

Frequently Asked Questions - East of Halewood site – August 2020

Section 1: About the site

1a. Where is the site?

The East of Halewood site is located to the east of the existing settlement of Halewood. It is severed by roads and by railways, meaning it is in four main parcels, two large and two small:

- Large northern parcel: Land bounded by Lower Road, Greensbridge Lane, Ditton Brook and the Liverpool-Manchester railway
- Large southern parcel: Land bounded by the Liverpool-Manchester railway, Lower Road, Finch Lane, Higher Road and Baileys Lane, including land currently occupied by RSPCA
- Small northern parcel: Land bounded by Greensbridge Lane, Cartbridge Lane and Ditton Brook currently occupied by Merseyside Dogs Home
- Small southern parcel: Land bounded by Aldersgate Drive, Higher Road and the West Coast Main line *(please see site boundary overleaf)*

1b. Isn't the site in the Green Belt?

No. The land is allocated for residential development and has been since the adoption of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy in 2016.

1c. Is the whole site going to be developed?

The site is allocated for residential development in the Local Plan. The Council has approved a masterplan which covers the whole site, but there will be some parts of the site that will not be developed for housing, including Finch Woods, the private fishing pond and United Utilities pumping stations.

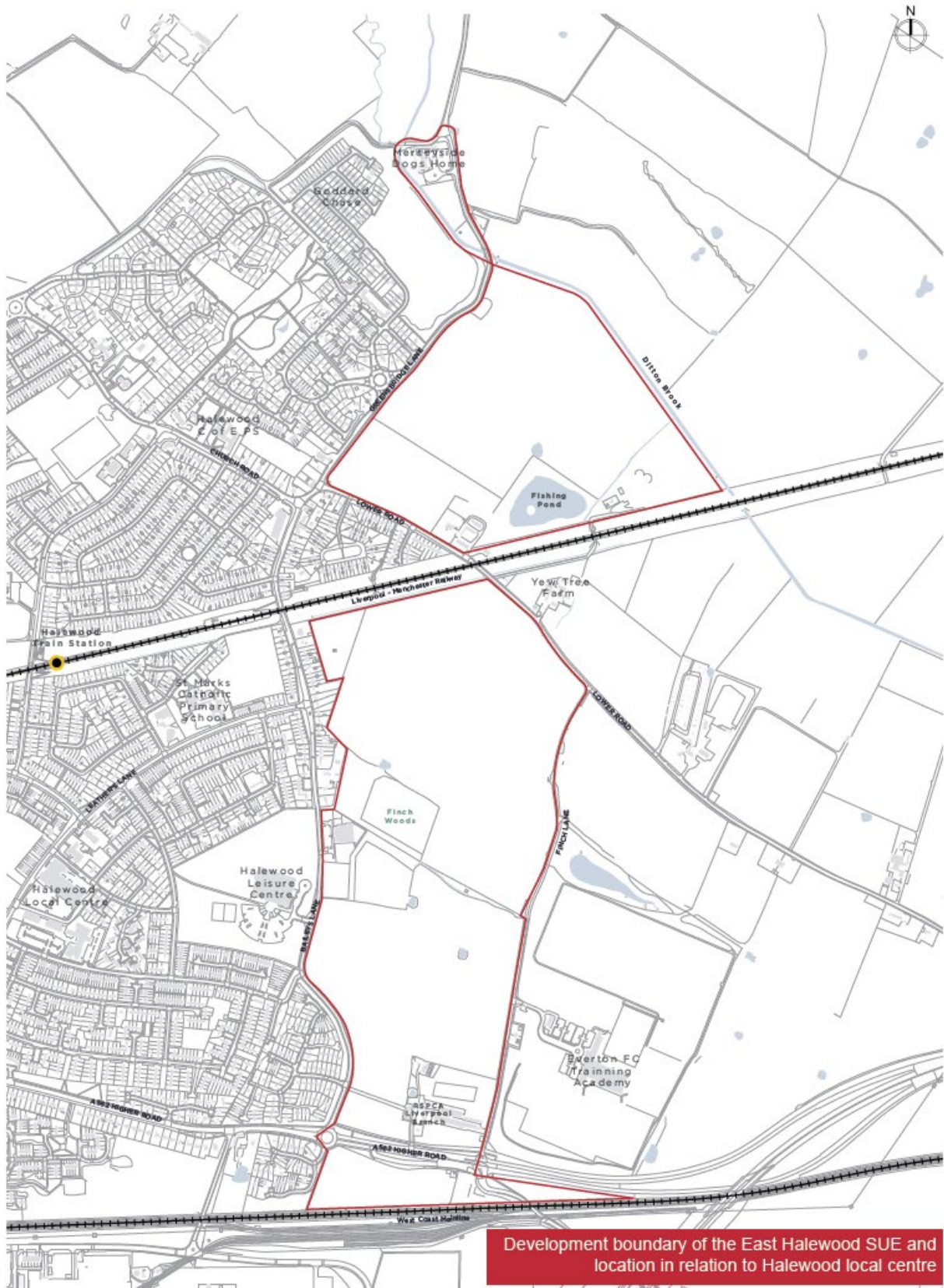
The masterplan also proposes commercial uses in the southernmost part of the site (between Higher Road and the West Coast Main Line). To complement the existing retail offer, it is envisaged that this would take the form of a new convenience retail store and a family pub.

Other parts of the site are currently occupied by uses they are currently planned to remain, such as the Merseyside Dogs Home site, but would be suitable for residential development were they to become vacant in the future.

1d. Who owns the land? Who are the developers?

The majority of the site is in private ownership. The only land that the Council owns is Finch Woods and Finch Woods Academy (freehold), neither of which are identified for development.

Large parts of the site are under the control of three housebuilders – Redrow, Bellway and Miller. These companies have “options” over the land, agreed with the existing landowners.



Section 2: About the SPD and Masterplan

2a. Why has an Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and Masterplan been prepared?

The Local Plan requires that a SPD and a detailed masterplan be prepared for the site, to help guide development as it comes forward and ensure it delivers the necessary infrastructure required for a sustainable development. These documents have now been prepared in consultation with the public and other key stakeholders. The SPD was adopted by the Council in March 2020 and the Masterplan was approved in June 2020. The documents will be used by Members of the Planning Committee and Development Management officers in assessing and determining subsequent planning applications.

2b. Does the site have planning permission already?

No, the site does not have planning permission at the current time. The Council will only support planning applications which are in accordance with its masterplan for the site; therefore, developers have been waiting for the masterplan and SPD to be finalised before finalising their planning submissions. The Council is now in receipt of three planning applications for the majority of the site from the following house builders:

Redrow - Planning reference 19/00521/HYB

Bellway – Planning reference 20/0063/FUL

Miller - Planning reference 19/00104/FUL.

Further information relating to planning applications can be viewed on the Council's website at <https://www.knowsley.gov.uk/view-planning-applications> using the above reference numbers.

There are some remaining smaller parcels of the site that are likely to be subject to other future planning applications, which are under the control of other land owners and developers.

2c. When will development start?

The exact timing of when development may come forward at East of Halewood is dependent upon the developers bringing forward their proposals.

Before development can begin, the land would need to secure planning permission. Any application will need to provide information about the detail of the proposed development, including site layouts and access arrangements and will need to demonstrate compliance with the Masterplan and SPD. The process of determining planning applications includes public consultation with those directly neighbouring the development location.

Section 3: Proposals for the site

3a. How much new development is proposed?

The East of Halewood site can accommodate between 1,100 and 1,500 new homes. The exact amount of new housing that is ultimately delivered will depend on the detailed planning applications from developers.

In addition to new homes, the site will deliver substantial public open space, including an enhanced and expanded Finch Woods.

The site could also accommodate some commercial uses on the small southern parcel (such as retail and a family pub).

3b. What types of new housing will be delivered, and will they be affordable?

A wide mix of new housing will be delivered on the site. This will diversify the housing mix in the area, providing larger family houses, which are currently under-represented in the Halewood housing market.

The majority of homes will be for market sale, but the Council's policy is that at least 25% of the new homes will be affordable housing, including a mix of affordable home ownership (which could include shared ownership and discount market sale) and affordable rented homes. This would provide access to the new homes for a wide variety of households.

3c. Will the new properties be leasehold?

Whilst the Council has no control over this, the developers have advised that all of the homes to be built for market sale will be sold as freehold, i.e. there will be no ground rent payable.

3d. What new infrastructure will be delivered by the development?

Development must deliver infrastructure to support the comprehensive development of the whole site, including:

- New road junctions and improvements to existing local routes and junctions;
- New walking and cycling routes throughout the site;
- Bus route through the site, with two new bus stops;
- On site public open space, including parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, play facilities and allotments;
- Suitable flood risk reduction measures, and new water, drainage, gas, electricity and broadband infrastructure;
- Appropriate noise reduction and air quality improvement measures, including development setbacks along main roads and railway routes;
- Contributions towards community infrastructure, including health care, education and outdoor sports facilities (see [section 4](#) for more details).

3e. Where are the access points?

The masterplan requires that the site has several new road junctions:

- Two from Greensbridge Lane (serving the large northern parcel);
- Two from Lower Road and two from Baileys Lane (serving the large southern parcel);
- One from Higher Road (serving the small southern parcel).

Additional access points will be provided for pedestrians and cyclists.

For clarity, no road junctions are proposed from Finch Lane due to utilities constraints and easements; however, improvements will be sought to Finch Lane and to its junction with Higher Road.

3f. What will happen to Finch Woods?

Finch Woods is an existing public open space, the majority of which is currently occupied by woodland of comparatively poor quality. The masterplan requires that the entirety of Finch Woods is retained as public open space, and that the existing site is expanded to include some land in private ownership, which will also be delivered as public open space. The masterplan sets out how this space will be enhanced and sets a requirement that developers will contribute towards enhancement projects – this will include new facilities for community use, such as play areas.

In addition to Finch Woods, the masterplan sets out that various other public open spaces will be provided throughout the site, serving different functions, including amenity space for new residents, flood risk attenuation, ecological mitigation, sustainable drainage, noise and air quality mitigation and utilities easements.

3g. How will the new public open space be managed?

The Council will seek to ensure that the developers make a financial contribution towards the future management and maintenance of Finch Woods.

The public open space to be provided within the development area will be expected to be managed by the developers, for example through them setting up a management company, to manage the spaces in perpetuity.

3h. Will the RSPCA and Merseyside Dogs Home be closing?

The masterplan acknowledges that the RSPCA Liverpool Branch has now closed and that this land will be developed for housing. This was a business decision of the RSPCA.

The masterplan assumes that the Merseyside Dogs Home will remain, should the site close in the future, this could come forward for residential development.

Section 4: Impacts on Halewood

4a. Will the development deliver road and transport improvements?

Yes. The masterplan proposes that several nearby junctions will be upgraded and stretches of highway improved. This will include measures to slow traffic on routes around the site, including Higher Road, Baileys Lane and Lower Road.

The masterplan also makes provision for improvements in public transport, including a bus route running through the site, served by new bus stops. Walking and cycling are central to the masterplan – a new north-south route through the site is proposed, for walking and cycling use only, connecting to existing leisure and commuter routes, as well as new east-west routes through to Halewood Shopping Centre, Halewood train station and other local facilities.

4b. The Halewood Shopping Centre is nearby, how will this be affected?

Halewood Shopping Centre is located within a short distance of the site, providing local shops, as well as health care facilities and a library. It is anticipated that the residents of the new development will use these facilities, ensuring their ongoing viability.

Recognising that the Halewood Shopping Centre is often very busy, and its car park is sometimes operating at full capacity, the masterplan includes the potential for additional commercial uses in the southernmost part of the site (between Higher Road and the West Coast Main Line). These uses could be more appropriate in this location than more residential development, due to the noise and vibration constraints associated with the West Coast Main Line.

4c. What about local schools and health care facilities?

It is recognised that the amount of new residential development planned will potentially require additional school and health care provision. The Council can seek to secure financial contributions towards these facilities from developers; such funds can pay for new or refurbished buildings, but not towards revenue costs for new teachers, doctors, nurses, etc.

The masterplan sets out that the Council will seek financial contributions from developers towards the expansion of existing primary schools and nurseries (early years) in Halewood to provide additional capacity. The exact locations for such expansion are yet to be identified.

Financial contributions will also be sought from developers towards expanded health care facilities, with projects to be identified by the Knowsley Clinical Commissioning Group.

4d. How will the leisure centre be affected?

Halewood Leisure Centre is directly adjacent to the site. The masterplan identifies that developers will be expected to make a financial contribution towards the provision of new outdoor sports facilities at this site, which will then be managed by Volair for community use. The masterplan also identifies the opportunity for the Leisure Centre to accommodate upgraded walking and cycling connections between the East of Halewood site and the Halewood Shopping Centre.

4e. Will the development deal with local flooding issues?

Part of the East of Halewood site is adjacent to Ditton Brook, and is at high risk of flooding. The masterplan requires that significant mitigation measures are implemented adjacent to the Brook, to effectively lower the land levels and provide a flood storage area. This land is expected to be dry most of the time but provides space for flood waters to be accommodated in extreme weather events. This will both ensure that new development on the East Halewood site is not affected by flood risk but is also expected to deliver net benefits for existing Halewood residents, through reducing the risk of flooding in the surrounding area.

The masterplan also requires that where feasible, sustainable drainage solutions are implemented across the site. This means that surface water will be managed within the site, through the use of swales and storage basins (small ponds), rather than sending this water to surface water sewers. This approach is endorsed by both United Utilities and the Council's Lead Local Flood Authority.

4f. There are water mains and electricity pylons across the site, how will they be addressed?

The masterplan requires that an existing 132kv power cable, hosted on pylons on the large southern parcel, will be re-routed and buried adjacent to Finch Lane. A substation on the corner of Lower Road and Greensbridge Lane is also proposed to be relocated. Elsewhere on the site, easements will be required to accommodate water mains and sewers; this means that developers will not be able to build directly over this area.

4g. Will there be jobs for local people in construction?

The Council's adopted Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document will apply. This requires developers to prepare and implement a Social Value Strategy, which will set out how they will ensure that benefits of development are passed on to Knowsley residents, through apprenticeships, employment and training initiatives.

Section 5: Further Information

5a. How can I contact the Council to find out more?

You can contact the Council to find out more on:

- Email: EastofHalewood@knowsley.gov.uk
- Post: East of Halewood, Knowsley Council, Ground Floor, Yorkon Building, Huyton, Merseyside, L36 9FB (postage required)
- Telephone: 0151 489 6000
- TypeTalk: 18001 0151 443 4031

5b. Can I get the information in different formats?

If you would like any of the information published relating to the East of Halewood Masterplan or East of Halewood Supplementary Planning Document in a different format (e.g. a different language, large print), please contact the Council Customer Services on 0151 443 4031 or email customerservices@knowsley.gov.uk.