able to make a modest contribution but only in respect of a small proportion of Bootle and Netherton's unmet housing needs, and not anywhere else in the Borough.

Land for new jobs

5.10 Our employment land study assessed our need for employment land over the period of the plan. It concluded that in order to meet the needs of the local economy, we will need to retain all the land which is already designated for employment uses. It recommended that most vacant or underused employment sites should be improved and made available for new employment uses. Taking these sources of supply together we should be able to meet the needs of most of the Borough to 2027.

5.11 However, the study recommended that a new site should be identified to meet the employment needs in the north of the Borough, as a successor site for the Southport Business Park. This site should be around 25 hectares (gross) in size and should be available from the early 2020s onwards.

5.12 There is no suitable land of this size which is available within the built-up area. The draft Overview Study seems to be concluding that no adjoining authorities would be able to help Sefton meet these needs.

Possible options

5.13 In accordance with good practice, we will continue to promote development in the urban areas first, especially where this will support the regeneration of our most deprived communities.

5.14 **Three broad options** have been identified.

5.15 Given the constraints of land supply, it is considered that the only realistic alternatives are based on accommodating different numbers of homes, and the implications of this for the population of the Borough, rather than different locations where development might take place. However, each approach to accommodating homes will have different implications on how much land is required for development and where this might be.

5.16 The three options actually share many of the same key underlying principles that are essential if many of the objectives are to be met, such as helping to achieve sustainable development and the focus on regeneration.

5.17 All three options will also contribute broadly equally to achieving particular plan objectives and vision. This includes a high standard of design (e.g. energy efficiency, safety and security, sustainable drainage, respecting local character), and reducing Sefton's carbon footprint by reducing the need for travel by private car, reducing waste, and preparing for climate change.

5.18 Once we have described the options, this Paper will set out the broad implications of each option for development in the different community areas of Sefton. Some areas may be more suitable for development than others because of the potential impact of development, for example on a sensitive environment, or because of the effect on existing services or facilities.

5.19 Within each option, development will be located away from the areas most likely to be affected by flooding. Where it is necessary to build in an area most likely to be affected by flooding – mainly within existing urban areas – all options will require development to be built in order to be able to withstand this risk.

5.20 The three options are
- Option One – urban containment
- Option Two – meeting identified needs
- Option Three – stabilising Sefton's population.

5.21 None of the options will lead to a larger population for Sefton. Both Options One and Two will result in fewer people living in Sefton in the future than do now. In the case of Option One, there will be significantly fewer people living in Sefton in 2027 than do now. In the case of Option 2, there will be a smaller loss, but there will still be nearly 7,000 fewer people in 2027 than now.

5.22 Each of these options is explained in turn below. There is also a diagram showing the implications for each option at the end of this section. The development land implications for each option, and how these needs would be met, is clearly set out.   Where exactly they would be met is described in the next section.

Option One – urban containment

5.23 Under this option, development will only be permitted on suitable sites in Sefton's existing urban area. No development land is proposed in the Green Belt. Only needs which can be met within the urban area will be met.

Land for new housing

5.24 A recent study indicated we could build approximately 4850 new homes on sites in the urban area on sites that are suitable, available and deliverable. The Core Strategy will set out the need for new homes for Sefton for a 15 year period from adoption (in 2012). Therefore, under this option the number of houses built each year would on average be no greater than 285 **homes per year** (i.e. 4850 divided by 17 years).

5.25 Potential housing sites in Sefton's urban areas are not spread equally across the borough. The table below shows the potential housing capacity in each of the main settlement areas.

Southport	1793
Formby	221
Sefton East (including Maghull)	154
Crosby	460
Bootle & Netherton	1866
Other small sites (< 0.1 hectare)	348
Total	**4842**

5.26 The potential housing sites are mainly concentrated in Southport, Bootle & Netherton. Whilst these areas have traditionally been where most new housing has taken place, they may not necessarily be the best places to meet local needs. This is particularly true given the high level of need for affordable housing in Southport and Formby, and the lower viability of

sites in Bootle & Netherton, which may mean that fewer homes are built in these areas compared to the supply.

5.27 Overall, this option would enable us to meet very few of our affordable housing needs (and none in the second part of the Core Strategy period), as this would depend totally on there being a supply of suitable and viable sites in the urban areas. The location of available sites does not necessarily match where the affordable housing need is, which as far as possible should be met in the area where the need arises.

Land for new businesses and employment

5.28 As with housing, development for employment purposes would be restricted to existing sites within the built-up area. The latest assessment of employment land in Sefton found that there were 57 hectares of available employment land. A key recommendation of the employment study is to provide an extra 25 hectare site for a new business park to replace the Southport Business Park to the east of Southport once it has been fully developed. It is anticipated that this will be needed from the early 2020s onwards. As this cannot be accommodated in the built up area, under this option, we would not be able to meet this requirement.

5.29 This option is also likely to have a harmful effect on the labour force, particularly as Sefton's population is growing older. Fewer people will be available of working age and this may mean more people are likely to commute to work in Sefton, as there will be fewer people in Sefton of working age.

Other uses

5.30 As all new homes would be located in existing urban areas it is unlikely that there would be a need for substantial new infrastructure. Existing infrastructure could be improved to meet demand created by new developments. However as many urban sites are small or have high development costs associated with them, the opportunities to improve infrastructure may be limited.

5.31 Another consequence of this option is that the population of Sefton is likely to decrease significantly, and faster than it has in the past. As a result, there is likely to be less demand for schools and other social facilities, and the demand for services and shops will also reduce. This could therefore make it harder to attract investment.

Green Belt Implications

5.32 Under this option, land in the Green Belt would not be needed or considered for development purposes <u>for the entire period of the plan</u>. Once all of the Borough's urban sites had been developed, no further development in the Green Belt would be permitted for as far ahead as can be anticipated.

5.33 Advantages
- This Option would not involve any encroachment into Green Belt land, and existing settlement boundaries would be maintained.
- By restricting development opportunities to the urban area, this Option would promote urban regeneration as little development could take place elsewhere.
- It would put limited additional pressure on infrastructure, as the population will decrease.

- There would be lower carbon emissions as this option would require fewer homes and less construction.

5.34 Disadvantages
- This Option would not meet the housing needs of the local community, including providing a wider choice of new homes, for affordable, market and specialist needs
- This Option would lead to a more rapid decline in population, potentially affecting the viability of local services or facilities in some areas. Local young people, families, and others who cannot get a house would either leave Sefton or live in unsuitable accommodation.
- Sefton's population would have a greater proportion of older people and fewer skilled people available for work; also, people would also leave Sefton due to lack of suitable housing – both of these would harm Sefton's economy;
- This could lead to greater inequality as more people are unable to find suitable accommodation.
- At some point in the plan period we would run out of land for new homes and jobs
- This option has, potentially, the least scope to meet biodiversity targets (e.g. to create new habitat) or to enhance green space. This is partly because less development in total may reduce the total contributions from developers towards enhancing the existing provision.

5.35 Policy Implications
- We would not need to identify any development sites in Green Belt.
- We would need to reduce our targets for providing affordable homes or meeting the needs of the elderly, as only a small proportion of our identified needs could be met.
- We would have to review the implications for local services and facilities of a more rapidly declining population. For example, fewer schools would be required.

Option Two – Meeting Identified Needs

5.36 Under this option sufficient land will be allocated to meet Sefton's emerging housing and employment needs to 2027. This would allow Sefton to meet household growth. We would also be able to meet more of our need for affordable housing.

Housing

5.37 A study has recently been completed which looked at the number of new homes that would be required to meet Sefton's housing needs, based on the housing needs that will arise in Sefton during the Core Strategy.

5.38 The study concluded that Sefton needs **480 new homes per year** (8160 in total over the plan period) to meet anticipated household needs. There is also a small unmet housing need of about 360 homes that has not been met during the period of 2003-10. Over the period of the Core Strategy, under this option there is a need to find land for 8520 new homes. As only about 4850 new homes can be built in the urban areas, this leaves a shortfall of 3670 homes. As all of Sefton's land outside the urban area is within the Green Belt, some of this would have to be released for development.

5.39 This figure is broadly consistent with the housing target contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West, and would be consistent with the scale of development we have achieved over the past decade.

5.40 Under this Option, we could identify a number of larger development sites that would provide a greater number of affordable home, and in areas with high affordable housing needs. This option would allow us to provide significantly more affordable homes than under the 'urban containment' option.

Employment

5.41 There is a need to identify land for a replacement site when the Southport Business Park is developed. This would need to be available in the early 2020s and be approximately 25 hectares in size.

Other uses

5.42 Providing new homes in Green Belt will require more services. This will include space for new roads, green spaces, shops and other facilities, and may require nearby existing services to be improved.

Green Belt Implications

5.43 Under this option, land would be identified adjacent to all of our main urban areas. In most areas, this would only be needed to meet our future housing needs. However, in Southport, or failing this, in Formby we would need to identify a site that would meet the area's long term employment needs.

5.44 Advantages:
- This option is based on up-to-date research on the increase in housing needs and would be able to meet the vast majority of the Borough's needs for homes and jobs
- There would be a more gradual decline in population than under Option One
- This figure would allow more affordable homes and specialist elderly accommodation to be built in the later part of the Core Strategy period, as these would be provided on larger greenfield sites. This Option would also allow a greater number of much needed family homes to be built in Sefton.
- This level of house building would help to provide continuing support for local services and facilities.
- This option would include some larger sites in the Green Belt that may allow for improvements to infrastructure to be made in the existing local urban area.
- This option has, potentially, considerable scope to meet biodiversity targets (e.g. for new habitat creation), and to provide new and enhanced green spaces
- This option allows a choice to be made as to which Green Belt sites would provide the most sustainable development.
- This option most closely matches historic house building rates in Sefton.

5.45 Disadvantages:
- This option would involve some encroachment into the Green Belt, potentially including up to 3800 homes on the edge of the existing urban area, although this could be spread across the Borough, thereby minimising the impact in any single area.
- There would be a potential loss of some Grade 1 agricultural land on the edge of the built up area.

- There would be a greater impact on existing infrastructure than under the 'containment' option (Option One). Many of the sites are at the end of existing networks (e.g. roads, water supply), and so the existing infrastructure may have limited capacity.
- Unless this option is very carefully phased in terms of both timing and the distribution of development between settlement areas, it could undermine Sefton's commitment to urban regeneration, especially in Bootle / Netherton and Southport.

5.46 Policy Implications
- This Option represents a broad continuation of the current rates of new house building and would identify sufficient land for new jobs.
- It would be possible to spread development across our area, and relate the amount of new development to locally generated needs. Each area would be able to take its 'fair share' of development in the Green Belt, except Bootle and Netherton.
- The additional development could be accommodated through a number of smaller and medium-sized sites. If larger sites were identified this would have implications for investment in new infrastructure, and the size of some of the settlements.
- The development of land in Green Belt would potentially allow for new facilities to be built including new green spaces, local shops, and the development of low carbon homes. Detailed master planning would be required to ensure they were designed to a high quality, including the necessary green space and other new facilities, and that they contributed to the character of the local area.
- More people would leave Sefton than would move to it, although the difference would not be great – the would be an overall fall in population of 7,000.

Option Three – Stabilising Sefton's Population

5.47 This option would seek to maintain Sefton's population at current (2010) levels and provide the development land and infrastructure to support this. In 2027, the number of people living in Sefton would be similar to the number living here now. More people would be attracted to move to Sefton, and fewer people would move to other areas than do at present. Household size would also continue to decline slightly, which will also increase the need for more new homes.

Land for New Housing

5.48 Based on current populations levels and trends, such as the number of people living in each household, we would need to provide an additional **650 a year** to retain the population at 2010 levels. From the period 2010 to 2027 this would be an overall requirement of 11050 new homes. Under this option there is also an outstanding housing need of about 1550 homes that will not have not been met during the period 2003-10 This gives a total requirement of 12600 more homes. Given that there is capacity in the urban area of 4850 homes this leaves a shortfall of 7750 new homes to be located outside of Sefton's urban area in the Green Belt.

5.49 This Option would involve identifying a number of large development sites that could potentially cross-subsidise the building of greater numbers of affordable homes than would be possible under either Options One or Two.

Land for New Businesses and Employment

5.50 There is a need to identify land for when the Southport Business Park is developed. This would need to be available after 2020 and be approximately 25 hectares in size.

5.51 Under this Option, it would also be possible as part of mixed-use developments to cross-subsidise the provision of future, additional, employment land in the eastern part of south Sefton towards the end of the Core Strategy period to meet needs arising at the end of the period and beyond. This would have to be located in eastern part central Sefton as there are no suitable sites adjacent to south Sefton, where this need would originate. It would also have the benefit of making these communities more sustainable by increasing the employment opportunities available.

Other uses

5.52 As with Option Two the provision of new homes would have to include enough land to provide infrastructure necessary for the development. Even though this option would not seek a larger population than Sefton's current population it would result in new areas of growth (more so than under Option Two) and would have to be supported by new roads, open spaces, shops and other facilities.

Green Belt Implications

5.53 Under this Option, land would need to be developed in the Green Belt almost from the start of the plan period, in order to ensure that we have a 5 year supply of housing land available at any one time.

5.54 Advantages:
- This would halt the decline in Sefton's population stabilising it at 2010 levels
- A stable population would help to maintain existing levels of services and facilities.
- The number of large new housing developments which would be likely under this option would cross-subsidise larger numbers of affordable homes and specialist elderly accommodation, helping to address identified shortfalls across the Borough.
- New development could secure major benefits for local communities in the form of new parks and facilities, and could provide a significant number of sustainable low-carbon homes.
- The total amount, location and scale of new development in the Green Belt means that this option, potentially, provides the greatest opportunities for low carbon energy. It is also likely to provide a significant number of sustainable low-carbon homes.
- The total amount, location and scale of new development in the Green Belt means that this option, potentially, provides the greatest opportunities to meet biodiversity targets (e.g. for new habitat creation), and to provide new and enhance existing green space.
- Under this option, it would be possible to ensure Sefton has a generous long-term employment supply as it would be possible to provide a site to meet future needs (beyond the end of the Core Strategy period) arising in south Sefton as well as the identified need for a further site in north Sefton.

5.55 Disadvantages:

- This option would entail significant encroachment into Sefton's Green Belt, including the use of some more constrained sites. This would involve major expansions to a number of the Borough's settlements, including 7700 new homes in Green Belt, and the identification of land for 2 new business parks.
- This would result in the loss of the greatest amount of land in the Green Belt
- Those settlements which have a greater proportion of more suitable Green Belt land would have to take a greater share of new housing. This would affect central Sefton more than any other area.
- This option would have the greatest impact on existing infrastructure and significant investment would be needed to improve and provide new infrastructure. This would be costly and may mean that development is not viable in some locations.
- This option would entail much greater losses of Grade 1 agricultural land than either of the other options.
- Unless this option is carefully phased in terms of both timing and the distribution of development between settlement areas, it could harm regeneration of the urban area
- This option would require an almost immediate release of Green Belt sites so that a five year supply of housing land can be maintained. This could put at risk the chance of some of our most difficult urban sites being developed.
- This option implies a potentially unrealistic level of house building that is significantly higher than has been regularly achieved by Sefton in the recent past
- This could potentially, because of the scale of housing proposed under this option and the need to attract more people from outside Sefton, risk undermining fragile urban housing markets, including those in neighbouring local authority areas such as Liverpool.

5.56 Policy Implications

- We would need to identify a large amount of land in Green Belt for housing development and the choice of sites would be limited
- This amount of Green Belt development would have implications for the size of a number of the Borough's settlements. This would require a high level of investment in new infrastructure, although the significant development value created would be able to meet most if not all of these costs.
- There would be likely to be a concentration of development in and around central Sefton. This would change the historic pattern of development over the last three decades, which has largely taken place in Bootle and Southport.
- The development of large areas of land in Green Belt would potentially allow for new facilities to be built including new green spaces, local shops, and the development of low carbon homes. Detailed master planning of these sites would be required to ensure they were of high design quality, including the necessary green space and other new facilities, and that they contributed to the character of the local area.

Conclusions

5.57 An assessment of the three available options show that each has their advantages and disadvantages.

5.58 **HOWEVER WE FEEL THAT OPTION TWO – MEETING LOCAL NEEDS – IS OUR PREFERRED OPTION**. There are a number of reasons why this is the case:

5.59 Although Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is likely to be abolished before the Core Strategy is published, Option Two most closely matches the housing requirement it proposes for Sefton (500 homes a year) and which our Core Strategy ought to be consistent with.

5.60 We also think that the amount of land identified in the Green Belt under Option Two is consistent with what RSS terms 'non- strategic' as it is meeting local needs. The extent of Green Belt land required for Option Three would be likely to be considered 'strategic' because it is catering for people moving into the Borough. Given the proposed scale of development, it would be more difficult to justify.

5.61 In summary, Option Two offers the following benefits:

- It would seek to link future development to identified needs in Sefton. In particular this could benefit many households who have a specialist housing need, and provide much needed new family housing.

- It would make sure that Sefton's longer term employment land requirements can be met.

- It will provide a flexible supply of land for development so that Sefton is an attractive place to invest.

- It would include some larger sites that could provide an opportunity to improve local infrastructure.

- It will restrict the amount of Green Belt land required for development to that which is essential for Sefton's anticipated needs.

- It allows a choice to be made on which Green Belt sites would provide the most sustainable development.

- It would enable a new Green Belt boundary for the Core Strategy period to be set which best reflects the current demographics of Sefton.

- It provides an annual housing requirement which is close to the level of buuiklding which has taken place in recent years.

- While still resulting in a decline of population, this is likely to be modest, and matches recent trends best.

- It would still allow us to provide a focus on regeneration and developing sites in the urban area, particularly in the first part on plan.

5.62 As a result it is proposed that the **preferred option** will be for a strategy which **meets identified needs.**

5.63 For the period of the Core Strategy this will include a requirement for **480 new homes** in Sefton per year and for **25 hectares** of new employment land in north Sefton post 2020.

Are other options possible?
5.64 The fact that we have put forward these three options does not mean that we cannot consider other options. If you think that a different option would be appropriate, then it would be possible to suggest this together with your reasons.

Sustainability appraisal of the options

A sustainability appraisal was carried out for the three options for the Core Strategy. This considered the different numbers of homes which each proposes and tested this against the range of sustainability objectives. The appraisal concluded that each option had strong and weak elements.
The general view was that the options that proposed least growth scored well on environmental grounds but poorly on economic and social issues. It also concluded that a middle option was often a compromise option with many positives being gained without significantly effecting the environment.
The appraisal recognised that some key sustainability objectives would be relevant to all options, such as improving accessibility, continuing regeneration programmes and the need for good design, and that these would be explored in detail once the preferred option was chosen.

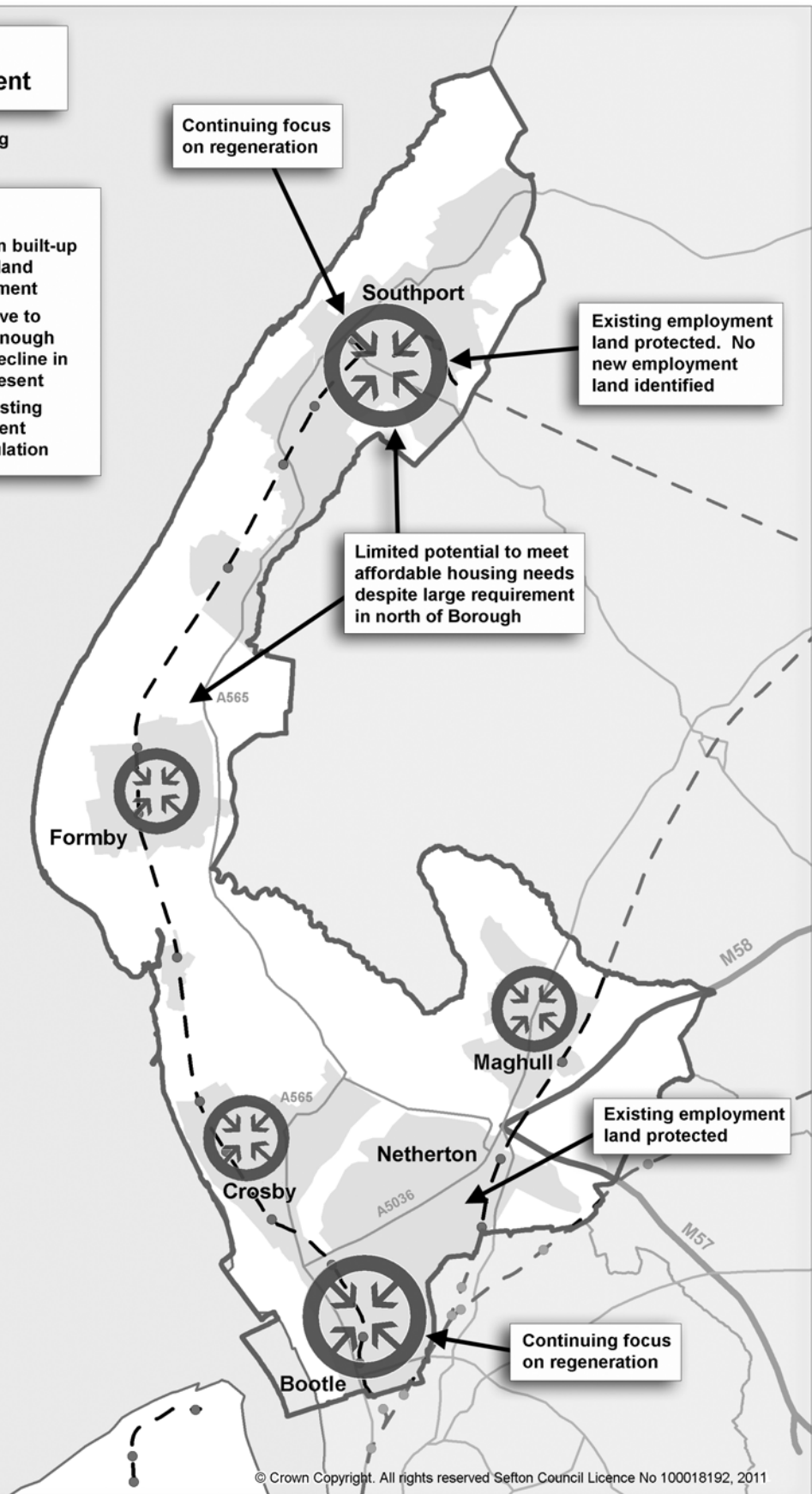# Questions

◊   Do you agree that Option 2 [meeting identified needs] is the preferred option?

◊   If not, what option do you support?

◊   If you do not agree with any of the options described, would you like to suggest an alternative option?

**Option One -
Urban Containment**

 Focus on existing built-up area
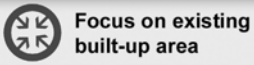
Sefton-wide

- Needs met only within built-up area - no Green Belt land released for development
- Some people may have to leave Sefton as not enough new homes - faster decline in population than at present
- Possible threat to existing services and investment through smaller population

Continuing focus on regeneration

Southport

Existing employment land protected. No new employment land identified

Limited potential to meet affordable housing needs despite large requirement in north of Borough

A565

Formby

M58

Maghull

A565

Netherton

Existing employment land protected

Crosby

A5036

M57

Bootle

Continuing focus on regeneration

Option Two - Meeting Identified Needs

Focus on built-up area and some expansion onto land at edge of main towns

Sefton-wide

- Sites released from Green Belt for new homes around edge of urban area
- Meets Sefton's general housing needs
- More scope to meet need for affordable homes
- Provision of new facilities eg. shops, green spaces
- Population still declining but at slow rate

Southport

Existing employment land protected.

New employment site identified in north of borough at Southport or Formby

A565

Formby

Maghull

Crosby

A565

Netherton

A5036

Existing employment land protected

Bootle

Continuing focus on regeneration

M58

M57
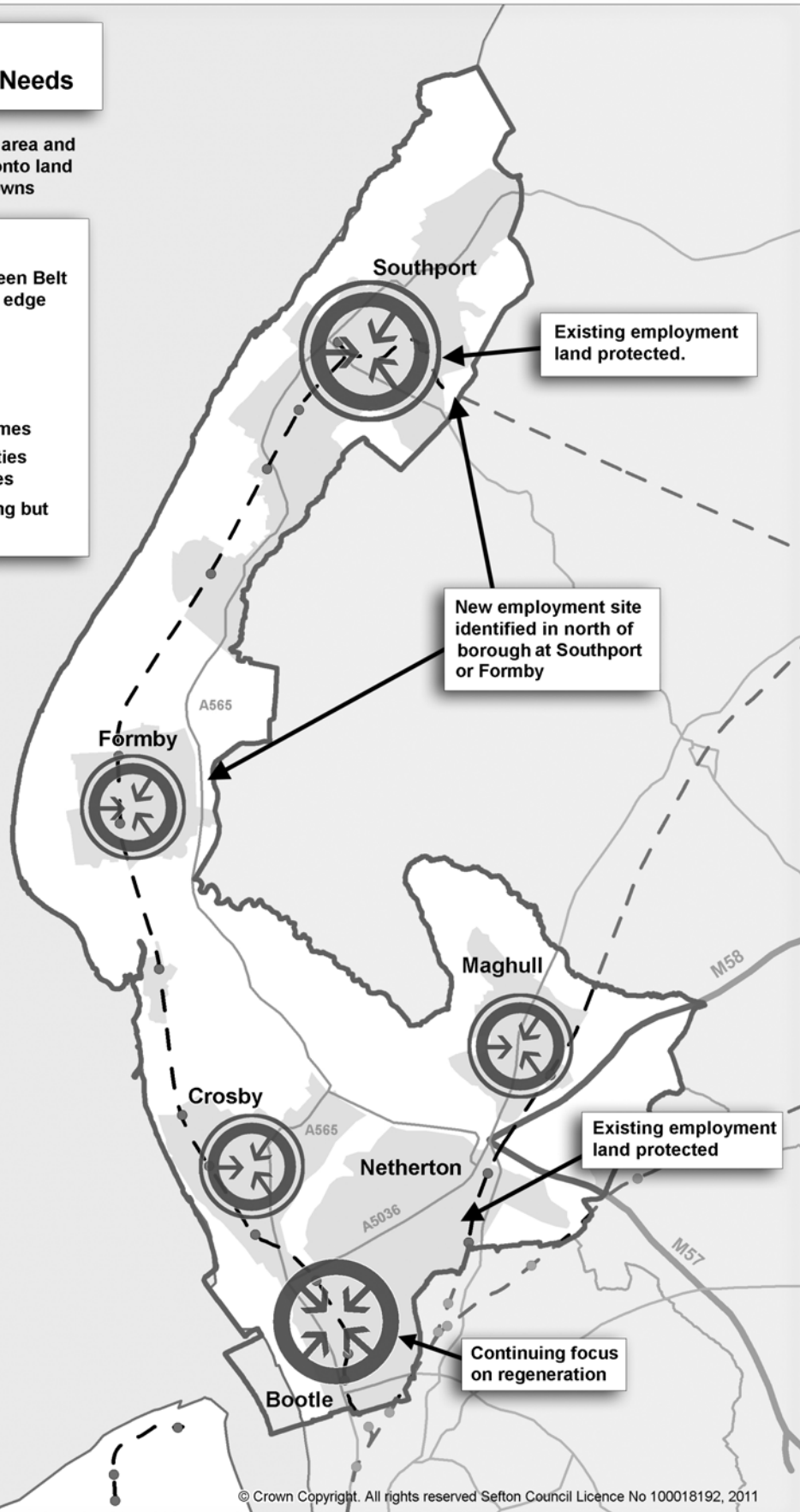
Option Three -
Stabilising Sefton's population
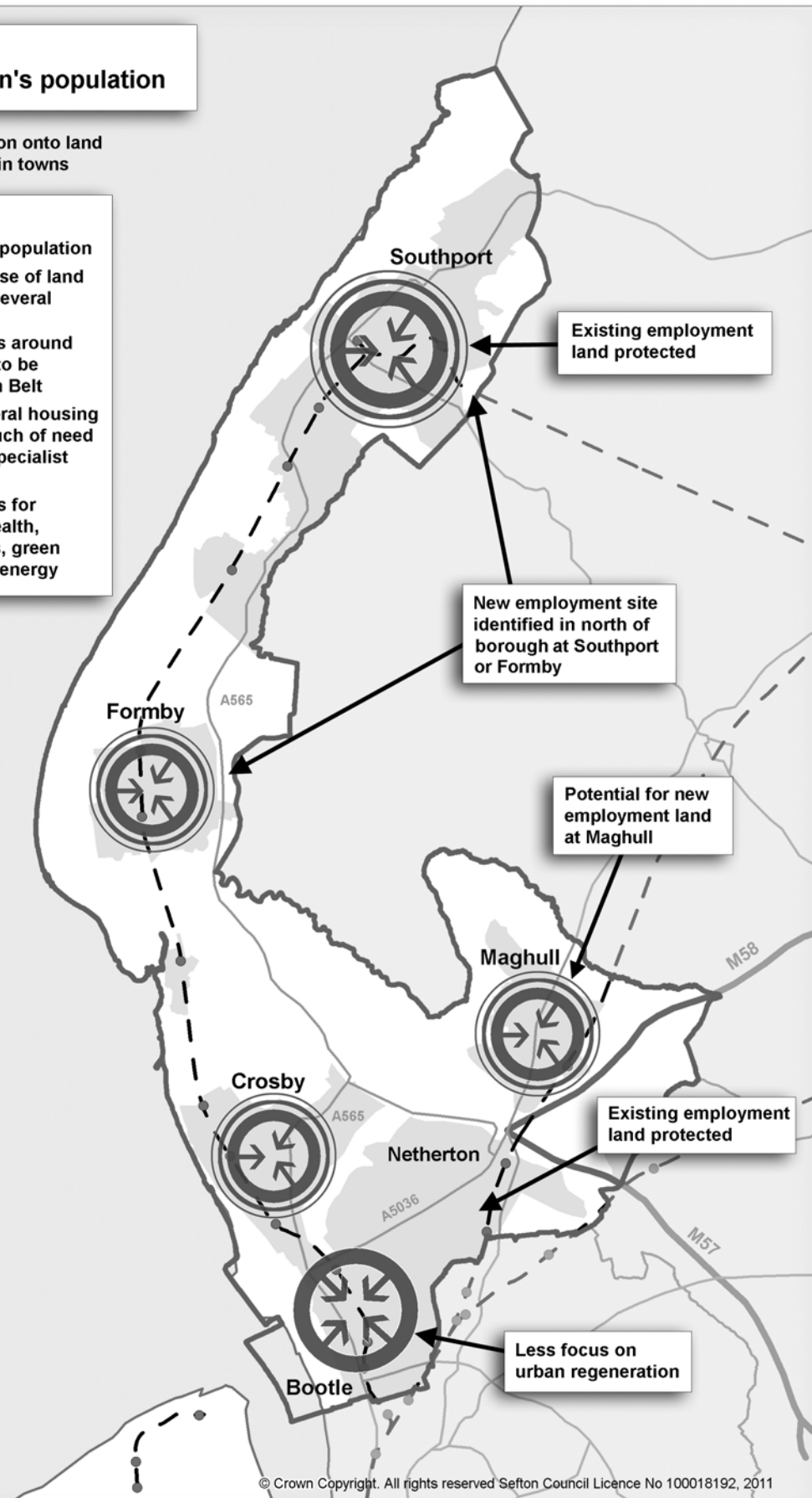
More expansion onto land at edge of main towns

Sefton-wide

- Halts the decline in population
- Requires early release of land from Green Belt in several parts of Borough
- Requires larger sites around edge of urban area to be released from Green Belt
- Meets Sefton's general housing needs, including much of need for affordable and specialist housing
- Meets more of needs for infrastructure eg. health, community facilities, green spaces, low carbon energy

Southport

Existing employment land protected

New employment site identified in north of borough at Southport or Formby

Formby

A565

Potential for new employment land at Maghull

Maghull

M58

Crosby

A565

Netherton

Existing employment land protected

A5036

M57

Bootle

Less focus on urban regeneration

5a   Options in summary

	Urban containment	Meeting identified Needs	Stabilising Sefton's Population
Explanation	Development will only be permitted on suitable sites in Sefton's existing urban area. No development land would be identified in the Green Belt **Homes: 285 per annum** **Employment: Within existing urban sites** **Green Belt: No change during Core Strategy period**	Sufficient land will be allocated to meet Sefton's emerging development needs for the Core Strategy plan period. This option will also seek to make sure that development is in locations that will best meet Sefton's identified needs. **Homes: 480 per annum** **Employment: Within existing urban sites and additional 25 ha**	Maintain Sefton's population at current (2010) levels and provide the development land and infrastructure to support this. **Homes: 650 per annum** **Employment: Within existing urban sites and additional 25 ha**
Advantages	Would not require releasing any land from the Green Belt. By restricting development to urban areas could assist with urban regeneration. Would put limited pressure on existing infrastructure. Lower carbon emissions and use of resources with fewer homes and construction.	There would be a more gradual decline in population than with option one. Housing needs of Sefton's residents would be largely met. Would provide a greater number of affordable and special needs homes than option one. The level of development would support construction and associated industries. The level of new homes would support local services and facilities. Development of larger sites in Green Belt may allow some improvements to infrastructure. Would provide considerable scope to meet biodiversity targets and new/improved green spaces. This option most closely matches recent building rates in Sefton.	This would halt the decline in Sefton's population. Would help maintain existing level of services and facilities. Could provide the greatest amount of affordable and special needs homes. Could secure major benefits for local community facilities Would be option most likely to achieve renewable and low carbon energy. Most scope to improve infrastructure. Greatest opportunities to meet biodiversity targets and new/improved green spaces.
Disadvantages	This option would make sites in the Green Belt vulnerable to challenge by developers. Would lead to a more rapid decline in population and could affect viability of local services. Could shift the burden of Sefton's unmet housing need on our neighbouring authorities, who also have a shortage of development land. Would not provide much affordable or special needs housing and none in the second part of the Core Strategy period Could affect economic growth as labour supply would diminish & some skilled labour would be likely to leave Sefton. Could lead to greater inequality and more people would not have housing needs met. Would have the least scope to meet biodiversity targets or improve/provide new green space. Least scope to provide renewable/low carbon energy.	This option would require significant encroachment into the Green Belt.. There would be a loss of some grade 1 agricultural land. This option would put greater pressure on existing infrastructure than option one. If not carefully phased this option could undermine Sefton's commitment to urban regeneration.	Substantial encroachment into Sefton's Green Belt. Would need to use greater number of sites which have natural value or are grade 1 agricultural land. Would have the greatest impact on existing infrastructure. If not carefully phased could undermine Sefton's commitment to urban regeneration. Could undermine wider regeneration objectives of the Liverpool City Region. Would require an almost immediate release of Green Belt sites. This option would require a higher level of house building than that historically achieved.

6.   How will we decide where will new development should go? (The spatial strategy)

6.1 The Council's spatial strategy is based on our Vision for what Sefton will be like in 2027. Its purpose is to make Sefton's communities more sustainable, that is improving people's quality of life. In view of the issues identified earlier, the need to regenerate Bootle and central Southport will remain a priority.

6.2 In Bootle, this means that we should continue to improve people' lives in this area by providing better quality and a wider choice of housing in more attractive environments, and providing better prospects for people in most need. We want to make sure that jobs are available close to where people live and that people have easy access to the services and facilities they need.

6.3 In central Southport, the focus will be on continued investment in the town centre and seafront areas. This will enable Southport to continue to compete as a quality shopping centre and popular 'classic resort'.

6.4 **As a result, Bootle and Southport will remain the focus for new development.**

6.5 Earlier sections on Seton's Profile and Issues and Challenges highlighted the national and international importance of much of Sefton's coast. Sefton also contains many areas that are classified as being the best and most versatile agricultural land, which should normally be protected from development.

6.6 As the environment is intrinsic to what Sefton special, it is important that these areas should be protected from development if at all possible. This means that most other land, and in particular land that has previously been developed, in our main urban areas should be developed before land in our rural area.

6.7 **Consequently, development in the urban areas should take precedence over land in the rural area.**

6.8 There are many opportunities in the urban area where development can take place. Many of these are identified in our housing land supply study. Because of the limited extent of available and developable land within our urban areas, we need to make the most of our use of vacant and under-used land and buildings in the urban area. Therefore, we will encourage the re-use or redevelopment of all suitable land in the urban areas, so as to minimise the need to develop 'greenfield' land.

6.9 We will promote the efficient use of land. However, this does not necessarily mean building at high densities. New development should reflect the character and density of the area where it is located. It should not erode the distinctiveness of our towns and villages, but 'fit in' with the local environment.

6.10 Sefton has a higher than average number of empty homes. Whilst the Council does not have the resources and cannot force private owners to bring these back into use, we will encourage the re-use of empty homes. This will help to improve the appearance of the local environment in areas where there is a concentration of empty properties, and may provide more affordable housing.

6.11 **We will make the most efficient use of land in our urban areas, in order to minimise the need to develop land in the Green Belt.**

6.12 Section 3 and the Green Space Study set out the increasing importance of urban green spaces, not only in making our towns and villages attractive neighbourhoods in which to live, but also in encouraging healthier lifestyles and helping to adapt to some of the effects of climate change. The quality of a borough's green spaces also helps attract investment and visitors.

6.14 These areas are also generally important to their local communities. Therefore, even though we need to maximise the amount of new development that can be accommodated in the urban areas to meet future needs, it is important that the majority of these green spaces are retained. However, there may be a small number of sites that do not have any benefits and are not valued by their local communities, where development might be welcome. There may also be some scope on the sites of former schools and other institutions where it may be possible to develop part of the site, whilst improving the rest of the site or a nearby area.

6.15 We also need to retain the majority of our existing employment land to allow local businesses to expand and to help attract new companies to Sefton.

6.16 **Not all land in the urban area is suitable for development.**

6.17 The diverse nature of Sefton means that wherever possible development should take place to meet local needs in the areas where the need arises. In the case of housing, needs generated in Bootle and Netherton should be largely met in this area, and in the case of land for new employment in the future, the need to identify a successor site for the Southport Business Park should be met in either Southport or Formby.

6.18 **In order to reflect the different needs arising in the different parts of Sefton, we will seek to meet locally generated needs in the areas in which they arise.**

6.19 One of the key principles of a sustainable community is that major new developments which a lot of people visit should be located in places that are easily accessible by pubic transport, walking and cycling so that there are realistic alternatives to the car.

6.20 Complementing this, we will seek to ensure that our town, district and local centres are vital, viable and attractive locations that people will want to visit. These will continue to be the focal point not only for further retail investment, but also all other services, facilities and other appropriate uses so that it is easy for people to combine trips . We will also need to protect and enhance the range of local employment opportunities that are provided in these areas.

6.21 **Development which generates significant journeys should be located in accessible locations such as town, district and local centres, and on sites which are easy to get to by public transport.**

6.22 **In order to take advantage of the fact they are easy for most people to get to, we need to ensure that our town, district and local centres remain attractive locations which serve their local community. Appropriate development will be directed to these locations.**

6.23 it is important that nw development incorporates the necessary infrastructure to support it. We have talked to the main infrastructure providers to identify where the existing networks are at or near capacity, so we know what the priorities are. However, we will also need to ensure that developers provide the appropriate infrastructure to support their development. These requirements will be set out in our Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

6.24 New development should be in accessible locations. Most services and facilities are located in our urban areas, and these areas are also the best-served by public transport. Where development cannot be accommodated in an existing urban area, it should be located on the edge of our main towns and villages to benefit from these facilities. This will also help to support existing services and facilities and reduce the need for new ones.

6.25 Whilst we have not ruled out development on the edge of any of our smaller villages, this will only be considered if the development would allow these settlements to grow in proportion to their size and in a way that will support existing service provision, or enable the provision of services and facilities that are currently unavailable.

6.26 **Where new development cannot be accommodated within an existing urban area, it should be located in the most sustainable locations possible, and should be accompanied by appropriate infrastructure.**

6.27 A new challenge we face is to make sure that new development is located and designed so that it has the least impact on climate change. Specifically, we need to ensure that development is not located in areas at risk of flooding unless there are no other suitable alternatives available. Development will also be directed away from areas that are at risk of coastal erosion or rising sea levels.

6.28 **Development should not be located in areas at risk of flooding unless there are no other alternatives. New development should be designed to mitigate any potential impact.**

6.29 We also need to promote all aspects of sustainable development, including incorporating sustainable construction and design.

6.30 **New development should be well-designed and as sustainable as practicable.**

6.31 Most new housing has taken place in Southport and Bootle over the past 30 years and this is where future needs are likely to be greatest in the future. However, land is beginning to run out in these areas, and there is no Green Belt immediately adjacent to Bootle. Furthermore, land adjacent to Netherton was identified as being an area that should remain open in order to prevent Netherton merging with either Sefton village or Maghull.

6.32 A few areas have been identified as having development potential around Southport. However, the main areas identified as having potential in the Green Belt are next to the settlements in central Sefton – Crosby, Maghull, Aintree and Formby.

6.33 We also need to take into account the ability of settlements to accommodate new development – do they have the appropriate infrastructure; could additional development help to sustain and support existing service provision; or could this be provided as a result of further development? This includes services and facilities such as roads, water, sewerage,

gas and electricity, shops, schools, health facilities, green spaces and other community facilities, and access to public transport.

6.34 In Sefton, the larger settlements are usually well provided with these facilities and services, but they tend to be lacking in many of our villages. The scale of development that would be appropriate relative to the size of the settlement would mean that the maximum amount of development that should be contemplated (10% over 10 years) is such that the expansion of most villages would not be able to support the provision of many new services. Consequently, most of the villages would not be sustainable locations for further development, and this would not support any existing services or facilitate any which may exist or be currently lacking. The only possible exception to this is Hightown, which is not only the largest village, but also one with a limited range of local services and a rail station.

Spatial priorities for new development – draft policy CS1

A. In meeting Sefton's future development needs, the following is the preferred sequence for identifying land:
- The first preference is for unused or underused land and buildings in the urban area
- Only when this has been substantially used would Green Belt land become available for development. This will be identified as follows:
- in accordance with the findings of the Green Belt Study; and
- to ensure that local needs are met in the town in which they arise or as close as possible to the town in which they arise if land is not available.

B. All proposals for development in Sefton will be assessed against the following principles:

- Development should be located and designed to reduce the impact of climate change
- Development should seek to reduce the use of resources and where appropriate incorporate the use of on-site or decentralised renewable energy
- Development should be located close to existing homes, jobs and services, and in locations accessible by walking, cycling and public transport to reduce the use of the private car
- Development should be designed and built to a high standard and be sensitive to the [positive] character of the area in which it is situated
- Development should meet a locally identified need
- Development should not compromise the wider regeneration objectives of the plan and where possible positively contribute to these aims
- Development should provide or be served by a good choice of services and facilities that are accessible to all
- Development should not detract from the role of Sefton's town and local centres and if possible should enhance them
- Development should be served by appropriate infrastructure and where possible help improve local deficiencies in infrastructure
- Development should not cause significant harm to any important environmental or recreational asset
- Development should not create risk to people or property, including from traffic, pollution and contamination.

How much development is needed in each settlement?

6.35 Under all 3 options, we would seek to maximise the amount of development in the urban area. Our draft SHLAA Update[1] indicates that approximately 4,850 additional homes net of clearance replacement can be accommodated in the urban area. This figure, and the net capacity of the each Area Committee areas may be reviewed following engagement with our Housing Market Partnership and the public.

Settlement / Area Committee area	Net capacity	%	Average no of homes per year
Bootle & Netherton	1866	38.5	110
Crosby	460	9.5	27
Formby	221	4.6	13
Sefton East (Maghull & Aintree)	154	3.1	9
Southport	1793	37.0	105
Other small sites (< 0.1 hectare)	348	7.1	20
Total	**4842**	**100**	**285**

4850 /17 = 285 dwellings per year.

6.36 T able 2 compares the supply to the number of people living in each area[2].

Settlement / Area Committee area	Maximum supply	Population	% of population
Bootle & Netherton	2149	72,729	26.6
Crosby & Hightown	463	47,377	17.3
Formby & Ince Blundell	234	24,009	8.8
Maghull & Aintree	155	39,252	14.4
Southport	1804	89,936	32.9
GRAND TOTAL:	**5154**	72,729	100.0

6.37 From this it can be seen that Bootle and Netherton have a greater supply of land in their area than is needed to meet their pro rata population needs, whilst the supply in central Sefton (Crosby, Formby & Maghull) is considerably less than would be needed.

6.38 Table 3 compares the future supply with where development has historically taken place over the past 20 years[3]:

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[1] Draft SHLAA Update, February 2011
[2] Source: ONS Mid 2009 population estimates
[3] Review of former RSS requirement for Sefton, NLP, February 2011

Table 3

Settlement / Area Committee area	2000 - 2010			1990 - 2010		
	Number built	No. per year	%	Number built	No. per year	%
Bootle & Netherton	1,829	183	38.3	3475	174	35.9
Crosby & Hightown	498	50	10.4	944	47	9.7
Formby & Ince Blundell	231	23	4.8	612	31	6.3
Maghull & Aintree	539	54	11.3	1,193	60	12.3
Southport	1,683	168	35.2	3,464	173	35.8
GRAND TOTAL:	4,780	478		9,688	484	

6.39 These tables show that there is a reasonable correlation between the level of houses built in each area relative to its current population, and that it would therefore not be unreasonable to assume that future housing should be allocated to each Area Committee area based on their existing population.

Table4:
Annual housing requirement based on the distribution of the existing population

	% of Sefton's population	285	480	650	Urban capacity (net of clearance replacement + small sites)
Southport	32.9	1594	2685	3635	1866
Formby	8.8	426	718	972	221
Crosby	17.3	838	1412	1912	460
Sefton East Parishes	14.4	698	1175	1591	154
Bootle & Netherton	26.6	1289	2170	2939	1793
Sefton TOTAL	100.0	4845	8160	11050	4850

Option One – 285 dwellings a year

6.40 Under Option One, we would only be building the number of homes that can be accommodated in the urban areas. This broadly replicates past trends, which show that most development has historically taken place in Bootle, Netherton & Southport. Very little new development would occur in central Sefton. Only Bootle and Netherton would be capable of meeting their pro rata need under this option.

6.41 We would not be seeking to meet future employment needs that cannot be met in the urban area.

Option Two – 480 dwellings a year

6.42 Under Option Two, we would split the number of homes required over the plan period (2010 – 2027) between the numbers that can be accommodated in the urban area, and then calculate the shortfall that would need to be identified in the Green Belt.

6.43 This is shown in Table 4.

Settlement / Area Committee area	Urban capacity (net of clearance replacement + small sites allowance)	Total pro rata need (2010 – 2027)	Unmet need	Estimated capacity of Green Belt sites in each area
Bootle & Netherton	1866	2685	819	0
Crosby	460	718	258	1404
Formby	221	1412	1191	2286
Sefton East (Maghull & Aintree)	154	1175	1021	4661
Southport	1793	2170	377	1714
Total	**4,842**	**8,160**	**3,666**	**10,065**

6.44 Under this option, no area will be able to meet its future pro rata needs wholly within the urban area. As all land not in the urban area is within the Green Belt, land within each Area Committee area will need to be released. With the exception of Bootle and Netherton, where none of the unmet need can be met in the Green Belt, all the areas are more than able to meet their pro rata requirements under this option. However, if the unmet pro rata needs generated in Bootle and Netherton are to be met, these would have to be met in an adjoining area. This means that one or more areas (Crosby and / or the Sefton East Parishes area) would have to accommodate these needs, and it would not possible to allocate land in the Green Belt on an entirely proportionate basis.

6.45 As set out in our spatial strategy (above), the most sustainable locations for new development are on the edge of the urban area. Therefore we would look at those areas identified through the Green Belt Study that are adjacent to the urban area before any land on the edge of villages.

6.46 Under the spatial strategy, the areas on the edge of the main settlements that could contribute towards meeting the outstanding need could yield more capacity than is needed. Decisions could be based on which areas would have least impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and are the most sustainable or best located in relation to existing services and facilities.

6.47 Under this option, it would also be necessary to identify a site of at least 20 hectares, preferably on the eastern edge of Southport to accommodate a successor site to the Southport Business Park when this is fully developed. If no suitable site can be found, then this site could be potentially be located adjacent to the Formby Bypass in Formby.

Option three – 650 dwellings a year

6.48 Under this option, far more land in the Green Belt would be needed than under Option Two, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Settlement / Area Committee area	Urban capacity (net of clearance replacement + small sites allowance)	Total need (2010 – 2027)	Unmet need	Estimated capacity of Green Belt sites in each area
Bootle & Netherton	1866	3635	1769	0
Crosby	460	972	512	1404
Formby	221	1912	1691	2286
Sefton East (Maghull & Aintree)	154	1591	1437	4661
Southport	1793	2939	1146	1714
Total	**4,842**	**11050**	**6555**	**10,065**

6.49 The unmet pro rata need generated in Bootle and Netherton will double. As there is no suitable land in the Green Belt adjacent to these areas where development could take place, this unmet need would have to be met in other parts of Sefton. As with Option Two, this means that it would not possible to allocate land in the Green Belt on a proportionate basis.

6.50 In all other parts of Sefton, it will be possible to meet future housing needs on the edge of the main urban areas. However, there will be less choice about which sites are developed. It should also be possible to avoid developing on the edge of any village, unless there was an over-riding need for development that would support an existing service or facility or secure the provision of a service or facility that is currently lacking.

6.51 In order to provide long term employment needs in the south of Sefton that will emerge after 2026, it would be possible under this option, to identify a site of at least 20 hectares which could be cross-subsidised by the development of any land in the Green Belt for housing.

7 Sites in the Green Belt

Identifying suitable land in the Green Belt

7.1 A study was carried out in 2010 to look at all of the Green Belt in Sefton with a view to identifying areas of land which could be developed without harming the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. This included land that has to be kept open in order to prevent nearby towns and villages from merging, and land where development would lead to urban sprawl, because it is not adjacent to any urban area.

7.2 The study has also taken account of land which has a high risk of flooding, or which has a national or international nature conservation value, and these areas have also been ruled out of further consideration.

7.3 Although sites have been assessed to ascertain if they good access to services and facilities, this has not been used to identify whether a site is more accessible than other sites, since this can change. This is because new services and facilities could be required to be provided in conjunction with any development that may take place.

7.4 At this stage, we have not contacted any landowners to find out whether there is any possibility of their land being developed, so not all of the land identified as being potentially suitable will actually be available. This will only become apparent at the end of the consultation we are currently carrying out on the draft Green Belt Study & Core Strategy Options.

7.5 Our housing and employment land supply studies have indicated that land will be need to be identified for development in the Green Belt for both housing and employment under both Options Two and Three (see Section 5).

Criteria for bringing forward sites for development

7.6 In Section 6 'The Spatial Strategy' we have set out that our first priority will continue to be development within our urban areas, with development taking place in the Green Belt only as a last resort. Land in the Green Belt will only be considered for development when the supply of sites in the urban area is largely exhausted, and we no longer have a 5 year supply of identified suitable, available and deliverable housing land. This will be identified in the housing trajectory in our Annual Monitoring Report[1] and future SHLAA updates, which will indicate how many homes can still be built in our urban areas.

7.7 We will also seek to ensure, through both our (draft) spatial priorities policy and the (draft) Green Belt release policy, that when land in the Green Belt is released for housing, it will not adversely impact on any regeneration priorities. These relate primarily to the regeneration of housing markets in Bootle and Litherland, and to development in Southport, including Town Lane, Kew.

7.8 The (draft) Green Belt release policy will also set out the triggers for when, where and how much land in the Green Belt needs to be released to meet identified employment needs.

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[1] The Annual Monitoring Report is produced each year and reports on changes that have taken place in Sefton during the previous year.

7.9 In section 5, we have explained that under Option Two, there is a requirement for about 3,650 more homes that would need to be built outside our urban areas based on demographic trends. This would mean that there would be about 7,775 more households (but about 7,000 fewer people) than live here now.

7.10 This need increases to about 6,550 more homes under Option Three, although the same number of people would live in Sefton as do now.

7.11 The Green Belt Study has indicated that there is sufficient land around the edge of all our main urban areas except Bootle and Netherton to meet pro rata housing needs. Even under Option Three we will have some choices about which areas of land area developed in some areas.

7.12 Apart from the fact that they are in the Green Belt, many of the areas are affected to various degrees by constraints such as flood risk, local wildlife designations and different agricultural land classifications. However, these do not affect the whole of Sefton in the same way. In addition, the constraints affecting land around one settlement are likely to be different to those affecting land adjacent to another. This means that some compromises will have to be made, and that they may vary across Sefton.

7.13 The Green Belt Study included an assessment of whether any parcel (the 'unit' by which land in the Green Belt was assessed) was well-contained by strong physical boundaries, as this will define where development takes place in the future. As these are less likely to lead to urban sprawl than other parcels, then sites with existing physical boundaries should be given precedence over other sites where there is a choice about where development could take place on the edge of any settlement.

7.14 Where possible, we will identify a number of sites on the edge of each settlement so that locally generated needs arising in that settlement can be met in an ongoing way. This will also ensure that we do not identify more sites in any area than the market could deliver at any time. Where there is a choice of sites on the edge of any settlement, we have identified those sites that we think should be developed first because they have the strongest boundaries and affect fewer constraints.

7.15 Full details about the individual merits of each parcel are set out in the Technical Appendix to the Green Belt Study (www.sefton.gov.uk/greenbeltstudy).

So how will we choose the sites?

7.16 We will consider the suitability of potential sites taking into account the following factors:

1.   How does the site meet the spatial strategy (See Section 6) and the objectives (set out in section 4 – Vision & Objectives)? For example, would the site deliver affordable housing (the greatest need for affordable housing is in north of Borough), or a successor business park to the east of Southport or Formby? Or could it provide a specialist housing e.g. extra care, or a site for gypsies and travellers? Land which is

in active use for recreation, has a local wildlife value or provides local employment opportunities will generally not be considered suitable for housing.

2.   Which are the most contained sites that would not lead to urban sprawl? Sites with strong physical boundaries will normally be preferred to those where a new boundary is required.

3.   What are the constraints affecting each parcel, and what compromises would be required if development took place. Are there any alternate sites in the local area with fewer constraints that could be developed first?

4.   How accessible is the site? Could improvements reasonably be secured to the existing public transport network?

5.   Are there any infrastructure constraints? Would development of one or more sites on the edge of a town or village be able to provide new infrastructure, or would the impact of development place excessive burdens on the existing infrastructure?

6.   Whilst the size and notional capacity of the site will be taken into account, larger sites will generally be able to provide more in the way of things like affordable or specialist housing, and infrastructure improvements. However, we will need to ensure that the size of any future development is proportionate to locally generated needs and the size of the settlement where development is proposed.

Do you agree that these are the right criteria? Are there any other criteria that we should take into account?

7.17 Once sites have been assessed against these criteria, we need to know whether the landowner is willing to sell, and that the site is available for development. We

7.18 Where sites are taken forward through the Core Strategy, they will have to be developed in accordance with good design principles which will be set out in the Core Strategy. These will include sustainable construction; accessible locations; accessibility by range of means of travel; opportunity to create new green areas etc, as well as the provision of associated infrastructure, and affordable housing etc. Development briefs will be prepared for each area in conjunction with the local community before any development is permitted.

How much land should be identified adjacent to each settlement?

7.19 We have concluded (in Section 6 – the spatial strategy) that the best approach, once land in the urban areas has been largely exhausted, and based on meeting local needs in the area where they are generated, that we should begin by identifying land on the edge of each settlement based on the size of the existing settlement. We have therefore looked at land on the edge of our main settlements first, as these are the usually the most sustainable locations with the best access to local services and facilities.

7.20 Where services and faculties are lacking, and any new development is able to bear the cost of new facilities, then this would become a requirement of the development, and would be set out in a Development Brief or a future Development Plan Document (DPD).

7.21 The Green Belt Study has identified areas on the edge of each of the main settlements, which are capable of meeting those locally generated needs that cannot be met in the urban area. The amount of land, and which sites are identified for future development, will vary between Options Two and Three, as the latter requires more land in the Green Belt being developed. The maximum potential in each area is set out in Section 7 – 'The Spatial Strategy'.

Will any land be identified next to any of Sefton's villages?

7.22 Only if we cannot identify sufficient land on the edge of the urban areas will we considered whether any land on the edge of any village may be suitable for development, again considering villages with existing services and facilities first, and within these, sites in the most sustainable locations. Any proposals for further development in any village must be proportionate to the size of the village.

7.23 As part of the Green Belt Study, we carried out an assessment of where services are located, and concluded that only Aintree and Hightown are of a sufficient size, and sufficiently close to the public transport network, that they would be suitable for accommodating any additional development.

7.24 Aintree currently has a population of almost 7,000. There is also a single site south of the M57 motorway which would form the natural extension of Aintree, although part of the site has been identified as having a medium risk of flooding and should therefore be kept open unless there are no other alternative areas available.

7.25 In accordance with Government guidance, if any development is needed in Hightown, we would only suggest that a maximum of 90 additional dwellings should be added to the village (which would represent a 10% increase in the total size of the village). However, this would mean that the only benefits likely to be secured if any development were to take place in this area would be the provision of some affordable housing and public open space.

7.26 The Green Belt Study also identified land on the edge of Ince Blundell and Melling as having some potential for development. However, neither Ince Blundell nor Melling village have any facilities and are poorly served by the public transport network, and their size is such that the amount of development required to support the provision of any services would not be proportionate to the size of these villages. No additional development is therefore proposed in either of these locations.

7.27 Land has also been identified on the edge of Waddicar which is potentially suitable for development. However, over 400 homes have been built in Waddicar over the past 15 years, and service provision has not kept pace with this scale of development. Although it has some local services, it is not well connected with the rest of Sefton either physically or by public transport. An option therefore is that no further development should be

proposed adjacent to this village. Conversely, would some extra development enable Waddicar to be better linked to local services?

1.   **Meeting Southport's needs**

7.28 Under Option One, we would only meet that part of Southport's future housing and employment needs that could be met in the urban area. We have only identified land that could accommodate about 1,800 more homes, which is less than is needed to meet demographic trends and the town's population would therefore fall. Under this option, it is likely that less than 1 in 6 of the town's affordable housing need will be addressed. A smaller population could also put more pressure on existing services and facilities (some may close), and investment in the town centre may not take place.

7.29 Under Options Two and Three, it will be necessary to develop land in the Green Belt. Most would be needed for housing, but there is also an identified need for at least 25 hectares for a successor site to the Southport Business Park to the east of Southport under both options. Housing development should be phased so that any development in the Green Belt would not occur until the site at Town Lane Kew was well underway.

7.30 The Green Belt Study has identified a number of areas around the edge of Southport that do not have to be kept open in order to preserve the integrity of the Green Belt. However, not all of the areas identified as having potential for development are suitable for development, because they do not meet the Core Strategy's objectives, which are set out in Section 4. Most of the excluded areas comprise land which is used for recreation.

7.31 Three sites have been identified which could provide the successor site to the Southport Business Park. These are located adjacent to the Crowland Street / Foul Lane industrial estate.

7.32 Eight areas have been identified as having potential for housing. Most are located on the edge of Ainsdale with two located to the east of Churchtown. The potential sites are listed in Appendix 1.

Summary of implications for the Green Belt

7.33 No sites in the Green Belt would be developed under Option One. However, future housing and employment needs would not be met.

7.34 Under Option Two, there is only a need to identify land for about 377 more homes in the Green Belt, so less than 1/4 of the areas we have identified as having potential would need to be developed during the plan period.

7.35 Under Option Three, there is a need to identify land that could accommodate 1146 more homes. This will mean that whilst we still have a choice about which sites would have to be developed as we would need to develop about 2/3 of the areas we have identified, we may have to begin making compromises about sites which have a local wildlife designation, or located in less accessible areas.

2.   **Meeting Formby's needs**

7.36 Under Option One, we would only meet that part of Formby's future housing needs that could be met in the urban area, as we have only identified sufficient land in the urban area to accommodate about 225 more homes. This is likely to mean that only about 15 new affordable homes would be built, despite there being an identified need for almost 450 units. This means less than 1/ 30th of the town's affordable housing need would be addressed. This would lead to a smaller population, which would put more pressure on existing services and facilities, and some may close.

7.37 Under Options Two and Three, it will be necessary to develop land in the Green Belt to meet Formby's future housing needs. In addition, if land identified to the east of Southport proves unsuitable for development as a successor site for the Southport Business Park, then land north of Formby Industrial Estate would have to be considered as an alternative site for this development.

7.38 A total of 4 sites have been identified on the edge of Formby as not having to be kept open without harming the overall purpose of the Green Belt, and hence where any new housing could take place. Most are located to the east of the railway and are therefore better related to local services and other infrastructure as well as the primary road network. A further site has been identified to the south west of the town. The sites to the northeast of the town have a local wildlife value, and so should not be considered if less constrained sites are available. The potential sites are listed in Appendix 2.

Summary of implications for the Green Belt

7.39 No sites in the Green Belt would be developed under Option One, but the town's population would decrease, and its large affordable housing needs would not be addressed.

7.40 Under Option Two, there is a need to identify land for about 1,200 more homes in the Green Belt. Under this option we would need to develop about half the area we have identified. This could mean that both of the least constrained sites, which are both located to the south east of the town, would need to be developed during the plan period rather than other sites which have more constraints.

7.41 It could also mean that an area immediately to the north of Hightown is developed.

7.42 Under Option Three, in addition to the above sites, we would also need to develop at least part of the other 2 sites identified on the edge of Formby in order to build the required 1,450 additional homes. The remainder of these sites could potentially meet needs that will arise after the end of the plan period (after 2027).

7.43 Formby Area Committee also includes the village of Ince Blundell. However, due to its lack of facilities and public transport, none of the identified areas are considered suitable for development under with Options Two or Three.

3.   Meeting Crosby's needs

7.44 Under Option One, we would only meet that part of Crosby's future housing needs that could be met in the urban area, as we have only identified land for some 460 dwellings in the urban area. However, it is likely that only 10 new affordable homes would be built, despite there being an identified need for almost 120 units. This means that less than 10% of identified affordable housing needs will be met. A smaller population would also put more pressure on existing services and facilities, and some may close.

7.45 Under Options Two and Three, it will be necessary to develop land in the Green Belt to meet Crosby's future housing needs.

7.46 A total of 9 sites have been identified on the edge of Crosby that may have potential. Of these, two comprise brownfield sites – Hall Road Sidings, Blundellsands and Runnell's Lane Nursery, Thornton. The remaining sites are located along the northern edge of Crosby and Thornton. A number of the sites in this area are used as playing fields, and these have been excluded from consideration. The potential sites are listed in Appendix 3.

7.47 Whilst most of the sites are not affected by any local wildlife designations, an area to the northwest of Crosby has been identified in the past as a potential feeding area of the pink-footed goose. Survey work would need to be undertaken to ascertain if this area is still used, and whether an alternative feeding area might be needed before this area could be developed.

7.48 Hightown village is also included in the Crosby Area Committee area. The site that would have least impact on the openness of the Green Belt, and which is also a sustainable location, is, however, in the Formby Area Committee area. If it is decided that development adjacent to Hightown is proposed, then the total amount of development that could be accommodated should not exceed 10% of the size of the village at present, if the village is to retain its existing character.

Summary of implications for the Green Belt

7.49 No Green Belt sites would be developed under Option One. As 460 more homes can be accommodated in the urban area, Crosby's demographic needs to the need for affordable housing would not be met.

7.50 Under Option Two, this would leave a requirement for a further 260 to be built in the Green Belt. This would be less than 20% of the potential sites we have identified.

7.51 Under Option Three, just over 500 more homes would be needed in the Crosby area. This represents less than 40% of the areas we have identified, so again not all the potential areas would need to be developed.

4. **Meeting the needs of Sefton's East Parishes**

7.52 The main settlements in Sefton's East Parishes include Maghull, Lydiate, Waddicar and Aintree, as well as the smaller villages of Melling, Sefton and Lunt. Under Option One, development would be accommodated in the main settlements, but no further development is proposed in the villages. A total of 154 more homes could be provided.

7.53 As the majority of these would be built on sites that are very small and below the threshold when affordable housing would be required, we anticipate only 2 affordable homes would be built in the urban area during the plan period. This would leave a further need for over 90 affordable homes that will not be built under this option.

7.54 Surplus land at Ashworth Hospital East has been identified as a future housing site, and a planning application is anticipated later this year. Although this site is in the Green Belt, it could meet some of the outstanding needs under Option One if planning permission is granted.

7.55 In addition, the Government has recently announced that its plans to redevelop the Ashworth South site as a new prison have been postponed. It is our understanding a definite decision on this site will not be made until at least 2015. As this is a brownfield site on the edge of the urban area, we will keep the situation under review. If the prison is abandoned, we would consider alternative uses for this site, which could include housing or employment, at the appropriate time under Option One.

7.56 Under Options Two and Three, it would be necessary to build in the Green Belt, in order to meet the area's demogrpahic housing needs.

7.57 Six sites have been identified on the edge of Lydiate and Maghull, 4 on the edge of Waddicar, and 3 on the edge of Aintree. A list of the sites is included in Appendix 4. These have the potential to accommodate 3355, 491 & 227 more houses respectively. This is far in excess of what is needed to meet the area's demographic needs.

7.58 Most of the sites in the area contain Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land. This is a national resource, which should normally be protected from development. However, if we are to meet needs arising in this area, then some development will have to take place on good quality agricultural land.

7.59 The sites on the edge of Aintree (including 2 in Melling parish) are partly identified as having a medium risk of flooding, and therefore should not be developed if there are any alternative areas available that are not.

7.60 As Waddicar has had a significant amount of new housing in its area over the past 15 years, which has not been matched by service provision, and it is not very accessible by public transport, this is probably not a sustainable location for more development. Furthermore, none of the sites identified in this area have existing physical boundaries, so they are less suitable for development than other sites which do.

Summary of implications for the Green Belt

7.61 None of the sites in the Green Belt would be developed under Option One, apart from land at Ashworth East and Ashworth South.

7.62 Under Option Two, there is a need to identify land for about another 1000 homes in this area. We would need less than 1/4 of all the areas we have identified as not having to be kept open to protect the purposes of including land in the Green Belt. Under this

option, it would be possible to develop a number of smaller sites around the edge of Lydiate and Maghull.

7.63 Under Option Three, there is a need to identify land for about another 1450 homes. Under this option there are more ways that this requirement could be met. For example, it would be possible to develop some smaller sites and one or more larger sites adjacent to Maghull and Aintree. Under this option, we would only need about 1/3 of all the land we have identified on the edge of both these settlements, and none adjacent to Waddicar.

7.64 Under this option it would also be possible to identify a site of at least 25 hectares that could accommodate a Business Park which would help to meet future employment needs in the south of the Borough which are likely to emerge after about 2027.

APPENDICES

The following pages list the sites in each Area Committee area where there may be scope for development to take place in the Green Belt. In the comments column, we have only included comments relating to the emerging Core Strategy objectives, which were not relevant to the Green Belt Study assessment.

As a result of on-going discussion with land owners and utility & service providers, some of the sites that have been identified may be ruled out from further consideration, or the boundaries of the areas that we have identified as being suitable for development may change.

Full details of our assessment relating to the individual sites can be found in the Green Belt Study (**www.sefton.gov.uk/corestrategy**).

Appendix 1

The following sites on the edge of Southport have been identified as having some potential:

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential housing capacity or area (employment sites only)	Comments
S004	Land east of Bankfield Road and south of Moss Lane, Southport (2 areas)	774 (333 N + 441 S)	Two sub-areas have been identified as having potential within this parcel. Both are close to Churchtown local centre. However, the northern area is identified as a Local Wildlife Site and as it is not physically defined, it should not be proposed for development unless areas with fewer constraints can be identified.
S007	Land south of Crowland Street, Southport	25.0 has employment	This is a well-contained site adjacent to Crowland Street industrial estate, and would form the natural extension to this area. However, it site is not adjacent to the primary road network, and is remote form any train station.
S008	Kew Park & Ride site, Foul Lane, Southport	2.76 has	If the site is not needed as a park and ride site, it would form the natural extension to the above site. It is not adjacent to the primary road network, and is remote form any train station.
S009	Former tip, Foul Lane, Southport	11.35 has	This is a well-contained site on the edge of the urban area which contains a mix of non-residential uses. It is not adjacent to the primary road network, and is remote form any train station.
S016	Site of Ainsdale Hope High School, Ainsdale	213	The site is close to Ainsdale village centre & station. The playing fields would not be available for development until late 2015.
S017	Land to rear of Lynton Road, Birkdale	47	This is a well-contained site close to Hillside station. The

			area is identified as a Local Wildlife Site, so should not be developed unless no other less constrained alternatives.
S026 & S027	Land at Segar's Farm, Ainsdale	506	Unconstrained site on the edge of the urban area. A new junction on the Coastal Road would be needed were the site to be developed. The site is not close to a railway station or a local centre.
S030	Land south of Moss Lane, Ainsdale	128	Unconstrained site on the edge of the urban area. The site is not close to a railway station or a local centre.
S031	The Kennels, Woodvale Sidings, Ainsdale	48	Small infill site on edge of the urban area which does not contribute to the openness of the Green Belt. A small part of the site has a medium risk of flooding (Flood Zone 2). The site is not close to a railway station or a local centre.
Southport - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**1714 homes** **+ a maximum of 36.4 hectares employment land**	

Appendix 2

The following sites on the edge of Formby have been identified as having some potential:

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity or area	Comments
S044	Land north of Formby Industrial Estate	22.6 has employment land	This is a well-contained site adjacent to the Formby Bypass and is adjacent to the existing Formby Industrial Estate. It could meet the need for a successor site to the Southport Business Park, but only if this need cannot be met to the east of Southport.
S048	Land bounded by Liverpool Road, Formby Bypass & Alt Road, Little Altcar	376	Well-contained site on the edge of the urban area close to many local services, but not public transport. Recreation area would need to be retained or re-located.
S049	Land south of Altcar Lane, Little Altcar	967	Large site close to many local services and rail station. However, the road network west of the railway is constrained. The southern boundary of the developable area is not physically defined.
S053	Land south of Barton Heys Road, Formby	734	Well-contained site to south of urban area, with similar constraints to S048, but slightly less accessible.
S054	Open land at Altcar Rifle Range, north of Mark Road, Hightown	90	The site contains a MOD training centre. It is close to the railway station and local services in the village.
Formby - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**2167 + 22.6 hectares employment land**	

Appendix 3

The following sites on the edge of Crosby have been identified as having some potential:

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity or area	Comments
S066	Hall Road Sidings, Crosby	12	Brownfield site on the edge of the urban area close to railway station but not other services.
S069	Land north of Crosby & east of the railway	518	On the edge of then urban area close to public transport and some local services. Although this area has no formal wildlife designation, it is an area that has been used as a feeding area of pink-footed goose. Surveys would be needed to ascertain if an alternate feeding area needs to be provided. The site is not close to Crosby village centre, but is otherwise well located in relation to most services.
S077	Land north of Holy Family Secondary School, Crosby	235	A reasonably accessible location on the edge of the urban area. However, the area is not physically defined.
S078	Land east of Virgins Lane, Thornton	64	A reasonably accessible location on the edge of the urban area. However, the area is not physically defined.
S086	Land south of Homer Green & Lunt and east of Thornton	248	A reasonably accessible location on the edge of the urban area. However, the area is not physically defined.
S089	Land at Rothwells Lane, Thornton	150	A reasonably accessible location on the edge of the urban area. However, the area is not physically defined.
S093	Runnells Lane Nursery, Runnells Lane, Thornton	48	Brownfield site on the edge of the urban area, but not very close to many local services.
S095	Land between Thornton, Lunt & Sefton villages	129	A reasonably accessible location on the edge of the urban area. However, the area is not physically defined.
Crosby - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**1404**	

Appendix 4
Areas on the edge of Maghull & Lydiate where development could take place

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity	Comment
S111	Land bounded by Green Lane & built up area of Maghull	239	An accessible site, but good quality agricultural land.
S112	Land between Maghull Brook, Bell's Lane, Green Lane & built up area of Lydiate	252	An accessible site, but good quality agricultural land.
S123	Land bounded by Liverpool Road, Kenyons Lane & Northway, Lydiate	204	Well-contained site with development on 2/3 of road frontages. Not particularly close to many local services and good quality agricultural land.
S125	Maghull Smallholdings Estate	597	Well-contained site adjacent to urban area and Ashworth Hospital. Not particularly close to many local services and good quality agricultural land.
S129	Land bounded by School Lane, M58, Poverty Lane & railway, Maghull	1425 (+ 30 hectares employment land)	Well-contained site that could deliver significant infrastructure improvements if developed. Good quality agricultural land.
S131	Land bounded by Melling Lane, Leeds & Liverpool Canal and M58	63	Well-contained site between urban area and M58 and close to train station. Good quality agricultural land.
S132	Land between railway & M58, south of the	575	Good quality agricultural land.

	Leeds & Liverpool Canal		Could provide significant infrastructure improvements to make up for current deficiencies.
Maghull & Lydiate - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**3355 + 30 hectares employment land**	

Areas on the edge of Waddicar where development could take place

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity	Comments
S144	Land north of Rainbow Drive, Waddicar	85	Would round off urban area. Good quality agricultural land. Not close to many local services.
S145	Land between Chestnut Walk & Wadacre Farm,	82	Would round off urban area. Good quality agricultural land. Not close to many local services.
S152	Land north of Spencers Lane & west of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal	124	Would round off urban area. Good quality agricultural land. Not close to many local services.
S158	Land west of Bank Lane, Kirkby	200	Would round off urban area. Good quality agricultural land. Not close to many local services.
Waddicar - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**491**	

Areas in Melling parish on the edge of Aintree village

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity	Comment
S154	Land west of Bull's Bridge Lane, Aintree	122	Good quality agricultural land and part has a medium risk of flooding so should not be developed if other sites are available. Not close to local services.
S155	Land to the north of	105	Good quality agricultural

	Taunton Drive & Wango lane, Aintree		land and part has a medium risk of flooding so should not be developed if other sites are available. Not close to local services.
Aintree / Waddicar - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**227**	

Areas on the edge of Aintree where development could take place

Green Belt Study site reference	Site location	Potential capacity	Comment
S157	Land north of Oriel Drive, Aintree	588	In an accessible location and close to local services, although the northern part of the site may be at medium risk of flooding and contains good quality agricultural land.
Aintree - maximum provision in the Green Belt		**588**	

8   Next Stages

The next stages are as follows.

Stage	When
Options Consultation – This will be a formal period of public consultation when all interested parties will have the opportunity to discuss and comment on the options and some of the background studies.	Expected – late March – late May 2011
Approval of a Preferred Option and draft policies – The Cabinet will make a formal decision based on the evidence provided by the studies and by the formal consultation of a Preferred Option. The Cabinet will also need to approve a number of the key studies.	Expected late Summer 2011
Core Strategy Publication Draft – Approval by Cabinet.	Early 2012
Publication and pre-submission consultation	Early 2012
Examination in Public – The Core Strategy is required to go for a formal public examination. This will be carried out by a Government appointed Inspector.	Summer 2012
Adoption – The Core Strategy is required to be formally adopted by the full Council.	Late 2012

Technical Appendix A
What the Options mean for Different Community Areas

What will this mean for my local area?

In a time of reduced public spending it is important for the Council and its partners to concentrate efforts and resources on a number of key priorities. This section looks at what the Core Strategy vision, objectives and spatial strategy will mean for each of Sefton's settlements.

Although is difficult to put timescales on when many of the aspirations will happen, these will be some of the key priorities of the Core Strategy to 2027.

A map is provided for each area to show the where some of the aspirations will be implemented.

Bootle & Netherton

There will be a continued focus on regeneration in the area with emphasis on improving housing and the local environment (green spaces, public areas etc). We will look at ways to reduce the number of empty homes in the area and at bringing vacant and derelict land back into use.

The Council will work with its partners to reduce the level of deprivation in the Bootle and Netherton areas and to tackle inequalities in health, education, training and job prospect.

All our important employment sites, including Atlantic Park and the Bootle Office Quarter, will be protected and when possible improved. This will help to encourage investment into the Bootle and Netherton area.

We will work with Peel Ports, other employers and local residents to find ways of making the most of the economic potential of the maritime sector whilst decreasing the impact on local people, including reducing problems with heavy traffic, and protecting the integrity of internationally important nature sites.

Bootle Strand will be the focus of new shopping, leisure and other services in the area, with Seaforth Village and Marian Square also providing local facilities. We will look at ways to broaden the role of Seaforth Village Centre so that it provides a better facility for local people.

We will continue to protect and enhance the main parks (e,g. Derby Park) in Bootle and improve access to and through them, taking into account safety/ crime and fear of crime, and their health, recreation and other benefits. We will look at ways to manage the risk of localised, surface water, flooding in the Bootle area.

Crosby

Crosby and Waterloo centres will be the focus of new shopping, leisure and other services in the area. We will work with the private sector to make sure that any redevelopment proposals are both viable commercially and appropriate to the character of Crosby Village

centre. We will look at ways to make the most of the tourism, recreation and ecological potential of the Crosby Coastal Park, and the Rimrose Valley.

We will look at ways of reducing congestion on the A565 (Crosby Road North and South and Liverpool Road). This will help improve access, safety and help reduce local problems with air pollution. The new Thornton-Switch Island link road will help reduce congestion in the east of Crosby and Thornton, and will include other environmentally sensitive measures such as creation of nature areas and use of sustainable drainage.

We will look at ways to manage the risk of localised flooding in the Crosby area, including through design and layout of development.

The preferable locations for new homes will be within the existing built-up area. This will include the site of the former Littlewoods site. New homes will be built on the edge of Crosby in sustainable locations. We will make the most of the opportunities this provides to enhance green space provision, and access to it, from northern Crosby and Thornton; and take opportunities to protect and enhance green space networks throughout Crosby.

Maghull and Sefton East Parishes

Maghull Town Centre will be the focus of new shopping, leisure and other services in the area. This will include working with partners to make sure that the area has sufficient health facilities.

The preferable locations for new homes in the first instance will be the existing built-up area. Beyond that new homes will be provided on the edge of the built-up area in sustainable locations.. Green space provision linked to these new housing areas will take opportunities to provide green links to existing urban areas as well as providing recreation and new nature areas. Together with partners such as Parish and Town Councils we will investigate the scope to enhance green space networks within existing settlements

We will investigate the potential for, and if practicable encourage take up of, low carbon district heating linked to new development.

We will look at ways to manage the risk of localised flooding in the Maghull area, including including through design and layout of development, and sustainable drainage.

The Council and its partners will look at ways to secure funding for a new train station at Maghull North.

Although we expect most people from the Sefton East area to continue to commute to work we will look at ways of making the most of existing employment opportunities, including in the rural area and opportunities for leisure linked to the canal.

Uncertainty currently exists about the proposed prison site. We will keep this under review and identify an alternative use for this site if the prison does not go ahead.

Formby

The Council and its partners will look at ways to protect and improve the high quality natural environment that provides the setting for Formby. This will include looking at how we can encourage visitors to travel by public transport and reduce car traffic near the coast.

Formby Town Centre will remain the focus for new shopping, leisure and other facilities in the area.

The preferable locations for new homes in the first instance will be the existing built-up area, including the site of the former Powerhouse. New homes will be built on the edge of the built-up area in sustainable locations. We will make the most of opportunities to provide green space, nature areas and green links to Formby's existing built-up area, as well as enhancing existing green spaces.

We will continue to work with partners, such as the National Trust, to manage visitor pressure on the Sefton Coast, so that recreation and tourism use continues alongside the protection and enhancing of the internationally important Coastal nature sites.

Although we expect most people from the Formby area to continue to commute to work we will look at ways of the making the most of existing employment opportunities. The land north of Formby Business Park is a possible location to meet future employment needs after 2020.

The new Thornton – Switch Island link road will provide improved access to the motorway network.

Development will be located away from areas at greatest risk of flooding or coastal erosion. We will look at ways to manage the risk of localised flooding in the Formby area, including accommodating flood water from the River Alt at Lunt Meadows, through design and layout of development, and sustainable drainage. The potential to locate wind turbines in an area between Formby and Ince Blundell will be considered.

Southport

Southport Town Centre will be the main focus of new shopping, leisure and other services in the area. It is a priority to increase the available floorspace in the centre so that Southport can attract a wider range of shops. Southport market will be refurbished.

The smaller local centres of Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown and Shakespeare Street will be protected and promoted as locations in which we will encourage uses that meet a local need.

The preferable locations for new homes in the first instance will be the existing built-up area. New homes will be built on the edge of the built-up area in sustainable locations. The Council will work with partners and developers to provide more homes suitable for Southport's elderly population. Efforts will be made to reduce the amount of empty properties in the area.
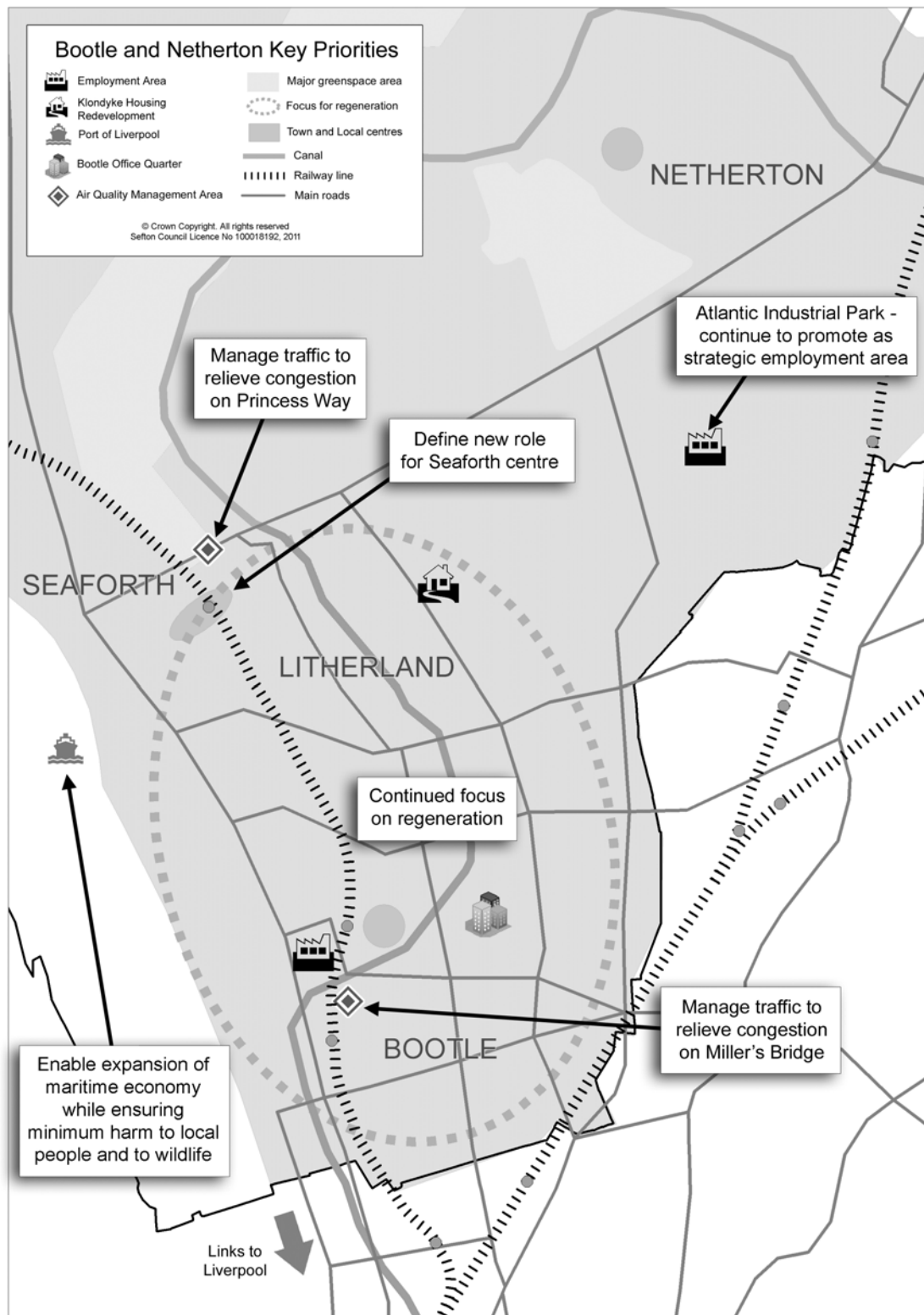
We will make the most of opportunities linked to development to provide or enhance green space, nature areas and green walking and cycling links with Southport's existing built-up area, especially central Southport.

Tourism will continue to be a major employer in the area and we will help protect Southport's assets that help make the town attractive to visitors. On the Coast, we will work towards realising the potential of Pleasureland and Pontins for tourism related development. We will work with partners to both manage visitor pressure and make the most of other tourism linked to the Coast, including the 'Golf Coast' and wildlife especially birds, while continuing to protect and enhance internationally important Coastal nature sites.
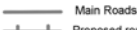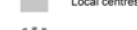
The Southport Business Park will be the main focus for new high quality employment development and we will identify land in a sustainable location for an additional large employment site for when this reaches capacity (estimated to be after 2020).

Development will be located away from areas at greatest risk of flooding as far as is possible, and we will look at ways to manage the risk of localised flooding throughout Southport. Measures will include design and layout of development, including flood resistance and resilience measures.

The following maps set out how the vision and objectives of the Core Strategy will affect each of Sefton's main settlements. Please note that these maps are indicative only.

Bootle and Netherton Key Priorities

Employment Area
Klondyke Housing Redevelopment
Port of Liverpool
Bootle Office Quarter
Air Quality Management Area
Major greenspace area
Focus for regeneration
Town and Local centres
Canal
Railway line
Main roads

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NETHERTON

Atlantic Industrial Park - continue to promote as strategic employment area

Manage traffic to relieve congestion on Princess Way

Define new role for Seaforth centre

SEAFORTH

LITHERLAND

Continued focus on regeneration

Enable expansion of maritime economy while ensuring minimum harm to local people and to wildlife

BOOTLE

Manage traffic to relieve congestion on Miller's Bridge

Links to Liverpool

Crosby Key Priorities

Legend:
- Potential housing area
- Air Quality Management Area
- Port of Liverpool
- Major areas of Greenspace
- Canal
- Main Roads
- Proposed route of Thornton to Switch island link road
- Local centres
- Town centre regeneration
- Railway line

Place labels: BLUNDELLSANDS, THORNTON, CROSBY, WATERLOO

Annotation boxes:

Thornton to Switch Island link road will reduce congestion in Thornton

Regeneration of Crosby village centre

Littlewoods site to be redeveloped for housing

Manage traffic on A565 and Princess Way to relieve congestion and improve air quality

Exploit leisure and tourism potential of Crosby Coastal Park to benefit local economy

Tackle issues to do with night-time leisure use at South Road

Continue to promote mix of uses within Waterloo

Formby Key Priorities

Manage recreational pressure on coastal woodland

FORMBY

Potential extension to Formby Business Park if no site available east of Southport

Powerhouse site - Potential for redevelopment

INCE BLUNDELL

HIGHTOWN

Improved access to the motorway through the Thornton to Switch Island link road

Formby Key Priorities

Symbol	Description	Symbol	Description
	Housing Area		Area under pressure from coastal erosion
	Potential housing area		Main Roads
	Employment Area		River Alt
	Potential employment area		Railway line
	Location identified as suitable for wind farm		Formby centre
			Nature area

Sefton East Parishes Key Priorities

Legend:
- Potential housing area
- Employment Area
- Retail Park
- Aintree Racecourse
- Major greenspace area
- Town and Local centres
- Town centre regeneration
- Railway line
- Canal
- Motorways
- Main roads
- Proposed route of Thornton to Switch island link road

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LYDIATE

MAGHULL

MELLING

AINTREE

Potential for redevelopment of Maghull town centre

Improve Sefton Industrial Estate

Potential Housing opportunities within the Ashworth complex

Long-term proposal for Maghull North railway station

Exploit recreation and tourism potential of canal

Assemble new retail site in town centre

Redevelop Pleasureland and Princes Park for tourism and leisure uses

Redevelop Pontins site for tourism/ leisure uses

CHURCHTOWN

SOUTHPORT

BIRKDALE

AINSDALE

Southport Business Park

Southport Key Priorities

★	Retail Park	⊶	Town centre regeneration
🏠	Housing Area (Town Lane)		Main roads
🏠	Potential housing area	⦙⦙⦙⦙⦙	Railway line
🏭	Employment area		Major greenspace area
🏭	Potential employment area	●	Town and Local centres
☀	Tourism sites and opportunities	⚑	Royal Birkdale
		🌿	Nature area

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Appendix B: How will we implement the Core Strategy?

In order to achieve the Vision of the Core Strategy, we produced a series of objectives. This section sets out possible ways that we may be able to achieve these objectives, including who will do it, when, who will pay and how will we know whether we have achieved it? This Appendix is a first draft of the how we may meet the objectives and will change according to circumstances and to which Option is considered the Preferred Option.

There is currently a lot of uncertainty surrounding the futures of many organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors, with many uncertainty surrounding future sources of funding. As such, much of what is stated below may change and reflects the best information available to us at the current time.

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
1. To make sure that development is designed to a high quality and respects local character.	A design policy to ensure that development is of high quality & is sensitive to character of local area [including density] Guidance to outline distinctive elements of the character of each area.	Continuous Through development	English Heritage; civic societies; parish councils; design panel, developers.	• Percentage new housing which is Building for Life • qualitative assessment
2. To manage new housing provision to meet the needs of a changing population.	A policy will guide the release of land from the Green Belt – it will contain a 'trigger' which will enable sites to come forward in good time.	Continuous Through development	Neighbourhood & Investment Programmes Dept; developers; housing associations	• Monitor 5 yr supply

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	An Infrastructure Delivery Plan will set out the infrastructure which is needed for individual sites to be developed.	Continuous Through development	Utilities Provider, Sefton Council, Area Committees, Parish Councils, Developers.	• Monitoring development completions through the Development Management Process.
3. To meet the affordable and special housing needs of Sefton's residents.	A policy defining affordable housing, what type is required, how much is needed where; size thresholds; when it could be provided on & off-site; economic viability.	Continuous Through development.	Housing associations; developers	• Number of affordable homes provided in the right places.
	Approach to achieving extra care accommodation.	Continuous Through development	Sefton Planning, Developers.	• Annual Monitoring Report showing the amount of extra care provision
	Bringing vacant homes back into use.	2012 Possible bid for Government empty Homes funding	Sefton based Registered Social Landlords Sefton Housing Market Renewal Team	• Number of vacant homes brought back into use; change to proportion of homes which are vacant

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
4. To make sure that development is supported by infrastructure, services and facilities.	Maghull North station (not programmed yet; lack of funding, but longer term objective)	Not funded. However may be funded partly out of development. Later part of h plan period.	Merseytravel Network Rail	• When the station opens for passengers.
	Improvements to access to Port of Liverpool	Dependent upon the outcome of stage 2 study.	Sefton Council Liverpool City Council Peel Ports, Highways Agency Merseytravel LCR/LEP	• Completion of proposed package of access improvements
	Infrastructure Delivery Plan will set out clearly what infrastructure is planned and is required to support development.	2012-2027 (maybe updated during that period as changing infrastructure needs are identified). Will be paid for by development.	Sefton Council, utilities companies, developers, Parish Councils.	• Monitoring as part of the Annual Monitoring Report.

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
5. To make sure that everyone has easy access to services, facilities and jobs without having to rely on the car	Development within built-up areas is generally already accessible. For any development that will take place within Green Belt, policy will provide that sites must either already have good links with facilities and services, or can provide them. Includes public transport, cycling, walking links. Potential to provide links using existing greenspace. Improvements to evening and weekend bus services in Netherton and Ford.	Will take place in association with development	Sefton Council Transport Planning and Development Control teams, Merseytravel Local Transport Plan partners	• To monitor the amount of new housing within 15 minutes public transport travel time of a) an employment area, b) GP, c) shopping parade d) primary school and accessible open space. • Monitor the % of population living within 15 minutes public transport travel time of the above • Confirmed provision of new walking and cycling links
	Local Transport Plan will include priorities from 2011 onwards.	Local Transport Plan (LTP)2011-2024, LTP capital allocation	Sefton Council Merseytravel Other infrastructure/ utility providers	• Performance monitoring of LTP • Successful delivery of LTP capital programmes

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	Improved bus links in rural areas and urban areas where there is greatest need.	Nothing programmed. However work will be ongoing to try and address the accessibility issues.	Merseytravel, Sefton Council Transport Planning Team, Area Commitees, Parish Council's and Bus Operators.	• Confirmation of new bus routes/links
	Improved access through walking and cycling may be improved through. A policy approach will be developed to improve walking and cycling opportunities through new development.	Continuous. Combination of developer contributions and LTP capital allocation	Sefton Council Transport Planning and Development Control teams. Area Committees and Parish Council's.	• Confirmed provision of new walking and cycling links
6. To support Sefton's town and local centres so they are able to meet local and wider needs for shopping, leisure and other services.	Policy to set out a hierarchy of shopping centres in Sefton stating what level of retail and other activity would be appropriate in each. Identify where there is scope for expansion of activities and roles. Making town centres more attractive. Promote redevelopment of town centres where appropriate – Southport/ Crosby/ Maghull.	In the Core Strategy 2012.	Developers (e.g. Sainsbury's, Crosby); owners Business Village Partnerships	• SPD for Southport town centre identifying the type and amount of new shopping floorspace required. • Timescale for development (difficult to specify in current economic climate) • Various initiatives to make centres more attractive

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	Planning Policy Guidance on improving Southport Town Centre.	SPD Southport Town Centre late 2011	Sefton Planning Southport Partnership	• Annual Monitoring report
	Bootle Town Centre – Need to refresh and upgrade the existing centre to meet competition	No plans at present	The Strand Shopping Centre, Sefton Council	• Retail Health Checks
	Seaforth Centre This may mean consolidation / change of function. Revitalise some shopping parades – may mean contraction & consolidation. Will produce an Area Action Plan (AAP)	AAP produced by 2014 Funding unsure	Sefton Planning, Local businesses. The Stella Precinct.	• Retail Health Checks.
	Identification for different roles for different sized centres (including Formby, Crosby, Waterloo, Shakespeare Street and Maghull) through the Core Strategy.	Core Strategy adopted in 2012	Sefton Planning. Retail companies, Area Committees.	• Retail Health Checks.

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	Improvements to A565 (Crosby and Waterloo) – consultation stage; no significant new works, but improvements within carriageway	Action plan programme covers 2011/12-2014/15 LTP capital allocation, developer contributions	Sefton Council	• Completion of highway improvements. • Reduced journey times along route due to reduction in congestion • Reduced traffic accident casualties
	Burscough Curves	Not programmed and unlikely to take place in lifetime of Core Strategy Delivery dependent on Network Rail	Council to lobby Network Rail and Lancashire County Council	• Opening of new rail service using the completed Curves
	Ormskirk Bypass	Not programmed and unlikely to take place in lifetime of Core Strategy Delivery dependent on Lancashire County Council	Council to lobby Lancashire County Council	• When the road opens for use.
7. To promote a wider based economy in terms of jobs, skills for the local labour supply, and	Policies to: - promote Southport Business Park - protect Strategic Employment sites - identify land for successor to Bus Park in north - regenerate existing industrial areas	Continuous. Sefton Council Regional Growth Fund	Regional Growth Fund Sefton Regeneration Team Framework)	• Land allocated for business park in North Sefton

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
support existing businesses and small start-up businesses.	Thornton to Switch Island Link Road (TSIL); - reduces local congestion and provides strategic link to motorway network – also contributes to healthy living and safety and to improving local environment	Thornton-Switch Island Link: complete by 2013; Government and Sefton Council funding	Sefton Council, Highways Agency	• When the road opens for use.
	Policy to promote use of local labour – Local labour agreements	Continuous. Through development.	Sefton Planning. Developers	• Annual Monitoring Report.
	Stepclever – Help small business start ups in Linacre and Derby	Continuous. Stepclever	Stepvclever. Small businesses and entrepreneurs, SMBC Regeneration	• New business start-ups in Linacre & Derby [Stepclever] – Quarterly monitoring on a ward basis for both jobs and businesses.
	Improvement of skills for teenagers over 16 years of age.	Continuous Skills Funding Agency (SFA).	Sefton Regeneration, Further Education Colleges, Private Providers Children's Trust	• Children's Trust performance monitoring framework
	Improvement of skills - Adult LCR Employment Strategy Partnership	Continuous SFA	Sefton Regeneration Further Education Colleges, Private Providers	• Monitoring in the Annual Population Survey.

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
8. To make the most of the value of the Port to the local economy, while making sure that the impact on the environment and local communities is kept to a minimum.	Identify land for the Port to expand including Seaforth Nature Reserve. Where this results in a loss of a protected nature site then compensatory habitat will need to be provided.	2014 Peel Ports Core Strategy (adopted 2012). Post-Panamax development complete by 2014.	Peel Ports Natural England Sefton Council	• Amount of land identified for development & timescale • Compensatory habitat for development on Seaforth Nature Reserve – what, where and by when
	A policy in the Core Strategy to limit the environmental impact especially on noise, traffic congestion and air pollution.	Development of the Port would have to pay for improvements to highways to limit congestion and air pollution.	Peel Ports Sefton Council.	• When Proposed access improvements have been implemented.
	Policy setting out potential to improve access to the Port, based on Port Access Study.	Dependent upon the outcome of stage 2 study.	Sefton Council Liverpool City Council Peel Ports, Highways Agency Merseytravel LCR/LEP	• Completion of proposed package of access improvements

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
9. To enable Sefton's community to live a healthy life and to provide safe and secure environments.	Develop policy approach to help achieve the following: - improve quality, accessibility and variety of greenspaces/ improve green 'infrastructure'. - increase natural areas in association with development – part of approach to GI . - identify opportunities for more allotments (e.g. in association with development) - identify opportunities to improve existing links for walking and cycling and integrate these	Continuous	Sefton Council (Transport Planning; Leisure Dept; Coast and Countryside team); Merseytravel NHS Sefton.	• Monitoring of Sefton greenspace strategy • Annual Monitoring Report
	Policy to promote safe and secure design of development	Core Strategy 2012 Through development	Sefton Council, Merseyside Police Architectural Liaison Officer. Developers.	• Monitoring as part of AMR
	Initiatives to improve health e.g. Active Sefton	Continuous. Sefton Council, NHS Sefton.	Sefton Council Leisure Dept; NHS Sefton voluntary and community sectors	• Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	The Core Strategy will set out a policy approach to provide decent Homes, which are energy efficient.	2012 onwards. Through development.	Sefton Energy team and Planning. Private households and developers	• Annual Monitoring Report.
	The Green Deal. The governments new approach to producing more efficient homes.	2012 Private Householders and Government funding through the "Green Deal".	Sefton Energy team, Private "Green Deal" providers. Private Householders and Developers.	• Monitoring arrangements as yet unclear.
10. To preserve and enhance Sefton's natural and built environment.	Policy approach will provide both for protection and also enhancement as part of new development e.g. expansion of ecological framework areas.	Continuous Funding unknown although some may come through development.	Sefton Council, Sefton Coastal Partnership Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS), Natural England.	• Ecological Framework update. • Annual Monitoring Report • Natural England Monitoring
	Policy approach will also protect the best and most valued natural environment from new development.	Continuous Sefton Planning	Sefton Planning Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service	

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	Creating more biodiversity in our parks	Continuous SMBC Leisure	Sefton Leisure	• Asset Management Plan Updates.
11. To mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and reduce Sefton's carbon footprint	The Core Strategy will provide a policy approach that will: - steer development away from flood risk - promote renewable energy – incorporate within development - promote energy efficiency	Continuous Through Development	Sefton Planning. Developers.	• Annual Monitoring Report
	Planning policies on design of building – sustainable construction Locate development close to facilities/ public transport (easy access)	Continuous Through Development	SMBC Planning, Developers	• AMR
	Planning policies on water use, flood resistance/ resilience and sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDs).	Continuous Through Development	SMBC Planning, Developers	• AMR

Core Strategy Objective … based on analysis of issue	How will this be achieved?	When will it be done, and who will pay for it?	Who will be involved?	How will we know if the objective has been achieved?
	Improving the energy efficiency of buildings through Planning Policy and also through the governments Green Deal" Please see section 9 above.	2011 to 2013. Funded by the North West Regional Development Agency (NWRDA), Sefton Council and other partners.	NWRDA and Sefton Council.	• Unsure at present of monitoring arrangements.
	Also the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in Community Housing) REECH programme will help provide renewable energy and efficiency to social housing in some of the most deprived areas of Sefton			• Unsure at present of monitoring arrangements.