

THE MERSEY GATEWAY PROJECT

LAND USE

CHAPTER 9.0

LAND USE

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9. LAND USE

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 This Chapter has been prepared to assess the effects of the Mersey Gateway Project (the Project) on land use, having regard to the amount, location and nature of land take that would be necessary for the construction of the Project and effects that the use of the relevant land would have on the Borough of Halton. This report has been written in accordance with Highways Agency *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB): volume 11, section 3, Part 6 Land Use* (Ref. 4). In addition, a qualitative assessment of the Project against land use plans within the Borough has been made. This assessment has been undertaken based upon detailed information which relates to the current and proposed land use in the vicinity of the Project provided by the Council and from additional surveys undertaken for the Project.

9.1.2 The information to inform this Chapter has been derived from a number of other assessments undertaken as part of the Project, these include:

- a. Transport (Chapter 16); and
- b. Socio-Economic Impacts (Chapter 21).

9.2 Purpose of the Study

- 9.2.1 Land use is a standard component subject in most EIAs. The assessment of the potential effect of a Project on land use within a defined study area is an important consideration for planning authorities to undertake when assessing planning applications. The potential direct and indirect effects of the Project are important because the Project could affect much of Halton Borough, from the M56 junctions in the South to central Widnes in the North. Without the assessment enclosed in this Chapter, it would be difficult for stakeholders to assess the effects of the Project in terms of land take, effects which lead to change in land use and severance of public rights of way and assumed rights of way.
- 9.2.2 This assessment has considered the potential effects which may arise from the Project on existing land use within the Borough, a “project corridor” centred on the proposed route extending 500m each side of the works. The assessment also considers against the published designations for future developments given in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

9.3 Study Area

9.3.1 The study area considered in this Chapter has two extents, as follows:

- a. In the first instance the construction and operation of the Project is considered against policies and plans for development and land use across the Borough, as given in the UDP (which covers land use from 2002 to 2016). For this reason the study area for this aspect is defined by the Borough boundary; and
- b. Secondly, the direct temporary and permanent effects of the construction and operation of the Project will be more restricted in land use terms to a corridor either side of the Mersey Gateway Bridge, its access routes and adjacent areas of land. For this reason a more detailed assessment of the potential effects of the Project in land use terms has been undertaken on a 500m zone either side of the works, the “project corridor” centred on the alignment of works.

9.3.2 The Project has the potential to affect the economic fortunes of an area greater than Halton Borough. However, any potential changes outside the Borough would be subject to a range of regulatory, economic and environmental factors which make it difficult to quantify their effects, in land use terms, in this Chapter. Therefore, they have been excluded from the land use Chapter.

9.3.3 The boundaries of the study areas are shown in Figure 9.1 (Appendix 9.1).

9.4 Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

9.4.1 This Section of this Chapter outlines the main policies and plans relevant to land use within the Project. A summary of key policy documents, additional policies and legislation specific to land use are outlined below. A further examination of project specific planning policy is contained in Chapter 6 of this ES.

9.4.2 In preparing this Chapter, reference has been made to the following planning policy guidance notes and planning policy statements:

National Policy

- a. PPS 1: Delivering Sustainable Development;
- b. PPG 2: Green Belts;
- c. PPS 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas;
- d. PPG 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation; and
- e. PPS 25: Development and Flood Risk.

Regional Policy

- a. Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (2003); and
- b. Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (2006).

Local Policy

- a. Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005); and
- b. Emerging Halton Local Development Framework.

National Policy

9.4.3 Of the national Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance documents available from central government, the following have been reviewed in relation to their relevance to land use:

9.4.4 *PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2005)* provides broad policy guidance on delivering sustainable development and should be read in conjunction with other national policy statements. The Government's key objective is to encourage Local Planning Authorities to bring forward land of a suitable quality in appropriate locations for residential, retail, commercial and industrial development. By using land use planning efficiently to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development, suitable land can be made available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives, in order to improve people's quality of life, but also by using these resources (land use) efficiently.

9.4.5 *PPG2: Green Belts (1995)*, the fundamental aim of the Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Green Belts help to protect the countryside, be it in agricultural, forestry or other use, and can assist in moving towards more sustainable patterns of urban development. When any large-scale development or redevelopment of land occurs in the Green Belt, it should, where possible contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of land in Green Belts. The visual amenities of the Green Belt should not be damaged by proposals for development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt. The purposes of including land in Green Belts are of paramount importance to their continued protection, and should take precedence over the land use objectives.

9.4.6 *PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas (2004)* replaced *PPG7: The Countryside - Environmental Quality and Economic and Social Development (1997)*. The key principles ensure that decisions on development proposals are based on sustainable development and an integrated approach to the consideration of social inclusion, effective protection and

enhancement of the environment. By planning the use of land efficiently and prudent use of natural resources this policy aims to maintain high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

- 9.4.7 A revised version of *PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002)* was adopted by the ODPM in July 2002 superseding previous planning guidance published in 1991. The principal objective of PPG17 is to ensure that open spaces, sport and recreation are well designed and implemented into planning policies that fit into the deliverance of the broader government objectives. A high quality of local networks or land use designated for these facilities needs to be maintained and well managed in order to help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe.
- 9.4.8 *PPS25: Development and Flood Risk (2006)*: The effects of weather events can be increased in severity both as a consequence of previous decisions about the location, design and nature of settlement and land use. This policy aims to ensure that flood risk on development is taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding, and to direct development away from areas at highest risk. By using land use planning effectively, it will help to deliver both sustainable development and apply the government's policy on flood risk. Where land use is designated or available for development, this policy aims to make it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere and where possible, reducing flood risk overall.

Regional Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (2003)

- 9.4.9 RSS13, now part of the development plan, provides a regional planning strategy for the North West. This sets out broad, strategic policies at the regional level where there are matters which, though not of national scope, apply across regions or parts of regions and need to be considered on a scale wider than the area of a single planning authority. RSS13 states that the main focus for development should be the North West Metropolitan Area (NWMA), with priority areas identified as Manchester and Liverpool City Centres.
- 9.4.10 A number of specific RSS policies are relevant to the Project, as outlined below:
- a. *DPI - Economy in the Use of Land and Buildings* sets out the RSS13 core development principles and emphasises the sequential approach to the effective use of land and buildings within urban areas, followed by previously developed land. The policy states that new development should make the efficient use of transport facilities/networks to assist people in meeting their needs locally;
 - b. *DP4 - Promoting Sustainable Economic Growth and Competitiveness and Social Inclusion*, seeks to strengthen and expand the Region's economy in a sustainable way which produces a greater degree of social inclusion. There will be opportunities to encourage the re-use of disused land and buildings, critical to improving the Region's image. Opportunities should also be taken to reshape and restructure land uses to the extent necessary to establish well designed and compact, mixed-use and mixed-tenure neighbourhoods with good facilities and linkages. The aim is to improve local access to jobs, shops, leisure and community facilities and open space;
 - c. *SD1 - The North West Metropolitan Area* advise that first priority should be given to development and resources which will enhance significantly the economic strength, complementarity of roles, overall quality of life, environmental enhancement, and social regeneration within the City Centre of Liverpool and its surrounding inner area, and which will enhance the major, strategic infrastructure which supports them. Within the North West Metropolitan Area greater economic synergy and prosperity will follow on from the development of more efficient and better quality transport linkages within the conurbations, and between the city centres of Liverpool and Manchester/Salford;

- d. *SD2 - The policy on other settlements within the North West Metropolitan Area* identifies Runcorn and Widnes as areas in need of very significant enhancement, in terms of improved townscape and landscape quality, and encourages opportunities for a higher quality of life overall. A focus on development with the NWMA will generate a need for improved public transport networks between areas and towns, alongside the introduction of management and additional measures to ease traffic flow on motorways;
- e. *SD7 - The North West's Coast* identifies an emphasis towards the conservation and enhancements of historic and archaeological features, natural beauty, seascapes and natural features. Any form of development should respect the changing physical nature of the coastline, and RSS13 promotes a continual focus on water quality, habitat management, and development quality to create exciting and attractive new living and working environments; and
- f. *ER1 - Management of the North West's Natural, Built and Historic Environment* promotes the positive management of the region's natural, built and historic environment by Local Planning Authorities to protect it from development likely to cause harm. Development likely to affect such sites significantly should only be allowed if there are no alternative solutions, and only if there are reasons of overriding public interest.

Emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West (2006)

- 9.4.11 A full review of RSS13 commenced in July 2004, with a submitted draft document published by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) in January 2006. This was later subject to public consultation between 20th March 2006 and 12th June 2006. An Examination in Public (EiP) into the RSS was held between October 2006 and February 2007. On 8th May 2007 the EiP Panel published its report. It is expected that the RSS will be formally adopted in mid 2008.
- 9.4.12 To inform the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the Region, the NWRA produced a Regional Transport Strategy in 2003. The Strategy was progressed by the North West Assembly with a steer from the Regional Transport Co-ordination Group and involved the participation of a wide range of stakeholders through a wider reference group. The Regional Transport Strategy now forms an integral element of the draft RSS.
- 9.4.13 In addition, a number of specific emerging RSS policies are also relevant to the development proposal, outlined below:
 - a. *DP1 - Regional Development Principles* These continue to promote the efficient use of land, buildings and infrastructure. Development proposals and schemes within the region should incorporate an appropriate mix of uses that reduce the need to travel. This influences spatial land use planning in Local Development Frameworks (LDF) such as the Council's. Development should firstly focus on the effective use of existing buildings and infrastructure within settlements, prior to the re-use of previously developed land. Emerging plans and strategies need to develop and implement policies to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by using land use planning to influence mixed use development and effective use of infrastructure;
 - b. *RDF1 - Main Development Locations* aim to ensure that most new development in the Region takes place within the urban areas of the Regional Centres and Regional Towns and Cities. Runcorn and Widnes are identified as Regional Towns in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy. This therefore requires effective use of existing land within the urban centres and consequently improvements in infrastructure to allow effective use of urban sites;
 - c. *RDF4 - The Coast*, this policy promotes the enhancement of the economic importance of the coastal region and the regeneration of coastal communities. Local Authorities should promote the conservation and enhancement of cultural, historical and natural environmental assets, including land and seascapes, and ensure the prudent and sustainable use of natural resources. In land use terms this required coastal areas to be

- sustainably used and effective land use planning to ensure effective management of those areas;
- d. *EM1 - Integrated Land Management*, this policy seeks the delivery of an integrated approach to land management based upon detailed character assessments and landscape strategies. These should aim to provide an increase in the region's biodiversity resources through the protection, maintenance, restoration and expansion of priority habitats. Natural, man-made and historical features which contribute to the character and culture of landscapes, places and local distinctiveness within the North West should also be subject to protection and maintenance; and
 - e. *EM3 - Green Infrastructure* promotes the identification, promotion and delivery of multi-purpose networks of greenspace where there is currently limited access to natural greenspace, or where connectivity between these places is poor. New major development and regeneration schemes should seek to incorporate green infrastructure provision to address any deficiency. For the Project this means that it must ensure that connectivity in green and open spaces is maintained.

Local Policy

Halton Unitary Development Plan (2005)

- 9.4.14 The local land-use policy framework is given in the Halton UDP. The Halton UDP was adopted by the Council in April 2005 and covers the plan period 2002-2016. At present, all existing UDP policies are saved for three years until April 2008. The Council has now applied to the Secretary of State to save its policies for a further three years, for which a decision is imminent. The Borough Council is presently in the process of preparing a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs) which will form the basis of its Local Development Framework (LDF) to replace the current UDP.
- 9.4.15 The UDP includes a number of specific policies relating to environmental, social and economic issues that influence, or are influenced by the Project. The policies relevant to land use are summarised in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1 - Specific Allocations of the Halton UDP

UDP Policy Reference	Policy	Relevance to the Project
S14	A New Crossing of the River Mersey	This policy seeks to promote the development of a new bridge across the River Mersey. During the development and operation of the new crossing current land use designations within the borough may be subject to changes.
RG1	Action Area 1 - Southern Widnes	The Southern Widnes Action Area is proposed as an area of mixed uses, including housing. But will also consider land use for; business, general industry (provided there is no detrimental effect on residential amenity), residential institutions, dwelling housings, community facilities, shops (that serve the local community provided that UDP retail policies are complied with), food and drink outlets, recreation and leisure facilities and open space and public spaces. The current land use should be designed and planned to ensure that these requirements are met.
RG2	Action Area 2 - Central Widnes	The Central Widnes Action Area is proposed as a mixed-use area for uses supporting and enhancing the vitality and viability of Widnes Town Centre. The following land uses will be acceptable; financial and professional Services, food and drink, business uses, hotels, residential institutions, assembly and leisure and shops (that serve the local community provided that UDP retail policies are

UDP Policy Reference	Policy	Relevance to the Project
		complied with). The new developments should be well related to the Town Centre and therefore require efficient use of current land.
RG3	Action Area 3 - Widnes Waterfront	Within the Waterfront Action Area, the following land uses will be acceptable; employment, residential, leisure (where they comply with policy outlined in the UDP), open space, food and drink, and bulky goods retail warehousing (where it complies with policy outlined in the UDP). The nature, design and land use designated for this development should take advantage of the waterside location beside the St. Helens Canal and Mersey estuary. But it should also efficiently integrate land use for planning with other adjacent action areas.
RG4	Action Area 4 - Runcorn and Weston Docklands	The Runcorn and Weston Docklands Action Area are proposed as an area primarily for the development of freight handling, storage and distribution activities. Land uses will include; business, general industry, storage and distribution, open space, uses for ancillary to employment area and education and housing. Development should take advantage of its waterside location and planning of the proposed land uses should be developed to benefit the area, e.g. commercially as a leisure and tourism facility.
RG6	Action Area 6 - Castlefields and Norton Priory	Within this area, development will permit land use for new housing, open space and community use. There may be a requirement to replace existing housing and land currently used for community use which may become redundant, but this will allow for more efficient planning of existing land use to accommodate for the restructuring of the new proposed land uses.
GE1	Control of Development in the Green Belt	Planning permission will not be given for inappropriate development within the Green Belt, or to proposals for development conspicuous from the Green Belt that would harm its visual amenity by reason of their siting, materials or design; except in very special circumstances. Development in the Green Belt will be regarded as inappropriate unless it is for any of the following purposes; agriculture or forestry, the limited extension, alteration, or replacement of existing dwellings, the re-use of buildings, essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries or other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
GE5	Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities in the Urban Fringe and Open Environment	Proposals for the development of outdoor sport and recreation facilities in the urban fringe and open countryside will be permitted provided that certain criteria can be satisfied. Those that apply in terms of land use are to ensure that proposals; do not cause damage to the best and most versatile agricultural land, or conflict with agricultural interests (best and most versatile agricultural land is defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a); and that facilities should use existing buildings if they are available. New buildings or structures should be sited close to any existing buildings and blend into the landscape in terms of the design, siting, materials and landscaping.
GE6	Protection of Designated Greenspace	Development within designated and proposed greenspace will not be permitted unless it is ancillary to the enjoyment of the greenspace or, in the case of designated greenspace in educational use; it is specifically required for educational purposes. However, exceptions may be made where the loss of the amenity value which led to the

UDP Policy Reference	Policy	Relevance to the Project
		designation of the site as greenspace, is adequately compensated for.
GE7	Proposed Greenspace Designations	The Council has given proposals for the following greenspace designations; Hutchinson's Hill, Upton Rocks park and structural landscaping, Wigg Island, Sandymoor open space and structural landscaping, land south of Employment site 49 Johnsons Lane; Keckwick Brook Linear Park, landscape buffer surrounding employment site 253 "Land North of Halebank Road" and future cemetery use for Widnes Cemetery.
GE8	Development within Designated Greenspace	This policy allows certain developments to be built within areas of designated greenspace. Developments will only be permitted if their function is directly related and ancillary to the use of the greenspace. It will also allow development specifically for educational purposes. However, where development is permitted, the buildings should be of a scale, form, layout and design which respects the character and open nature of the greenspace. It should not lead to a loss in the overall amenity and use of the greenspace.
GE10	Protection of Linkages in Greenspace Systems	The linkages between greenspaces provide important visual, physical, functional and structural linkages. Development will not be permitted if the following could occur; severance or unacceptably affect the function, visual and physical linkages, detrimentally affect the overall amenity of the system, cause effects on the landscape, wildlife and recreational value, effect future objectives of creating inter-connecting greenspaces, impair the movement of people on foot, cycle or horseback or cause effects on ecological processes and loss of (protected) flora and fauna.
GE11	Protection of Incidental Greenspace	This policy protects the loss of incidental greenspace from development for housing, commercial and industrial use where the greenspace is of amenity value (measured against the criteria for designation set out in Policy GE6 of the Halton UDP, 2005).
GE12	Protection of Outdoor Playing Space for Formal Sport and Recreation	Development that would result in the loss of outdoor playing space for formal sport, and recreation whether in public, private or education use will not be permitted unless certain criteria can be satisfied (as outlined in GE12).
GE15	Protection of Outdoor Playing Space for Children	Development that would lead to the loss of outdoor playing space for children will not be permitted unless certain criteria can be satisfied (as outlined in the UDP).
E1 (142)	Local & Regional Employment Land Allocation (Ditton Road / Speke Road)	Land is allocated for development on Ditton Road/Speke Road for employment use (in accordance with Part 1 Policy S19 of the Halton UDP, 2005).
E1 (53/5)	Local & Regional Employment Land Allocation (Davey Road, Astmoor)	Land is allocated for development on Davey Road, Astmoor for employment use (in accordance with Part 1 Policy S19 of the Halton UDP, 2005).
E2	Priority Employment Redevelopment Areas	This policy identifies priority employment redevelopment areas within the Borough which are considered suitable for employment redevelopment as and when they become vacant, are fully reclaimed and when land assembly takes place.
E3	Primarily Employment Areas	Development where it can be used for business, general industry, storages and distribution and Sui Generis industrial uses will be permitted in primarily employment

UDP Policy Reference	Policy	Relevance to the Project
		areas designated on the UDP map, 2005.
H1	Provision for New Housing	This policy sets out land that will be provided for new dwellings in line with the building rate set by RSS. Halton is to provide 330 dwellings per annum, in line with this policy. The council have outlined 3 phases of development for the allocation of new housing; Phase 1 (2002-2007), Phase 2 (2007-2011) and Phase 3 (2011-2016).
TP2	Existing Public Transport Facilities	This policy prevents development that is likely to prejudice the use of; the Runcorn busway as a part of the public transport network and the present or future use of existing stations, their interchange facilities or railway lines as part of the public transport network. However, improvement to these facilities will be permitted.
TP3	Disused Public Transport Facilities	Development will not be permitted where it is likely to prejudice the use of; the Ditton Station in Widnes, the Halton Curve rail line in Runcorn, the Shell Green route rail line in Widnes, the Bridgewater Locks which connect the Bridgewater Canal to the Manchester Ship Canal. However, re-opening of these transport facilities will be permitted.
TP4	New Public Transport Facilities	This policy prevents development that is likely to prevent the opportunity for new railway stations to be built. It promotes new stations and other new public transport facilities. The policy will not permit development where the provision of additional rail tracks could be prejudiced.
TP9	The Greenway Network	This policy aims to provide networks of largely car-free, off-road routes connecting to facilities and open space in and around towns, cities and the countryside all over the country. It will not permit development where these aims would be compromised.
TP10	The Trans-Pennine Trail and Mersey Way	These are important routes within the greenway network and are important sections of longer distance recreation routes. Development incorporating or adjoining these routes will be expected to comply with policy TP9: The Greenway Network. Proposals for the development of recreational, tourism or other related facilities adjacent to, and incidental to, the development and enjoyment of the routes named in this policy will be permitted subject to the requirements of other policies in the UDP being met.

- 9.4.16 In addition to the specific planning policies summarised in Table 9.1, the Halton UDP also incorporates a number of specific planning policies against which land uses as a result of the Project should be assessed. Those relevant to Land Use are PR6; Land Quality and PR13; Vacant and Derelict Land, further descriptions of these policies can be found in the Planning Policy Chapter.

Emerging Halton Local Development Framework (LDF)

- 9.4.17 The UDP policies will be gradually supplemented and then replaced by a number of different plans that will make up the new LDF. These will be prepared at different times with some proposing new land uses and others containing policies for the control of development and planning applications.
- 9.4.18 The Council is in the process of developing the initial high level documents within the LDF. Until these are complete, considerations of land use within the Borough will remain as identified in the UDP, which continues to be in effect until 2011.

- 9.4.19 The Council has currently prepared the Core Strategy for the LDP and is currently preparing a series of Local Development Documents (LDDs) to form the basis of its emerging LDF. On adoption, these will replace the Council's existing strategic and generic UDP policies. At present, all existing UDP policies are automatically saved for three years until April 2008. These will gradually be replaced as the Council's LDDs are adopted.
- 9.4.20 The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2007 timetable establishes dates for the adoption of key LDF Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and SPDs of relevance to the Project, as follows:
- a. *Core Strategy* - This will set out the vision, objectives and strategy for the spatial development of the Borough of Halton. It is the over-arching policy document for the LDF and all other DPDs must be in conformity with the Core Strategy, as well as the RSS for the North West. The Council's LDS identifies a proposed date for adoption in January 2009;
 - b. *Site-Specific Allocations DPD* - This document will allocate land for specific uses, including policies relating to the delivery of site-specific allocations, and is also likely to provide additional development control related policies which will set the criteria against which all planning applications will be decided; and
 - c. *Development Control Policies* - This will establish additional policies against which all planning applications will be decided. The scheduled date for adoption is November 2010;
- 9.4.21 *Southern Widnes Regeneration Area* - Provides the policies and proposals for the comprehensive development / redevelopment of the Southern Widnes area. Its proposed date for adoption is currently scheduled for Autumn 2008.
- 9.4.22 Emerging policies and plans will appear during the Project period. It is the intention of the Chapter to concentrate on existing policies as these have been both adopted and considered at EiP. As new policies emerge, their implication on the Project will be assessed.

9.5 Assessment Methodology

Methodology

- 9.5.1 The assessment of the potential effect of the Project on land use has been undertaken based on the methodology given within Highways Agency (Ref. 4) *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB): volume 11, section 3, Part 6 Land Use*. The assessment focused on the potential effects of the development on land used for residential, commercial/industrial, recreation, development and agriculture. Effects on land designated for its ecological importance are discussed in Chapter 10 for its landscape and visual amenity in Chapter 12, for its archaeological or cultural importance in Chapter 13 and for navigation/aquatic use in Chapter 18. In addition, socio-economic effects of the development are discussed in Chapter 20.
- 9.5.2 The extent of the study area has focused upon land use within the Borough and for areas of land within a 500m limit either side of the centre line of the works (the “project corridor”) which will be changed directly or indirectly as a result of the Project, both temporarily during construction and permanently following the opening of the New Bridge have been considered. This Chapter of the ES does not address future land use changes that would be likely to occur as a result of the release of land by the Project or/be a result of its indirect effects.
- 9.5.3 Maps of existing and proposed land uses in the Borough of Halton provided in Geographic Information System (GIS) format by the Council have been used to determine the nature of land use which would be changed, or development land that would be no longer available for future development as a result of the development of the Project. This data originates from a dataset used by the Council to define their UDP.
- 9.5.4 Through the use of maps of existing and proposed land use, these land uses have been classified into a number of receptors, these include:
- a. Residential Areas;
 - b. Community Resources/Open Space;
 - c. Commercial/Industrial Land;
 - d. Agricultural Land;
 - e. Infrastructure;
 - f. Development Land; and
 - g. Other Properties.
- 9.5.5 The assessment process has been developed using a baseline of land designated for existing and future development in the Borough according to adopted policy within the Council’s UDP and discussions with the Council. In addition, known development sites identified in the forecasting report have been included in the assessment. Future windfall sites that may be brought forward by the private sector have been excluded from the assessment.
- 9.5.6 This process was facilitated by ArcGIS, which was used to overlay the location of the Project on top of land use maps of Halton. This allowed the spatial location of the areas of land use which will be affected by the proposals to be readily identified, whilst also providing information on the nature, number and size of individual sites of land use.
- 9.5.7 Rights of way have been identified from OS mapping and through the completion of a rights of way survey. The survey was undertaken by Gifford within the application boundaries of the “project corridor”. Rights of way and assumed rights of way were identified by field walking the “project corridor” and noting obvious signs of established public use as assumed rights of way. However, due to accessibility, observations were made beyond the application boundaries where possible, e.g. along some areas of saltmarsh.

- 9.5.8 Once construction of the Project has been completed, land used temporarily for construction compound and construction activities will be returned to productive use. Whilst there will be no subsequent direct changes to land use within the application site boundary as a direct result of the Project, areas of such land that have been cleared for the proposed of the Project may become available for different uses. It is anticipated that the Project will have indirect effects upon land use beyond the opening year (2015) associated with changes in economic prosperity in Halton and the ability of the Council to implement regeneration plans. A detailed assessment of the economic effects of the Project is reported on in Chapter 20; the findings of which have been used to inform this land use assessment.

Evaluation and Assessment

- 9.5.9 Assessment of the potential effect of the Project across land use proposed within the specific UDP policies across the Borough has been undertaken using a qualitative approach. The assessment has considered the potential of the Project to affect the delivery of specific land use changes (such as provision of new housing) by considering the effect on issues such as access/severance, loss of land, and reduction of land availability for such development (as defined in the UDP). Therefore, windfall applications and applications from private developers for sites not allocated in the UDP have not been considered.
- 9.5.10 Effects potentially occurring as a result of either the construction or operation of the Project on land use within the “project corridor” were identified. Potential effects during the construction and operational phases are discussed in more detail in Section 9.7.

Effect Scales

- 9.5.11 The significance of effects has been determined through an assessment of the magnitude of effect and the importance of the receptor. The criteria used to determine the magnitude of each effect, the importance of receptors and hence overall significance of potential effects are provided below.

Outline of Significance

- 9.5.12 Effect significance, prior to the implementation of mitigation measures was determined using the following criteria.
- a. Positive or negative effect;
 - b. Permanent or temporary effect;
 - c. Duration of the temporary effect;
 - d. Direct or indirect effect;
 - e. Magnitude of the effect; and
 - f. Importance/ Sensitivity of receptor.

Nature of Effects

- 9.5.13 The nature of effects was determined by considering whether the Project will have an effect on the receptor, i.e. specific land use; residential areas, agricultural land, etc. The potential effects are then assessed based on the actual effect they will have upon the identified receptors. Effects included the permanent loss of land, temporary loss of land either due to its use for construction or affected by temporary severance and permanent severance.

Positive or Negative Effect

- 9.5.14 The status of the effects was assessed by considering whether the Project will have a positive or negative effect on the receptor.

9.5.15 The potential effects are then assessed based on the actual effect they will have upon the identified receptors. The effects were graded as follows:

- a. Positive - The bringing back into effective use land which currently is adversely affected by its contaminative status, historic use or by poor access. In addition, improvements to public rights of way, enhancing accessibility are considered a positive effect. An example of this would be improved access to Ditton Road area, which would facilitate future development;
- b. Neutral - an effect that is likely to have negligible influence, irrespective of other effects; and
- c. Negative - The current site will no longer be available for its current use or that conceivable under the existing or emerging development plans; or allows the existing land use to proceed but with inconvenience or disruption or which would cause temporary or short term delays to consented development. An example of this would be loss of commercial/industrial land at Catalyst Trade Park.

Permanent of Temporary Effect

9.5.16 For the purposes of this assessment, effects have been assessed as either permanent or temporary:

- a. Permanent - where effects are irreversible and will last for the lifespan of the Project and beyond, i.e. long term in nature; and
- b. Temporary - where effects are those considered to be one that is associated with the construction phase, which are more likely to be short term in nature.

Duration of Temporary Effect

9.5.17 In assessing the potential impact of the Project to land use the likely duration of each identified effect has been considered. The following timescales have been considered within this assessment:

- a. Short Term - Effects are likely to occur between 0 - 40 months;
- b. Medium Term - Effects are likely to be between 40 months - 10 years; and
- c. Long Term - Effects are likely to occur for >10 years.

Direct/ Indirect Effects

9.5.18 Effects were assessed as either directly or indirectly influenced by the construction/ operational activities of the Project. For example, a direct effect would be land directly removed for the requirements of the Project, an indirect effect would be land made available for development following construction.

Magnitude of Effect

9.5.19 The magnitude of effects were assessed as either high, moderate, low or neutral:

- a. High - a change in land use making the land in question unavailable for its current or intended use or meaning that the character of use of the land is completely different;
- b. Moderate - a change in land use which means that the ability to use the site for its existing or intended use is materially more difficult, but not impossible, and/or requiring rearrangement of site layout or manner of its use;
- c. Low - a change in land use which is slight and means that the ability to use the site for its existing or intended use is not difficult and/or does not require substantial rearrangement of site layout or manner of its use; and
- d. Neutral - no change to current land use.

Importance of Receptor

- 9.5.20 The scale used to determine the importance of each receptor with regard to the construction and operational period of the development is summarised below.
- a. High - Where land in question is characterised by one or more of the following (i) existing or proposed high intensity of use; (ii) currently available and designated for development by public or private sector; (iii) a large area of designated open space, designated recreational area or other open/greenspace; (iv) absence of, or low contamination which is readily remediated at low cost; (v) vacant land with little demolition required to put land to new use for which there are few opportunities to recreate the land use in question elsewhere in the Borough, (or land which is considered unsuitable for any use due to its existing status, for example contamination, but would be remediated and/or made available for use as a result of the Project);
 - b. Moderate - Where land in question is characterised by one or more of the following (i) existing or proposed moderate intensity of use; (ii) potentially available for redevelopment but currently not designated for specific redevelopment; (iii) a medium area of designated open space, designated recreational area or other open/greenspace; (iv) absence of, or low contamination or contamination which could affect the ability of the site to be redeveloped; (v) vacant land with little demolition or some demolition required and for which there are some opportunities to recreate the land in question elsewhere in the Borough (or land which is considered unsuitable for any use due to its existing status, for example contamination, but would be remediated and/or made available for use as a result of the Project);
 - c. Low - Where land in question is characterised by one or more of the following (i) existing or proposed low intensity of use; (ii) low potential for redevelopment and site currently not designated for redevelopment use; (iii) a small area of designated open space, designated recreational area or other open/greenspace; (iv) high contamination or remediation costs which may significantly affect redevelopment; (v) vacant land requiring demolition of structure and for which there are many opportunities to recreate the land in question elsewhere in the Borough (or land which is considered unsuitable for any use due to its existing status, for example contamination, but would be remediated and/or made available for use as a result of the Project); and
 - d. Negligible - Very little prospect of the land coming into any use.

Significance

- 9.5.21 Effect significance is based on the magnitude of effect and the importance of receptor. The effects were determined as being of either;
- a. High Significance;
 - b. Moderate Significance;
 - c. Low Significance; or
 - d. Not Significance.

Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

- 9.5.22 Where significant negative effects have been identified, the potential to mitigate or remove that effect has been considered. In addition, where positive effects have been identified, the opportunity to enhance these effects has been considered. The mechanisms for mitigation and enhancement comprise both physical and procedural/management methods.
- 9.5.23 The 'mitigation hierarchy' produced by the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions (Ref. 7) and the emerging EIA: A Guide to good practice and procedures (Ref. 8 - see Chapter 3 for more details) was used to address effects. The hierarchy starts at avoidance of effect and moves through reduction, compensation, remediation to enhancement. Options for

mitigation at the higher end of the hierarchy were the first to be considered. If these were not appropriate, potential forms of mitigation lower in the hierarchy were examined until a successful form of mitigation was identified which was as high up the hierarchy as possible. This was undertaken for effects created during the construction and operational stages of the Project. In some cases mitigation measures themselves may create effects, all of which were assessed.

9.5.24 Although not a “mitigation measure”, compensation of land lost from its current use is valuable in reducing effect on residents and land users in the Borough. This could include enhancement of existing areas such as land use swaps, regeneration of derelict or unused contaminated land and replacement of designated areas by replication elsewhere. These enhancement measures are further discussed in Section 9.8.

9.5.25 Improvements in positive effects are considered as enhancements.

Residual Effects

9.5.26 Residual effects on land use following mitigation measures were identified and their significance determined.

9.6 Baseline and Results

Land Use within Halton Borough

- 9.6.1 The Council's UDP (Ref. 1) Land Use Proposal Map indicates land uses in the vicinity of the Project.
- 9.6.2 As detailed in Chapter 4 the Borough of Halton was formed in 1974 following a reorganisation in Local Government. The borough lies in North West England on the Mersey Estuary and occupies an area of 92 Km² (Ref. 6).
- 9.6.3 The Borough is roughly divided into two by the River Mersey, which runs roughly north-east to south-west through the area. The river narrows at the Runcorn Gap, and widens either side of this, where there are extensive areas of mudflats and channels which are fringed by saltmarsh. The Borough is largely urban in character with the central area occupied by the principal towns of Runcorn and Widnes. These urban areas provide residential, retail and commercial/industrial areas, as well as docks and other facilities. Due to the industrial history of the area, the urban areas contain large areas of derelict land, some of which has been returned to open space. Much of this borders the river.
- 9.6.4 Land use in the eastern area of the Borough to the south of the River Mersey (Daresbury Ward) is predominantly agricultural. This agricultural area forms the separation of the Borough with the built up area of Stockton Heath. The area contains four villages; Moore, Daresbury, Preston Brook and Preston on the Hill. The villages of Moore and Daresbury lie within the central part of the agricultural area and the villages of Preston Brook and Preston on the Hill on the southern boundary of the Borough adjacent to the M56. The Bridgewater Canal passes through this area of agricultural land. In addition, a green belt has been designated around the urban areas of Runcorn and Widnes, which extends to embrace the villages of Moore, Daresbury and Preston on the Hill.
- 9.6.5 To the north of the River Mersey, the eastern boundary of the Borough is formed by the suburbs of Widnes. Beyond this, but outside the Borough, lie agricultural areas and, further afield, the town of Warrington.
- 9.6.6 Hale, to the west of Widnes lies in a rural area on the inside of a bend in the River Mersey. The area is characterised by agricultural fields but is sandwiched between the urban areas of Widnes and the urban/industrial area of Speke. It also lies close to the eastern end of the main runway of Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

National Statistics on Land Use

- 9.6.7 In terms of land use, data from National Statistics is given in Table 9.2. This compares data for the Council with that for the North West Region and England as a whole.

Table 9.2 - Land Use Statistics for Halton, North West England and England (Ref. 6)

Land Use	Unit	Halton	North West	England
Total area	Thousand m ²	92, 860.05	14,850,307.11	132,323,721.60
Area of domestic buildings	Thousand m ²	3,446.57	201,313.77	1,507,704.90
Area of non-domestic buildings	Thousand m ²	2,406.01	120,168.16	868,948.76
Area of Road	Thousand m ²	7,682.76	400,554.95	2,949,587.87
Area of Path	Thousand m ²	689.09	21,443.55	143,436.17
Area of Rail	Thousand m ²	604.77	25,046.22	179,349.95
Area of Domestic Gardens	Thousand m ²	9577.65	619,333.94	5,645,140.41

Land Use	Unit	Halton	North West	England
Area of Greenspace (and agriculture)	Thousand m ²	47,547.44	12,310,064.92	115,741,625.40
Area of Water	Thousand m ²	15,834.86	919,078.23	3,436,199.04
Area of other land use	Thousand m ²	5,070.91	233,208.50	1,850,204.61
Area of Unclassified Land	Thousand m ²	0.00	94.86	1,524.56

- 9.6.8 The industrial history of Halton means that there is significant vacant and derelict land available for redevelopment within the Borough. Data from the National Statistics for Halton, North West England and England for the amount of vacant and derelict land and buildings are given in Table 9.3.

Table 9.3 - Land-Use Statistics - Previously Developed Land 2004. (Ref. 5)

Item	Unit	Halton	North West England	England
Vacant Land	Hectares	50	2,730	14,100
Vacant Land for Suitable Housing	Hectares	10	930	5,090
Vacant Land – Estimated Dwellings	Number of dwellings (Count)	160	37,460	178,080
Vacant Buildings	Hectares	0	550	4,200
Vacant Buildings suitable for Housing	Hectares	0	360	2,300
Vacant Buildings – Estimated Dwellings	Number of dwellings (Count)	20	20,680	107,680
Derelict Land and Buildings (Sites)	Hectares	70	5,690	19,870
Derelict Land and Buildings suitable for housing (Sites)	Hectares	10	1,110	6,450
Derelict Land and Buildings suitable for housing	Hectares	220	37,410	158,270

Residential Areas

- 9.6.9 The Borough of Halton is comprised of 21 wards. These wards comprise; Appleton, Beechwood, Birchfield, Broadheath, Castlefields, Daresbury, Ditton, Farnworth, Grange, Hale, Halton Brook, Halton Lea, Halton View, Heath, Hough Green, Kingsway, Mersey, Norton North, Norton South, Riverside and Windmill Hill. Chapter 4 of the ES presents a description of the residential areas which may be affected by the Project.
- 9.6.10 Chapter 9 of the Halton UDP (Ref. 1) identifies the housing requirements set out to comply with Part 1 Policy S18, for the provision of land for new dwellings in line with the RSS. The rate of dwellings to be provided set by the RSS per annum was 330 as from April 2002 onwards. Additional future housing developments were to be delivered in a number of phases and of different status. The initial two phases were defined to cover the residual period, 2002-2011. The third phase was to cover the following 5 year period, these comprise:

- a. Phase 1 Sites (2002-2007): Committed Sites and Allocated;
- b. Phase 2 Sites (2007-2011): Allocated Sites; and
- c. Phase 3 Sites (2011-2016): Allocated Sites.

9.6.11 Areas of former open countryside in east Runcorn and north Widnes are the main areas which have been allocated for housing development within the Borough.

9.6.12 Table 9.4 summarises the housing requirements for each phase and can be found in further detail in Appendix 9.2.

Table 9.4 - Housing requirements for Phase 1, 2 and 3 (Ref. 1).

Phase 1 (2002-2007): Housing Provision and Phasing		
Housing Completions and Requirement	Requirement	Annual Rates
RPG Allowance (Net of Clearance)	1650	330
Estimated Demolitions/Clearance	170	34
Allowance for loss of dwellings in Castlefields Action Area 6	500	100
Allowance for clearance within Widnes Road & Broseley Square SPG Area	230	46
Gross Phase Housing Requirement	2550	510
Phase 2 (2007-2011): Housing Provision and Phasing		
Housing Completions and Requirement	Requirement	Annual Rates
RPG Allowance (Net of Clearance)	1320	330
Estimated Demolitions/Clearance	136	34
Allowance for loss of dwellings in Castlefields Action Area 6	400	100
Gross Phase Housing Requirement	1856	464
Phase 3 (2011-2016): Housing Provision and Phasing		
Housing Completions and Requirement	Requirement	Annual Rates
RPG Allowance (Net of Clearance)	1650	330
Estimated Demolitions/Clearance	170	34
Allowance for loss of dwellings in Castlefields Action Area 6	500	100
Gross Phase Housing Requirement	2320	464

9.6.13 The emerging LDF will rely upon the allocation of new housing to Halton as defined in the emerging North West Plan. This currently indicates that the Council will need to deliver 500 new houses per year until 2021. This represents an increase from the current allocation of 330 new dwellings per year as given in the UDP (2002-2016).

Open Space/Greenspace

9.6.14 Halton has over 810 ha of Open Space, which includes formal parks and gardens, countryside and woodland, waterfront sites and promenades, recreational sites and children's play areas local nature reserves and the soft estate adjacent to highways. The Wigg Island Community Park, is crossed by the Project. Open and greenspace is located throughout the urban areas and along the margins of the River Mersey. In the urban areas, sites such as St Michael's Golf Course, St Georges Park in Widnes, Runcorn Hill Public Park and Town Park in Runcorn provide open space within the urban areas, whilst Wigg Island and Widnes Warth provide greenspace along the river margin. As is noted in Section 9.6.31, the Council have a history of restoring contaminated derelict sites to recreational use. Given the issues faced by the council in restoring such land, it is likely that the activities of the council will result in further restoration of sites in the future.

Commercial/Industrial Land

- 9.6.15 Chapter 10 of the Halton UDP (Ref. 1) outlines a number of employment policies and proposals, in land use terms; they seek to allocate a sufficient supply of employment land to meet the needs of industry and business. The Urban Capacity Study, 1997 undertaken by Pleda Plc for the Council highlighted a number of key issues in land use terms with regard to local industrial and business land, these comprise:
- Demand for industrial and business land is concentrated amongst local companies. Land should be allocated to satisfy this;
 - The majority of demand is industrial related and is particularly concentrated within the manufacturing sector. Demand is less apparent in the service sector. Land allocations should therefore primarily seek to satisfy the locational requirements of manufacturers;
 - Demand is greatest for sites of up to 4 ha, land allocations should reflect this; and
 - Widnes is disadvantaged in comparison to Runcorn due to an absence of attractive, readily available development land. Particular consideration needs to be given to addressing land supply deficiencies in Widnes.
- 9.6.16 With these issues in mind, the UDP has allocated land for employment and redevelopment areas within the Borough, these are summarised in Table 9.5, and can be found in further detail in Appendix 9.3.

Table 9.5 - Employment Land Allocations (Ref. 1)

Local and Regional Employment Land Allocations	Area (Ha)
Quantity of Employment Land at Widnes	45.01
Quantity of Employment Land at Runcorn	43.32
Total Quantity of Local Employment Land	88.33
Quantity of Regional Investment Sites	126.01

- 9.6.17 These areas of land allocated for employment development sites are situated across the Borough with large pockets of allocations in east Widnes, west Widnes and east Runcorn (see Appendix 9.1).

Agricultural Land

- 9.6.18 Agricultural land within the borough is predominantly located to the west of Widnes, in Hale Ward, and to the east of Runcorn, in Daresbury, with a smaller area to the north of Widnes along the Borough boundary. Agricultural Land Classification Maps (www.magic.gov.uk) show the land in Hale to be predominantly grades 1 and 2 with a small area of grade 3. In the Daresbury ward, the agricultural land is predominantly grades 2 and 3, whilst that along the northern boundary of the Borough, land is predominantly grade 2 with a small area of grade 3.
- 9.6.19 The saltmarshes along the Mersey are also classified for agricultural use. They are classified as grade 5, the lowest quality grade. Currently they are not used for agriculture and are physically separated by built up areas and infrastructure from the farming units within the main agricultural areas of the Borough. Therefore, they would be difficult to farm, if not impossible.

Infrastructure

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.6.20 The existing cycle network in Runcorn provides a nearly complete circular route through Runcorn's built up area, with links to both the Halton Lea shopping centre and the Old Town. Much of the route runs parallel to the Expressway highway network and integrates into the National Cycle Network (NCN route 5) with links beyond the Borough. There are proposals to extend the network including links along the Bridgewater Canal and the Halton Castle.

- 9.6.21 Cycle lane provision in Widnes has recently been expanded with an additional 7 km provided over the period of the first Local Transport Plan. The Trans Pennine Trail route (NCN route 62) is the main through link following the coast from Warrington through Widnes towards Liverpool. Cycle route coverage is patchier than in Runcorn, with much of it related to provision as part of new developments. Therefore there is a lack of continuous routes through the built up area and poor connectivity between existing routes.
- 9.6.22 In Halton, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) other than vehicular highways, are made up of a number of footpaths, bridleways and byways. There is approximately 76 km of PRoW, comprising 73.5 km of footpaths and byways and 2.5 km of Bridleways. These are identified in Figure 9.2 (Appendix 9.1) and include:
- Public footpaths - for pedestrian use only
 - Public bridleways - for use by pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists
 - Public byways - for use by pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists and motorised vehicles, depending on the character of the route
- 9.6.23 It should be noted that PRoW shown on Figure 9.2 have been derived from the published definitive PRoW maps for Halton. However, the definitive PRoW map has shown differences in the GIS layer for the PRoW and the “route map” (Figure 16.16, Chapter 16) provided by the Council. The definitive PRoW map shows PRoWs at two areas; Astmoor Industrial Estate and Halton Lodge (Appendix 9.4) and they have not been included in the PRoW GIS layer or “route map”. Land at Astmoor Industrial Estate has since been developed and therefore for the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that this PRoW has been stopped up. The PRoW also identified at Halton Lodge has not been included in the PRoW GIS layer provided by the Council. It is apparent that a bus route presently uses this route and therefore it has been assumed that this PRoW is still accessible. In addition, there is a small section of the PRoW identified in this area which has also since been developed (for use as housing) and therefore it has been assumed that this PRoW has been stopped up.
- 9.6.24 A number of hand drawn annotations (Appendix 9.4) have been included on the definitive PRoW map. These have not been included as PRoW within the GIS layer provided by the Council, as they are not considered as published routes. A review of the bus routes within Halton show that these hand drawn annotations correspond with one another and therefore have been included in the assessment under this land use designation.
- 9.6.25 In addition to the above, Halton has a Greenway network of largely car-free off-road routes connecting to facilities, public transport interchanges and open spaces in and around the built up area and to the countryside. The Greenway network has no legal status but is for shared use on foot, bike or in some cases horseback, including for commuting. All Greenway routes within Halton have been identified on Figure 9.3 (Appendix 9.1).
- 9.6.26 The Trans Pennine Trail is an important recreational route (which is included in the Greenway Network) for residents of the Borough. It follows the waters around West Bank and Spike Island before following the towpath of the St Helen’s Canal to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station, where it is also designated as the Mersey Way.

Rail Network

- 9.6.27 There are two railway stations in Widnes both on the Liverpool to Manchester line. There is no direct rail link between Widnes and Runcorn due to the closure of Ditton Station in Widnes. Policy RG1 allows for the opening of a new passenger station between 2002 and 2016. Two principal freight lines into employment areas exist, particularly into the West Bank Dock estate and into the south-east Widnes employment area (Figure 9.2, Appendix 9.1). Runcorn has two railway stations; a main line station on the Liverpool to London line and a further station on the Manchester to Chester line. There are various rail sidings for freight within the Docks areas to

the west of Runcorn. This area is also alongside the Manchester Ship Canal with its associated docking facilities.

Buses

- 9.6.28 The commercial bus routes in Halton are shown in Figure 9.2 (Appendix 9.1). There are also two main bus stations in Runcorn; Halton Lea North Bus Station and Runcorn High Street (Old Town) Bus Station. However, there are no bus stations located within Widnes.

Regeneration Action Areas (RAAs)

- 9.6.29 The Council are concentrating strategic development in a series of Regeneration Action Areas (RAAs), a total of total of six areas have been designated within the Borough, illustrated in Figure 9.4 (Appendix 9.1) these comprise
- Southern Widnes;
 - Central Widnes;
 - Widnes Waterfront;
 - Runcorn and Weston Docklands;
 - Halebank; and
 - Castlefields and Norton Priory.
- 9.6.30 A RAA is an area defined by the Council as an area that has been selected for the commencement, during a prescribed period, of comprehensive treatment by development, redevelopment or improvement. They have been designated to allow for opportunities for old, redundant land uses (particularly industry) to be replaced by new uses such as open space, housing and new commercial development, aiming to create a mixed use development.
- 9.6.31 The boundaries of the RAA plans are purely land use based and may be different to those areas identified in the Council's Regeneration Strategy wherein a broader range of actions to promote regeneration will be undertaken. The existing land use in each is described in Table 9.6.
- 9.6.32 The Council are currently developing a regeneration strategy covering both Widnes and Runcorn. This will determine how the Council will use the opportunities open to these areas, including those which occur as a result of the Project (which are not part of the baseline), within the financial and planning constraints enforced on it. The regeneration strategy for Widnes and Runcorn is discussed in Chapter 6.

Table 9.6 - Land Use in each of the Six Regeneration Action Areas in Halton Borough (Ref. 1)

Action Area	UDP Policy covering area	Description
1 Southern Widnes	RG1	This area was formerly the Victorian centre of Widnes, which comprised a mix of workers' housing and heavy industry. Plans put into place since 1974 have changed land use with replacement with better quality housing and light industry. Whilst the area retains a mix of housing and industry, there is significant migration of people out of the area to the suburbs.
2 Central Widnes	RG2	This was the main retail area of Widnes and contains many of the main civic buildings in the town. It also contains a number of office buildings and a leisure centre. The former retail centre has migrated northwards, leaving the area rundown and, in the view of the Council, in need of investment.
3 Widnes	RG3	Formerly an area occupied by the chemical industry and

Action Area	UDP Policy covering area	Description
Waterfront		consequently formerly an area of major employment. As a result of plant closures, the area is now a wide swathe of derelict and vacant and contaminated land, and a chemical waste landfill. The regeneration policy notes the opportunity to reclaim the whole area for employment and open space and housing where this is possible.
4 Runcorn and Weston Docklands	RG4	This is an area predominantly of employment use, including commercial docks, storage and distribution, and general industry. The area also contains large areas of derelict land.
5 Halebank	RG5	Currently an isolated residential area adjacent to a "mixed quality employment area" (the Council's UDP, 2005).
6 Castlefields and Norton Priory	RG6	Mixed use area of residential and commercial land uses.

Contaminated Land

- 9.6.33 The industrial history of Halton has left a legacy of contaminated land across the Borough. Whilst this may appear at first to offer opportunities in terms of locating new development on brownfield sites, in line with Central Government Policy, the type of industry previously present in Halton has affected the economic ability of the local authorities and developers to bring this land back into productive use. Since 1974, the Council have brought 180 ha of such land back into use. Of this the majority (71%) had to be returned to green end use. This has meant that the Council have contributed significantly to the provision of open and greenspace within the Borough. However, ongoing investment to ensure that continuing contamination issues do not affect users of these sites and the local environment is needed. St Michael's Golf Course is an example of this. Of the 51 ha reclaimed by the Borough for "hard" end use, 32 ha (63%) is still vacant despite significant efforts by the Council to market these sites.

Land Use within the Project Corridor

- 9.6.34 The western extent of the proposed main alignment of the roads associated with the New Bridge will be located in Widnes, along the A562 Speke Road to Liverpool, to the west of the existing Ditton Roundabout Junction (A562 and A533). The carriageway alignment will divide the southern part of St Michael's Golf Course, which is designated as greenspace. The Golf Course is currently closed to the public due to the requirement for the site to be remediated as a result of risks posed by the presence of contaminated land. The Council has committed to reopen the Golf Course when funds permit. There are currently no plans in the current fiscal calendar to commit the significant funds needed to remediate the site and to return it to use as a Golf Course. Whilst there is the political will to reopen the course when conditions allow and when funding becomes available, the prospect remains uncertain. St Michael's Golf Course may have no practical use as a Golf Course for some considerable time.
- 9.6.35 From the southern part of the Golf Course site, the Project follows an existing pocket of previously developed land (approximately 1.44 ha in area) at the junction of Ditton Road and Speke Road which is allocated for development for employment use. This area of land is previously developed land but is currently vacant.
- 9.6.36 The Project subsequently joins the existing Ditton interchange (junction of the A552 and A533) and passes close to an area of existing brownfield land and allocated for development on Lowerhouse Lane, and an area of industrial units on Ditton Road. The study area then traverses the Garston to Timperley rail freight line before crossing the existing A557 Widnes Eastern Bypass and industrial properties on Waterloo Road.
- 9.6.37 The Project also crosses an area of land allocated for employment use at the Catalyst Trade Park and extends east to the western corner of the ThermPhos Chemical Works on Earle Road.

The New Bridge extends over Bower's Brook and the St Helen's Canal prior to crossing the saltmarsh of Widnes Warth, the Mersey Estuary and saltmarsh at Wigg Island, which are collectively designated as a Local Wildlife Site.

- 9.6.38 The Project crosses the southern Mersey shoreline at Wigg Island and passes over a small area of disused canal at the Wigg Island Nature Reserve. The New Bridge passes over the Manchester Ship Canal and industrial units at the Astmoor Industrial Estate. It then heads south and links into the junction of the Daresbury and the Central Expressway where the Project subsequently merges into the existing road infrastructure and crosses over the Bridgewater Canal. The Central Expressway and SJB are already in transport use.

Identification of Receptors

- 9.6.39 The following receptors have been identified in relation to the likely significant environmental effects associated with changes in land use within the "project corridor", as a result of the development of the Project:
- a. Residential Areas;
 - b. Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace;
 - c. Commercial/Industrial Land;
 - d. Agricultural Land;
 - e. Infrastructure;
 - f. Development Land; and
 - g. Other Properties.

Residential Areas

- 9.6.40 The "project corridor" passes along existing infrastructure in Beechwood, Halton Lea, Halton Brook and Castlefields in Runcorn and Riverside in Widnes. Residential properties are located within the "project corridor" of the Project in each of these areas.

Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace

- 9.6.41 There is a wide range of community resources within the Borough. A number have been identified within the "project corridor" and have been identified as potential receptors. These are shown on Figure 9.5 (Appendix 9.1), and include:
- a. St Michael's Golf Course; occupies land where the proposed Main Toll Plaza will be located;
 - b. Halton Brook Playground; approximately 170m west of the Central Expressway;
 - c. Parker Street Playground, approximately 515m east of the SJB South Junction;
 - d. Castle Rise Playground; approximately 260m west of the Bridgewater Junction;
 - e. Cunningham Road Playing Fields; approximately 160m north of the Main Toll Plaza;
 - f. West Bank Dock Playing Fields; approximately 850m south of the Widnes Loop Junction;
 - g. King Georges Park; approximately 220m north of Ditton Junction;
 - h. Town Park; approximately 560m east of the Bridgewater Junction;
 - i. St Maries Park; approximately 130m north of the Freight Line to North Abutment;
 - j. Wigg Island Community Park; occupies land at where the proposed viaduct across the Astmoor Industrial Estate will be situated; and
 - k. A shooting club on Wigg Island; occupies land at where the proposed viaduct across the Astmoor Industrial Estate will be situated.
- 9.6.42 Research has indicated that a shooting club may very well be located on Wigg Island. On a precautionary basis it is assumed that the members of such a club would have rights to wildfowl shooting on part of the island and the adjacent estuary. The shooting range is assumed to lie within the application boundaries of the Project.

- 9.6.43 Greenspaces occurring within the urban areas of Borough are being recognised as being worthy of a comparable level of protection to that of the open countryside, as classified by the Council. The amenity value of greenspace is recognised as being wide ranging (Chapter 3, The Green Environment, the Council's UDP (Ref. 1)). In addition, at least six of these greenspaces and parks have received green flag awards for their excellence. The Green Flag Award is a national standard for parks and greenspaces in England and Wales. These awards recognise and reward the best greenspaces in the country. They also provide a benchmark of excellence and encourage others to achieve the same high environmental standard to recreational green areas. However, to retain Green Flag status, holders must re-apply annually.
- 9.6.44 The land to the south of Speke Road is allocated as a greenspace within the Council's UDP. In addition, the New Bridge approach on the north bank of the Mersey Estuary at the former Catalyst Industrial Park will dissect a small area of greenspace immediately to the south of the Garston to Timperley rail freight line.
- 9.6.45 In total, the "project corridor" crosses over 145 areas of greenspace; the total area of these greenspaces identified is approximately 452.60 ha.
- 9.6.46 The "Greenway Network" is made up of proposed and potential off-road routes for walking, cycling and where appropriate, horse riding. The network acts as a series of routes aimed at connecting to facilities (greenways) and greenspaces in and around the urban area and the countryside.
- 9.6.47 The Trans Pennine Trail is a national recreational route for cyclists, horse riders and walkers, and is also part of the National Cycle Network (NCN). It runs along the north bank of the River Mersey (Figure 9.3, Appendix 9.1) and follows the waters around West Bank and Spike Island before following the towpath of the St Helen's Canal to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station.
- 9.6.48 The location of greenspaces and proposed and potential greenways are shown on Figure 9.3 (Appendix 9.1).
- 9.6.49 The green belt performs a useful function in preventing the unrestricted sprawl of the urban area, and help to safeguard the surrounding countryside, protect agricultural land and assist in urban regeneration. Green belts should seek to; provide a number of opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population, provide opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas, retain attractive landscapes and enhance landscapes near to where people live, to improve damaged and derelict land around towns, to secure nature conservation interest and to retain land in agricultural, forestry and related uses. The green belt within the Borough is currently preventing the towns of Runcorn and Widnes merging with neighbouring towns and cities. In addition, the green belt provides informal recreation opportunities for the Borough's residents and also offers an important habitat for wildlife. The Boroughs policies regarding green belts also aim to protect the visual amenity of the green belt and to help protect the setting of Halton's towns and villages.
- 9.6.50 Wigg Island has been designated as a green belt region and occupies approximately 161 ha, as shown in Figure 9.3 (Appendix 9.1).

Commercial/Industrial Properties

- 9.6.51 There are a number of retail facilities located within Halton, their location and description are further described in Chapter 20. However, there are two major shopping areas which have been identified within the "project corridor" of the alignment, these include:
- a. Market Hall; approximately 130m north east of the Silver Jubilee South Junction; and
 - b. Trident Retail Park; approximately 130m north east of the Southern Expressway Junction.

- 9.6.52 Areas immediately surrounding the River Mersey mainly comprise industrial units due to the historical nature of the area. Large commercial/industrial areas have been identified within the “project corridor” (Figure 9.6, Appendix 9.1) and include:
- Industrial works situated south of the A562 Speke Road to Liverpool;
 - Industrial/commercial land situated east of the Ditton Junction and along the A562 Ashley Way;
 - Industrial/commercial land situated north east of Widnes Loop Junction and along the A557 Widnes Eastern Bypass;
 - Catalyst Trade Park situated west of Spike Island;
 - Dukesfield Depot situated approximately 370 south west of the Silver Jubilee South Junction;
 - A pocket of industrial/commercial land situated within the centre of the Silver Jubilee South Junction; and
 - Astmoor Industrial Park situated south of Wigg Island, extending along A533 Bridgewater Expressway West.

Agricultural Land

- 9.6.53 Agricultural land is classified in accordance with the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system. The system applies grades to land based on its characteristics for long-term food production. The ALC Grade are as follows in Table 9.7.

Table 9.7 - Agricultural Land Classification Grades

Agricultural Land Grade	Description		Characteristics
1	Excellent	Best and most versatile agricultural land	Land with very minor or no physical limitations.
2	Very good quality		Land with some minor soil limitations which exclude it from Grade 1.
3a	Good quality		Land with moderate limitations due to the soil, relief or climate, which restricts the choice of crops, timing of cultivations or level of yield.
3b	Moderate quality		
4	Poor quality		Land with severe limitations due to adverse soil, relief or climate or a combination of these.
5	Very poor quality		Land with very severe limitations due to adverse soil, relief, or climate, or a combination of these.

- 9.6.54 Agricultural Land Classification Maps (www.magic.gov.uk) indicate that the majority of land within the “project corridor” is classified as being of urban or non-agricultural land use. The land at Wigg Island and Widnes Warth is not used for agricultural purposes. However, the land is classified as being of agricultural quality category 5 (very poor). The total area of agricultural land in these two locations is approximately 159.70 ha.
- 9.6.55 In addition, a small piece (1.46 ha) of agricultural land located adjacent to the M56, Junction 12 close to Clifton will be affected. The land is currently used for horse grazing and is classified as being of agricultural quality category 5 (very poor).
- 9.6.56 Figure 9.7 (Appendix 9.1) indicates the land at Wigg Island and Widnes Warth in relation to the “project corridor” along the Project.

Infrastructure

- 9.6.57 The current infrastructure present within the Borough is described in detail in the Chapter 16. The existing road network over the Mersey Estuary in Halton is characterised by a single

crossing (the SJB) over the river that is linked into the expressway systems either side. The expressways then link directly to the trunk road and motorway network both north and south of the SJB.

- 9.6.58 The SJB also provides an important link for local and public transport within Halton. There is an established bus network across Halton, with 19 services crossing the SJB. Runcorn Station lies on the main railway line between Crewe and Liverpool, and Runcorn East Station lies on the regional railway line from North Wales and Chester to Warrington and Manchester. The regional railway line between Liverpool and Warrington passes east-west through Widnes with stations at Hough Green and Widnes. The Garston to Timperley rail freight line runs west to east through Widnes.
- 9.6.59 A narrow and unprotected pedestrian walkway is provided on the upstream side of the SJB but no cycle lane provision is made and cyclists must use the traffic lanes, or dismount and use the pedestrian walkway. The Council has developed a walking strategy as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). As part of this they plan to produce a walking and cycling map for the Borough. There is a pedestrian walkway on the upstream side of the railway bridge. However, difficult access means that this is used infrequently.
- 9.6.60 The road network around the Central Expressway Junctions is an important section of transport infrastructure in Halton, which serves to link the Runcorn region with the south bank of the River Mersey and the wider regions to the east of Runcorn. The M56 joins the A557 at Junction 12 and merges to the A533 at the southern junction of the site. The Runcorn busway system runs to the northwest of the site. The stretch of the A533, which includes the Central Expressway Junctions, does not have specific provision for cyclists, pedestrians or public transport.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.6.61 There are a number of official and suggested cycle routes within Halton (designated by the Council). These 'suggested' routes include unofficial cycleways, which do not have the relevant orders to make them official, and include routes, which are viewed as safe and are typically used by cyclists. Identifying these unofficial routes together with the official routes will ensure that any potential effect on cyclists caused by changes in traffic flows will be addressed.
- 9.6.62 Section 9.6.22 describe the PRoW within the Borough. PRoW that cross the "project corridor" are identified in Figure 9.2 (Appendix 9.1).
- 9.6.63 The saltmarshes along the Mersey Estuary comprise foreshore. As such, the public have rights of access, and the saltmarshes should, therefore, be treated as established rights of way; the saltmarshes comprise Widnes Warth and Wigg Island saltmarsh. The "project corridor" crosses both areas of saltmarsh, these areas of saltmarsh are shown on Figure 9.2 (Appendix 9.1).

Assumed Rights of Way

- 9.6.64 A survey was undertaken by Gifford in November 2007 on behalf of the Council to identify other rights of way (i.e. not formally designated by the Council as PRoW) along the Project route, and to confirm PRoW within the application boundaries. The survey was undertaken from PRoW and publicly accessible land. All obvious signs of public use as assumed rights of way were noted in the application boundaries of the Project. However due to accessibility, observations were made beyond this boundary where possible, e.g. along some areas of saltmarsh.
- 9.6.65 The survey showed that there were a number assumed rights of way within the Borough, these included accesses, which had been created/established due to public use and are therefore "acting" as a designated rights of way.

- 9.6.66 Approximately 31 assumed rights of way were identified within the application boundaries. These were located at St Michael's Golf Course, Spike Island, West Bank, the Bridgewater Junction, A533 Central Expressway and Lodge Lane Junction. These comprise routes that have been created due to repeated use by the general public and unofficial routes, which have been created by the Council within public areas, but have not been designated on the Council's local plan. Assumed rights of way have been identified on Figure 9.2 (Appendix 9.1).
- 9.6.67 The findings of this survey are summarised below in Table 9.8 and an example of an assumed right of way is shown in Plate 9.1. It should be noted that even if a route is identified in this ES as an assumed right of way, this is not determinative of that status. Whether a route is subject to a public right in a matter of law. However, in order to ensure that this ES adopts a conservative approach, it has been assumed that all such routes are rights of way and accordingly, effects on such route are assessed.

Table 9.8 - Summary of results

Area of Informal PRow	Description
St Michael's Golf Course	A number of assumed rights of way were noted across the Golf Course in the form of rough paths through grassland. Vehicular access' to the Golf Course were also noted.
Spike Island	Many breaks in hedgerows along the canal towpath to access/view areas of Spike Island, some routes stopping abruptly forming no obvious route. Other routes showed use by the general public. However, there was no evidence that these routes exist as designated public rights of way. Tracks had been created through tree area on the island, which have possibly been informally made by the Council, giving access to a pond on the island. Routes on the island also include a number of surfaced pathways, indicating they have been informally created by the Council but not designated on the Council's plan.
West Bank	A small pathway identified around residential areas within the West Bank area.
Wigg Island	A number of assumed rights of way were noted around Wigg Island Local Nature Reserve, which included access onto and around areas of the saltmarsh
Bridgewater Junction	Pathways identified along the Bridgewater Junction, following around industrial buildings of the Astmoor Industrial Estate.
A553 Central Expressway	Footpaths identified following both sides of the Central Expressway.
Lodge Lane Junction	Assumed rights of way crossing Lodge Lane Junction from the school on Whitchurch Way to Hallwood Park.

Plate 9.1 - Assumed right of way at crossing of Stewards Brook (east and west).



Development Land

- 9.6.68 As mentioned in Section 9.6.27, there are six Regeneration Action Areas (RAAs) within the Borough.
- 9.6.69 Figure 9.4 (Appendix 9.1) illustrates where the proposed alignment intersects with and runs adjacent to the designated RAAs within the “project corridor”.
- 9.6.70 In addition, there are three plots allocated for development within the “project corridor”. These include:

- a. Ditton Road/Speke Road;
- b. Kingsway/Moor Lane Phase 2; and
- c. Land at Rock Savage, Clifton Leave.

- 9.6.71 Figure 9.4 (Appendix 9.1) shows where these plots of land are located in relation to the Project.

Other Properties

- 9.6.72 Two electricity substations are situated within the “project corridor”. The first is located on Ditton Road in Widnes. It is adjacent to the former Anglo Blackwell compound. The second is located adjacent to the ThermPhos site adjacent to the Catalyst Trade Park. Figure 9.8 (Appendix 9.1) illustrates where these sites are located in relation to the Project.

9.7 Effects Assessment

Potential Effects

- 9.7.1 Potential effects resulting from the Project include the permanent loss of residential, commercial (including farms), industrial and other buildings. This could include either the demolition of buildings for the road infrastructure itself or isolation of buildings caused by road severance. In addition, effects may comprise the loss of part of an operational site, which may affect its viability for the current use. Potential effects also include the possible temporary loss of buildings or temporary loss of access. The proposed alignment of the New Bridge will create and alter infrastructure within the area. Appendix B of the Construction Methods Report (Appendix 2.1) and Chapter 2.3 of this report describes the main elements of the proposed works.

Climate Change

- 9.7.2 Potential and actual land use will, may very well be affected by the potential effects of climate change in the future, particularly in relation to fluvial and tidal flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken to assess the susceptibility of land to flooding and its implications of the specific risk of flooding to the development being proposed. This is provided in Appendix 8.2 of Chapter 8. In addition, the hydrodynamic modelling undertaken has also taken climate change into account in the assessment of the hydrological effects of the Project.
- 9.7.3 Whilst the effects currently being predicted for sea level rise and rainfall intensification will affect land use in the Borough, particularly for low lying land adjacent to the estuary, the timescales involved in such changes mean that it is likely that compensation for land use change due to climate change will occur outside the UDP period (2005-2016), and is therefore not considered further in this Chapter.

Do Nothing Effects

- 9.7.4 Under the “do nothing” scenario, the Project will not be delivered. Therefore, there will be no potential physical land use effects resulting from the Project, either in the Borough or “project corridor” context. It has been assumed that the potential for the Council to deliver against the policies within the UDP is independent of the delivery of the Project.

Construction Phase Effects

- 9.7.5 This assessment considers the potential effects of the Project on land use during the construction phase, approximately forty months. Many effects have been provided in Table 9.10; those effects considered to have no significant negative effect have been shaded in grey.
- 9.7.6 The potential effects of the Project on local and regional transportation are considered in Chapter 16. As can be seen from Chapter 16, the implications of the Project on traffic and transportation extend beyond the borders of Halton. Therefore, it is possible that these changes will influence future land use outside the Borough of Halton. Therefore the effects will be indirect, and will occur following opening of the Project and in concert with the policies in place in the relevant local authority.
- 9.7.7 It is not possible to identify or quantify these effects. Therefore this effect assessment has concentrated on direct and indirect effects within Halton itself.

Halton Borough

- 9.7.8 The Project has the potential to affect delivery of land use changes as designated within the Borough (as defined in the UDP). In particular, the Project potentially conflicts with policies RG1,

RG2, GE1, GE1, GE6, GE7, GE8, GE12 and GE15 (Table 9.1). The implications of this are discussed in the paragraphs below and in Chapter 6.

- 9.7.9 In terms of residential use, the UDP clearly identifies the areas which are designated for the construction of new houses. The UDP has been developed to deliver the number of new units allocated to Borough in the current RSS. The housing provisions defined in the UDP for Halton are divided into three phases. Phase 1 sites should have already been delivered whilst phase 2 and the first two years of phase 3 will occur during the construction period. Each phase currently aims to deliver an allocation of 330 houses, plus additional units giving a total of between 400-500 units per year. The allocated and committed sites given in the UDP are located in east Runcorn in Daresbury, Windmill Hill and Norton North wards. In Widnes the allocated sites lie in the north of the town in the following wards; Birchfield, Farnworth and Halton View. These residential development sites all lie some distance from the Project and residential development is not predicted to suffer severance or disruption to its delivery. Small scale developments are also proposed in the UDP across most of the Borough. However, these are Phase 1 commitments and will be completed prior to construction of the Project.
- 9.7.10 The Project will not lead to the loss of any residential properties. However there will not be the need to increase provision of housing in other areas of the Borough.
- 9.7.11 In terms of commercial/industrial (employment) provision, the UDP identifies the need to provide new allocated lands within the Borough (on both greenfield and previously developed land), even though the Councils reports that previously remediated land has been difficult to sell or let for such uses. The allocated sites up to 2016 in the UDP are located within Daresbury (Runcorn) and Riverside and Halton View and Farnworth Wards (Widnes). Proposed developments in the wards of Halton View, Farnworth and Daresbury are remote from the Project, and no severance or disruption issues are anticipated from the construction of the Project. However, in terms of the Riverside allocated sites, these lie close to the Project. Nevertheless, no loss of these areas will occur during the construction phase. Should redevelopment occur during the Project construction period, then severance will not occur as access from the west along the A562 and south via the SJB will be possible. Following construction, the sites will continue to be linked into the main road network and will not be severed by the Project.
- 9.7.12 During construction of the Project, commercial space in Catalyst Trade Park and Astmoor Industrial Estate will be lost on a permanent basis. This will require empty facilities and sites to be available for relocated businesses if they are not to be lost from the Borough. Data from the Council and National Statistics show that there is land which has been remediated and is currently available (see Appendix 9.3). The National Statistics data from January 2005 (Ref. 6) shows that over 50 ha is available within the Borough, and the Council data (Ref. 1) states that over 36 ha of remediated land is vacant and available for occupation.
- 9.7.13 The Council have designated six RAAs within the Borough. The aims of these RAAs are to provide a planning and land use framework for land use change and focus development to improve the local environment. In Borough terms, the Project is potentially significant as it potentially directly affects three of the six RAAs during the construction period.
- 9.7.14 The most affected RAA will be Southern Widnes (RG1); where major new infrastructure construction will occur within this designated area. The UDP policy aim is to improve the area and make it more desirable to live in, reversing the outward migration of people from this area, whilst “maintaining the close community spirit in the West Bank area”. The policy therefore aims to “provide a convenient, efficient and pleasing place, within which people can live, work and pursue their daily lives (Ref. 1). The policy aims to assist in the development of additional housing, local shopping and leisure facilities and community facilities. The policy includes:

- a. Open space and sports facilities on vacant and derelict sites;

- b. Housing on suitable infill sites;
 - c. Neighbourhood shops;
 - d. New passenger railway station;
 - e. Conservation area enhancement to the West Bank Promenade;
 - f. Tourism development based on spike island and catalyst Museum;
 - g. Water based recreational facilities; and
 - h. Relocation of bad neighbour uses.
- 9.7.15 The policy does not include provision for new major road infrastructure, and so the Project potentially is at odds with the land use aims of RG1. It is also probable that significant construction effects will occur, including significant temporary disruption to access to this area, affecting both current land use and the ability to affect land use change within the RAA. It is particularly pertinent that land uses in the RAA will also experience disruption should the proposed new railway station proposed to be constructed if this is over the same period. It is probable that the aims given in RG1 will not be able to be fully undertaken until construction has completed in this area (2015).
- 9.7.16 For the Central Widnes RAA the proposals provide a framework for restructuring existing land use and the provision of mixed use developments. The developments listed within RG2 do not include major infrastructure developments. However, the land affected in this RAA is small and it is not anticipated that this will result in an inability to progress with the aims of RG2.
- 9.7.17 Policy RG3 covers Widnes Waterfront RAA. The Project passes over of western part of the area within this RAA. The proposal for this area is to provide freight and storage handling facilities, both of which will require good road communications. The loss of land within this RAA and the disruption to local road networks is likely to adversely affect development pursuant to Policy RG3 over the Project construction period
- 9.7.18 In terms of the other RAAs, the Project passes close to their boundaries and it is not predicted that the construction will affect the delivery of the relevant policies (RG4 to RG6 inclusive).
- 9.7.19 With regard to greenspace, the loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course, Widnes Warth and Wigg Island is potentially significant within the "project corridor". In Borough terms, the loss represents 2.33% of the Open Space currently available. Although this is contrary to the Council's UDP Policy GE6, this is not considered significant. It should also be noted, that remediation of contaminated land undertaken by the Borough will, over the construction period, continue to provide additional public space and greenspace. It should also be noted that the Council have a policy to re-open St Michael's Golf Course as an 18 hole course with driving range. Since golfers are currently unable to use the course on public health grounds, the re-opening of the club will effectively mitigate losses of land on the southern part of the current site provided that such a comprehensive facility can be accommodated on the unaffected land. The timescale for the reopening of the Golf Course is not currently known - indeed it is highly uncertain.
- 9.7.20 The Council are developing the Core Strategy for the emerging LDF. It is intended that this will replace the UDP over the next 5 years (Ref. 2 and 3). The Core Strategy notes that the policies and proposals within the emerging LDF documents will eventually replace those in the adopted Halton UDP. It also notes that the UDP is "considered to be up to date with a sound evidence base. However, it also notes that the LDF will adopt or modify the existing UDP provision. The Core Strategy is proposed to be adopted by the Council in November 2009. However, given a slippage in timetabling, the more likely adoption date is Spring 2011.
- 9.7.21 In terms of housing, the current proposals in the draft North West Plan will lead to an increase in proposed new housing provision up until 2021, from 330 houses per year to 500 houses per year. At present the Council have not identified the areas where this additional housing provision will be accommodated. However, it is highly unlikely that the Council will put this in an

area that conflicts with the construction of the Project on which would be affected by its construction.

- 9.7.22 In terms of commercial/industrial and employment land, the draft LDF Core Strategy identifies the requirement for the Council to liaise with other Boroughs/Councils on the allocation of additional employment land needed in the North West Region. Therefore, the Council is currently unable to identify future increases in the allocation of land for such uses in Halton. However, the draft North West Plan does mention a number of sites in Halton, such as the Daresbury International Science and Technology Park and the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park. Both of these are already identified in the UDP, and the delivery of both will be unaffected by the construction of the Project.
- 9.7.23 The draft Core Strategy notes that green belt will remain substantially unaffected until a review which will be undertaken in 2011. Since the results of this review will be unknown until 2011/2012, this assessment has assumed that no substantive change will occur to green belt in Halton until the Project is constructed. However,
- 9.7.24 The draft Core Strategy notes that Halton lies “at the convergence of the Mersey Basin Regional Park and North West Coast Regional Park”. The aims of these are to assist in the provision of high quality recreational, sporting and leisure opportunities along the coast.

Project Corridor

Residential Areas

- 9.7.25 The Project passes close to the residential areas of Riverside, Castlefields, Halton Brook, Grange, Halton Lea, Beechwood and Heath. However, by reconfiguring the existing highway infrastructure as much as possible adjacent to the residential areas, the Project will not result in the loss of residential properties. Because of this, direct effect on residential land use will not occur as there will be no change to the current land use
- 9.7.26 Temporary disruption to residential use may occur due to temporary closure and diversion of major infrastructure and accesses within the surrounding areas of these residential areas. A list of the roads and other infrastructure temporarily closed and/or diverted is given in Chapter 16.
- 9.7.27 These effects are considered to be temporary during the construction phase but may have a negative effect due to such disruptions/closures. However, these disruptions are of no significance in land use terms as they will not lead to the abandonment or change in use of residential properties.

Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace

Community Resources

- 9.7.28 The continued operation of the shooting club located on Wigg Island will be inconsistent with the requirements of the construction phase. The land currently used by the club will become part of the construction area and insufficient land will remain for the club to remain in operation without health and safety issues arising. Therefore, the club will have to be closed. This is a community resource, which understood to be well used. This will result in both social and land use effects. In land use terms, the site will be unavailable for its current use throughout the construction period and therefore the magnitude of this effect is high. Therefore the effect significance will be high.
- 9.7.29 There are a number of other community resources within the “project corridor”. None of these resources will be lost either temporarily or permanently as a result of the Project. There will be no change in its current land use and consequently the effect will not be significant. The construction of the Project is likely to have negligible influence on community resources.

- 9.7.30 It is likely there will be temporary indirect transport disruption due to road closures during construction within the areas surrounding the community resources. However, in land use terms, no community asset will be severed from the community served. Suitable diversions will be put into place where these are required and, although some increase in access journeys may be experienced, in land use terms there will not be any abandonment or change in use of community resources. Therefore there will be no significance in terms of land use.
- 9.7.31 Part of Wigg Island is classified as a community park. During construction, approximately 2.71 ha of the 25.51 ha will be required. This represents 10.6% of the park. The area required for construction would effectively segregate the park into two smaller units. The park is of high importance, and the effect magnitude is also high. The loss will be temporary (over the construction phase). However, the effect will be of high negative significance.

Open Space/Greenspace

- 9.7.32 The Project potentially results in the loss of all or part of the following sites during construction:
- St Michael's Golf Course;
 - Greenspace south of Garston Rail Line;
 - Wigg Island Saltmarsh;
 - Widnes Warth Saltmarsh;
 - Greenways; and
 - Wigg Island
- 9.7.33 The total area of greenspaces identified within the "project corridor" is approximately 452.60 ha. The predicted loss of greenspaces during construction is calculated as approximately 26.31 ha. The percentage of the greenspace lost during construction is, therefore, approximately 5.81%.
- 9.7.34 The Project will result in the loss of part of the former St Michael's Golf Course. Although this is classified by the Council as greenspace, it has been closed to public access on safety (contamination) grounds. Although no longer used for golf, informal use of the site has continued. Little value or weight should be given to this use because it comprises a trespass and indeed, is unsafe.
- 9.7.35 St Michael's Golf Course is classified as greenspace; and represents 2.33% (approximately 10.53 ha) of 5.81% greenspace that will be permanently lost in total by the alignment. The southern part of this land will be permanently lost to the Project for the construction and operation of the main toll plaza. The northern part of the Golf Course will not be used for development of the Project. During construction, a construction compound will be located in the area to be used for the main toll plaza. This will minimize temporary loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course.
- 9.7.36 The Golf Course is currently closed on public health grounds. Although informal use undoubtedly continues, this is unofficial and against the Council's wishes. Whilst the Council have publicly committed to re-opening the Golf Course, it does not currently have the funds to do so, and so this is unlikely to happen in the construction period. Therefore, whilst classified as greenspace, the site is currently not fulfilling its designated use. Due to its designation as a large area of greenspace, it is of high importance. The loss of the southern part of the site will be a permanent loss which will continue through to the operational phase, and will not return to its original use, thus the magnitude of the effect is high and negative. The loss of this land is of high significance under its designation as greenspace, albeit the significance is diminished because of the current closure of the Golf Course.
- 9.7.37 The continuing leakage of contaminants from the site into the local aquatic environment may require the Council to commit emergency funds to ameliorate such pollution earlier than plans to bring forward the restoration of the Golf Course. Under such a situation, the works undertaken

are likely to be restricted to those necessary to stop the pollution occurring, and would be unlikely to mitigate the potential exposure of people using the site to the contaminants within the site. The site would, therefore remain closed to public use and in reality act as derelict land.

- 9.7.38 The Council has committed to reopen the Golf Course when funds permit. There are currently no plans in the current fiscal calendar to commit the significant funds needed to remediate the site and to return it to use as a Golf Course. Therefore, it can be argued that there is the political will to reopen the course when conditions allow. In such a situation, it can be argued that the use of the site for the main toll plaza removes the future potential for restoration of the entirety of the site. Therefore the effect would be permanent and of low significance, as explained above.
- 9.7.39 The proposed alignment of the New Bridge approach on the north bank of the Mersey Estuary at the former Catalyst Trade Park will dissect a small area of greenspace immediately to the south of the Garston to Timperley rail freight line. This area of designated greenspace and is approximately 1.34 ha in area. The northern part of the site will be lost to the construction of the approach road embankment. The small remaining southern section will remain as designated greenspace during and after construction and access will not be severed by the Project. However, some of the principles underlying the use as greenspace will be compromised. Its location adjacent to the Project during construction will significantly affect its use as greenspace. This area of land is of low importance as it is only a small area of designated greenspace. Nevertheless, the loss of land will be a direct effect and permanent. The magnitude of the effect will be high as it will not be able to return to its original land use, due to the construction of the embankment for the Project. The effect on this area of greenspace is of moderate significance.
- 9.7.40 At Wigg Island and Widnes Warth there will be a temporary loss of saltmarsh during construction. It is anticipated that an area of 6.23 ha will be temporarily taken which will include all areas for construction across the saltmarshes. An access route will be required at Wigg Island and this will require an additional 0.05 ha. These areas are designated as greenspace. The proposed loss of land is temporary and represents only 1.50% of the designated greenspace of within the "project corridor". Therefore the importance is low. However, although temporary, the area of land to be lost will be direct and will mean that it will not be available during the entire construction period. In addition, both areas would be temporarily separated, and this will reduce the ability of the local community to use the sites and affect their openness. Due to the temporary loss of greenspace and severance issues, the effect significance will be moderate.
- 9.7.41 A number of greenspaces located within the construction areas of C (Freight Line to St Helens Canal), F (Bridgewater Junction) and G (Central Expressway, Lodge Lane Junction and Weston Link Junction). Approximately 7.72 ha (1.7% of greenspace identified within the "project corridor") will be permanently lost during the construction of the Project. Although these areas are designated as greenspace, the size of those areas to be lost is small and therefore their importance is low. However, these small areas of greenspace will be directly affected and therefore the magnitude of the effect is high. As a result, these small parcels of land will not be able to return to their original land use designation, the significance of the effect on these areas of greenspace is of moderate significance.
- 9.7.42 The Borough wide network of greenways will be affected where the Project intersects land designated for this use. The greenway network will be affected at the following locations:
- the Daresbury Expressway and the A558;
 - the junction of the A533 and Central Expressway;
 - the junction of the Rocksavage Expressway, Central Expressway and the A557;
 - greenway running from the Quay Bridge, along Wigg Island and terminating at the most eastern point of Wigg Island.

- 9.7.43 These greenways act as pathways for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders and are of moderate importance. Effects on these greenways would be temporary and restricted to the construction period. There will be no direct change in the land use as temporary diversions will be put in place, and therefore the magnitude of the effect is neutral. The effect significance for the temporary severance of the potential greenway will be low negative.
- 9.7.44 The proposed alignment of the Project crosses Wigg Island which has been designated as a green belt, which extends to approximately 161 ha in area. Due to the designation and the area of land that the green belt occupies, this area is of high importance. As a result of the New Bridge, the amount of land to be temporarily lost during construction is approximately 2.82 ha (1.75% of the total area). In land use terms, the construction of the Project will have a negative temporary effect on the green belt due to the loss of land, and segregation of the green belt into two areas. In addition, the intrusion of the bridge will compromise the ability of Wigg Island to act as greenspace, and is directly contrary to policy GE1 in the Council's UDP. The construction activities will urbanise the area, and will affect the landscape value of the island and adjacent estuary (see Chapter 10). The magnitude of the effect on the green belt will be high. There will be a direct change in the land use for the construction period, thus the magnitude of the effect will also be high. As a result, the effect significance on the green belt that crosses Wigg Island will be high.

Commercial/Industrial Land

- 9.7.45 The assessment of land required to meet the strategic needs of the Project has identified areas of land currently occupied or designated as commercial/industrial sites. These will require purchase (it will be compulsory), and demolition. A detailed assessment of the specific buildings requiring Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) is reported on in the Construction Methods Report (Appendix 2.1).
- 9.7.46 It is understood that the Council will use compulsory powers to purchase these properties if need be. The operators/tenants will move out ahead of construction. The Council has developed an Early Land Acquisition Policy to assist in the compilation of required land. The Council will consider opportunities to identify suitable properties in the region, but will not re-house these tenants. There remains the potential for some operators/tenants to move out of the Borough.
- 9.7.47 The total area of commercial/industrial land which has been identified within the "project corridor" of the alignment is approximately 236.62 ha.
- 9.7.48 The total area of commercial/industrial land use to be lost by the Project during construction is approximately 20.23 ha. In terms of loss in relation to the total area of this land use identified within the "project corridor" of the Project is 8.55%. The land which is used for commercial/industrial purposes is of high importance as it offers business and employment to the Borough. The permanent direct effects from the Project (which occur during construction period) would result in the loss of this land use and therefore would have a negative effect, as the site would no longer be available for its current land use and, therefore, the magnitude of the effect will be high also. The loss of these areas of land for the construction of the Project will be of high effect significance.
- 9.7.49 Table 9.9 summarises the areas of commercial/industrial land that will be lost during the construction period.

Table 9.9 - Commercial/industrial land lost during the construction of the Project.

Construction Area	Construction Period (temporary land loss)
B - Ditton Junction to Freight Line	4.81 ha
C - Freight Line to St Helens Canal	5.93 ha
E - Astmoor Viaduct	7.61 ha
I - SJB and Widnes Delinking	1.88 ha

Agricultural Land

- 9.7.50 Wigg Island and Widnes Warth are not currently used for agriculture and they are both designated agricultural quality grade 5 (very poor).
- 9.7.51 Temporary access for construction to these areas of saltmarsh will be via stone tracks (as noted in Section 3.4.7-3.4.12 of the Construction Methods Report (Appendix 2.1)) and will be in place for a period of up to 2 years (short term duration). It is anticipated that the stone tracks will be approximately 5m wide with intermediate passing bays being provided at appropriate positions.
- 9.7.52 Temporary land take will also be required for construction activities. Approximately 6.73 ha will be temporarily required for construction, and this will form a rectangular shape across the width of both saltmarshes. As outlined above, the land will only be required during the construction period, therefore a temporary short term effect.
- 9.7.53 These areas of land which will be used for the construction activities will not be available for their current land use and therefore the magnitude of the effect will be high. The area of land temporarily lost will have low importance due to its current use and classification of grade 5 agricultural quality. Therefore, the effect will be of moderate significance.
- 9.7.54 The parcel of land (approximately 1.46 ha) located adjacent to Junction 12 of the M56 will be lost during the construction of the Project. The total amount of land lost will be approximately 0.40 ha and is classified as agricultural quality grade 5 (very poor). This land is currently used for horse grazing and alternative sites for this activity will have to be found by the current land users. The area of land lost will have moderate importance and the magnitude of the effect will be high as it will no longer be available for its current use. Therefore the effect will be of moderate significance.
- 9.7.55 The Project will not result in the loss of agricultural buildings which are used as part of a viable agricultural business. Therefore, there will be no effect on viable agricultural units.

Infrastructure

- 9.7.56 A number of modifications in the existing infrastructure within the Borough will be required for the construction of the Project, in addition as outlined in the previous and following Sections (with regard to receptors affected), a number of other land uses will require land take/change for the proposed alignment, these include:

Existing Road infrastructure

- 9.7.57 A number of existing roads will be modified to form part of the Project. These are described in detail in Chapter 2.1 and Chapter 16.
- 9.7.58 There will be no change to the current land use as all modifications will be made within the current highway boundary; therefore the magnitude of the effect will be neutral. The importance of this receptor is high as it is used intensively as a transport route within the Borough. These

modifications will be permanent in line with the changes required for the construction of the Project. However, this will be a positive effect as it will make improvements to the existing infrastructure. The effect significance of these changes will be low.

Silver Jubilee Bridge (SJB) and Widnes De-Linking

- 9.7.59 The proposed de-linking for Widnes will allow existing bus services over the SJB to be improved in terms of journey time reliability, and provision of a shared pedestrian/cycle path on the eastern side of the SJB. At Widnes, a section of the Queensway highway and the Widnes Eastern Bypass will be made redundant.
- 9.7.60 In addition, two areas of highway will be made redundant by the works; these comprise the Central Carriageway of Queensway and a length of Ditton Road to the east of the Ditton roundabout. These may become available for development. It is the intention of the Council to provide these to developers and so in this assessment we have assumed that they will change use from highway to commercial, residential or recreational use. On the Runcorn side, existing direct bus routes between Runcorn and Widnes will remain. There will be an opportunity for the removal of slip roads from the Weston Link Junction and the free flow slip roads connecting the SJB and the Weston Link Junction may be replaced with a roundabout.
- 9.7.61 Effects of modifications and the construction of new structures are likely to have a moderate magnitude of effect. Although where the construction of new structures is required, these changes will be made within the existing highway boundary, and therefore there will be a low magnitude of effect as there will be slight alterations. However, these changes will not render the land use unfit under its current land use classification. As mentioned in the earlier Section, existing major road infrastructure within the Borough is of high importance as it is an intensively used transport pathway. The modifications to these areas of infrastructure will have positive effects to the overall land use as they will improve its ability to function efficiently. With these factors in mind, the effect significance of modifications to the SJB and associated Widnes de-linking activities is positive and moderate.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.7.62 Cycle routes across the Borough may be temporarily affected by the construction of the Project. Some routes will be maintained throughout the construction period; however, other routes may be temporarily disrupted due to construction of the Project. Therefore, routes affected will be closed or diverted during this period. In terms of its current land use, these cycle routes are of high importance as they provide important links to certain areas of the Borough. The exact cycle routes that will be disrupted during the Project are identified in Chapter 16. They will not be completely lost and their land use designation will remain unchanged and therefore the magnitude of the effect is moderate. These effects will be short term negative effects during the construction phase. With these effects in mind, the overall effect significance to cycle routes affected by the Project will be low.
- 9.7.63 The Trans Pennine Trail (as part of the national cycle network) will be affected by the construction phase of the Project and may be subject to closures or local diversions (see Chapter 16). However, there is a medium pressure gas main buried beneath the cycleway and efforts will be taken to avoid closing or diverting this route.
- 9.7.64 The public right of way access to Spike Island and public rights of way along the Manchester Ship and the Bridgewater canal will be subject to closures and local diversions during construction. The public right of way which links both halves of the St Michael's Golf Course in Widnes will need to be realigned during construction of the main toll area. The public right of way access across the Central Expressway which are provided via two grade separated footbridges will need to be widened as part of the Central Expressway works. Construction operations may also temporarily affect cycleways at Ditton roundabout, Victoria Road, Astmoor

Road, Bridgewater canal, but also whilst constructing the freight line to St Helens canal. Footway/cycleway bridges will also face effects during the construction period. These effects upon public rights of way and cycleways are further detailed in Chapter 16.

- 9.7.65 The routes mentioned above are of high importance in terms of their land use designation. They are intensively used routes within the Borough. The magnitude of the effect from the construction phase of the Project will be neutral. There will be no change to their current land use designation as they will remain as PRoW and will not be completely lost. However there would be temporary negative effects as a result of the temporary closures or diversions to these PRoW. These effects would only be short term in duration as the closures/diversions would be removed once construction was complete. The effects from construction on the PRoW that intersect the Project are of low effect significance.
- 9.7.66 There is no data available on usage of the foreshore, however it is considered that the number of people using the foreshores is low, and access to the foreshore either side will be maintained. Access along the foreshore will be temporarily blocked during the construction period at both Wigg Island and Widnes Warth. No diversions are currently proposed, however the closures will be temporary and short term in duration. The foreshores at Wigg Island and Widnes Warth are of low importance, as the land that will be directly affected will not prevent the access of foreshores east of the construction areas for the Project. The foreshores that will be affected will be temporarily lost in terms of their current land use designation, and therefore the magnitude of the effect to the areas affected by construction will be moderate. The temporary construction phase effects to foreshores at Wigg Island and Widnes Warth will be of moderate significance.

Assumed Rights of Way

- 9.7.67 Assumed rights of way identified on St Michael's Golf Course, those that pass around areas of Astmoor Industrial Estate and assumed rights of way at Lodge Lane Junction will be lost permanently during construction of the Project which cross the construction area will be permanently lost during construction and will not be replaced due to this land being lost for the location of the main toll plaza for the Project. The importance of these rights of way is high as they provide additional links to areas within the Borough. During construction, it is probable that such non-designated paths that are closed off will be informally re-routed by those currently using the paths. However, the magnitude of the construction effects on the assumed rights of way will be high as there will be no access to these pathways. In addition, there will also be a negative effect as there will be a permanent loss of land and it will not return to its current undesignated use. The effect significance to the assumed rights of way identified is low. This is based on the fact that these assumed rights of way are not shown on Ordinance Survey maps
- 9.7.68 During construction, assumed rights of way identified on Wigg Island LNR will be temporarily affected by construction access routes and may face temporary closures due to the construction activities. Although they are currently acting as assumed rights of way for the use of the general public, they are not designated by the Council in the UDP proposals map of the Borough. Due to this, their importance as a receptor is high as they provide additional links to areas within the Borough. The magnitude of the effect will be high as the public will no longer be able to access these unofficial routes. However, the effect significance is low.
- 9.7.69 Assumed rights of way identified on Spike Island and at the A533 Central Expressway will remain open and accessible throughout the construction period, and no effects are predicted.

Rail Network

- 9.7.70 There will be no loss of rail infrastructure due to the Project and therefore effect is not significant. The proposals in Policy RG1 allows for the reopening of a passenger station in the Ditton Road area. The Project will not adversely affect this proposal.

Buses

- 9.7.71 There will be no loss of or gain in bus routes or stations from the Project and therefore the effect is not significant.

Development Land

- 9.7.72 This Section considers direct land loss within the “project corridor” on the existing six RAAs in the Council’s UDP (Ref. 1).
- 9.7.73 Halebank RAA (approximately 69.35 ha) will not be directly affected by the Project due to its location and therefore their effect is not significant.
- 9.7.74 The following RAAs run adjacent to the Project are Runcorn and Weston Docklands – approximately 92.94 ha, and Castlefields and Norton Priory – approximately 127.72 ha. These areas will not be directly affected by the Project and therefore effect is not significant.
- 9.7.75 RAAs that will be directly affected by the Project due to land lost and changes in access/use include:
- a. Southern Widnes;
 - b. Central Widnes; and
 - c. Widnes Waterfront.
- 9.7.76 The total area of RAAs that will be occupied during the construction period of the Project is approximately 33.80 ha. These areas of land are of high importance as they are currently designated for regeneration and development and each have specific regeneration strategies as outlined in the Halton UDP. Land uses that fall within these RAAs and that will be lost within these areas has been addressed in the above Sections. In terms of the land use as regeneration action areas, land lost due to the construction of the Project through these designated areas will be of high magnitude as the current land use designations will no longer be fit under their current designation and there will be dramatic changes in the land use throughout these areas. Infrastructure is not included in the description of appropriate development type in these RAAs and so the Project is contrary to these policies. However, in practical terms, the improvement in infrastructure will have a positive effect on allowing improved access to these areas and, therefore, positive effects on the chances of delivering regeneration and land use change in these areas. The Project may result in bringing back the effective use of land which is currently economically, environmentally or physically blighted by a number of factors that are not considered in terms of land use, e.g. economic prosperity within the Borough. The effect for the regeneration action areas discussed above is of high positive significance.
- 9.7.77 Three small plots of development land have been identified. The plot situated adjacent to Lowerhouse Lane (Kingsway/Moor Lane Phase 2) will not be affected by the Project. Part of the plot located at the intersection of Ditton and Speke Road has been identified as being lost permanently due to the Project. The plot of land at Ditton and Speke Road is saved for development. Part of this area (approximately 0.11 ha) will be permanently lost during construction and will not be available following construction, therefore loss will be permanent. The land is of moderate importance due to its scale, the site would face medium scale changes in its current function and would require modifications, therefore of moderate magnitude. However, the site has been designated for development; there will be a negative effect due to the construction of the Project. This plot of land will no longer be available for its proposed use for development. With this in mind, the effect to development land identified in the Project is of high negative significance. The plot allocated for development at Rock Savage, Clifton Leave has also been designated for development. The UDP states that the allocated use for this parcel of land is for “roadside” user (petrol station, restaurant, hotel). Approximately 0.40 ha will

be lost permanently during the construction of the Project. As detailed above, this parcel of land will face medium scale changes as its current land status is greenfield. This part of land will be subject to direct land use changes and therefore the magnitude of this effect is high. As this plot of land is designated for development, there will be a negative effect and therefore the effect significance is high negative.

Other Properties

- 9.7.78 As outlined in Section 9.6.70, two electricity substations are located within the application boundaries of the Project. The Project passes directly over the electricity substation located adjacent to an industrial compound on Ditton Road, Widnes. The facility will be either relocated and demolished, depending on demand for electricity in the area and the ability of the existing infrastructure to supply that demand. If the facility is relocated, or provision made for supply from other locations, the importance of the existing facility will be negligible and the magnitude neutral, and therefore the effect will be not significant.
- 9.7.79 The electricity substation located adjacent to the ThermPhos site will also be relocated and demolished. As the facility is to be relocated, the importance of the existing facility will be negligible and the magnitude neutral, and therefore the effect will be not significant.

Operation Phase Effects

- 9.7.80 A summary of effects is provided in Table 9.11, those effects considered to have no significant negative effect have been shaded in grey.

Halton Borough

- 9.7.81 Following construction, the Project has the potential to affect delivery of land use change as currently designated within the Borough, as defined in the 2005 UDP. It should be noted, that the Council is in the process of developing the new LDF, which will replace the UDP at some stage in the future. The LDF will adopt many of the land use policies and plans from the UDP. However the LDF process will include a review of these policies and it is possible that the use of more sustainable criteria will lead to changes in the location of some of the land uses adopted. The LDF will also include increased provision for some land use types, such as housing, and will increase the time horizon used to 2026. Currently the Council are preparing a Core Strategy, but are awaiting the completion of the emerging new North West Plan (emerging RSS 13) before progressing to review of existing land use policies and plans, and definition of additional areas for allocated land use change. The implications of this developing policy cannot be assessed in this Chapter as the detailed development of land use policies for the LDF has yet to be undertaken. The current UDP covers land use only to 2016, and construction will be completed by 2015. Therefore, the current UDP policies have been used in the assessment, even though they will only cover the first two years of the operation of the Project. In mitigation to this perceived shortfall, the new land use policies and plans in the emerging LDF will be prepared on the assumption that the Project will be going ahead and will, therefore take into consideration any potential effects of the operation of the Project on land use allocation. It is not predicted, therefore, that the Project will have any negative effect on the emerging LDF land use policies and plans. Indeed, improved transport arrangements, de-linking in Widnes (and at a later date in Runcorn under separate arrangements) and releasing land within the Ditton Road/Newtown area should allow proposed future improvements within these areas to be realised.
- 9.7.82 The Project will not lead to the loss of any residential properties, and will not affect the provision of housing as defined in the UDP post construction (2015-2016). Because of this, there will not be a need to increase provision of housing in other areas of the Borough over this period.

- 9.7.83 The Project will not adversely affect the delivery of land allocated in the UDP for the provision of commercial and industrial use post construction (i.e. from 2015-2016). There will be a release of lands at Astmoor Industrial Estate and improved access to lands at Ditton Road which could be used in the future for employment use. This will provide partial compensation for land lost during the construction phase of the Project.
- 9.7.84 The emerging core strategies mention two proposed employment areas which will be taken forwards into the LDF Land use policies and plans. These are Daresbury International Science and Technology Park and the Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park. The Project will not adversely affect the delivery of either in land use terms.
- 9.7.85 During operation of the Project, there will be no further “loss” of land within the RAAs. As part of the construction, properties in the Victoria Road area will be demolished. In this area the Project will be on an open viaduct. During operation, the area around Victoria road will be available for redevelopment in line with the aims of Policy RG1, with the viaduct design allowing connectivity between the two remaining areas of the Southern Widnes RAA.
- 9.7.86 During the operation phase there will be no further loss of greenspace or open space within the Borough as a result of the Project. Open/greenspace in Widnes Warth and Wigg Island temporarily lost will be returned to their designated use. In addition, as previously noted, remediation of contaminated land undertaken by the Borough will, following construction, will continue to provide additional open space and greenspace over the construction period.
- 9.7.87 The Council have an aspiration to re-open St Michael's Golf Course. The use of the newly opened course will not be adversely affected in land use terms by the operation of the Project.

Project Corridor

Residential Areas

- 9.7.88 There will be no loss of residential properties during the operation of the Project. For these reasons, effect will be not significant.

Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace

- 9.7.89 The land assumed to be used for the shooting club located on Wigg Island is a community resource which is currently well used and is therefore of high importance. During the operation of the Project, the site used by the shooting club would no longer be available as a community resource. In land use terms, the changes due to the Project will result in effects of high magnitude. The assumed shooting rights that the club would currently have on the site would be removed due to health and safety issues. Therefore the effect significance during the operation of the Project are assumed to be high.
- 9.7.90 Part of Wigg Island is also classified as a community park. During the operation phase, the majority of the area temporarily taken will be returned to community park use. The permanent loss of land will occur due to the construction of the piers. These will take approximately 0.06 ha of land from the park. This represents 0.23% of the park area. This loss will be permanent and negative. The importance of the receptor is high, but the magnitude of the effect not significant. Therefore, the effect is predicted to be “not significant”.
- 9.7.91 There will be no loss of community resources during the operation of the Project. For these reasons, effect will be “not significant”.
- 9.7.92 The Project will result in the permanent loss of part of St Michael's Golf Course. Under its designation the substantial loss of a large area of greenspace is of high importance. The proposed area of land take will occur during construction period but will remain lost after

construction. Therefore, no additional land will be lost. This permanent loss of this land is of high magnitude and the effect significance would be high.

- 9.7.93 St Michael's Golf Course has been closed on public health and safety grounds. The Council have publicly announced an ambition to reopen the facility as an 18 hole course on the remaining land north of the Project. Given that the use of this land for such a recreational purpose is currently not possible, this would be positive. The delivery of this new Golf Course will be independent of the Project. Given this ambition, it is clear that the Council do not consider that the Project compromises the re-use of the remaining part of the Golf Course. Therefore, it is anticipated that effects on the reuse of the Golf Course will be neutral.
- 9.7.94 The use of the southern part of the current Golf Course site as the main toll plaza will result in its permanent loss as greenspace. The importance of this loss has already been discussed in the construction effects assessment. However this loss will be permanent and occur throughout the operation phase. The loss previously assessed as a high magnitude will be a large scale development. For this reason, the effect for the permanent loss of St Michael's Golf Course in its current state is high negative significance.
- 9.7.95 During operation, much of the land in Wigg Island and Widnes Warth used for construction will be returned to greenspace. The only remaining permanent loss of land will be related to the piers constructed to support the New Bridge. This comprises:
- a. Wigg Island - 0.12 ha; and
 - b. Widnes Warth - 0.14 ha.
- 9.7.96 Approximately 5.97 ha of land temporarily used for construction in these two areas will be returned to use as greenspace.
- 9.7.97 The permanent loss of land at Widnes Warth and Wigg Island is small, but of high importance. However, during the operational use of the Project there will be no further loss of greenspace at these two locations and so the significance of the effect is not significant.
- 9.7.98 During the operational phase of the Project, part of the greenspace at Ditton Road will be permanently lost and will not be returned to their designated use. The lost areas of greenspace will no longer be fit for their current use and therefore the effect is of high magnitude and a negative effect. The area lost is small. However, the use of the retained area of the site as greenspace may be affected by the Project. The significance of the effect, however, is low.
- 9.7.99 Greenspaces identified within the construction areas of C (Freight Line to St Helens Canal), F (Bridgewater Junction) and G (Central Expressway, Lodge Lane Junction and Weston Link Junction) will be permanently lost during the operational phase of the Project. Although these areas are designated as greenspace, the size of those areas to be lost is small and therefore their importance is low. However, these small areas of greenspace will be directly affected and therefore the magnitude of the effect is high. As a result, these small parcels of land will not be able to return to their original land use designation, the significance of the effect on these areas of greenspace is of moderate significance.
- 9.7.100 The Project crosses land designated as green belt at Wigg Island. The permanent loss of green belt land is 0.12 ha.
- 9.7.101 This loss is permanent but only represents 0.10% of the designated green belt. However, during operation, the deck of the New Bridge will pass through the airspace above the green belt. The effect of this on landscape value is discussed in Chapter 12, and on ecology in Chapter 10. In land use terms, the deck above represents an incursion into the green belt. All developments in the green belt should contribute to the aims of the green belt (PPG2) irrespective of if they are appropriate or inappropriate developments. The potential visual effects and urbanisation effects

resulting from the New Bridge deck will comprise permanent negative effects. The importance of the receptor and magnitude of the receptor are high, and so the effect is permanent and high.

Commercial Land/Industrial Land

- 9.7.102 The construction phase effects identify loss of land in this phase. No additional loss of land will occur during the operation. However, the loss of this land use is of high importance and permanent. Therefore the effect significance remains high negative. Some parcels of land taken during the construction phase will not be required for the operation of the Project, these parcels of land equate to approximately 7.91 ha. Land designated for commercial/industrial use is of high importance in terms of its provision as a land use within the Borough. The loss of such land will have a negative effect as the land will no longer be fit for its original designated use.

Agricultural Land

- 9.7.103 The construction effects discussed previously identify the areas of agricultural land that will be temporarily lost during construction. However, the proportion of land that will be permanently lost is relatively small in relation to the area of agricultural area.
- 9.7.104 There will be permanent agricultural land lost to the Project for permanent structures such as the approach piers. In total this comprises:
- a. Wigg Island - 0.12 ha; and
 - b. Widnes Warth - 0.14 ha.
- 9.7.105 In addition, the quality of the agricultural land is low, and it does not form part of an active agricultural unit. The land is segregated from areas of higher quality agriculture, and the segregation will widen as new housing and commercial development occur to the east of Runcorn (Daresbury) and west of Widnes. The area of the land occupied by the piers will not be available for use under their current land use designation and therefore the magnitude of the effect will be low negative. However, the surrounding land will still be suitable for use as agriculture. The effect of the direct permanent loss of these areas for the piers will be not significant.
- 9.7.106 The parcel of land located adjacent to Junction 12 of the M56 will be permanently lost during the operation of the Project. The total amount of land lost will be approximately 0.40 ha and is classified as agricultural quality grade 5 (very poor). This land is currently used for horse grazing and alternative sites for this activity will have to be found by the current land users. The area of land lost will have moderate importance and the magnitude of the effect will be high as it will no longer be available for its current use. Therefore the effect will be of moderate significance.

Infrastructure

- 9.7.107 There are no further infrastructure changes proposed to the Project during operation. No further effects are, therefore anticipated and so is "not significant"
- 9.7.108 As a result of Widnes de-linking activities, some roads will be become redundant following construction; Widnes Eastern Bypass and the main carriageway of Queensway. The land made available from the de-linking activities will be of high importance but will also have a positive effect in the Borough, as the land will be available for development. The land will be redundant and therefore will not be needed for its original land use designation, therefore will be of high magnitude. These changes to the infrastructure will have a high positive effect significance.
- 9.7.109 The Council propose, in the future, to de-link the SJB in Runcorn and to reprioritise roads near the SJB. This proposal forms part of a separate proposal, and so is not a direct result of the Project. However, without the development of the Project, the SJB will continue to be heavily over-used, and therefore, de-linking could not effectively occur. The benefits of de-linking in

Runcorn will be assessed under a separate application. However, in land use terms, they are expected to allow enhanced land use change within central Runcorn and the Runcorn and Western Docklands RAA.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.7.110 There are many routes within the Borough which provide important links and are therefore of high importance as a receptor. The Trans-Pennine Trail is part of the national cycle network within the Borough and the Council have identified the objective of linking the de-linked SJB into the Trans Pennine Trail and to link into national paths on Runcorn. It is anticipated that during operation, cycle routes will either be re-established or permanent diversions provided. Any changes made will not directly alter or prevent the cycle routes from functioning under their current land use designation and therefore the magnitude of this effect is low. During the operation phase of the Project, the effect significance is low.
- 9.7.111 The Trans-Pennine Trail is a major PRoW and as mentioned above, the Council have identified the objective of linking the de-linked SJB into the Trans Pennine Trail and to connect it into national paths which pass through Runcorn. In addition, there are many other PRoW throughout the Borough, these however will not be affected during the operational phase of the Project but may be enhanced and improve the accessibility and the use of PRoW from other new infrastructure, such changes will have a positive effect. In land use terms, the routes provided for the residents of the Borough are of high importance, however, the magnitude of the effect will be low as there may be small modifications to some routes, but as already mentioned this will be beneficial rather than detrimental. It is therefore regarded that the Project will have low effect significance upon PRoW.
- 9.7.112 Access along the foreshore of the saltmarshes will be re-established following construction of the Project. There will be no change in land use and so the magnitude of effect will be neutral. The importance of the foreshores is low as public use will continue. The foreshores offer a facility and additional recreational routes to the residents of the Borough. Therefore the effect is "not significant" as there will be no additional effects in terms of change in land use during the operation of the Project.

Assumed Rights of Way

- 9.7.113 There will be no additional impact during the operational effects upon the assumed rights of way that were affected in the construction phase of the Project as those identified in the earlier Sections will no longer exist. The construction phase effects identify loss of land in this phase. No additional loss of land will occur during the concession operation, and therefore the effect significance will be low.
- 9.7.114 Those that remain; assumed rights of way at Spike Island, West Bank, A533 Central Expressway and sections at Lodge Lane Junction will face no further effects and therefore effect is not significant. At present, there will be no further land take and therefore if any other assumed rights of way that may develop or become established in future, will have to be assessed.

Rail Network

- 9.7.115 Rail users will not be affected by the Project and therefore no operational effects apply and therefore effect is not significant.

Buses

- 9.7.116 It is likely that bus journey times will be improved due to the Project, however, in land use terms, no new infrastructure will be provided and therefore effect is not significant.

Development Land

- 9.7.117 There will be no additional loss of vacant or development land following construction. The land is of high importance. Therefore the potential effect is not significant.
- 9.7.118 Some land may be returned to productive use following construction and this described in the mitigation Section of this Chapter (9.8).

Table 9.10 - Construction and Operation Effects on Land Use Receptors affected by the Project.

Effect	Receptor and importance	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
Construction Phase			
Loss of land at Wigg Island used for the shooting club	Community Resources High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of land at Wigg Island Community Park	Community Resources High Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course.	Open Space/Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of a small compound of land south of the Garston to Timperley Rail Freight Line.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land designated as greenspace.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of saltmarsh at Astmoor and Widnes.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Severance of potential greenways.	Open Space/Greenspace Moderate Importance	Temporary Neutral Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Loss and segregation of land for designated green belt at Wigg Island.	Green Belt High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of commercial/industrial land.	Commercial/Industrial Land High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term	High Negative Significance

Effect	Receptor and importance	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
		Direct	
Loss of saltmarsh for construction access and construction activities.	Agricultural Land Low Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land used for horse grazing.	Agricultural Land Moderate importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Modifications to existing road infrastructure.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Positive Significance
Modifications to the SJB and Widnes De-Linking.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Low Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Positive Significance
Severance of PRow across the Borough.	Infrastructure High Importance	Temporary Moderate Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Loss and severance of foreshores at Widnes Warth and Wigg Island.	Infrastructure Low Importance	Temporary Moderate Magnitude Short Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of assumed rights of way on St Michael's Golf Course, Lodge Lane and Astmoor Industrial Estate.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Loss and severance of assumed rights of way at Wigg Island LNR.	Infrastructure High Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Loss of land uses in Southern Widnes, Central Widnes and Widnes Waterfront Regeneration Action Areas.	Development Land High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Positive Significance
Loss of land at Ditton/Speke Road and Rocksavage, Clifton.	Development Land Moderate Importance	Permanent Moderate Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Operation Phase			
Loss of land at Wigg Island used for the shooting club	Community Resources High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude	High Negative Significance

Effect	Receptor and importance	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
		Long Term Direct	
Loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course.	Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of a small compound of land south of the Garston to Timperley Rail Freight Line.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Loss of land designated as greenspace.	Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land as designated as green belt at Wigg Island	Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of land used for commercial/industrial use.	Commercial/Industrial Land High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance
Loss of land used for horse grazing.	Agricultural Land Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance
Land made available from SJB and Widnes de-linking.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Positive Significance
Modifications to PRow as a result of the Project.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Low Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Positive Significance
Loss of assumed rights of way at St Michael's Golf Course, Lodge Lane and Astmoor Industrial Estate.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance
Re-establishment of assumed rights of way on Spike Island, Wigg Island LNR and A533 Central Expressway.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance

9.8 Mitigation, Compensation, Enhancement and Monitoring

9.8.1 This Section gives a description of the mitigation measures and enhancement opportunities suggested to reduce the significance of those effects identified in Section 9.7. Mitigation measures were identified following the guidance outlined in Section 9.5.

9.8.2 It is recommended that mitigation and enhancement measures identified in this Section is integrated into the development of land use policies and plans in the emerging LDF.

Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace

Greenspace

9.8.3 The greenspace that is proposed to be lost due to the Project is of high significance. The largest area lost will be on the former St Michael's Golf Course. The Council have aspirations to re-opening the Golf Course, as an 18 hole course, in the future when funds allow. The re-opening of the Golf Course will only occur once issues of contamination and public safety can be satisfied. The Council do not consider that the Project will prejudice the opportunity for St Michaels Golf Course to re-open. The impact was considered by the Mersey Gateway Executive Board on 24 January 2008 (Appendix 9.5).

9.8.4 Additional areas of greenspace lost or modified will still allow their current use to continue for majority of the sites, although some disruption in connectivity will be experienced during construction. However, during construction, the provision of alternative routes/diversions will be provided along greenway networks to lessen the effects from the Project and still allow these community routes/facilities to be accessed. During operation, the design of the viaduct will enable visitors to the site to pass under the New Bridge.

Agricultural Land

9.8.5 The permanent loss of agricultural land on the saltmarshes at Widnes Warth and Wigg Island will not be compensated. However, the amount of land lost is minor and the agricultural quality is poor. The translocation of saltmarsh turfs during the construction phase, and treatment of soils post construction for replacement of saltmarsh turf lost, will be a mitigation measure to ensure that current land use will be maintained in the future.

Commercial Industrial Land

9.8.6 Land classified for commercial/industrial use comprises a large proportion of one of the land uses lost by the scheme. The loss of these areas reduces the availability of commercial/industrial land available in the area. The Council are in the process of developing specific policies regarding business relocation for the Project, and they are in the process of helping businesses relocate where possible on a case by case basis. This will encourage businesses in properties which are to be lost to stay in Halton. Another possible measure in order to retain commercial/industrial business in the Borough, is to utilise the areas of redundant highway or previously remediated land for such use, this will replace the areas lost. In addition, in Widnes, the de-linking process in the Ditton Road/Newtown area will release an area which currently sterilised by the highway network. This will replace lost space for more commercial/industrial businesses in the area.

9.8.7 As mentioned in Section 9.7.102, certain parcels of land used for construction will not be required during the operation of the Project and therefore these areas of land (approximately 7.97 ha) will be available for redevelopment.

9.8.8 As detailed in Section 3.5.2 of the Construction Methods Report (Appendix 2.1) once complete, the land under the proposed Astmoor Viaduct will be available for redevelopment. Calculations show that the land available could be up 2.4 ha of space available for redevelopment, assuming

one storey buildings will be constructed directly under the viaduct. In addition, as mentioned above, a proportion of the temporary land take will also be returned for development (approximately 4.30 ha). The type of redevelopment undertaken will depend upon market needs at the time of bringing these developments forward. Therefore at this stage, the exact amount of land removed cannot be confirmed. However, it is anticipated that the Council will play an active part in ensuring that appropriate development is proposed for these locations. This proposal of compensation could potentially provide approximately 6.70 ha of the land take at the Astmoor Viaduct, meaning an overall loss of approximately 1.90 ha of industrial space. It is possible to construct two storey buildings are constructed under the spans of the viaduct, additional employment space can be provided.

- 9.8.9 Existing highway at Widnes Queensway will become redundant. Currently this is assessed as remaining as highway land. However, the land is capable of being released for commercial/industrial development.
- 9.8.10 Table 9.11 summarises the commercial/industrial land lost both temporarily and permanently within the “project corridor” during the construction and operation of the Project. It also outlines the total change in the land lost at these locations after mitigation (i.e. if released for an other use) and residual effects.

Table 9.11 - Commercial/industrial land lost and returned during the construction/operation phase of the Project.

Construction Area	Construction Period (temporary land loss)	Operation Period (permanent land loss)	Land made available for redevelopment/ original land use	Residual Effects (permanent land loss)
B - Ditton Junction to Freight Line	4.81 ha	3.71 ha	1.1 ha	3.71 ha
C - Freight Line to St Helens Canal	5.93 ha	5.03 ha	0.90 ha	5.03 ha
E - Astmoor Viaduct	7.61 ha	3.31 ha	6.70 ha	1.90 ha
I - SJB and Widnes Delinking	1.88 ha	0.00 ha	1.88 ha	0.00 ha
Total	20.23 ha	12.05 ha	10.58 ha	10.64 ha

- 9.8.11 From the data above, it can be seen that with land available for return to its original use after construction and mitigation, the commercial/industrial land lost reduces from 20.23 ha to 10.64 ha.

Infrastructure

- 9.8.12 Exiting land classified as infrastructure will, in the main, remain as infrastructure. Two areas of current infrastructure will no longer be required (land at Ditton Road). The loss of these areas will be mitigated by the new infrastructure developed. The areas no longer needed will be available for reclassification as development land. This will only be undertaken following completion of the new infrastructure so no loss of infrastructure usability will occur. There is, therefore, no requirement to provide mitigation for infrastructure land.
- 9.8.13 It is the intention that any rights of way such as footpaths and cycleways which are temporarily closed during construction will be diverted to ensure connectivity during the Project. Routes for these diversions are set out in the application documents. Mitigation measures are further detailed in Chapter (16).

Development Land

- 9.8.14 The design seeks to minimise the loss of development land within the specific regeneration areas the Project passes through. Whilst the new roads will improve accessibility to these areas, some loss of land will occur. The loss of this land will be partially mitigated by the ability to better use the retained areas because of improved access and the potential for the provision of better quality units. In addition, the lease of additional development land in Widnes by the proposed de-linking activities will provide land for re-classification as development land, effectively partially mitigating for losses in other areas.
- 9.8.15 The potential conflict of the Project with the list of appropriate development types given in RG1, RG2 and RG3 needs to be carefully considered by the Council in the LDF process, and both the implications of, and opportunities offered by, the Project taken into account in the emerging spatial strategy for the Borough.
- 9.8.16 The loss of development land at the intersection of Ditton and Speke Road and at Rock Savage, Clifton Leave, which is currently designated for development, will have a small adverse affect the availability of development sites in the area. However, it is proposed to re-use areas of defunct highway no longer required as development land and redesignate it for designation as commercial/employment use. Some areas of commercial and industrial land lost during the construction phase of the Project will also be made available for redevelopment following commencement of operation of the Project. This will help to mitigate for these areas of designated development land lost by the Project (see Table 9.11).

Monitoring Requirements

- 9.8.17 There are no specific monitoring requirements for land use. However, the monitoring of business relocations as a result of the Project could be undertaken to assess the success of policies developed by the Council in terms of re-utilisation of brownfield sites and vacant land has assisted in the redevelopment and regeneration of the Borough due to the changes brought about by the Project.

9.9 Residual Effects

- 9.9.1 It is not always possible or practical to avoid effects altogether. Therefore the residual effects, whilst they may be mitigated are not always removed completely. In addition, mitigation of some effects is not possible. Assuming that all the mitigation measures have been carried out as suggested above, the expected residual effects are outlined below and summarised in Table 9.12. Those effects considered to have no significant negative effect following mitigation have been shaded in grey.

Do Nothing Effects

- 9.9.2 The Project will not be delivered and therefore there will be no changes within the “project corridor”.

Residual Construction Phase Effects

Halton Borough

- 9.9.3 No mitigation is proposed for Borough wide effects in land use terms for the construction period, as the Project has few effects on the delivery of the policies and plans given in the UDP (2005). The major effect in Borough terms is on the delivery of policies RG1, RG2 and RG3 where land lost for construction of the Project is contrary to the list of appropriate developments in these policies. It has been proposed that the Council consider this in the development of the emerging spatial strategy for the LDF.

Project Corridor

- 9.9.4 No mitigation measures in land use terms have been proposed for the construction period. Therefore the effects described in Section 9.7 remain pertinent.

Residual Operation Phase Effects

Project Corridor

Residential Areas

- 9.9.5 Residential properties will be unaffected by the Project during the operational phase. Therefore there is no residual effect.

Community Resources/Open Space/Greenspace

- 9.9.6 The loss of the shooting rights on Wigg Island will be lost during the operation of the Project due to issues of health and safety. This loss will not be mitigated and so will be permanent. In land use terms, the loss of land used for shooting will be high as it is a community resource and it is understood that it is well used. Therefore the magnitude of this effect will be high and permanent and so the effect significance remains high.
- 9.9.7 There will a loss of 0.06 ha of land in the Wigg Island Community Park. This will not be mitigated and so will be permanent. The loss is small in area, and the majority of the park will remain in operation. The park is of high importance within Halton. However, the effect is considered to be of low magnitude. For these reasons, the residual effect significance will be not significant.
- 9.9.8 Part of the greenspace at Ditton Road will be permanently lost and will not be returned to its designated use. The lost areas of greenspace will no longer be fit for their current use and therefore the effect is of high magnitude and a negative effect. The area lost is small. However,

the use of the retained area of the site as greenspace may be affected by the Project. The residual effect significance remains low.

- 9.9.9 In addition, parcels of greenspace land in construction zones; C (Freight Line to St Helens Canal), F (Bridgewater Junction) and G (Central Expressway, Lodge Lane Junction and Weston Link Junction) would be lost. This permanent loss of this land is of high magnitude, however, as mentioned earlier, the effect significance will remain low as these parcels of land are moderate.
- 9.9.10 The Project will result in the permanent loss of part of the former St Michael's Golf Course. Under its designation the substantial loss of a large area of greenspace is of high importance. The Council have an ambition to re-open St Michael's Golf Course as an 18 hole facility on the remaining land north of the Project. The Council do not consider that the Project compromises the re-use of the Golf Course as an 18 hole facility (Appendix 9.5). It is anticipated that effects on the reuse of the Golf Course will be neutral and does not require mitigation; therefore the residual effect is not significant.
- 9.9.11 The New Bridge crosses land designated as green belt at Wigg Island. The predicted effect significance is high and permanent loss of green belt land and cannot be mitigated. The residual effect remains as assessed in the earlier Sections.

Commercial Land/Industrial Land

- 9.9.12 The unmitigated commercial industrial land lost because of the Project is 10.64 ha. However, once constructed, land at Astmoor Industrial Park can be returned to commercial/industrial use. In addition, the Project will solve severance issues at Ditton Road/Newtown, releasing additional space for development/redevelopment. The total released will be in the order of approximately 10.58 ha. Data from the Council and National Statistics identifies that land is available for reallocation of businesses relocated due to the Project. However, the Project will reduce the overall land available for these uses ultimately. Therefore, although mitigation reduces the significance of the effect, the losses are predicted to be of moderate significance.

Agricultural Land

- 9.9.13 No mitigation for the small losses of agricultural land is proposed. Therefore the assessment remains as that given in the earlier Sections.

Infrastructure

- 9.9.14 No mitigation for changes in infrastructure is proposed. Therefore the effects remain as those described in the earlier Sections.
- 9.9.15 As a result of Widnes de-linking activities, some roads will become redundant following construction; Widnes Eastern Bypass and the main carriageway of Queensway. The land made available from the de-linking activities will be of high importance but will also have a positive effect in the Borough, as the land will be available for development. No enhancements for this positive effect have been proposed, as the Council are currently developing a new regeneration strategy for the LDF.
- 9.9.16 The Council propose, in the future, to de-link the SJB in Runcorn and to reprioritise roads near the SJB. This proposal forms part of a separate proposal, and so is not a direct result of the Project. However, the de-linking is dependant on the Project occurring. The benefits of de-linking in Runcorn will be assessed under a separate application. However, in land use terms, they are expected to allow enhanced land use change within central Runcorn and the Runcorn and Western Docklands RAA. No enhancements for this positive effect have been proposed, as the Council are currently developing a new regeneration strategy for the LDF.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 9.9.17 No mitigation for PRoW is proposed in land use terms. Mitigation in terms of transportation is included in Chapter 16. Therefore the effects remain as those described the earlier Sections.

Assumed Rights of Way

- 9.9.18 No mitigation for non-designated, assumed rights of way has been proposed in land use terms. Mitigation is described in Chapter 16, and the residual effect is as described in the earlier Sections.

Rail Network

- 9.9.19 Rail users will not be affected by the Project and therefore no residual effects apply and therefore effect is not significant.

Buses

- 9.9.20 It is likely that bus journey times will be improved due to the Project, however, in land use terms, no new infrastructure will be provided and therefore the residual effect is not significant.

Development Land

- 9.9.21 The mitigation Section proposes that the Council, in its remediation activities, should return contaminated land back to a range of land uses, including soft and hard end uses. This process will continue to provide additional development land within the Borough. Given the availability of vacant, derelict and contaminated land in the Borough, it is anticipated that the Borough, in developing its LDF policies, should be able to designate sufficient areas to satisfy land use needs for the LDF period.

Table 9.12 - Summary of Residual Effects on Land Use Receptors affected by the Project.

Effect	Receptor and importance	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)	Mitigation & Enhancement Measures	Residual Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
Construction Phase					
Loss of land at Wigg Island used for the shooting club	Community Resources High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of land at Wigg Island Community Park	Community Resources High Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course.	Open Space/Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of a small compound of land south of the Garston to Timperley Rail Freight Line.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance		Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land designated as greenspace.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance		Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of saltmarsh at Astmoor and Widnes.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance	Translocation of saltmarsh turfs during construction.	Moderate Negative Significance
Severance of potential greenways.	Open Space/Greenspace Moderate Importance	Temporary Neutral Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance	Provide/Implement diversions/alternative routes during construction.	Low Negative Significance
Loss and segregation of land for designated green belt at Wigg Island.	Green Belt High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance

Effect	Receptor and importance	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)	Mitigation & Enhancement Measures	Residual Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
		Direct			
Loss of commercial/industrial land.	Commercial/Industrial Land High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of saltmarsh for construction access and construction activities.	Agricultural Land Low Importance	Temporary High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance	Translocation of saltmarsh turfs during construction.	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land used for horse grazing.	Agricultural Land Moderate Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance		Moderate Negative Significant
Modifications to existing road infrastructure.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Positive Significance		Low Positive Significance
Modifications to the SJB and Widnes De-Linking.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Low Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Positive Significance		Moderate Positive Significance
Severance of PRoW across the Borough.	Infrastructure High Importance	Temporary Moderate Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance	Provide/implement diversions/alternative routes during construction.	Low Negative Significance
Loss and severance of foreshores at Widnes Warth and Wigg Island.	Infrastructure Low Importance	Temporary Moderate Magnitude Short Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance	Provide/implement diversions/alternative routes during construction.	Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of assumed rights of way on St Michael's Golf Course, Lodge Lane and Astmoor Industrial Estate.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Low Negative Significance		Low Negative Significance
Loss and severance of	Infrastructure	Temporary	Low Negative		Low Negative

Effect	Receptor importance and	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)	Mitigation & Enhancement Measures	Residual Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
assumed rights of way at Wigg Island LNR.	High Importance	High Magnitude Short Term Direct	Significance		Significance
Loss of land uses in Southern Widnes, Central Widnes and Widnes Waterfront Regeneration Action Areas.	Development Land High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Positive Significance		High Positive Significance
Loss of land at Ditton/Speke Road and Rocksavage, Clifton.	Development Land Moderate Importance	Permanent Moderate Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Operation Phase					
Loss of land at Wigg Island used for the shooting club	Community Resources High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of land at St Michael's Golf Course.	Open Space/Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance	See Appendix 9.5	Not significant
Loss of a small compound of land south of the Garston to Timperley Rail Freight Line.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance		Low Negative Significance
Loss of land designated as greenspace.	Open Space/Greenspace Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance		Moderate Negative Significance
Loss of land as designated as green belt at Wigg Island	Open Space/Greenspace High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Negative Significance		High Negative Significance
Loss of land used for commercial/industrial use.	Commercial/Industrial Land	Permanent High Magnitude	High Negative Significance	Make area of redundant highway from de-linking	Moderate Negative Significance

Effect	Receptor importance and	Nature of Effect	Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)	Mitigation & Enhancement Measures	Residual Significance (High, Moderate, Low and Positive/Negative)
	High Importance	Long Term Direct		processes available to provide additional areas for the potential development of commercial/industrial land. Make land under Astmoor Viaducts available for development of potential commercial/industrial use.	
Loss of land used for horse grazing.	Agricultural Land Low Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	Moderate Negative Significance		Moderate Negative Significance
Land made available from SJB and Widnes de-linking.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent High Magnitude Long Term Direct	High Positive Significance	Make area of redundant highway available to provide potential additional areas for commercial/industrial use.	High Positive Significance
Modifications to PRow as a result of the Project.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Low Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Positive Significance		Low Positive Significance
Loss of assumed rights of way at St Michael's Golf Course, Lodge Lane and Astmoor Industrial Estate.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance		Low Negative Significance
Re-establishment of assumed rights of way on Spike Island, Wigg Island LNR and A533 Central Expressway.	Infrastructure High Importance	Permanent Neutral Magnitude Long Term Direct	Low Negative Significance		Low Negative Significance

9.10 References

- Ref 1 Halton Borough Council, 2005. Halton Unitary Development Plan, Halton Borough Council, Halton.
- Ref 2 Halton Borough Council, 2006. Core Strategy: Issues and Options Consultation Document 1 – Issues Paper. Halton Borough Council, Halton.
- Ref 3 Halton Borough Council, 2006. Core Strategy: Issues and Options Consultation Document 2 – Options Paper. Halton Borough Council, Halton.
- Ref 4 Highways Agency, 2001. *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB): volume 11, section 3, Part 6 Land Use*. Highways Agency.
- Ref 5 National Statistics, 2008. Land Use Statistics (Previously-Developed Land) Period March 2004. DirectGov. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>. January 2008
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