

# Wirral Local Plan 2021-2037 Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance

**Regulation 19 Submission Draft, March 2022**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of the Statement of Compliance

- 1.1.1 This Wirral Local Plan Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance demonstrates how Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council has addressed the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate throughout the production and progression of Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 This Statement of Compliance sets out how the Council has engaged with surrounding authorities and prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies on strategic and cross boundary matters during the preparation of the Plan, and the outcomes arising from this engagement. A full timeline of Duty to Cooperate related activities is presented within Appendix 1 and 2.
- 1.1.3 This Statement of Compliance will form part of the Local Plan evidence base.

### 1.2 Requirements of the Duty to Cooperate

- 1.2.1 The Duty to Cooperate, introduced under the Localism Act 2011, is a legal duty for local planning authorities, county councils and relevant bodies to ‘engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process’ including the preparation of development plan documents (Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 1.2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) states that local planning authorities should engage with relevant bodies to meet the Duty to Cooperate, including elected Mayors and combined authorities, infrastructure providers and the Marine Management Organisation<sup>1</sup>. The NPPF highlights that ‘effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy’, and is essential in determining additional infrastructure needs and in addressing unmet development needs<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.2.3 To demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, the NPPF recommends that authorities ‘prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these’<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.2.4 As part of the Duty to Cooperate, local planning authorities should ‘identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans’<sup>4</sup>. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 defines strategic matters as ‘sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas’.

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 25, National Planning Policy Framework

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 26, National Planning Policy Framework

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 27, National Planning Policy Framework

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 25, National Planning Policy Framework

### 1.3 Prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies

1.3.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 sets out the following prescribed bodies relevant to Wirral Borough to which the Duty to Cooperate applies:

- Environment Agency;
- Historic England;
- Natural England;
- Civil Aviation Authority;
- Homes England;
- Clinical Commissioning Group / NHS;
- Office of Rail and Road;
- National Highways / Highways England;
- Marine Management Organisation;
- Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership / Liverpool City Region Combined Authority; and
- Nature Connected, Liverpool City Region Local Nature Partnership (LNP).

1.3.2 In addition to the prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies listed above, the Council has also engaged with all surrounding local authorities (see Figure 1 below), and all authorities within the Liverpool City Region. This includes the following authorities:

- a) Liverpool City Region authorities:
  - Halton Borough Council;
  - Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council;
  - Liverpool City Council;
  - Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council; and
  - St Helens Borough Council.
  
- b) Surrounding authorities:
  - Cheshire West and Chester Council;
  - West Lancashire Borough Council; and
  - Flintshire County Council

1.3.3 To support the production of the Local Plan, and ensure a comprehensive approach to cooperation on strategic and cross boundary matters, engagement undertaken by the Council has gone beyond those prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies and surrounding authorities listed above, to also include cooperation with a range of other organisations that may have an interest in the production of the Plan. The organisations which the Council has engaged with, and the type of engagement undertaken, are listed within Appendices 1 and 2.

## 2. Duty to Cooperate activities

- 2.1.1 Appendix 1 summarises the main Duty to Cooperate related activities which the Council has undertaken since the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation in January 2020. A comprehensive list of Duty to Cooperate related activities undertaken by the Council, including meetings and consultation with relevant organisations since January 2018, are presented within the Duty to Cooperate Activities Register in Appendix 2.
- 2.1.2 The following sections provide a summary of the main Duty to Cooperate activities undertaken by the Council and listed within Appendices 1 and 2.

### *Liverpool City Region District Planning Officers Group and Liverpool City Region Planning Policy Managers meetings, 2018 onwards*

- 2.1.3 Planning officers from the Liverpool City Region (LCR) authorities and other associated organisations (such as Mersey Travel and Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS)) have met on a regular basis throughout the production of the Local Plan to share updates on the LCR Strategic Development Strategy and LCR wide evidence base studies. The meetings provided the opportunity to share progress on the Wirral Local Plan and discuss the production of the LCR Statement of Common Ground (SoCG).

### *Engagement with infrastructure providers, 2018 onwards*

- 2.1.4 Meetings between infrastructure providers and Wirral Council planning officers were held during 2019 to discuss the draft Wirral Local Plan and emerging draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Meetings were held with Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, Welsh Water, Transport for Wales, NHS Trusts WUTH, Merseytravel, SPEN, Merseyside Police, Virgin Media, Openreach, Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority, United Utilities and Cadent Gas.
- 2.1.5 Further meetings were held with the following infrastructure providers: United Utilities, Peel Ports, Transport for Wales, SPEN, Openreach, Cadent Gas, Merseytravel, Merseyside Police. The meetings covered the Wirral Local Plan and evidence base production, the Birkenhead 2040 Framework, infrastructure and service provision and the production of SoCG to support the submission of the Plan. The meetings informed Local Plan policy drafting and associated evidence base production. Where available, notes of all meetings listed within Appendix 2 are available within Appendix 3.

### *Internal engagement with Wirral Council departments*

- 2.1.6 Wirral Council planning policy officers met with officers from other departments to discuss the drafting of the Local Plan and the production of evidence base documents, including the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. Meetings were held with Parks and Countryside, School Places, Public Rights of Way, Waste, Leisure Services, Environmental Health, the Lead Local Flood Authority, Public Health, Sustainability, Libraries, Transport and Highways, Youth Support, and Adult Care and Health.

*Duty to Cooperate meetings with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and surrounding local authorities*

- 2.1.7 In addition to the regular LCR District Planning Officers Group and LCR Planning Policy Managers meetings, Wirral Council has met individually with Liverpool City Council, Sefton Council, the LCRCA, Cheshire West and Chester Council and West Lancashire Borough Council as required throughout the production of the Plan. These meetings provided the opportunity to present updates on the progress of respective Local Plans and evidence base documents, to discuss strategic and cross boundary matters and links to the LCR SoCG, and the production of SoCG between the authorities to support the progression of the Plan.
- 2.1.8 In some instances joint meetings were held with neighbouring authorities and infrastructure related organisations to consider strategic and cross boundary matters. Joint meetings were held with National Highways and Cheshire West and Chester Council to discuss the Wirral Local Plan and associated evidence base production, transport modelling and impacts to junctions on the M53, and Regulation 18 consultation responses.

*Meetings with prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies*

- 2.1.9 As summarised in Appendix 1 and 2, Wirral Council has invited all prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies to participate in the production of the Local Plan at various stages. All bodies were invited to attend Duty to Cooperate workshops in December 2020, and where required ongoing engagement has taken place to support the production of the Plan. In particular, the Council has engaged regularly with National Highways, Natural England, Historic England, Environment Agency, Marine Management Organisation, the NHS Community Trusts, and Homes England in support of the production of the Plan.

*Regulation 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation 27<sup>th</sup> Jan-6<sup>th</sup> April 2020*

- 2.1.10 As outlined within the Local Plan Consultation Statement, all surrounding local authorities and prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies were made aware of the Regulation 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation and invited to provide a representation. The surrounding local authorities and prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies which provided representations are listed within Appendix 1, and copies of those representations are included within Appendix 4.

*Duty to Cooperate housing needs letter circulated to all surrounding local authorities, March 2020*

- 2.1.11 A Regulation 18 Local Plan housing needs letter was circulated to all LCR authorities and the surrounding authorities of West Lancashire and Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) in March 2020. The letter requested views on the ability of surrounding authority areas to accommodate any potential unmet housing needs arising from the Wirral Local Plan growth strategy. An example of the letter sent out by Wirral Council is presented in Appendix 5.
- 2.1.12 Responses were received from all LCR and surrounding authorities, and are presented within Appendix 6.

*Duty to Cooperate workshops, December 2020*

2.1.13 Three Duty to Cooperate workshops were held in December 2020 virtually using MS Teams with infrastructure providers on 10<sup>th</sup> December, surrounding local authorities on 14<sup>th</sup> December, and other prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies on 18<sup>th</sup> December. The workshops were guided by a PowerPoint which:

- Provided an update on the Wirral Local Plan, including the emerging housing, employment and environment strategies;
- Presented the Wirral Local Plan timetable and next steps including the proposed distribution of Duty to Cooperate proformas to surrounding local authorities;
- Summarised Local Plan evidence base production, including the Viability Study and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- Sought to identify and confirm strategic and cross boundary matters which should be considered through the production of the Wirral Local Plan; and
- Proposed organisations where it was likely that a SoCG may be needed to support the submission of the Local Plan.

2.1.14 Invitations to the DtC workshops were circulated to all surrounding local authorities, prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies, and other key stakeholders likely to be involved in the production and progression of the Local Plan. The details of all organisations invited and in attendance at the workshops, and notes of the discussions at the workshops are presented in Appendix 7.

*Duty to Cooperate proformas circulated in February 2021*

2.1.15 Duty to Cooperate proformas were circulated to all LCR authorities, West Lancashire, and CWaC. The proformas sought information regarding the need to plan for strategic unmet development needs in the area, meeting any potential short-term deficits in housing delivery, strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authorities and how these should be considered through ongoing engagement and cooperation, the strategic cross boundary matters addressed in the LCR SoCG, and the approach to producing a SoCG to support the submission of the Local Plan.

2.1.16 Completed proformas were received from the authorities of CWaC, Halton, Liverpool City, Sefton, St Helens, and West Lancashire. A proforma was not completed by Knowsley Council. The completed proformas are presented within Appendix 8.

2.1.17 The information provided within the proformas was used by Wirral Council to identify and consider strategic and cross boundary matters affecting the Local Plan, and therefore informed the approach to future engagement with the authorities and the content of draft SoCG.

*Duty to Cooperate letters sent in June 2021*

2.1.18 Letters were sent to all surrounding local authorities, prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies, and other key stakeholders involved in the production and progression of the Local Plan, informing them of the upcoming circulation of the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan and inviting the arrangement of meetings to discuss the draft Plan where necessary. The purpose of the letter was to ensure that stakeholders were fully aware of the Council's approach to further engagement on the production of the emerging

Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan, and ensure that stakeholders were provided with sufficient opportunity to participate in the production of the Local Plan.

2.1.19 An example of the letter is presented in Appendix 9. The organisations which received the letters are listed within Appendix 1.

*Informal consultation on the emerging draft Regulation 19 Local Plan, circulated in August 2021*

2.1.20 As outlined in the June 2021 letter, the emerging draft Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan was circulated in August 2021 to all surrounding local authorities, prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies, and other key stakeholders involved in the production and progression of the Local Plan. Stakeholders were invited to review the emerging draft Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan and provide comments for the Council to consider in the finalisation of the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan.

2.1.21 The organisations invited to review the draft Plan, and the organisations that responded, are presented in Appendix 1. A summary of the comments received from each responding organisation to the informal consultation is provided in section 3 below.

*Duty to Cooperate meetings, September-December 2021*

2.1.22 As part of the informal consultation on the draft Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan, invitations for virtual meetings were provided to all surrounding local authorities, relevant prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies, and other key stakeholders involved in the production and progression of the Local Plan.

2.1.23 Meetings were held with the LCR Combined Authority and surrounding authorities of Sefton, West Lancashire, Liverpool City, and CWaC, in addition to meetings with Cadent Gas, SPEN, Transport for Wales, Merseyside Police, BT Openreach, Vodafone, Merseyside Waste Authority, Mersey Dee Alliance, Merseyside Fire and Rescue, ITS Technology Group and Network Rail. Through these meetings Wirral Council shared an overview of the draft Regulation 19 Submission Draft Local Plan, timetable for next steps, and relevant information from supporting and evidence base documents. The meetings provided the opportunity, where relevant, to discuss the content of SoCG, and to answer any questions regarding the Wirral Local Plan and associated evidence base documents from stakeholders.

2.1.24 Discussions during the meetings and written feedback provided after the meetings informed the finalisation of the Wirral Submission Draft Local Plan and associated documents such as the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

2.1.25 Details of the meetings undertaken are presented in Appendix 1, and notes of the meetings are provided in Appendix 3.



### 3. Duty to Cooperate engagement with surrounding local authorities and prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies

#### 3.1 Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

3.1.1 A Liverpool City Region Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) was agreed by the six local authorities of Halton Borough Council, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Liverpool City Council, St. Helens, Sefton, West Lancashire Borough Council and Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA), in September 2019. The LCR SoCG covers 22 strategic matters outlined in section 4 below. The LCR SoCG is included in Appendix 10.

3.1.2 A series of evidence base documents have been produced for the Liverpool City Region, to inform the production of the emerging LCR Strategic Development Strategy (SDS).

3.1.3 A summary of engagement activities undertaken with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority throughout the production of the Local Plan is provided below.

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
2018 onwards	Regular Liverpool City Region (LCR) District Planning Officers Group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular Wirral Local Plan updates provided.</li> </ul>
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options document.	Issues and Options document shared with the LCRCA. LCRCA is not responding formally to local plan consultations prior to adoption of the Spatial Development Strategy.
September 2020	Meeting with officers from the LCRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on Local Plan and evidence base production.</li> <li>Discuss ongoing approach to meeting the Duty to Cooperate including workshops proposed for November 2020.</li> <li>Update provided on the LCR Spatial Development Strategy.</li> <li>LCR confirmed that they would like to participate in proposed DtC workshops.</li> <li>Considered options for reviewing the LCR SoCG prior to the submission of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
March 2021	Meeting with officers from the LCRCA and Merseytravel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wirral Local Plan production timetable update.</li> <li>Discussions on draft strategic and site specific policy approach for transport.</li> <li>Agreement to provide proposed per site public transport contributions.</li> <li>Agreement to provide the latest transport pipeline priorities.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Meeting with officers from the LCRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wirral Local Plan production timetable update.</li> <li>LCR Spatial Development Strategy update.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
November 2021	Meeting with officers from the LCRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timescales for Wirral Local Plan discussed</li> <li>• Update on the LCRCA SDS timetable and evidence base.</li> <li>• Agreed that data regarding funding schemes the LCRCA has supported in Wirral will be provided.</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Engagement with surrounding local authorities

3.2.1 Wirral Council is part of the Liverpool City Region, and shares its southern boundary with Cheshire West and Chester Council. To support the production of the Local Plan, the Council has sought to engage on a regular basis with the surrounding local authorities identified within Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Map of the surrounding local authority areas**



3.2.2 The following sections provide a summary of engagement activities undertaken with surrounding local authorities throughout the production of the Wirral Local Plan.

*West Lancashire Borough Council*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief description of the activity</b>	<b>Key outputs</b>
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	Issues and Options document shared with the Council. No representation received.
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	West Lancashire Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs, highlighting that there is insufficient capacity in the authority area to accommodate additional housing needs from the Wirral without requiring additional Green Belt release, there are no direct housing market connections, and the Council raised concerns regarding the sustainability of transport connections between the authority areas.
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Council's planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation that the Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Council's housing needs remains unchanged.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council cannot assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>• Confirmation that where West Lancashire Council is not directly adjacent to the Wirral authority area, and where the Council is not a full member of the LCR Combined Authority, the level of engagement needed between the parties on strategic and cross boundary matters in the LCR SoCG is low. West Lancashire Council therefore confirmed that the LCR SoCG addresses the identified strategic and cross boundary matters adequately in terms of the relationship between the two authorities.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council does not see the need to participate in the production of a SoCG, as it is considered that strategic and cross boundary matters are sufficiently addressed within the LCR SoCG.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	Comments provided by the Council on the approach to meeting unmet housing needs in the area.

*Halton Council*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	Issues and Options document shared with the Council. No representation received.
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	Halton Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs, highlighting that there is insufficient capacity in the Halton authority area to accommodate additional housing needs from the Wirral without requiring additional Green Belt release, there are no direct housing market connections, and there are few direct functional linkages between the authorities.
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirmation that the Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Councils housing needs remains unchanged.</li> <li>Confirmation that the Council cannot assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>Confirmation that the Council would participate in the production of a SoCG in relation to the draft Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	No response received.

*Sefton Council*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief description of the activity</b>	<b>Key outputs</b>
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues and Options document shared with the Council.</li> <li>• Sefton Council outlined its support for the growth strategy presented within the draft Wirral Local Plan relating to housing, employment and retail.</li> <li>• Recommendation that Wirral's policy framework for assessing the impact of development (not just from recreational pressure) on internationally important sites and the integrity of such sites and networks should be explicit that it applies to all internationally important sites across the Liverpool City Region and beyond, and should refer specifically to the sites on the Sefton Coast.</li> </ul>
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	Sefton Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs, highlighting that there would be insufficient land in the Sefton authority area after meeting local housing needs, and the housing linkages between the authorities are limited.
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation that the Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Councils housing needs remains unchanged.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council cannot assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>• Recommendation of amended wording regarding the 'approach to protection of internationally protected habitats'.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the LCR Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan have been approved.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council would participate in the production of a SoCG in relation to the draft Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.

August 2021	Informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	No response received.
September 2021	Meeting with Sefton Council Officers to discuss the draft Reg 19 Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of strategic matters and cross boundary issues affecting the authorities.</li> <li>• Growth strategy in the Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Environmental implications of the Plan.</li> <li>• Approach to progressing the Wirral Local Plan and the Sefton Local Plan review.</li> </ul>

*St Helens Council*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief description of the activity</b>	<b>Key outputs</b>
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	Issues and Options document shared with the Council. No representation received.
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	St Helens Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs, highlighting that there is insufficient capacity in the St Helens authority area to accommodate additional housing needs from the Wirral without requiring additional Green Belt release and there are no direct housing market connections.
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation that the Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Councils housing needs remains unchanged.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council cannot assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>• Recommendation to amend the wording within the 'Approach to protection of internationally protected habitats', to remove reference to agreeing an interim approach, as this approach has not been agreed by all authorities.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council would participate in the production of a SoCG in relation to the draft Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>

June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DTC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	No response received.

*Knowsley Council*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	Issues and Options document shared with the Council. No representation received.
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	Knowsley Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs, highlighting that there is insufficient capacity in the authority area to accommodate additional housing needs from the Wirral without requiring additional Green Belt release, and the geographic separation between our authorities would lead to unsustainable environmental and social connections.
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowsley Council did not respond to the Duty to Cooperate Proforma circulated by Wirral Council to all LCR authorities.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DTC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	No response received.

*Liverpool City Council*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
October 2019	Publication of the LCR SoCG	Statement which outlines how authorities within the LCR will cooperate on cross boundary strategic planning matters.
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	Issues and Options document shared with the Council. No representation received.
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	Liverpool Council stated that they are unable to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs without significantly delaying the progression of the emerging Liverpool Local Plan. The response also indicated that constrained site availability,

		the potential for future unmet need in Liverpool, and housing market conditions would make this approach inappropriate
August 2020	Wirral and Liverpool Duty to Cooperate Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highways capacity and transport were discussed including outputs from baseline and development scenario modelling.</li> <li>• Request for extraction of traffic modelling data and circulation to LCC.</li> <li>• Clean air zone discussed</li> <li>• Update on evidence studies</li> </ul>
September 2020	Correspondence from Wirral Council to Liverpool Council sharing information from the Local Plan transport modelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liverpool Council were invited to respond to the Council if they had any queries or concerns with the transport modelling.</li> <li>• This correspondence was followed up by further correspondence from Wirral Council in October 2020 inviting any queries from the Council.</li> <li>• The transport modelling information was shared again with Liverpool Council in January 2022, and followed up by further correspondence from Wirral Council in February 2022</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liverpool Council did not attend the workshop.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation that the Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Councils housing needs remains unchanged. It was also noted that future housing requirements in the area would result in there being no capacity to accommodate needs from other area.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council cannot assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>• Clarification that LCR authorities have not agreed to provide investment funding towards infrastructure improvements at Liverpool John Lennon Airport.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Council would participate in the production of a SoCG in relation to the draft Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
October 2021	Duty to Cooperate Meeting with Liverpool Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Super Port was discussed in relation to the emerging Local Plan and in relation to B8 provision.</li> <li>• Hierarchy of Centres and impact of Wirral Waters and Bidston Dock in relation to commercial development.</li> <li>• Transport and Infrastructure.</li> <li>• Clean air zone and air quality.</li> <li>• No residual housing or employment needs impacting Wirral from Liverpool.</li> </ul>



December 2021	Response to informal engagement on the draft Wirral Local Plan in advance of Publication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcomes Wirral’s view that there is no expectation on Liverpool to assist in meeting any of the Borough’s housing needs.</li> <li>• Would welcome a reference within an appropriate policy that when considering impact of proposals outside centres, that impacts on centres in adjoining authority areas will also need to be considered.</li> <li>• With regard to Wirral Waters, a policy would be welcomed which references the need to test the impact of future proposals on the City Centre.</li> <li>• Follow up discussions with highway officers regarding traffic modelling and potential impacts of the demolition of flyovers would be appropriate.</li> <li>• Consider whether the Super Port is an issue to take account of in the Local Plan.</li> <li>• The policy on mitigating recreational disturbance is welcomed and aligns with Liverpool’s approach.</li> </ul>
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*Cheshire West and Chester Council*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
May 2019	Duty to Cooperate meeting with Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gypsy and Traveller data sharing</li> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester Council to provide development data for Transport model when requested and to be kept informed of Highways England discussions</li> <li>• Wirral to review Statement of Common Ground for Cheshire West and Chester Council and Warrington</li> </ul>
November 2019	Duty to Cooperate meeting with Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wirral Local Plan update: evidence base, emerging Regulation 18 report, public consultation commencing January 2020</li> <li>• Suggested topics for inclusion within a Statement of Common Ground with Cheshire West and Chester Council</li> <li>• LCR Statement of Common Ground – update</li> </ul>
January 2020	Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation on the Local Plan	<p>Issues and Options document shared with the Council. The consultation representation from Cheshire West and Chester Council stated broad support for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the preferred growth strategy,</li> <li>• the approach to identifying housing needs,</li> <li>• the approach to planning for employment needs,</li> <li>• the Green Belt Review (2019), and</li> <li>• the summary of the Duty to Cooperate progress to date.</li> </ul> <p>Concerns were raised within the representation in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester Council requested clarification on employment related matters.</li> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester Council requested further engagement on transport matters, and identified specific issues regarding transport related evidence base documents.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester Council identified transport related concerns regarding:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The level of engagement between the two authorities on transport matters;</li> <li>○ Information in the draft Plan on the impacts of planned growth on the rail network;</li> <li>○ The impacts of proposed growth on cross-boundary transport networks, including the A540; and</li> <li>○ Impacts of proposed employment allocations on the A41 corridor.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cheshire West and Chester Council recommended that allocations for traveller needs were made in the Plan. The Gypsy and Traveller Need Assessment has since reassessed the need for pitches in the area, which is addressed within the draft Local Plan.</li> <li>• The inclusion of an assessment of the compatibility of Local Plan objectives and a Sustainability Assessment (SA) framework within the SA.</li> <li>• Further consideration of the potential for marine aggregates and associated landings at port facilities in the area.</li> <li>• Identification of the Petroleum Exploration and Development License (PEDL) in the area within the Local Plan policies map.</li> <li>• Clarification on minerals extractions allocations in the Plan.</li> <li>• The need to update the Wirral Minerals Report to take account of the updated Local Aggregate Assessment 2019.</li> <li>• Detailed clarifications relating to minerals policies.</li> <li>• Clarification of proposals for reviewing the Joint Waste Local Plan and the associated waste needs assessment for the area.</li> <li>• Detailed comments on the Interim HRA, and clarification on the approach to the production of a Recreation Mitigation and Avoidance Strategy (RMAS).</li> </ul> <p>Engagement with Cheshire West and Chester Council alongside production of the policies in the draft Local Plan has sought to address these concerns. Any outstanding matters identified by CWaC Council on the draft Local Plan are outlined within section 3 below.</p>
March 2020	Letter inquiring about the ability of other areas to assist Wirral Council in meeting its housing needs.	Cheshire West and Chester Council stated that they are unable to accommodate Wirral's housing needs because Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council are in self-contained Housing Market Areas and there is insufficient capacity in the Cheshire West and Chester Council authority area to contribute towards meeting Wirral's housing needs without requiring additional Green Belt release.

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
August 2020	Duty to Cooperate meeting with Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan progress update from both authorities.</li> <li>• Evidence base update from both authorities.</li> <li>• LCR update on Recreation Management Study.</li> <li>• SoCG production discussion.</li> </ul>
October 2020	Joint National Highways (formerly Highways England) and Cheshire West and Chester Council meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Local Plan and evidence base production.</li> <li>• Consideration of Reg 18 consultation representations.</li> <li>• Presenting the Council response to Reg 18 representations.</li> <li>• M53 Junction Impact Review.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop held with all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated all LCR authorities on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Confirmation that no additional engagement is required beyond the Councils planned programme of engagement with LCR authorities to support the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Duty to Cooperate proforma circulated to all LCR authorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation that the Cheshire West and Chester Council's March 2020 position regarding assisting in meeting Wirral Councils housing needs remains unchanged.</li> <li>• Confirmation that the Cheshire West and Chester Council is unable to assist Wirral Council in any short-term deficit in housing delivery.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters jointly affecting the authority areas.</li> <li>• Confirmation that Cheshire West and Chester Council would participate in the production of a SoCG in relation to the draft Wirral Local Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Reg. 19 Local Plan	<p>Comments received from Cheshire West and Chester Council on 4 October 2021 relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification of accessibility relating to the Key Route Network.</li> <li>• Approach to considering development proposals at the Eastham employment area.</li> <li>• Proposed minor amendments to text within Policy EMP S4.5 Eastham Dock Estate.</li> <li>• Clarification of the wider transport network.</li> <li>• Approach to enhancing the Wirral Circular Trail.</li> </ul>

### *Flintshire County Council*

3.2.3 Flintshire County Council is located in Wales, and is separated from Wirral Borough by the estuary of the River Dee. Flintshire Council was consulted on the Regulation 18 Issues and Options document, and correspondence inviting further engagement with Wirral Council on the production of the Local Plan was sent to Flintshire Council in June 2021 and February 2022.

3.2.4 To date Flintshire Council has not responded to consultation on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.

## 3.3 Engagement with prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies

3.3.1 The following sections provide a summary of engagement activities undertaken with prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies.

### *Environment Agency*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Brief description of the activity</b>	<b>Key outputs</b>
June 2019	Meeting with Wirral Council and the EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an update on the production of the Local Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.</li> <li>• Discussed the approach to evidence base production and flood risk management and mitigation.</li> <li>• Consideration of any nitrate neutrality issues in the area.</li> <li>• Considered the approach to future engagement.</li> </ul>
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options	<p>Draft Plan shared with the EA. Representation received in April 2020, commenting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for clarification on the environment emergency identified within the Council's ambition.</li> <li>• Relevant additional information which may be helpful in producing the Local Plan, including the Natural Capital Baseline Report and the North West River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>• The approach to considering the density of new development near areas with environmental constraints and sensitivities.</li> <li>• Approach to using brownfield land for greenspaces.</li> <li>• Consideration of environmental protection and enhancement within the Spatial Vision.</li> <li>• Including the flood risk sequential test, and where applicable the exception test, into the assessment of site allocations.</li> <li>• Environmental constraints associated with sites assessed within the Green Belt.</li> <li>• Support for the approach to considering climate change related issues, and the approach to considering green and blue infrastructure.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for additional reference to coastal or riparian habitats, and the protection of a diverse landscape for encouraging biodiversity.</li> <li>• The information required to be submitted with planning applications, and how this should be presented in the Local Plan.</li> <li>• The need for a biosecurity strategy to help preserve the local native environment.</li> </ul>
February 2020	Meeting with Wirral Council and the EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussions regarding the Regulation 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated attendees on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Agreement on the need for the Infrastructure Delivery Plan to consider flood defence infrastructure.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council and the EA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an update on the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Discussed how engagement should take place to support the progression of the Plan.</li> <li>• Discussed the approach to SFRA level 2 modelling.</li> <li>• Agreed that the Council would liaise with the EA to develop a fee estimate for ongoing EA advice.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	<p>The EA provided comments to the Council regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How the Plan considers the provision and quality of green and blue infrastructure.</li> <li>• Detailed wording changes throughout to support the aims and objectives of the EA in relation to environmental protection and enhancement.</li> <li>• How the Plan takes into account the conclusions of the Level 2 SFRA.</li> <li>• Making reference to foul drainage as well as surface water drainage.</li> <li>• Making increased reference to the Water Framework Directive, the Water Environment Regulations and associated assessments, and the North West River Basin Management Plan.</li> <li>• The approach to managing flood risk, and types of development within flood risk areas.</li> <li>• The approach to protecting water quality, and the approach to locating developments which have the potential to release hazardous substances into the ground.</li> </ul> <p>The Council has taken these comments into account through the production of the Regulation 19 version of the Wirral Local Plan. Following the publication of the Plan, the Council will</p>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		continue to engage with the EA to ensure that these comments have been appropriately considered.

*Historic England*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan	<p>Draft Plan shared with Historic England. Representation received in March 2020, commenting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The strategy for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.</li> <li>• The potential impact of new development on the historic environment.</li> <li>• Ensuring the density of development is appropriate to the local context.</li> <li>• Need to include the historic environment within the Local Plan vision.</li> <li>• How heritage assets should be considered within the assessment of sites, and the use of heritage impact assessments.</li> <li>• How the historic environment forms a key part of sustainable development, helping to address climate change and environmental issues.</li> <li>• How the historic environment should be considered in relation to flood management, green and blue infrastructure.</li> <li>• The need to cover all aspects of the historic environment.</li> <li>• The need for specific policies covering the historic environment.</li> </ul>
November 2020	Meeting with Wirral Council and Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an update on the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Discussed the approach to managing the historic environment.</li> <li>• Discussed issues raised through the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation representation, and the Councils approach to addressing these issues in the Regulation 19 version of the Plan.</li> <li>• Considered the approach to producing a Statement of Common Ground.</li> <li>• HE agreed to review emerging draft Local Plan policies, and to assist in assessing the potential impact of proposed Local Plan site allocations on the historic environment.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated attendees on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>• Agreement that a SoCG should be produced between the parties to support the progression of the Local Plan.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Correspondence from Historic England commenting on draft Local Plan policies and support text	Comments received from HE in December 2020, further details provided below.

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
February 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council and Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided an update on the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>• Discussed the outcomes of the November 2020 meeting.</li> <li>• Considered the approach to producing a Statement of Common Ground.</li> <li>• HE agreed to review further amendments to emerging draft Local Plan policies.</li> <li>• Agreed that the Council will consider the need to update conversation area appraisals.</li> </ul>
March 2021	Consultation on the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework	<p>Historic England responded to the consultation in May, commenting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General support for the production of the Framework and the approach to referencing the historic environment throughout.</li> <li>• HE publications which may be relevant to the production and progression of the Framework.</li> <li>• The need for additional references to the historic environment throughout, including within the identified challenges, vision, outputs and outcomes, and Framework strategies.</li> <li>• Additional reference to key specific heritage assets within the Birkenhead Neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	<p>Comments received from Historic England in September 2021 regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposed detailed wording amendments throughout the Plan to ensure that the historic environment is appropriately considered, protected and enhanced.</li> <li>• Proposed additions to the supporting text to ensure that the policies are clear and easy to understand and use.</li> <li>• The need for a Heritage Impact Assessment to support each regeneration area.</li> <li>• The consideration of improving energy efficiency and cutting greenhouse gas emissions from historic buildings.</li> </ul> <p>The Council has taken these comments into account through the production of the Regulation 19 version of the Wirral Local Plan. Following the publication of the Plan, the Council will continue to engage with Historic England to ensure that these comments have been appropriately considered.</p>

### Natural England

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
May 2019	Scoping of Sustainability Appraisal and EqIA	<p>The Council consulted Natural England on the Scoping of the Sustainability Appraisal and EqIA on 25 March 2019. Comments can be summarised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise that the Liverpool Bay SPA should be included</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggest key features of sites are provided to explain the baseline environment</li> <li>• Consideration of functionally linked land should be considered</li> <li>• Consideration should be given to current impacts from recreational disturbance, as part of the baseline evidence base.</li> <li>• Further consideration to whether impacts may be regarded as short or long term and whether these are temporary or permanent.</li> <li>• Highlight further mitigation required by the Habitats Regulations, with regard to Wirral Waters.</li> <li>• The Liverpool City Region Ecological Network Report by MEAS (2015) should be considered as part of the evidence base within the SA.</li> <li>• Consideration to Blue-Green Infrastructure should be made</li> <li>• Ensure consistency across the emerging HRA and SA. The documents should inform each other and influence the development of the plan.</li> <li>• Monitoring the significant environmental effects of implementing the local plan, as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.</li> <li>• Consider the information and evidence available in the National Seascape Character Assessment for England (MMO 1134)</li> <li>• Expect the plan to consider the marine environment and apply an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Approach</li> <li>• Consideration and linkages to strategic plans including the Rights of Way Improvements Plans and the England Coastal Path.</li> </ul>
October 2019	Wirral Local Plan Engagement Meeting	<p>Provided an update on the Local Plan progress and timetable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reg. 18 Issues and Options consultation planned for the first week of January.</li> <li>• Discussed engagement processes</li> <li>• NE confirmed that they would not need to see the Interim Position Statement at Reg18. The acknowledgement of the recreational pressure issue in the SA Scoping Report is sufficient at this stage. Interim position would, however, need to be in place for Reg. 19.</li> </ul>
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options	<p>Issues and Options document shared with Natural England. The representation from Natural England commented on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The vision and strategy for the Plan.</li> <li>• The production of the Habitats Regulation Assessment.</li> <li>• Natural England’s position regarding recreational pressure on coastal designated sites, and the approach to considering mitigation for housing growth proposed in the Plan.</li> <li>• The content of the Sustainability Appraisal.</li> </ul>



Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The potential impacts of proposed growth in the Local Plan on locally designated sites.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated attendees on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> <li>Agreement that a SoCG should be produced between the parties to support the progression of the Local Plan.</li> <li>Agreement that further meetings should be undertaken to seek to address recreational disturbance issues in the area.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council and Natural England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provided an update on the production of the Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Discussion on the approach to producing a SoCG to support the progression of the Local Plan.</li> <li>Agreement that Natural England will review draft emerging Local Plan policies and proposed growth locations.</li> </ul>
March 2021	Consultation on the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework	<p>Natural England responded in May, commenting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations for the vision and objectives relating to existing and future greenspace provision.</li> <li>The impacts of waterfront development on designated sites.</li> <li>Recommendations on the approach for considering likely impacts on a Site of Special Scientific Interest.</li> <li>The consideration of urban green infrastructure networks.</li> <li>The approach to considering biodiversity net gain.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
July 2021	Correspondence with Natural England to review proposed Local Plan housing and employment allocations.	Comments from Natural England on proposed Local Plan site allocations, for consideration in the finalisation of the draft Regulation 19 Local Plan.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	<p>Comments received from Natural England in December 2021 regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The presentation of policies within the Plan and the inclusion of additional mapping.</li> <li>Proposed wording changes to the strategic objectives of the Plan.</li> <li>The need for additional reference to the North West Marine Plan within strategic policies.</li> <li>Reference to the need for a Local Development Order relating to Wirral Waters to be subject to environmental regulations.</li> <li>Amendments to text relating to ports within Policy WS4.</li> <li>The inclusion of additional text on wider environmental gains, and the consideration of Natural England's Habitat Network Maps.</li> <li>The need to review the Wirral Recreation Mitigation and Avoidance Strategy (RMS) Interim Approach to assist in</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<p>review the draft Local Plan and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference to the effects of light pollution on nature conservation.</li> <li>• Inclusion of an additional policy regarding the protection of best and most versatile agricultural land.</li> <li>• The importance of considering air pollution, particularly nitrogen emissions, from additional traffic resulting from growth allocated in the Local Plan.</li> <li>• The inclusion of an additional climate-specific policy setting out climate related targets and commitments for the Plan.</li> <li>• The inclusion of further information within the Plan habitats and protected sites that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.</li> <li>• The inclusion of a nature recovery policy.</li> </ul> <p>The Council and its consultants have taken these comments into account through the production of the Regulation 19 version of the Wirral Local Plan. Following the publication of the Plan, the Council will continue to engage with Natural England to ensure that these comments have been appropriately considered.</p>
December 2021	Consultation on the draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)	<p>Comments on the draft HRA were provided in February 2022 regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration of the Liverpool Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), Mersey Estuary SPA, the Dee Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore SPA / Ramsar.</li> <li>• Approach to considering recreational pressures on designated areas.</li> <li>• Consideration of functionally linked habitats.</li> <li>• Approach to considering visual and noise distribution from construction works.</li> <li>• Approach to considering atmospheric pollution.</li> <li>• Consideration of other plans, including the Liverpool City Region Spatial Development Strategy and the Shoreline Management Plan.</li> <li>• Support for the mitigation contained in the Local Plan.</li> </ul> <p>The Council and its consultants have taken these comments into account in finalising the draft HRA to inform the completion of the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The Council will continue to work with Natural England following Regulation 19 publication to address any post-publication issues relating to the Local Plan or HRA prior to submission to the Secretary of State and thereafter during the Local Plan Examination, for example if additional HRA is required for any proposed main modifications to the Local Plan.</p>
February 2022	Consultation on the draft Interim Approach	<p>Comments on the draft Wirral Interim Approach (IA) were provided on 11 February 2022 regarding:</p>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include reference to West Lancashire Council relating to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Recreational Mitigation Strategy (RMS)</li> <li>• Clarify/explain that the Wirral IA will be in place only in the intervening period before the LCR RMS is finalised and adopted.</li> <li>• Clarify that the LCR Interim Approach was a draft document to set out the template approach for each LPA to adapt for their own district, it is not an IA that covers the LCR.</li> <li>• Check and clarify in the document that references are consistent to both the Habitats Regulations and internationally designated sites. State which internationally designated sites fall within the scope of this Interim Approach. Check for repetition of this information and ensure it is concise and clear.</li> <li>• Undertake a review of the use of terminology within the Wirral IA in relation to references to the stages of the Habitats Regulations Assessment.</li> <li>• Clarify that the RMS is being jointly prepared and produced by the Local Planning Authorities of the LCR and West Lancashire.</li> <li>• Amend reference to the 'draft LCR RMS' to the LCR Evidence Report.</li> <li>• Reference the timeframe for completion and adoption of the LCR RMS (June 2023) and include this deadline for the LCR RMS implementation in the Wirral IA, as well as Local Plan policies and the Wirral Local Plan HRA.</li> <li>• Further information is required to justify exclusion of supported living facilities from the Wirral IA.</li> <li>• Discounting of the Wirral IA tariff has the potential to risk undermining the strategic approach set out in the Wirral IA if all the monies for all the mitigation measures required are not collected.</li> <li>• Advise that the charging schedule should be subject to change in line with annual inflation.</li> <li>• Additional commentary is required in relation to the mitigation options that relate to Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) measures.</li> <li>• Further commentary regarding how mitigation measures are prioritised and how this aligns with subsequent LCR RMS mitigation measures should be provided.</li> <li>• Further detail is required on mitigation measures that will be deployed and at which locations to help direct monies collected and prioritises delivery of mitigation measures.</li> <li>• Natural England would welcome further engagement on the monitoring framework to be set out within the Wirral IA.</li> </ul> <p>The Council will continue to work with Natural England following Regulation 19 publication to address any post-publication issues relating to the Wirral Interim Approach prior</p>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		to submission to the Secretary of State and thereafter during the Local Plan Examination. The Council will also continue to participate in the LCR RMS Steering Group and related activity.

#### *Marine Management Organisation*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options	Issues and Options document shared with the MMO. The representation from the MMO commented on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The functions of the MMO and the role of marine plans.</li> <li>• Links regarding marine planning which may be helpful to the Council in drafting the Local Plan.</li> <li>• Relevant sections of the draft North West Marine Plan which may be helpful in drafting the Local Plan, including access, tourism and recreation, climate change, seascape and landscape, biodiversity, heritage assets, aggregates, marine protected areas, marine litter, employment, ports, harbours and shipping.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	The MMO were invited, but were unable to attend.
January 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council and the MMO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided updates on the production of the Wirral Local Plan and the North West Marine Plan.</li> <li>• Discussion on the approach to producing a SoCG to support the progression of the Local Plan.</li> <li>• Consideration of the strategic cross boundary issues affecting the area.</li> <li>• Agreement that the MMO will review draft Local Plan policies.</li> </ul>
March 2021	Consultation on the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework	The MMO responded, commenting on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The functions of the MMO and the role of marine plans.</li> <li>• Links regarding marine planning which may be helpful to the Council in drafting the Local Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	Draft Local Plan provided. No comments received from the MMO.

#### *Homes England*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
March 2021	Consultation on the Birkenhead Regeneration Framework	Homes England responded to advise that while they have no comments on the Framework, they will continue to engage with the Council as appropriate.
November 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council and Homes England	Discussions at the meeting included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Plan production update.</li> <li>• The emerging outputs from the Local Plan Viability Assessment.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approach to infrastructure funding on large sites.</li> <li>Approach to working with Homes England to support the production and progression of the Local Plan.</li> </ul>
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	Draft Local Plan provided. Comments provided related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The involvement of Homes England in supporting the delivery of strategic development sites in the area.</li> <li>The approach to referring to Homes England as an executive non-departmental body.</li> <li>The approach to presenting changes to the Policy Map.</li> </ul>

*NHS / Clinical Commissioning Group*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
July 2019	Meetings with Wirral Council and representatives of the NHS (Wirral NHS Community Trusts and CCG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions on S106 contributions to support the delivery of new and improved healthcare related infrastructure.</li> <li>Advice on proposed new and improved infrastructure required in the area to support growth proposed in the Local Plan, and associated costs.</li> <li>Considering information included within the IDP.</li> <li>Consideration of parking requirements at NHS facilities.</li> <li>Agreement to share information as required.</li> </ul>
September 2019		
October 2019		
March 2020		
June 2020		
March 2021		
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	Attended the Duty to Cooperate workshop on 10 <sup>th</sup> December. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated attendees on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	Draft Local Plan provided. No comments provided.

*National Highways / Highways England*

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
January 2020	Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options	Issues and Options document shared with the MMO. The representation from the MMO commented on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The outcomes of modelling, and the impacts on junctions on the M53.</li> <li>The need for further information to be provided on mitigation measures required to support growth.</li> <li>The intention of National Highways to review in further detail the modelling undertaken to date.</li> <li>The need for development to be located in sustainable locations.</li> <li>The need to reference the local road network.</li> </ul>
April 2020	Meeting with Wirral Council and National Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss representations from Reg 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation.</li> <li>Discuss the progression of the Local Plan.</li> </ul>

Date	Brief description of the activity	Key outputs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing and discussing transport modelling undertaken to support the production of the Plan.</li> </ul>
June 2020	Meeting with Wirral Council, National Highways, WSP and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss Local Plan production timetable and approach to transport modelling.</li> <li>Agreement to set up workshop to review transport modelling.</li> </ul>
October 2020	Meeting with Wirral Council, Mott MacDonald, National Highways, and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenting results of transport modelling, and Wirral Councils response to Reg 18 consultation representations.</li> <li>Discussion on the M53 Junction Impact Review.</li> <li>Agreement on how to distribute and consider the outputs of further transport modelling.</li> </ul>
December 2020	Duty to Cooperate workshop	Attended the Duty to Cooperate workshop on 10 <sup>th</sup> December. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated attendees on the emerging Wirral Local Plan.</li> <li>Confirmation of the strategic cross boundary matters affecting the area.</li> </ul>
February 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council, Mott MacDonald, National Highways, and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree updated Strategic Transport Model and next steps for detailed junction modelling.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council, Mott MacDonald, National Highways, and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenting outcomes of junction assessments by WSP</li> <li>Discussions regarding approach to producing a SoCG</li> <li>Agreement to circulate further transport modelling results.</li> </ul>
June 2021	Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders.	Ensuring that all DtC bodies and key stakeholders were prepared to review the emerging draft Local Plan and associated SoCG, and to continue with further engagement.
August 2021	Circulation of draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan	Draft Local Plan provided. No comments received.
August 2021	Meeting with Wirral Council, National Highways, and Cheshire West and Chester Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on Wirral Local Plan production and timescales.</li> <li>Update on M53 modelling</li> <li>Discussing content of SoCG</li> </ul>

*Other prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies (Civil Aviation Authority, Office of Rail Regulation, Nature Connected)*

3.3.2 The Council has sought to engage with the Civil Aviation Authority, Office of Rail Regulation, and Nature Connected through the same approach as the organisations listed above, however the Council has not received any response from these organisations throughout the process. This is likely to be due to relevance of the strategy and policies in the emerging Wirral Local Plan to the functions and interests of these organisations.

3.3.3 Throughout the production of the Local Plan the Council has sought to engage with these organisations through the following activities:

- January 2020 – Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Options;
- December 2020 – Duty to Cooperate workshops;
- June 2021 - Local Plan update letter sent to all Duty to Cooperate bodies and key stakeholders; and

- August 2021 - Circulation of emerging draft Local Plan for informal consultation on the Draft Regulation 19 Local Plan.

## 4. Strategic and cross boundary matters

### 4.1 Identification of strategic and cross boundary matters

4.1.1 Strategic and cross boundary matters for the Liverpool City Region area have been identified through the production of the Liverpool City Region Statement of Common Ground (LCR SoCG, see Appendix 10). Through the December 2020 Duty to Cooperate workshops, the February 2021 Duty to Cooperate Proforma, and through ongoing meetings with relevant organisations, the Council has sought to identify strategic and cross boundary matters affecting the area. Through this process, the Council has sought to determine if the identified matters are:

- included and appropriately addressed in the LCR SoCG and therefore do not need further consideration through the Wirral Local Plan;
- not included in the LCR SoCG and/or have recent localised issues which require further consideration through the production of the Wirral Local Plan.

### 4.2 Strategic and cross boundary matters identified with the Liverpool City Region Local Authorities

4.2.1 The following strategic and cross boundary matters relating to Wirral Borough are included within the LCR SoCG.

Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues as presented within the LCR SoCG
Planning for housing needs	The Liverpool City Region (LCR) authorities agree that there is no unmet housing need to be redistributed among or beyond the seven local authorities during current local plan periods.
Planning for employment needs	The LCR authorities agree that they will work collaboratively to identify the minimum proportions of the need for strategic B8 uses which should be accommodated within each local authority.
Approach to the Green Belt	The LCR authorities agree to continue involving each other closely when considering the case for localised changes to the Green Belt.
Approach to town centres, meeting retail needs and the retail hierarchy	The LCR authorities agree that there is a need to promote regeneration and successful place making in each centre in the City Region within the context of the current retail hierarchy.
Planning for transport infrastructure and addressing impacts	The LCR authorities agree to work collaboratively to support delivery of the key initiatives set out in the Transport for the North Strategic Transport Plan including Northern Powerhouse Rail. The LCR authorities agree that a key priority is to consider a number of options with respect to Central Station capacity enhancements and identifying the preferred solution to be taken forward. The LCR authorities will continue to develop a number of other large-scale cross boundary schemes with city region-wide impact.



Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues as presented within the LCR SoCG
Cross Mersey movement	<p>The LCR authorities agree to work collaboratively with other relevant bodies to identify and address required improvements to the Strategic Road Network and Major Route Network.</p> <p>Additionally, the Liverpool City Region partners have agreed a LCR Key Route Network to support new housing and employment development across the Liverpool City Region and unlock growth, and the Lancashire Key Route Network will be consistent with this in relation to their network in West Lancashire.</p> <p>The LCR authorities agree to work collaboratively to implement the LCR Rights of Way Improvement Plan and LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan when finalised.</p>
Liverpool John Lennon Airport	<p>The LCR authorities will support the Airport through investment in infrastructure improvements, including the Eastern Access Transport Corridor, education, training and skills.</p>
Approach to digital inclusion	<p>The LCR authorities agree that the city region must develop its own investment plans to accelerate investment and deployment in shared infrastructure to maximise development of digital and tech businesses, to support rapid public sector transformation and provide improved digital connectivity for residential properties and businesses.</p>
Planning for utilities	<p>The LCR authorities agree to identify areas where improvements to utilities infrastructure are needed to support schemes of city region significance, and will broadly set out working arrangements to deal with cross-boundary issues.</p> <p>Providing clarification to utilities companies on strategic allocations within the emerging Plan, to ensure the deliverability of the allocations and to inform future investment decisions.</p>
Approach to coastal change management and flood risk	<p>The LCR authorities will continue to work with partners in relation to strategic management of flood risk across river catchments and in relation to other sources of flooding where appropriate.</p>
Tidal flood risk from River Mersey	<p>Monitor tidal flood risks from the River Mersey</p>
Renewable energy	<p>The LCR authorities will work together to generate a new evidence base regarding renewable energy, including wind.</p>
Approach to protection of internationally protected habitats	<p>The LCR authorities agree to work towards a co-ordinated interim<sup>5</sup> policy approach for mitigating impacts on the LCR coast<sup>6</sup>. The LCR authorities and other partners will work towards implementation and delivery of the strategy across the City Region.</p>

<sup>5</sup> Not all authorities have agreed to this as an interim approach.

<sup>6</sup> Pending the completion of the Recreation Mitigation Strategy.

Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues as presented within the LCR SoCG
European wildlife sites across the Liverpool City Region	Consideration of impacts from proposed allocations in proximity to designated sites on the Mersey Estuary.
Approach to air quality	The LCR authorities and other partners will work together to address cross-boundary air quality issues and to deliver mitigation and measures to deliver air quality improvements across the City Region.
Approach to waste management	The LCR authorities agree that the Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan continues to provide a suitable vision for the management of waste up to 2027 and that the need for any changes to this Plan will be addressed on an on-going basis as required by relevant legislation.
Approach to minerals	The LCR authorities will maintain their commitment to the Managed Aggregate Supply System through continued representation in the North West Aggregates Working Party, will continue to work with the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) and each other on minerals issues and will consult with Lancashire County Council as Minerals Planning Authority.
Approach to planning for community facilities, including healthcare, education and cultural infrastructure	The LCR authorities will continue to work with partners to take opportunities for development to improve health, wellbeing and quality of life across the City Region. The LCR authorities will continue to work with Clinical Commissioning Groups, hospital and health trusts regarding health needs, future housing and other development and the estate management programmes of these trusts.
Green and blue infrastructure	The LCR authorities will continue to work with a range of partners to protect, enhance and where possible extend the strategic natural assets of the City Region.

4.2.2 Through the December 2020 Duty to Cooperate workshops, the February 2021 Duty to Cooperate Proformas, and through ongoing meetings, it was agreed with all participating LCR authorities that, with the exception of the matters discussed below, all strategic and cross boundary matters listed above are sufficiently addressed within the LCR SoCG, and therefore do not need to be considered further to support the submission of the Wirral Local Plan.

#### *Planning for housing needs*

4.2.3 While planning for housing needs is addressed within the LCR SoCG, Wirral Council has approached each LCR authority individually to consider the ability of that authority to accommodate any additional housing needs, and the need for the Wirral Local Plan strategy to take into account any unmet needs arising from surrounding areas. Through the March 2020 letters (see Appendix 5 and 6), and February 2021 Duty to Cooperate Proforma (see Appendix 8), it has been confirmed that no LCR authorities would be able to accommodate any unmet housing needs arising from the Wirral Local Plan, and there

are no unmet housing needs arising from any LCR authorities which should be considered within the Wirral Local Plan.

#### *Planning for employment needs*

- 4.2.4 Halton Council, Sefton Council, and St Helens Council have raised concerns through the Regulation 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation and February 2021 Duty to Cooperate Proforma regarding the delivery of strategic B8 uses within the LCR, particularly where local plans for Liverpool, Halton, and St Helens have been examined and no regional approach has yet to be agreed.
- 4.2.5 The achievement of the aims within the LCR SoCG regarding strategic B8 uses has been raised within regular Planning Policy Managers meetings within the Region, however to date no agreement has been reached on how to address this issue at a regional level.
- 4.2.6 The LCR Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment (GL Hearn, 2018) concluded that, due to the Borough's position relative to logistics demands, there is no need to allocate additional large scale B8 uses in the Borough. However, the Wirral Local Plan does support B8 uses within port related uses in the Borough, including at West Float and within designated employment areas.
- 4.2.7 Through engagement with the relevant authorities, it has been agreed that this is a matter which should be addressed at the regional level, and Wirral Council will seek further consideration of this matter by the LCR Combined Authority through the emerging LCR Spatial Development Strategy.

#### *Liverpool City Council*

- 4.2.8 Through engagement with Liverpool City Council the following additional strategic and cross boundary matters have been considered between the authorities.

a) Impacts of Wirral Local Plan strategic site allocations on the surrounding area

- 4.2.9 Liverpool City Council have advised Wirral Council of the need to test the impact of future development proposals on Liverpool City Centre, to ensure that proposals complement as opposed to negatively impacting on the function and role of the City Centre. Wirral Council has sought to incorporate this into the approach within the Wirral Local Plan.

b) Town Centre Hierarchy and Retail Development

- 4.2.10 The inclusion of reference to Liverpool City Centre as the regional shopping centre within the LCR.

c) Cross-Mersey movement

- 4.2.11 The potential impacts of the demolition of the Queensway Tunnel flyovers on traffic movement have been raised, and modelling analysis has been shared with LCC highway and transport officers. Ongoing discussions and collaboration will take place with Liverpool City Council highway officers.

## d) The 'Super Port'

4.2.12 Consideration regarding whether the Wirral Local Plan should recognise the 'Super Port' as a City Region issue, particularly as it ties in with the strategic need for B8 uses across the region.

### 4.3 Strategic and cross boundary matters identified with Cheshire West and Chester Council

4.3.1 Through the February 2021 proforma and ongoing engagement, the following relevant strategic and cross boundary matters were identified with Cheshire West and Chester Council (CWaC).

Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues
Planning for housing needs	Confirmation of housing market areas and delivery of housing requirements. Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council agree they are unable to accommodate unmet housing need between the authorities.
Planning for employment needs	Confirmation of functional economic market areas and delivery of employment land needs. Cheshire West and Chester Council supports the identification and development of the Eastham Docks Estate for employment needs, providing it does not require Green Belt release. The proposed Wirral Local Plan site allocation at North Road, Eastham (EMP-SA4.5), for main employment uses is accessed via road/rail access which is located within the administrative boundary of Cheshire West and Chester. The 8.38 ha site has outline planning permission (with all matters reserved) for up to 46,450 sqm of B2/B8 Use floorspace. The application was submitted to both Wirral and Cheshire West and Chester with Wirral acting as the lead authority. The site is proposed for allocation to safeguard the quantum of floorspace permitted. The development of the site for employment purposes is considered to be complementary to Cheshire West and Chester's adjacent allocation of Hooton Park as an important key sub-regional employment location in policy STRAT 4 of Cheshire West and Chester's Local Plan (Part One) and Policy EP4 of the Local Plan (Part Two). The quoted site area in the Wirral Local Plan relates to the land within Wirral's administrative boundary only.
Approach to the Green Belt	Cheshire West and Chester has been previously consulted on Wirral's Green Belt methodology and considered it an appropriate basis to undertake a Green Belt Review. Wirral Council have since confirmed that no Green Belt release is included in the Regulation 19 Wirral Submission Draft Local Plan. However, as Wirral Council progresses through examination with its Local Plan, should any Green Belt sites be identified as being necessary, there will be a requirement for joint co-operative working to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues
Impacts of strategic site allocations and the proposed uses	Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council have considered the impacts of proposed allocations within the Wirral LP on their areas, and further clarity on their likely consequences for infrastructure and networks within Cheshire West and Chester have been identified, including mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Cheshire West will be carried out, if required.
Planning for transport infrastructure and addressing impacts	<p>Wirral Council has shared outputs from transport modelling work in its discussions with Cheshire West and Chester. Cheshire West and Chester anticipates traffic growth could have potential impacts along the A41 corridor, the Strategic Road Network, and on the Merseyrail Electric network, Borderlands rail line and cross-border bus services. (Some matters will be addressed through a separate SoCG with National Highways (formerly Highways England).</p> <p>Wirral Council have confirmed that no Green Belt release is included in the Regulation 19 Wirral Submission Draft Local Plan. However, as Wirral Council progresses through examination with its Local Plan, should any Green Belt sites, in the southern part of Wirral, that could increase road traffic on the A41 and Strategic Road Network within Cheshire West and Chester, be identified as being necessary, it is agreed that Wirral Council will carry out further modelling/ model reappraisal to understand the impact on the A41 and Strategic Road Network, using Cheshire West and Chester's growth data and the national trip end model. This will include agreeing the mechanisms by which any mitigation measures within Cheshire West and Chester will be carried out, if required.</p>
Approach to coastal change management and flood risk	Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council will share Strategic Flood Risk Assessment work and work related to coastal change management where advantageous. This will form part of both Councils' ongoing Duty to Co-operate work as part of their respective Local Plan processes.
Approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation	Cheshire West and Chester and Wirral agree that there may be opportunities to align work with both authorities' respective climate emergencies. This will form part of both Councils' ongoing Duty to Co-operate work as part of their respective Local Plan processes.
European wildlife sites across the Liverpool City Region	Consideration of potential impacts from development on designated sites is required. Cheshire West and Chester has been involved with the Liverpool City Region Recreational Management Strategy Project. This will form part of both Councils' ongoing Duty to Co-operate work as part of their respective Local Plan processes.
Approach to minerals	Cheshire West and Chester recommend highlighting the potential for marine-won aggregates to address a future shortfall in the Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Warrington area. Wirral

Strategic cross boundary matters	Description / summary of issues
	Council will continue to participate in the North West Aggregates Working Party and subscribe to the national Managed Aggregate Supply System through market monitoring and production of an annual Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA) in line with the requirements of the NPPF. Due to the lack of workable sand and gravel reserves and no crushed rock reserves in the borough, the Local Plan does not include a policy which commits to contributing to the sub-regional aggregates supply. However, Wirral Council will continue to work with MEAS and neighbouring authorities to ensure that any unmet needs and shortage do not place unnecessary burden on the two authorities and the wider Cheshire sub region.
Green and blue infrastructure	As part of the Mersey Dee Alliance a Green Infrastructure Framework for North East Wales, Cheshire and Wirral has been developed. Cheshire West and Chester Council and Wirral Council will continue to work with the Cheshire Local Nature Partnership in order to improve the natural environment within the partnership area.
Landscape	Previously agreed as a topic which should be addressed within a SoCG between Wirral Council and Cheshire West and Chester. The two authorities have consulted each other on their respective review of local landscape designations and development of evidence base documents to support their respective Local Plans.
Gypsy and traveller needs	Cheshire West and Chester is a member of a sub-regional partnership along with Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington who commissioned a GTAA in June 2018. All the authorities within the partnership agreed to meet the identified need within their areas. The 2019 GTAA for Wirral indicates there is no need for permanent pitches.
Water resources	There is a dependence of the Wirral Peninsula on Sutton Hall Water Treatment Works in Cheshire West and Chester.

#### *Planning for housing needs*

4.3.2 Wirral Council has engaged with CWaC to consider the ability of the authority to accommodate any additional housing needs, and the need for the Wirral Local Plan strategy to take into account of any unmet needs from the CWaC authority area. Through the March 2020 letters (see Appendix 5 and 6), and February 2021 Duty to Cooperate Proforma (see Appendix 8), it has been confirmed that CWaC would not be able to accommodate any unmet housing needs arising from the Wirral Local Plan, and there are no unmet housing needs arising from the CWaC authority area which should be considered within the Wirral Local Plan.

*Planning for transport infrastructure and addressing impacts*

4.3.3 National Highways (formerly Highways England) requested that traffic modelling was undertaken on the Junctions of the M53. Junction 6 is located within the Cheshire West and Chester local authority area, very close to its boundary with Wirral and was included within the modelling at the request of Cheshire West and Chester Council. Modelling was undertaken at a strategic level using Saturn modelling and also at a local level using merge / diverge assessments. The results of the modelling indicated that the impact of the Wirral Submission Draft Local Plan developments when compared with the baseline situation at Junction 6 is not material.

4.3.4 Through engagement with CWaC, additional text has been agreed and included within the Wirral Local Plan Strategic Transport Modelling report to clarify the context for the modelling undertaken, and explain how areas outside of Wirral Borough have been assessed within the modelling.

#### 4.4 Strategic and cross boundary matters identified with prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies

*National Highways – Additional transport modelling on the junctions of the M53*

4.4.1 As outlined above, National Highways requested that traffic modelling was undertaken on the junctions of the M53. Through ongoing information sharing and engagement (summarised above and within Appendix 1 and 2), additional transport modelling has been undertaken to meet the requirements of National Highways. The results of the additional modelling demonstrated that impacts from the Wirral Submission Draft Local Plan on the Strategic Road Network are not material when compared with the predicted baseline situation. Consequently, no mitigation is proposed within the Wirral Local Plan.

4.4.2 There are therefore no items of disagreement between Wirral Borough Council and National Highways on the impact of the Wirral Local Plan on the Strategic Road Network.

*Natural England – Production and review of the Wirral Recreation Mitigation and Avoidance Strategy Interim Approach*

4.4.3 Wirral Council is currently finalising the LCR Recreation Mitigation and Avoidance Strategy (RMS) Interim Approach supporting the draft Wirral Local Plan. A draft Interim Approach was shared with Natural England in December 2021, and comments were provided in February 2022. Following the receipt of Natural England's response to the Draft Interim Approach, the Council is actioning each point to inform the preparation of the Interim Approach.

4.4.4 The Council will continue to work with Natural England following Regulation 19 publication to address any post-publication issues relating to the Wirral Interim Approach prior to submission to the Secretary of State and thereafter during the Local Plan examination. The Council will also continue to participate in the LCR RMS Steering Group and related activity.

## 5. Duty to Cooperate Statements of Common Ground

5.1.1 The Planning Practice Guidance<sup>7</sup> (PPG) recommends that authorities should make ‘SoCG available on their website by the time they publish their draft plan, in order to provide communities and other stakeholders with a transparent picture of how they have collaborated’. The Council has identified the following (see table below) surrounding authorities, prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies, and other organisations, where it would be helpful to present within a Duty to Cooperate SoCG how regular and ongoing engagement has taken place in order to support the production and progression of the Wirral Local Plan.

5.1.2 The table below also outlines the current status of the Duty to Cooperate SoCG.

Organisation	Status of SoCG
St Helens Council	Drafted, shared with Council, no comments received to date
Halton Council	Currently being finalised
Knowsley Council	Currently being finalised
Sefton Council	Agreed
West Lancashire Council	Agreed
Liverpool City Council	Currently being drafted
Cheshire West and Chester Council	Currently being drafted
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority	Drafted, shared with Council, comments received, awaiting reply
Natural England	Agreed
Marine Management Organisation	Currently being drafted
Historic England	Currently being drafted
Environment Agency	Currently being drafted
National Highways	Agreed
Sport England	Agreed

5.1.3 This Statement of Compliance provides a comprehensive and transparent account of how the Council has collaborated with all relevant organisations throughout the production of the Local Plan. Where a Duty to Cooperate SoCG has been agreed, this is presented within Appendix 12. The completion of outstanding SoCG will be sought with the relevant organisations during the Regulation 19 publication period, in order to support the submission of the Plan.

<sup>7</sup> PPG, Plan Making, Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 61-020-20190315



## 6. Conclusion

6.1.1 This Statement demonstrates that, through the range of activities undertaken by Wirral Council, the production of the Wirral Local Plan has met the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate.

## 7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Duty to Cooperate engagement since January 2020

Appendix 2: Duty to Cooperate Activities Register

Appendix 3: Notes of meetings listed within the Duty to Cooperate Activities Register

Appendix 4: Regulation 18 Local Plan Issues and Options consultation representations from surrounding local authorities and prescribed Duty to Cooperate bodies

Appendix 5: Example of the March 2020 Duty to Cooperate housing needs letters sent to all surrounding local authorities

Appendix 6: March 2020 Duty to Cooperate housing needs letter responses received from surrounding local authorities

Appendix 7: December 2020 Duty to Cooperate workshop notes

Appendix 8: Completed Duty to Cooperate Proformas, February 2021

Appendix 9: Example of the June 2021 Duty to Cooperate letters

Appendix 10: Liverpool City Region Statement of Common Ground

Appendix 11: Letters to Flintshire Council and Natural Resources Wales

Appendix 12: Agreed Duty to Cooperate Statements of Common Ground