

A photograph of a paved path in a park. In the foreground, a woman in a white and green long-sleeved shirt and black pants is walking away from the camera. To her right, a man and a woman are cycling towards the camera. The man is wearing a blue helmet and a green shirt, and the woman is wearing a white helmet, sunglasses, and a light blue shirt. In the background, other people are walking and cycling on the path, which is lined with large trees and green grass. The scene is bright and sunny.

Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy

Embedding Sport England Active Design Principles

December 2025

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Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to outline how Active Design principles are applied throughout the Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy, particularly in relation to two key regeneration sites: Halewood Leisure Centre and Grace Park. These principles underpin the wider ambition to foster inclusive, vibrant, and accessible environments, aligning with feedback received through extensive community engagement.

By embedding Active Design from the outset, the design proposals aim to:

- Promote healthier lifestyles by enabling walking, cycling, and inclusive access to facilities.
- Create safer, well-connected green and public spaces.
- Encourage community interaction, recreation, and social cohesion.
- Deliver long-term value for residents through sustainable infrastructure and placemaking.

This document demonstrates how the Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy integrates Sport England’s Active Design Principles to support Halewood’s transformation into a healthier, more inclusive, and better-connected community. It serves as a strategic framework for embedding physical activity into everyday life, shaping public spaces, and improving long-term wellbeing outcomes for residents of all ages and abilities.



Context: The Halewood Investment Masterplan

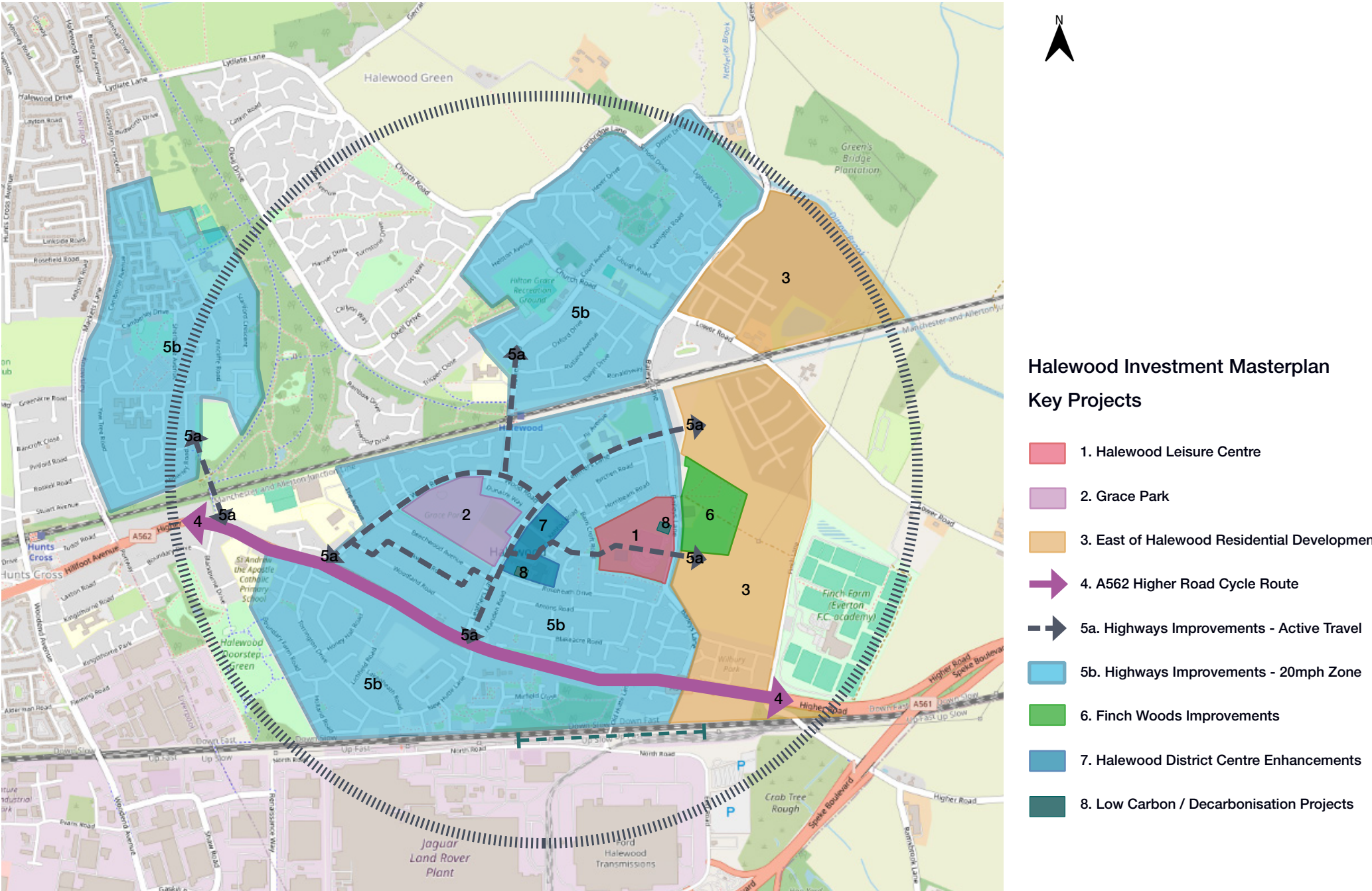
The Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy forms a key part of the broader Halewood Investment Masterplan—an ambitious regeneration strategy designed to coordinate and deliver transformational change across Halewood. This holistic plan is supported by a combination of funding sources, including over £15.3 million in Levelling Up Funding (LUF) awarded in 2023, Section 106 contributions exceeding £13 million from private development, and strategic investment from the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

The Investment Masterplan brings together multiple initiatives, policies, and projects under one coherent framework, with key components including:

- Council Investment:** Targeted upgrades to highways, schools, green spaces, and public infrastructure.
- Private Investment:** Development of new housing and commercial space, including the East of Halewood development.
- LUF-Funded Projects:** The regeneration of Halewood Leisure Centre and Grace Park to serve as inclusive, high-quality, multifunctional spaces at the heart of the community.
- Policy Alignment:** Integration with strategic documents such as the Knowsley 2030 Strategy, Knowsley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), and the Sport England Active Design Guide.

The Halewood Investment Masterplan is designed to deliver tangible improvements in health, mobility, and quality of life by transforming the built environment to support active living, economic growth, and social cohesion. It presents an opportunity for Halewood to become a connected, thriving, and resilient town centre, delivering long-term benefits for current and future generations.

- Key Projects in the Halewood Investment Masterplan**
- 1. Halewood Leisure Centre (LUF-Funded)**
 - Redevelopment of the existing centre with expanded indoor and outdoor facilities.
 - Includes new MUGAs, active travel routes, outdoor gym equipment, and civic plaza.
 - Supports formal sport and informal activity for all ages.
 - 2. Grace Park (LUF-Funded)**
 - Major upgrade of green space into an inclusive, multifunctional community park.
 - Features play areas, fitness trails, pavilion, and a “Grace Gardens” civic space.
 - Integrated with new walking and cycling infrastructure.
 - 3. East of Halewood Residential Development (Private Sector Funded)**
 - A large-scale housing development delivering new homes for the borough.
 - Accompanied by £13 million in Section 106 contributions to support:
 - Local highways upgrades
 - Education facilities
 - Public open space
 - Sports and healthcare provision
 - 4. A562 Higher Road Cycle Route (LCR Combined Authority Funded)**
 - £2.5 million investment to deliver a new cycle route along Higher Road.
 - Links Halewood to key employment and transport destinations in the wider city region.
 - Aligns with Liverpool City Region LCWIP and Halewood’s Active Travel objectives.
 - 5. Highways Improvements (Council & Developer Funded)**
 - Local road upgrades to support new housing and improved accessibility.
 - Includes junction enhancements and traffic calming to improve pedestrian safety.
 - Designed to complement walking and cycling routes.
 - 6. Finch Woods Improvements**
 - Enhancements to woodland access, trails, and habitat management.
 - Improves east-west green corridor connections between residential areas and the town centre.
 - Supports informal recreation and biodiversity goals.
 - 7. Halewood District Centre Enhancements**
 - Public realm upgrades around the shopping centre and library.
 - Includes new paving, street furniture, signage, and event space.
 - Strengthens the town centre’s role as a vibrant civic and commercial hub.
 - 8. Low Carbon / Decarbonisation Projects**
 - Investment into low-carbon technology and energy upgrades for public buildings.
 - May include improvements to the Leisure Centre’s environmental performance.
 - Supports Knowsley’s broader sustainability goals.



Strategic Alignment: Health, Place and Connectivity through Design

The Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy aligns closely with regional and national policy frameworks that prioritise sustainability, wellbeing, and placemaking. Specifically, it integrates the ambitions of the Sport England Active Design Principles, the Knowsley 2030 Strategy, and both the Liverpool City Region and Knowsley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). This alignment ensures the Masterplan is both locally relevant and strategically robust.



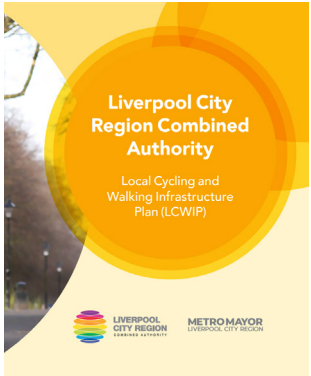
Active Design
May 2023
Sport England

Sport England Active Design Principles

Sport England's Active Design framework sets out 10 principles structured around three themes: Supporting Active Travel, Creating Active, High-Quality Places, and Maintaining Activity Over Time. Halewood’s Masterplan addresses all 10 principles by:

- Establishing walkable communities and safe, connected active travel routes.
- Integrating multifunctional spaces like Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre.
- Co-locating key amenities such as leisure, green space, and transport hubs.
- Providing infrastructure that enables activity (e.g., cycle parking, gym stations).
- Designing buildings and public spaces to invite physical activity, not just allow it.

This strategic integration ensures activity becomes part of everyday life for Halewood residents—whether through formal recreation or informal, incidental movement.



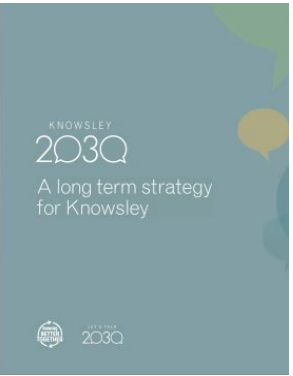
Liverpool City Region
Local Cycling and Walking
Infrastructure Plan
LCRCA

Liverpool City Region LCWIP

The Liverpool City Region Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCR LCWIP) outlines a long-term strategy to deliver a safe, integrated active travel network across Merseyside. For Halewood, the plan:

- Identifies the A562 Higher Road corridor—a key route through Halewood—as a regional cycling priority.
- Directs £2.5 million in investment into active travel improvements along this route.
- Supports modal shift to reduce car dependency and improve regional air quality and health outcomes.

Halewood’s proposals complement this by creating local connections into the regional network, ensuring residents can safely access employment, schools, and amenities by bike or on foot.



Knowsley 2030 Strategy
August 2022
Knowsley Better Together

Knowsley 2030 Strategy

The Knowsley 2030 Strategy defines a long-term vision to build a borough that is sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous. The Halewood Masterplan supports this vision in five key ways:

Knowsley 2030 Priority	How the Strategy will deliver
Sustainable Borough	Prioritises walking and cycling, reduces car use, integrates green infrastructure and biodiversity.
Health & Wellbeing	Supports physical activity through accessible design, leisure facilities, and active public realm.
Thriving Communities	Flexible civic spaces encourage events, local enterprise, and social cohesion.
Improved Connectivity	Walkable layout with enhanced links to rail, cycle routes, and new housing developments.
Empowered Residents & Businesses	Co-located facilities, active buildings, and community engagement in shaping public spaces.

By aligning spatial design with social goals, the Masterplan delivers lasting value for people, place, and the economy.



Knowsley Local Cycling and
Walking Infrastructure Plan
March 2025
Knowsley Council

Knowsley LCWIP

Published in 2025, the Knowsley Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) zooms in on borough-specific infrastructure needs. Key ambitions supported by the Halewood Masterplan include:

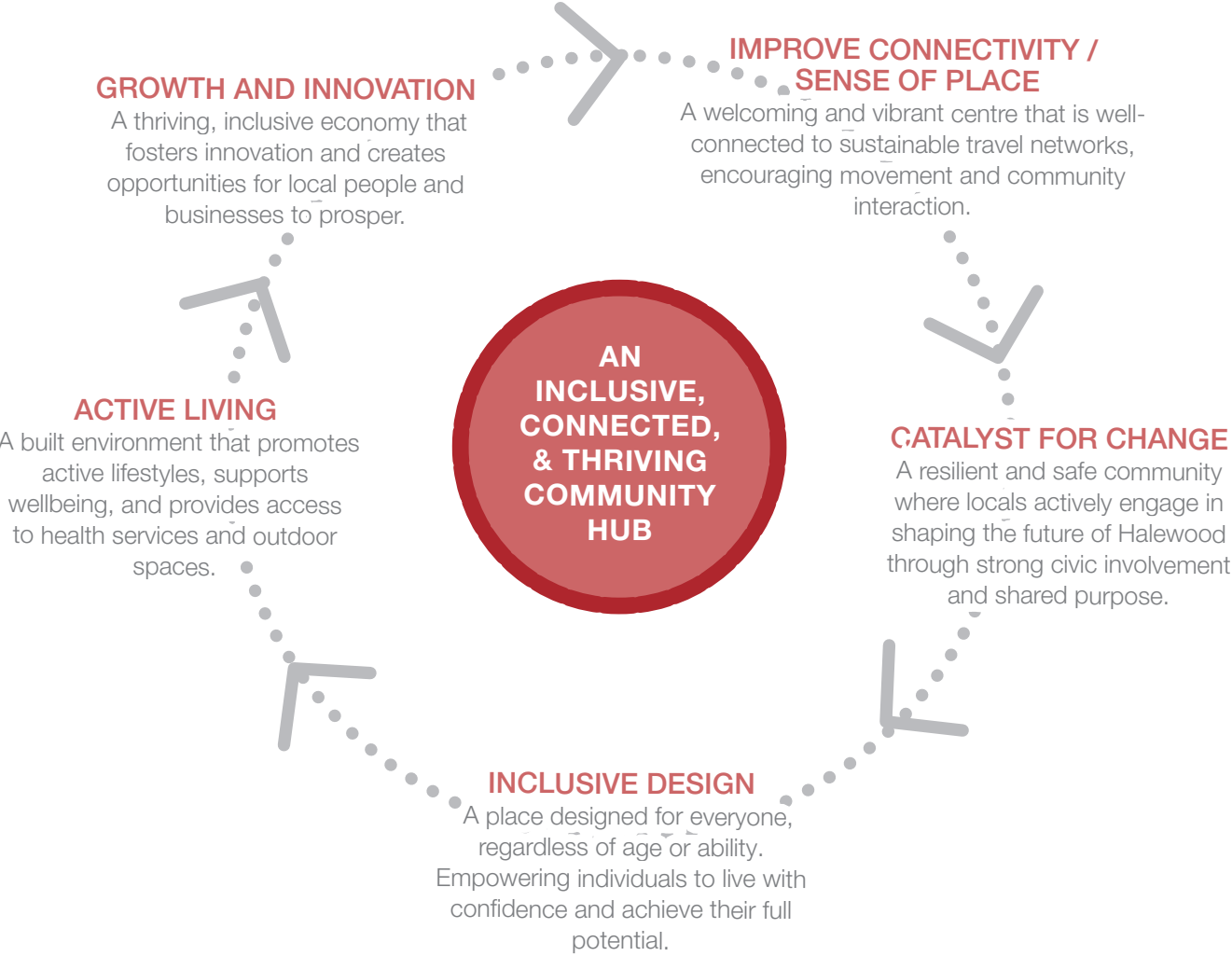
- East–west connectivity linking the new East of Halewood housing developments to the town centre.
- Safe, LTN 1/20-compliant walking and cycling routes integrated through Grace Park and the Leisure Centre.
- Seamless connections to green corridors such as Finch Woods and National Cycle Route 62 (Liverpool Loop Line).
- Improved links to Halewood Railway Station, supporting multi-modal, sustainable commuting.

These strategies ensure that Halewood not only provides high-quality infrastructure but also promotes long-term behavioural change in how people move around their community.

Halewood Town Centre Vision

By strategically aligning with these 4 key documents. The Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy sits at the intersection of design, health, and policy and sets out a coherent vision for movement and wellbeing for Halewood.

It delivers a connected, active, and inclusive urban environment. This alignment ensures that every investment made in Halewood serves multiple goals—supporting individual wellbeing, community development, and environmental sustainability.



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Active Design Principles

Active Design, as outlined by Sport England’s guidance, emphasises the importance of quality design in our living and working environments. This approach aims to enhance opportunities for physical activity, promoting healthy lifestyles and overall well-being.

WSP has created designs for the Halewood Leisure Centre and Grace Park, with the Active Design ‘Ten Principles’ at the forefront of the design along with supporting documents and policy in line with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Councils aims.

The subsequent pages explain how WSP has implemented these principles within the design framework for Halewood Town Centre.

Core Theme : FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPAL



Principle 1 – Activity for all
All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours. This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle.

Theme 1 : Supporting Active Travel



Principle 2 – Walkable communities
Facilities for daily essentials and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.



Principle 3 – Providing connected active travel routes
Encourage active travel for all ages and abilities by creating a continuous network of routes connecting places safely and directly. Networks should be easy to use, supported by signage and landmarks to help people find their way.



Principle 4 – Mixing uses and co-locating facilities
People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.

Theme 2 : Active High-Quality Spaces & Places



Principle 5 – Network of multi-functional open spaces
Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.



Principle 6 – High-quality streets and spaces
Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.



Principle 7 – Providing activity infrastructure
Infrastructure to enable sport, recreation and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate activity for all.



Principle 8 – Active buildings, inside and out
Buildings we occupy shape our everyday lives, both when users are inside and outside. Buildings should be designed with providing opportunities for physical activity at the forefront, considering the arrival experience, internal circulation, opportunities to get up and move about, and making the building an active destination.

Theme 3 - Creating & Maintaining Activity



Principle 9 – Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces
Spaces and facilities should be effectively maintained and managed to support physical activity. These places should be monitored to understand how they are used, and flexible so that they can be adapted as needed.



Principle 10 – Activating spaces
The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

What is Active Design?

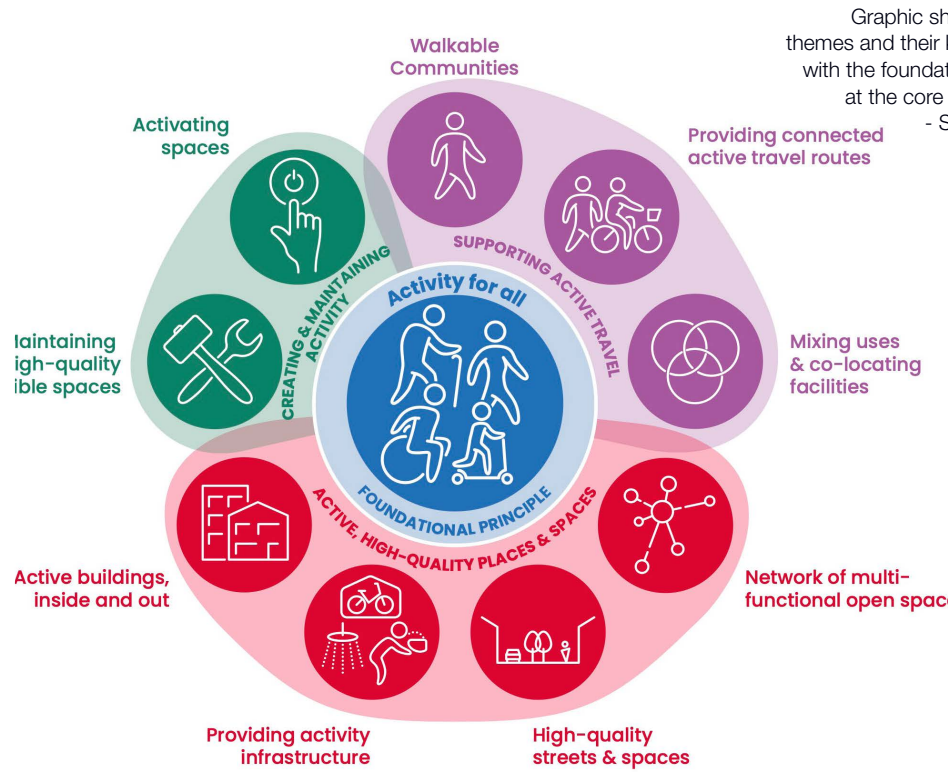
Sport England Active Design Guidance states;

Active Design sets out how the design of our environments can help people to lead more physically active and healthy lives. It’s about helping to create ‘active environments’

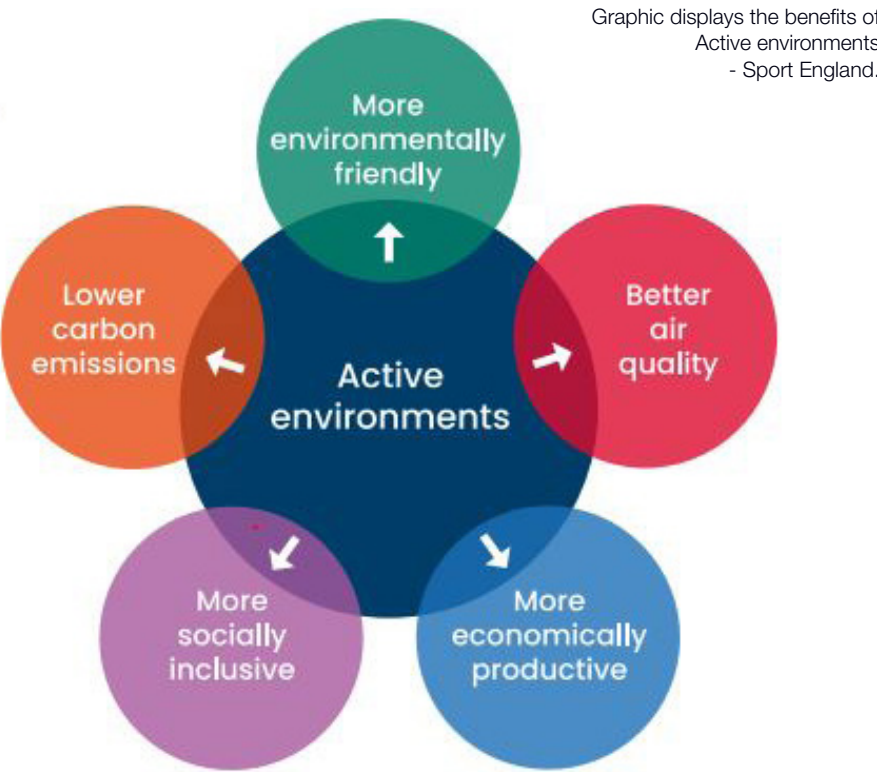
Active environments are the spaces and places for people to be active. They are not just focused on delivering opportunities for sport and formal exercise. They seek to encourage all physical activity—such as active travel, children’s play, outdoor leisure and anything else that maximises opportunities for

people to be active, as well as sport and exercise. By providing opportunities for physical activity, active environments can help improve the physical and mental health of adults and children.

The Sport England themes and principles shape the structure of the report to demonstrate how the Halewood town centre design meets the ten principles.



Graphic shows the three themes and their key principles, with the foundational principle at the core of the graphic - Sport England.



Graphic displays the benefits of Active environments - Sport England.

Core Theme : FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLE

Principle 1 — Activity for All



Sport England | Aim
All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours.

This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle

Sport England | How to do it

A network of multifunctional open space should be created across all communities to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play and other landscape uses including woodland, wildlife habitat and productive landscapes (allotments, orchards). Facilities for sport, recreation and play should be of an appropriate scale and positioned in prominent locations, to increase awareness and visibility of activity, as well as being appropriately sited and designed to respect residential amenity.



How the design aligns to the principle

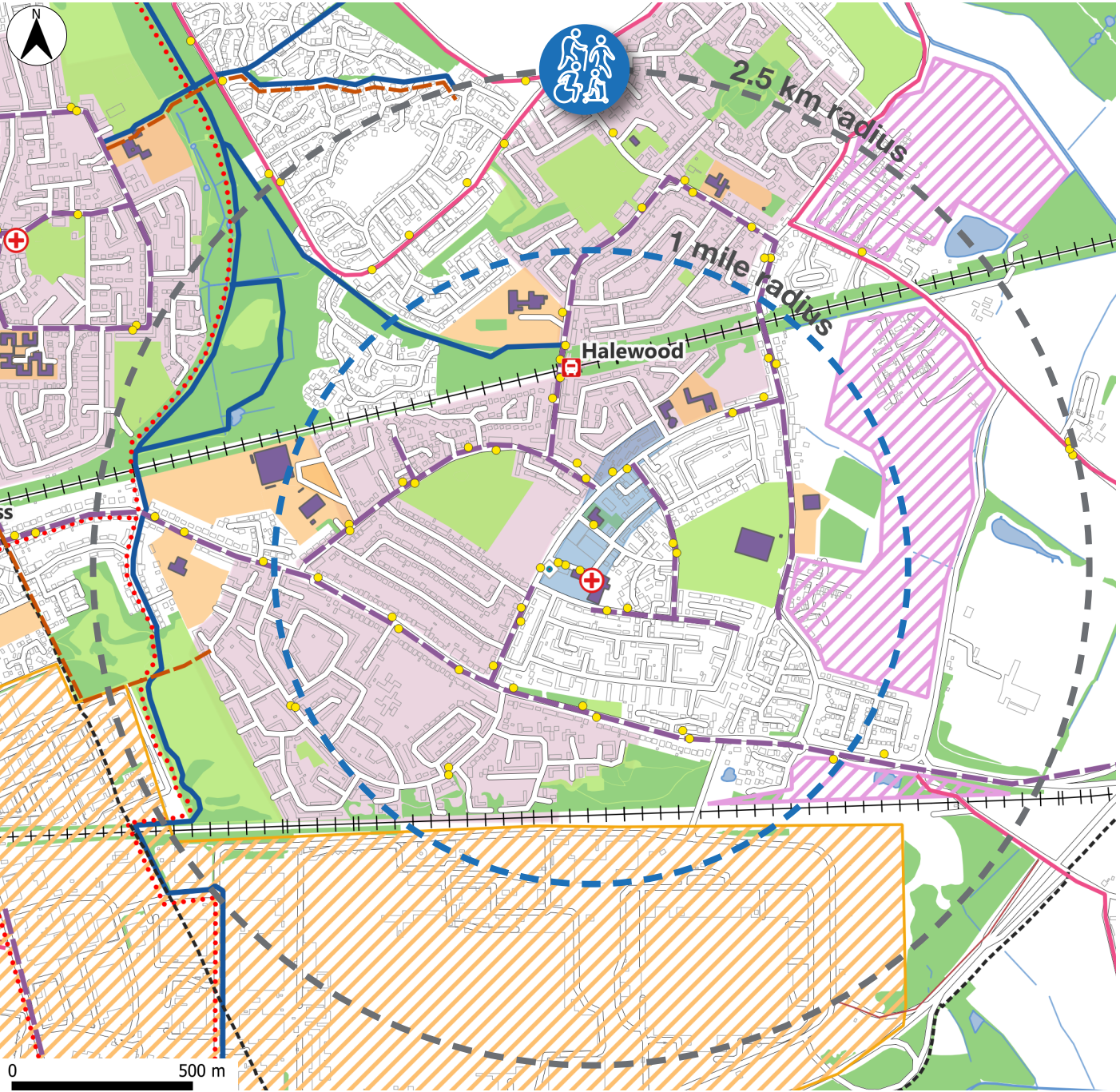
Halewood masterplan supports physical activity, by having active design at its core. This means that the residents of Halewood will be able to travel by foot, bike or wheelchair from all parts of Halewood to the improved facilities that are being created or improved (sports facilities, formal play and open spaces). This supports the physical health of people and the wider community by making travel by walking and wheels possible and purposeful.

Proposed design features include a fitness circuit in the green space around the Leisure Centre, offering a safe, traffic-free walking route that promotes physical activity. Accessible via an active travel route, it encourages users to combine walking with social or leisure activities like meeting friends or visiting shops, while supporting sustainable travel.

The walking route also serves as a mini bike circuit, promoting early cycling habits and active lifestyles for children. The complements the leisure centre, offering a full-day experience while helping build cycling confidence through directional changes and links to the LTN 1/20 pathway.

The proposed walking and cycling design encourage behavioural changes as walkers and cyclists become aware of the enhancements and start to make new journeys. Once pedestrians and cyclists start to use the new routes and journeys, and find that they are positive experiences, a range of positive behaviour changes will follow. When the people of Halewood are able to experience more enjoyable high-quality journeys, they are more likely to use them. In turn this means better physical fitness and mental wellbeing, triggered by increased exercise and spending time outdoors.

As people change their habits from using cars to active travel, a mode shift will occur, meaning less congestion on the road, and therefore cleaner air quality, resulting in healthier people and communities.



Key Design Features

- Aligned with the wider Knowsley Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan
- A mini bike route designed as a loop enhances the leisure centre's offering by providing a full-day experience.
- The route changes direction and links to the LTN 1/20 compliant route giving children the opportunity to build confidence before utilising the enhanced infrastructure.
- Sensory trails providing quiet and calming spaces
- Carefully located resting points to promote comfort and accessibility.

Legend

Primary Walking Routes

- Public Rights of Way
- Link Footways
- Secondary Walking Routes
- KMBC Boundary

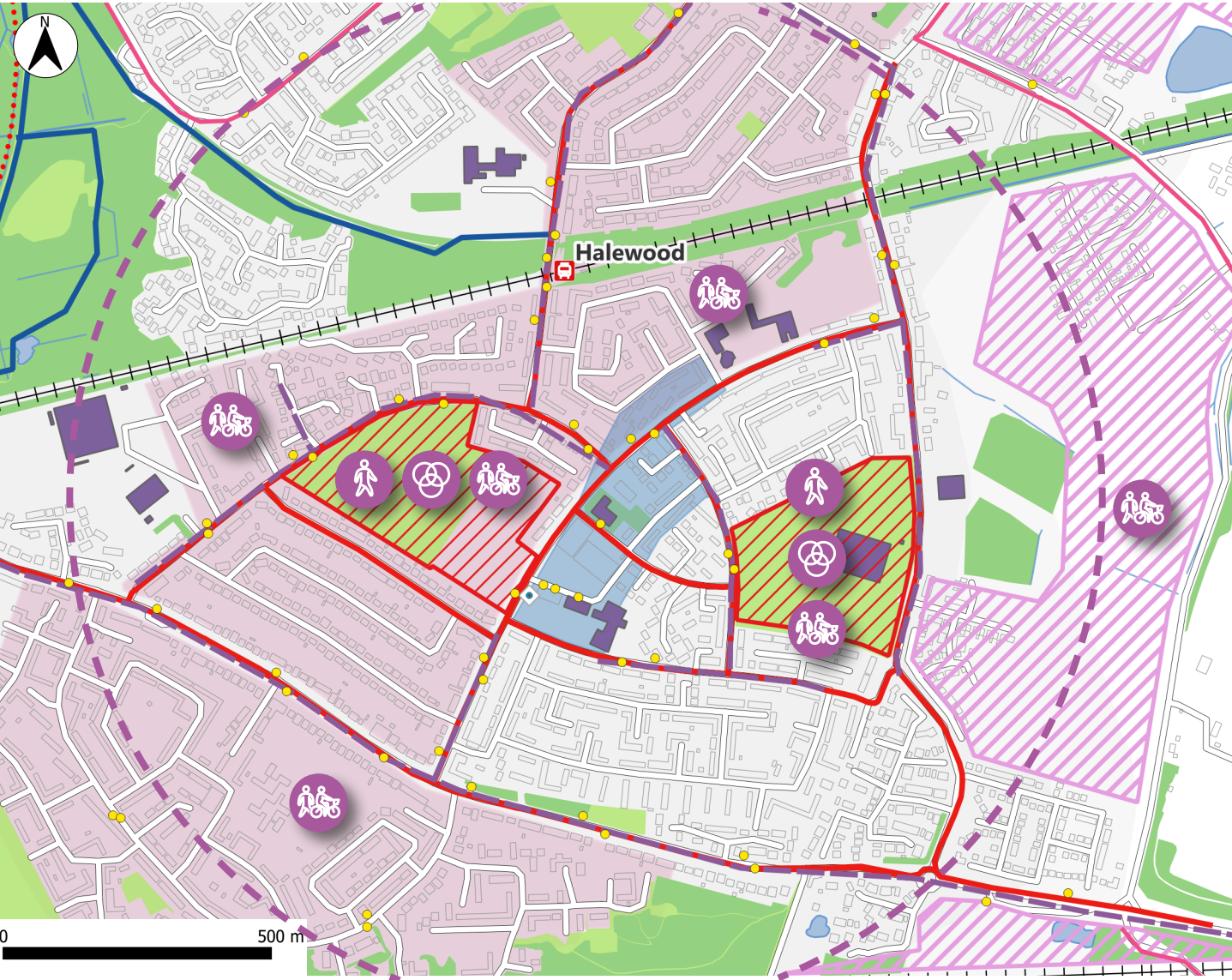
Cycling Routes

- National Cycle Network
- Trans Pennine Trail
- Other cycle routes

Trip Generators

- Train Station
- Halewood Bus Stops
- Medical
- One Stop Shop and Library
- Core Walking Zone (CWZ)
- Future development sites
- Landmark / Key Buildings
- 20mph Roads
- Employment area
- Open Greenspace

Theme 1 : Supporting Active Travel



Key Design Features

- Creating new Halewood Cycle Loop connection to National Cycle Route 62 and Liverpool Loop Line.
- Provide safe routes to residential areas and jobs.
- Encourage local residents to Choose Active Travel modes (walk & cycle) to work and to local amenities.
- Shared use path, with crossings and onward connection to surrounding road network
- New wayfinding and lighting
- Increase connectivity through Grace Park to connect Wood Road and Leather's Lane

Legend	
Primary Walking Routes	Trip Generators
Public Rights of Way	LUF Development Sites
Secondary Walking Routes	Train Station
Link Footways	Halewood Bus Stops
Core Walking Zone (CWZ)	One Stop Shop and Library
20mph Roads	Landmark / Key Buildings
Cycling Routes	Open Greenspace
National Cycle Network	Employment area
Trans Pennine Trail	Future development sites
Proposed Halewood Active Travel Network	
Other cycle routes	

- Walkable communities
- Providing connected active travel routes
- Mixing uses and co-locating facilities

Principle 2 — Walkable communities



Sport England | Aim

Facilities for daily activities and recreation should be within easy reach of each other by active travel means, making it more likely that people will make the journey by using active travel modes (defined in Theme 1). Good active travel connections should be provided to extend the range of services that are accessible while remaining physically active.

Sport England | How to do it

New development should be designed to be compact, with shops, schools, community facilities, open space and appropriate sports facilities typically within a maximum 800m distance from homes, along streets and active networks. Existing communities should be assessed for provision gaps, and opportunities to strengthen their mix of facilities within 800m of homes should be prioritised. Communities should have good onward connections to higher-order services and jobs through active travel networks, and public transport.



How the design aligns to the principle

- 2.1 Locate facilities, jobs and homes close to each other**
Connecting more spaces and amenities, gives people multiple purposes to use a new active travel journey, and the more likely they are to use them. For example the active travel routes mean that a person can combine travelling from their home along the East West connectivity between new housing development and Wood Road Green Space, via Finch Woods, the Leisure Centre and the District Centre and beyond to local employment leisure facilities and improved open space.
- 2.2 Promote the active travel choice**
Active travel is promoted by individuals using the routes, which is achieved by designing high quality and well-connected routes that are enjoyable, safe and convenient to use, such as those proposed as part of the Halewood town centre design.

Promoting health benefits of active travel, such an improved physical fitness and mental well – being can encourage the use of active travel as a choice. Promoting active travel as a better economic choice, as a cheaper alternative to using a car may also help to encourage people to use the routes.
- 2.3 Use filtered permeability to make it easier to use active travel rather than drive**
The routes through Halewood leisure centre and Grace Park only allow use by walking or cycling. There is a car park close to the entrance at both sites, therefore cars cannot and have no need to travel through the site, ensuring the routes are people first and safe.
- 2.4 Utilise residential and employment travel planning**
Residential and employment travel planning is encouraged in the Halewood town centre design as it incorporates the residential development of Halewood East, providing a safe and well connected cycle route from the new housing development to Halewood Leisure centre and Grace Park.

Principle 3 — Providing connected active travel routes



Sport England | Aim

Encourage active travel for all ages and abilities by creating a continuous network of routes connecting places safely and directly. Networks should be easy to use, supported by signage and landmarks to help people find their way.

Sport England | How to do it

A comprehensive network of safe, high quality and easy to find active travel routes should connect destinations and provide feeder routes to homes. This should create a range of clearly signed routes for all potential or existing users, including a choice between busy and quiet, leisure and utility focused options, and should limit conflict between different transport modes. Existing networks (including Rights of Way) should be mapped and opportunities identified, and connected with high quality provision, with active travel prioritised. Providing connections and interchange to public transport enhances the utilisation and effectiveness of such networks.

How the design aligns to the principle

3.1 Create a direct network of routes which connect to places, along routes people want to use.

The shared use path at the heart of these developments will form a vital connection through the centre of Halewood, meaning that cycling through the town will be safer, faster and a more pleasant experience.

The wider network extends to destinations such as local school Halewood Academy, Halewood Railway Station and Finch Woods, giving local residents and visitors more freedom to choose how they travel.

3.2 Provide high quality, safe, routes with a clear role and purpose

Through the developments, the shared-use paths will be clearly marked, well lit and connect easily for onward journeys. They will create an environment where cycling is safe, convenient and socially acceptable is key to driving change in modern habits.

Works planned for Higher Road (A562) will provide an improved cycling experience in the area surrounding the site, with new crossings and markings for cyclists and pedestrians alike. This investment in local infrastructure will give local people the confidence to make more journeys by bike and on foot.

3.3 Enable interchange between active modes and onward sustainable travel

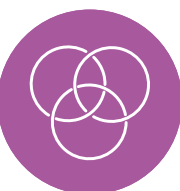
The proximity of both sites to Halewood Railway Station means that multi-modal journeys (those which use more than one mode of transport) will be easier than ever in the town, helping commuters, visitors and residents make more sustainable choices when getting around. Cycle parking at the sites also allow visitors to access the wider area, for example Halewood Shopping Centre, by bike with a secure and convenient way to store their bike when travelling sustainably to the area.

3.4 Include wayfinding signage aimed at active travel modes and consider digital approaches

The wayfinding proposed across the design enhances active travel modes by providing clear and accessible navigation information that acts as an aid to help look beyond the boundary of a site such as Grace Park or Halewood Leisure Centre, to connecting routes to the wider area. The wayfinding strategy will adopt a design that further strengths the character of the site with consistent colours, graphics and text.

Digital approaches such as mobile applications can provide additional navigation and route planning for active travel modes using GPS, which can give people confidence in the route they are going to take which therefore encourages use to explore new places and access local amenities.

Principle 4 — Mixing uses and co-locating facilities



Sport England | Aim

People are more likely to combine trips and use active travel to get to destinations with multiple reasons to visit. Places with more variety, higher densities, and a mix of uses also reduce the perception of distance when travelling through spaces. They also generate the critical mass of travel demand to better support public transport services.

Sport England | How to do it

Place schools, shops, community facilities, healthcare facilities, sports and leisure facilities, principal public open spaces and suitable employment close together at key locations within active travel and public transport networks. Ensure residential populations have convenient access by active travel means to a good mix of uses and co-located facilities. This will not only provide greater opportunities to local communities but also increase the population that can access the uses and facilities, potentially in turn boosting their viability.



How the design aligns to the principle

4.1 Avoid uniform ‘zoning’ of large areas to single uses

Halewood town centre design promotes multifunctional and innovative spaces, such as planned walking paths through planted sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) or biodiverse features, play furniture, innovative small sports or cycling areas, as well as interspersed seating and commercial opportunities, which all together create a valuable public space.

4.2 Create mixed use, connected focal points in prominent places within a community

The proposals for Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre include flexible spaces designed for multi-uses, such as pop-up markets. The hard standing space directly outside the main entrance gives opportunity for spill café space, pop-up events markets, Christmas trees and commercial enterprise.

4.3 Co-locate sport and recreation facilities alongside complementary uses

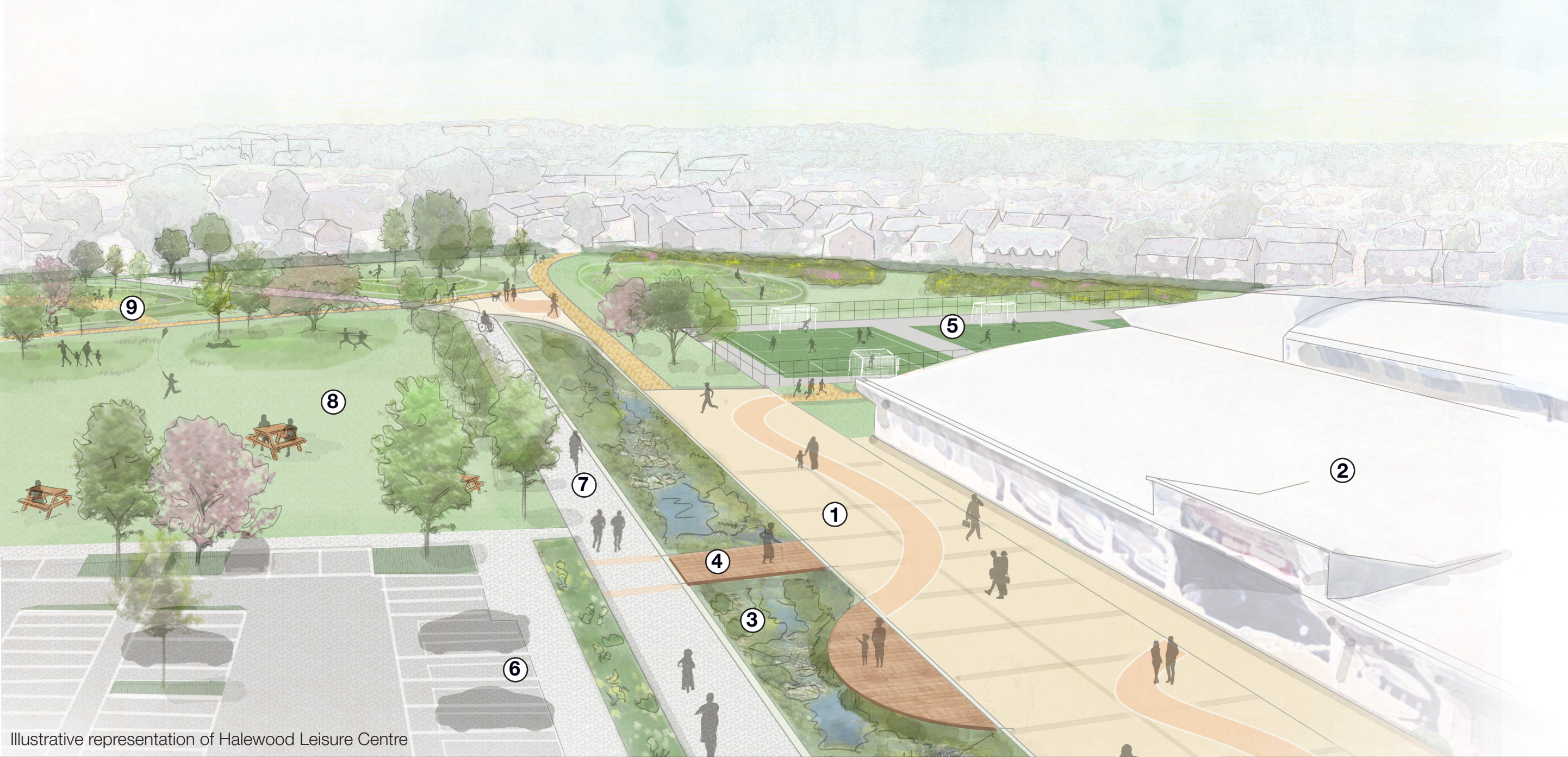
Co-locating sport and recreational facilities alongside complimentary uses involves careful designing, to ensure spaces are functional attractive and beneficial to the community.

The Halewood town centre design takes an integrated approach to design, supporting easy and clear access to different areas by wayfinding. The design ensures safe access, by providing segregated routes that are frequently lined by sustainable design features such as rain gardens, which creates an attractive space that also improves the local active network.

4.4 Use the public realm to create informal activity at sports/recreation facilities

The open green spaces at Halewood Leisure centre and Grace Park, offers opportunity for informal activities such as playing (ball, frisbee, flying a kite) or relaxing on the grass, having a picnic or enjoying yoga.

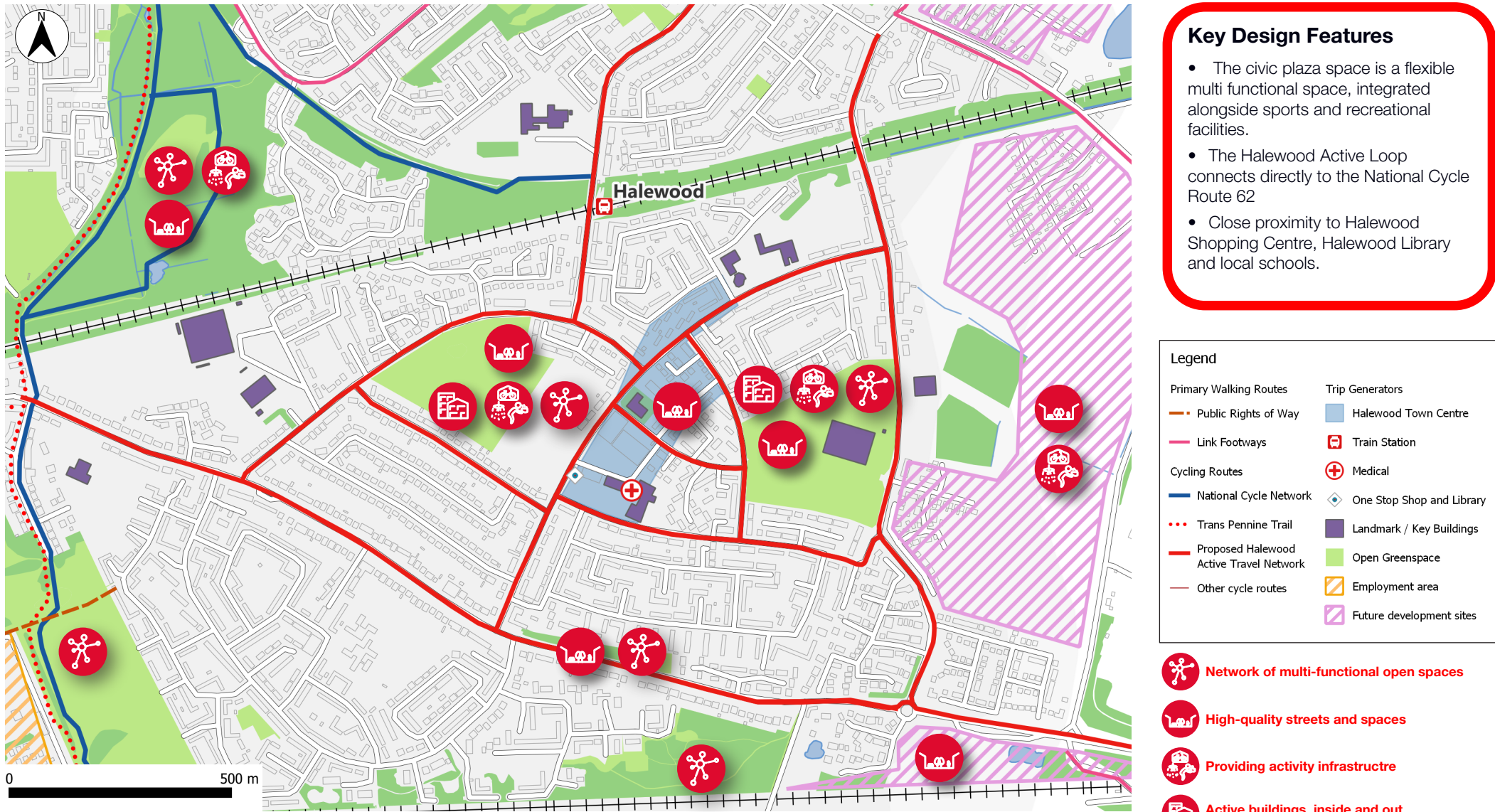
The plaza offers multifunctional flexible hard standing space to be used in a informal manner, such as a space to gather and meet others.



Illustrative representation of Halewood Leisure Centre

- ① Flexible-use space with outdoor electricity access points
- ② Halewood Leisure Centre Building
- ③ Planted swales
- ④ Boardwalk & viewing platform access from car park to entrance space
- ⑤ Fenced games area/ sports pitches
- ⑥ Car park
- ⑦ Shared-use route to LTN 1.20 guidance
- ⑧ Amenity lawn grassed area for recreational use
- ⑨ Active loop with outdoor gym equipment

Theme 2 : Active High-Quality Spaces & Places



Principle 5 — Network of multi-functional open spaces.



Sport England | Aim
Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.

Sport England | How to do it
A network of multifunctional open space should be created across all communities to support a range of activities including sport, recreation and play and other landscape uses including woodland, wildlife habitat and productive landscapes (allotments, orchards). Facilities for sport, recreation and play should be of an appropriate scale and positioned in prominent locations, to increase awareness and visibility of activity, as well as being appropriately sited and designed to respect residential amenity.



How the design aligns to the principle

- 5.1 Create a variety of open spaces**
The Halewood Active Loop will become the link that connects to the open spaces within Halewood, together with emphasis on connecting the two Level-Up Funded developments; Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre through the Halewood Town Centre.

The civic plaza space is the ‘heart of the town centre’ and will offer the local community a multi-functional space to own and gather, strengthening the sense of community and inclusivity. The plaza offers a flexible hard standing space to enhance the visitor experience of the Leisure Centre directly outside the main entrance, giving further opportunities such as spill café space, pop-up events markets, Christmas trees and commercial enterprise.
- 5.2 Link open spaces together within and beyond a site.**
The Halewood Active Loop connects directly to the National Cycle Route 62 (Liverpool Loop Line) and aims to make Halewood Town Centre a focal point either as a starting point or destination area.
- 5.3 Plan and design for a wide range of activities.**
The proposals at Halewood Leisure Centre and Grace Park will cater to the following activities;
 - Feature play area from Toddler to Teens
 - Sports pitches provision which will be bookable through Volair
 - Community Indoor and outdoor classes such as yoga, pilates, dance classes etc.
 - Outdoor fitness equipment
 - Shared use route connecting to Halewood Park Triangle and Liverpool Loop Line encouraging walking and cycling.
 - Direct links to Halewood Shopping Centre and Halewood Library and NHS Walk-In Centre

Principle 6 — High-quality streets and spaces



Sport England | Aim

Streets and outdoor public spaces should be Active Environments in their own right. They should be safe, attractive, functional, prioritise people and able to host a mix of uses, with durable, high quality materials, street furniture in the right places and easy-to-use signage. High quality streets and spaces encourage activity, whereas poor quality streets and spaces are much less likely to be used to the same degree.

Sport England | How to do it

Streets and public spaces of all types should be designed to be attractive places, using durable materials to reduce maintenance costs and improve longevity. Streets are places and not simply movement corridors, and their role in a network and the surrounding place should be clearly defined. Placemaking should be supported through reducing the speed and dominance of motor traffic, the creation of informal spaces and flexible uses along streets, including children’s play, resting places and meeting spots. Street furniture and signage can also contribute to the variety and quality of the street scene, when used in a considerate way.

How the design aligns to the principle

6.1 Design safe, function people first streets.

The Halewood Active Loop puts people at the heart of every journey. Designed to be safe, accessible, and inviting, it features dedicated cycle lanes, shared-use paths, and slow-speed streets that prioritise comfort, security, and ease of movement for everyone—whether walking, cycling, or using mobility aids.

Crafted with high-quality materials and thoughtful design, these routes encourage individuals and families to choose active travel with confidence. As more people leave their cars behind, Halewood will experience a meaningful shift: less traffic, cleaner air, and healthier lives. The result is an Active Environment, where wellbeing, community pride, and sustainability thrive.

6.2 Design streets and spaces of high quality, utilising appropriate and durable materials.

Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre will have a connecting design ethos regarding materiality and design with the use of high quality building materials for outdoor public spaces, a variety of open greenspace with sustainable urban drainage features to help create diverse and biodiverse areas of amenity for the community to interact with.

6.3 Create and support safe, flexible spaces which can support multiple forms of activity.

The Halewood Investment Masterplan incorporate flexible use of outdoor space providing large and small spaces to accommodate a variety of uses and activities to allow the community to create a unique sense of place.

- Shared use route connecting to Halewood Park Triangle and Liverpool Loop Line encouraging walking and cycling.
- Direct links to Halewood Shopping Centre and Halewood Library and NHS Walk-In Centre

6.4 Create resilient spaces that can be active in all seasons.

The provision of a new community building at Grace Park and all weather sports pitches at both Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre will allow for outdoor sports to be played during all seasons.



Principle 7 — Providing activity infrastructure



Sport England | Aim
Infrastructure to enable sport, recreation and physical activity to take place should be provided across all contexts including workplaces, sports facilities and public space, to facilitate activity for all.

Sport England | How to do it
Infrastructure to support physical activity should be provided and be easily accessible and safe. There are a range of opportunities to achieve this, for example providing water fountains, public toilets and clear wayfinding networks. Offices and workspaces should provide changing facilities and cycle parking to encourage employees to commute via active travel. Sports and community facilities should look beyond their primary function, to encourage wider activity, including the provision of infrastructure which non-facility users can access, such as toilets, refreshments, social spaces and water refilling stations.



- How the design aligns to the principle**
- 7.1 Provide infrastructure which supports and enables active travel.**
The Halewood Active Loop was designed incorporating the Active Travel England principles and guidance. Along the 3km route a variety of design methods are implemented to encourage active travel and provide safe and secure movement for all users. Safe and secure cycle parking provision is provided at key locations and community facilities are also provided at Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre.
 - 7.2 Provide infrastructure which supports physical activity.**
The proposed developments at Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre aim to enhance recreational facilities and community spaces. Each site will feature an all-weather pitch and an amenity lawn. Additionally, the Leisure Centre will include three multi-use games areas and a learn-to-cycle loop, while Grace Park will have a 3G mini 5-a-side pitch and a feature play area. These enhancements, combined with the existing leisure and activity options at the Leisure Centre, will transform these locations into key destination areas within the Halewood Active Loop.

- 7.3 Provide supporting infrastructure which enable people to utilise spaces flexibly.**
Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre incorporate a diverse range of open spaces, including public realm plazas, amenity grassed areas, and ample seating. These plazas are designed with the broader community in mind, emphasising flexibility to foster community-led events. Key features, such as outdoor electricity connections, raised platforms and dedicated areas for pop-up events and gatherings ensure adaptability and encourage local engagement.

Principle 8 — Active buildings, inside and out



Sport England | Aim
Buildings we occupy shape our everyday lives, both when users are inside and outside. Buildings should be designed with providing opportunities for physical activity at the forefront, considering the arrival experience, internal circulation, opportunities to get up and move about, and making the building an active destination.

Sport England | How to do it
Consider the user journey of arriving at a building by active means – it should be easy to find the way in, park cycles and store belongings. Once inside, spaces should enable regular activity and active circulation, and should be connected to the outdoors through the use of space and landscape. Valued older buildings can be brought back to life through creative reuse, increasing vitality, community connections to a local place and make activity a visible and distinctive part of a place. Physical ctivity can also be a method to re-utilise or regenerate places, taking advantage of the economic and social benefits it creates.

How the design aligns to the principle

- 8.1 Orientate and design buildings to encourage activity**
The area surrounding the leisure centre is designed to enhance the building's presence, offering a flexible and spacious spill-out space that seamlessly integrates with its architecture. The carefully considered paving design not only serves as a visual guide but also creates an inviting transition into the building.

At Halewood Leisure Centre, visitors are met with expansive views of the planted swales, providing a visually appealing connection to their environment and an enhanced the sense of arrival.

- 8.2 Provide activity infrastructure inside and outside buildings**
The space around the leisure centre is designed to compliment the building by providing active travel features close by, such as cycle racks to allow for convenient storage.
- 8.3 Utilise areas within and around buildings to support activity**
The masterplan includes clear and attractive arrival experiences, welcoming people into the spaces with signing and planting. There are separate entrances for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, providing a people first arrival, and clearly marked pathways with signing to ensure navigating the spaces are simple.

The proposals at Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre will provide a variety of activity and sports for users inside and outside. With the Leisure Centre the addition of 3 new MUGA's as well as the existing services the centre already provides will be supplemented with new outdoor gym equipment and a 'learn to cycle' route. With Grace Park the provision of a new Community Building and upgraded sports provision and a feature children's play area along side proposed public realm spaces will provide flexibility of use and encourage activity both indoor and outdoor.

Both sites will be enhanced with a new shared-use pedestrian and cycle path that links the Leisure Centre and Grace Park to the wider Halewood Active Loop.
- 8.4 Consider how to repurpose valued local assets into new physical activity destinations**
The areas at Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre already have some sports provision and therefore are already valued assets. Through the design, the purpose of the spaces are elevated and diversified into high quality, multifunctional activity spaces, which accommodate a wide variety of both formal and informal sports.



Illustrative representation of Halewood Grace Park

① Shared-use route to LTN 1.20 guidance



② Swale



③ Public meeting space 'Grace Gardens'



④ Feature play area, fenced with inclusive play



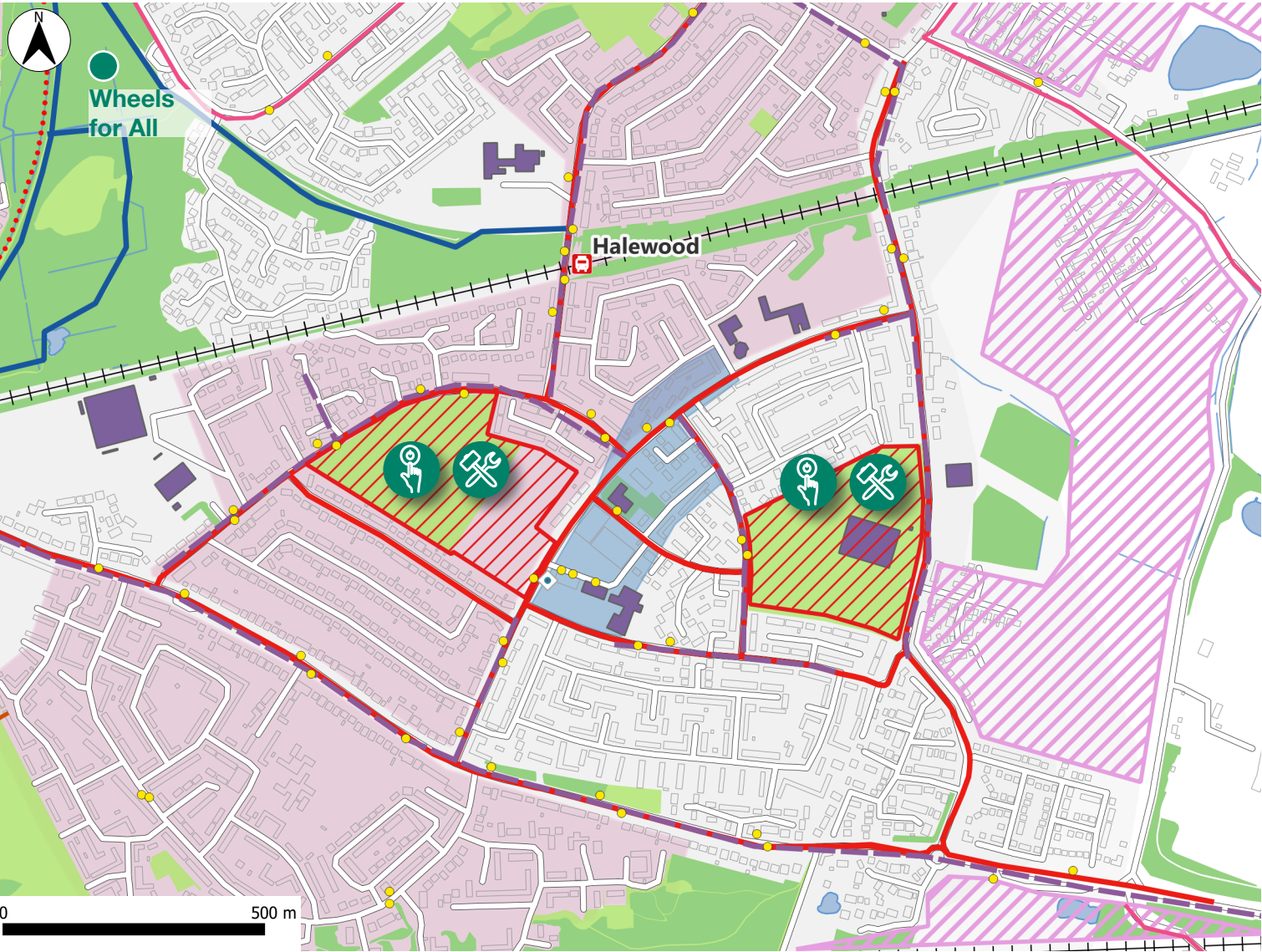
⑤ Trim trail and active play leading to fenced play area



⑥ Sports/ community pavilion to be designed by Architect



Theme 3 - Creating & Maintaining Activity



Key Design Features

- An agreed maintenance and monitoring plan will be implemented to ensure the designs are fulfilling their purposes and retain longevity and high quality.

Legend

Primary Walking Routes	Trip Generators
Public Rights of Way	LUF Development Sites
Secondary Walking Routes	Train Station
Link Footways	Halewood Bus Stops
Core Walking Zone (CWZ)	One Stop Shop and Library
20mph Roads	Landmark / Key Buildings
Cycling Routes	
National Cycle Network	Open Greenspace
Trans Pennine Trail	Employment area
Proposed Halewood Active Travel Network	Future development sites
Other cycle routes	

Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces

Activating spaces

Principle 9 — Maintaining high-quality flexible spaces



Sport England | Aim
Spaces and facilities should be effectively maintained and managed to support physical activity. These places should be monitored to understand how they are used, and flexible so that they can be adapted as needed.

Sport England | How to do it
The management, long-term maintenance and viability of facilities and spaces should be considered in their design. As these spaces operate, monitoring should be undertaken of their use and effectiveness. This enables evaluation, assessing the success of Active Design initiatives and understanding where changes can be made. Where spaces and facilities have been designed flexibly (see Principle 6), design responses can be undertaken to respond to this evaluation, or spaces could be activated differently (see Principle 10).



How the design aligns to the principle

9.1 Manage and maintain spaces to enable effective and efficient use
The proposals within the Halewood Investment Masterplan will be managed and maintained to ensure they fulfil their purposes and retain longevity. An agreed maintenance and monitoring plan will be implemented to ensure the designs remain of high quality and fit for purpose.

Currently, the Halewood Leisure Centre site is maintained by Volair and KMBC under a Service Level Agreement (SLA), with the level of maintenance tailored to the site's needs. Once operational, this maintenance arrangement is expected to remain unchanged, in line with the SLA.

For Grace Park, maintenance responsibilities will be shared between Halewood Town Council and Halewood Town Junior Football Club. The football club is expected to maintain the sports pitch and the café, while the council will maintain the rest of the site.

Notably, all lighting across the sites will consist of high longevity, low-maintenance LED luminaires. Luminaire drivers, where applicable, will be located in dry, ventilated, and accessible locations for easy access and maintenance. Additionally, the sites will feature planting areas designed for low maintenance.

9.2 Monitor the effectiveness of Active Design interventions and be prepared to make changes if circumstances have changed
Monitoring the effectiveness of the Active Design interventions can be carried out by observational study, to determine how frequently the routes are being used. More formal methods of monitoring could be through surveys and questionnaires. In the longer term, changes in the physical health demographics of a community can be reviewed.

9.3 Consider management and monitoring, and how it will be funded, at an early stage
The proposals within the Halewood Investment Masterplan will be managed and maintained to ensure they are fulfilling their purposes and retain longevity. An agreed maintenance and monitoring plan will be put in place and followed to ensure the design remains at a high quality and is fit for purpose.

Principle 10 — Activating spaces



Sport England | Aim
The provision of spaces and facilities which can help to improve physical activity should be supported by a commitment to activate them, encouraging people to be more physically active and increasing the awareness of activity opportunities within a community.

Sport England | How to do it
Methods to promote sport and physical activity should be supported to communicate the benefits of such activity across all settings including neighbourhoods, workplaces and facilities. Effective investment should be employed to allow this promotion, with consideration given to how promotion could be more effective to target those in the most need. Volunteers and local champions within a community should be supported and encouraged where possible, as often local people can be the most effective in communicating within their communities the opportunities for sport and physical activity. Managers and operators of our places and spaces should encourage their wide and varied use, establishing a broad programme of activities and events to engage the local community and visitors.

How the design aligns to the principle

- 10.1

Provide investment into activity promotion, as well as provision itself

There is opportunity to invest in local activity groups or specialists, such as yoga practitioners to guide people through an hour’s yoga on the flexible green space and nature enthusiasts to carry out nature walks around Halewood and educate about the local flora and fauna. Fitness instructors who specialise in different age groups and abilities can offer to take a class on the green space area.

This would raise the profile of Halewood, encouraging different people with different interests and abilities to come and use the site, improving their mental and physical well-being. This investment would also benefit the Specialist, supporting local businesses and therefore the local economy.
- 10.2

Make spaces social to form connections around physical activity

The proposals for Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre include several social spaces designed to encourage interaction. For example, both sites feature sports facilities that can be used by multiple individuals simultaneously, such as all-weather sports pitches and outdoor fitness equipment at the Leisure Centre. Additionally, the proposed developments will offer a variety of street furniture, including benches with backrests, bespoke raised planters with integrated seating, and picnic tables for outdoor seating, encouraging people and families to spend the day at the site.
- 10.3

Use digital technology to promote active travel, as well as more traditional methods

The use of digital strategies can help raise awareness, provide valuable information and create a supportive community around active travel. Digital technology can be implemented as part of the Halewood design, by providing online booking systems to hire sports facilities. QR codes could be included on information boards that open booking systems, or have information about design elements of the site or about upcoming events at Halewood and Grace Park.
- 10.4

Encourage temporary uses and testing of ideas

The proposals for Grace Park and Halewood Leisure Centre include flexible spaces designed for temporary uses. These hardstanding areas, a temporary market pop-up space at the leisure centre and a civic plaza at Grace Park, offer new opportunities for social interaction. They can be utilised by various community groups for gatherings and events.

Conclusion

The Halewood Investment Masterplan places people at the centre of every design decision, committing to implementing Active Design and Active Environments to shape a healthier, more connected future. Building upon the Sport England Active Design Guide’s themes and principles, this document reflects a deep understanding of how thoughtful spaces can elevate lives—physically, mentally, and socially.

The Masterplan goes beyond infrastructure. It demonstrates, through the key examples of the Halewood Leisure Centre and Grace Park, how everyday environments can foster movement, inclusion, and joy.

These spaces are carefully designed to be:

- Well-connected: Linking homes, parks, and community hubs with intuitive pathways that promote walking and cycling
- Multifunctional & Multipurpose: Offering flexible use to support leisure, social interaction, and community events
- Inclusive for all ages and abilities: Ensuring accessibility and comfort across the lifespan
- Enjoyable: Inspiring people to engage, explore, and thrive in spaces that feel welcoming and safe

The Halewood Investment Masterplan aims to create an Active Environment where design fosters behaviour change and enriches community wellbeing. Building better spaces for better lives.

Adopt design that ultimately supports Active Travel by providing safe and accessible, well connected spaces that benefit the community as a whole, where people want to exercise, play, commute, shop and thrive.



Halewood Active Town Centre Strategy

Embedding Sport England Active Design Principles

December 2025

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