



LEVERHULME

The Leverhulme Vision

Creating dynamic, sustainable communities for everyone

INTRODUCTION

There has never been a greater need for new, dynamic, sustainable communities where people want to live, work, raise families and enjoy outdoor space, and which complement and enhance our existing communities.

Fundamental to the development and success of such communities is that there is a healthy, transparent and rigorous debate.

Wirral has an opportunity to become an exemplar in local planning, revitalising our urban areas while also breathing new life and energy into more rural parts of the peninsula.

Leverhulme wholeheartedly supports Wirral Council's commitment to regenerating brownfield land through its Birkenhead 2040 Framework.

However, we also believe strongly that Wirral will miss out on a once-in-a-generation opportunity to revitalise the wider area if it fails to consider a broader, more holistic canvas.

Real regeneration has to be based on something that is truly deliverable and will enhance the lives of everyone who calls Wirral home.

This is why we set out our vision of how we can contribute to the debate about place-making in Wirral and the many and varied aspects that go into creating the kind of communities people want and which our changing world requires.

“Leverhulme is the only partner capable of creating beautiful new neighbourhoods in Wirral, closely linked to their rural setting but offering enhanced accessibility and where health and wellbeing are prioritised.”



ABOUT LEVERHULME

Leverhulme has been part of the fabric of Wirral life for over 130 years, originating and delivering two of the most iconic parts of Wirral.

The 1st Viscount Leverhulme had the vision for Port Sunlight - to this day still used as a shining example of model village excellence.

Together with the 2nd and 3rd Viscounts, he also contributed to the development of the picturesque village of Thornton Hough, providing quality housing, the school, the Village Club, St George's Church, the W.I. Hall and the Village Hall.

His vision was that everyone had a right to wellbeing and fulfilment through social engagement, family homes, access to nature and creative arts. He delivered his vision through the environments he created both in the work place and in his villages.

Today, Leverhulme is responsible for the long-term, sustainable management of over 2,000 hectares on Wirral.



Our land is home to tenant farmers, commercial properties containing an eclectic mix of businesses and Brimstage Hall & Courtyard. We also provide 150 homes ranging from farmhouses to terraced properties.

Footpaths and bridleways cross the estate and are used regularly by walkers, riders and cyclists, while cricket, rugby, golf and fishing are all enjoyed on Leverhulme land.

Leverhulme is the custodian of 69 Grade II listed buildings along with Grade I listed Brimstage Hall and Tower. It also owns and leases the

popular Wheatsheaf Inn in Raby, an iconic thatched inn and restaurant which dates to 1630.

It is Leverhulme's aim to ensure that any development of its land will make Wirral a better place for people, both for today and for generations to come.



PLANNING OVERVIEW

With a population of 325,000, Wirral is populous and at 60 square miles, it is also sizeable.

The Council has acknowledged that Wirral is at a crossroads. In recent years, the Borough has not been able to deliver the levels of development required by national policy in order to provide for the sustainable growth of its communities and economy.

The draft Wirral Local Plan proposes that it will now cover a period through to 2037 – an extension of two years to account for delays - and sets out policies and proposals to guide the future development of the Borough over that time.

It sets out where future development will take place, and allocate land for housing, employment, mixed-use and other development (the demand for land to build on in Wirral primarily relates to housing and employment).

One of the most important tasks for the new Local Plan will be to provide for the appropriate number of homes to meet its needs. This is a key component of its vision

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to overcome any inequalities across the Borough and create sustainable communities and align with the Strategic Objectives set out in Chapter 3 of the Issues and Options document.

Leverhulme is uniquely placed, given its extensive landholding, to enhance Wirral on a significant and comprehensive scale, reinvesting in all of the elements that make for strong and vibrant communities.





A WIRRAL FOR EVERYONE

While supportive of Wirral Council’s commitment to brownfield regeneration, the reality is that there will need to be some release of Green Belt land in order to meet the Borough’s housing need.

In Leverhulme’s view, the combined release of both urban and greenfield land is also the only way to ensure the delivery of successful high-quality places in Wirral capable of enhancing the quality of life and wellbeing for all existing and future residents.

The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 states that any review of Green Belt boundaries should “set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.”

This could include:

- ***New or enhanced green infrastructure.***
- ***Woodland or other appropriate planting.***
- ***Landscape and visual impact enhancements.***
- ***Biodiversity improvements.***
- ***New walking or cycling routes.***

Leverhulme is alone in being able to deliver a vision of such significance, aligned with the principles of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission and creating aspirational and high quality communities similar to those seen at Nansledan and Poundbury. Beautiful new neighbourhoods, offering enhanced green infrastructure and where health and wellbeing are prioritised.



THE LEVERHULME OFFER

Creating dynamic, sustainable communities where people want to live, work and enjoy their leisure time is complex and needs to consider the views of many different stakeholders.

Through the scale of its landholding and its legacy of best-in-class place-making, Leverhulme is in a unique position to help ensure Wirral maximises the benefits from greenfield as well as brownfield renewal.

Beautiful homes for Wirral residents

Land at the edge of the rural estate has the potential to offer a highly attractive living environment which complements the urban area; leafy streets with generous gardens and easy access to the rural footpath and cycling network. Characterful homes which draw inspiration from Port Sunlight and Thornton Hough while offering high levels of energy efficiency and modern living spaces.

Communities not just homes

Leverhulme wishes to create exemplary neighbourhoods which have vitality, wellbeing and a sense of belonging at their heart and which are recognised as wonderful places to live.

“Port Sunlight made Wirral a world-leader in place-making. The Leverhulme Vision would restore this status to Wirral.”

By engaging with local stakeholders, we will be able to curate the right mix of facilities and services to help local communities to flourish.

A modern, biodiverse agricultural estate

The vast majority of the landholding will remain agricultural.

Farming is having to adapt in response to changing agricultural policy, and the climate and biodiversity needs. Leverhulme is developing an estate-wide green infrastructure plan, including plans to assist the evolution of farming practices and to deliver improved access and net gains in biodiversity which go beyond current Government requirements.

Health and Wellbeing

Leverhulme has the ability to increase public access to the rural landscape, including improvements to existing footpaths, new off-road cycleways and footpaths, and the creation of new publicly accessible conservation areas.

Interaction with nature and active leisure are increasingly recognised as being essential to both the mental and physical health of adults and children.

This is a real area of opportunity to enhance the quality of life that is on offer for all residents of Wirral. Such a Local Plan would provide the opportunity for health and wellbeing to be placed at the forefront of sustainable place-making.

Connected infrastructure

Leverhulme land has the potential to facilitate improved east-west highways improvements across Wirral and to relieve localised congestion hotspots, such as the constrained junction of Storeton Lane in Barnston village.

Larger, well planned new neighbourhoods have the critical mass to support improved bus and rail services and will be designed to integrate with the existing street network, to encourage travel by foot and bike for local journeys.

Investment in off road cycle routes will support the objectives of the Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and provide a viable alternative to car-based commuting.

Thriving rural economy

The centre of Wirral is home to a number of village communities including Thornton Hough, Raby, Brimstage and Storeton. The future economy and vitality of these villages can, through effective planning, be supported by enhanced connectivity, farm diversification and support for rural and community enterprises.

Leisure and tourism

Leverhulme's vision involves new walking and cycling leisure trails as part of the green infrastructure plan to widen Wirral's appeal to visitors, reveal its heritage and places of interest and support the local economy.

As the farming economy evolves there are opportunities for further diversification projects to ensure historic farm buildings have a viable long-term use.

*“Leverhulme offers a vision and scale of opportunity
that enhances Wirral for everyone.”*



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