



Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan

Adopted
July 2017



ST HELENS
EDUCATED CHOICE



St. Helens
Council



Foreword

The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan is the next step in transforming the southern part of St. Helens into an economically diverse, prosperous and high quality environment.

The area has already changed markedly from the dereliction left behind by former mining activity. The time is now opportune to build on the environmental enhancements already made to make the area contribute more fully to the future of St. Helens and attract investment.

The vision for the Forest Park is to provide a high quality setting to stimulate tourism and provide a platform for local businesses to grow and develop and for the establishment of new businesses. The area will also provide opportunity for a diverse range of outdoor activities to create a critical mass of activity that the local economy will thrive upon.

The Area Action Plan has been developed through a partnership making use of neighbourhood planning principles but in the context of a formal development plan.

It is therefore breaking new ground on how areas should be planned in the future. This has been to such an extent, that it has drawn particular interest at the European level and is one exemplar project as part of the Pure Hubs Programme funded by European Union programme Interreg IVB.

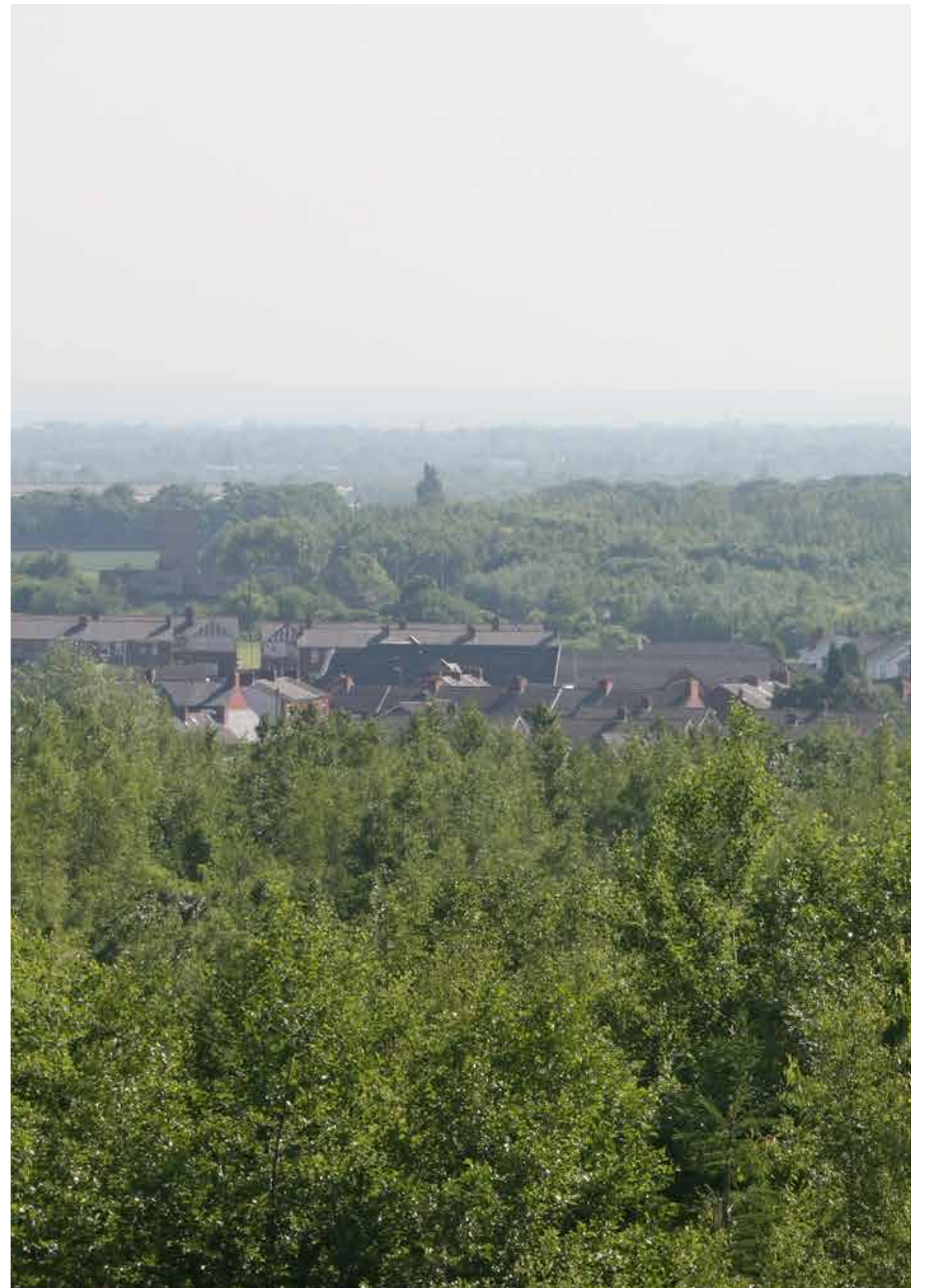
We would like to thank all the partners and stakeholders in developing this plan for the future of Bold and look forward to the plan shaping the future of this part of St. Helens.



Councillor Barrie Grunewald
Leader St. Helens Council



Councillor Anthony Johnson
Chair of Bold Forest Park Board



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Part 1: *Context*



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The development of Bold Forest Park (BFP) in the south of St. Helens Borough is a fitting legacy to the former mining industry which helped shape the area and St. Helens as a town. The last colliery to close was Sutton Manor which ceased production in 1991. Following over 20 years of landscape restoration to transform ugly slagheaps into community woodlands, St. Helens Council and its partners are seeking to develop an extensive Forest Park on and around the woodland sites around the Bold area as the final phase of the long-term restoration process.

1.1.2 As a place for outdoor recreation and activity, the Forest Park will provide a platform for economic growth and rural entrepreneurship, principally in the visitor economy, whilst providing leisure opportunities for the community and the wider region.

1.2 Status and Purpose of Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (AAP)

1.2.1 Forming part of the St. Helens Local Plan, Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (AAP) is a statutory document which sets out the detailed policies and actions needed to develop and sustain the Forest Park. St. Helens Core Strategy sets out the key strategic principles for the development of the Borough. Core Strategy Policy CAS 5 Rural St. Helens identifies a strategy to encourage the positive use of the rural areas of St. Helens, which includes the development of Bold Forest Park.

1.2.2 This Area Action Plan will provide a framework for the development of the Forest Park and does not repeat policies contained within other documents which form the St. Helens Development Plan. All elements of the Development Plan should be read together, including the Core Strategy, the Saved UDP Policies and the Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan. The Development Plan will also include the new St. Helens Local Plan which will, when adopted, replace the Core Strategy and Saved UDP Policies.

1.2.3 It is considered that land within the Forest Park will also need to contribute to meeting the Borough's housing and employment needs. The level of this need and allocation of land to meet it will be determined through the Local Plan process and detailed in the new Local Plan.

1.3 Relationship between the Area Action Plan and the Evidence Base

1.3.1 An extensive evidence base consisting of specially commissioned research documents and wider referenced works supports this Area Action Plan.

1.3.2 The complete evidence base is listed in Annexe 1 of this document but the key documents are:

- Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Supporting Technical Document;
- Developing the Visitor Potential of the South St. Helens Forest Park - Crease Consultancy Services 2006;
- St. Helens Forest Park for the Mersey Forest and St. Helens Council - Blue Sail 2009;
- Economic Intelligence Gathering Report - URS 2012; and
- Bold Forest Park Local Business and Community Consultation Report - URS 2012.

2.0 Policy Context

2.1 National

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to promote a strong rural economy through sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas (NPPF paragraph 28). The Bold Forest Park will support existing employment areas such as Bold Industrial Estate and Bold Business Centre whilst seeking to increase inward investment via the visitor economy.

2.1.2 The NPPF supports economic growth that benefits businesses and communities in, and visitors to, rural areas and which respect the character of the countryside. This includes the expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations and the development and diversification of farm and other rural land-based businesses (NPPF paragraph 28). The Bold Forest Park will provide a platform for sustainable rural entrepreneurship.

2.1.3 The NPPF (paragraph 93) recognises that protection and enhancement of the natural environment is an essential part of sustainable development and seeks to safeguard and enhance landscape and important habitats and species through the development of ecological networks, designed to reduce habitat fragmentation.

2.1.4 The Bold Forest Park area is located within the Green Belt and therefore Green Belt policy will apply. Any future development proposals within the Bold Forest Park area will have to comply with national Green Belt policy and, if they constitute inappropriate development, will only be approved where very special circumstances are demonstrated in accordance with the NPPF. The Green Belt boundary was set by the 1998 St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was saved in 2007, and the definitive Green Belt boundary is shown on the UDP Proposals Map (now known as the St.Helens Policies Map). The Policies Map within this document shows the additional designations that will be added to the St.Helens Policies Map on adoption of this AAP. The Green Belt boundary on the Policies Map in this AAP does not alter the definitive boundary.

2.1.5 The NPPF (paragraph 89) states that local planning authorities should regard the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt as inappropriate, subject to the following exceptions:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purpose of including land within it;
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

2.1.6 The NPPF expects local authorities to plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of land in the Green Belt (paragraph 81). This includes looking for opportunities to provide access to Green Belt; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

2.2 Regional

2.2.1 The Atlantic Gateway Parklands project is part of a major regional regeneration initiative focused on the Manchester and Merseyside corridor aiming for £50m investment over the next 50 years. 'Atlantic Gateway Parklands - the landscape for prosperity' sets out the vision and ambition to "make places liveable and investable through an exceptional landscape". The Strategy recognises Bold Forest Park as one of four Existing Landscape Assets, where Parklands will support the partners managing and developing the value of the natural assets across the Atlantic Gateway.

2.2.2 With the major cities of Manchester and Liverpool half an hour's train ride away and around 2 million people within a 30 minute drive, Bold Forest Park is well located to complement existing regional visitor destinations. Tourism is a major priority for the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership. The LCR Visitor Economy Strategy to 2020 recognises that public art is a popular visitor attraction and identifies Dream at Sutton Manor as a key Gateway to the City Region. Current recorded visitor numbers to the Dream site are around 87,650 per year.

2.2.3 St.Helens Council is one of seven Local Authority partners forming the Mersey Forest Partnership. The Mersey Forest Delivery Plan 2009-16 identifies the development of Forest Parks as a way of delivering its organisational goals of:

- Working in partnership;
- Transforming landscapes;
- Delivering sustainable economic benefits; and
- Engaging with people.

2.2.4 The Mersey Forest Plan¹ cites Bold Forest Park as a case study of partnership working and in Policy 11, The Economy and Tourism, the Plan states "We will ensure that new planting and woodland management makes a significant contribution to the strengthening of the economy through: creating attractive settings for housing and business; enhancing transport corridors and gateways; enhancing tourist settings and creating new visitor attractions such as Forest Parks; facilitating landscape enhancement as part of economic development initiatives."

2.3 Local

2.3.1 St.Helens Plan 2015-2018 which forms the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's Corporate Plan, has the aim of continuing to transform St. Helens, making it a cleaner, greener, more accessible place for this and future generations. A key focus will be to promote the sustainable development of the Borough through delivery of the Local Plan Core Strategy, other Development Plan Documents and Area Action Plans. A priority will be to progress Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan. The Plan also seeks to promote healthy active lifestyles and take a preventative approach to ill health.

2.3.2 The St.Helens Core Strategy (October 2012)² identifies Bold Forest Park as a Green Infrastructure priority and as a subject for an Area Action Plan (Policy CAS 5). The vast majority of the Forest Park is within the Green Belt and is therefore, subject to national Green Belt planning policy. Opportunities for rural diversification will be encouraged where adequate access can be achieved and there is no significant impact on the character of the area.

2.3.3 The Core Strategy seeks to direct future development to the urban areas and maintain the general extent of Green Belt in the short to medium term. However, as part of the preparation of a new Local Plan for the whole of the Borough, a Green Belt review is being undertaken to identify suitable land to accommodate new housing and employment development. If any allocations are made within the Bold Forest Park area in the new Local Plan, they will be based on a process that is consistent with Green Belt policy and exceptional circumstances will need to be demonstrated.

2.3.4 The St.Helens City Growth Strategy (CGS)³ sets out the vision for economic growth in St. Helens with four overarching themes of:

- Transforming the business base;
- Achieving a cultural transformation;
- Achieving a physical transformation; and
- Transforming perceptions.

Bold Forest Park is a key project within the CGS Action Plan to deliver physical transformation.

2.3.5 The St.Helens Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2016 has overarching goals to improve health and wellbeing across St. Helens as a whole. Priority 4 of the Strategy seeks to reduce obesity and excess weight. The strategy states "Obesity and being overweight represents a widespread threat to health and wellbeing in England. Excess weight is a major risk factor for diseases such as type 2 diabetes, cancer and heart disease."

(1) More From Trees - The Mersey Forest Plan, 2013, page 20

(2) St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy, 2012, page 85

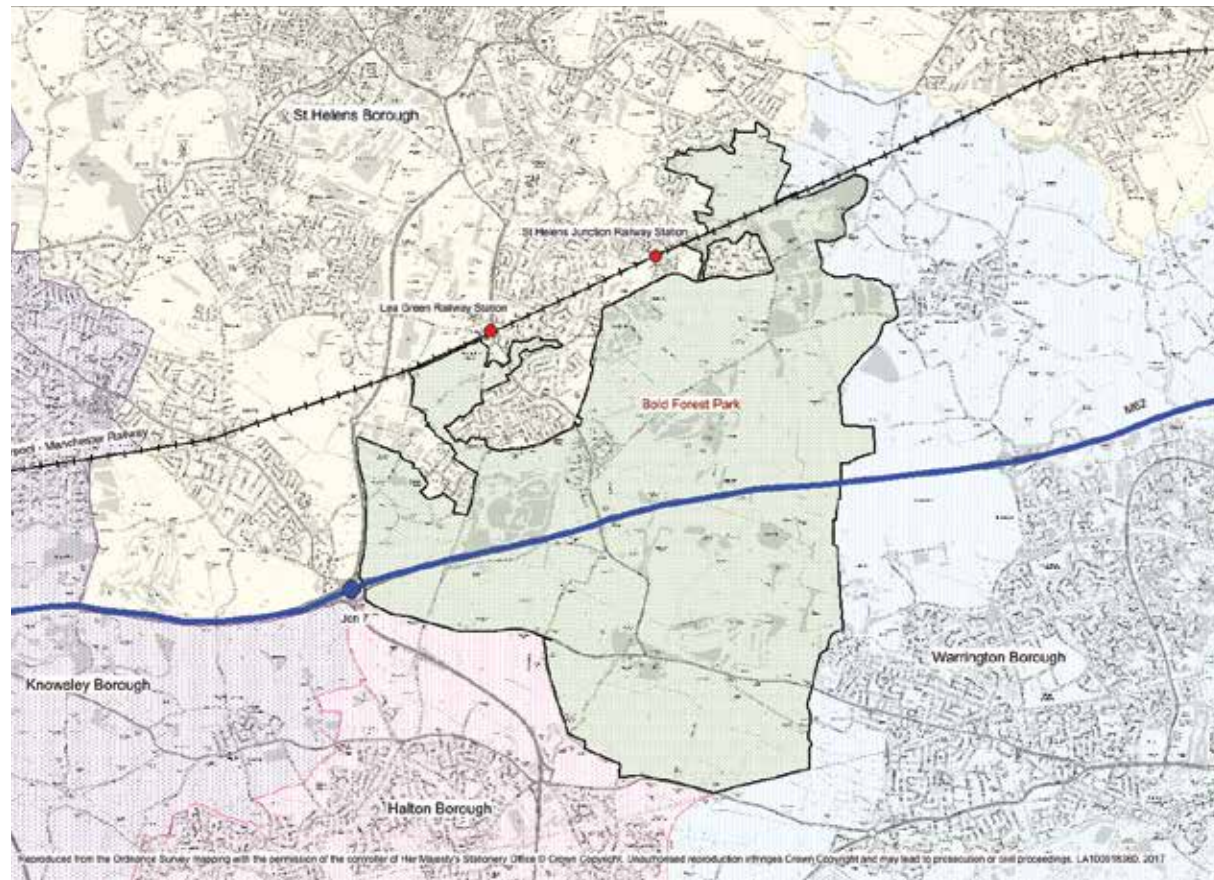
(3) St.Helens City Growth Strategy 2008-2018, page 41

3.0 Area Context

3.1 Location

3.1.1 Bold Forest Park is strategically situated in the south of St. Helens Borough, abutting the boundaries of Halton and Warrington Boroughs, making it ideally located to serve the three Boroughs as an easily accessible, major economic and recreational resource.

Figure 1: Location



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3.1.2 From a visitor economy perspective, the Forest Park is well located to draw visitors from across the region. The Manchester to Liverpool railway line runs to the north of the Forest Park with stations at Lea Green and St Helens Junction allowing easy access from the two conurbations.

3.1.3 The Forest Park straddles the M62 motorway between Junctions 7 and 8 allowing easy road access from Junction 7 and is within a 30 minute drive for 2,065,000 million people⁴.

3.1.4 The Forest Park is in easy reach of established major visitor destinations such as Chester, Liverpool and Manchester and can “slipstream” onto those attractions in terms of market development.

3.1.5 The park is mainly within Bold Parish and is adjoined by five further Parishes, all of which will have an influence on the Forest Park. Burtonwood Parish is of particular significance as the village centre is in close proximity to the Forest Park. Clay Lane Recreation Ground and pavilion could provide a local gateway into the Forest Park for the residents of Burtonwood and Warrington via the Sankey Valley.

3.1.6 The Forest Park is 2 miles from St. Helens Town Centre and well served by public transport, providing a sustainable and accessible recreational resource for residents to enjoy.

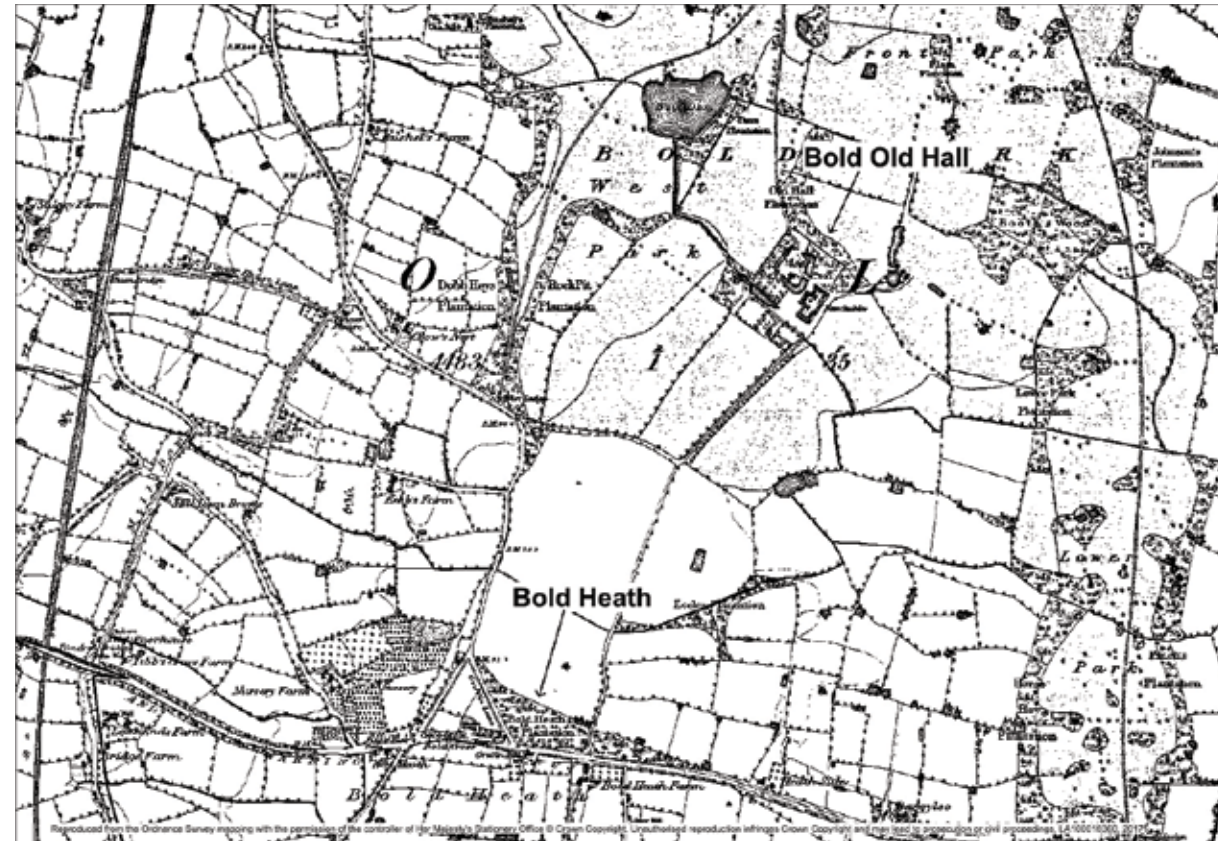
(4) St. Helens Forest Park Report for the Mersey Forest and St. Helens Council, Blue Sail, 2009

3.2 Character Profile

3.2.1 The Forest Park covers an area of 6.9 square miles (1,808 hectares) of mainly agricultural land with a number of large community woodland sites inset into it.

3.2.2 Historically, the area was part of the medieval Bold Hall Estate and numerous remnants from this parkland landscape can still be recognised.

Figure 2: Bold Hall Estate Circa 1849



3.2.3 The settlement of Bold Heath is a distinctive village clustered around the crossroads of Warrington Road (A57) and Mill Lane. The village has a number of businesses including Bold Heath Garden Centre, The Griffin Pub, Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club and an equestrian centre. Nearby is Woodend Garden Centre and Harefields Alpaca Centre. Together these form a significant cluster which can serve visitors to the Forest Park and provide employment.



The Garden Centre at Bold Heath

3.2.4 The character of the area began to be dominated by the deep coal mining industry in the 19th century with collieries at Clock Face, Sutton Manor and Bold. The industry, which had ceased by 1991, had a major impact on the area. Housing developed to shelter the colliery workers at Clock Face and Sutton Manor, urbanising the formerly rural area. From 1955, a coal fired power station was developed to utilise the local coal from the Bold Colliery. It was demolished in 1992 and today the site is the thriving residential community of New Bold Place. The huge slag heaps which once scarred the area still dominate the landscape but are now transformed into pleasant woodlands forming the core of the Forest Park for recreation and as wildlife habitat.

3.2.5 Current land use in the Forest Park is dominated by agriculture with 63% (1,159 hectares) of the area cultivated for wheat, oil seed rape, barley or legumes. 21% of the land is used for recreation with most (320 hectares) being developed as public open space. A further 18.4 hectares of former landfill is currently being developed as open space.

3.2.6 Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club is a privately owned, 51.5 hectare, recreation facility offering activities including golf and angling in addition to quality meals and even weddings. The club employs a number of staff from the local area.

3.2.7 There is an extensive equestrian sector in and around Bold with major yards at Bold Heath Equestrian Centre, Northfields, Old Brook Hall Farm and Tunstalls Farm and many more small DIY livery and grazing facilities. Consequently, much of the land is utilised for pasture and hay-cropping.



Staff at Bold Heath Equestrian Centre

The equestrian sector provides a key focus for recreation in the Forest Park and a significant factor in shaping the character of the Forest Park area. The sector aspires to develop a coherent network of bridleways and infrastructure, which will support an ambitious visitor offer of events and activities including endurance riding.

3.2.7 The area also contains a number of commercial areas including Bold Industrial Estate where manufacturing is a major focus and Bold Business Centre where consultancy and component supply is the focus. Employment land use covers 0.95% of the Forest Park. In addition to the formal employment areas, many small home-based businesses are within the Forest Park. These range from driving instruction and home decoration to IT services.

3.2.8 Clock Face is a further economic centre with a range of services including a post office, newsagents and convenience stores. The focus of Clock Face is the Clock Face Hotel, an independent public house providing excellent quality food and drinks.



The Clock Face Hotel Management Team

3.2.9 The environmental quality of the area is of fundamental importance to the success of the Forest Park. The landscape setting has been significantly improved through reclamation of derelict land to woodland but these sites are yet to mature and also need to be fully assimilated into the wider farmland landscape.

3.2.10 Noise pollution from road traffic is a constant background feature of the area. Amelioration of this through higher levels of woodland planting is a high priority.

3.2.11 A number of pubs such as the Griffin Inn at Bold Heath, and cafés and restaurants around the area, provide a range of services that visitors to the Forest Park require. The Forest Park initiative provides a significant opportunity to expand and diversify existing businesses or create new enterprise, such as cycle hire or a mountain boarding centre.



The Griffin Pub, Bold Heath

3.2.12 Community hubs play a huge part in social cohesion. Often revolving around community sporting clubs they are a significant part of the social fabric of an area, helping to instill positive ethics in youth and helping to combat anti-social behaviour. Clock Face Miners Rugby Club was established in 1921 (originally as Clock Face Rangers) and is based at the Recreation Ground off Crawford Street with a range of age groups participating. Bold Miners Institute is a similarly established sporting club in the north of the Forest Park Area. Angling clubs such as Clock Face Anglers and Newton Angling Club are also important social mechanisms that help to channel positive activities and instill positive environmental ethics.

3.2.13 A strong cultural association with the mining industry in the area remains and has manifested itself in the Dream sculpture located on Sutton Manor which was designed by Jauma Plensa working in conjunction former miners from Sutton Manor Colliery. Rather than opting for a mining monument, the miners wanted a forward looking piece of art which would provide a beautiful, inspiring and contemplative space for generations to come.

Dream (below) is the spectacular response by Jauma Plensa to that challenge.



Dream, Sutton Manor

3.2.14 Built heritage is a major component of local character. In Bold Forest Park there are 10 designated heritage features including 3 Scheduled Monuments, one of which is on the Buildings at Risk Register and 7 listed buildings/structures. Much of this stock relates to the former Bold Hall Estate.

3.2.15 Beyond the now reclaimed slag heaps and some capped mine shafts, little physically remains of the mining industry.

3.2.16 Ecologically, the Forest Park contains a range of important wildlife habitats including a mossland and heathland complex at Colliers Moss Common, many farm ponds and wetlands, along with mature woodlands. These have been supplemented by more recent habitats created on former industrial sites such as Sutton Manor and Clock Face Collieries.

4.0 Research and Consultation Background

- 4.1 In 2005 Crease Consultancy Services were contracted by The Mersey Forest to investigate whether the proposal of establishing the Forest Park was viable. The Study⁵ concluded that the proposition was indeed viable and identified a range of potential outdoor leisure activities, ranging from horse riding, cycling, and walking to bouldering and mountain boarding.
- 4.2 The study was supplemented by a major study in 2009 by Blue Sail⁶ in conjunction with consultants KKP and Rural Innovation. This study set out recommendations to increase active use of the area by identifying new and improved infrastructure, linked business opportunities along with advice on branding and marketing. The study advocates targeting a family market coupled with the concept of “soft danger”- a range of safe but demanding activities such as those pioneered by Go Ape at sites such as Delamere Forest in Cheshire.
- 4.3 In 2012 consultants URS were contracted to undertake community and local business consultation⁷ in order to gauge local views on how the Forest Park could and should be developed. The overwhelming response was that community and businesses were very supportive of the concept of the park, and welcomed the leisure, recreational and commercial opportunities it would bring. A very small minority indicated it should be left as it is. Some of this concern stemmed from an awareness of the sensitive nature conservation value in some areas of the park and its potential vulnerability to increased visitor numbers.
- 4.4 Popular activities that people would like to see promoted within the park include walking, cycling/mountain biking, horse riding, boating/canoeing, fishing and adventure play/children’s play facilities. People also want to know about the local history and nature of the area through guided walks and activities. More prosaically, toilet facilities were seen as essential.
- 4.5 URS also undertook business intelligence gathering⁸ in order to establish the realistic level of economic activity the Forest Park could be expected to generate. Analysis showed that Bold Forest Park is a significant environmental, heritage and cultural asset, which is well used by the community but is currently under exploited in terms of its economic potential. A site audit and visitor survey showed that numbers of visitors as relatively high but spend per visit was low and the duration of visits was short when compared to other examples. The survey also showed that awareness amongst non-users was low despite good accessibility and a high level of interest.
- 4.6 URS estimates that in its current capacity Bold Forest Park generates over £57m per annum to the local economy and supports 1578 (net) jobs. Public sector services (£16,297,482 GVA) and wholesale; retail; repair of motor vehicles; and transport and storage (£13,179,703 GVA) contribute the most whilst leisure and tourism related businesses contributes £11,809,769 GVA and supports 325 (net) jobs.
- 4.7 In summer 2013 a scoping consultation was undertaken with statutory consultees, asking for comments on the scope of the issues to be addressed by the Area Action Plan and the range of policy areas. Strong support was offered from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Cory Environmental who stated it was “a vast statement of intent in a positive way”⁹.

(5) Developing the Visitor Potential of South St. Helens Forest Park, Crease Consultancy Services, 2006

(6) St. Helens Forest Park Report for the Mersey Forest and St.Helens Council, Blue Sail, 2009

(7) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, Executive Summary, pages 5/6

(8) St. Helens Economic Intelligence Gathering Report, URS, 2012, Executive Summary, page 5

(9) Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Scoping Consultation Report, 2013

4.8 Consultation on the Area Action Plan Preferred Options was carried out in winter 2014/15. The consultation received 24 responses from a range of statutory organisations, commercial business representatives and community based individuals. Collectively, 70 issues were raised and are documented along with the Council's responses, in a consultation report¹⁰. In general, there was strong support for the Forest Park initiative and the draft policies which were set out.

4.9 Key issues which were raised included:

- All draft policies were unanimously supported;
- Policy BFP ECON1 was welcomed and reflected government guidance set out in NPPF paragraph 28;
- Creating local employment should be the primary objective;
- A tighter focus on cycling, walking and horse riding as core activities was suggested;
- A greater emphasis on public transport;
- Stronger recognition of the heritage resource and the need for proposals for heritage protection, especially relating to the Scheduled Monument on the "Monuments At Risk Register" at the Old Moat House;
- Arts in the Forest Park were seen as important, with the potential to create a destination to rival the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. A strong partnership with the Heart of Glass arts project is proposed;
- The opportunity to add a caravan site in this area would have further appeal;
- More emphasis on enjoyment of the countryside for its own sake;
- Greater woodland development was welcomed;
- Acknowledgement that, should residential development be required to be built in the Forest Park, high design values will need to be ensured. This can be best achieved by working closely with developers; and
- The large majority of new jobs which are created within the Bold Forest park should be filled by local recruitment.

The report documents the issues raised and the Council's response. This helps to document how the Area Action Plan evolved from the "Preferred Options" Stage to the Publication version of the Plan in response to stakeholder opinion.



(10) Bold Forest Park Draft Area Action Plan 2014 (Preferred Options) Report of Consultation and Summary of Changes

5.0 The Case for Bold Forest Park

5.1 Development of Bold Forest Park:

- Is supported by policy development and associated evidence through the Unitary Development Plan and the Local Plan Core Strategy;
- Holds strong public support;
- Supports inward investment and promotes a more attractive business location;
- Could underpin existing businesses such as pubs, restaurants and diversification of existing farms and rural businesses;
- Supports new jobs;
- Contributes to St.Helens Healthy Weight Strategy and St.Helens Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Can provide a catalyst to new leisure-based businesses;
- Has potential to improve the natural environment of the area;
- Has potential to improve the historic environment of the area;
- Has potential to provide a recreational resource easily accessible to surrounding communities, many of which experience the symptoms of deprivation including ill health and unemployment;
- Is recognised as a sub-regional location in the Liverpool City Region Green Infrastructure Plan;
- Is recognised as a landscape asset in the Atlantic Gateway Parklands Project; and
- Has potential to provide a recreation resource of sub-regional significance, which contributes to the growth in tourism, attracting over 300,000 visits per year.



Harefields Water Gardens and Alpaca Centre

6.0 Issues, Problems and Challenges

6.1 Key Issue 1: Developing the Forest Park Economy

6.1.1 Research by URS indicates that Bold Forest Park represents a significant environmental, cultural and heritage asset on St. Helens' urban fringe which is under exploited in terms of its wealth generation potential.

6.1.2 URS¹¹ sets out the following market potential:

- Bold Forest Park provides a significant leisure offer within the local and regional context and its close proximity to the M62 make it accessible for those travelling beyond the region;
- The outdoor leisure sector is a growing market;
- Interest from outdoor leisure companies interviewed was positive, although some sectors felt it would not be suitable for their business (i.e. outdoor retail, rural food retail);
- Interest from existing local businesses was positive - some businesses are already taking steps to invest locally; and
- The park is accessible to a large market with a mixed demographic, who are interested in the offer and show that demand exists for the proposal.

6.1.3 Although Bold Forest Park currently attracts around 200,000 visits per annum only around £1.41 per group is expended. URS recommend the following:

- Activities to attract more visitors; and
- Facilities to make visitors to stay longer.

6.1.4 URS proposes the following mix of uses:

Table 1: Proposed Mix of Uses

Activities: Attract more visitors	Additional visitors	Additional visitor income	Net Jobs (Full Time Equivalent)	GVA (£)
Walking, running, cycling routes	60,204	£808,544	8.6	£290,847
Adventure Play Area	20,469	£179,108	2.6	£88,169
Public Art Trail linked to Dream	9,031	£25,195	1.0	£32,805
Boating/canoeing	10,034	£150,511	2.6	£89,753
Cycle Hire	3,010	£42,504	1.9	£62,772
Facilities: Visitors stay longer				
Café	200,683	£642,179	9.6	£325,968
Toilets		£0	0.0	£0
Litter & Dog Bins		£0	0.0	£0
Improved pathways, signage and connectivity		£0	0.0	£0
Events: More Visitors (less frequent)				
Family fun days	1,605	£11,238	0.3	£9,978
Educational events	1,605	£11,238	0.3	£9,978
Totals	306,643	£1,870,517	27	£910,270

(11) Economic Intelligence Gathering Report, URS, 2012, page 23-26

6.1.5 The equestrian sector in Bold Forest Park is well established with a number of major yards at Tunstalls Farm in Clock Face, Bold Heath Equestrian Centre at Bold Heath and Northfields in Bold, coupled with numerous smaller yards and DIY livery locations.

6.1.6 Market segmentation data suggests that latent demand on Merseyside is estimated at 5,151 individuals and in St. Helens at 615 individuals (K. Chew, Merseyside Sports Partnership pers. comm. 2014).

6.1.7 The Merseyside Branch of the British Horse Society (BHS) estimates there being 9,085 horses in Liverpool City Region and an annual expenditure of £33m¹². Merseyside BHS suggest “urban trekking”, learning to ride holidays, horse and rider Bed and Breakfast and multi-activity holidays all have potential to operate successfully on Merseyside. BHS has an aspiration to develop a three day “Mersey Circular” route with stabling adjacent to the route and suggest businesses in St. Helens are particularly well placed to benefit as the route is mostly in St. Helens Borough and in particular Bold Forest Park.

6.1.8 An investigation into the feasibility of a bridleway network in Bold Forest Park area in 1996¹³ by Groundwork St. Helens, Knowsley, Sefton and Liverpool, highlighted a clear need for safe off-road routes to ride out on with 94% of riders stating that routes in the area were inadequate and 99% supporting the development of a network in the Bold Forest Park area.

6.1.9 Of the local equestrian businesses who responded to the survey by Groundwork, 37.5% felt that their business was moderately constrained by a lack of safe places to ride and 50% felt they were greatly constrained. For the equestrian sector to flourish the development of an off-road bridleway network into which local businesses can link into is a clear priority. The development of a bridleway network needs to be supplemented by equestrian activities to attract new riders to the Forest Park such as guided rides, equestrian competitions such as endurance riding.

6.1.10 Cycling is a growing pastime in the UK with cycling miles increasing by 20% over the last 15 years¹⁴. On Merseyside cycling is consistently growing year on year. Monitoring¹⁵ indicates an increase of 11.99% increase in the year up to March 2014 and shows an increase for the years 2010/11 to 2014/15 of 34%.

6.1.11 Results from the Merseyside Sports Partnership Active People Survey suggests that participation in sport and active recreation has raised moderately in St. Helens between 2005 and 2009¹⁵. Market Segmentation identifies the following types who are most likely to participate in cycling and inhabit St. Helens:

Table 2: Types of People Most Likely to Participate in Sport in St. Helens

Male Age 36-45 Pub League, Social Drinker, Football Fan	Male Age 46-55 comfortable midlife male	Female age 18-25 Fitness class, friends	Male age 18-25 Competitive male urbanite
Motivations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys team sports • Keeping fit • Social Aspect to Sport • To meet friends 	Motivations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys team sports • Keeping fit • Social Aspect to Sport • To meet Friends 	Motivations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose Weight • Keep Fit & Healthy • Exercise with Friends • Team games • Swimming 	Motivations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Sports • Improve performance • Training/competition • Meeting Friends
Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Facilities • Cheaper admission • Those that don't participate struggle with health issues 	Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better facilities • Childcare issues • Lack of time 	Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combat sports don't appeal • Free time • People to go with • Gym hours too short 	Barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time/Facilities • Friends to go with • Those that aren't active are generally not interested

(12) The Equine Economy of the Mersey City Region, Hackett K., British Horse Society, 2014

(13) Bridleway Feasibility Study for St. Helens and Halton, Groundwork St. Helens, Knowsley, Sefton and Liverpool, 2003

(14) CTC - the national cycling charity www.ctc.org.uk/resources/ctc-cycling-statistics

(15) Merseyside Cycle Monitoring Report 2013/14 Final Report, Mott MacDonald, 2014

6.1.12 With a membership of around 190, the Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club, which was originally formed in St. Helens and now draws members from all over the North West including Manchester, Liverpool, Warrington, Prescot and Wigan, actively uses the Forest Park area for evening club rides. Some members utilise the park when they have a few hours free time and also take their family there (Roger Sparkman pers. comm.) The Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club is an enthusiastic and active supporter of the development of Bold Forest Park.



Members of the Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club

6.1.13 Income in the farming sector can be volatile due to prolonged weather events such as in 2012, causing reduced crop yields or even crop failure. With predicted climate change, this is likely to be exacerbated. The Forest Park Area Action Plan will provide a common framework within which existing land-based businesses can diversify into, within the context of Green Belt planning policy. However, this is likely to develop as visitor numbers increase, providing a market for entrepreneurs to serve.

6.1.14 The visitor-orientated business within the Forest Park such as cafés, garden centres, pubs and restaurants provide essential facilities for park visitors. However, the offer to the public needs to be crystallised and marketed within St. Helens, the City Region and the wider region.

6.1.15 Rural entrepreneurs are at the heart of making the Forest Park successful in the long term. There is a need to develop a mechanism for them to work together to develop and market the leisure offer. A Forest Park business network is an essential tool to allow this to happen. A clear interface with the Local Authority needs to be streamlined and maintained in order to minimise bureaucracy and explain its necessity where appropriate.

6.1.16 With an increasing value in the wood market for biomass, the Forest Park has a great potential to develop a thriving forestry sector as part its management. Key players in this will be the Mersey Forest and the Forestry Commission. However, the scale of this market will be sub-regional but Bold has a role to play, possibly as a pilot area for feasibility studies.

Key Messages:

1. Evidence strongly suggests that the initial focus for the Forest Park Economy should be to develop facilities and infrastructure which:
 - Attract the family market;
 - Develop the Local Equestrian Businesses; and
 - Develop the cycling offer.
2. A local business network is needed to drive entrepreneurship.
3. The potential of the forestry economy warrants investigation.

6.2 Key Issue 2: Meeting the Strategic Needs of the Borough and the Sub-region

6.2.1 Land in Bold Forest Park may be required to meet objectives beyond outdoor leisure and recreation. Across the Borough, St. Helens has a requirement for 13,680 new dwellings between 2003 and 2027 in order to meet the Government's key housing policy objective¹⁶. Similarly, with provision of employment land, a minimum of 177 hectares will be required to meet local needs.

6.2.2 Whilst the spatial distribution of residential and employment land is yet to be determined through the Local Plan process, some land within Bold Forest Park may be required for development. Where this does occur, the challenge will be to ensure the design and layout of development is fully integrated with the Forest Park and that development fully contributes to the Park's aims and objectives. This also applies to farm developments and visitor attractions. The process of allocating housing and employment land will be consistent with national Green Belt policy whereby exceptional circumstances will have to be demonstrated.

6.2.3 The Bold Forest Park area provides an opportunity to plan positively for environmental enhancement, recreation and leisure. The planning for these opportunities can enhance beneficial use of the Green Belt in accordance with the NPPF and related development proposals need not necessarily be considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

6.2.4 With a thriving visitor economy, Liverpool is the 6th most visited city in the UK. The Caravan Club is seeking to develop a new touring caravan site near to the city of Liverpool (Tony Barnett, Caravan Club pers. comm.) to exploit this popularity. Bold Forest Park could provide an ideal location for such a facility. The development of a touring caravan site would bring significant investment into the local economy.

Key Messages:

1. Any development allocated within the Forest Park must have high design standards and must positively contribute to the Forest Park.
2. Bold Forest Park offers a potential site for a touring caravan site.

6.3 Key Issue 3: Meeting the Needs of the Community

6.3.1. The community is a key stakeholder in Bold Forest Park and has a range of needs which the Forest Park can help to address.

6.3.2 There are areas in and around the Forest Park including Parr, St. Helens Town Centre area, Thatto Heath and Four Acre that are amongst the most deprived in the country. Low educational attainment, above average unemployment, and poor health blights these areas.

6.3.3 A key challenge is ensuring development and management of the park can play a role in helping to improve basic skills to increase employment prospects. As attractions develop, opportunities to create employment opportunities will increase. A great example of this is already set by Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club who employ many local people and take on apprentices.

6.3.4 Promoting physical health is a priority in St. Helens. High levels of cardiovascular disease and childhood obesity are common. The Forest Park can offer a range of ways to increase fitness including cycling, horse riding, walking and jogging in a pleasant and accessible setting.

6.3.5 Anti-social behaviour is a costly nuisance which can affect the quality of life of communities. Community hubs such as sports clubs such as Bold Miners and Clock Face rugby clubs and uniformed groups such as Scouts provide a positive influence on youth helping to reduce petty crime and vandalism.

6.3.6 Community groups and individuals need a voice in the development and management of the Forest Park if it is to be a community asset.

Key Messages:

1. The Forest Park needs to support local community groups and organisations.
2. A Community Forum or Network is needed to enable groups and individuals to fully benefit from the Forest Park.
3. Development of the Forest Park should seek to support local employment, skills development and improved public health.

(16) St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy, Policy CH 1, 2012

6.4 Key Issue 4: Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

6.4.1 A high quality environment is an essential ingredient of a successful outdoor leisure attraction. This includes a strong sense of place and local character.

Landscape Character

6.4.2 The landscape character of Bold Forest Park is urban fringe farming coupled with raised spoil heaps, which have been reclaimed to woodland, imposed upon it. Whilst the reclaimed slag heaps themselves are starting to develop some character, they remain unintegrated into the landscape. Woodland and hedgerow planting, strengthening and linking features, is needed to provide a greater cohesiveness in the landscape and help to develop a stronger sense of place.

6.4.3 Natural England's National Character Area Advice for the Lancashire Coal Measures (NCA 50)¹⁷ identifies mining and agriculture as major influences on landscape character of the Character Area which includes St. Helens and Bold. Specific opportunities identified to protect and enhance local character include:

- Conserving the Lancashire Coal Measures historic environment and engaging local communities with their past through the restoration of key features and sites, and by improving understanding, interpretation and access.
- Supporting the agricultural landscape by expanding the habitat networks of grassland, woodland, ponds and hedges.

6.4.4 St. Helens Landscape Character Assessment¹⁸ (LCA) provides a more detailed analysis of the local landscape character (summarised in the Supporting Technical Document¹⁹). Generally, the area is of fairly robust character with the ability to accommodate some small-scale development and the LCA recommends maintenance and expansion of woodland cover.

6.4.5 The area suffers from elevated levels of background traffic noise, particularly but not solely, emanating from the M62 motorway. Reduction of this intrusion is essential for the long-term success of the Forest Park as a visitor destination.

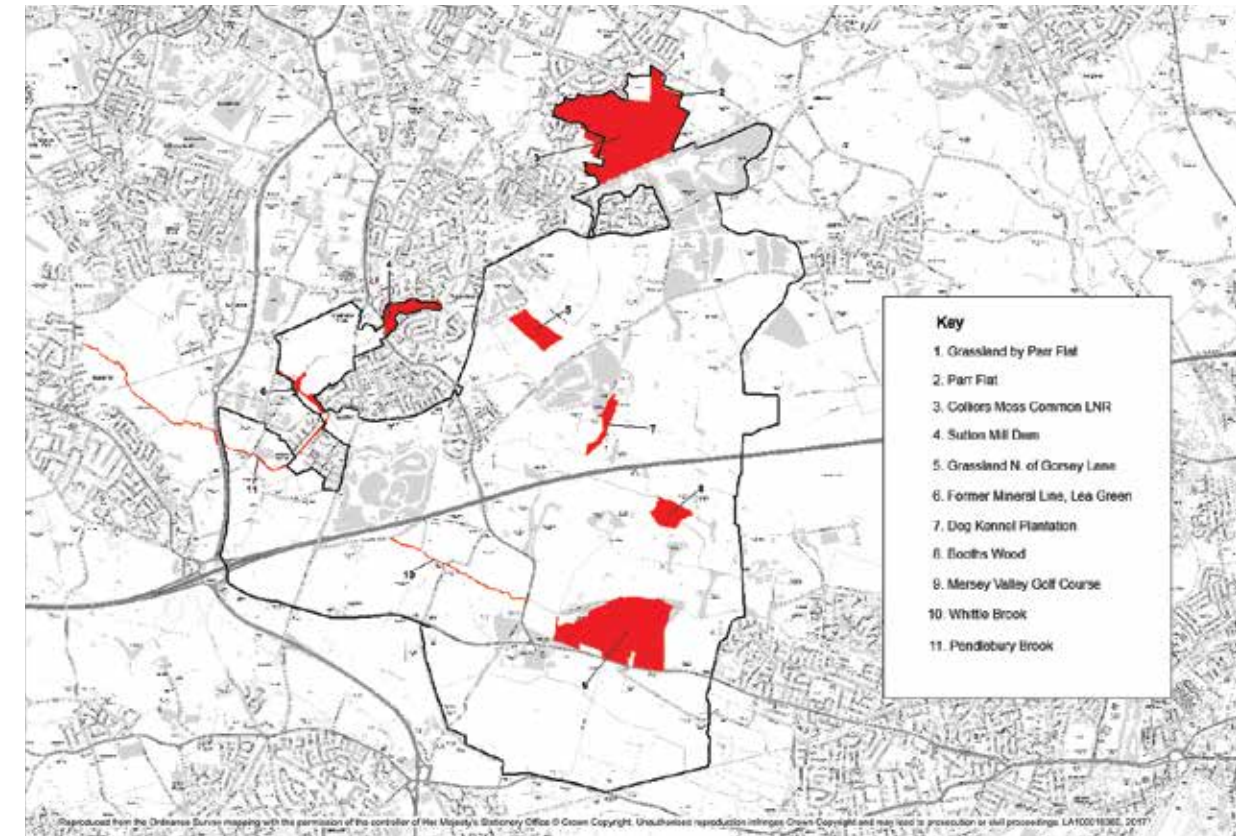
An increase in tree cover will assist in noise reduction generally, but consideration of planting to baffle specific noise sources or to protect key recreation assets is needed.

Biodiversity

6.4.6 Besides statutory duties towards biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 which requires Local Authorities and public organisations to have regard for biodiversity in all duties, community consultation carried out by URS strongly indicated the public's interest in the natural environment²⁰.

6.4.7 Within Bold Forest Park there is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) at Colliers Moss Common North, along with 11 Local Wildlife Sites across the area.

Figure 3: Local Wildlife Sites in Bold Forest Park



6.4.8 A key challenge is to improve the condition of these assets. However, most are in private ownership and an incentive is needed to influence unsympathetic land owners.

6.4.9 Semi-natural vegetation is generally confined to isolated small patches and linear features such as hedgerows within the farmed landscape. Larger patches of habitat are generally confined to the reclaimed community woodland sites such as Sutton Manor, Clock Face Country Park, and Wheatacre and Maypole Woods. The habitats on these sites, as with their landscape character, are relatively immature with young plantation and semi-improved grassland being the most common. However, the sheer scale of these sites makes them significant wildlife habitat resources.

6.4.10 Farmland habitats are generally confined to small woodlands and hedgerows with occasional areas of rough grassland or scrub. The cropping regime has a major impact on farmland bird species such as Skylark, Lapwing and Grey Partridge and mammals such as Brown Hare which are present in low numbers in the Forest Park. All these species tend to fare better where cereal crops are spring-sown and areas of grassland are retained.

(17) Natural Character Area 56 Lancashire Coal Measures, Natural England, 2013

(18) St. Helens Landscape Character Assessment, Land Use Consultants, 2006

(19) Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Supporting Technical Document, Section 3.2

(20) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, page 5



Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)

Widespread specialisation of autumn sown cereal cropping makes the Forest Park area generally sub-optimal habitat for such species.

6.4.11 A key to conserving and increasing wildlife in Bold Forest Park is to reduce habitat fragmentation by increasing connectivity, especially in the farmland landscape. This can be achieved by creating networks of hedgerows, grass field margins and woodland planting linking to the large community woodland sites. However, care needs to be taken not to displace ground-nesting birds.

Table 3: Priority Species

Brown Hare	Across farmland area & Mersey Valley Golf Course in low numbers
Barn Owl	Anecdotal evidence of present in area, low numbers
Great Crested Newt	Recorded in Clock Face area
Water vole	Recorded on Pendlebury Brook
Bats	4 species recorded across Sutton Manor, Wheatacre, Colliers Moss Common.
Farmland Birds Skylark, Lapwing, Corn Bunting, Yellow Hammer	Across farmland.
Dragonflies	17 species recorded at Colliers Moss Common LNR

Table 4: Priority Habitats:

Broadleaf Woodland	Across farmland - often remnant estate landscape. Newer planting on reclaimed colliery sites and some farm land by Forestry Commission.
Raised Mire	Colliers Moss Common LNR
Lowland Heath	Colliers Moss Common LNR
Hedgerow/Field Margin	Farmland
Ponds	Widespread across area.
River	Pendlebury Brook, Union Bank Brook
Unimproved Grassland	Colliers Moss Common, Clock Face Country Park, Sutton Manor

Heritage

6.4.12 The Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER) coupled with the Merseyside Historic Characterisation Study are central to the understanding of the heritage of the Forest Park area. The HER has 108 site records which range from prehistoric finds on the mossland areas, through moated farm sites of the medieval period, to post industrial sites linked to the mining industry including capped mine shafts and WW2 installations.

6.4.13 The Historic Characterisation Study undertaken by the National Museum and Galleries on Merseyside paints a picture of the agricultural area as being of regular, medium scale field patterns predominantly dating from the mid to late 1800s.

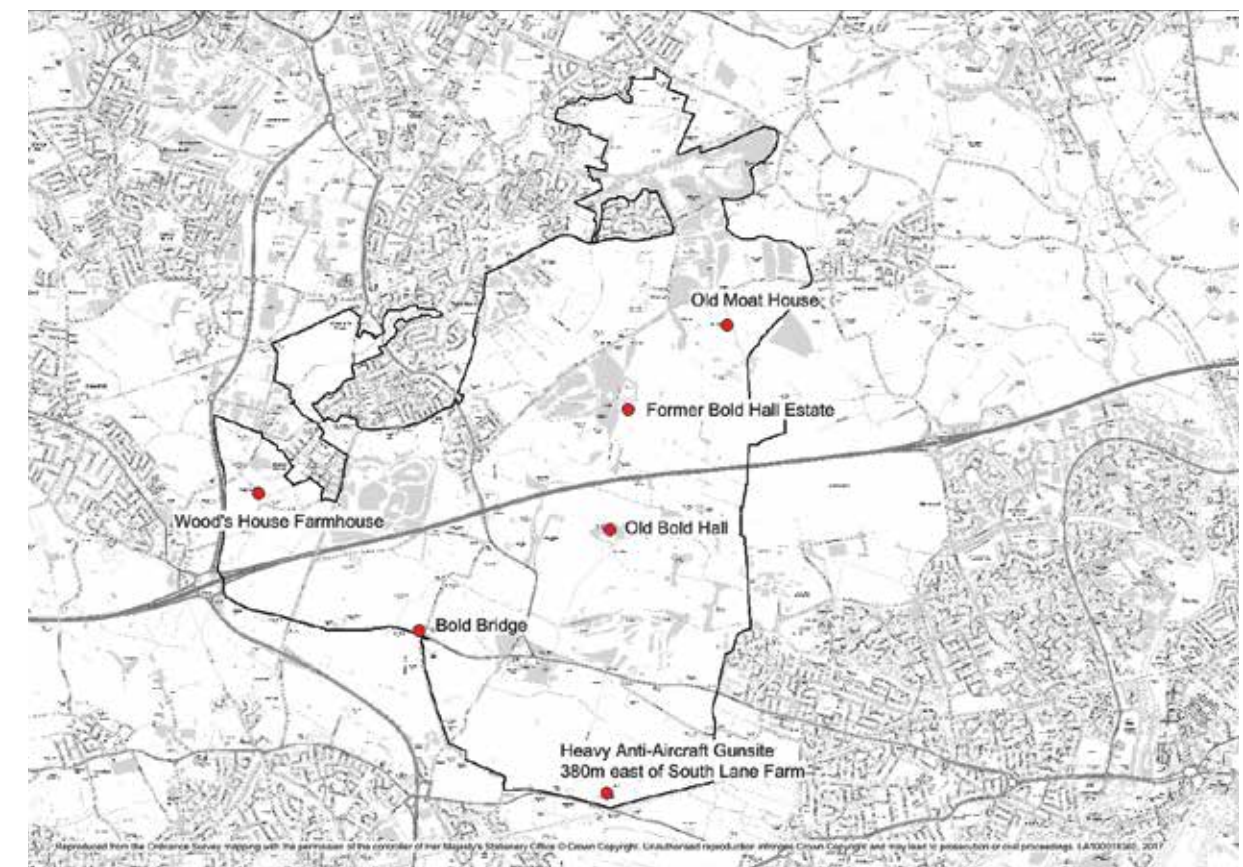
6.4.14 There are 3 Scheduled Monuments (SM) in Bold Forest Park mainly relating to the former Bold Hall Estate. One site, The Old Moat House is on the Historic England Buildings at Risk Register due to erosion caused by heavy vehicle movements along the adjacent farm track. In addition to the SMs, there are 7 Listed Buildings, all Grade 2.

6.4.15 Core Strategy Policy CQL 4 seeks to protect and enhance St. Helens historic built environment and landscape character including designated and undesignated heritage assets including Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, archaeological sites and buildings and structures of local interest.

Table 5: Key Heritage Sites in Bold Forest Park

Heritage Asset Name	Location	Key Feature of the Heritage Asset	Listing
Old Moat House Medieval Moat, Bold	Old Moat House, Joy Lane off Gorsey Lane, Bold	Medieval moat	Scheduled Monument
Farmhouse at Former Bold Hall Estate	Home Farm Farmhouse, Hall Lane, Bold	Farmhouse	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Farm Outbuilding, Formerly Stables, at Former Bold Hall Estate	The Coach House, Home Farm, Hall Lane, Bold	Former stables	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Walled Garden Adjoining Site of Former Bold Hall [Estate]	Bold Hall Nursery, Hall Lane, Bold	Walled garden	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Old Bold Hall Moated Site, Bold	Old Bold Hall, Warrington Road, Bold Heath	Medieval moat	Scheduled Monument
Gate Piers at Bold Old Hall	Old Bold Hall, Warrington Road, Bold Heath	Gate piers	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Bridge at Bold Old Hall	Old Bold Hall, Warrington Road, Bold Heath	Bridge	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Wood's House Farmhouse	Wood's House Farm Farmhouse, School Lane, Sutton Manor	Farmhouse	Listed Building (Grade 2)
Heavy Anti- Aircraft Gun Site 380m east of South Lane Farm	Disused Camp, South Lane, Widnes	Heavy anti-aircraft gun site	Scheduled Monument
Bold Bridge	A57 Warrington Road, Nr Bold Bridge Cottages, Bold, St. Helens, WA8 3UR	Road bridge	Listed Building (Grade 2)

Figure 4: Key Heritage Sites in Bold Forest Park



Key Messages:

1. A woodland framework for the Forest Park could be developed to reduce background traffic noise, strengthen landscape character and create an ecological network.
2. Core Strategy Policy CQL 4 provides the context for protection and enhancement of heritage assets in Bold Forest Park and the wider Borough. The Area Action Plan can add value to that by promoting and interpreting heritage assets to the public.
3. A practical solution to reduce the traffic impacts on the Old Moat House Scheduled Monument is needed.
4. The HER and Historic Characterisation Study provide a foundation for interpretation of the Forest Park's heritage.
5. The main heritage themes of the area are: The Bold Hall Estate, Wartime Bold, The industrial and mining history of the Forest Park area.
6. A mechanism to improve monitoring and management of Local Wildlife Site in Bold Forest Park is needed.

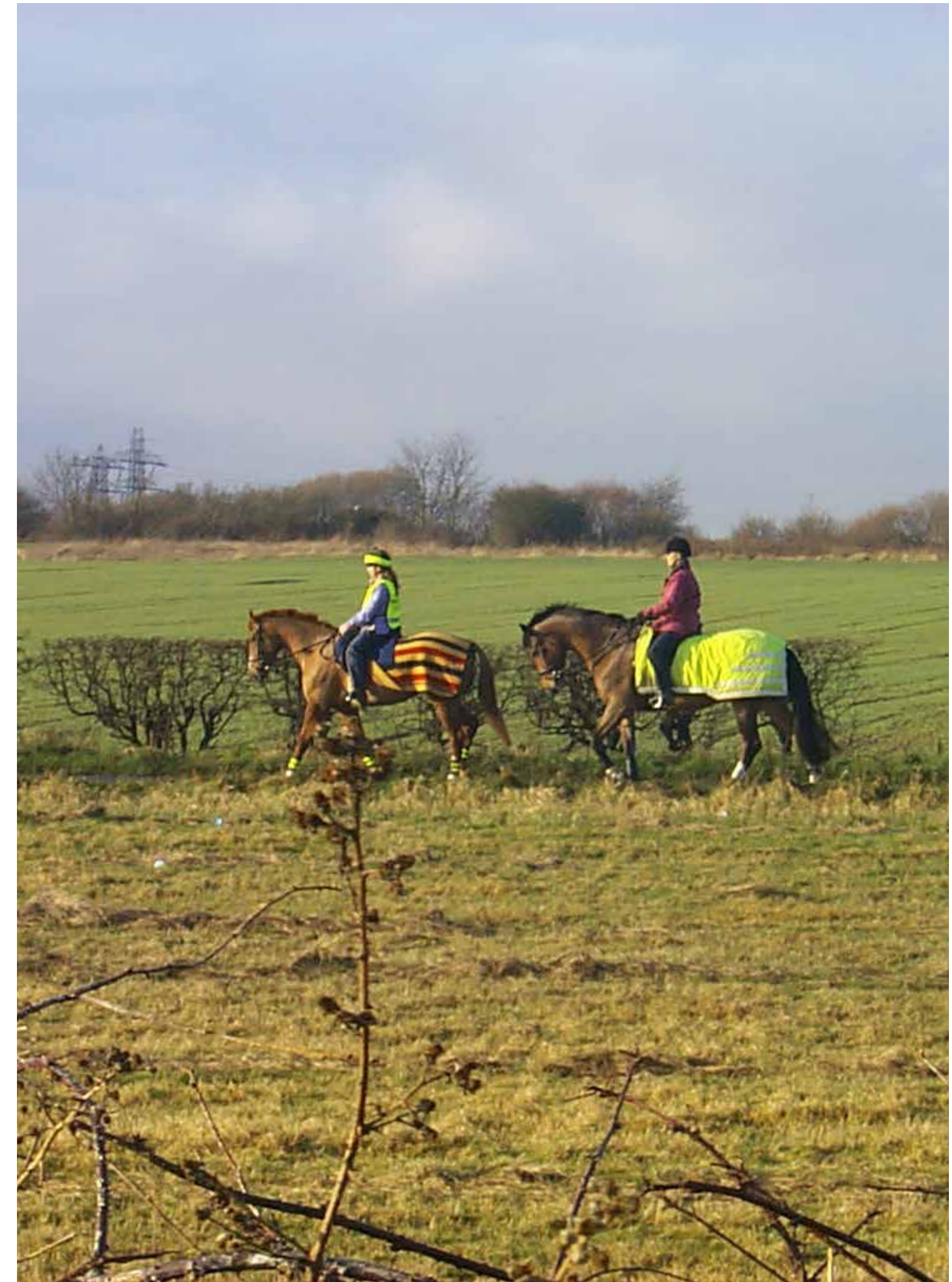
Key Issue 5: What Activities are Appropriate to Develop within the Forest Park?

6.5.1 Consultation undertaken by URS²¹ suggests that the overwhelming activity need is for routes to facilitate walking, running and cycling. Other suggested facilities and activities include:

- A public arts trail linking to Dream coupled with an arts activity package;
- An adventure play area;
- Bridlepaths;
- Nature trails;
- Climbing wall, bouldering rocks;
- Skateboard park;
- Angling;
- Picnic Sites; and
- Orienteering.

6.5.2 A feasibility study²² undertaken by Groundwork St. Helens in 2004, investigated the need for the development of a bridleway network across the area now covered by Bold Forest Park. 99% of respondents supported the development of a bridleway network over the open spaces in and around the Forest Park suggesting that horse riding is as much an anchor activity in the Forest Park as walking, cycling and running.

6.5.3 Establishing the anchor activities and developing the Forest Park as a visitor destination may provide the catalyst for on-farm activities to be developed in response to market opportunities. These can range from electric motorcycling, such as at E-SCAPE in Cheshire, to laser clay pigeon shooting events and to the re-use of farm buildings as craft shops, café facilities or even appropriate non-leisure enterprises.



(21) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, page 20 table 1 and page 22 table 2
(22) Bridleway Feasibility Study for St. Helens and Halton, Groundwork St. Helens, Knowsley, Sefton and Liverpool, 2003, page 11

Key Issue 6: Developing the Infrastructure

6.6.1 To be successful, it is essential for the Forest Park to have a clear, coherent infrastructure which creates a distinct and functioning visitor destination. The infrastructure not only includes the physical aspects such as car parks, tracks trails and signage but also promotional tools such as a website.

Access Infrastructure

6.6.2 Sustainable access to the Forest Park from railway stations and bus routes needs to be coordinated and promoted by St. Helens Council and Merseytravel.

6.6.3 Railway station information points at Lea Green and St Helens Junction, highlighting the Forest Park are essential to encourage sustainable travel from Liverpool and Manchester. Access routes from the stations need to be identified and waymarked. This could be complimented by installing bicycle hire.

6.6.4 A number of bus routes serve the Forest Park from St. Helens town centre, particularly to Sutton Manor²³. Promotion of the Forest Park at St Helens Bus Station is needed to raise awareness of the recreational opportunities the Forest Park increasingly provides, to encourage people to explore the area by bus.

6.6.5 Straddling the M62 motorway between Junctions 7 and 8 allows easy access from the North West Motorway network. Junction 7 offers the most acceptable route into the Forest Park, via Warrington Road and Jubits Lane. This would also provide access to Bold Heath and the business cluster located there, such as Mersey Valley Golf Club and Harefields Alpaca Centre. Access from Junction 8 would need to be discouraged to ensure traffic does not swamp Burtonwood Village.

Family Visitor Facilities

6.6.6 There is an obvious need to have some form of visitor centre for Bold Forest Park. However it is an enormous challenge to maintain such facilities which would need to be financially viable. Working with business owners to adapt existing leisure related businesses to provide park related information alongside existing facilities such as toilets, food and refreshments may provide the most viable way to establish visitor facilities. Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club could easily be developed to provide a Forest Park Hub, supplementing and improving existing facilities.

6.6.7 However, Sutton Manor is the best location for a family-orientated facility utilising Dream as the key marketing tool²⁴. Initially, this could be a simple facility with a large shelter housing information and picnic benches served by a catering franchise with portable toilets. A similar model is run by Cheshire West and Chester Council at Marbury Park. This could evolve into a more sophisticated facility should market forces dictate. Car parking is currently inadequate and needs to be improved.

Cycling Network

6.6.8 In the UK cycling tracks are graded as follows²⁵:

Table 6: UK Cycling Track Grading

Grade	Suitable for:	Trail
Green: Easy	Beginners in Good Health with basic bike skills. Most types of bike.	Relatively flat and wide.
Blue: Moderate	Riders in good health with basic off-road riding skills and fitness. Good mountain bikes.	Some "single-track" sections and small obstacles of root and rock.
Red: Difficult	Proficient mountain bikers with good off-road skills and fitness. Good mountain bikes.	Challenging climbs, tricky descents and technical features such as drop offs and large rocks.
Black: Severe	Expert Mountain bikers with high level of fitness. Quality off-road mountain bikes.	Greater challenge and difficulty. Expect large and unavoidable features.

From a rider safety point of view, it is essential to ensure trails are managed and maintained to the grade they are designed and advertised to be.

(23) Bold Forest Park Supporting Technical Document, Section 5.2

(24) Bold Forest Park Supporting Technical Document, Section Key Issue 5

(25) Forestry Commission <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infod-87rlq8#green>

6.6.9 Bold Forest Park needs to cater for a range of cyclist standards. To promote healthy lifestyles it is important that the Forest Park provides an attractive and safe place for the community to cycle ride. The network needs to be equivalent of the Green Route grading.

6.6.10 However, to provide interest for off-road enthusiasts there needs to be areas of greater challenge. These could be specialist routes veering off the main green network. Partner organisations will need to agree on the degree of risk they are willing to subscribe to on their landholdings. Working with local riding enthusiasts to design and manage sections of route may provide extra resources and expertise.

Equestrian Network

6.6.11 There is a pressing need for an extensive bridleway network to provide good quality recreation riding which will underpin the development of equestrian businesses in and around the Forest Park.

6.6.12 The bridleway network will need to provide a spine, into which local yards can develop links to. Where necessary, rural funding via the Mersey Leader programme, may be able to assist with funding towards developing such linkages.

6.6.13 Parking for people arriving with horse boxes who wish to ride the area, will need to be accommodated. An equestrian “hub”, possibly coupled with the cycling “hub”, defined within the route network(s) will allow user information to be provided and facilities to be developed via franchises such as mobile catering.

Walking Routes

6.6.14 Whilst the public rights of way network already provides walking routes within the Forest Park there is a need to provide waymarked self-guided trails with a range of interest points which link to facilities such as toilets and refreshments. Pubs, garden centres and cafés provide obvious start and finish points.

Multi-functional Routes

6.6.15 To accommodate and rationalise the various route requirements, it is likely a general network of multi-use routes will need to be developed. This will need to link to specialist sections of specific use such as red Route bike track, orienteering or an equestrian gallop area. Some specialist sections could be developed on private land and operated on a subscription basis such as farm rides.



Key Issue 7: Delivery and Implementation

6.7.1 Developing and maintaining a committed partnership of organisations from the public, private and charity sectors, landowners and interest groups is a key challenge to the implementation and delivery of Bold Forest Park.

6.7.2 Capital funding for infrastructure may come from a range of sources including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Cory Environmental Trust Landfill Fund and the European Interreg V Programme. A further potential source is via Planning Agreements or Section 106 Agreements, the Atlantic Gateway Community Environment Fund and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

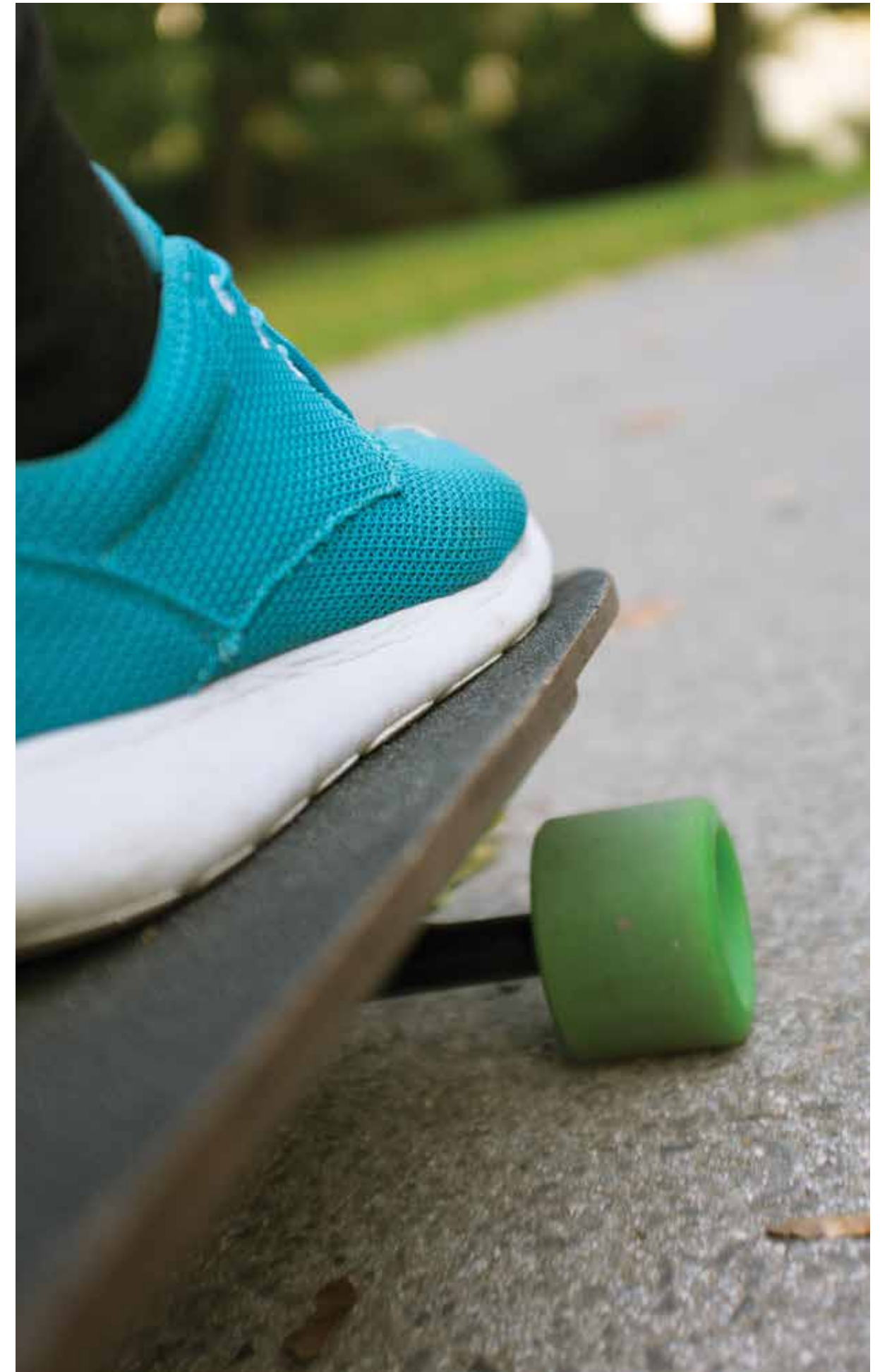
6.7.3 Integrating cross-cutting issues such as worklessness, health and sustainable transport to employment locations can provide a range of income stream and grant sources that can be matched to each other to provide small pots of capital funding.

6.7.4 It is essential that site management and maintenance are carried out by the various landowners in a coordinated manner, to ensure the various open space site complement each other and work as a whole. A high standard of site maintenance, site cleanliness and site safety are prerequisite to a successful visitor attraction.

6.7.5 Generally under-valued, a Warden or Ranger Service is an essential ingredient of creating a successful outdoor visitor attraction, providing a reassuring presence for visitors, deterring anti-social behaviour and imparting knowledge about the Forest Park.

6.7.6 Marketing of the Forest Park is, as with any destination, fundamentally important. Public consultation undertaken by URS showed a low awareness of Bold Forest Park within the St. Helens community. Essentially, there are two visitor markets for the Forest Park:

- Visitors from within St. Helens and the surrounding area; and
- Visitors from the region and sub-region.



Part 2: *Developing the Forest Park*



7.0 Vision, Aims and Objectives

7.1 Vision for Bold Forest Park

The Forest Park Board has established the following vision for Bold Forest Park:

“By 2030 Bold Forest Park will be at the heart of a thriving diverse economy, providing a hub for family leisure and adventure sport. The natural environment and cultural environment will be rich and diverse. A network of open spaces and routes accessible to all connects the Forest Park to the wider countryside and links to our local communities.”

7.2 Aims and Objectives

Policy CAS 5 of St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy sets out the aims and objectives for the Forest Park Plan.

The aim of Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan is to provide an outdoor leisure destination in an attractive, wooded setting with the following objectives:

- 1:** Create new economic opportunities through sustainable development within Bold Forest Park;
- 2:** Create opportunities for tourism and leisure related business, supported by the natural economy;
- 3:** Create an easily understood and accessible network of linked open spaces within Bold Forest Park and with surrounding areas;
- 4:** Promote the provision and positive use of green space for the benefit of the local community and visitors; and
- 5:** Enhance the natural environment through targeted delivery of green infrastructure programmes that improve and expand the biodiversity and landscape quality of the Bold Forest Park area.

These can be supplemented by the additional aim of:

- 6:** Create quality outdoor space with opportunities for physical activities and positive use of green space to improve mental health and wellbeing of the local community and visitors.



8.0 Strategic Development Policy

Policy BFP1: A Sustainable Forest Park

In developing the Forest Park infrastructure and attractions, the Council will work with its partners to seek an economic focus, balanced with environmental sustainability, in order to meet the needs of the community by:

- Promoting current employment sites within the Bold Forest Park;
- Promoting rural diversification which contributes to the Forest Park vision, aims and objectives and is consistent with Green Belt policy;
- Ensuring the Bold Forest Park area contributes to meeting the Borough’s needs for housing, employment, open space, sport and recreation;
- Enhancing the landscape character, primarily by increasing tree cover up to 30% of the Forest Park area through:
 - Seeking additional and/or improved landscaping from new developments; and
 - Working jointly with the Mersey Forest and landowners on project implementation;
- Integrating wildlife habitats into an ecological network;
- Conserving and enhancing heritage;
- Ensuring built development is of an appropriate scale for its location and use, and is utilised to provide solutions to problems;
- Safeguarding and expanding the range of leisure and visitor facilities within the Forest Park;
- Promoting sustainable “at source” management of water resources through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes;
- Working with developers to create opportunities for “work experience”, offering a progression path to employment; and
- Continuing to work with the local community and local businesses to achieve the aims of the AAP.

The majority of the Bold Forest Park area is located within the Green Belt and therefore national Green Belt policy will continue to apply to new development in those Green Belt areas.

The boundary of the Bold Forest Park is shown on the Policies Map.

Objectives Met: 1,2,3,4,5,6

Purpose:

The purpose of **BFP1: A Sustainable Forest Park** is that of an overarching policy which provides a broad context for the development of, and development within, the Forest Park to be measured against.

Justification:

Core Strategy Policy CAS 5: Rural St. Helens indicates an area on the southern edge of the Borough as Bold Forest Park and makes a commitment for an AAP to be prepared for the Bold Forest Park Area in order to:

1. Create new economic opportunities through sustainable development within Bold Forest Park;
2. Create opportunities for tourism and leisure-related business, supported by the natural economy of the Bold Forest Park;
3. Create easily understood and accessible network of linked open spaces within Bold Forest Park and with surrounding areas;
4. Promote the provision and positive use of green space for the benefit of local communities and visitors; and
5. Enhance the natural environment through targeted delivery of Green Infrastructure programmes that improve and expand the biodiversity and landscape quality of Bold Forest Park area.

The vision, aim and objectives of the Plan have been based on the above Core Strategy priorities for the Bold Forest Park and they have gained widespread stakeholder support through the consultation process. Policy BFP 1 provides the strategic approach to deliver the vision, aims and objectives and gives an overall picture of how development will be guided and how sustainable development will be delivered.

As part of the preparation of a new Local Plan for the whole of the Borough, a Green Belt review is being undertaken in order to identify suitable land to accommodate new housing and employment development. Policy BFP 1 therefore recognises that the Forest Park could have a role to play in helping to meet the objectively assessed housing and employment needs of the Borough and therefore seeks to deliver economic growth balanced with environmental safeguards in order to meet the social needs of the local community.

In order to achieve a balanced approach, the location and scale of enhancements to landscape character (i.e. increasing tree cover) should not prejudice the development of land that may be needed for housing or other forms of development. Additional on-site provision should ensure any new development integrates into the Forest Park setting by, for example, adopting garden village principles.

9.0 Developing the Forest Park Economy

<p>Policy BFP ECON1: Supporting Economic Growth</p> <p>Proposals which support the Forest Park economy or which enhance the range and quality of economic opportunities or facilities, will be considered favourably where the developer can demonstrate they help to deliver the objectives of Bold Forest Park, and they comply with national and local planning policies, particularly with regard to the Green Belt.</p> <p>Any proposal which would reduce the range and quality of businesses or tourism attractions and facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impacts upon the local economy, the environment or on the quality of visitors' experience.</p>	<p>Purpose: To develop Bold Forest Park as a business location of choice</p>
<p>Objectives Met: 1, 2</p>	<p>Justification: The Government has set its priority as being economic growth and wishes to see rural areas contributing to and benefiting from it²⁶. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 28) states that planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable development. To do this local and neighbourhood plans should “support sustainable tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, which respect the character of the countryside. This should include the provision and expansion of tourism and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met.”</p>
<p>Key Delivery Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigating the potential of Bold Forest Park as a “Business Improvement District”; • Business Support via St.Helens Council Economic Development Team; • Increase sustainable access to key employment sites and visitor attractions within and around Bold Forest Park through the construction of cycle routes; and • Facilitate and support a Forest Park Business Forum. 	<p>Bold Forest Park is an initiative designed to maximise the benefits that the countryside in and around the town provides to the community. Encouragement of rural diversification will boost the local economy, safeguard businesses and create employment opportunities. URS’s visitor survey²⁷ identified a range of visitor needs which could be provided through establishment of new businesses or diversification of existing ones. These opportunities include climbing walls, cycle hire, and food and drink franchises.</p>

(26) Rural Statement 2012 Economic Growth, paragraph 7, Defra, 2012

(27) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012 Sections 3.2.2, page 19

Policy BFP ECON2: Addressing Worklessness

Within the Forest Park Area, St.Helens Council, Groundwork and other appropriate partners will establish a land-based training scheme linked to the development and management of the Forest Park infrastructure, including strategic routes, public car parks, access controls, signage and wildlife habitats. This scheme will add value to current site management resources. Developers will be encouraged to participate in the land-based training scheme.

Objectives Met: 4, 5

Key Delivery Item: Establishment of a land-based training scheme.

Purpose: Addressing issues of worklessness in and around the Forest Park Area.

Justification:

As part of improving people’s lives, St.Helens Plan²⁸ aims to “increase skills levels and attainment of local people, particularly families and young people, to maximise opportunities for accessing employment.”

The wards in and around the Forest Park (Town Centre, Thatto Heath, Parr and Bold) suffer from levels of unemployment higher than the national and Borough averages²⁹.

Employing and training local people will help to achieve the aims of Policies BFP COM2 and BFP COM3, giving people an active role in the area and also assist in increasing active lifestyles.

The land-based training scheme will make a major contribution to cost effective management of a wide range of facilities and wildlife habitats whilst increasing the range of skills to be gained by participants.

In addition to the land-based training scheme, in accordance with the St.Helens Local Economy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2013), the Council will expect applicants for developments in the Bold Forest Park over a certain size threshold (as defined on page 21 of the Local Economy SPD), where appropriate, to take reasonable steps to engage with named organisations (to be agreed with the Council) regarding the use of local recruitment services, employment of local apprentices and finding local suppliers of goods and services in the construction phase, and where applicable, in the operation of development.

(28) St.Helens Plan 2014-2017, page 12

(29) St.Helens Analysis and Research Exchange <http://share.sthelens.gov.uk>

10.0 Delivering the Forest Park Infrastructure

10.1 Current infrastructure

10.1.1 Community consultation³⁰ carried out by URS confirmed a very low awareness of Bold Forest Park as an entity. Some of this may be due to a lack of a clear identity and coherent infrastructure whilst much will be due to a lack of promotion of the sites. Clearly, a priority must be to develop a marketable product with networks of recreational sites and routes linking to existing or new attractions and facilities.

10.1.2 Currently, there is no obvious destination for visitors to head for within the Forest Park. Creation of a family orientated “visitor gateway” to which visitors can be signposted to before exploring the wider park, is critical. The Dream sculpture is the obvious unique selling point to focus a key visitor destination around, creating a visitor hub on the Forestry Commission owned Sutton Manor site.

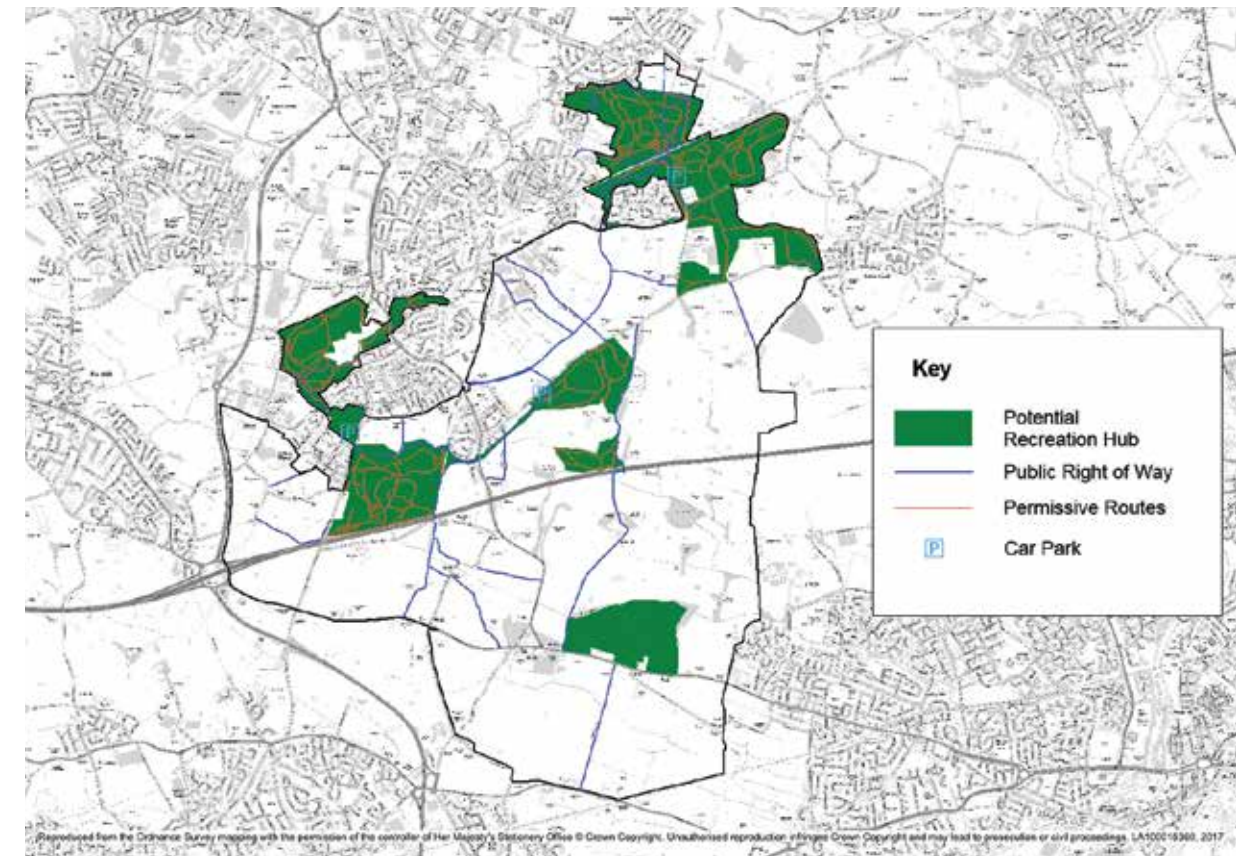
10.1.3 Specialist activity hubs for cycling and equestrian sectors are also needed and may be on a separate site.

10.1.4 The main existing elements of infrastructure are the reclaimed brownfield sites of Clock Face Country Park, Colliers Moss Common, Sutton Manor and Brickfields, supplemented by extensive areas of woodland planting on farmland at Wheatacre, Maypole and Griffin Wood. Whilst these individual sites, which already represent millions of pounds of investment, have been landscaped with networks of paths laid out, they are not integrated into one coherent network. These open space sites are potential recreation hubs within the Forest Park.

10.1.5 The linkages between sites are currently limited and need strengthening, in part, by adapting the Public Rights of Way network in the area. This needs to be supplemented and re-focussed onto the Forest Park.

10.1.6 The community can currently access the Forest Park for informal recreation at 22 entrances from the residential areas on the periphery of the park. Public car parks are provided at Clock Face Country Park, King George V Playing Fields and Colliers Moss Common South, which although constructed, has never been in use. However, visitor information is limited and facilities are absent. The process of way marking has been started at Sutton Manor using Local Sustainable Transport Funding but needs to be carried out across the whole Forest Park area.

Figure 5: Current Forest Park Infrastructure



10.1.7 A Visual Appraisal Study³¹ of the strategic infrastructure undertaken by Groundwork sets out the following strategic recommendations:

- Create a Strategic Masterplan for the Forest Park - an overview of entry points, park routes areas and zones for improvements/uses for existing land, plans for development areas/diversification opportunities. Realise new opportunities to create added visitor attractions. Guide designs within focus areas and collate information for funding opportunities;
- Create detailed masterplans for focus sites-review how the landscape works/could be improved for visitors to the Forest Park and surrounding communities; and
- Physical works should offer opportunities for local people - improved prospects (employment and training), improved health and lifestyle/wellbeing (through outdoor activities) and create better places to live whilst delivering the wider strategic aims of improved appearance, raised awareness and further inward investment.

(30) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, page 20

(31) Bold Forest Park Visual Assessment Report, Groundwork, 2013

10.2 Proposed Infrastructure

10.2.1 The proposed infrastructure for Bold Forest Park is for a series of linked “Recreation Hubs” at Sutton Manor, Clock Face Country Park, Colliers Moss Common, and Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club with an aspiration for visitor facilities to be developed on each, although the principle visitor gateway will be located on Sutton Manor. Brickfields will remain a community-focused Recreation Hub.

10.2.2 Strategic Linking Routes comprising pedestrian, cycling and/or equestrian linkages will link the Recreation Hubs together and also to important economic centres such as Bold Heath and Burtonwood village (in Warrington Borough), creating a network of sites, trails and services. The off-road pedestrian linkages exist, as do most of the cycling routes, with the equestrian linkages requiring the most development. As this network attracts visitors, it may then act as a catalyst for new business ventures such as cycle hire, refreshment franchises, pony trekking and Segway hire.

10.2.3 Key walking and cycling links from railways stations will be defined, signposted and promoted as “Gateways” into the Forest Park from the rail network. Bike hire could also be offered. Road traffic will be directed to the Forest Park from Junction 7 of the M62 Motorway via Warrington Road (A57) to Bold Heath and Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club or, via Jubits Lane to, initially, Sutton Manor. These preferred road routes will act as the road “Gateways” into the Forest Park.

10.2.4 The wider agricultural land provides opportunities for rural land-based businesses to diversify into the visitor economy, and possibly other sectors, within the context of national and local Green Belt planning policy and the Bold Forest Area Action Plan. This could increase the number of visitor attractions in the Forest Park.

10.2.5 Local employment sites will be more accessible via the Forest Park cycle network but need to be made to be cycle friendly with bike racks and employee facilities to encourage take up of cycling to work. The network sign posting needs to include major employment sites.

10.2.6 Clock Face Country Park has a large car park which is ideal to create a cycling hub which provides information, refreshments, toilets and cycle hire. The site is also an ideal access to the proposed bridleway network for riders arriving by road with horse boxes.

10.2.7 Bold Forest Park provides a significant opportunity to develop a touring caravan site which is near to the major tourism attractions of Liverpool and Manchester. The Forest Park could provide a perfect base for this market utilising the Liverpool to Manchester railway, bringing in significant investment to the park and the local economy. Located in close proximity to St Helens Junction station, Colliers Moss Common (south) provides an ideal location for such a facility.

10.3 Infrastructure Development Policies

10.3.1 The Infrastructure Development Policies cover the following:

Policy BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy;

Policy BFP INF2: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub;

Policy BFP INF3: Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub/Cycling Centre;

Policy BFP INF4: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub Development Opportunity Site;

Policy BFP INF5: Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Recreation Hub; and

Policy BFP INF6: Creating an Accessible Forest Park:

- Public Transport;
- Walking;
- Cycling;
- Horse Riding; and
- Road Access.

Policy BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy

St.Helens Council and its project partners will support the development of recreation hubs at Sutton Manor, Clock Face Country Park, Colliers Moss Common, Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club and Brickfields.

Recreation and tourism development proposals in identified recreation hubs will be assessed in line with the proposed hierarchy of hubs below and, where they are in the Green Belt, subject to planning policy for the Green Belt.

The following recreation hubs are identified on Figure 6: Key Diagram and on the Policies Map.

Site Hierarchy	Role	Typical Activities	Infrastructure/Facilities
Sutton Manor	The primary visitor destination with a mainly family and community orientated recreational offer using Dream as the focal point of an innovative sculpture and arts attraction (linked to Policy BFP INF2).	Walking, cycling, orienteering, running events, country fairs, environmental education, guided walks, conservation activities, horse riding, arts activities.	Access road into the site, car park, toilets, visitor centre/café, events area, Dream, picnic areas, walking trails, cycling routes, bridleways.
Clock Face Country Park	A cycling orientated recreation hub which also provides family picnicking and walking routes (linked to Policy BFP INF3).	Walking, cycling, arts activities, conservation activities.	Cycling hub, refreshment caravan, cycling support, toilets, picnic zone.
Colliers Moss Common	A high quality Local Nature Reserve north of the Manchester - Liverpool railway line. South of the railway provides a range of activities including angling, cycling, BMX, walking and horse riding. Limited commercial development coupled with visitor services (linked to Policy BFP INF4).	BMX, angling, running events, cycling, skateboarding, environmental education, walking, horse riding.	Amphitheatre, wildlife habitat, interpretation. BMX track, cycle network, bridleway, walking routes. Forest Park Visitor Information Point. Caravan site or other commercial venture.
Mersey Valley Golf And Country Club	Golf and Country Club with Forest Park Centre, restaurant and facilities and accommodation (linked to Policy BFP INF5).	Golf, angling, archery, potential for quad biking.	Dedicated entrance road and Forest Park visitor car parking, Club House with bar and restaurant, open-standard gold course, angling waters, accommodation chalets. Way-marking to wider Forest Park.
Brickfields	A mainly community-based hub with some cycling, walking and horse riding routes.	Off-road cycling, walking, horse riding, picnicking, conservation activities, environmental education, arts activities.	Footpath routes, bridleway, cycleway.

Objectives Met: 1, 2, 4, 6

Purpose: To support the development of recreation hubs in the Forest Park.

Justification: One of the 12 core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should “recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it” (NPPF paragraph 17).

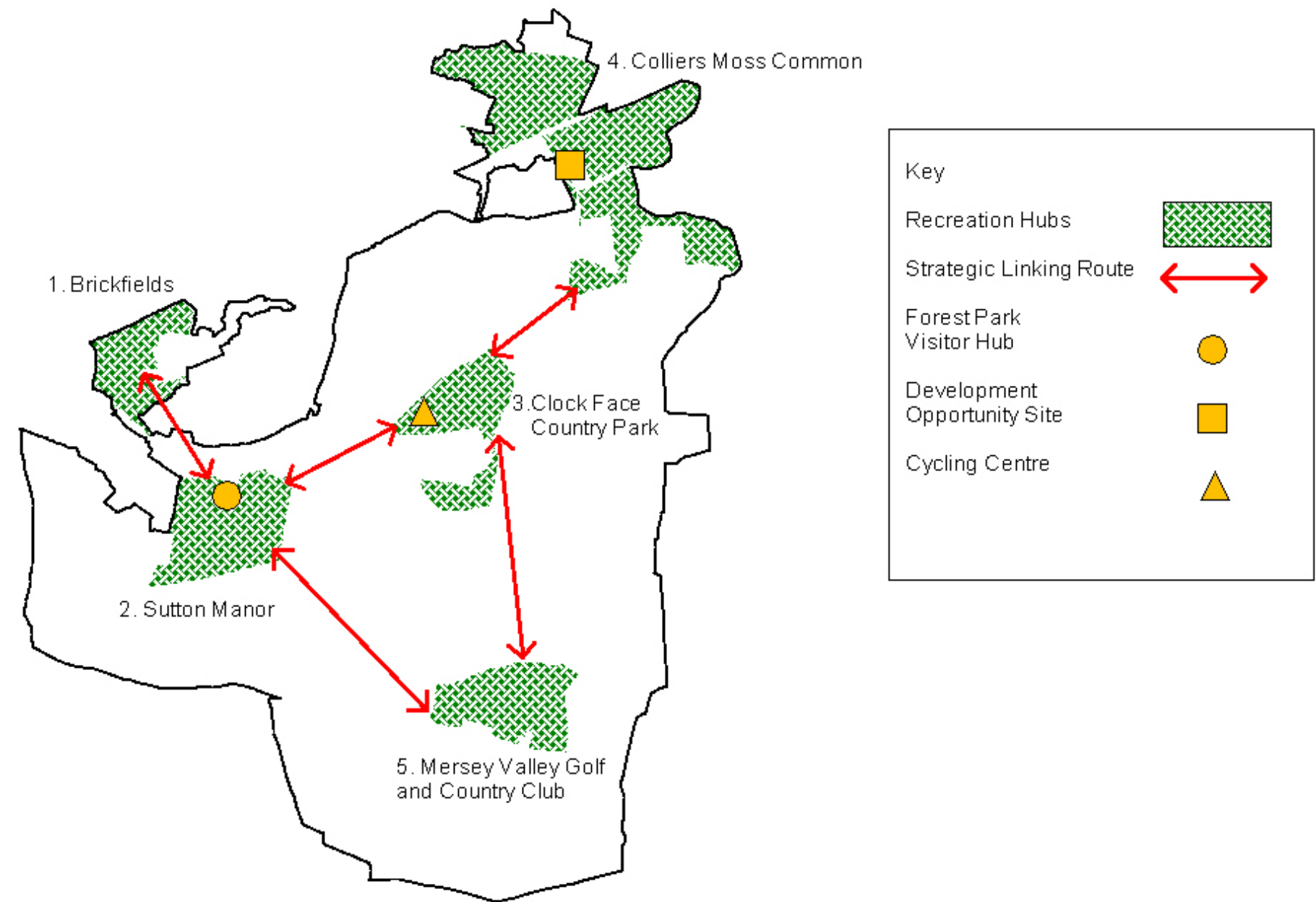
Core Strategy Policy CAS 5 supports the development of an Area Action Plan for the Bold Forest Park area which creates new economic opportunities through sustainable development and creates opportunities for tourism and leisure-related business in the Forest Park and will be key to the establishment of the Forest Park as a visitor destination.

Recreation hubs will be the focus of recreational experiences within the Forest Park and subject to the provisions of national Green Belt policy, they will contain the necessary enabling infrastructure to facilitate recreational activity such as small car parks, toilets, on-site visitor information, catering facilities, as well as more specific activity focused infrastructure for activities such as angling, horse riding, skateboarding and cycle hire facilities. They will be the starting point for wider exploration and enjoyment of the Forest Park and will be defined by good access to the active recreation infrastructure such as:

- Cycle trails;
- Walking routes; and
- Bridleways for horse riding.

The recreation hub at Brickfields will be smaller in scale than the other proposed recreation hubs offering access for walking, cycling and horse riding routes for local people.

Figure 6: Key Diagram - Strategic Infrastructure Plan of Bold Forest Park



Policy BFP INF2: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub

Sutton Manor Recreation Hub is identified as the location for the principal Forest Park Visitor Hub.

The Council and its project partners will, subject to necessary national and local planning policy concerning Green Belt and retail, support proposals that would deliver the following:

- Access Road into Sutton Manor off Jubits Lane;
- Car Parking for visitors of the wider Forest Park, including bays for the disabled;
- Provision and infrastructure for walkers, cyclists and young children;
- The sale of food and drink, to be eaten both on the premises and within the Forest Park;
- The opportunity for retail concessions for the sale of items complimentary to the Forest Park as an outdoor recreation destination;
- Space for small business to operate from, with uses complimentary to the Forest Park such as craft and creative industries;
- Provision of information, art trail and heritage interpretation;
- Space available for events in connection with the Forest Park and to serve the local community; and
- Space for Forest Park Management.

Any permanent or temporary buildings or structures for catering, retail or small business uses are to be located within the general vicinity of the Visitor Hub.

Development of the site for a use which prejudices its delivery as a visitor hub will be resisted.

BFP Objective Met: 1, 2

Key Delivery Item: Development of brief for visitor facilities.

Purpose: To safeguard the prime location for the essential development of a Forest Park Visitor Gateway.

Justification: Of the 5 Recreational Hubs in the Forest Park, Sutton Manor presents the best location to develop the main visitor gateway in terms of:

- Accessibility - Sutton Manor is served by 11 bus services from St. Helens Town centre with up to 4 buses per hour, is 1.2 miles from Lea Green Railway Station and is within 400 metres of 1,854 households so it is highly accessible by foot. The site is 1.4 miles for Junction 7 of the M62 motorway, via Warrington Road and Jubits Lane. This route has a lower potential for disturbance, passing only 250 house (within 100m of the route)⁽³²⁾. Modest car parking is currently available but there is great potential to create adequate parking facilities by creating a new access road into the site and utilising the former coal storage pad on the northern side of the site.
- Unique marketable selling point - Visitor counters indicate the site already attracts around 75,000 visitors much of this is centred on the Dream sculpture which acts as the focal point of the site. This instantly recognisable image is a major marketing asset for the site.
- Potential - The site is suitable for a range of activities⁽³³⁾ and space to hold medium to large scale events such as the well-attended Elf and Fairy Fair held in 2012.

It is likely that the development of the visitor facilities will be incremental, starting modestly and developing in line with market forces.

Proposals for the development of the visitor hub will be subject to the provisions of national policy concerning Green Belt and retail (including applying a sequential test and, where applicable, an impact assessment subject to any locally set floorspace thresholds).

(32) St. Helens Forest Park Report for the Mersey Forest and St. Helens Council, Blue Sail, 2009

(33) Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Supporting Technical Document, Section 5.11

Sutton Manor Recreation Hub - Indicative Profile

A mainly family-orientated visitor hub, providing a range of events and activities.

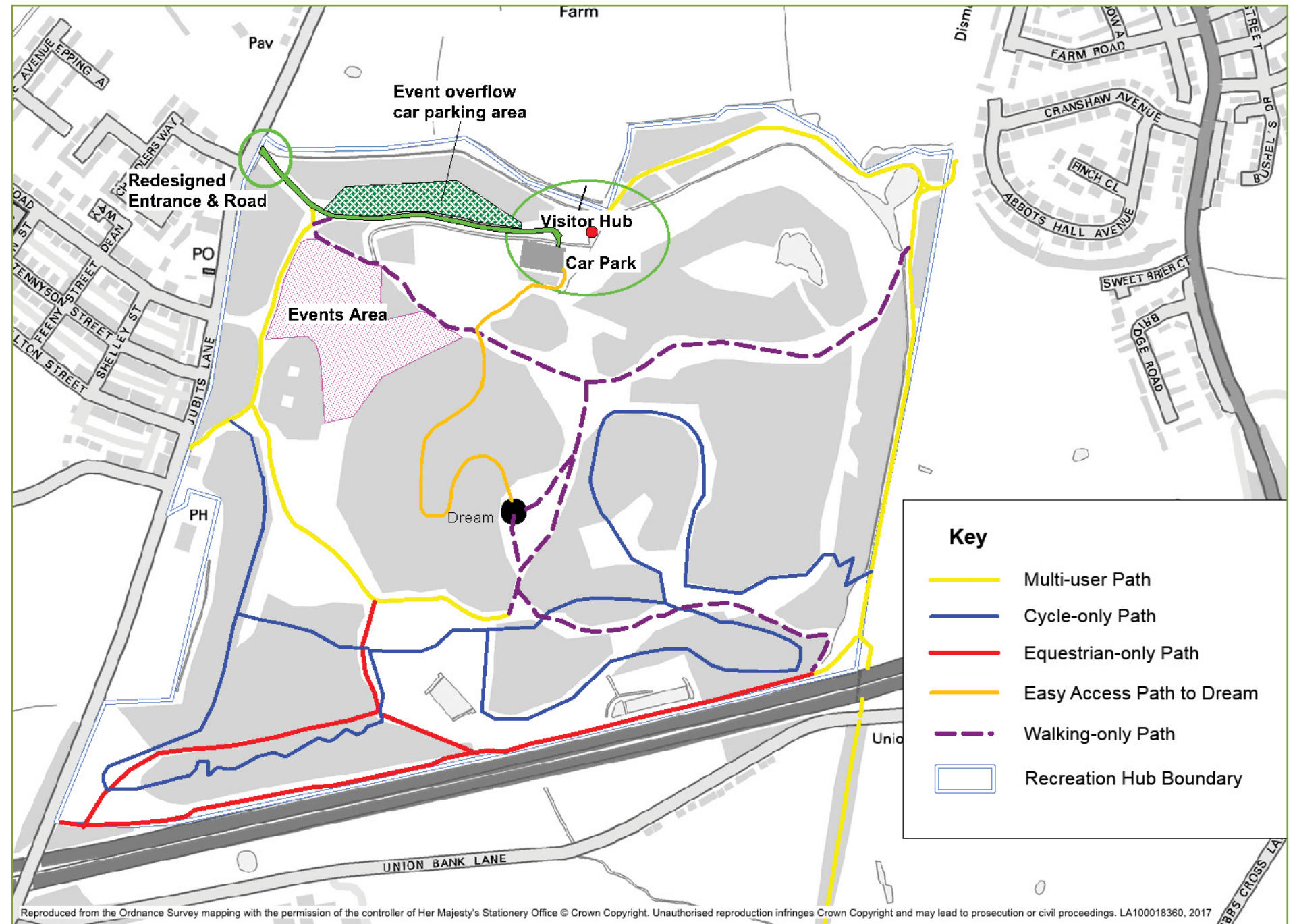
Infrastructure:

- Principal visitor destination within the Forest Park with park information, refreshments; toilets, event booking, administration office;
- New entrance road and car park;
- Dream Sculpture;
- Site interpretation;
- Art trail, activities;
- Outdoor events area;
- Walking routes;
- Cycle routes;
- Bridleway; and
- Wildlife Habitats.

Typical Activities:

Self-guided trails, bike riding, horse riding, country fairs, guided walks, environmental education, conservation activities, picnicking, orienteering, running events, arts in the environment events.

Figure 7: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub (Illustrative Only)



Policy BFP INF3: Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub/Cycling Centre

Clock Face Country Park is identified as the location for a cycling focused Recreation Hub. Whilst cycling will be the primary focus, the wider recreational hub will also cater for equestrian needs and family provision.

Focused on the western end of the country park car park a cycling centre will consist of:

- Catering Vehicle;
- Dedicated Bike Riders car parking;
- Bike Centre providing technical support, bike hire, Forest Park information;
- Off-road beginners track;
- Toilets;
- Family and horse box parking; and
- Horse mounting blocks.

The wider recreation hub will provide:

- A network of cycling routes;
- Bridleway routes;
- Walking routes;
- Family picnic zone; and
- Wildlife habitats.

Proposals for the development of the cycle centre involving a permanent or temporary building or structure will be subject to the provisions of national policy concerning Green Belt.

Objectives Met: 1, 2

Key Delivery Item: Establishment of Cycle Centre.

Purpose: To establish cycling as one of the anchor attractions within Bold Forest Park.

Justification: Consultation carried out by URS and Preferred Options stage consultation³⁴ strongly indicated a significant demand for off-road cycling facilities. This has been reinforced through close working with the Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club as part of the Forest Park Partnership.

Clock Face Country Park is located on the proposed Cycleway and Bridleway networks with a large area of under-utilised car park available to site appropriate buildings needed to create a hub with dedicated cyclist parking.

NPPF paragraph 89 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except in certain cases, including “provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.”

The proposed cycling centre is initially expected to comprise structures of limited permanence and associated with outdoor sport and recreation; and are therefore not considered likely to constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

As the centre becomes established, it is possible that the development of more permanent facilities may be accommodated. Proposals for such facilities will be supported subject to their compatibility with national Green Belt policy with particular regard to openness.

Located on the existing car park area, adjacent to the urban fringe and well screened with vegetation, it is considered that the proposed cycle centre would have minimal impact on the openness of the area.

The site is physically linked to Sutton Manor hub via the Miners Way making it accessible to visitors from neighbouring Halton, and rail commuters via Lea Green Station.

The cycling hub can be relatively easily delivered via a franchise arrangement which would provide some revenue to the Council.

Increasing participation in cycling is a key plank in the fight against obesity in St. Helens. Bold Forest Park provides a major opportunity to increase participation. A study into how the Forest Park can contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community³⁵ recommends the creation of a cycling hub on Clock Face Country Park as a high priority.

Cycling is also central to the development of sustainable transport systems within the Borough. The Forest Park cycle network will assist in sustainable access to employment at key sites such as Omega.

(34) Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (Preferred Options) 2014 Report on Consultation and Summary of Changes

(35) Creating a Healthy Bold Forest Park, Krins, R., 2015

Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub - Indicative Profile

Cycling focused Recreation Hub, which also provides for equestrian and family - orientated use.

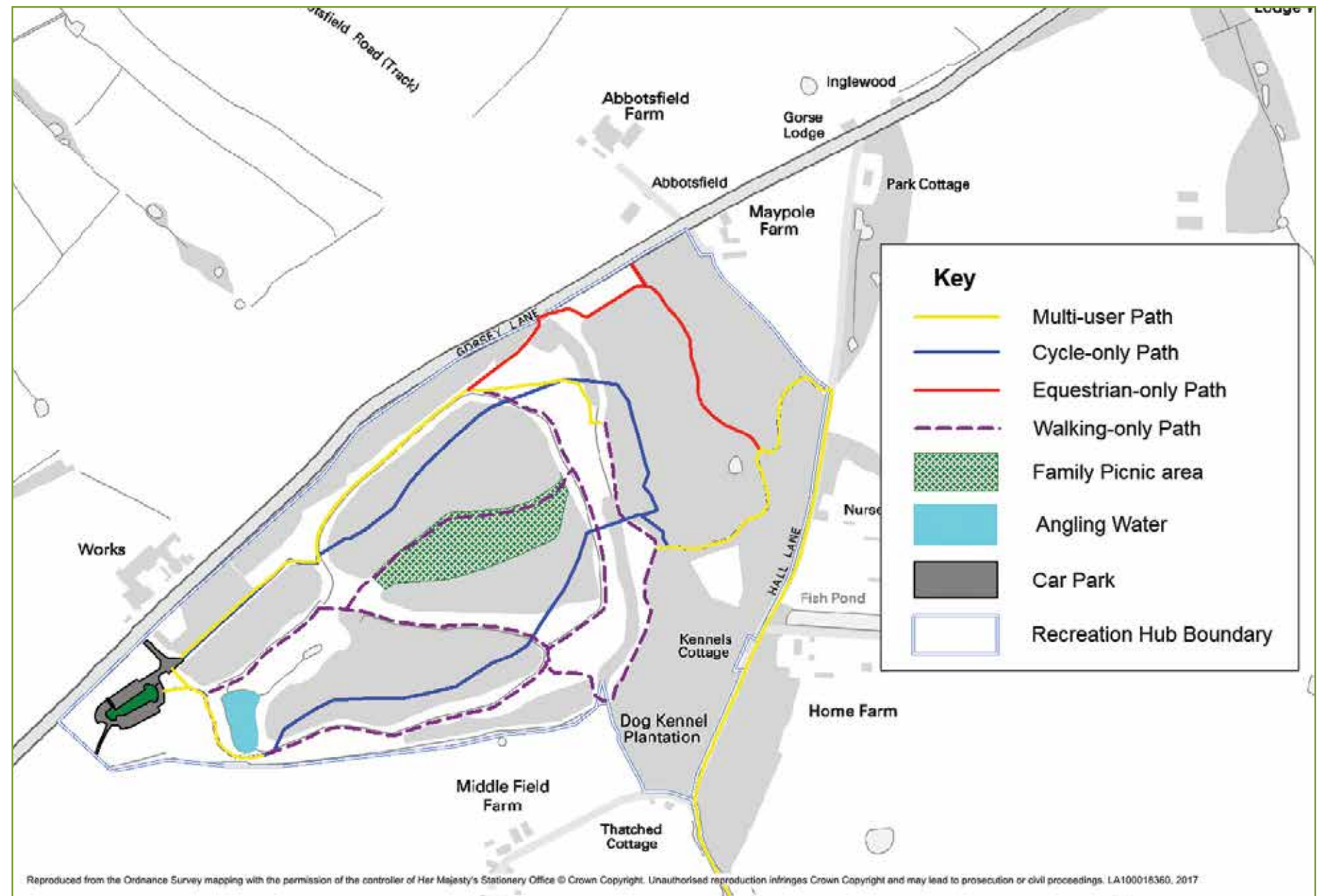
Infrastructure:

- Dedicated cycling car park area;
- General visitor car parking area;
- Forest Park Information - maps, interpretation;
- Cycle Hub - catering franchise, toilets, cycle hire container, cycling support;
- Angling water;
- Walking - self guided trails;
- Bridleway with horsebox parking, mounting blocks;
- Beginner's bike track;
- Wider cycle network; and
- Picnic areas.

Typical Activities:

Cycling events, angling, walking, running, horse-riding, environmental education, picnicking, guided walks, photography.

Figure 8: Clock Face Recreation Hub (Illustrative Only)



Policy BFP INF4: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub Development Opportunity Site

In order to ensure that the Forest Park can support a wide range of countryside related recreation and economic activities, and to enhance the viability of the Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub, an area of land at the Colliers Moss Common Hub to the south of the railway line and east of the New Bold Place housing estate is identified as a “development opportunity site”.

In the Development Opportunity Site, which is shown on the Policies Map, development which would directly benefit the viability of the hub and the range and offer of activities in the Forest Park will represent important positive factors to be weighed when assessing inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Potential uses for this site may include:

- Visitor accommodation compatible with a rural setting;
- Visitor facilities such as an information point, café, and ancillary small-scale Forest Park related retail; and
- Small business units to facilitate the development of creative industries.

Any development of the site must:

- Be of a scale which is not detrimental to the nature and character of the site;
- Ensure that impact on the openness of the Green Belt is acceptable;
- Incorporate significant landscape improvements;
- Provide safe and adequate access from the highway network;
- Provide safe links to the local walking and cycling networks and St Helens Junction railway station; and
- Protect residential amenity from any unacceptable noise or disturbance.

Whilst identified as an opportunity site, it is still washed over by the Green Belt to ensure adequate planning control in the future.

Objectives Met: 1, 2

Key Delivery Item: Development Brief for the site.

Purpose: To utilise a limited development opportunity to provide visitor facilities and generate income to invest in the development and management of Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub.

Justification: At over 158 hectares in size, the Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub lacks the visitor facilities normally associated with such a large site. The site is in close proximity to St Helens Junction Railway Station allowing easy and sustainable access into the Forest Park from the Liverpool and Manchester conurbations giving it a significant population catchment.

The part of the site to the south of the railway line was a colliery and coal holding area before it was reclaimed and landscaped and transferred to the Council’s ownership. The site suffers from anti-social behaviour and requires investment and funding for ongoing maintenance and management. There is no dedicated funding or endowment for the site, and efforts to transfer the site to a voluntary organisation failed in 2007. The Council continues to explore solutions to provide a sustainable future for the site and to maximise benefits to the wider Forest Park.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 81 states that “local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access, to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity and or improve derelict land.”

NPPF paragraph 89 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except in certain cases, including “provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.”

The Council considers that there is potential for development within the Colliers Moss Common Hub that would generate funding and/or an income stream for the ongoing development and the wider Hub. This approach is considered consistent with Policy BFP ENV4 Problem Sites.

This development could include visitor facilities, or indirectly support facilities elsewhere on the site or elsewhere in the Forest Park. Visitor facilities could comprise of an information point, café or ancillary small-scale Forest Park related retail.

Accommodation for visitors compatible to a rural setting could comprise chalets, cabins, yurts/“glamping” and caravans (static and/or touring). Another possibility is small business units of an appropriate design and construction that would support creative industries that would produce goods and services related to the countryside such as arts and crafts.

Any permission for small business units would have to incorporate measures such as a condition or legal agreement to ensure the activities conducted would be creative industries related to the countryside.

Justification continued:

The identified Development Opportunity Site is an existing open area and has been identified as the most suitable location in the Hub due to:

- Any built form would have least impact on the openness of the site due to topography, surrounding trees, proximity to existing housing to the west and Bold Business Centre to the south-east;
- Good pedestrian, cycle public transport and road access; and
- Proximity to key access points such as railway stations.

Although the Green Belt designation places limitations on the type of development that can be considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt, the Council considers that, provided the criteria set out in the policy are adhered to, the benefit to the Hub site and wider Forest Park could amount to strong, positive considerations. These would need to be weighed in the balance to determine whether very special circumstances exist that would clearly outweigh potential harm to the Green Belt.

Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub - Indicative Profile

Infrastructure:

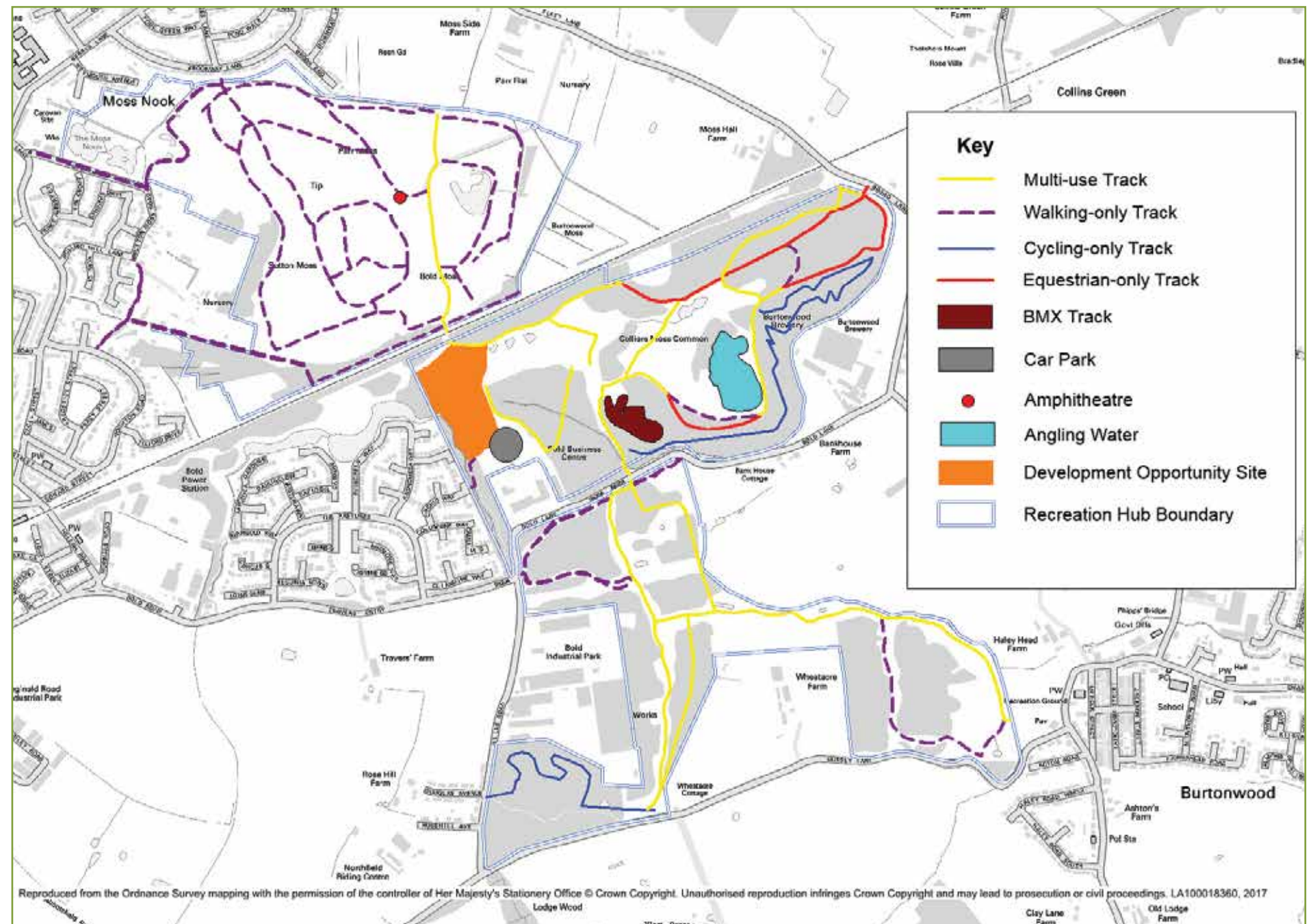
(All the following exists unless otherwise stated)

- Car Park;
- Local Nature Reserve (north of railway);
- Amphitheatre;
- Forest Park Information Point/visitor hub, potentially including small scale retail, café etc.;
- Angling water;
- Cycle network & specialist route;
- BMX track;
- Equestrian routes (existing with potential for extension-see Policy BFP INF6);
- Walking routes; and
- Potential for adventure sports e.g. skateboard park, mountain boarding (subject to market forces).

Typical Activities:

Conservation activities; guided walks; caravanning (potentially); outdoor theatre; community arts productions; angling; walking; running; horse-riding, and cycling.

Figure 9: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub (Illustrative Only)



Policy BFP INF5: Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Recreation Hub

Situated in Bold Heath, Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club is an existing recreational facility which is identified as being able to strongly contribute to the development of the Forest Park.

The Club has important visitor facilities such as food, refreshments and toilets.

The current facilities of:

- Golf Course;
- Golf Shop;
- Angling Waters;
- Wedding Venue;
- Conference facilities; and
- Restaurant;

will be supplemented by:

- Chalets providing overnight accommodation;
- A Forest Park Information Centre;
- Dedicated Forest Park Visitor Parking; and
- A dedicated access road into the site.

The built development will be clustered around the existing club house and car parking in the north west corner of the Recreation Hub.

Proposals for the built development of the hub will be subject to the provisions of national Green Belt policy.

Objectives Met: 1, 2

Key Delivery Item: Master Plan for the Recreation Hub and its environmental assets.

Purpose: To establish Forest Park Visitor Facilities in the south of the Forest Park, to support and sustain The Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club business and to boost the Bold Heath cluster of businesses generally.

Justification: The existing facilities form the basis of the Recreation Hub. It is logical to seek to expand these to benefit both the visitor to Bold Forest Park and the existing business.

The Recreation Hub is deliverable as the owner of the site is supportive.

The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 81 states that “local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access, to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation, to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity and or improve derelict land.”

NPPF paragraph 89 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate in the Green Belt, except in certain cases, including “provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it”.

The Golf and Country Club and car parking in the north west corner of the site is mostly enclosed by woodland and hedgerows which effectively masks the site from view reducing any negative impact on the openness of the Green Belt. This area is considered to be the most suitable area for any new built development (subject to satisfying Green Belt policy).

The potential development of overnight visitor accommodation serving strictly non-outdoor recreational business such as weddings, conferences or other development which might constitute inappropriate development would need to be considered within the context of planning policy for the Green Belt and therefore need to demonstrate very special circumstances.

The absence of overnight accommodation is a major restriction to the sustainability of the business. 90% of all enquiries for wedding receptions require overnight accommodation. The current take-up is only 5 per year. The conference facility side of the business often loses booking to city centre rivals due to the lack of available accommodation.

There are around 1400 registered golfing societies throughout the country whose function is to organise away trips for members to golfing destinations - typically 25-50 members. A pre-requisite is overnight accommodation. Similarly, with accommodation, the club’s angling waters can be marketed for match fishing events.

Currently, the Club employs 20 full and part time staff. Overnight accommodation could provide a further 4 full time and 8 part time new jobs.

The network of hedges and ponds are valuable wildlife assets which provide a setting for the development of the recreation hub.

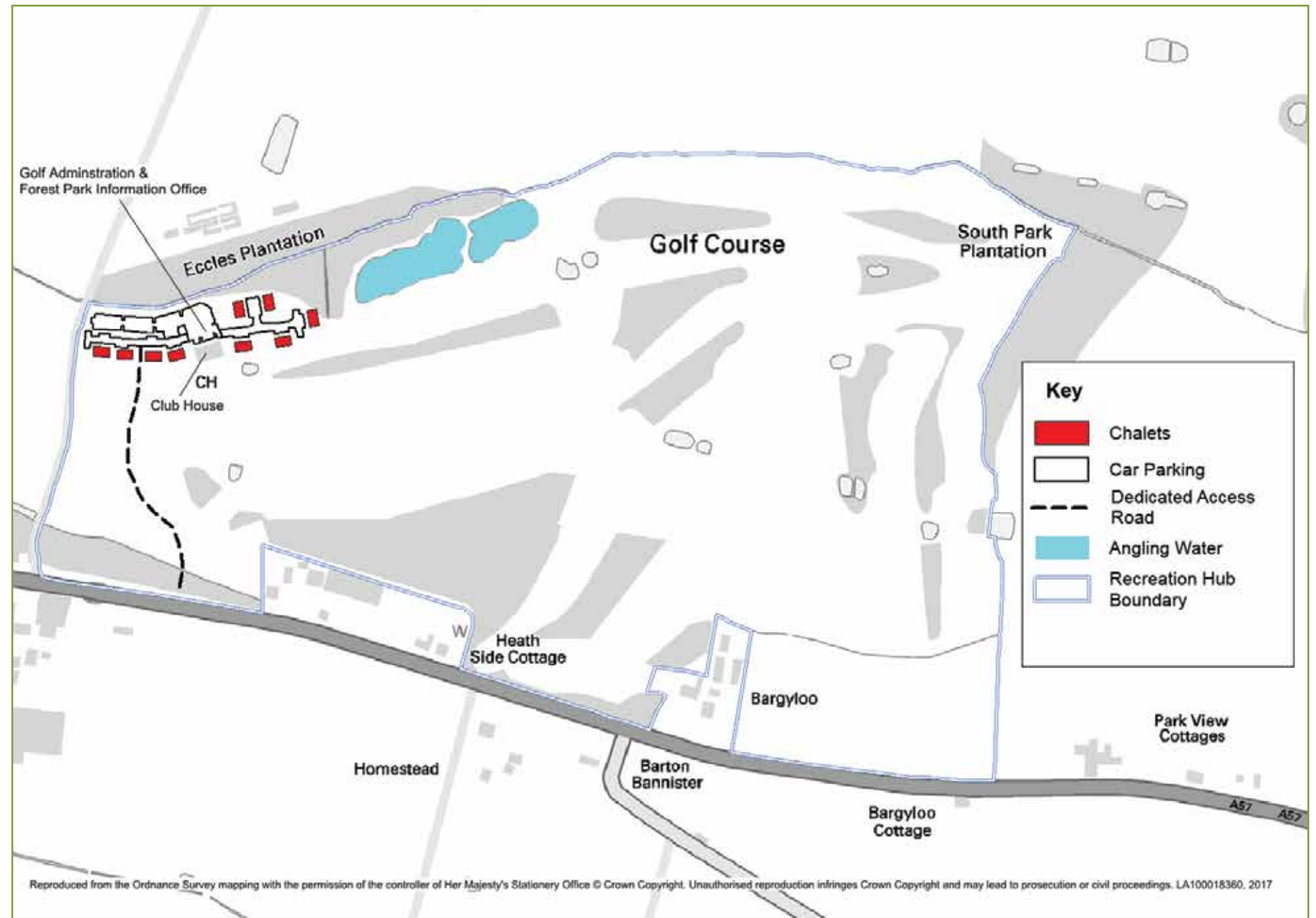
Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Indicative Profile

A Recreation Hub anchored on golf and angling but providing dining facilities and Forest Park information.

Infrastructure:

- Forest Centre, Walk start point;
- Dedicated Forest Park visitor car parking;
- 18 hole golf course - Open qualifying standard;
- Coarse Angling;
- Wedding venue;
- Restaurant;
- Clubhouse;
- Overnight accommodation (chalets);
- Dedicated Access Road; and
- Possible quad bike trail.

Figure 10: Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Recreation Hub (Illustrative Only)



Policy BFP INF6: Creating an Accessible Forest Park

The Forest Partnership will ensure that journeys to and within the Forest Park can be made by a range of transport modes. This will be achieved by:

Public Transport

- A network of “green” Forest Park bus stops that promote the Forest Park will be developed on key routes between St. Helens Town Centre, railway stations and Bold Forest Park.
- Signage at railway stations will be provided to provide Forest Park related information.
- Key walking and cycling routes from railway stations to the Forest Park will be protected and enhanced between:
 - Lea Green to Sutton Manor; and
 - St Helens Junction to Colliers Moss Common.

These Rail Station Link routes will be waymarked and landscaped (as appropriate) to create clear access routes and are shown on the Policies Map and in Figure 11.

Walking

- The following key walking routes connecting the recreational hubs within the Forest Park are shown on the Policies Map and in Figure 12, and will be protected and enhanced:

From:	To:	Public Right of Way Reference Number
Sutton Manor	Bold Heath	104,105,103,108
Sutton Manor	Brickfields	108, King George V Playing Fields
Sutton Manor	Clock Face Country Park	345,344,108
Bold Heath	Clock Face Country Park	102
Clock Face	Colliers Moss Common	308,311

- A network of secondary routes will increase the range of routes available for self-guided and guided recreation and health walks.

Figure 11: Railway Station Links

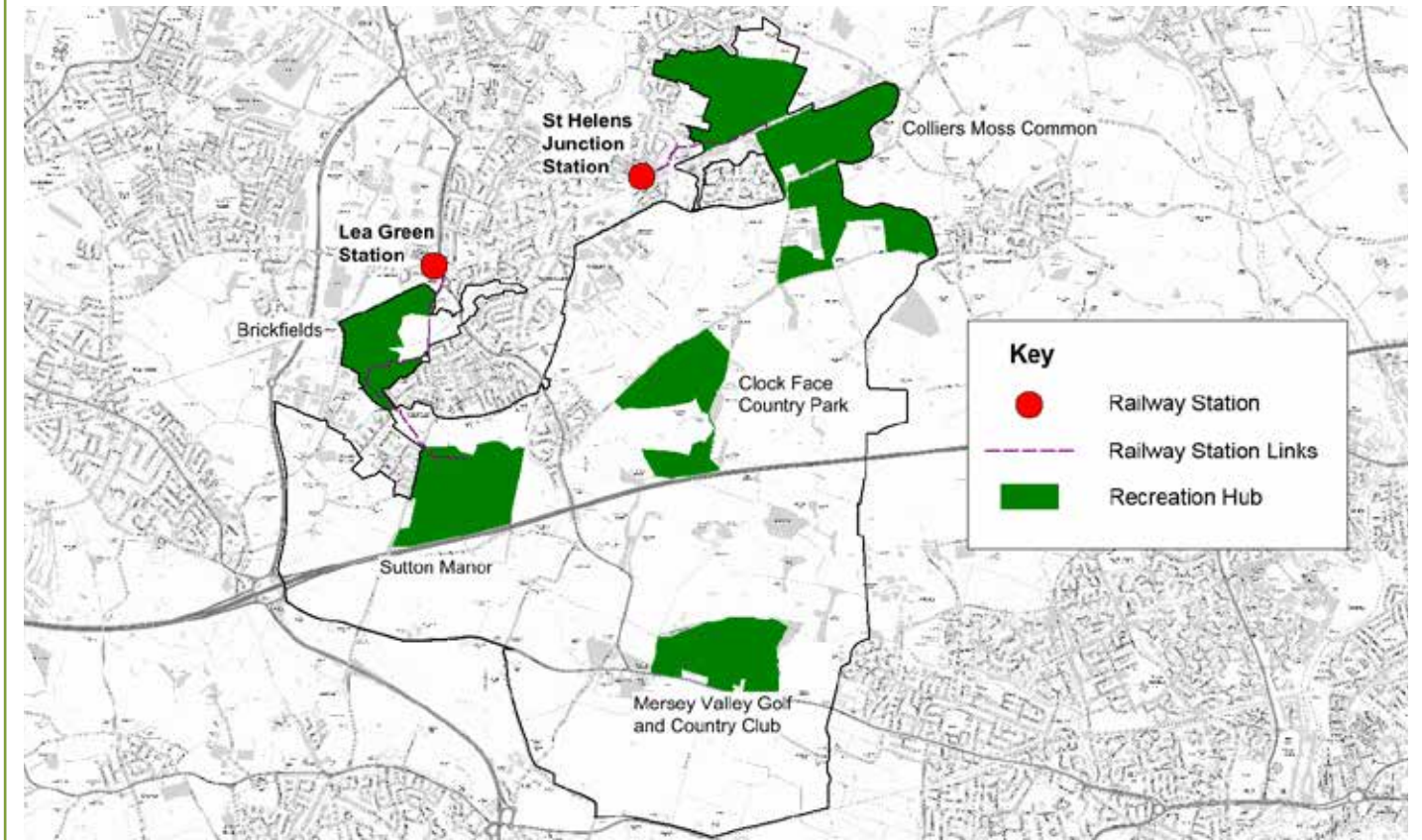
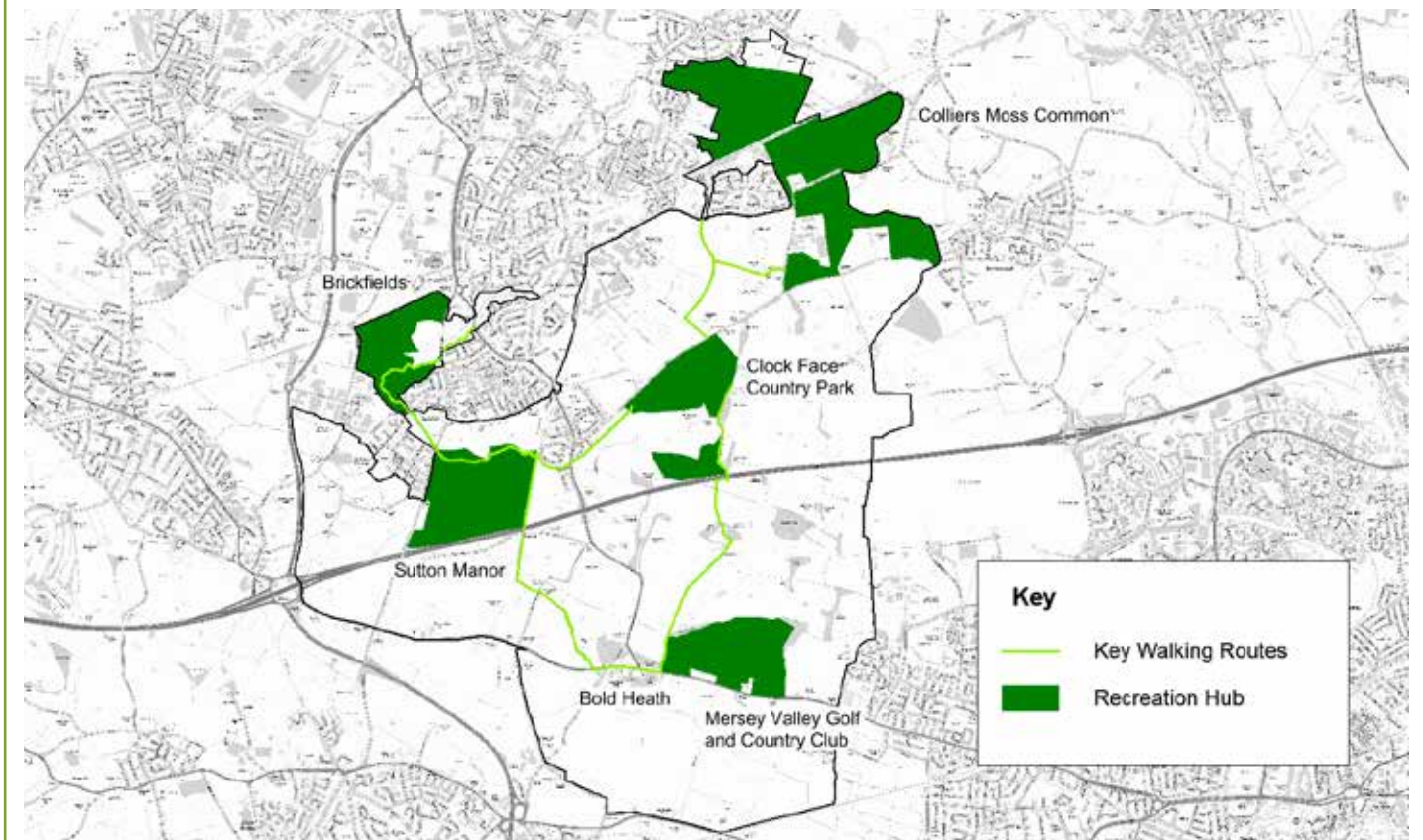


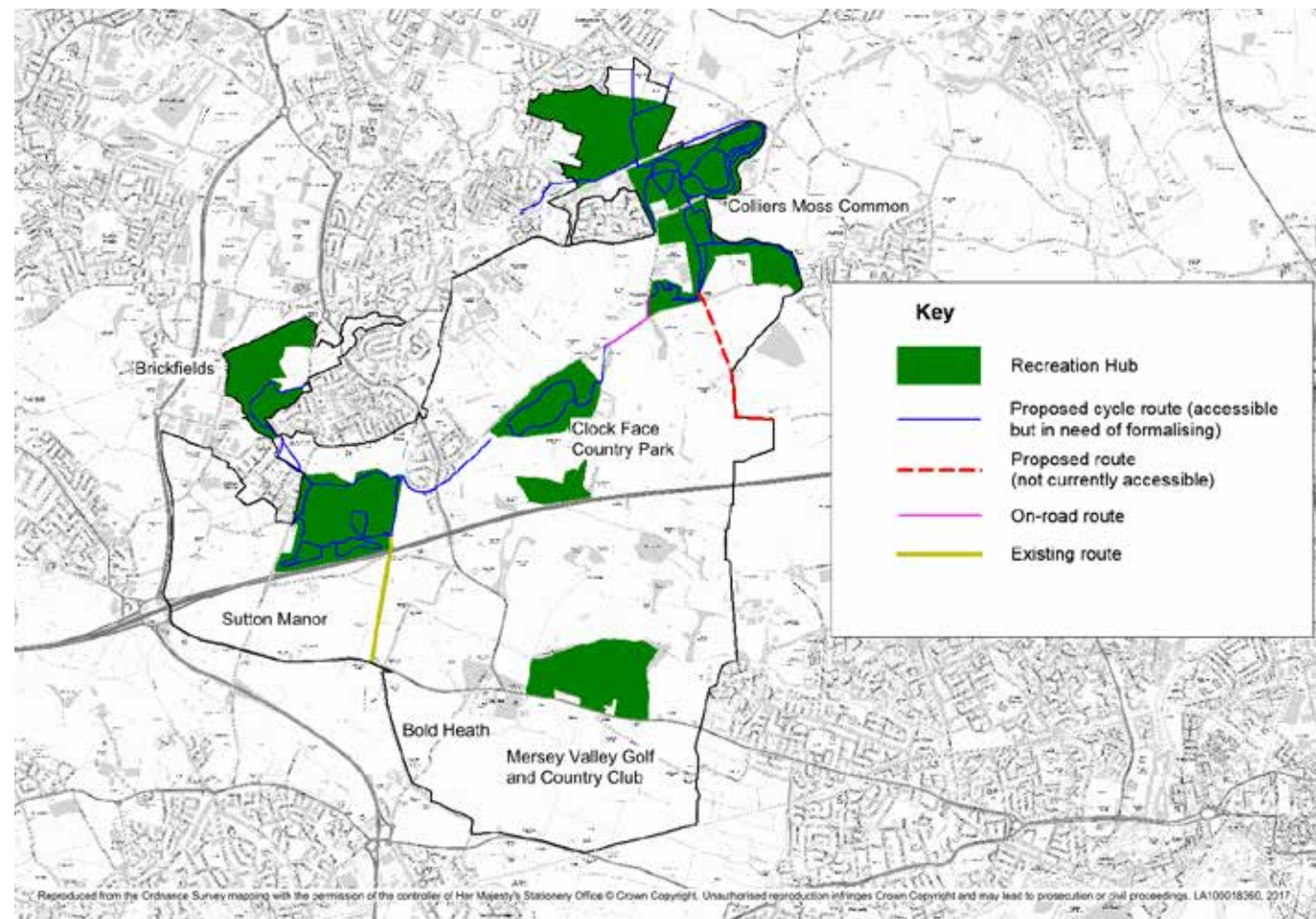
Figure 12: Key Walking Routes in Bold Forest Park



Cycling

- The cycling network, as indicated in Figure 13, will be protected, enhanced and extended to compliment the cycling hub at Clock Face Country Park and to provide a greater range of routes.
- Predominantly this will be of a standard to cater for the family market (Green Route Standard) but will link to more specialist sections which will cater for higher skill levels (Blue/Red) which may be developed on the recreational hubs or as an attraction on private farmland. Any future new or extended cycle routes should assess and address risks and benefits to users and landowners, including any potential conflicts between multiple different users and anti-social behaviour.

Figure 13: Existing and Proposed Forest Park Cycleway Network



Horse Riding

- The Council will work with partners such as landowners, equestrian businesses and the British Horse Society, to improve and expand the network of bridleways within the Forest Park with the aims of:
 - (i) Linking the Forest Park Recreation Hubs;
 - (ii) Linking to local equestrian businesses;
 - (iii) Creating a circular route within the Forest Park; and
 - (iv) Linking to bridleways outside the Forest Park to contribute to a wider city region facility.
- Figure 14 illustrates the Council's proposed bridleway network, including existing and proposed bridleways, and the Proposed Bridleways are shown on the Policies Map.
- The Council will encourage and work with landowners and other partners to create new permissive bridleways, assessing and addressing risks and benefits to users and landowners, including any potential conflicts between multiple different users and anti-social behaviour.
- Where negotiations with landowners for a permissive route have been exhausted and there is no reasonable alternative, the Council will consider the use of statutory creation orders.

Road Access

- As shown on the Policies Map and in Figure 15, the route from M62 Junction 7, following Warrington Road (A57) eastwards joining Jubits Lane, forms the preferred vehicular route for visitors to Bold Forest Park. The route will be signed from M62 Junction 7 and the corridor will be subject to a landscape enhancement programme.
- Car-parking provision within the Forest Park at Sutton Manor and Colliers Moss Common will be improved. Dedicated Forest Park Visitor Parking will be sought at Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club on the existing car park.
- New car parking to serve new Forest Park attractions and facilities must minimise the impact on the Green Belt and enhance the Forest Park through good design, landscaping and avoid intrusive lighting.

Objective Met: 3

Justification: Access to the Forest Park by public transport will help to reduce carbon emissions and potential traffic congestion.

Ensuring access to the Forest Park will help to encourage healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for exercise. The estimated health care cost of cardio-vascular disease in the UK in 2009 was estimated at £8.6 billion, which represents 6% of the National Health Service budget.³⁶ Natural England's Walking for Health Scheme³⁷ has been estimated to save £81 million from the NHS budget, with a cost benefit ratio of 7:1.

There are high levels of childhood obesity in St. Helens and particularly in the wards in and around Bold Forest Park (Parr, Bold, and Thatto Heath). The Forest Park is a major opportunity to develop a centre of excellence for natural approaches to health care through outdoor recreation.

With potential annual visitor numbers of around 306,000³⁸ the access from the M62 is a crucial route, which is influenced by, and in turn influences the location of the principal Forest Park Visitor Hub. The preferred route passes little housing and is easily navigated.

New routes in the Forest Park will predominantly be permissive in nature to allow landowners to retain overall control of their land. The Council will seek to utilise its statutory power to create bridleways only when it considers an essential need for a path, having had regard to:

- The extent to which the path would add to the convenience or enjoyment of a substantial section of the public or to be convenient of persons resident in the area; and
- The effect which creation of the path would have on the rights of persons interested in the land (account being taken of the rights of compensation).

Figure 14: Existing and Proposed Bridleway Network

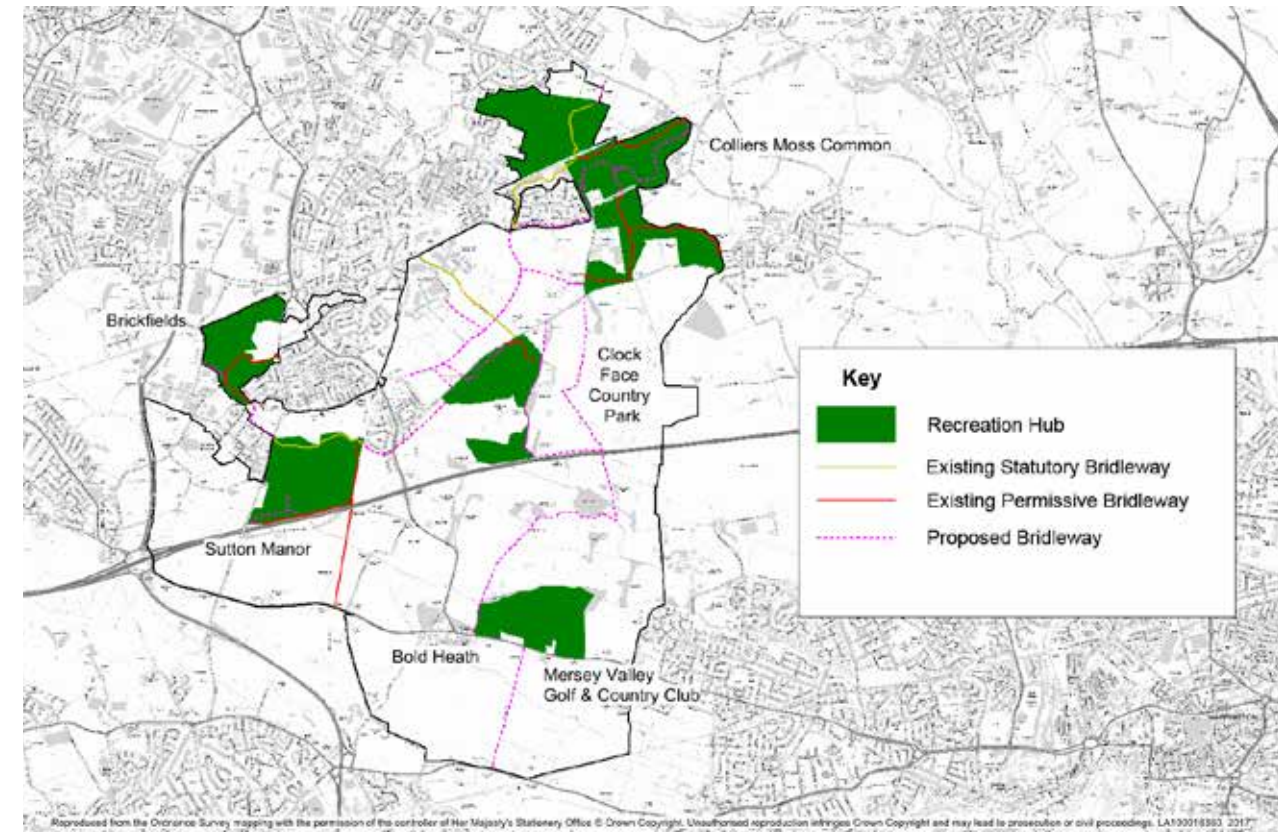
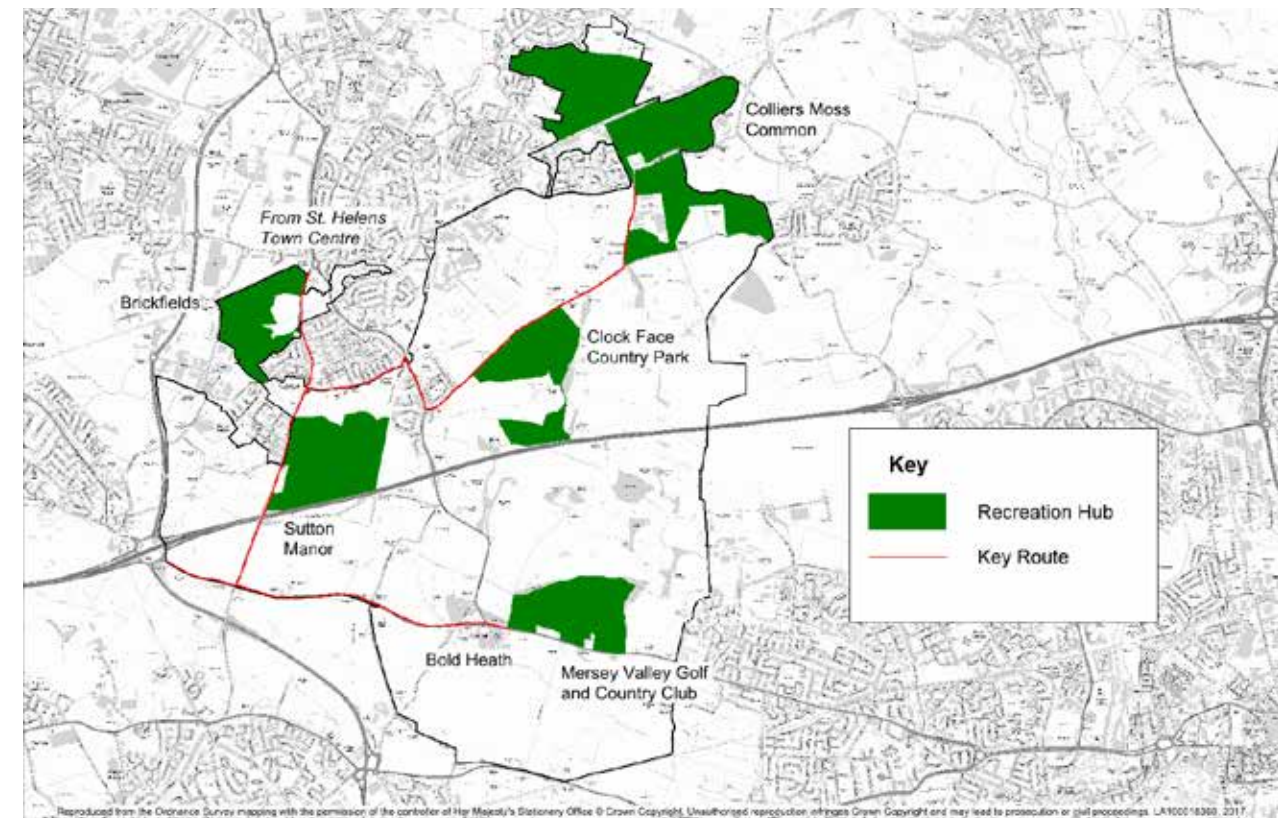


Figure 15: Key Roads into and within Bold Forest Park



(36) The Healthcare Costs of CVC, CHD and Stroke in the United Kingdom, British Heart Foundation, 2009, table 6.1,

(37) An estimate of the economic and health value and cost effectiveness of the expanded WHI scheme, Natural England, 2009 <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/95007>

(38) Economic Intelligence Gathering Report, URS, 2012, page 4

11.0 Meeting the Strategic Land-use Needs of the Borough

<p>Policy BFP SN1: Meeting the Development Needs of the Borough in a Manner Appropriate to the Forest Park</p> <p>Development must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Contribute positively to the development of Bold Forest Park; (b) Not result in the loss of critical infrastructure elements of the Forest Park or prevent their implementation; and (c) Housing or employment development should include measures to enhance connectivity between the urban area and the Forest Park. 	<p>Purpose: To ensure that the Bold Forest Park area contributes, as appropriate, to meeting the needs of the Borough.</p> <p>Justification: Research undertaken by the Council indicates a continuing long term need for new homes and employment land to meet the needs of St. Helens’ residents and businesses wanting to invest in the area. The next Local Plan will consider whether land needs to be removed from the Green Belt to meet development needs, and such a review is likely to include consideration of the Forest Park area. Should land within the Forest Park area be required to meet these needs, any development should not harm the development of the Forest Park but should instead contribute positively to it.</p> <p>Positive contributions include design, massing and layout of buildings that respects the landscape character of the Forest Park, increasing tree cover and helping to deliver the recreation hubs. Some development is positive as it contributes directly to the development of the components of the Bold Forest Park set out in this Plan, such as the Recreation Hubs.</p> <p>The critical infrastructure elements referred to in Policy BFP SN1 are the Recreation Hubs, Strategic Linking Routes (the Key Walking Routes, Cycle Way Network, Existing Bridleways and Proposed Bridleways) and Gateway Routes (Rail Station Links and Preferred Road Routes).</p> <p>Measures to improve connectivity between the urban area and the Forest Park include the creation of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways and the enhancement of them and their surroundings, the provision and improvement of public transport and associated facilities, and car route signage.</p>
<p>Objective Met: 1</p>	
<p>Key Delivery Item: Local Plan.</p>	

<p>Policy BFP SN2: Planning Obligations</p> <p>Development will be expected to contribute to the infrastructure of the Forest Park. Such infrastructure will include the provision of, maintenance or improvements to, footpaths, bridleways, cycleways and car parks, improvements to signage and interpretative material and mitigation and enhancement for landscape conservation and biodiversity.</p> <p>This will be undertaken either by development contributions or through a Community Infrastructure Levy in accordance with the statutory tests set out in paragraph 204 of the National Planning Policy Framework (or any subsequent revision to national guidance).</p> <p>Where appropriate, instead of on-site provision such as Public Open Space, a contribution to the Forest Park would be accepted instead. Where appropriate, this funding will be ring-fenced to be spent within the defined boundary of Bold Forest Park subject to the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended or any subsequent regulations in this regard).</p>	<p>Purpose: To generate funding to invest into the development of Bold Forest Park.</p> <p>Justification: Almost all development has some impact on the need for infrastructure, services and amenities or benefits from it. It is therefore only fair such development pays a share of the cost. It is also right that those who benefit financially when planning permission is granted should share some of that gain with the community which granted it, to help sustain the infrastructure that is needed to make development acceptable and sustainable³⁹.</p> <p>Developer contributions will be sought to mitigate the site-specific impacts of new development within or immediately adjacent to the Forest Park, subject to the financial viability of the proposed development.</p> <p>Developer contributions will only be sought when they meet the tests set out in paragraph 204 of the NPPF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; • directly related to the development; and • fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. <p>Developer contributions will also be subject to the criteria set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 122 and 123 (2010 as amended) or any successors.</p>
<p>Objectives Met: 3, 4</p>	
<p>Key Delivery Item: : Appropriate Planning Agreements.</p>	

(39) Community Infrastructure Levy - An Overview, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2011, page 5

12.0 Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

Policy BFP ENV1: Enhancing Landscape Character

St. Helens Council in partnership with The Mersey Forest and the Forestry Commission, will endeavour to enhance landscape character by increasing levels of tree cover up to 30% of the area of Bold Forest Park.

To meet this target, new development in the Forest Park will be expected to contribute to increasing tree cover through on-site landscaping or where appropriate, by contributions towards off-site provision within the AAP area. Implementation will be guided by St. Helens Landscape Character Assessment⁴⁰, taking in a range of issues including:

- Landscape amenity;
- Wildlife Habitat including farmland bird habitat;
- Land use;
- Background noise amelioration, and;
- Heritage.

This policy will interlink to Policy BFP ENV2 Ecological Network.

Objective Met: 5

Key Delivery Item: Prepare, implement and review a Landscape and Biodiversity Enhancement Plan.

Purpose: To ensure a high quality landscape within Bold Forest Park.

Justification: The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

The policy compliments Core Strategy Policy CQL 4 Heritage and Landscape which seeks to achieve the enhancement of St. Helens landscape character through a range of measures including ensuring that all new development respects the significance and distinctive quality of the landscape character.

A target of increasing tree cover either side of the M62 Motorway (30% to the north and 20% to the south) was set in the Mersey Forest Plan 2014 'More from Trees' to create an ecological network and to help ameliorate background noise. This also presents the opportunity to develop a strong wood fuel and timber industry economy helping to provide training and employment whilst assisting the transition to a low-carbon economy.

Justification continued:

Currently, woodland cover is around 13% of the area but much is concentrated on the reclaimed brownfield sites, leaving much of the Forest Park with very little tree cover and an incoherent character; effectively afforested raised mounds inset within a flat, open agricultural landscape. A planned network of woodland, hedgerows and copses will allow woodland cover to be expanded across the Forest Park, better integrating these sites into the landscape and develop a more cohesive landscape character for the area.

The location and scale of the enhancements to landscape character (i.e. increasing tree cover) should not prejudice the development of land that may be needed for housing or other forms of development. Additional on-site landscaping or a contribution in lieu of on-site provision should ensure any new development integrates into the Forest Park setting, for example by adopting garden village principles.

(40) St. Helens Landscape Character Assessment, LUC, 2006



Bluebells

Policy BFP ENV2: Ecological Network

St.Helens Council and its project partners will, within a woodland and farming framework, enhance biodiversity in Bold Forest Park by developing an ecological network which reduces habitat fragmentation and increases the resilience of wildlife in the Forest Park by:

1. Identifying and safeguarding sites of importance for biodiversity and geological conservation;
2. Identifying and safeguarding Priority Habitats including:
 - Unimproved grassland
 - Ponds and wetlands
 - Raised Mire
 - Hedgerows and Field Margins
 - Woodland
 - Lowland Heath
 - Brooks
3. Identifying and safeguarding Priority Species including:
 - Great Crested Newt
 - Myotis sp Bat
 - Bluebell
 - Brown Hare
 - Pippistrelle Bat
 - Grey Partridge
 - Corn Bunting
 - Water Vole
 - Lapwing
 - Brown Long-eared Bat
 - Dragonflies
 - Noctule Bat
 - Skylark
4. Increasing connectivity between priority habitats by creating corridors and stepping stones.

Sensitivity mapping will be employed to identify habitats at risk from visitor disturbance and opportunities to integrate the ecological network with recreational features such as cycleway, bridleway and footpath networks will be utilised to reduce habitat fragmentation.

Objective Met: 5

Key Delivery Item: Implementation of an ecological network for Bold Forest Park.

Purpose: To improve the resilience of biodiversity within Bold Forest Park.

Justification: Safeguarding biodiversity is a statutory duty placed on Local Authorities by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Increasing the recreational use of the area could lead to increased pressure on wildlife. The Government's White Paper⁴¹ on the natural environment indicates a move from no net loss of habitats to net gains through functioning ecosystems and ecological networks. The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 117 states that in order to minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies "should identify and map components of the local ecological network."

(41) The Natural Choice; Securing the value of nature, HM Government, 2011, Section 2, page 14

Policy BFP ENV3: Heritage

St. Helens Council will protect the heritage of Bold Forest Park by:

- Protecting designated and undesignated heritage assets, including listed buildings and Scheduled Monuments, archaeological sites and buildings and structures of local interest, from development which would harm such assets;
- Ensuring that all new developments respect the significance and, where possible, enhance the distinctiveness of the built and historic environment of the Forest Park area in their location, design and layout; and
- Working with appropriate partners and landowners to enhance and promote the heritage of the Forest Park.

Objective Met: 4

Key Delivery Items:

- Conserve listed gate piers at Old Bold Hall - subject to landowner's consent;
- Under archaeological supervision, excavate the scheduled moat under listed bridge at Old Bold Hall to improve the presentation of the site and to increase public understanding - subject to statutory written Scheduled Monument Consent and the consent of the landowner;
- Divert access road to Moat House Farm away from the scheduled moat - subject to landowner's consent;
- Create Bold Forest Park Heritage Trail - including way-marking, interpretation and displays of artefacts at a range of venues in the Forest Park;
- Working with The Heart of Glass project, create a web-based digital recreation of Bold Forest Park at key periods in time i.e. Medieval, Industrial Revolution & Mining, WW1 & 2; and
- Development of a heritage phone application using the Merseyside Heritage Environment Record information.

Purpose: To protect and promote the heritage of Bold Forest Park.

Justification: Community consultation undertaken by URS⁴² indicated that the community values local heritage and holds a desire to see it protected and promoted. The National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 126 states that Local Planning Authorities should set out a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.

Figure 16: Heritage Trail Route

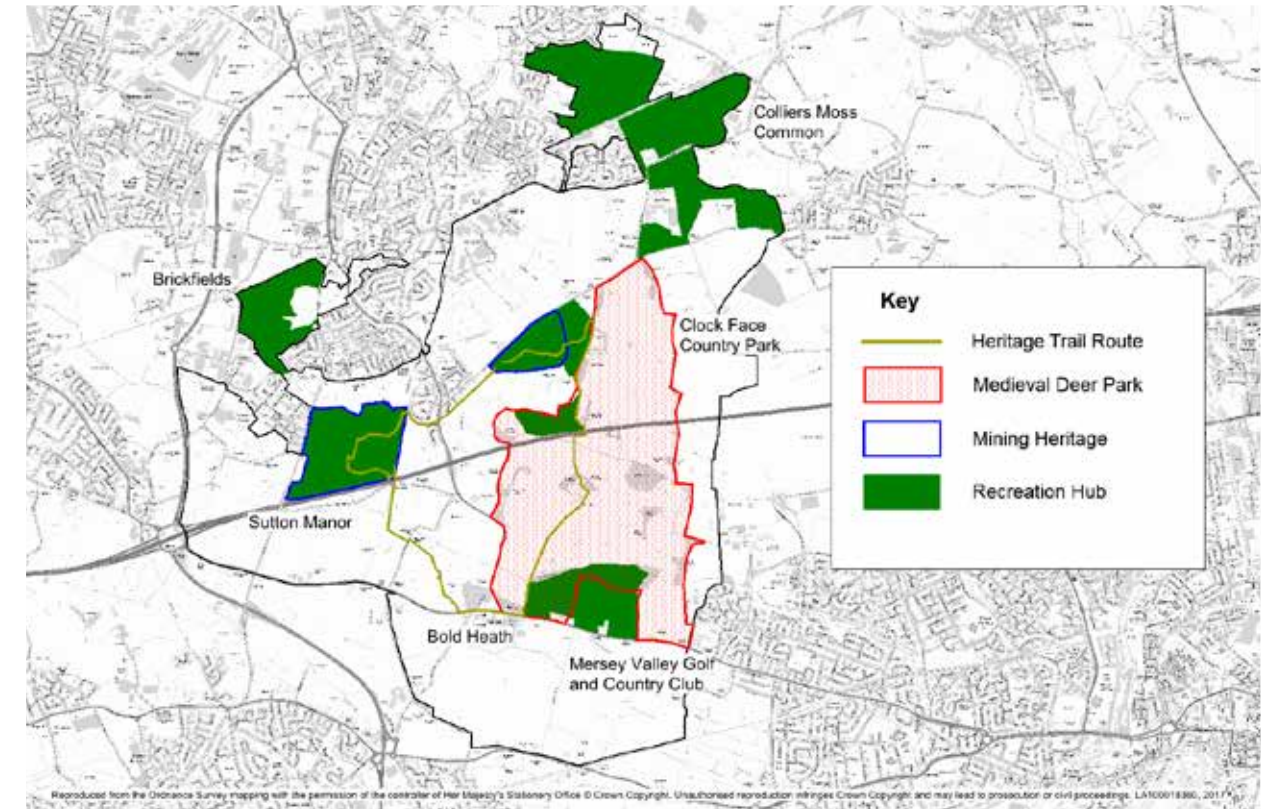
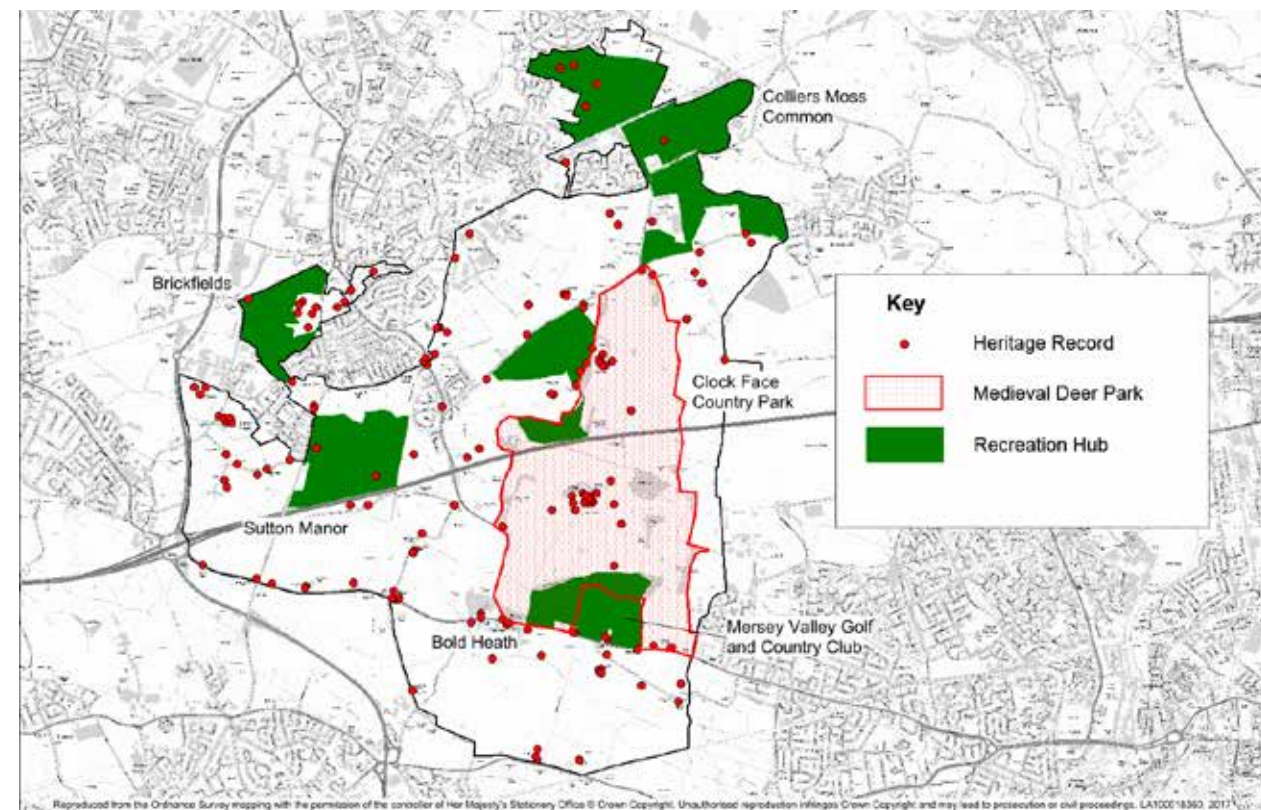


Figure 17: Historic Environment Records in Bold Forest Park



(42) Bold Forest Park - Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, page 5

Policy BFP ENV4: Problem Sites

Where the condition or use of a site is causing serious and intractable environmental harm which is significantly detrimental to the aims of the Bold Forest Park, the Council will give favourable consideration to proposals for small scale development which could alleviate such problems, provided that any potential harm to the Green Belt would be clearly outweighed by other considerations amounting to very special circumstances.

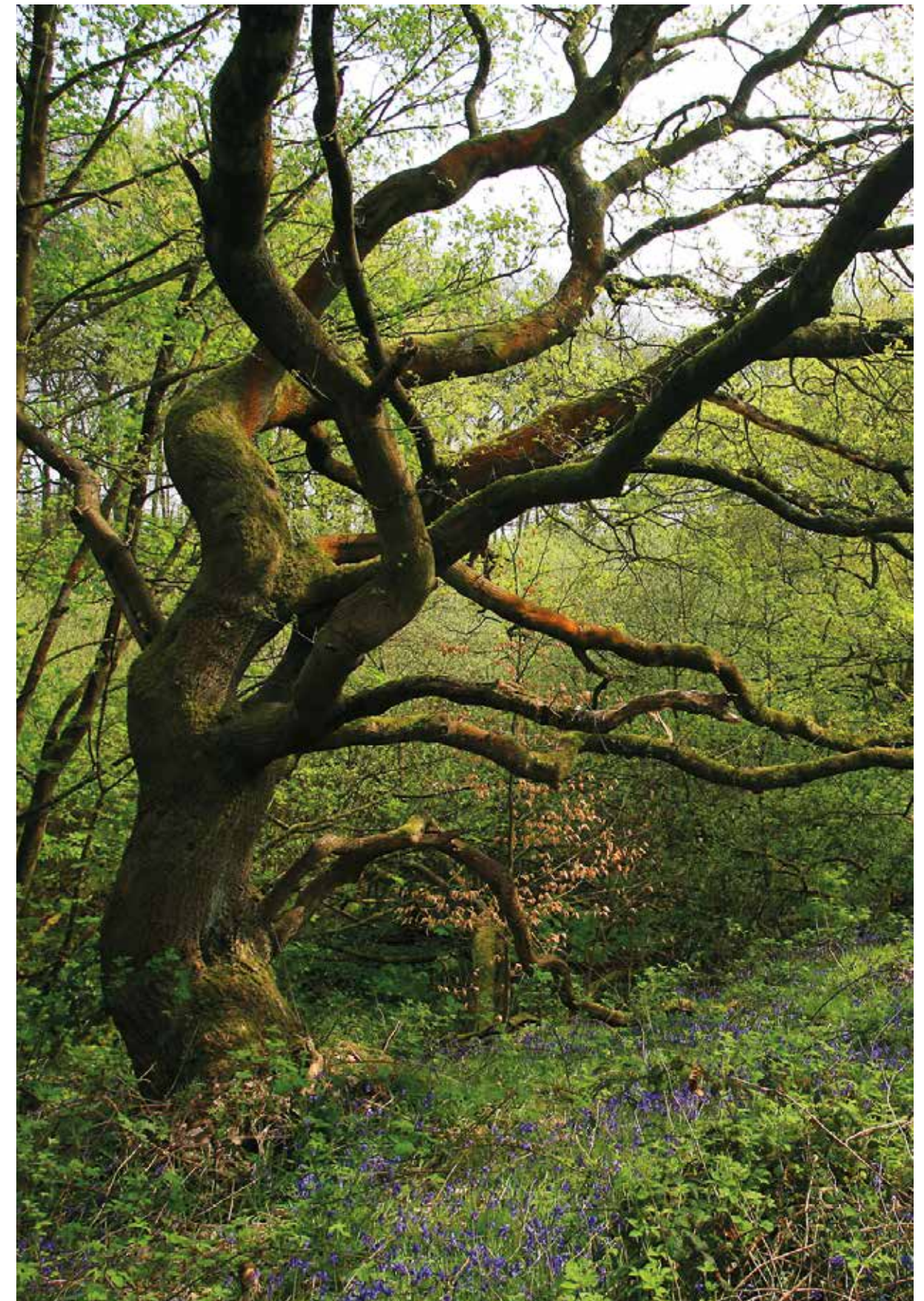
Objective Met: 1

Purpose: To utilise development as a solution to intractable problem sites.

Justification: The National Planning Policy Framework states that one of the principles of land-use planning should be “a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places where people live”⁴³. Sites such as derelict brownfield land or greenfield land at risk of falling into dangerous dereliction can pose obstacles to the achievement of the overall aims of the Forest Park. For example, the former scrapyards and builders yards on land to the east of Hoghton Road, Sutton is visually unsightly and very unwelcoming. The track alongside this land is a key route into the Forest Park from St Helens Junction railway station. Creation of a pleasant, safe and welcoming route from the station into the park is fundamental to developing sustainable visitor transport. These derelict sites are a significant barrier to creating such a route.

If, after all reasonable attempts by landowners to prevent such problems occurring and to find solutions have demonstrably been exhausted, and there is no available alternative funding or recourse in statutory regulation and enforcement, then limited, small scale development may provide an appropriate mechanism to find a solution and achieve sustainable development. Where such sites are located within the Green Belt, it should be clearly demonstrated that such a solution is justified within the context of relevant national and local planning policy.

The raison-d’etre of the Wasteland to Woodland project and the Forest Park was, and is, the economic necessity to regenerate sites which deter inward investment into St. Helens. The principle remains pertinent at the local level, in the development of Bold Forest Park.



(43) National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 17, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

13.0 Engaging the Community

Policy BFP COM1: Community Network Forum

The Council and its partners will facilitate a network of groups (including Parish Councils) and individuals in and around the Forest Park, who wish to work together to develop community led initiatives which will further the aims of the Forest Park and meet the needs of the community. The network will act an umbrella for community interest groups such as Friends Groups, Special Interest Groups, Special Needs Group, Uniform Groups and Sporting Groups.

Objective Met: 4

Key Delivery Item: Development of a Bold Forest Park Community Action Plan to feed into the Area Action Plan delivery.

Purpose: To ensure a high quality landscape within Bold Forest Park.

Justification: Community Consultation⁴⁴ confirmed that the community was supportive of Bold Forest Park being developed. In the long-term, community need and opinion must underpin the development of Bold Forest Park. A Community Network will provide the vehicle for the community to organise into a cohesive unit that can help to drive the Forest Park initiative forward.

A key part of the vision for St. Helens set out in the St.Helens Plan⁴⁵ states that the Council wishes to see all partners “consult, engage and empower communities”.

As part of the Government’s Frontrunner, Neighbourhood Planning Scheme, the Forest Park Area Action Plan, although a different mechanism, has actively sought to embrace Neighbourhood Planning principles. As such, community empowerment is a fundamental aim of this plan.

Policy BFP COM2 : Supporting Community Hubs

St.Helens Council and its project partners will support the local community to maintain and develop effective community hubs across the Forest Park areas such as Sports Clubs, Social Clubs Community Groups and Activity Centres to provide positive alternatives to anti-social behaviour.

Objective Met: 4

Key Delivery Items:

- Cycling Hub established at Bold Miners Institute; and
- Working with Safer St.Helens Neighbourhood Action Groups.

Purpose: To ensure the community hubs within Bold Forest Park provide cohesive focal points, which maximise the positive community use and enjoyment of the Forest Park and help to reduce and displace anti-social behaviour.

Justification: Anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, illegal off-road motorcycling, dog fouling and deliberate setting of grass fires all represent a threat to the success of the Forest Park as a community asset and as a visitor destination.

Safer St.Helens’ Anti-social Behaviour Strategy⁴⁶ includes environmental damage such as criminal damage/vandalism, graffiti and dog fouling as examples of anti-social behaviour which will be targeted for action.

(44) Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report, URS, 2012, page 6

(45) St.Helens Plan 2015-18, Chapter 2

(46) Safer St.Helens Anti-social Behaviour Strategy, St.Helens Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, page 4

Policy BFP COM3: Bold Forest Park as a Flagship for Delivery of Community Health Improvement

St.Helens Council and its partners will utilise the Bold Forest Park initiative to provide a cost effective resource for natural prescriptions to a range of health problems including obesity, cardio-vascular disease and mental health.

Objective Met: 4

Key Delivery Items:

- Establish the Forest Park as a venue for Health Walks, Cycling for Health and Green Gym;
- Organise various theme walks;
- Promote healthy lifestyle at surrounding primary schools by promoting Bold Forest Park;
- Promote healthy food at the food retailers in the Bold Forest Park area;
- Ensure clean and safe sites as a setting for healthy recreation; and
- Establish a cycling hub on Clock Face Country Park.

Purpose: To ensure Bold Forest Park provides opportunities for community health improvement.

Justification: Nationally, 23% of adults are obese, 61.3% are either overweight or obese. For children, 23.1% of 4-5 year olds and 33.3% of 10-11 year olds are overweight or obese. It has been estimated that the costs of obesity to society and the economy were almost £16bn in 2007(over 1% of GDP) with a potential rise to just under £50bn by 2050 if rates of obesity remain unchecked⁴⁷. In St. Helens 38% of the adult population is overweight and 29% are obese. For children, 25.9% of 4-5 year olds and 36.7% of 10-11 year olds are overweight or obese.

Across the Mersey Belt, all nine Joint Strategic Needs Assessments prioritise:

- Cardio-vascular disease;
- 7/9 prioritise healthy weight; and
- 6/9 Health and Wellbeing Boards prioritise mental health and wellbeing⁴⁸.

In St. Helens, priorities for action include Improving the health and wellbeing of young children and young people and to encourage participation in sport, physical activity and the arts to promote physical and mental wellbeing⁴⁹.



(47) Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England, HM Government, pages 10,17

(48) Natural Health Service Consortium Business Plan, NW Investment Forum, 2013, page 10

(49) St.Helens Plan 2015-18, page 9

Part 3: *Implementation*



14.0 Partnership

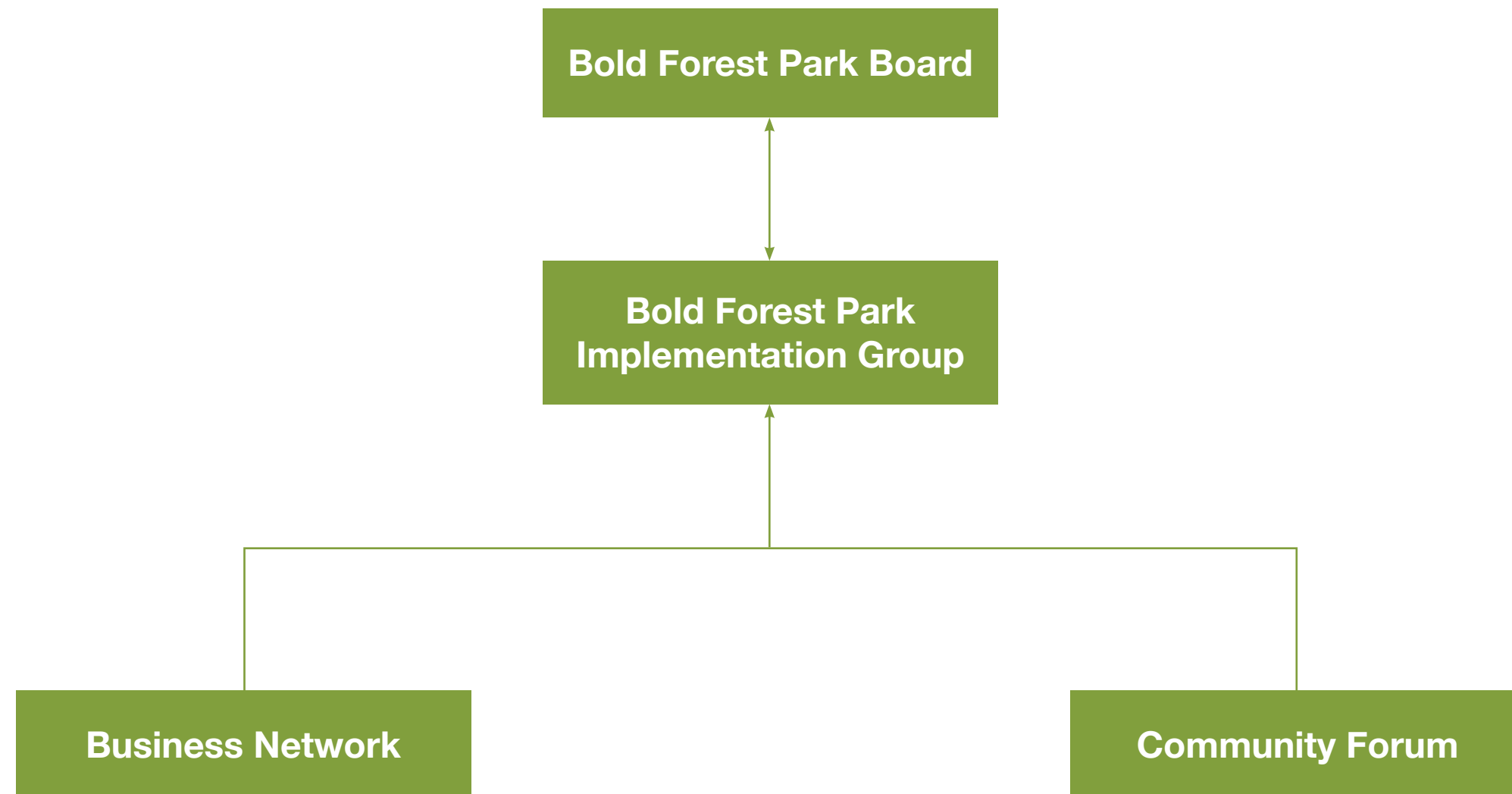
14.1 The development of Bold Forest Park will be a product of a wide partnership of organisations collaborating within the common vision of the Forest Park to provide visitor attractions and services which will bring inward investment via the visitor economy and support initiatives which provide community benefits.

Key Partners:

- St.Helens Council;
- The Mersey Forest;
- Bold Parish Council;
- Forestry Commission;
- Groundwork;
- British Horse Society;
- Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club;
- Cory Environmental;
- Local Businesses;
- Local Community groups and individuals.



15.0 Management Structures



15.1 Bold Forest Park Board

Remit: To take a strategic overview of the development of Bold Forest Park and provide strategic decision making.

Representation:

Relevant Portfolio Holder (Chair)	St.Helens Council
Ward Councillor x2	St.Helens Council
Parish Councillor x1	Bold Parish Council
Director	The Mersey Forest
Relevant Director or Assistant Director	St.Helens Council

15.2 Bold Forest Park Implementation Group

Remit: To support the Board and to be responsible for the development of the Forest Park.

Representation:

The Mersey Forest
St.Helens Council Development Plans
St.Helens Council Public Health
St.Helens Council Parks, Landscape
St.Helens Council Strategic Communications Team
St.Helens Council Economic Development
Forestry Commission
Cory Environmental
Groundwork
British Horse Society Merseyside
The Woollybacks Mountain Bike Club
Bold Parish Council

15.3 Bold Forest Park Community Forum

Remit:

- To provide a platform for groups and individuals to work together within the Forest Park vision and to develop initiatives which provide community benefit;
- To provide an ongoing conduit for community consultation on the development of the Forest Park.

Representation:

Facilitated by Bold Parish Council	
Open to all community groups in and around Bold Forest Park	
Neighbouring Parish Councils	Burtonwood & West brook, Gt. Sankey, Penketh, Cuerdley, Cronton, Rainhill
Neighbouring Ward Councillors	Parr, Thatto Heath, Sutton, Town Centre
Other stakeholders with an interest in the Forest Park Area	

15.4 Bold Forest Park Business Network

Remit:

- To provide a platform for local businesses to work together to develop the attractions and services needed for a successful visitor destination; and
- To provide a forum from which local businesses can assist in the development of the Forest Park economy through new initiatives.

Representation:

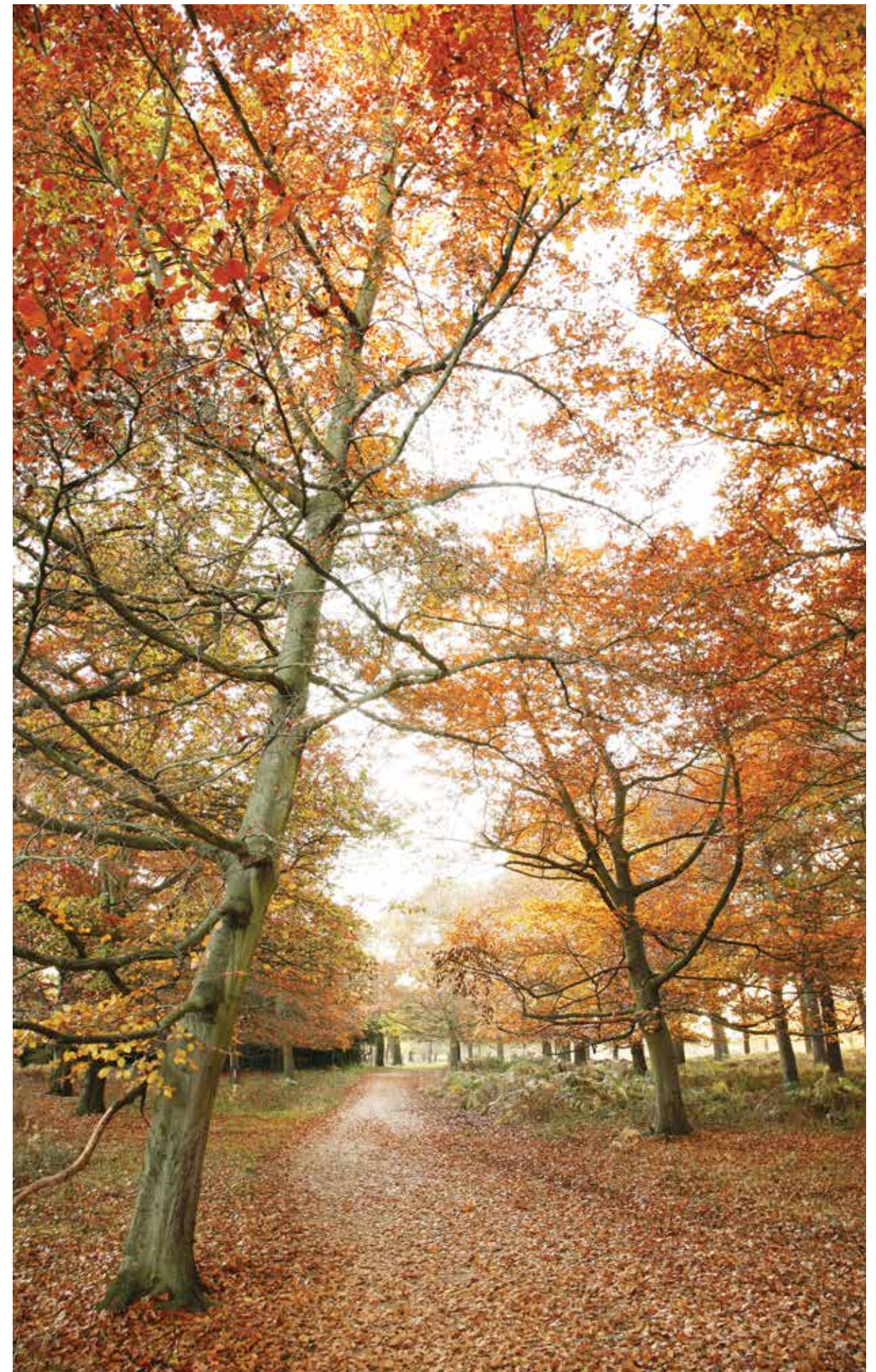
Open to all local businesses
St.Helens Council Economic Development Team
Mersey Rural Leader

15.5 Linkages

It is essential to ensure each part of the structure does not operate in isolation. Bold Parish Council's remit is to feed community opinion to the Implementation Group. Council officers assigned to support the Board, along with the Mersey Forest, will ensure an adequate flow of information between the Implementation Group and the Board.

16.0 Delivery Plan and Monitoring Framework (2017-2023)

- 16.1 The following delivery plan is designed to establish the elements necessary to shape the Forest Park and provide the necessary platform for future growth through rural entrepreneurial activity and community activity. The Bold Forest Park Implementation Group will be responsible for translating the delivery plan into work programmes and seek funding for implementation. The plan will be kept under regular review by the Implementation Group and will include new projects proposed by the Business and Community Networks, as they arise.
- 16.2 Each project which comes from the Action Plan's Delivery Plan must use Community Impact Assessment at the project development stage to help ensure that the community's needs are identified and balanced with the economic and environmental needs of the area.



Theme 1: Developing the Forest Park Economy

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Business Support and Expansion	Business Support	Employ business support officer to coordinate issues of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Policy & Development Control issues • Funding • Business Network • Business Improvement District Status Potential 	St.Helens Council Economic Development team	2017-2023	£50,000	Local Economic Partnership, St Helens Chamber, Business Growth Fund, Liverpool City Region Single Investment Fund (SIF)
	Economic Connectivity Package	Provision of cycle stands at businesses in BFP with particular focus on Bold Heath and Clock Face	St.Helens Council Transport Planning team/ Merseytravel		£61,000	Merseytravel, Cycle-recycle, Active Travel Assistance,
		Travel planning for businesses and visitors				
	Forest Park Perceptions Package	Forest Park Marketing Plan	St.Helens Council Economic Development, Transport Planning and Marketing teams, The Mersey Forest, Local Business network		£56,000	Merseytravel, Sport England, British Horse Society, St.Helens Council Health Improvement Team, Heritage Lottery
		TV Screen promotional points				
		“E-info” hubs at key locations				
		Web development				
		Leaflets				
		Site Interpretation				
Walking, riding, cycling routes guides						

Theme 1: Developing the Forest Park Economy Continued

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Business Support and Expansion Cont'd	Developing the Equestrian Sector	Equestrian Development Strategy	British Horse Society, Local Equestrian Sector, Mersey Leader	2019	£6,000	British Horse Society, Sport England
		TREC Delivery Plan	British Horse Society, Local Equestrian Sector, Mersey Leader	2019	£10,000	British Horse Society, Sport England, Mersey Leader
	Sustainable Timber Economy - Option Appraisal	A review of options and opportunities to develop a sustainable timber economy in Bold Forest Park	The Mersey Forest	2018	£10,000	The Mersey Forest

Theme 2: Developing the Infrastructure

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Visitor Gateway Development	Develop new visitor hubs	New Visitor hubs at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutton Manor; • Clock Face Country Park • Colliers Moss Common 	Forestry Commission, St.Helens Council Planning, Parks and Landscape, Transport Planning and Public Health teams, The Mersey Forest	2017- 2021	£850,000	Local S.106, Forestry Commission, Commercial Franchising
	Expand and support existing visitor hubs	• Mersey Valley Golf & Country Club	Mersey Valley Golf & Country Club, St.Helens Council Planning team	2018 ongoing	£300,000	Mersey Valley Golf & Country Club
		• Harefields Alpaca Centre	Harefields Alpaca Centre, Mersey Leader	2018	£15,000	Harefields Alpaca Centre, Mersey Leader
Access and Information Plan	Develop a network of Forest Park bus stops on key routes	Forest Park Branded Bus Stops	St.Helens Council Transport Planning team	2018	£60,000	Merseytravel
	Install Forest Park Information Points at railway stations and way - mark routes into the Forest Park	Map - Based information at Lea Green and St Helens Junction Stations.	Merseytravel, St.Helens Council Transport Planning and Highways teams	2018	£15,000	Merseytravel
	Improve Community Access	Access point improvement programme; standardised furniture, information and signage.	Forestry Commission, Community Forest Trust, St.Helens Council Grounds Maintenance, Cory Environmental, Groundwork	2018-2019	£50,000	National Lottery

Theme 2 : Developing the Infrastructure Continued

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Access and Information	Develop Strategic routes to link Recreation hubs and other key sites within the Forest Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold Heath to Sutton Manor • Sutton Manor to Clock Face Country Park • Clock Face Country Park to Colliers Moss • Mersey Valley Golf Club to Sutton Manor 	Groundwork, St.Helens Council Highways team	2017-19	£60,000	National Lottery; Health Lottery, Liverpool City Region Single Investment Fund (SIF)

Theme 3: Engaging the Community

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Community Empowerment	Community Support Officer	Employ a community support officer to develop and deliver a community action plan in the Forest Park.	St.Helens Council, Groundwork, Mersey Forest	2017-2022	£125,000	National Lottery
	Community Forum	Establish a Community Forum to focus activities, aspirations and opinions	Bold Parish Council, Groundwork	2017		
	Community Site Stewardship	Develop and empower local groups to participate in site enhancement	The Mersey Forest, Groundwork, Forestry Commission	2017 ongoing		
Pathways to Employment	Establish a land-based training scheme	A land-based training scheme to deliver training through infrastructure development and management	Groundwork, St.Helens Council Economic Development team	2018	£250,000	National Lottery, Department of Work and Pensions, St Helens College
Health Improvement	Healthy Walking Programme	Forest Park Walks leaflet	The Mersey Forest, Groundwork, St.Helens Council Health Improvement team,	2018	£2,000	The Big Lottery, Clinical Commissioning Group
	Guided Walk Programme	Programme aimed at differing abilities and interests		Annual	£10,000	
	Guided Cycle Programme			Annual		
	Green Gym	Develop a Green Gym Programme	The Mersey Forest, Groundwork,	Annual	£10,000	
Nature for Health	Forest Schools	Schools Engagement programme	The Mersey Forest	2017	£70,000	The Mersey Forest

Theme 4: Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Landscape Enhancement	Increase tree cover	Programme of targeted tree planting to increase tree cover to 30% north of M62 and 20% south of M62,	The Mersey Forest	2017-2022	£250,000	Countryside Stewardship, Natural England, SITA
Biodiversity	Develop and implement an Ecological Network	Design and develop a network linking habitats within the Forest Park and the wider landscape	St.Helens Council Planning team, The Mersey Forest, Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service	2017-2018 planning phase 2017 ongoing -implementation phase		Staff Time
Heritage	Protect Scheduled Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve listed gate piers at the Old Bold Hall - subject to landowner's consent; 	St.Helens Council Conservation Officer	2020	£5,000	Heritage Lottery
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under archaeological supervision, excavate the scheduled moat under listed bridge at Old Bold Hall to make the monument more legible - subject to landowner's consent; 	St.Helens Council Conservation Officer/ Historic England	2020	£40,000	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Divert access road to Moat House Farm away from the scheduled moat - subject to landowner's consent; 	Historic England	2019	£8,000	

Theme 4: Safeguarding and Enhancing the Environment Cont'd

Theme	Action	Description	Lead	Timescale	Estimated Cost	Possible Funding Source
Heritage	Forest Park Heritage Trail	Walking trail interpreting the story of the Bold Area	St.Helens Council Planning team, Rights of Way Officer and Forestry Commission	2019	£7,000	Heritage Lottery, Heart of Glass
	Digital Landscape recreation	Working with The Heart of Glass project, create a web-based digital recreation of Bold Forest Park at key periods in time i.e. Medieval, Industrial Revolution & Mining, WW1&2; Linked to the Heritage Trail, development of a heritage phone application using the Merseyside Heritage Environment Record information.	Heart of Glass, St.Helens Council Planning team and The Mersey Forest	2017-2020	£75,000	
Arts in the Forest	Programme of community arts engagement	Utilising the Forest Park as a venue for a range of community projects such as outdoor theatre, woodland sculpture and heritage-based art.		2018-20	£20,000	
Resolving Problem Sites	Re-development of derelict builders yard and former scrap yard, east of Hoghton Road, Sutton	Promote pre-application discussions seeking appropriate development of the site.	St.Helens Council Planning Team	2018		Staff Time

Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Monitoring Framework

The Monitoring Framework below expands on the AAP policies and delivery plan by outlining how the performance of the AAP will be monitored. The Implementation Group will be responsible for ensuring that the necessary information is collated.

No.	Indicator	AAP Policy	Target	Frequency	Delivery Plan Items	Source
1.	Visitors to the Bold Forest Park a) Overall visitor numbers b) Numbers of visitors from Thatto Heath, Parr, Bold and Sutton wards	BFP1: A Sustainable Forest Park BFP ECON1: Supporting Economic Growth BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy BFP INF2: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub BFP INF3: Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub/Cycling Centre BFP INF4: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub Development Opportunity Site BFP INF5: Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Recreation Hub BFP INF6: Creating an Accessible Forest Park BFP COM3: Bold Forest Park as a Flagship Resource for Community Health Improvement	a) Upward trend on baseline b) Upward trend on baseline	3 years	Theme 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support and Expansion Theme 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Gateway Development • Access & Information Plan 	Refresh of existing visitor survey undertaken by URS in 2012

No.	Indicator	AAP Policy	Target	Frequency	Delivery Plan Items	Source
2.	Customer Satisfaction Rates	<p>BFP1: A Sustainable Forest Park</p> <p>BFP ECON1: Supporting Economic Growth</p> <p>BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy</p> <p>BFP INF2: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub</p> <p>BFP INF3: Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub/Cycling Centre</p> <p>BFP INF4: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub Development Opportunity Site</p> <p>BFP INF5: Mersey Valley Golf and Country Club Recreation Hub</p>	Upward trend on baseline	3 years	<p>Theme 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support and Expansion <p>Theme 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Gateway Development • Access & Information Plan 	Refresh of existing visitor survey undertaken by URS in 2012
3.	Percentage of journeys made to Bold Forest Park by car	<p>BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy</p> <p>BFP INF6: Creating an Accessible Forest Park</p>	Decrease on baseline	3 years	<p>Theme 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support and Expansion <p>Theme 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor Gateway Development • Access & Information Plan 	Refresh of existing visitor survey undertaken by URS in 2012
4.	<p>Environmental enhancements in Bold Forest Park</p> <p>a) Percentage of tree cover in Bold Forest Park</p> <p>b) Changes in Priority Habitats in the Forest Park</p> <p>c) Number of Lapwing</p>	<p>BFP1: A Sustainable Forest Park</p> <p>BFP ENV1: Enhancing Landscape Character</p> <p>BFP ENV2: Ecological Network</p>	<p>a) Increase cover to 20% south of M62, 30% north of M62</p> <p>b) Minimum no net loss</p> <p>c) Monitoring of population trend</p>	<p>a) 1 year</p> <p>b) 3 years</p> <p>c) 3 years</p>	<p>Theme 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Enhancement • Biodiversity 	Mersey Forest, MEAS (as part of LCR Ecological Framework monitoring), St.Helens Council Planning team

No.	Indicator	AAP Policy	Target	Frequency	Delivery Plan Items	Source
5.	Protection of the Historic Environment in Bold Forest Park a) The number of Scheduled Monuments at risk in Bold Forest Park a) The number of listed buildings in Bold Forest Park	BFP ENV3: Heritage	a) Zero b) No loss	1 year	Theme 4: • Heritage	St.Helens Council Conservation Officer, Historic England
6.	The number and amount of developer contributions to the infrastructure of the Forest Park	BFP SN2: Planning Obligations	Increase on baseline	1 year	Theme 2: • Access & Information Plan Theme 4: • Landscape Enhancement • Biodiversity • Heritage	St.Helens Council Planning team
7.	Increasing employment opportunities in Bold Forest Park a) Numbers of people employed in Bold Forest Park b) Percentage increase/decrease of VAT registered businesses in Bold Forest Park c) The number of development proposals resulting in employment floorspace generation	BFP ECON1: Supporting Economic Growth BFP ECON2: Addressing Worklessness BFP SN1: Meeting the Needs of the Borough in a Manner Appropriate to the Forest Park	a) Upward trend from baseline b) Upward trend from baseline c) Upward trend from baseline	1 Year	Theme 1: • Business Support and Expansion Theme 3 • Pathways to Employment	St.Helens Council Planning and Economic Development teams
8.	Increasing accessibility in Bold Forest Park a) Length of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways a) Length of accessible footpaths (DDA compliant*)	BFP INF6: Creating an Accessible Forest Park	a) Increase on baseline b) Increase on baseline	3 years	Theme 1: • Business Support and Expansion Theme 2: • Access & Information Plan	St.Helens Council Development Plans, Planning (Development Control) and Highways teams

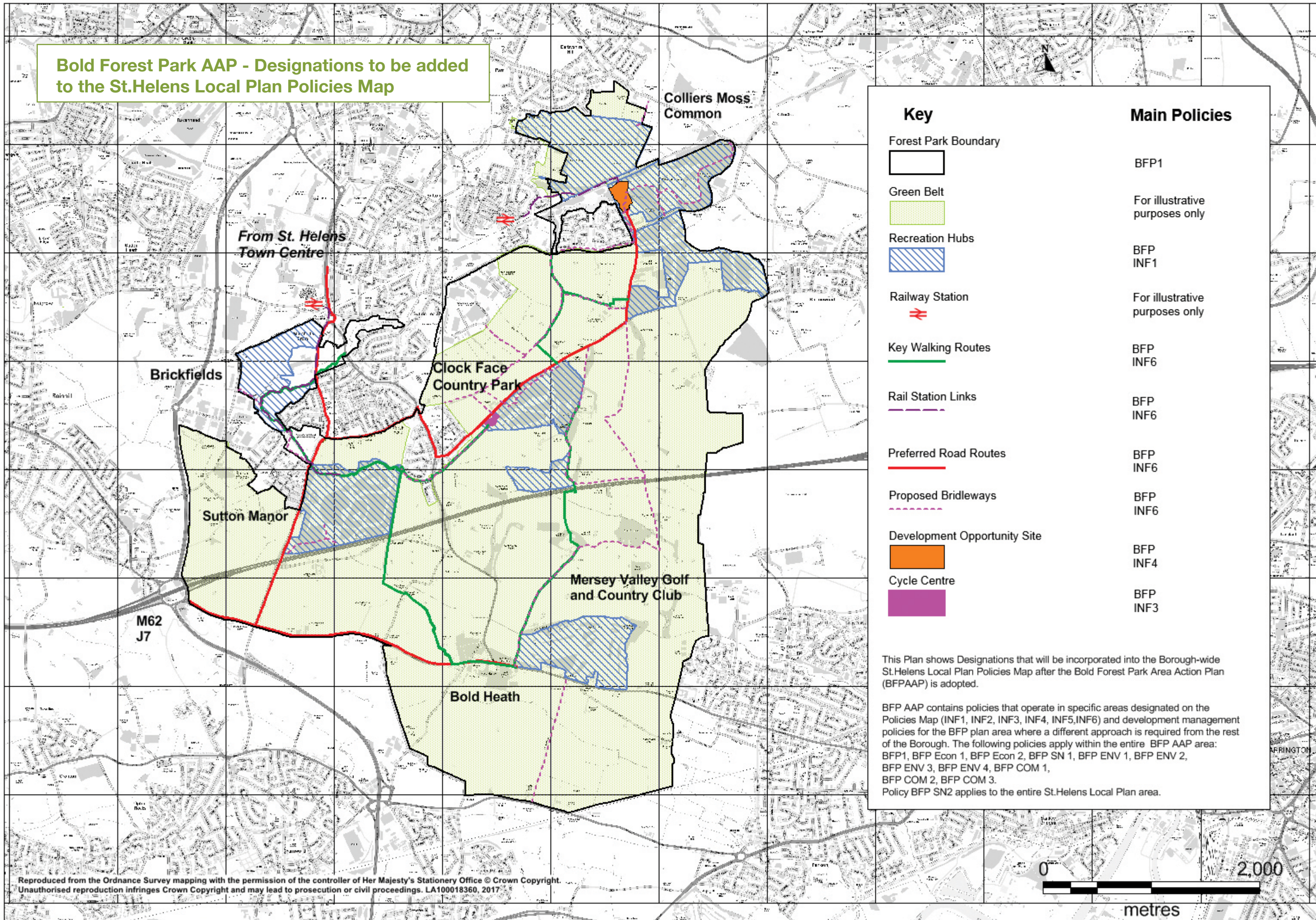
*In accordance with most up to date Department for Transport guidance

No.	Indicator	AAP Policy	Target	Frequency	Delivery Plan Items	Source
9.	Community engagement a) Establishment of Bold Forest Park Community Network and numbers of members b) Establishment of Bold Forest Park Community Action Plan	BFP COM1: Community Network Forum	a) Maintain active membership b) Establish Community Action Plan	a) 1 year b) 2 years	Theme 3: • Community Empowerment	Bold Parish Council
10.	Incidence of anti-social behaviour in Bold Forest Park	BFP COM2: Supporting Community Hubs	Monitoring of trend	1 Year	Theme 3: • Community Empowerment	Merseyside Police
11.	Number of Healthy Living Activities in Bold Forest Park (including participation levels in walking, cycling, horse riding and Green Gyms)	BFP INF1: Proposed Recreation Hubs Development Strategy BFP INF2: Sutton Manor Recreation Hub BFP INF3: Clock Face Country Park Recreation Hub/Cycling Centre BFP INF4: Colliers Moss Common Recreation Hub Development BFP COM3: Bold Forest Park as a Flagship Resource for Community Health Improvement	Increase on baseline	3 Years	Theme 1: • Business Support and Expansion Theme 2: • Visitor Gateway Development • Access & Information Plan Theme 3: • Pathways to employment • Health improvement • Nature for Health	Refresh of existing visitor survey undertaken by URS in 2012, St.Helens Council Health Improvement Team, The Mersey Forest, Groundwork

Part 4: *Policies Map*



Bold Forest Park AAP - Designations to be added to the St.Helens Local Plan Policies Map



Key	Main Policies
Forest Park Boundary 	BFP1
Green Belt 	For illustrative purposes only
Recreation Hubs 	BFP INF1
Railway Station 	For illustrative purposes only
Key Walking Routes 	BFP INF6
Rail Station Links 	BFP INF6
Preferred Road Routes 	BFP INF6
Proposed Bridleways 	BFP INF6
Development Opportunity Site 	BFP INF4
Cycle Centre 	BFP INF3

This Plan shows Designations that will be incorporated into the Borough-wide St.Helens Local Plan Policies Map after the Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (BFPAAP) is adopted.

BFP AAP contains policies that operate in specific areas designated on the Policies Map (INF1, INF2, INF3, INF4, INF5, INF6) and development management policies for the BFP plan area where a different approach is required from the rest of the Borough. The following policies apply within the entire BFP AAP area:
 BFP1, BFP Econ 1, BFP Econ 2, BFP SN 1, BFP ENV 1, BFP ENV 2, BFP ENV 3, BFP ENV 4, BFP COM 1, BFP COM 2, BFP COM 3.
 Policy BFP SN2 applies to the entire St.Helens Local Plan area.

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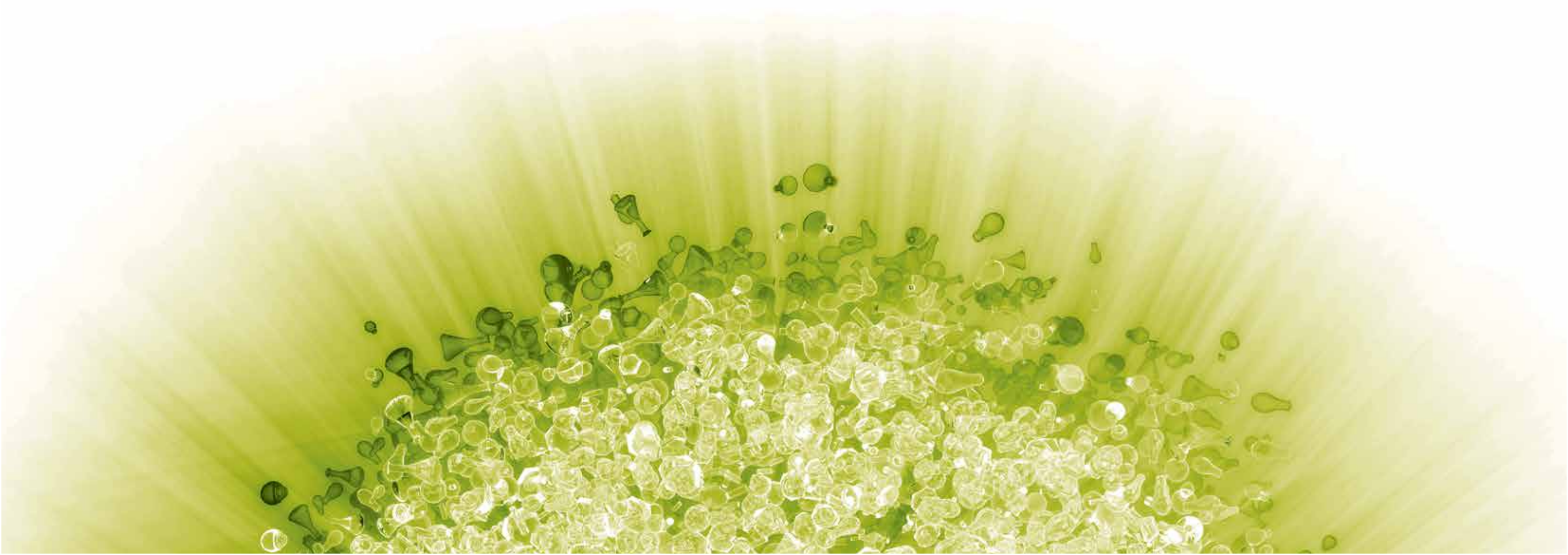
Annexe 1: Evidence Base Document List

AAP Ref. No.	Document Title	Author	Date
1	More From Trees - The Mersey Forest Plan	The Mersey Forest	2013
2, 16	St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy	St.Helens Council	2012
3	St.Helens City Growth Strategy 2008-2018	St.Helens Council	2008
4, 6, 32	St. Helens Forest Park Report for the Mersey Forest and St.Helens Council	Blue Sail	2009
5	Developing the Visitor Potential of South St. Helens Forest Park	Crease Consultancy Services	2006
7, 20, 21, 27, 30, 42, 44	Bold Forest Park - Local Business and Community Consultation Report	URS	2012
8, 11, 38	Economic Intelligence Gathering Report	URS	2012
9	Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Scoping Consultation Report	St.Helens Council	2013
10	Bold Forest Park Draft Area Action Plan 2014 (Preferred Options) Report of Consultation and Summary of Changes	St.Helens Council	2015
12	The Equine Economy of the Mersey City Region	Hackett K. British Horse Society	2014
13, 22	Bridleway Feasibility Study for St. Helens and Halton	Groundwork St. Helens, Knowsley, Sefton and Liverpool	2003
14	CTC -the national cycling charity. www.ctc.org.uk/resources/ctc-cycling-statistics	CTC	2015
15	Merseyside Cycle Monitoring Report 2013/14 Final Report	Mott MacDonald	2014
17	Natural Character Area 56 Lancashire Coal Measures	Natural England	2013
18, 40	St. Helens Landscape Character Assessment	Land Use Consultants	2006
19, 23, 24, 33	Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan Supporting Technical Document	St.Helens Council	2015
25	Forestry Commission http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-87rlq8#green	Forestry Commission	2015
26	Rural Statement 2012	Defra	2012
28,45,49	St.Helens Plan 2015 - 2018	St.Helens Council	2015
29	St.Helens Analysis and Research Exchange http://share.sthelens.gov.uk	St.Helens Council	2015

AAP Ref. No.	Document Title	Author	Date
31	Bold Forest Park Visual Assessment Report	Groundwork	2013
34	Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (Preferred Options) 2014 Report on Consultation and Summary of changes	St.Helens Council	2015
35	Creating a Healthy Bold Forest Park	Krins, R.	2015
36	The Healthcare Costs of CVC, CHD and Stroke in the United Kingdom	British Heart Foundation	2009
37	An estimate of the economic and health value and cost effectiveness of the expanded WHI scheme http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/95007	Natural England	2009
39	Community Infrastructure Levy - An Overview	Department for Communities and Local Government	2011
41	The Natural Choice; Securing the value of nature	HM Government	2011
43	National Planning Policy Framework	Department for Communities and Local Government	2012
46	Safer St.Helens Anti-social Behaviour Strategy http://safer.sthelens.gov.uk/crime-types/anti-social-behaviour/	St.Helens Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	2015
47	Healthy Lives, Healthy People: A call to action on obesity in England	HM Government	2011
48	Natural Health Service Consortium Business Plan	NW Investment Forum	2013

ST HELENS

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