

# Public Document Pack



## Executive Transmodal Implementation Sub Board

Thursday, 19 April 2007 2.00 p.m.  
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David Wright'.

**Chief Executive**

### **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

|                                          |               |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Councillor Rob Polhill (Chairman)</b> | <b>Labour</b> |
| <b>Councillor Tony McDermott MBE</b>     | <b>Labour</b> |
| <b>Councillor Marie Wright</b>           | <b>Labour</b> |

*Please contact Lynn Derbyshire on 0151 471 7389 or e-mail [lynn.derbyshire@halton.gov.uk](mailto:lynn.derbyshire@halton.gov.uk) for further information.*

*The next meeting of the Board is on Thursday, 7 June 2007*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH  
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Part I**

| <b>Item No.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Page No.</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>1. MINUTES</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                 |
| <b>2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                 |
| Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members) to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item. |                 |
| <b>3. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                 |
| <b>(A) REVISIONS TO PROPOSED STRUCTURAL LANDSCAPING ON HBC FIELDS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>1 - 5</b>    |
| <b>(B) RAIL RECEPTION SIDINGS FOR 3MG - MERSEY MULTIMODAL GATEWAY</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>6 - 13</b>   |

***In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.***

**REPORT TO:** 3MG Executive Sub-Board

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director - Environment

**SUBJECT:** Revisions to Proposed Structural Landscaping on HBC Fields.

**WARDS:** Ditton

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To update Members on revisions to the design, planning issues and implementation of the structural landscape around the area proposed for development on the 'Halton Fields' site.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) Members note the report.**
- (2) Members approve the submission of the revision to the existing planning application.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 A Planning Application for the Landscape infrastructure on the 'HBC Fields' site was approved in January 2006. With the exception of some improvement works to Halebank Recreation Ground, the work has not yet been implemented, as most of it is located on tenanted land. The Council has been negotiating with the tenants to achieve the surrender of the leases.

3.2 Since the date of the planning approval, several issues have arisen, which may impact on the approved scheme. The main issues are:

- The proposal for a 'Village Green' designation on the eastern section of the site.
- Issues with contractors' access through the possible Village Green area.
- The preference from local residents to replace the area originally shown as a new football pitch with mounding and planting.
- Detailed design work on the Sustainable Urban Drainage System which has resulted in a revised layout of the water features.

3.3 A revised landscape master plan has been prepared accordingly. This omits any landscape works to the possible Village Green area, which if

necessary will be dealt with as a future planning application / phase of work. Access for the construction traffic is now to be taken off Halebank Road, although this will be minimised by virtue of the fact that material for the earthworks is being obtained on site, rather than imported.

- 3.4 Other amendments have been made to the design of the mounding and the water bodies, as outlined in 3.2. These will be available for the Board's inspection at the meeting.
- 3.5 The revised landscape master plan, albeit only a variation to that approved earlier, will be submitted for a further revised planning approval in May 2007. The reports, surveys and other material that was requested in the Conditions of the previous application, will be amended accordingly and submitted as part of the new application. This should reduce the number of conditions likely to be imposed on any forthcoming permission and enable a quicker start on site.
- 3.6 The implementation of the landscape work cannot start until after the completion of the Sludge Main diversion by United Utilities. The haulage road, which will be constructed through the site as part of UU's contract, will be retained and utilised by the landscape contractors. It is planned that the landscape works will therefore commence in Autumn 2007, subject to planning approval, successful determination of the leases, and the completion of United Utilities' contract.
- 3.6 The design for the landscape around Lovel's Hall will also be progressed, to complement any proposed road link in this area.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council adopted the DSRFP (3MG) Masterplan in December 2004. 3MG is heralded in the Council's Corporate Plan, the LSP's and Halton Borough Council's Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan, and supports the Council's Urban Renewal key corporate priority.
- 4.2 The proposals will help towards the achievement of Halton's Biodiversity Action Plan by the creation of new reedbeds and wildlife corridors, and by providing habitats for certain key species.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Funding for the Landscape Infrastructure is available through the Council's Capital Programme for 3MG, and funding from the North West Development Agency.
- 5.2 The project is environmentally sustainable by creating a series of different habitats for wildlife, including wetlands, reedbeds, meadows

and woodland. It will enable any future built development to be drained in a sustainable manner, and will utilise material already on site to create the mounds, rather than importing / exporting material.

## **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 6.1 Landscape Scheme doesn't go ahead: unacceptable environmental and visual effect on Halebank
- 6.2 Delay in progress of scheme: planting does not have time to mature before the rail-related warehouse building proposed in the 3MG Masterplan is constructed; screening is less effective, hence the proposal to implement the scheme in advance.

## **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 7.1 The proposed landscape scheme will provide free access to informal recreational opportunities for all the local community.

## **8.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

## **9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

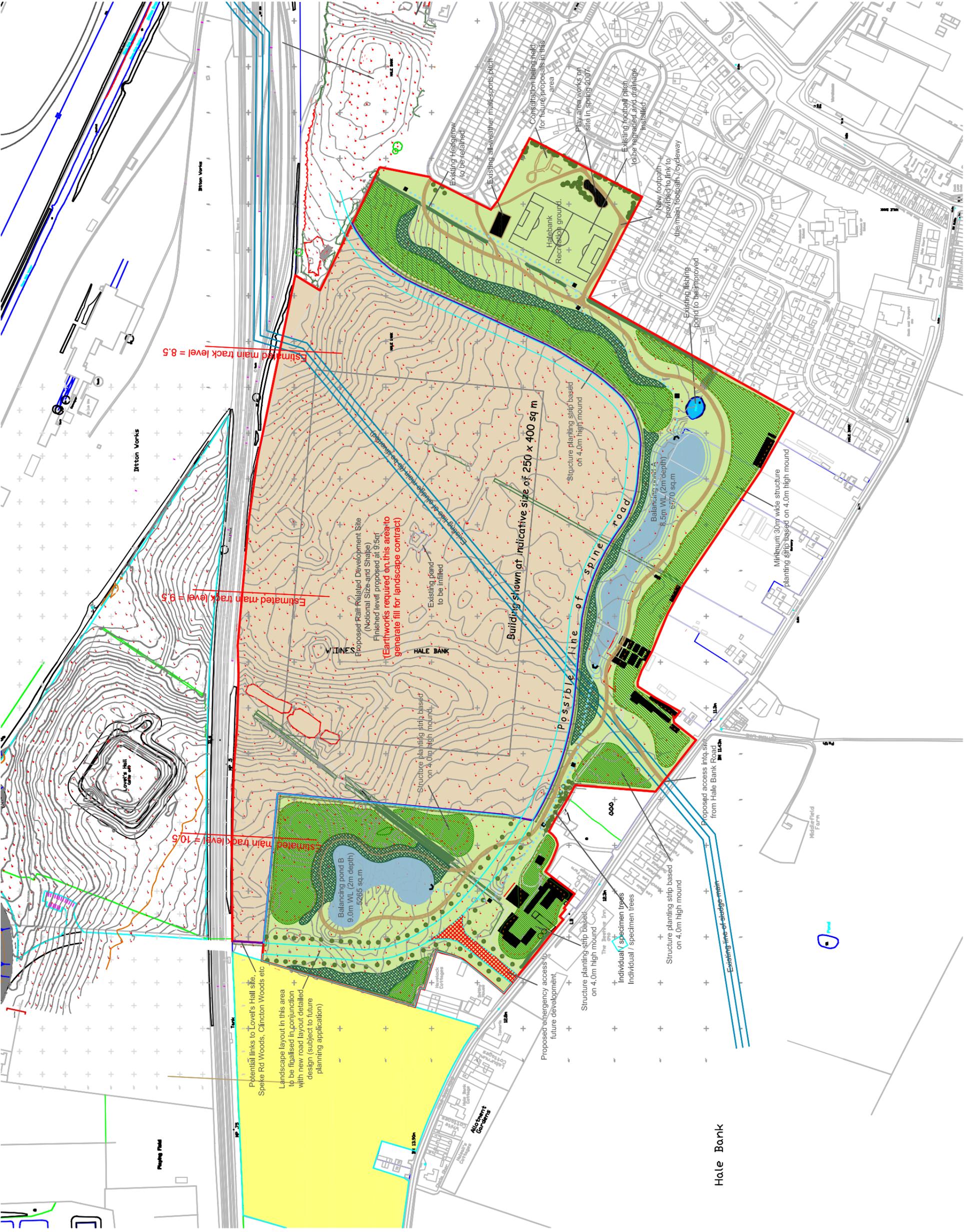
## **10.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

***(NB 8.0, 9.0 AND 10.0 ONLY IF KEY DECISION)***

## **11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

| <b>Document</b>                                                                                                                             | <b>Place of Inspection</b> | <b>Contact Officer</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park – Landscape Masterplan</b>                                                                            | <b>Picow Farm Depot</b>    | <b>Phil Esseen</b>     |
| <b>Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park – Revised Landscape Masterplan</b>                                                                    | <b>Picow Farm Depot</b>    | <b>Phil Esseen</b>     |
| <b>EXB 162 (9<sup>th</sup> December 2004) Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park – The Draft Masterplan and Next Steps</b>                      | <b>Committee Services</b>  | <b>Lynn Cairns</b>     |
| <b>ESB9 (20<sup>th</sup> October 2005) Landscape Infrastructure, Halton Borough Council Fields Site, Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park</b> | <b>Committee Services</b>  | <b>Lynn Cairns</b>     |
| <b>ESB20 (26<sup>th</sup> April 2006) Update on Landscape Infrastructure, Halton B.C. Fields Site</b>                                       | <b>Committee Services</b>  | <b>Lynn Cairns</b>     |

- Planning Application Boundary
- Halton B.C Land Ownership Boundary
- Future development site
- Amenity grassland
- Grassland meadow
- Woodland
- Individual / specimen trees
- Waterbodies
- Culvert / pipe
- 3.2m Footpath / cycleway
- Proposed hedgerow
- Existing hedgerow to be retained
- Hedgerow to be removed
- Post and wire fence
- Existing outbuildings to be demolished
- Landscape Mounds
- Manholes
- Inlet/ outlet headwalls



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of The Controller Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. The Environment Partnership, Genesis Centre, Birchwood Science Park, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 7BH. Licence No. AL 52685A



| Rev | Description                                   | Drawn | Approved | Date     |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
| C   | Amendments to labels                          | TP    | GDA      | 21/03/07 |
| B   | Amendments to boundary                        | TP    | GDA      | 31/01/07 |
| A   | Changes to labeling and inclusion of manholes | TP    | GDA      | 11/07/06 |

**TEP**  
 Genesis Centre  
 Birchwood Science Park Warrington  
 WA3 7BH 844904  
 Fax 01925 844902  
 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com

|                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| <b>Project</b>        |               |
| Ditton Implementation |               |
| <b>Title</b>          |               |
| Landscape Masterplan  |               |
| Dwg No                | D1058.08.001C |
| Scale                 | 1:2000 @ A1   |
| Drawn                 | TP            |
| Checked               | GDA           |
| Approved              | GDA           |
| Date                  | 28/06/06      |

**REPORT TO:** 3MG Executive Sub Board

**DATE:** 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Environment

**SUBJECT:** Rail Reception Sidings for 3MG – Mersey Multimodal Gateway

**WARDS:** Ditton and Riverside

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to submit a planning application for the Rail Reception Sidings for 3MG - Mersey Multimodal Gateway.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) Members agree the submission of the planning application described in the report;**
- (2) Members approve the development of the scheme and delegate its implementation to the Executive Director for Environment in Consultation with the Executive Board Portfolio holder for Planning, Transportation and Regeneration.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Executive Board on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2004 (EXB162) agreed to adopt the Draft Masterplan and for the 3MG - Mersey Multimodal Gateway (formerly Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park).
- 3.2 Network Rail owns Ditton Junction Sidings and the Goods Branch which therefore form part of the regulated national railway network. The sidings are 'track circuited' and controlled from Ditton Junction Signal Box, which is located to the south side of the mainline and to the west of the road bridge. ('Track circuits' form part of some signalling systems and they allow a remote location, such as a signal box, to detect whether a section of track is occupied by a train.) Network Rail are consequently responsible for the safe day-to-day operation of the sidings and the Goods Branch together with their long-term maintenance. The existing rail facilities on *Site 255* are privately owned and operated (connected to Network Rail infrastructure through private sidings agreements). (See appendix 1 for location of Ditton Junction Sidings in relation to 3MG and WCML Liverpool Branch.

### 3.3 Operational Requirement for Ditton Junction Sidings

In terms of the safe and efficient operation of 3MG, there are three main requirements for Ditton Junction Sidings:

- 3.3.1 A) Trains need to depart from the mainline in order to enter 3MG's rail-served facilities. However, the height and alignment of the mainline in relation to the facilities means that connections directly into them are not possible where the mainline passes the facilities. Immediately after crossing Runcorn Bridge the WCML Liverpool Branch is elevated above ground level, initially on brick railway arches. Once clear of the river the line progressively drops towards ground level on a 1-in-114 gradient. However, the line only reaches ground level immediately to the east of Ditton Junction. Conversely the Widnes-Warrington line approaches 3MG partly below ground level in order to 'dive' under the Liverpool Branch, after which it begins to rise and only reaches ground level at Ditton Junction. Ditton Junction is therefore the earliest opportunity at which trains can leave both mainlines. However, at this point 3MG's rail-served facilities are located to the rear of any arriving train from the Runcorn or Warrington directions. A location is therefore required where trains can stop and 'reverse' into 3MG's rail served facilities. Ditton Junction Sidings performs such a role.
- 3.3.2 B) Due to pathing and timetabling constraints on the mainline, trains may need to arrive at 3MG well before they are scheduled to be unloaded. In such circumstances trains require somewhere to 'park' while they await their turn in the intermodal terminal or rail-connected warehousing. Ditton Junction Sidings performs this role.
- 3.3.3 C) Similarly, once a train has been loaded/unloaded and is ready for departure, timetabling constraints may mean that a departing train needs to wait for an available 'path'. Again, in such circumstances trains require somewhere to 'park' while they await a free path. Ditton Junction Sidings performs this role.
- 3.3.4 In addition, the existing sidings are also utilised for the following purposes:
- Trains en-route to distribution facilities in the wider Liverpool area (e.g. the Ford Cars' distribution depot at Garston) are 'held' at Ditton Junction Sidings while awaiting an available freight path; and

- Network Rail engineering trains (e.g. ballast and track laying trains) are stabled at Ditton Junction during maintenance/renewal works on the Liverpool Branch line.

3.3.5 Appendix 2 shows a sketched map of existing railway track layout at Ditton Junction.

### 3.4 **Planned New Sidings**

MDS Transmodal, on behalf of Halton Borough Council and 3MG, are currently designing a new set of sidings at Ditton Junction. These will be located adjacent to the existing sidings on land currently owned by Halton BC. The designs are currently being finalised and a planning application 'need case' is being prepared. The 'need' for these new sidings results from the following factors:

3.4.1 a) The standard length freight train currently operating on the national network is between 500-550m. On this basis, there is only **ONE** siding within the existing Ditton Junction sidings which can accommodate standard formation freight trains - Goods Siding 1 in combination with the Headshunt (see appendix 2).

b) When Goods Siding 1 and Headshunt in combination is occupied by a train it is neither possible to receive nor despatch other freight trains. Therefore, following the arrival of a train, the sidings have to be vacated (by means of shunting the train into the intermodal terminal or rail connected warehousing) before another train can arrive or depart. This severely restricts the daily freight train capacity at 3MG. Analysis by MDS Transmodal, taking into account the number of freight paths available to serve 3MG and the time it takes to unload a train, demonstrates that the existing sidings can only handle a maximum of **SIX** trains per 24 hour period. The commercial and environmental case for 3MG is predicated on a forecast of **16 daily train** services to/from 3MG.

3.4.2 Clearly, the proposed new sidings are crucial to the successful development and completion of 3MG.

3.5 The rail reception sidings design will be progressed and, subject to planning permission, the intention is to tender for the construction of the sidings later this year. The detailed timetable is attached in appendix 3.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Council adopted the DSRFP (now 3MG) Masterplan in December 2004.

3MG is heralded in the Council's Corporate Plan and LSP and HBC Urban Renewal Strategy and Action Plan, and supports the Council's Urban Renewal corporate priority.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Resource implications were considered as part of the Masterplan process. The Masterplan identified the cost for the rail reception sidings as £2,470,000. The latest estimate provided by MDS Transmodal is £2,425,000. This figure may increase by 17.5% to £2,849,375 if VAT is non-recoverable. Grant Thornton, the Council's VAT consultants, are advising on this matter. Funding has been secured from ERDF to support this scheme and we are in discussions with the NWDA to establish if this will be an eligible scheme under their regulations. The intention is for the Council to build the rail reception sidings and lease the asset into the 3MG Company at Market Value. This will generate a revenue income for the Council, the value of which will be based on usage.

#### **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 The main risk is that the 3MG Company would not require the use of the sidings and the Council would be left with an asset it could not lease out or utilise itself. As the sidings are being provided based on current and forecasted demand, the likelihood of the sidings not being required is remote. Before letting the Contract to construct the sidings it would be prudent for the Council to enter into a Contract with the 3MG Company for the lease of the asset. A further report will be tabled before Members detailing the proposal for this Contract.

#### **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None.

#### **8.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

#### **9.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

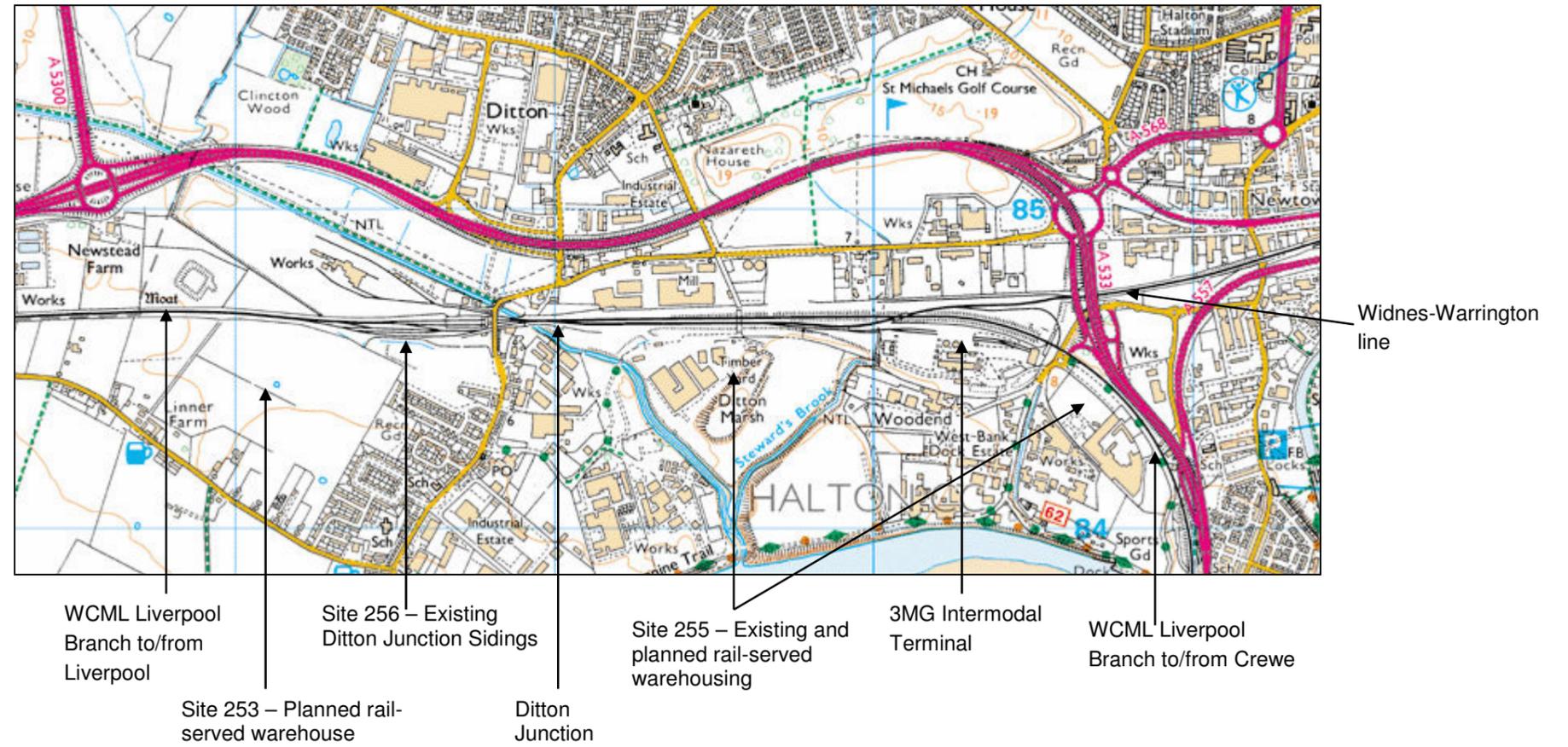
#### **10.0 IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

**(NB 8.0, 9.0 AND 10.0 ONLY IF KEY DECISION)**

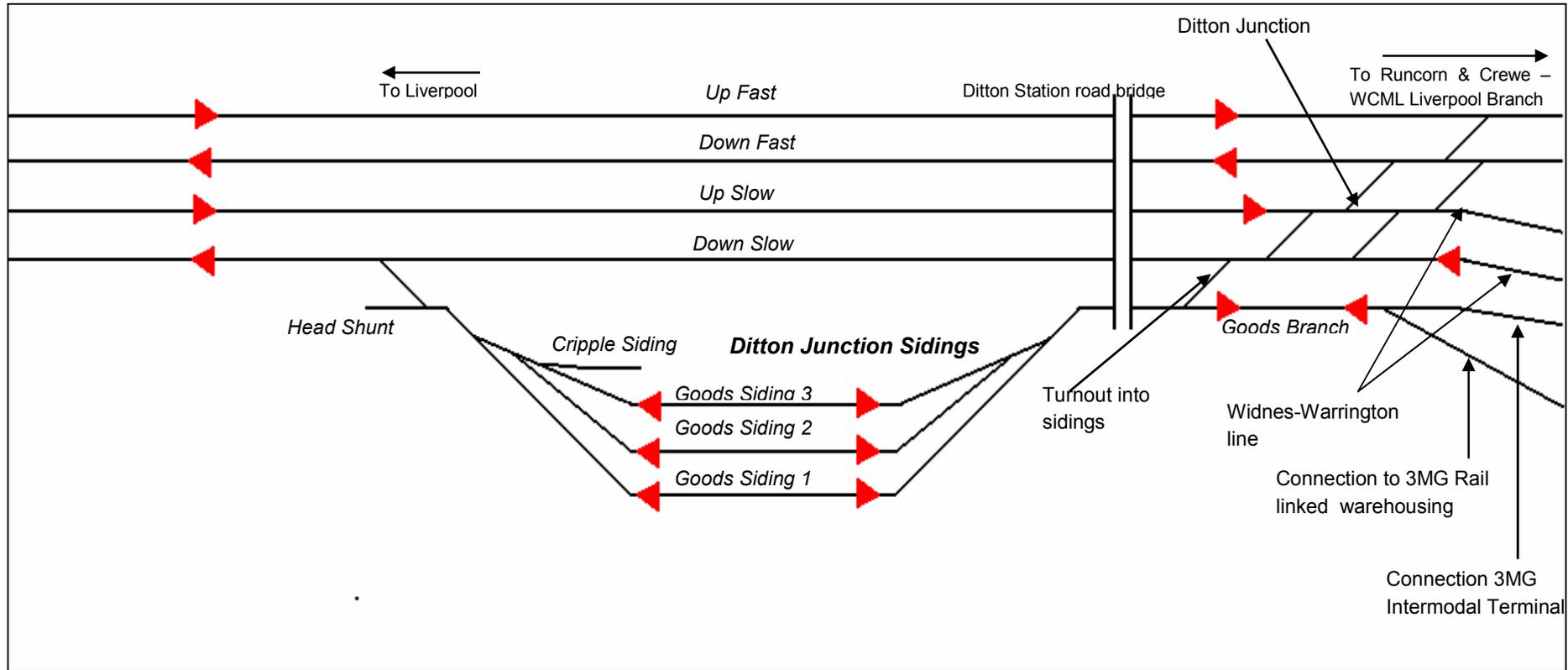
**11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

| <b>Document</b>                             | <b>Place of Inspection</b>                                                                   | <b>Contact Officer</b> |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>3MG masterplan and delivery strategy</b> | <b>3MG Team, Major Projects Department, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Municipal Building, Widnes</b> | <b>Sally McDonald</b>  |

**Appendix 1: Location of Ditton Junction Sidings in relation to 3MG and WCML Liverpool Branch**



**Appendix 2: Sketch Map of Existing Railway Track Layout at Ditton Junction**



*Not to Scale. The red arrows indicate direction of signalling on each line. Arrows pointing in opposite directions on a line indicates bi-directional signalling.*

**Appendix 3 - Rail Reception Sidings Timetable**

|                                                           | 2007   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                                           | Jan-07 | Feb-07 | Mar-07 | Apr-07 | May-07 | Jun-07 | Jul-07 | Aug-07 | Sep-07 | Oct-07 | Nov-07 | Dec-07 |
| Preparing planning application                            |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Revise layout design <sup>1</sup>                         |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Prepare Network Rail Functional Specification             |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Submitt planning application                              |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Planning application decision                             |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Agree funding                                             |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Ongoing GRIP procedures (NR)                              |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Prepare and issue detailed design and construction tender |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Evaluate tender responses                                 |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Appoint preferred construction company                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Refine and agree final design and cost                    |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Construction                                              |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

|                                  | 2008   |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|                                  | Jan-08 | Feb-08 | Mar-08 | Apr-08 | May-08 | Jun-08 | Jul-08 | Aug-08 | Sep-08 | Oct-08 | Nov-08 | Dec-08 |
| Ongoing GRIP procedures (NR)     |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Construction                     |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Connection to network possession |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Opening                          |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |

<sup>1</sup> Take account of east-west link road alignment and other factors