

3. Site Description

Introduction

- 3.1 This chapter provides a description of the Proposed Development Site, including a brief site history and a description of its surrounding area. It also summarises the potential environmental considerations to the proposed development of the Site.

Site Location

- 3.2 The site is irregular in shape and occupies approximately 23.7 hectares of land located in Kirkby, Knowsley approximately 10km from Liverpool City Centre. The Site is situated to the south of Kirkby Town Centre and occupies an area of mostly undeveloped land. The Site is bound to the north and east by Cherryfield Drive, to the south by Bewley Drive and to the west by the A506 Valley Road. To the northwest corner of the Site is Knowsley Community College, Kirkby Campus, which consists of a college building, carparking and playing fields. To the east of the Site is Kirkby Leisure Centre, with associated carparking and football pitches. The character of the area to the south, east and west of the Site is defined by 20th and 21st century residential development. There is also a small residential development located to the south of the site north of Bewley Drive. To the northwest of the Site is the historic settlement of Kirkby, including the Church of St Chad.

Site Description & Environmental Considerations

- 3.3 Barratt & David Wilson Homes (BDW) (the 'Applicant') is seeking to obtain planning permission for residential development including car parking, new vehicular access, highway improvements and landscaping. This site is currently vacant and available for residential development. The site characteristics comprise of the following:

Transport

- 3.4 The site has excellent transport connectivity and is located north of the M57 motorway, circa 350m south of Kirkby Town Centre and 5.5km southwest of Maghull. The development site is bound to the west by the A506 (Valley Road) and a parcel of urban green space. To the north and east, the development site is bound by

Cherryfield Drive, with the eastern boundary also including Kirkby Leisure Centre. To the south, the site is bounded by Bewley Drive as well as an existing residential development. To the immediate north of the site beyond Cherryfield Drive is Kirkby Bus Station and Kirkby Town Centre. Cherryfield Drive is a two-way single carriageway running in a circular alignment around the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.

- 3.5 To the north of the site, a 248no. space car park is available, with 156no. spaces for long parking, and 92no. spaces for short stay parking. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the car park is taken from Cherryfield Drive, with the footways at the junction featuring dropped kerbs to allow for pedestrian mobility.
- 3.6 Bewley Drive is a two-way single carriageway, running in a broadly east-to-west alignment along the southern boundary of the site. Valley Road is a four-lane dual-carriageway, travelling in both directions, running in a broadly north-to-south alignment along the western boundary of the site. To the south, the A506 forms the minor arm of a roundabout junction with the M57 Motorway at Junction 6.
- 3.7 There are no PRoW within the development site. There are several PRoWs present within the vicinity of the site, including routes KB/7/3, KB/8/1 and KB/8/2 south of the site, KB/4/1 is to the west, and KB/2/1, KB/2/2 and KB/2a/2 to the north of the site.
- 3.8 There is an extensive range of facilities accessible within a 500m walking catchment from the site. Multiple bus stops are accessible with a 500m walk, including bus stops on Cherryfield Drive providing services in both directions. Kirkby Bus Station is also c.340m (3-minute walk) from the site, providing a wide range of services. Kirkby Town Centre is located adjacent to the site's northern boundary, and provides various amenities including Rowland's Pharmacy, a Costa Coffee and a Santander Bank. Kirkby Retail Park, that includes a McDonald's, KFC and Taco Bell, is within c.600m (7-minute walk). A Morrison's supermarket is also accessible within c.490m (6-minute walk). The site is also located within walking distance from several schools, including St. Joseph the Worker Primary School within 260m (3-minute walk) and Kirkby High School within c.625m (7-minutes). Kirkby Rail Station also lies within

the 1,000m walking catchment from the site, an approximate 12-minute walk from the site.

3.9 The development is connected to local amenities via a network of good quality footways with dropped kerbs, signalised crossing points and good quality surfaces. This provides sufficient access to all uses, including those with various forms of disability. The site is well-placed in terms of pedestrian connectivity, with walking representing a realistic alternative to car trips.

3.10 The site is highly accessible via sustainable modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport - thereby offering a realistic and convenient alternative to single occupancy car trips.

Air Quality

3.11 KMBC have not declared any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). They have a number of automatic and non-automatic monitoring locations across Knowsley, including within Kirkby. The nearest AQMA is approximately 900m southwest of the Site and is the Liverpool City AQMA, declared by Liverpool City Council for exceedances of the NO₂ annual mean objective.

3.12 The air quality monitoring carried out closest to the proposed development shows a general compliance of the NO₂ annual mean objective in 2022, apart from at one location. The closest automatic monitor to the Site was compliant with the NO₂ annual mean and 1-hour mean objectives and the PM₁₀ annual mean and 24-hour mean objectives in 2019.

Noise and Vibration

3.13 The Site is located within a semi-suburban area which has noise environment predominantly influenced by road traffic on surrounding roads.

Heritage

3.14 There are a number of listed buildings, parks and gardens in the surrounding area, including;

- Old Hall Conservation Area

- Church of St Chad (grade II listed building)
- Kirkby Hall Lodge (grade II listed building)
- Vicarage (grade II listed building)
- Stables to the North of the Vicarage (grade II listed building)
- Gate Piers to South of Vicarage (grade II listed building)
- Kirkby War Memorial (grade II listed building)

3.15 The settlement of Kirkby was founded in the early medieval period, although the town remained largely farmland until the 20th century. By the time of the first edition OS map (1850), the settlement was shown to be low density and surrounded by agricultural land. Following the extensive bomb damage in Liverpool during the Second World War and a programme of slum clearances within the City, Kirkby began to be developed as an overspill estate in the 1950s. The development Site itself was not developed and remained largely open space through the 20th century, aside from the construction of a college to the north west of the Site, and school complex to the east. The school buildings were demolished in the 21st century and replaced by a leisure centre. Though there are no assets of heritage located on the site, the local area features a number of assets which require consideration during both the construction and operational phases.

Contaminated Land and Ground Conditions

3.16 Historical mapping indicates that the site was undeveloped until the 1960s, with the subsequent construction of the college campus in the north-western sector and a school in the south-eastern sector of the site. From 1961, historical mapping shows earthworks associated with Valley Hills located to beyond the southwestern site boundary, by 1976 the landfill is no longer identified in maps. Maps of the northern site boundary pre-1961 identified residential dwellings and retail buildings, including a fuel station and electrical substations. There is currently no evidence of the fuel station above ground level however it is understood the former underground storage tanks are still present.

3.17 At present, the site is largely vacant, with the former roads and hardstanding at the north of the site and areas of car parking associated with the now-demolished school and college. A building associated with the former college remains in the north-

western sector and the Kirkby Leisure Centre located to the east of the site off Cherryfield Drive.

- 3.18 A review of geological map information indicates that drift strata beneath the site comprises Glacial Till across the majority of the site and Shirdley Hill Sand at the northern boundary. No drift deposits are recorded in the north-west of the site. The solid geological stratum beneath the site is mapped as the Chester Formation Sandstone. The Glacial Till is classified as a secondary undifferentiated aquifer (drift) (low sensitivity) with the Shirdley Hill Sand classified as a secondary A drift aquifer (medium sensitivity). The bedrock stratum is classified as a principal aquifer (high sensitivity). No groundwater abstractions have been identified within a 1 km radius.
- 3.19 The Kirkby Brook is located 52m west to the site at a lower topographical gradient. The brook is assessed as being of medium sensitivity given its distance from the site.

Ecology

- 3.20 The site is not and does not form part of any statutory designated site for nature conservation. It is located within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone for a number of designated sites which are designated for their importance for wintering wildfowl and passage migrants. However, the proposals do not match any of the development categories which would require further consultation with Natural England in relation to the potential risks to statutory designated sites.
- 3.21 The site is not and does not form part of any non-statutory designed site for nature conservation i.e. Local Wildlife Site in Merseyside. Kirkby Brook LWS is located 30 metres to the west of the site. Suitable measures will need to be implemented during construction to protect the LWS.
- 3.22 The site is located within a suburban area and comprises areas of scrub and tree lines, coarse, infrequently mown grassland, regularly managed amenity grassland, hard standing with areas of colonising vegetation and an area of recently cleared ground at the south-eastern end of the site, which is recolonising to scrub and grassland. Habitats within and adjacent to the site are suitable for foraging and commuting bats and nesting birds. Mitigation and compensatory measures to

protect nesting birds and roosting bats at the site are feasible and are described in the ecology assessment (chapter 12).

Summary

3.23 This chapter has presented a description of the Site including a description of the location, a brief site history and a description of its surrounding area. Based on the information presented in this chapter, the main environmental characteristics of the Site have been identified as follows:

- The site has excellent transport accessibility to the wider Strategic Road Network and is highly accessible for sustainable modes of transport
- There are no landscape designations nor building, parks and gardens associated with historical/cultural heritage on the site.
- The site does not contain any sensitive ecological receptors nor ecological features.
- The closest watercourse is located 100m beyond the western site perimeter. The area beyond the site to the west is located in flood zone 3. The site is not at risk of flooding.
- The site is not located in an Air Quality Management Area

3.24 These identified constraints have been taken into account in the development of the proposals to ensure a thorough iterative design process and through the identification of appropriate mitigation measures as presented in Chapter 5: The Proposed Development.