



**Earlsfield Park**

**Draft Masterplan Report**

**ION Development**

2 Queens Square  
Liverpool  
L1 1RH  
United Kingdom

T: +44 (0)151 293 1010

**Ryder Architecture Limited**

Innovation Centre  
131 Mount Pleasant  
Liverpool  
L3 5TF

T: +44 (0)151 237 1300

**Cushman & Wakefield**

26 Spring Gardens  
Manchester  
M2 1AB

T: +44 (0)161 837 3555

**Mott Macdonald**

325 Royal Liver Building Pier Head  
Liverpool  
L3 1JH

T: +44 (0)151 482 9910

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Revision  
01

Date  
28 April 2017

Author  
DWI

Checked  
MSMI

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1

This report supports the masterplanning work that has been undertaken by ION Property Developments on behalf of the Knowsley Estate in relation to the Knowsley Lane sustainable urban extension (SUE) (figure 1 SUE boundary and site location).

## 1.2

It is ION Property Developments intention (on behalf of landowner The Knowsley Estate) to consult on the draft masterplan in parallel with the Council's consultation on the draft SUE.

The work undertaken to produce this masterplan report has resulted in a new brand name for the SUE being created by ION Property Developments. This new name is Earlsfield Park.

### **Purpose of the Masterplan and Vision Statement**

## 1.3

The masterplan is a direct requirement of Knowsley core strategy local plan (KCSLP) policy SUE2, which states:

**“Proposals for development within each of these locations will only be granted planning permission where they are consistent with a single detailed masterplan for the whole of the sustainable urban extension which is approved by the Council.”**

## 1.4

The Council therefore expect that the masterplan will be prepared to support the comprehensive and coordinated development of the Earlsfield Park, to ensure the highest standards of planning and design, and to ensure that the infrastructure needs arising from the development are met in a timely and coordinated way.

## 1.5

Knowsley Council has issued further masterplanning guidance in the form of a guidance note (April 2016). This guidance note confirms that the Council expects that the

masterplan will include the following information:

- Demonstrate a spatial vision and set out a common design framework for the entire site.
- Identify the type and location of physical, green and social infrastructure in a way which best addresses future needs arising from the entire development.
- Set out a logical phased development programme, which ties new housing, employment uses and services in to existing communities in the surrounding area, and provides infrastructure in a timely fashion.
- Engage surrounding residential and business communities in planning the site's future.
- Provide a basis for meeting infrastructure need and sharing costs across the site while still maintaining development viability.

## 1.6

CSLP policy SUE2a is specific to the Earlsfield Park and has been an important consideration in preparing the masterplan.

## 1.7

The preparation of the draft masterplan for consultation has had full regard to the above requirements as well as the vision statement and development objectives for SUE as set out at paragraph 2.5 and 2.6 of the draft SPD.

### **Vision statement**

**“The Earlsfield Park will become a prestigious employment and housing location. The business [employment] park and [other] employment uses on the site will ensure that this part of Huyton continues to contribute to the City Region's economic growth, building on the success of the nearby Kings Business Park, while the sustainable, high quality family housing will help to broaden the district's housing appeal.**

**The existing Lord Derby Playing Fields and Oak Plantation will be retained and improved as a valuable asset for new and existing residents, workers and visitors.”**

### **Development objectives**

- Deliver a high quality employment location for uses in line with the Liverpool City Region core economic sectors.
- Provide employment and supply opportunities for local residents and businesses.
- Provide high quality family housing which diversifies the local offer and extends the residential investment secured through the North Huyton Revive Partnership.
- Protect and enhance the Lord Derby Playing Fields and Oak Plantation within the site.

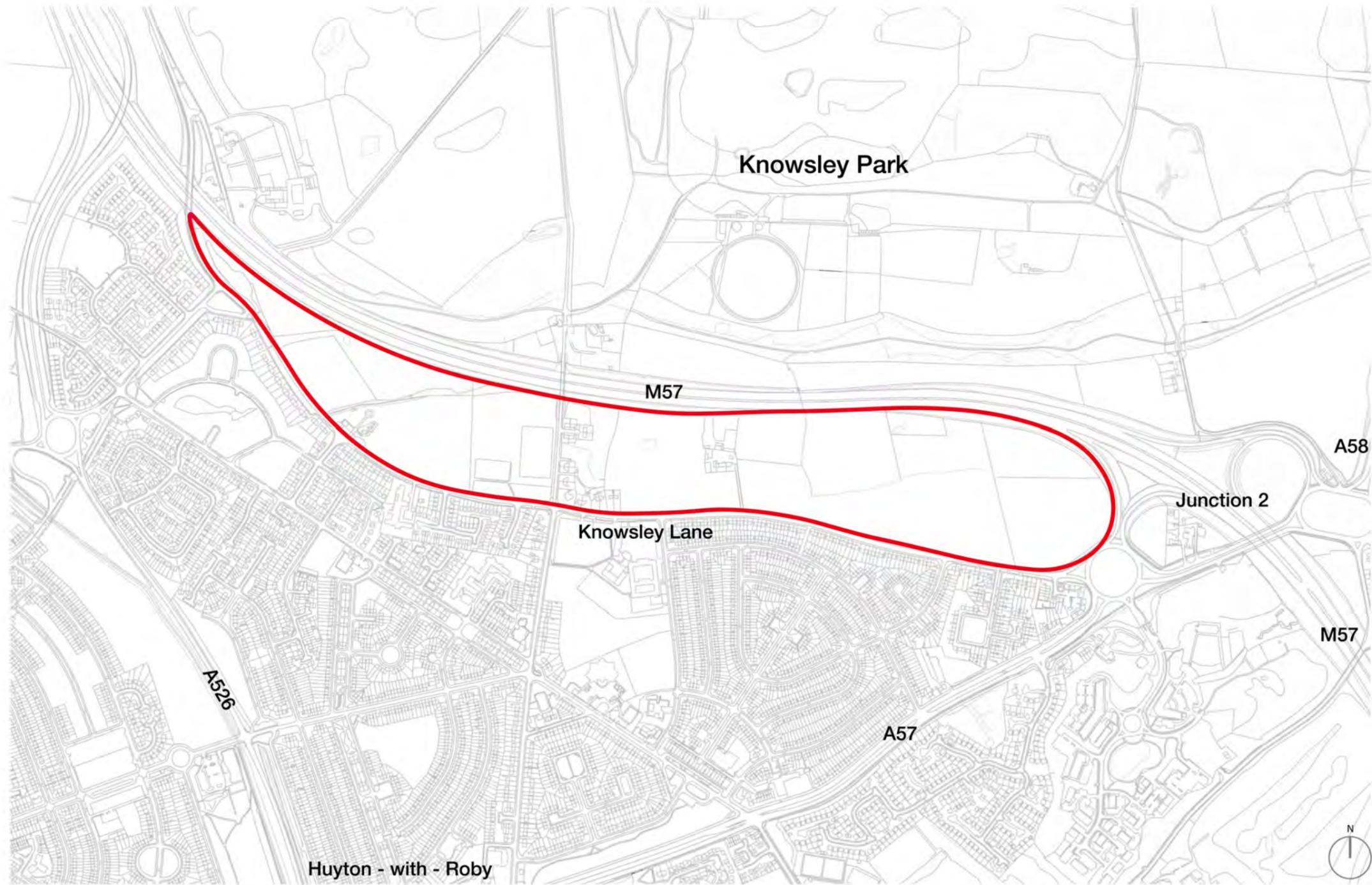


Figure 1 SUE Boundary and Site Location

# 2.0 The Spatial Masterplan

## Introduction

### 2.1

The evidence summarised in this section of the masterplan report demonstrates that the proposed land uses and their spatial configuration are consistent with the vision and development objectives for the Earlsfield Park.

### 2.2

It also begins to provide the basis for the site wide design framework that is introduced in section 3.0.

### 2.3

The draft masterplan is illustrated at figure 8 and has been informed by a detailed analysis of the SUE's physical, environmental, and social characteristics. This analysis builds upon the SUE's site allocation profile in the KCSLP (Appendix E) and figure 2.1 of the draft SPD that illustrates the main physical constraints and opportunities for this site. Figure 2 constraints and opportunities draws this analysis together into one comprehensive picture of the physical, environmental, and social parameters that underpin the masterplan response.

## Land Use Requirements

### 2.4

Table 4.1 of the draft SPD defines the land use parameters for the Earlsfield Park that must be reflected within any masterplan response. These parameters and the draft masterplan response is set out in table 2.1 and visually conveyed by figure 3 vision concept plan.

### 2.5

Further explanation of each land use parameter is provided in the remainder of this section as required by the Council's masterplan guidance.

Land use	Pre consultation draft SPD parameter	Draft masterplan response
Employment	Minimum 16 hectares	16.5 hectares
Residential	Approximately 100 new homes	Between 150 and 160 new homes
Public Open Space	(a) 0.58 hectares public open space (b) 0.40 hectares sports provision	(a) 0.67 hectares public open space (residential) (b) New vehicular access and Amenity/Sports Changing Facility with shared surface car parking to enhance the provision at the Lord Derby Playing Fields.

Table 2.1 Masterplan Land Use Parameters



Figure 2 Constraints and Opportunities Plan

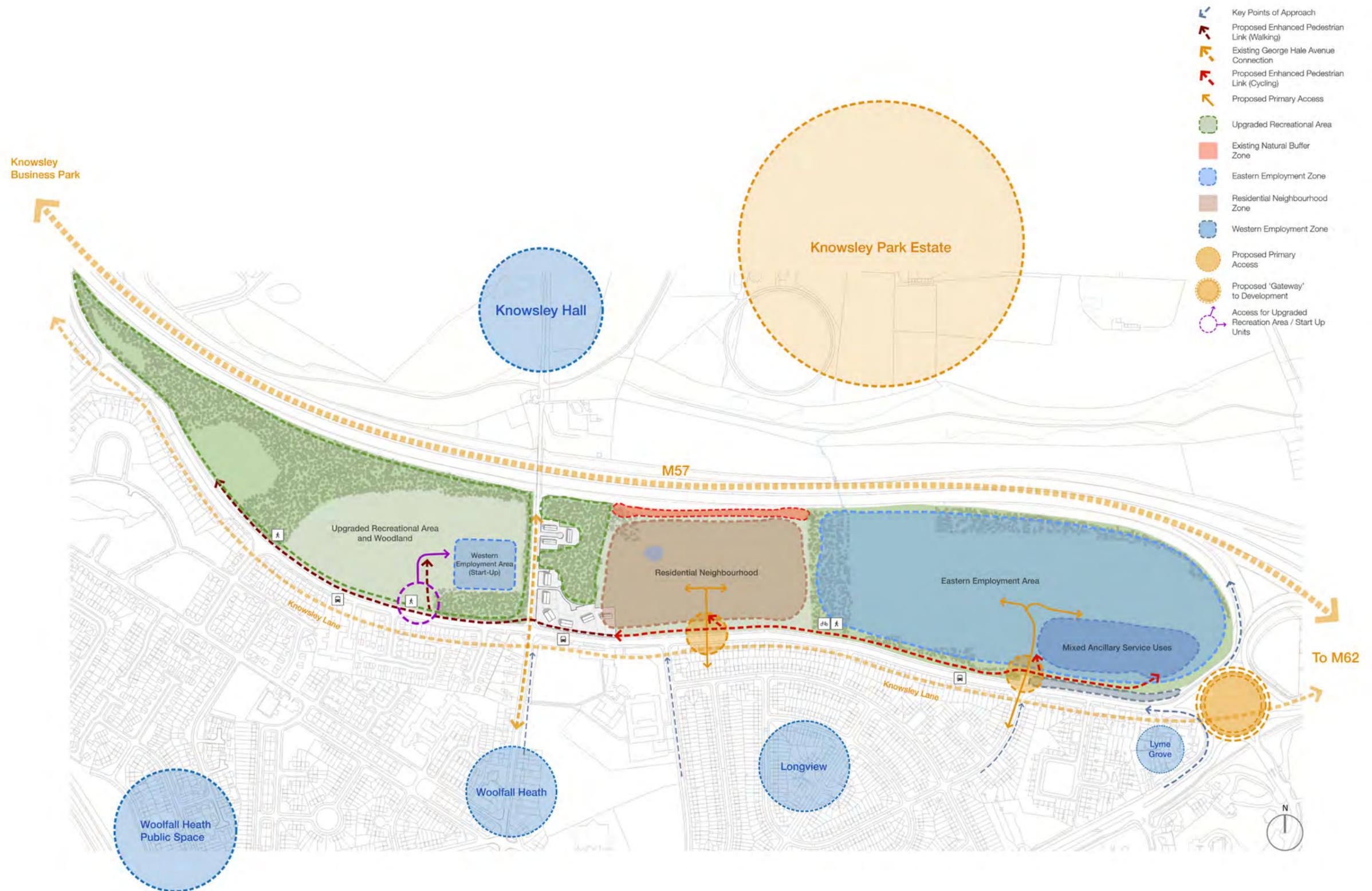


Figure 3 Vision Concept Plan

## Employment - Rationale

### 2.6

The draft SPD vision and box KL4 sets out the Council's ambitions to deliver a high quality employment location for uses in line with the Liverpool City Region core economic sector that will build upon the success of the Kings Business Park that is located in close proximity.

## Compliment not replicate

### 2.7

It is important to note that employment market circumstances have significantly changed since the development and occupation of Kings Business Park. Specifically that there is a clear market shift against the type of out of town offer that the Business Park presents and there is still a significant amount of vacant office stock overhanging the market and dating from around 10 years ago. By way of example, Network Space has moved away from further office accommodation at Mere Grange – at the time of writing a significant percentage of its phase one office scheme which it developed some 10 years ago remains unoccupied – to speculatively develop industrial accommodation (circa 90,000sqft within four units from 18,488 sqft - 26,295sqft). The same trend is being seen at the same operators Alchemy Business Park on the East Lancashire Road, where they are looking to provide a total of 100,000sqft within three detached units of 22,800sqft, 32,650sqft and 45,700sqft.

### 2.8

Furthermore, first generation Business Parks were popular, particularly with inward investors, because they replicated a successful US model of the time. Their benefits were a pleasant setting next to a motorway junction and a lower cost of construction compared to City Centres. However, in practice, many were developed with insufficient car parking, which is presenting operational problems, as a consequence of public transport connections perhaps not being as strong as initially envisaged. Also, many were delivered without a critical mass of support services such as retail and food / leisure.

### 2.9

It is also becoming recognised that there is a growing appeal of city centre locations for offices in the UK. Nationally this is driven by staff recruitment and retention issues – not just the ability to draw on a larger pool of labour by being in a central and well connected location, but also the importance of the amenities and character of city or town centre setting in keeping staff happy. The ability to shop and have a choice of food outlets at lunchtime, and socialise after work now factoring into end users' decision making. It is also important to note that end office occupiers' sustainability targets are better addressed in central locations.

### 2.10

These factors will become increasingly important in a knowledge based economy in which more young people live in town and city centres and fewer own cars. The main growth sectors, such as professional services, media and technology, thrive in locations that maximise the opportunities for knowledge sharing, networking and collaborative working. These tend to be found in Town and City Centres.

### 2.11

The rise in graduate numbers is also seeing young workers moving into the employment who have become used City Centre living and who do not want to move out of town.

### 2.12

It is likely that the Liverpool City Region will see new modern stock delivered in the central core through schemes such as Pall Mall, Princes Dock, the Knowledge Quarter, Liverpool Waters and Wirral Waters which will enhance floor space supply. Enhanced public transport links, particularly by rail, are improving connections between city and town centres, enhancing the benefits of a central location. The impact on office markets and the new build out of town market will be significant.

## Compliment to differentiate

### 2.13

It would therefore seem sensible for the Earlsfield

Park to provide a complimentary employment offer to that of Kings Business Park. Rather than seeking to replicate its model it will provide a positive mix of employment use and activity that strengthens both locations and creates a unique point of differentiation in the market.

### 2.14

ION has instructed further market analysis from Mason Owen to determine the optimum economic sector(s) to bring forward at Earlsfield Park that will deliver the necessary complementary mix of employment uses and activity.

### 2.15

This analysis has foreseen interest from the **advanced manufacturing, research and development (R&D), and sub regional logistics sectors** going forward, with 'business expansion in LCR being reported as being stifled by lack of supply of buildings for SME's' that dominate these sectors. Furthermore speculative development in these sectors has let well when built, with evidence of proposed / speculative schemes in the area responding to these market conditions:

- Stonebridge Park, Liverpool – St Modwen are on site with the speculative development of four units from 5 - 30,000sqft for rent or buy.
- Alchemy, Knowsley – Network Space propose to construct for units ranging from 18,500sqft - 2600sqft. These are leasehold only.
- Mere Grange, St Helens – Network Space again four units as per Alcemy – leasehold only again
- Beacon 62, Huyton Business Park – Henty Boot / Barnfield – potential for smaller units.

### 2.16

Knowsley Council has also confirmed through the parallel LCR SIF funding bid for the SUE that the size and type of units being provided complements the supply chain of commercial and industrial floor space in Knowsley. The Council have a healthy development pipeline of various sized accommodation, which allows business start ups to grow, expand and relocate within the Borough. The masterplan proposals

strengthen this position, recognising that the shortage of quality space of this size that is available for immediate occupation must be addressed. The new jobs that this will create will also make a positive contribution to productivity.

### 2.17

Mason Owen's analysis concludes that Earlsfield Park is a **superbly located manufacturing / industrial business park site in a location that will attract interest across the city region and beyond**. On this basis, the supply of a quality product in a good, accessible location will generate its own demand, with significantly more quality accommodation being required in order to satisfy current business needs. This is vitally important in short term because of the evidence that the market is defined by a lack of supply, particularly the type, size and quality of building required by local and regional SME's looking to grow their business.

### 2.18

To address this market demand and need it is concluded that **a new breed of Employment Park is required that will create a product and environment that can be immediately established as a credible location for businesses to invest in and that retains a longer term flexibility that keeps it current and attractive to the market over time**.

### 2.19

Earlsfield Park is considered to offer such an opportunity and the best way to achieve this is through the construction of a speculative first phase of employment floorspace that will generate interest and maximise the window of opportunity that is currently open in the market for a new product and offer. ION's market analysis suggests that any first phase needs to extend to circa 50,000sqft in units designed to cater for the needs of local SME's involved in advanced manufacturing, R&D, and sub regional logistics who typically require units in the 10,000 – 30,000sqft range together with a terrace of units to accommodate smaller requirements from say 3,500sqft.

\*Paragraphs 2.8 to 2.12 draw from a series of papers entitled The new geography of office demand, Jones Lang Lasalle.

## 2.20

Subsequent phases of the park can then ideally be brought forward on a build to suit basis depending on interest received from the market. For example, there are early signs of an improvement in the office sector, so for even greater flexibility going forward, the possibility of leaving aside an area within the eastern or western employment zone that could accommodate appropriate office uses should be explored. Depending on demand at the time, this area could be utilised for either offices or industrial development as required, which would enable the park to respond to any specific inward office or hybrid enquiry in the future but on a design and build basis. This approach would appeal to the appetite from the small / medium size manufacturing, engineering and service / logistics companies who wish to purchase their own property often in SIPPS, making it important to offer units for sale as well as to let from the outset in order to maximise the prospects of success and afford the park market advantage.

## 2.21

ION's market analysis and appraisal has also identified an emerging market for **good quality managed small scale workspace in a high quality environment**. The market is already seeing a step change in the way that office space is being delivered using the coworking space model offering flexible terms and more than just a property product (additional benefits can be provided such as IT / accounting / business support). ION in conjunction with their commercial development partner predict that this approach will soon be adopted for workshop type space and are exploring the application of the model to this sector, targeting the western employment zone at Earlsfield Park in particular. This will be space that will be the move on space for people who have started businesses in their own homes but cannot / do not want to take space on more traditional leasehold terms. It will be space for the cake bakers / microbrewers / drapers etc of the future. Such workspace will be a private sector owned and operated facility as per the rest of the employment space.

## 2.22

Earlsfield Park also benefits from its prominence on the M57 motorway. Aligned with proposals for a critical mass of support services such as retail and food / leisure at its entrance this will create an identity, credibility and a critical mass from the outset. **Being able to offer prospective occupiers on site services and facilities will give Earlsfield Park a distinct advantage in the market place, whilst also providing benefit to Kings Business Park and the wider mix of land uses across the site.**

## 2.23

The inclusion of ancillary retail and leisure facilities within the site are considered to have a variety of benefits that are integral to the concept of the Employment Business Park and must be seen as this rather than simply standalone enterprises. The benefits of an immediately available and integrated ancillary service offer are as follows:

- To serve staff and visitors to the new and existing business community by providing facilities in a convenient and accessible location.
- To provide facilities close at hand to the growing residential community in this area, reducing the need for car trips. In so doing, it will enhance the attractiveness of the new build housing that will be delivered as part of the plan.
- To establish a critical mass of early development on the employment park that will mean that the initial occupiers on the employment park will not sit on their own. This removes a barrier often seen in such developments where end users do not want to be the first to commit to a site.
- These uses will be concentrated at the entrance to the site providing a gateway marker to the development. The inclusion of the hotel presents opportunity to deliver a building of a scale and massing that will enhance the gateway to the employment site.
- Providing employment opportunities to the local community.
- Providing a critical residual land receipt to cross fund the infrastructure and serviced employment development plots that will deliver the first phase of employment

floorspace and open up the wider employment area for future development.

## 2.24

It is envisaged that the range of uses to be accommodated will include a petrol filling station that will incorporate a small amount of convenience retail / leisure floorspace, a family restaurant / pub, and a mid scale hotel.

## 2.25

The petrol filling station is considered to be critical to service a local and sub regional need and demand, given that this catchment is not well served in this respect. The SUE's location at a key interchange between the motorway network (M57), national trunk road network (A57), and local highway network (serviced from B5194 Earlsfield Park) is also significant. On this basis, the petrol filling station model that is proposed is one that includes a small convenience retail offer. This is not only intended to cater for the vehicular traffic associated with the petrol filling station trade, it is also intended to cater for the demand generated by the staff and visitors of the adjoining employment zones, as well as addressing the shortfall of provision at the adjoining Kings Business Park. As previously stated, this immediately accessible and available support service offer is critical to the success of the employment destination.

## 2.26

A mid scale hotel of 40 to 60 rooms in this location will also directly serve the new and existing business community as well as the local residential community. Its location close to Knowsley Hall and the Safari Park means that it will also assist in growing the visitor economy by supporting these major attractions.

## 2.27

The family pub restaurant will work in conjunction with the hotel and provide a venue to support local businesses and serve the new and established residential community.

## 2.28

In terms of employment opportunities, it is anticipated that these uses will deliver between

90 - 130 jobs at levels ranging from entry level to skilled kitchen and management staff.

## The Brand

### 2.29

For the reasons set out above, the Earlsfield Park should not seek to replicate the Business park offer at Kings Business Park, rather ensure that it is complementary in terms of land uses and activity, a similar quality of physical environment, and the provision of support services that can be accessed and utilised by both locations.

### 2.30

In this respect, Earlsfield Park can build on its unique location, being central to the City Region but not within an established industrial area, which is a distinct competitive advantage. This is further strengthened by the fact that Earlsfield Park and the adjacent Kings Business Park are well contained by high quality semi rural landscape meaning that they can therefore only be the scale that that they are, and not sprawl and expand.

### 2.31

The masterplan therefore seeks to position the Earlsfield Park as a **Hybrid Employment Park** that targets advanced manufacturing and business that requires a blend of office and manufacturing / warehouse space set within a high quality environment with immediately accessible and available support services for staff and visitors.

### 2.32

The 'Hybrid' brand reflects the market differentiating offer that this unique employment and business location can deliver, namely:

- Being a truly 'mixed' use employment destination that provides the opportunity to deliver a range of high quality advanced manufacturing, research and development (R&D), and sub regional logistics floorspace. This will be particularly attractive to the SME businesses and their supply chains that dominate these sectors, including the provision for business start ups to grow and expand within the Borough.

- The ability to align the mix of floorspaces available with a similar flexibility around the terms of lease / ownership. This is a market differentiator and very attractive to the users that the park will target, for example being able to offer long leasehold opportunities for businesses to rent and / or own and potentially build their own units (subject to them complying with the robust design framework - see section 3 of this masterplan report).
- Being an integral part of a wider mixed use destination that includes high quality new homes, ancillary support service, and enhanced / new recreational areas and spaces that are also well connected to wider local assets such as Kings Business Park, Knowsley Estate, local Primary Schools, Hillside Road Shopping Parage, King George V Memorial Playing Fields, and more widely Prescott Town Centre.

### 2.33

Flexibility is therefore key and is at the heart of comprehensively delivering the mix of land uses, activity, and infrastructure that will make the Earlsfield Park a success now and into the future. Section 4 of this masterplan report provides further detail on the phasing that is anticipated across the SUE, but in summary, there is a need to establish an immediate credibility and critical mass that will maximise the window of opportunity that is currently open in the market for a new employment product and offer. This will be achieved by delivering a speculative first phase of advanced manufacturing, R&D, and / or sub regional logistics employment floorspace (mix of 10,000 – 30,000sqft units and a terrace of smaller units circa 3,500sqft) alongside the immediate provision of the necessary supporting infrastructure and support services at the gateway / entrance to the site that will serve as the front door and quality benchmark for the rest of the site.

### 2.34

This first phase of development will also need to provide the necessary infrastructure to open up the remainder of the SUE. This will facilitate and set the benchmark for the comprehensive

delivery of development and investment across the whole of the SUE. It will also provide the opportunity to retain flexibility in the type and mix of advanced manufacturing, R&D, and / or sub regional logistics floorspace, or other high value employment uses, which will keep its offer current and attractive to the market over time.

### 2.35

In conclusion, **the product, offer, and critical mix of land uses at the Earlsfield Park Hybrid Business Park is unique**, particularly to its local and city region context, **bringing a profile and standing to the Borough that the Council set out to achieve in bring the SUE's forward through their Local Plan Core Strategy.**

<sup>1</sup> The maximum service floorspace proposed is 2,500sqm. This is the threshold within the NPPF above which a retail impact assessment may be required for such uses in out of centre locations.

## Masterplan Employment Outputs

### 2.36

The Council's guidance document requires the masterplan to set out the following in relation to the employment uses on the site:

- Location
- Type
- Volume
- Mix

### Location of employment uses

### 2.37

The masterplan incorporates the majority of the employment generating uses in the eastern zone of the SUE (refer to figure 3 vision concept plan and figure 8 masterplan). This is consistent with the spatial development framework contained within the draft SPD (figure 4.1), which seeks to showcase the economic and business profile of the site along the M57 corridor, as well as providing a clear connection to the established Kings Business Park referencing the importance of the relationship between the two business locations. This eastern employment zone of the masterplan comprises a land take of 15.35 hectares.

### 2.38

A further area of employment land is provided within the western zone of the site. This area is located to the immediate west George Hale Avenue (refer to figure 2 vision concept plan and figure 8 masterplan). The land take of this smaller employment zone is 1.5 hectares taking the total area for employment across the site to 16.5 hectares.

### 2.39

The western employment zone is proposed to be served by a new and improved vehicular access from Earlsfield Park and will provide new small start up business units.

### Type and volume employment uses

### 2.40

The market appraisal and analysis that ION has procured has informed the type and volume

(floorspace) of employment uses that the site has the capacity and capability to deliver.

The masterplan illustrates how the volume of employment use / floorspace can be maximised across the two identified employment zones. If this were to be implemented the site has the potential to deliver the employment generating floorspace set out in table 2.2.

### 2.41

The masterplan proposes a number of ancillary uses that fall into the definition of main town centre use as defined by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These uses are the:

- 40 - 60 bed mid scale hotel
- Family pub / restaurant (linked to the hotel)
- Coffee drive through kiosk

### 2.42

Although the petrol filling station is not considered a town centre use it will include a small amount of convenience retail / leisure floorspace. The proposed operator has precedent planning evidence that confirms that this particular model of petrol filling station is classed as a sui-generis land use inclusive of the small component of convenience retail / leisure discounting the need to consider these small areas of floorspace as town centre uses for the purposes of the PPG.

### 2.43

Given that the site is outside a defined town centre and town centre uses are proposed (albeit they are ancillary to the core employment function of the site), consideration must be given as to their appropriateness in this location.

### 2.44

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out two key tests that should be considered when planning for town centre uses which are not in an existing town centre and which are not in accord with an up to date local plan – the sequential test and the impact test.

### 2.45

In summary, the sequential test seeks to assess whether there are any preferable town centre locations that may accommodate the main town centre uses.

### 2.46

The impact test determines whether there would be likely significant adverse impacts of locating main town centre development outside of existing town centres, but is only applicable if the proposed development exceeds the floorspace threshold set out at paragraph 26 of the NPPF. This threshold is 2,500sqm.

### 2.47

The maximum floorspace proposed by the masterplan for such uses is 2,500sqm. On this basis, the impact assessment is not triggered.

### 2.48

A sequential assessment will be included within the forthcoming hybrid planning application for Earlsfield Park site, which the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) considers an appropriate time to undertake such an assessment. This, however, does not mean that sequential considerations have not been taken into account in the preparation of the masterplan.

Type (land use)	Maximum floorspace (sqm)	Type (occupier target)	Potential job creation (FTE)
B1 (c) light industrial / B8 logistic units	35,000 (across a variety of unit sizes)	Targeted at advanced manufacturing research and development, and sub regional logistics.	675
B1 (c) light industrial / B8 storage & distribution start up units	2,000	Local and Regional Small and Medium Enterprise	36
Ancillary C1 Hotel, A3 leisure, A1 retail	2,500	Ancillary support service uses to serve the employment zones and Kings Business Park within the context of supporting the LCR growth sectors, and provide an additional resource for existing and new residents and visitors.	101

Table 2.2 Volume and Type of Proposed Employment Uses

#### 2.49

In preparing the masterplan ION Property Developments has had due consideration to the guidance on sequential consideration included in the PPG .

#### 2.50

The proposed small scale ancillary retail and leisure service offer is critical to the concept of the Hybrid Business Park as it offers prospective occupiers on site services and facilities that create an immediate identity, credibility and a critical mass, which in turn will provide the SUE with a distinct advantage in the market place, as well as providing benefit to the adjacent Kings Business Park and the wider mix of land uses across the site. To reiterate paragraphs 2.22 - 2.28 of the masterplan report, the benefits of an immediately available and integrated ancillary service offer are as follows:

- To serve staff and visitors to the new and existing business community by providing facilities in a convenient and accessible location.
- To provide facilities close at hand to the growing residential community in this area, reducing the need for car trips. In so doing, it will enhance the attractiveness of the new build housing that will be delivered as part of the plan.
- To establish a critical mass of early development on the park that will mean that the initial occupiers on the employment park will not sit on their own. This removes a barrier often seen in such developments where end users do not want to be the first to commit to a site.
- These uses will be concentrated at the entrance to the site providing a gateway marker to the development. The inclusion of the hotel presents opportunity to deliver a building of a scale and massing that will enhance the gateway to the employment site.
- Providing employment opportunities to the local community.
- Providing a critical residual land receipt to cross fund the infrastructure and serviced employment development plots that will deliver the first phase of employment

floorspace and open up the wider employment area for future development.

#### 2.52

Whilst some of the uses that are proposed might be perceived as having the potential to be located in town centres in the locality if they are considered in isolation, this would in reality not materialise because the complementary nature and mix of land uses that are proposed to make up the Hybrid Business Park – employment, ancillary service (retail / leisure), and residential – are fundamental to its success, delivery and long term sustainability.

#### 2.53

Removing or diluting a particular land use or activity would be place significant risk to the success and long term sustainability of the Hybrid Business Park and the regeneration opportunity that bringing this significant employment generating development forward.

#### 2.54

The inclusion of ancillary retail and leisure service facilities within the site is considered to have a range of benefits that are unique to the Employment Business Park model and brand and are not considered to be able to be applied to any town centre opportunity or scenario, specifically that offered by Prescott Town Centre. This is on the basis that while the draft Prescott Town Centre Masterplan SPD identifies a series of development opportunity sites, none of them have the capacity to comprehensively incorporate the mix, adjacency and cluster of ancillary retail / leisure floorspace in one location that will deliver the identified benefits in serving a specific and unique employment destination, as well as being critical to its overall success and sustainability. Furthermore, the nature and operation of the proposed ancillary service uses that will directly serve the Hybrid Employment Park will attract a specific type of prospective occupier that would not consider town centre locations as being appropriate to the success of their business.

Key expectation	Masterplan (land use mix) response
M57 prominence / Kings Business Park relationship	<p>The majority of the light industrial / logistic units are located along the northern boundary facing the M57 and are orientated so that their visibility and profile is maximised to this corridor.</p> <p>The ancillary hotel, restaurant/family pub and coffee drive thru alongside one of the early phase light industrial units (45 000 sqft) create a visual and commercial presence onto the M57/ A57 roundabout. This has the objective of providing a functional connection and reference point between the Kings Business Park on the opposite side of the roundabout and the employment and business activity on the SUE itself, acting as a resource and gateway/entrance feature for both employment destinations.</p>
Gateway environment	<p>The ancillary hotel, restaurant / family pub and coffee drive thru alongside one of the early phase light industrial units (45,000 sqft) create a visual and commercial presence onto the M57 / A57 roundabout acting as a gateway / entrance attraction for the SUE and Kings Business Park. The hotel will provide scale and presence on the roundabout alongside one of the phase 1 45,000 sqft light industrial units.</p> <p>The commercial signage associated with the uses fronting the roundabout in conjunction with appropriately designed and located landscape / public realm will all seek to enhance the gateway environment at this location</p>
Interest and diversity across buildings / plots	<p>The masterplan proposes a mix of light industrial / logistic units in their own development plots across the main employment area of the SUE that will in themselves create interest and diversity. This will be supplemented by the green infrastructure framework that will provide the setting for the development plots and provide the appropriate transition between land uses across the SUE.</p> <p>The use, activity, scale, massing and plot treatment of the ancillary hotel, restaurant / family pub, coffee drive thru, and petrol filling station will all add to interest and diversity of the employment area.</p> <p>Further to this, the sensitively designed small employment starter unit scheme proposed to be located on the eastern edge of the Lord Derby Memorial Playing Fields are proposed to be set within a very high quality environment (inclusive of an ecological mitigation / POS area) to target new SME local businesses and those working in the "green sector". This will bring further interest and diversity across the whole of the SUE.</p>
Respect and protect residential amenity	<p>The masterplan has sought to respect and protect the amenity of existing residential properties along Earlsfield Park by locating the majority of the light industrial / logistic units towards the northern boundary of the SUE. Where this has not been possible, the units are orientated so that any direct interface with main elevations is reduced.</p> <p>The location of the more 'domestic' scale ancillary leisure, service and retail uses also serves to reduce impact on amenity.</p> <p>It is also recognised that the hedgerow alongside Earlsfield Park is a strong natural feature that lends itself to the general character and amenity of this corridor. Where possible it is proposed that this will be protected and reinforced – principally to the west of the main access road.</p>

**Table 2.3 Mix of employment uses - masterplan response**

**Residential - Rationale**

space enhancements.

**2.54**

KCSLP policy SUE 2a and the supporting draft SPD confirms that the inclusion of new homes as part of the Earlsfield Park site will support the core strategy priority of rebalancing the Borough's housing stock, and that the principal focus for housing development within this site should be on providing a range of homes to serve the higher end of the market, specifically high quality family housing which diversifies the local offer and extends the residential investment secured through the North Huyton Revive Partnership.

**2.55**

To achieve these objectives and demonstrate that high quality family homes are deliverable and viable at this location, ION Property Developments has entered into a partnership with Bellway Homes.

**2.56**

Bellway's assessment of the site in terms of location, local need, wider demand and market appetite for the new homes and the quality of residential environment that the Council aspire to, concludes that a critical mass of new homes is vital to creating a viable new residential market within this part of Huyton, and indeed Knowsley as a whole. This critical mass stands at between 150 - 160 new homes, which is envisaged will facilitate the delivery of a single comprehensive sustainable community that will make the step change in the residential market that the Council require (Knowsley Housing strategy 2016 -2020), which is to achieve a housing offer that not only meets the needs of the existing residents of the Borough but also attracts economically active people into the Borough and the wider city region. The Earlsfield Park site is able to directly meet this aspiration by aligning new homes and new employment opportunity in one single integrated destination.

**2.57**

The quantum of housing is also critically required to provide a level of financial cross subsidy to guarantee the delivery of the infrastructure to access the employment zone and the green

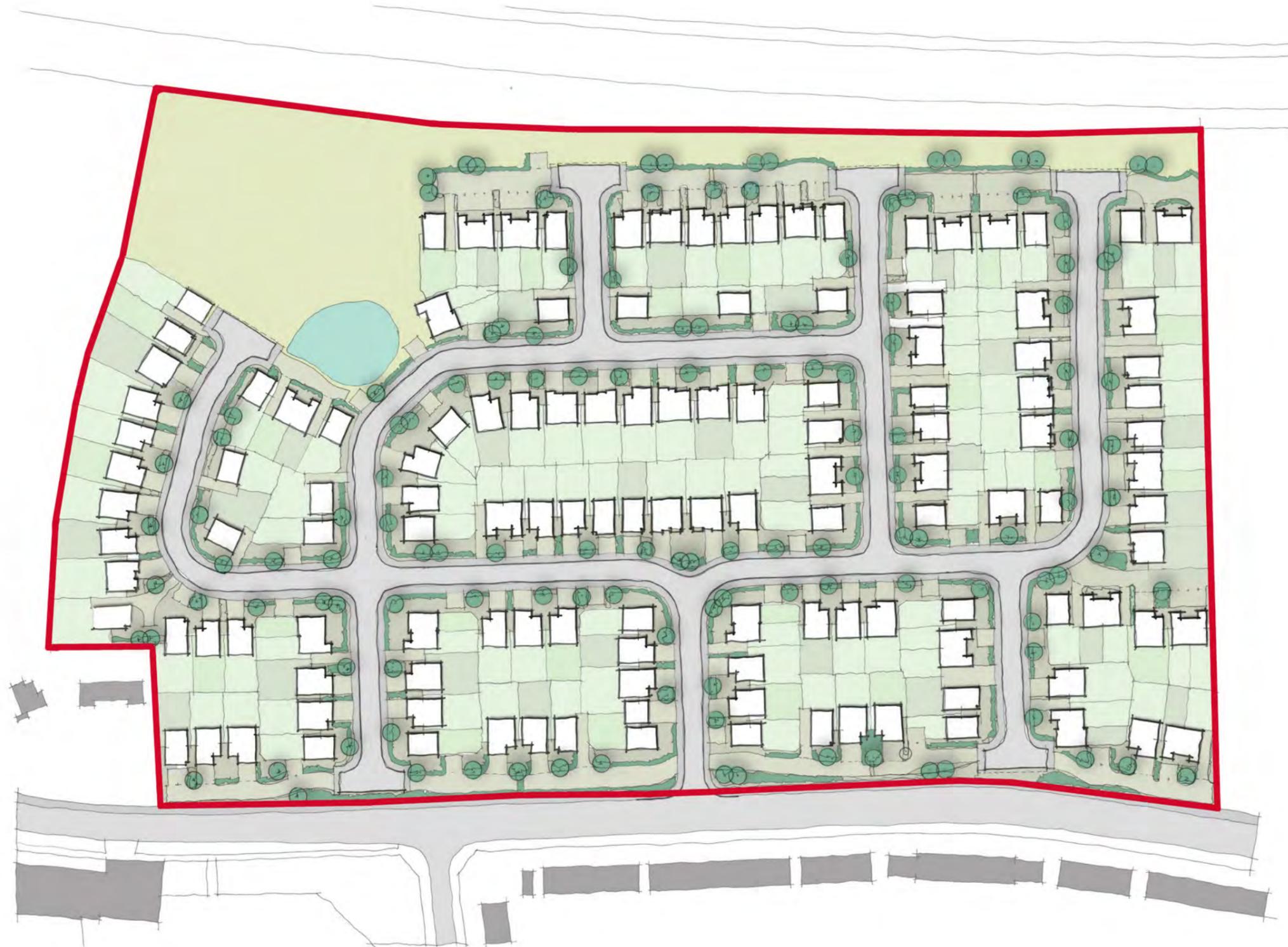


Figure 4 Bellway Layout

## Masterplan Residential Outputs

### 2.60

The Council's guidance document requires the masterplan to set out the following in relation to the residential land use on the site:

- Location
- Volume
- Type
- Mix

### 2.61

Figure 4 provides an illustrative layout to demonstrate that the residential location has the capacity to accommodate between 150 and 160 new homes with the associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure. This has included consideration of the potential amenity issues associated with the noise from the M57 motorway, specifically the commissioning of a calculation of road traffic noise assessment that has indicated that appropriate mitigation measures can be incorporated into the proposal residential layout (figure 4) that will not reduce the capacity of area proposed for new homes.

### 2.62

The location of the proposed residential development is consistent with the SDF contained within the draft SPD albeit its eastern boundary has encroached into the area that the SDF designates for employment use. The reason for this is that a greater area of land than is currently identified in the SDF is required to deliver between 150 and 160 new homes of the quality that the Council expect to be delivered inclusive of the associated amenity space, car parking standards, and quality of place requires. The 16ha policy requirement for employment uses is met with the inclusion of the western employment zone.

### 2.63

The new homes for this new community are proposed to predominantly comprise three and four bed detached and three bed semi detached standing at two storeys set in a high quality landscape and environment. The masterplan demonstrates that such an approach reduces the density of development with a consequential

impact of increasing the area of land required to accommodate the new aspirational homes, which stands at 5.1 hectares.

### 2.64

The final mix of new homes will be determined through the planning application process in conjunction with the Council, key stakeholders and the local community, including the requirement to meet affordable housing requirements.

## Public Open Space, Outdoor Space and Green Infrastructure Rationale

### 2.65

The existing landscape, recreational space and ecologically sensitive areas of the site has provided a strong reference point for structuring the masterplan, particularly in using this 'green infrastructure' to foster a common identity and character across the different development areas of the site.

### 2.66

A framework of green infrastructure has therefore been considered across the site that ties together the various landscape, open space, recreational and ecological components to create a single identity for the site.

### 2.67

Figure 2.1 constraints and opportunities map of the draft SPD has provided the basis for structuring the masterplan's green infrastructure framework, building upon the:

- Identified landscape and recreational resource provided by the Lord Derby Memorial Playing Fields and Local Wildlife designation areas to the west of the SUE.
- Mature woodland at the centre of the SUE east of George Hale Avenue.
- Further areas of mature woodland on the northern boundary of eastern component of the SUE.

### 2.68

The masterplan design team has also undertaken its own site analysis (figure 2) and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has also been

produced. This work has further informed the green infrastructure framework, identifying the following important features for the masterplan to incorporate:

- The hedgerows, ditches and streams, particularly to the northern and eastern boundaries of the site present the greatest ecological and environmental value as habitat corridors / woodland resources. They also have recreational value if footpaths could be provided within the areas to encourage public engagement with wilder areas of the site.
- The pond within the small woodland located in the north east corner of the eastern section of the site along with the pond in middle of the field west of the farm and pond to the east of George Hale Avenue retain ecological habitat value. They also have the potential to be the focus for any required public open space.
- There is one tree preservation order covering part of a wooded group of trees opposite the junction between Earlsfield Park and Thornton Way. The tree preservation order is No. 5 of 2007.
- It is likely that the majority of trees and woodland of value can be retained across the site through careful masterplanning and design.
- A water vole survey of the ditch and stream is recommended to support any forthcoming planning applications.
- The existing ponds on the site were considered to have potential for Great Crested Newt habitat, however, further eDNA survey testing was undertaken demonstrating that no great crested newt DNA was detected in the water samples. This is considered that they are not being used by GCN as a breeding pond and they are also unlikely to be using the adjacent woodland as terrestrial habitat.
- Ecological enhancements are to be encouraged within landscape and green infrastructure design, including planting mixes of wildflower and tree screening habitats, particularly to the boundaries of the site, as well as proposed 'building plot' boundaries by strengthening existing weak areas / gaps and new planting from a strategic landscape

perspective, including consideration of linear linkages to provide ecological corridors.

### 2.69

More generally the PEA demonstrates that within the eastern section of the site (proposed for the majority of the employment and residential development) the fields are not very species rich and have been subject to grazing by horses. The site is also unlikely to provide reptile or overwintering bird habitat, however, such a consideration requires further investigation with the Council.

### 2.70

The green infrastructure framework has a further masterplan function – it provides a mechanism to address the interface and transition between the different land uses proposed across the site and is something that the masterplan has carefully sought to achieve. This is a specific requirement of the draft SPD where it states that appropriate treatments should be carefully considered along site boundaries to create active road frontages, such as applying lower building density, or providing landscaped buffer. It specifically requires a landscape buffer between the site and the M57, and between the residential and employment uses within the site. This is to be planted with semi mature native trees, which would provide sufficient space for light pollution mitigation, appropriate landscape edge condition and visual separation between the two uses.

## Masterplan Outputs: Public Open Space, Outdoor Space and Green Infrastructure

### 2.71

The Council's guidance document requires the masterplan to illustrate the location of public open spaces, including new or improved outdoor space provision, areas of new and retained tree planting, and green infrastructure provision. This is communicated by figure 5 that is the masterplan green infrastructure framework. A commentary on each component of this framework follows.



Figure 5 Green Infrastructure Framework

## **1 Lord Derby Playing Fields / Oak Plantation**

### **2.72**

A key element of the green infrastructure within the Earlsfield Park site area is the enhancement of the Oak Plantation and the Lord Derby Playing Fields that fall within the site boundary to the west of George Hale Avenue.

### **2.73**

Oak Plantation is recognised as one of the poorest open spaces in the Knowsley, yet it is well located in an area that has an established residential population that is likely to grow significantly due to the release of a number of sites for housing development, including the new homes as part of the proposals.

### **2.74**

Oak Plantation and the adjoining Lord Derby Playing Fields has a key role to play in providing formal and informal recreation space to serve the existing and future local community. Delivery of the employment and housing uses within the site as set out in earlier sections of this report will enable a significant financial contribution to be made to the enhancement of these spaces as anticipated by the vision contained within the draft SPD. Works that this funding could assist in delivering include:

- Improved boundary treatments.
- New entrance feature to Oak Plantation to promote the site as a public open space.
- Creation of formal pathways.
- Habitat restoration.
- Benches, bins and signage.
- Access / car park improvements to playing fields.
- Enhanced sports changing facilities.

### **2.75**

The detail of the works to be undertaken using the contribution from the employment and residential development will require early consultation with the Council, users of the spaces and potentially Sport England. It is ION Property Developments intention to work with these groups to ensure the investment is targeted and timed to have maximum impact.

## **2 George Hale Avenue Woodland / Residential Public Open Space**

### **2.76**

The established woodland to the east of George Hale Avenue is also considered to be a valuable landscape and recreational asset and has an important relationship with the proposed new homes, particularly when considering that it currently provides an attractive setting and recreational area for a number of residential properties and buildings in the ownership of Knowsley Estate.

### **2.77**

It is therefore proposed to integrate this woodland area with the new amenity space to be provided to serve the new proposed homes. This will provide an extended and enhanced community recreational and amenity resource for the benefit of existing and new residents, as well as staff and visitors to the Hybrid Business Park.

### **2.78**

This extended and enhanced asset will also incorporate and improve the existing pond in this location, providing further interest to this important landscape and recreational area as well as adding to the ecological and environmental value of the site.

## **3 Structural Landscaping**

### **2.79**

To reiterate components of the open space, outdoor space and green infrastructure rationale, the structural landscaping and planting that is illustrated on figure 5 is vitally important to address the interface and transition between the different land uses proposed and is something that the masterplan has carefully sought to achieve.

### **2.80**

This is a specific requirement of the draft SPD where it states that appropriate treatments should be carefully considered along site boundaries to create active road frontages, such as applying lower building density, or providing landscaped buffer. It specifically requires a landscape buffer

between the site and the M57, and between the residential and employment uses within the site, including the interface between the employment uses adjacent to Earlsfield Park and the existing residential properties on the opposite site of this road. These areas are to be planted with semi mature native trees, which would provide sufficient space for light pollution mitigation, appropriate landscape edge condition and visual separation between the two uses. Whilst these areas provide the previously identified important functions, they will also be designed so that can also be used as part of the recreational and environmental resource that will allow staff, visitors and residents to enjoy these areas for their amenity and well being whilst enhancing the ecological and environmental value of the site. This will require detailed design to consider appropriate access points and movement routes through this spaces and corridors to facilitate connectivity. They are also seen as an integral and connected components of the green infrastructure network.

### **2.81**

The landscaping along the site boundary with M57 is also important in the context of the site ecological and environmental value. It is proposed that this boundary is transformed into an ecological and recreational asset that connects the two retained ponds (refer to figure 5) so a continuous linear corridor is created that allows identified species to move freely between the various natural and semi-natural spaces. Treatments along this corridor will include planting mixes of wildflower and tree screening habitats, particularly to the boundaries of the site.

### **2.82**

This corridor will also provide connections into the landscaping that is proposed to structure the employment 'building plot' boundaries, particularly strengthening existing weak areas / gaps and new planting from a strategic landscape perspective, including consideration of linear linkages to provide further extended and connected ecological corridors. The design principles of this approach are set out in section 3.0 design framework.

### **2.83**

It is also proposed to introduce footpaths where appropriate through the ecological corridor areas that will serve to encourage public engagement with 'wilder' areas of the site and provide important connectivity between the different land use zones.

## **Access and Movement - Rationale**

### **2.84**

The access and movement strategy has been informed by early discussions with Knowsley Council Highways. The strategy has been developed to allow convenient access to the individual elements of the site whilst at the same time connecting the site with existing walking, cycling and public transport networks.

### **2.85**

The masterplan has been prepared to meet the requirement of draft SPD Box KL10 and the response to these requirements is set out in the following paragraphs and illustrated by figure 6 access and movement.

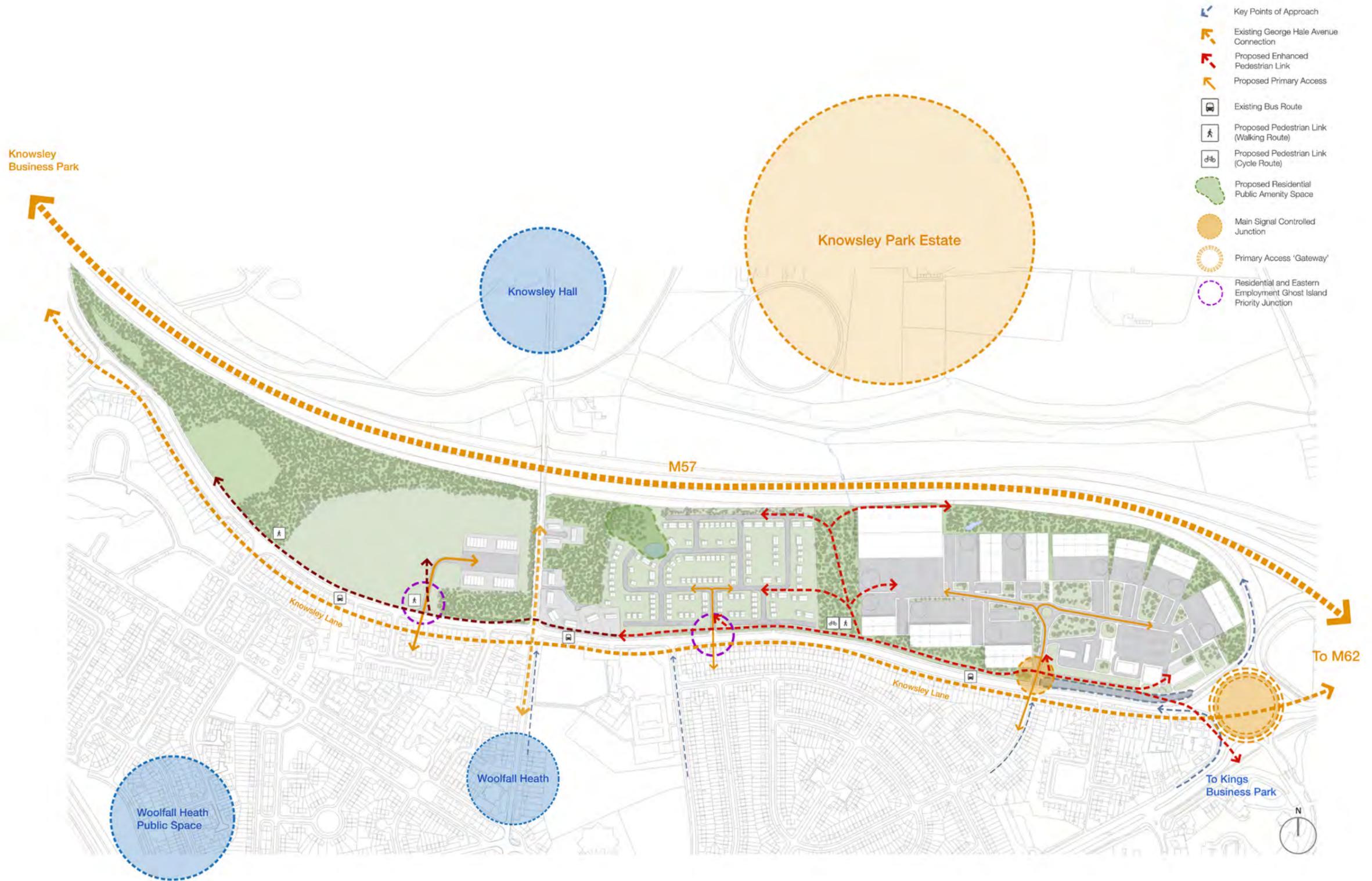


Figure 6 Access and Movement

## Masterplan Outputs: Access and Movement Vehicles

### 2.86

Vehicular access to the eastern employment zone, new homes and western employment zone will be provided by separate access junctions with Earlsfield Park. This will allow the separation of industrial heavy goods traffic and residential traffic inside the development parcels in the interest of amenity and safety.

### 2.87

Access will be provided to the eastern employment zone by a new signal controlled junction with Knowsley Lane and Radway Road. Details of the design will be determined by traffic modelling and the relevant design standards (Manual for Streets and DMRB), however, a concept layout has been drafted to demonstrate the viability and deliverability of such a solution (figure 7). The location of the access has been sited so as to reduce the chance of potential impact on the nearby M57 slips / Knowsley Lane / Liverpool Road roundabout. Another important

factor in determining the location is the need to reduce impact of heavy goods on existing residents. The location of the site access in proximity to the M57 slips roundabout can help reduce this impact.

### 2.88

Access to the residential area will be provided by a ghost island priority junction. The detail of the design will be determined by traffic modelling and relevant design standards (manual for streets and DMRB). The lighter traffic flows generated by this part of the development means a non signal controlled arrangement can be provided here.

### 2.89

Vehicular access to the western employment zone will be via a new ghost island priority junction with Knowsley Lane. The junction will be located in close proximity to the existing junction access to the site. The existing junction will be closed as part of development. The details of the junction design will be determined by traffic modelling and relevant design standards (Manual for streets and DMRB).

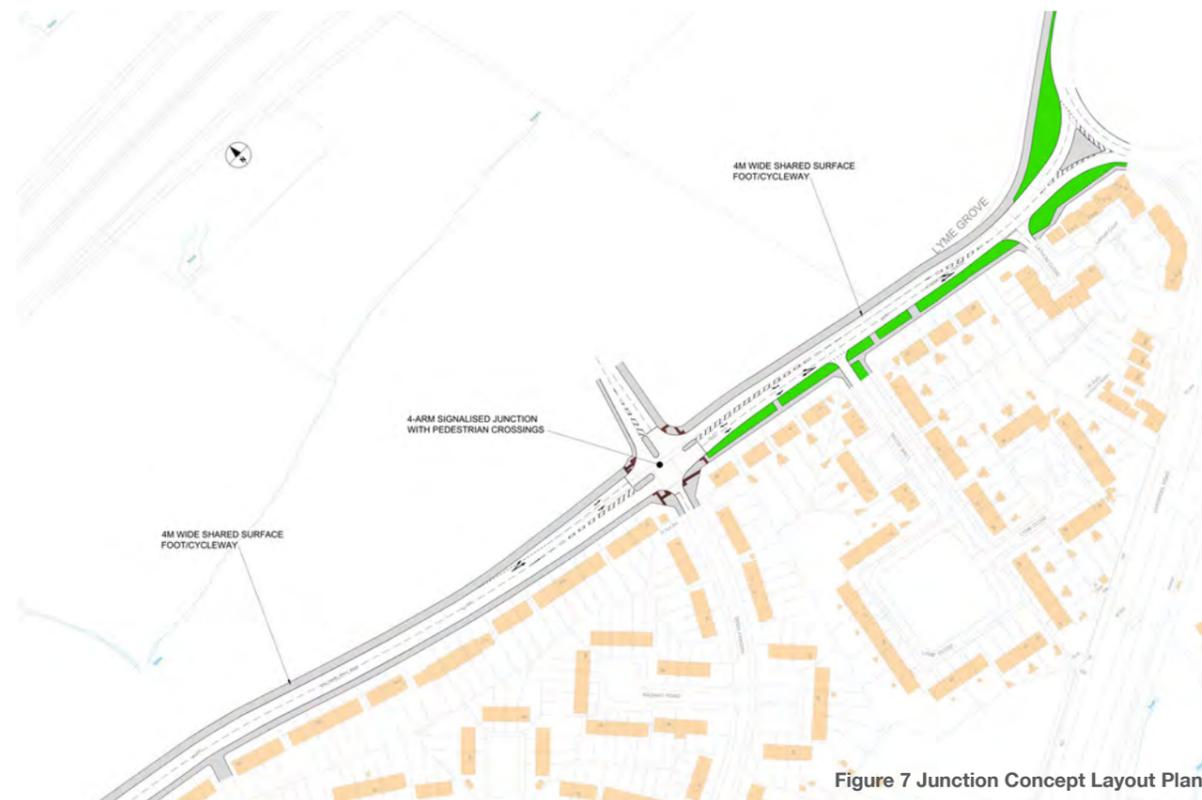


Figure 7 Junction Concept Layout Plan

## Public Transport, Pedestrian, and Cycle Access

### 2.90

Pedestrian crossing facilities will be provided within all development parcels. For the eastern employment zone pedestrian crossing facilities will be integrated into the new traffic signal junction design to allow the safe crossing of the access junction and of Knowsley Lane (please refer to figure 7). The pedestrian connection to Radway Road is important in connecting the site to nearby amenities, including the Primary School's, and the wider residential area.

### 2.91

An uncontrolled crossing will be provided in relation to the location of the new homes. This will include a central pedestrian island to allow the safe crossing of Knowsley Lane and will be incorporated into the ghost island design. This will ensure that connection to the residential area to the south is maintained.

### 2.92

For the western employment zone an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with a pedestrian refuge will be incorporated into the design across Knowsley Lane. This will help connect the site to the wider residential area.

### 2.93

A new combined pedestrian and cycle facility is currently proposed to run parallel to Knowsley Lane which will be provided as part of the development. This will provide a continuous sustainable transport connection along and between the eastern employment zone, new homes and the western employment zone – appropriate crossing facilities will be provided where this route crosses George Hale Avenue to provide the opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians to safely access Lord Derby Playing Fields and Oak Plantation beyond.

### 2.94

The pedestrian and cycle facility will run the length of the eastern employment zone converting to a pedestrian only link west of George Hale Avenue through to the western

employment zone. To the east the combined pedestrian / cycle facility will connect to existing pedestrian facilities at the M57 slips / Knowsley Lane / Liverpool Road roundabout. At the western end of the site connection to the surrounding pedestrian and cycle network will be made via dropped pedestrian crossings at the residential site access and the western employment site. The proposed pedestrian route will connect to the existing footway to the north of Knowsley Lane for routes towards Stockbridge Village.

### 2.95

Numerous pedestrian access points are proposed into the site from Knowsley Lane meaning that pedestrian and cycle access will not be limited just to the vehicular access points. In particular these will be provided near the hotel, pub / restaurant and other ancillary service uses, as well as into the new homes.

### 2.96

The final configuration of this combined pedestrian and cycle facility will require greater design work and assessment, particularly its compatibility with the 'green infrastructure' framework for the site and how it can be incorporated as an integral part of this framework. Its delivery will also require further consideration, particularly in respect of the proposed phasing of development across the site.

### 2.97

Although the employment zones will be industrial / commercial in nature, footways will be provided within the internal road layout so that pedestrians have a safe and legible environment, as well as an alternative to the main combined pedestrian and cycle facility previously described, and greater connectivity between the eastern employment zone and residential neighbourhood can be promoted and delivered. Compatibility with the 'green infrastructure' framework and how these routes can be incorporated as an integral part of the framework will be an important design consideration.

**2.98**

The residential internal layout will be designed in accordance with ‘manual for streets’ to ensure that pedestrian and cycle access is given due importance in the design as well as access by the private car. The design of the internal pedestrian footways and cycleways will be designed with good passive surveillance wherever possible. This will help encourage the use of these routes and provide a level of security to pedestrians and cyclists.

**2.99**

The proposed combined pedestrian / cycle route on Knowsley Lane will provide access to bus stops on Knowsley Lane. Furthermore the proposed crossing points will allow safe access to bus stops on the southern side of Knowsley Lane. Huyton and Prescott train stations are both located approximately 2.5km from the site (around 30 mins walk). Existing bus stop facilities on Knowsley Lane, although suitable for current levels of usage – are likely to be unsuitable for increased bus patronage generated by future residents and employees. As part of detailed design proposals current facilities consideration should be had for appropriate upgrades to current best practice standards in line with Council Policy.

**2.100**

In providing safe and direct crossing of Knowsley Lane this connects the site to existing walking and cycling routes to these facilities.

**2.101**

The proposed cycleway and footway along the southern perimeter of the site will provide a convenient connection between the development sites and the nearby Kings Business Park to the east. Pedestrian crossing facilities are already provided at the Knowsley Lane / M57 / Kings Drive / Liverpool Road roundabout. The new cycleway and footway will connect into the existing pedestrian facilities here. Kings Drive at the southern arm of the roundabout provides a direct route into the business park.

**The Spatial Masterplan**

**2.102**

Figure 8 illustrates how all of the individual components can be drawn together to provide a single comprehensive masterplan for the Knowsley Lane site.

**2.103**

Figure 9 provides a further illustration of the comprehensive masterplan response.



Figure 8 Illustrative Masterplan



Figure 9 Aerial Perspective

# 3.0 Design Framework

## Introduction

### 3.1

This section of the masterplan report sets out the strategic design principles that will form the basis of any detailed development proposal. This will enable well designed and attractive commercial buildings and new homes to come forward that are set within a pleasant landscaped environment, which in turn will serve to create a real sense of place.

## Defining the Place

### 3.2

Figure 2 constraints and opportunities plan provides a comprehensive picture of the physical, social and environmental parameters of the site. This is the starting point of being able to understand the type of place the site is at present, which will ultimately define the type of place it can become in the future.

### 3.3

To supplement this, an analysis of the historical growth of the area surrounding the site has been undertaken, which has sought to identify characteristics that can inspire and inform development as it comes forward.

## Historical Development

### 3.4

The original centre of Knowsley settlement was located to the north west of the current Knowsley Park, around St Mary's Church, a Victorian chapel which follows a sixteenth century style. The township was then dominated by the park from the early post medieval period.

### 3.5

The earliest reference to dedicated parkland in Knowsley is in 1292, when Robert de Latham is recorded as having 'certain wood that his father enclosed with paling'. The Latham family held the manor from c.1200 and it was used as a hunting seat. The Stanley's then controlled the manor from the fourteenth century into the nineteenth century which is when the settlement developed into a township.

### 3.6

One of the key landmarks within the area is Knowsley Hall and its estate. The Hall is a seventeenth century grand stone and brick building situated in extensive park grounds.

### 3.7

Whilst separated from the site by the M57, the grounds of the Estate to the west of the Hall are considered to provide good reference points for creating character and sense of place across the site. Significantly the main entrance to the Estate that continues northwards along one of the drive to the Hall is served by George Hale Avenue that connects directly into Earlsfield Park.





Red Brick Construction and Characteristic Railings

**3.8**  
George Hale Avenue bisects the site and along its eastern edge contains buildings that can be associated with the Knowsley Park Estate.

**3.9**  
The construction of these buildings are predominantly in red brick with some of the housing being clad in render. The railings that front a number of these properties also provide interest and character.

**3.10**  
A pair of Grade II Listed, eighteenth century school cottages are located on the south west corner of Earlsfield Park at its junction with George Hale Avenue. These were originally one building called Knowsley Boys School which was erected by Lord Derby, then in later years it was converted to a pair of cottages. These cottages are constructed in red brick with a slate roof and a hipped roofed porch. A low level stone wall forms the boundary to Knowsley Lane.

**3.11**  
The southern boundary of the site fronting Knowsley Lane is predominantly lined with a hedgerow, which is an important landscape asset and something that also provides a good reference point to inform future development proposals.

**3.12**  
The area to the south of the site on the opposite site of Knowsley Lane is dominated by residential neighbourhoods with associated local amenities and services. These support the everyday life within ward of Stockbridge.



School Cottages



Earlsfield Park Hedge Line

**3.13**

The two residential neighbourhoods that are directly adjacent to the site are Longview and Lyme Grove. These two neighbourhoods will have a direct interface with the eastern zone of the site where the majority of new employment and residential development is proposed. The relationship will be particularly important when detailed design work is undertaken, considering direct development interfaces, scale and massing, and accessibility and connectivity.

**3.14**

The Longview and Lyme Grove neighbourhoods contain important local amenities and assets including Hillside Shops, Earlsfield Park Primary School, St Columbus RC Primary School, New Horizons Children's Centre, and the Apostolic Church of Liverpool.

**Creating the Framework**

**3.15**

As previously set out in section 2.0 the existing landscape, recreational space and ecologically sensitive areas of the site has provided a strong reference point for structuring the masterplan, particularly in using this 'green infrastructure' to foster a common identity and character across the different development areas. This 'green infrastructure' provides a framework that all development across the site will be set within and begins to shape and frame different character areas.

**3.16**

The character areas can be defined as:

- Oak Plantation and the Lord Derby playing fields
- Eastern employment zone
- Western employment zone
- Residential Neighbourhood

**Oak Plantation, Lord Derby Playing Fields and George Hale Avenue Woodland**

**3.17**

Oak Plantation and the Lord Derby Playing Fields are significant recreational assets that play a key role in defining the character of Earlsfield Park,

particularly in respect of the 'green infrastructure framework', whilst also dominating the western areas of the site becoming a character area in their own right.

**3.18**

Whilst the established woodland to the east of George Hale Avenue is physically separate from Oak Plantation and the Lord Derby Playing Fields it has a strong visual connection and is therefore considered to fall into this character area.

**3.19**

Each of these natural and recreational areas has its own existing character that will influence the other character areas across the site. These are described and identified in paragraphs 2.72 – 2.83 of the masterplan report and figure 5 Green Infrastructure Framework. As development comes forward it must seek to improve and enhance the positive aspects of these natural and recreational assets and draw influence from them in terms of its own public realm and landscaping proposals.

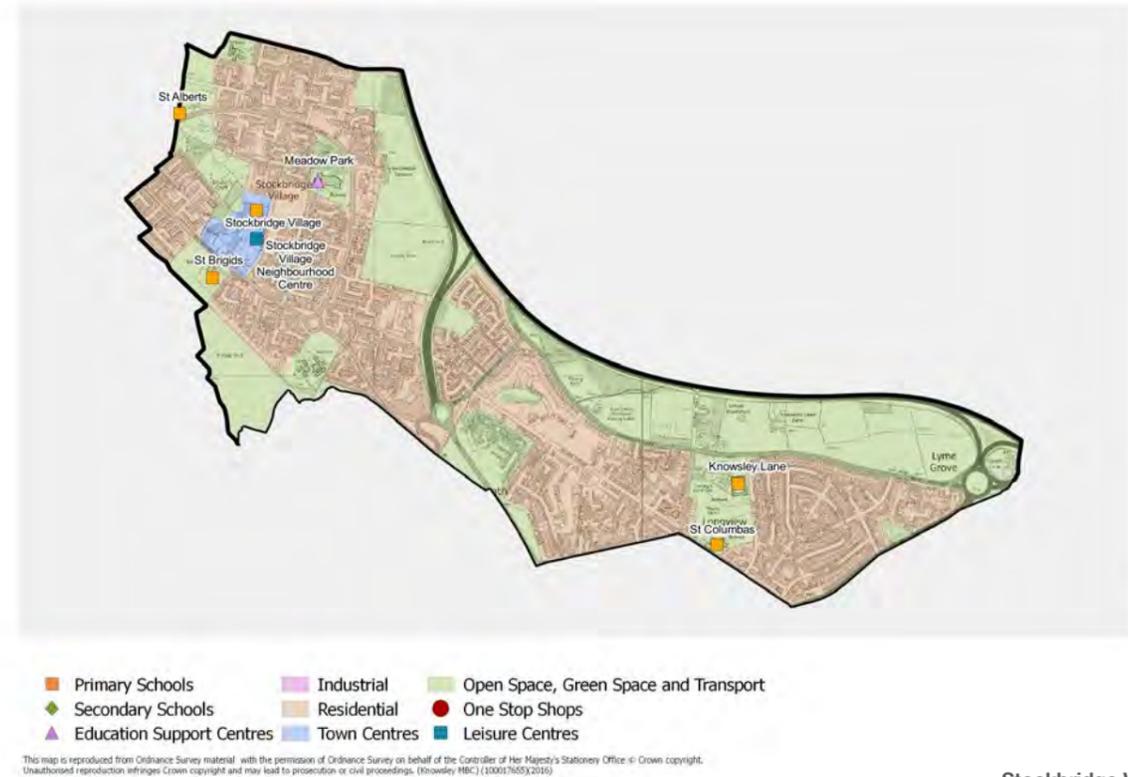
**Eastern Employment Zone**

**3.20**

One of the Council's key ambitions is to deliver a high quality employment location that will build upon the success of the Kings Business Park that is located in close proximity. As stated in section 2.0 of this masterplan report, the rationale for the site is to 'compliment not replicate' the offer at Kings Business Park by bringing a new employment product to the market – a **'Hybrid Employment Park'**.

**3.21**

The eastern employment zone incorporates the majority of the employment generating uses providing the optimum opportunity to showcase the profile of the 'Hybrid Employment Park'



Stockbridge Ward



Hillside Shops

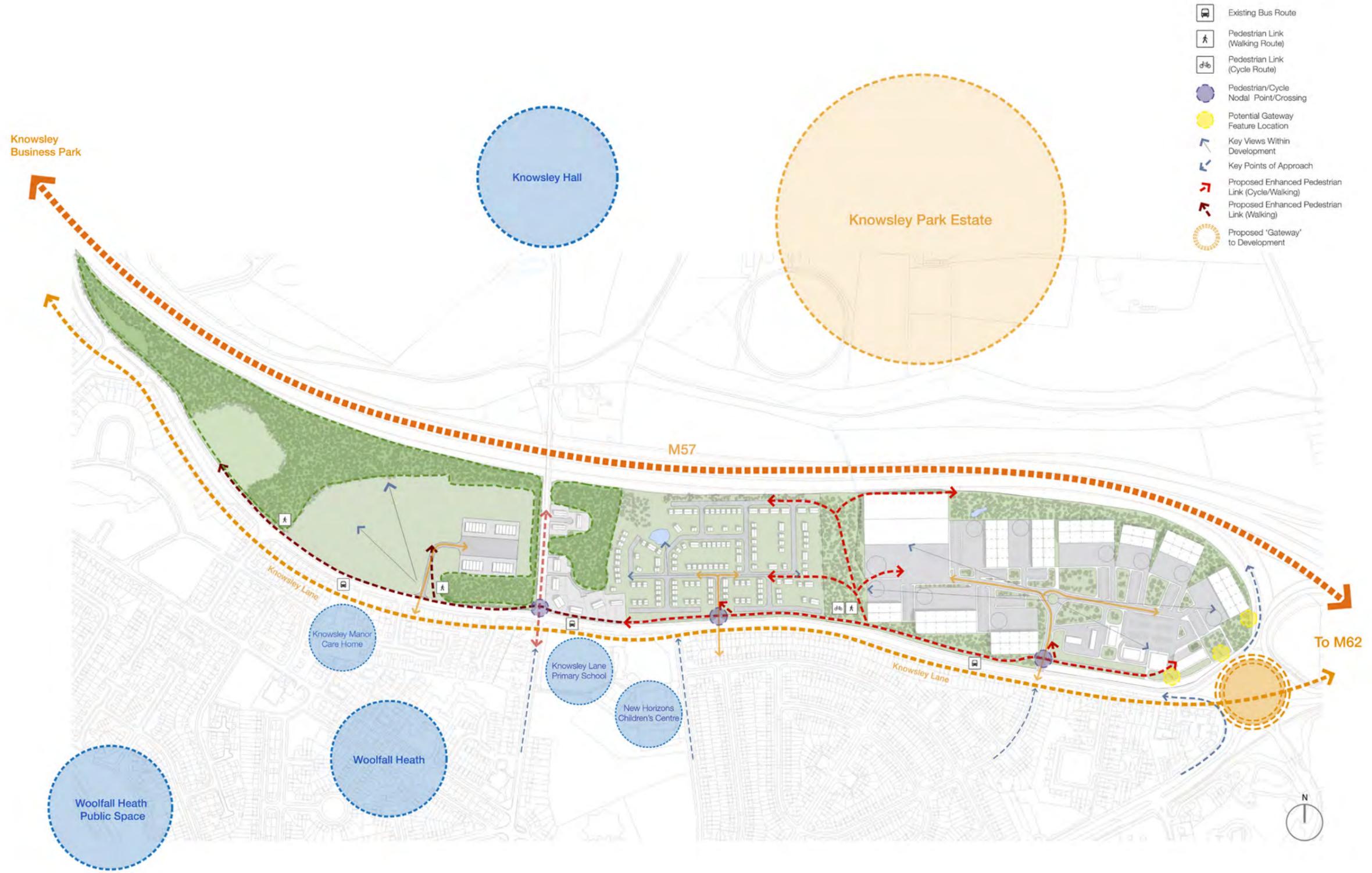


Figure 10 Urban Design Framework

along the M57 corridor, as well as providing a striking entrance at the junction of Earlsfield Park with junction 2 of the M57. It also presents the opportunity to provide a clear connection – visual and physical – to the established Kings Business Park referencing the importance of the relationship between the two premier business and employment locations.

### 3.22

This requires a bold design approach to the buildings in this eastern employment zone, particularly along the M57 corridor and at the junction of Knowsley Lane with junction 2 of the M57. Early design development for the first speculative phase of employment floorspace begins to express how this will be achieved and to set the benchmark for the character of this eastern employment zone (Figure 10).

### 3.23

The draft GA Elevation plans (Figure 10) communicate this early character development whereby expressed gables are incorporated in to the form of the employment units communicating the historic agricultural use of the site, whilst a simple palette of materials and colours will provide a modern contrast consisting of grey brick, composite vertical profiled aluminium wall cladding with accents of bronze look cladding. Super graphics on key elevations along the M57 corridor are also considered to communicate the profile and brand of the new 'Hybrid Employment Park'.



Figure 10: Early Phase 1 Design Development

**3.24**

The cluster of ancillary service uses that are located on the eastern and southern boundaries of this employment zone also serve to showcase the profile of the 'Hybrid Employment Park'. specifically through the use of scale and massing (hotel) and the use of well designed but striking advertisements and public realm. Figure 11 provides some precedent images that will inform the identity and character of this area of the masterplan.

**3.25**

The approach to the landscape will follow a similar agricultural / rural philosophy, responding to the historic agricultural use and reflecting upon the influence of the Knowsley Estate grounds to provide a high quality semi rural landscape that will frame and accentuate the form, design, and materiality of the employment units within their individual development plots.

**3.26**

Sensitivity of scale and massing will be required moving west along the Knowsley Lane frontage where there is an interface with residential properties on the opposite side of the road. Retaining as much of the existing hedgerow along this road frontage will be important, supplementing this with new boundary treatments that are more human and residential in their design and materiality where these are required. Figure 11 provides further detail on this design approach.



Figure 11: Ancillary Service Use Precedents

## Western Employment Zone

### 3.27

A further area of employment is proposed, and is defined as the western employment zone. This area is located to the immediate west George Hale Avenue.

The character of this zone will be different from that of the eastern zone for two reasons:

- A response to its immediate context
- The nature of the proposed end users.

### 3.28

It is proposed that small workshop / start up employment units will be located in this zone. The target audience are those that have started their business in their own homes but cannot/ do not want to take space on more traditional leasehold terms, for example, it will be space for the cake bakers / microbrewers / drapers etc of the future.

### 3.29

By their very nature they will be more domestic in their scale, massing, and design (Figure 12) and will be responsive to the natural environment that they are set within and surrounded by. The philosophy for this employment zone with therefore be to design and deliver a sensitively designed small employment starter unit scheme

set within a very high quality landscaped environment.

## Residential Neighbourhood

### 3.30

KCSLP policy SUE 2a and the supporting draft SPD states that the principal focus for new homes should be on providing a range of house types to serve the higher end of the residential market in Knowsley, specifically high quality family housing that diversifies the local housing offer.

### 3.31

ION Property Developments residential partner Bellway Homes Ltd is proposing to bring forward such a scheme, building upon the existing success and attractiveness of its housing product across the Borough, and recognising the opportunity presented by such a well located and attractive development site.

### 3.32

The existing landscape setting, including natural and ecological assets such as the pond in the north west corner of the site and the adjacent woodland, provides an attractive 'green' framework within which high quality new homes can be carefully laid out.

### 3.33

The new residential neighbourhood therefore has the potential to provide a seamless transition from the bold identity and scale of the eastern employment zone to the domestic scale of the existing properties and proposed start up units on George Hale Avenue and the recreational and woodland areas of Lord Derby playing fields and Oak Plantation beyond.

### 3.34

Its character will also be derived from variety of architectural styles in the surrounding area that use a range of materials, boundary and fenestration details.

### 3.35

Existing housing in the vicinity of the site displays a simple palette of materials including red brick, grey and red roofs, render and timber boarding and varying fenestration detailing. The varied palette of materials is supported by differing roof pitches including hipped roofs and pediments.

## Design Objectives and Principles

### Strategic Design Objectives

### 3.36

The overall design and layout of the masterplan, follows an Urban Design Framework – as illustrated at Figure 10 as a means of ensuring thorough consideration and the most suitable response to key characteristics of the area.

### 3.37

The key principles are set out below:

- To achieve a well considered and well planned blend of employment floorspace, homes, recreational and natural open space, and small scale ancillary local service uses in proximity to one another that will:
- Increase business interaction and opportunities
- Create a sense of place
- Provide activity, services and facilities for the benefit of the wider community within and adjacent to the site
- Appropriate zoning of uses to optimise the profile of the site at such a prominent location

alongside the M57 motorway whilst being sympathetic to its relationship with residential neighbourhoods to the south of Knowsley Lane.

- Being a truly 'mixed' use employment destination that provides the opportunity to deliver a range of high quality Advanced Manufacturing, research and development (R&D), and sub regional logistics floorspace.
- An applied hierarchy to the location of individual employment units that seeks to optimise developable area whilst remaining sympathetic to the immediate semi rural context and maintaining / enhancing the existing recreational space and established landscape / woodland.
- Creation of a gateway environment to mark the key M57 / A57 junction with appropriate scale, massing, landscape and public realm treatment, which also reflects and responds to the entrance and gateway to Kings Business Park.
- Encourage pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the site, Kings Business Park, and the Longview and Lyme Grove neighbourhoods, particularly focusing on the identified key points of approach and nodal/ crossing points.
- Utilise the existing landscape, recreational space and ecologically sensitive areas of the site to create a 'green infrastructure framework' that will foster a common identity across the different character areas.
- Promote and encourage pedestrian and cycle connectivity between the different character areas of the site utilising the green infrastructure network as a primary mechanism.
- Efficient treatment of strategic infrastructure works to maximise its effectiveness whilst minimising any physical dominance it may have, particularly the new main vehicular access points.
- Respect and respond to the identified key views that provide a direct visual connection to the surrounding and intermediate woodland and landscape areas, resulting in an aesthetically stimulating environment both externally and internally.



Figure 12: Workshop Start Up Precedent

## Employment Zone Principles

### 3.38

High level design principles provide further guidance for future development within the different zones across the site – this section deals with the employment zones. The guiding principles respond to the character area definition earlier in the chapter.

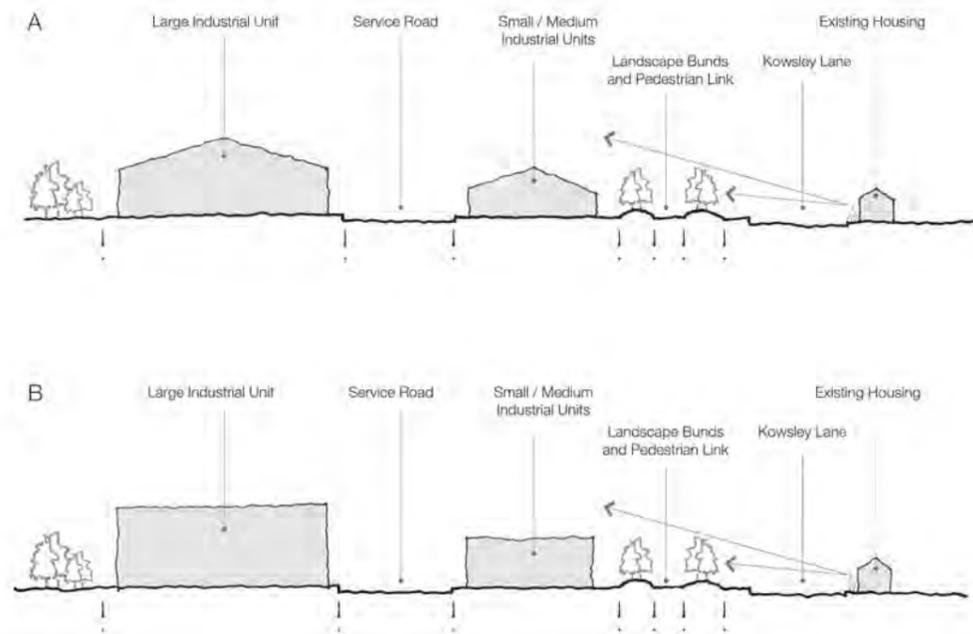


Figure 11 Employment Sketch Cross Section Options

## Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for the employment zones are illustrated by the sketch cross sections. These are underpinned by a philosophy that the layout of the units within the eastern employment zone in particular will typically comprise individual buildings in separate plots with interest and diversity being maintained through changes of layout, massing and detail of design.

Two sketch cross section approaches are presented to explore different treatments for industrial units within the employment zones. They both incorporate a hierarchy of scale, form, landscape and space to address the transition between the residential properties along Earlsfield Park, the small and medium industrial units across the eastern employment zone, the service road, and then large industrial units that border the M57.

The incorporation of landscaping bunds, structural landscaping, planting, and public realm will be multi-functional. It will provide the framework within which individual employment units will be set, provide a visual and acoustic buffer between the development and the edge of the existing housing, as well as being part of the green infrastructure framework that seeks to increase connectivity and permeability between and through the employment zone and into the residential neighbourhood to the west.

To optimise the creation of a buffer zone between the employment zone and residential neighbourhoods of Longview and Lyme Grove, it is proposed that the existing pedestrian route be enhanced and extended, thus providing a safe link between each phase of the development and in keeping with the character of the area.

As demonstrated in option A cross section, the form and hierarchy of the industrial units seek to optimise the area of developable land within the site, while remaining sympathetic to the surrounding scale and typology. Their orientation is important so that their visibility and profile is maximised to the two key movement corridors – the M57 and Knowsley Lane.

Option B demonstrates the less effective architectural response. The decision to base the form of the industrial units on the vernacular of the area as illustrated in Option A, reinforces the overall concept of creating a coherent design, knitting the development into the existing urban fabric.

The ancillary support services (hotel, restaurant / family pub, café, petrol filling station) must be planned and designed to create a visual and commercial presence onto the M57 / A57 roundabout in conjunction with the adjacent employment units. A functional connection and reference point between the Kings Business Park on the opposite side of the roundabout and the employment and business activity on the site itself is to be achieved to create a resource and gateway / entrance feature for both employment destinations.

The hotel will provide scale and presence on the roundabout alongside the adjacent employment units. It is considered that an optimum height for this development will be 3 storeys.

The commercial signage associated with the uses fronting the roundabout in conjunction with appropriately designed and located landscape / public realm will all seek to enhance the gateway environment at this location.

Flexibility is key and at the heart of comprehensively delivering the mix of land uses, activity, and infrastructure that will make the Earlsfield Park a success now and into the future, however there are certain parameters that all development must adhere to:

- Eastern employment zone units will be medium / large single story light industrial units
- Western employment units will be small single story start up units
- The maximum height for the ancillary service uses will be defined by the proposed hotel and will be no more than 3-storeys.
- The land take for the western employment area will be no more than 1.5 hectares.
- Where possible the existing hedgerow fronting Earlsfield Park is protected and reinforced – principally to the west of the main eastern employment zone access road.
- The hierarchy of scale, form, landscape and space principles set out in sketch cross sections A and B will form the basis of any future layout proposals
- A common design philosophy for the employment units across the site will be developed as part of the eastern employment zone phase 1 development – this will draw upon the references contained within paragraphs 3.20 – 3.26 of this section.

## Residential Neighbourhood

### 3.39

The overall design and layout of the proposed site, follows an Urban Design Framework – as High level guiding design principles provide further guidance for future development within the different zones – this section deals with the residential neighbourhood. The guiding principles respond to the character area definition earlier in the chapter.

### Guiding Principles

Attractive well designed homes that meet needs of local people, and attract new residents to the area, through a coherent mix of family, detached, semi detached and terraced houses will be provided.

New homes will consider the architectural style, detailing and materiality of the existing housing in the area, specifically those with heritage value, to provide character and diversity across the new neighbourhood. It is expected that new proposals will be designed to a simple palette of materials and detailing that compliments the simple building form that is prevalent across the local area.

New homes will present a strong built form to Knowsley Lane and provide a consistent boundary treatment to the site frontage incorporating a creative approach to landscaping and public realm. Reference must be taken from positive examples of existing boundary treatments in the local area.

Create a clear hierarchy of streets that facilitates effective vehicular access and egress but are also designed to promote a walkable neighbourhood with strong and clear pedestrian and cycle links. This will create rewarding, people riendly public realm experiences that are designed to encourage responsible vehicle speeds and manage the visual impact of the parked car.

Create a clear hierarchy of open and amenity space – from public open space to private garden – that is designed to be an integral part of the overarching green infrastructure framework and that facilities pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the western and eastern zones of the site.

Ensure connectivity to existing pedestrian and cycle routes to allow and encourage movement to local amenities both within the SUE and externally in the Longview neighbourhood.

Provide active street frontages encouraging social interaction between new residents.

Consider and respond positively to motorway noise and air quality impacts.

## Coordinated, connected and distinctive Green Infrastructure

### 3.40

The overall design and layout of the proposed site, follows an Urban Design Framework – as high level guiding design principles provide further guidance for future development within the different zones – this section deals with green infrastructure. The guiding principles respond to the character area definition earlier in the chapter.

### Guiding Principles

The site comprises a variety of natural landscape and recreational open space that are to be retained and enhanced. These have been pivotal in the development of the Design Framework, in maintaining the character of the site, and in knitting the masterplan proposals together as a coherent mixed use development that has a common identity.

Key principles applied to the proposed 'Green Infrastructure Framework' as demonstrated in Section 2 and Figure 5 of the Draft Masterplan Report are as follows:

- The hedgerows, ditches and streams, particularly to the northern and eastern boundaries of the site present the greatest ecological and environmental value as habitat corridors / woodland resources – all development proposals should seek to positively integrate these natural features, and where possible, consider their recreational role in terms of integrating footpaths that will encourage public engagement with wilder areas of the site.
- The pond within the small woodland located in the north east corner of the eastern employment area, along with the pond in middle of the residential neighbourhood, and to the east of George Hale Avenue, should be retained. These ponds have the potential to be the focus for any required Public Open Space.
- All development proposal should consider retaining all trees and woodland of value through careful masterplanning and design.
- All trees subject to an existing Tree Preservation Order will be retained and integrated within the development areas and/or new open space as appropriate.
- Ecological enhancements are to be encouraged within landscape and green infrastructure design, including planting mixes of wildflower and tree screening habitats, particularly to the boundaries of the site, as well as proposed 'building plot' boundaries by strengthening existing weak areas / gaps and new planting from a strategic landscape perspective, including consideration of linear linkages to provide ecological corridors.
- All elements of the green infrastructure framework, whether they are landscaping bunds, structural landscaping, general planting, or public realm etc must seek to be multi functional, particularly to increase connectivity and permeability between and through the employment zone and into the residential neighbourhood to the west.
- Development frontages to landscapes and natural environments and the green links and corridors that connect them must seek to be 'active'.

## Access and Movement

### 3.41

The overall design and layout of the proposed site, follows an Urban Design Framework – as high level guiding design principles provide further guidance for future development within the different zone – this section deals with access and movement. The guiding principles respond to the character area definition earlier in the chapter.

### Guiding Principles

Vehicular access to the eastern employment zone, new homes and western employment zone will be provided by separate access junctions with Knowsley Lane. This will allow the separation of industrial heavy goods traffic and residential traffic inside the development parcels in the interest of amenity and safety.

Access will be provided to the eastern employment zone by a new signal controlled junction with Knowsley Lane and Radway Road. The location of the access has been sited so as to reduce the chance of potential impact on the nearby M57 slips / Knowsley Lane / Liverpool Road roundabout. Another important factor in determining the location is the need to reduce impact of heavy goods on existing residents.

Access to the residential area will be provided by a ghost island priority junction.

A ghost island priority junction will also be used for vehicular access to the western employment zone junction with Knowsley Lane. The junction will be located in close proximity to the existing junction access to the site.

The movement and access network will be shaped through reference to the principles of the urban design framework and be designed to promote pedestrian and cyclist permeability.

The movement network will work in tandem with the Green Infrastructure Framework to create routes that are clear, intuitive, work with the site and its natural characteristics (including woodlands, structural landscaping and topography).

Development will be structured around a tailored strategic street hierarchy that will help to make legible connections and convey a semi rural character. The hierarchy aims to promote low speed family friendly streets including, at the lower order, shared surfaces. Street layout and design will be complemented by additional off highway pedestrian and cyclist links that can open up access for enjoyment of landscape / open space elements. These can further help the sense of connectivity into the surrounding area – aligning to existing key routes in and around Longview and Lyme Grove neighbourhoods, as well as Kings Business Park.

The design of the internal pedestrian footways and cycleways will be designed with good passive surveillance wherever possible. This will help encourage the use of these routes and provide a level of security to pedestrians and cyclists.

Pedestrian crossing facilities will be provided within all development parcels. For the eastern employment zone pedestrian crossing facilities will be integrated into the new traffic signal junction design to allow the safe crossing of the access junction and of Knowsley Lane. The pedestrian connection to Radway Road is important in connecting the site to nearby amenities, including the Primary School's, and the wider residential area.

An uncontrolled crossing will be provided in relation to the location of the new residential neighbourhood. This will include a central pedestrian island to allow the safe crossing of Knowsley Lane and will be incorporated into the ghost island design. This will ensure that connection to the residential area to the south is maintained.

For the western employment zone an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing with a pedestrian refuge will be incorporated into the design across Knowsley Lane. This will help connect the site to the wider residential neighbourhoods.

A new combined pedestrian and cycle facility is currently proposed to run parallel to Knowsley Lane which will be provided as part of the development. This will provide a continuous sustainable transport connection along and between the eastern employment zone, new homes and the western employment zone – appropriate crossing facilities will be provided where this route crosses George Hale Avenue to provide the opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians to safely access Lord Derby playing fields and Oak Plantation beyond.

The pedestrian and cycle facility will run the length of the eastern employment zone converting to a pedestrian only link west of George Hale Avenue through to the western employment zone. To the east the combined pedestrian / cycle facility will connect to existing pedestrian facilities at the M57 slips / Knowsley Lane / Liverpool Road roundabout.

Current bus stop facilities are likely to be required to be upgraded to current best practice standards in line with the relevant Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council standards.

# 4.0

## Delivery & Implementation

### Introduction

#### 4.1

The final section of this report presents the initial delivery and implementation considerations that have arisen from the masterplan and development appraisal work undertaken to date. These considerations have been limited to the viability and deliverability of the masterplan and as a consequence how this impacts upon development and infrastructure phasing provision.

#### 4.2

It also touches upon the proposed engagement and consultation strategy for the masterplan, as well as the current strategy for future planning application(s).

### Viability, Development and Infrastructure Phasing

#### 4.3

ION has undertaken an early development appraisal exercise to provide The Knowsley Estate with confidence that the masterplan is viable and deliverable. This exercise has included;

- A high level cost plan prepared by White Young Green.
- Valuation advice on the value of the employment uses provided by Mason Owen and Savills.
- Market testing of residential land values.
- Market testing of the ancillary retail and leisure use values.

#### 4.4

The phasing of development and associated infrastructure has been a critical consideration through this process. The outcome of the exercise has resulted in an initial phasing approach and strategy, which is also a requirement of the Council's own masterplan guidance.

#### 4.5

At this stage of the masterplan process the phasing approach and strategy is as follows:

- Phase 1a Contribution to agreed enhancements to the Oak Plantation and Lord Derby Playing Fields and new access to the starter units proposed for this area.
- Phase 1b – provision of the vehicular access infrastructure to the eastern employment zone to service the initial speculative phase of employment floorspace and to deliver the vehicular access infrastructure 'stub' into the remainder of the eastern employment zone.
- Phase 1c – the delivery of serviced development plots to support of 87,500sqft of light industrial / logistics units across the eastern employment zone.
- Phase 1d – construction of the ancillary service leisure / retail (petrol filling stations, drive thru [x1], pub / restaurant [x1], hotel [lodge 40 – 60 rooms]).
- Phase 1e - the construction of 2 initial speculate employment units totalling 45,000sqft of floor space subject to a bid for grant funding being successful.
- Phase 1f – 162 new homes.
- Phase 2 – 220,000sqft of advanced manufacturing / R&D / sub regional logistic floorspace.
- Phase 3 – 18,000sqft managed workspace / start up units.

#### 4.6

Notwithstanding this phasing sequence, paragraphs 2.33 and 2.34 of this masterplan report identify that flexibility is key and is at the heart of comprehensively delivering the mix of land uses, activity, and infrastructure that will make the Earlsfield Park a success now and into the future by keeping its offer current and attractive to the market over time. As such, the different components or phases of the masterplan should not be seen in the context of having to be delivered sequentially. If the market dictates, or a sound business plan is presented that allows parts of the site to come forward ahead of others, this should be embraced and brought forward whilst ensuring that it benefits

the site as a whole and does not prejudice the long term ability of the site to be delivered out comprehensively.

#### 4.7

The early development appraisal also demonstrates that the land value derived from the sale of the ancillary service leisure / retail and residential development provides sufficient funding to deliver the following elements subject to no Section 106 payments being imposed:

- A contribution to the Oak Plantation and Lord Derby Playing Field enhancements and the vehicular access infrastructure to serve it and the development plots for the managed workspace / start up units (western employment zone).
- The vehicular access infrastructure to open up the speculative first phase employment (eastern employment zone) and the vehicular access infrastructure 'stub' to open up the remainder of the eastern employment area.
- A first phase of serviced plots to support 87,500sqft of eastern employment zone floorspace and making ready the plots for the family pub, petrol filling station and hotel uses to be delivered.

#### 4.8

Whilst this is the case, constructing an initial phase of the employment uses takes the development appraisal into a deficit, i.e. there is a viability gap. ION Property Developments and the Council has therefore submitted a Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Single Investment Fund (SIF) funding bid to address this viability gap and allow two speculative light industrial units to be delivered (45,000sqft).

### Engagement and Consultation

#### 4.9

It is proposed that the draft masterplan will be consulted upon in parallel with the Council's draft SPD with the objective of providing nearby residents and other stakeholders with maximum opportunity to engage in the evolution of masterplan and final development.

### Approach to Planning Applications

#### 4.10

Based on the outcome of the initial development appraisal, the initial planning application strategy is to submit a hybrid planning application immediately following the adoption of the SPD and endorsement of the masterplan. This hybrid application is likely to comprise the following:

- Detail – provision of vehicular access infrastructure to the new managed workspace / starter unit – western employment zone.
- Detail – provision of the vehicular access infrastructure to the eastern employment zone, including the speculative first phase floorspace and the vehicular access infrastructure 'stub' into the remainder of the employment zone.
- Detail – Construction of 45,000sqft of light industrial / office units (two units and subject to funding bid success).
- Detail – up to 162 new homes
- Outline – due to the detail of investment required into the Oak Plantation and Lord Derby Playing Fields, at this current time these proposals are considered best to dealt with in outline, albeit the necessary contribution will be provided on receipt of planning permission.
- Outline – 42,500 light industrial / office in eastern employment zone.
- Outline – construction of the ancillary leisure / retail (petrol filling stations, drive thru [x1], pub / restaurant, hotel [lodge 40 – 60 rooms])
- Outline – 220,000 sqft of advanced manufacturing / R&D / sub regional logistic and 18,000sqft managed workspace / start up units and associated landscaping.

#### 4.11

Reserved matters applications are anticipated to be prepared and submitted to align with the market demand and against the provisions of paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of this masterplan report.