

# Social Value Baseline Report: Silkash

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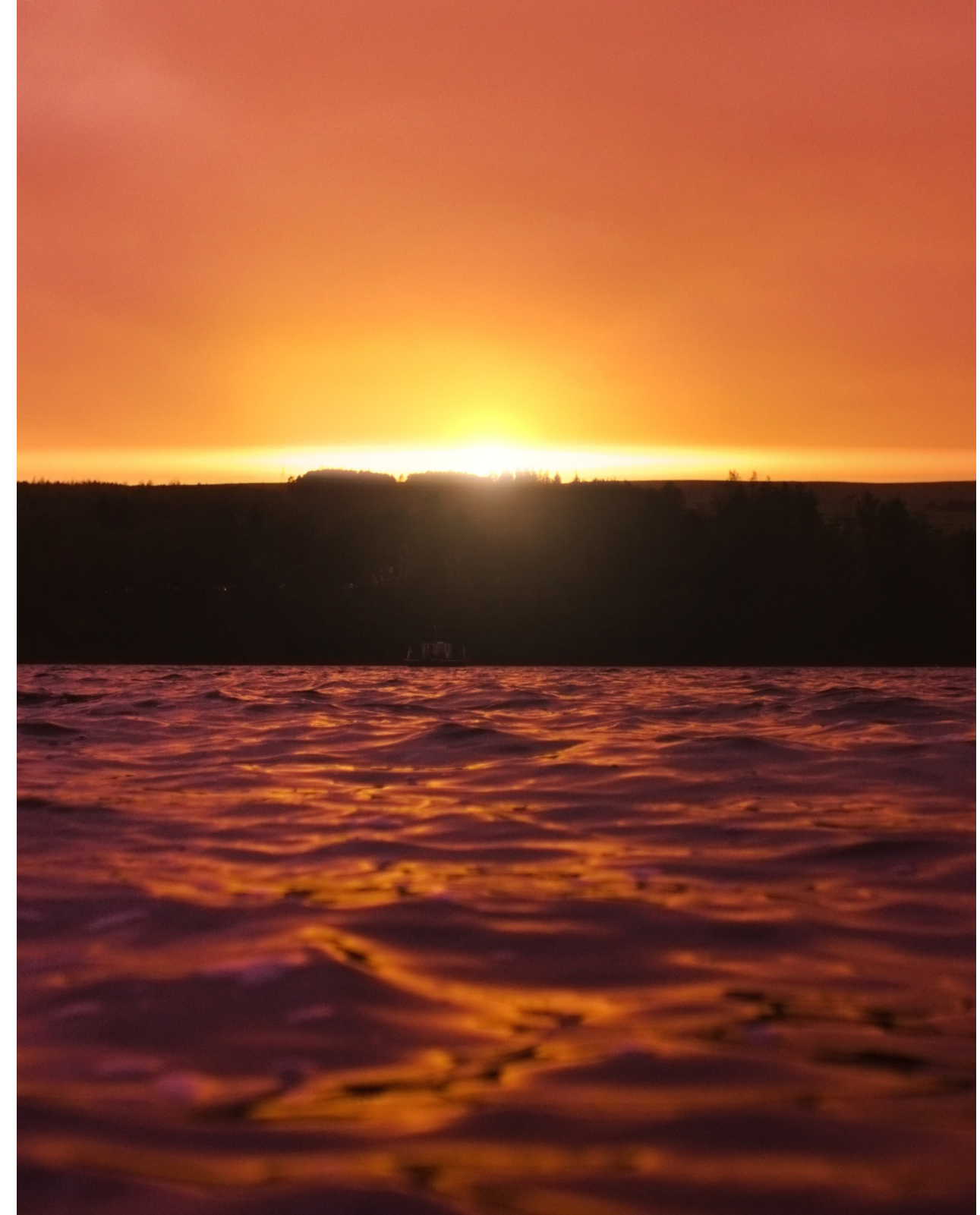
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# 1. Introduction

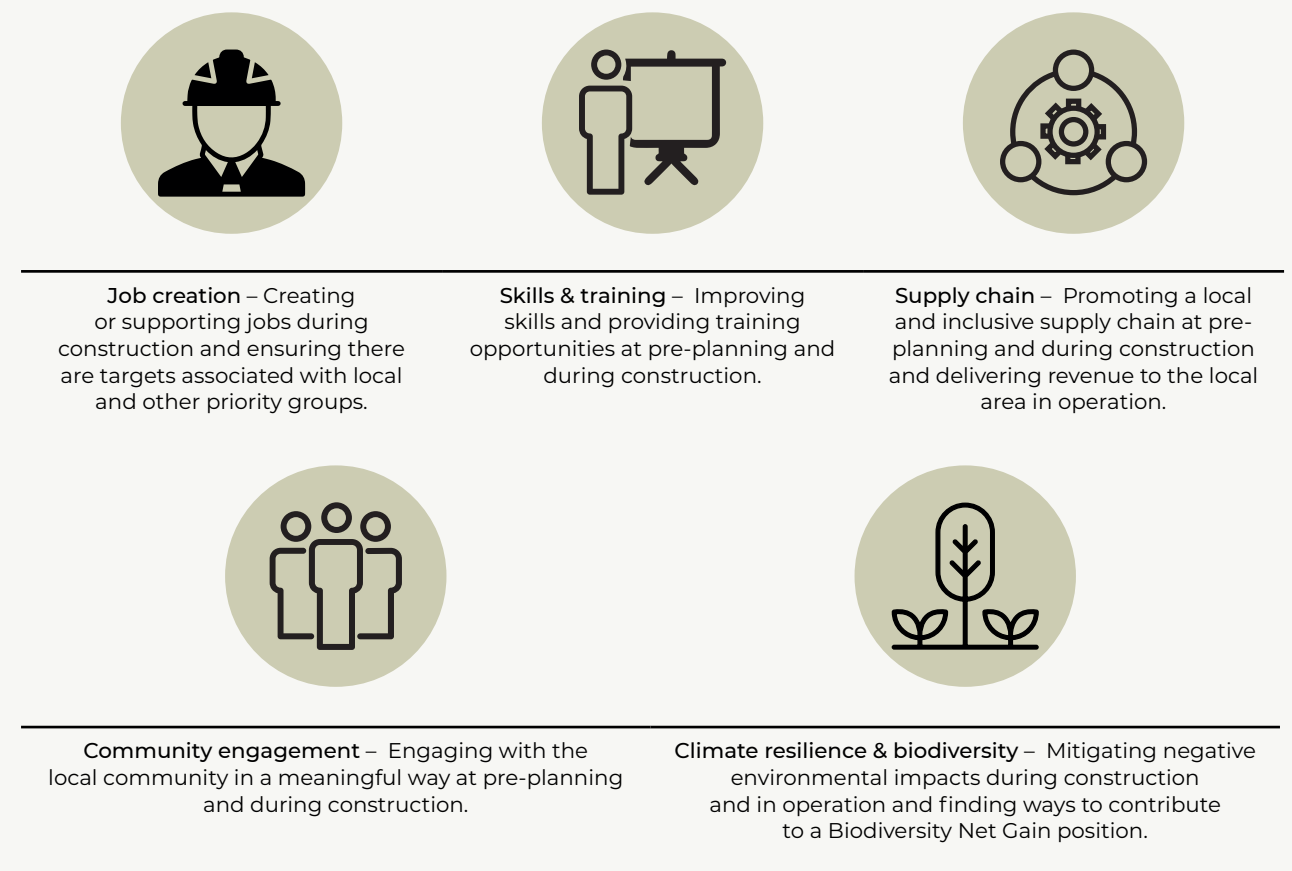
- 1.1 The following report contains the baselining process undertaken in relation to Silkash, Westhoughton, with the purpose of providing a structured approach to identifying the significant social value issues relevant to the socio-economic context specific to the site.
- 1.2 The baselining process provides a comprehensive understanding of the social and economic issues of the site area, and further offers an overview of how the development will address such issues, and stakeholders concerns alike.
- 1.3 The report provides a socio-economic analysis of the conditions at Silkash prior to the development undertaken by Northstone. The report focusses on the following key areas:
  - Features of the site – including the suitability of the sites surroundings for housing delivery, considering the physical site, public services and amenities available.
  - Housing and economic needs and opportunities – informed by local, regional, and national policy drivers.
  - The local socio-economic context – including the needs of the population compared to regional and national contexts (information provided by publicly available and Peel L&P commissioned primary data).
  - The report concludes with a summary of how Northstone's proposals responded in line with the local context and provides an assessment of the potential social value that the scheme could deliver.



# 2. Social Value Baseline

Northstone have a set of 5 core focus areas to be included in all sites and development scheme which are accompanied by site specific focus areas depending on the result of the Social Value Baseline process. The 5 core focus areas are illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Site specific focus areas, Silkash



Section 2 presents the social value baseline at Silkash, Westhoughton. The specific focus areas chosen for Silkash are provided upfront, followed by a detailed overview of the site context, policy context, local socio-economic context, and stakeholder context in the following sections.

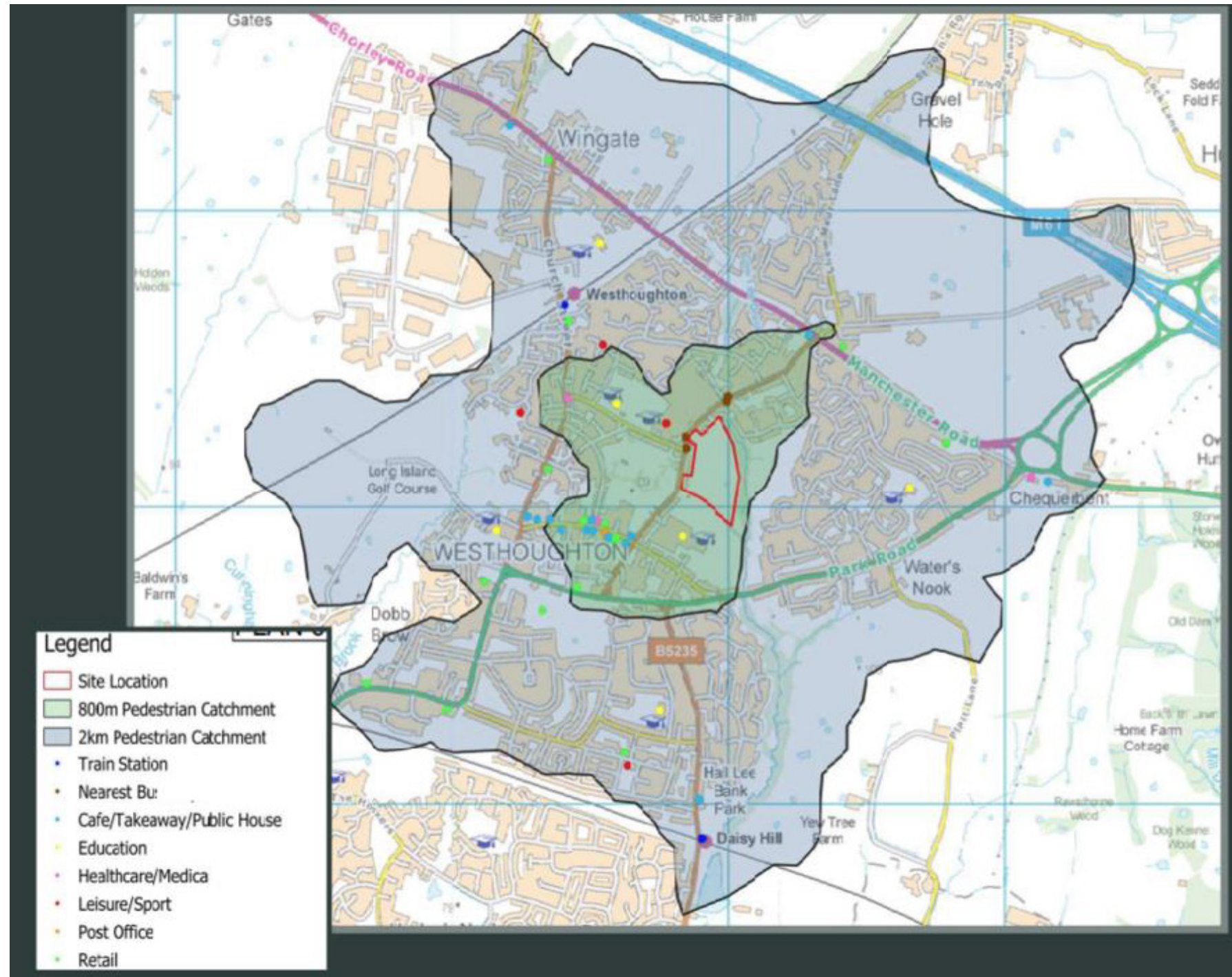
## Headline Social Value Baseline

Figure 2.2: Site specific focus areas, Silkash





# Site Context



Map of the Silkash site and local services  
Source: Northstone, Travel Plan

## Location and Condition

- 2.1 The Silkash site, previously known as Roscoe's Farm, is located in the town of Westhoughton. Westhoughton is a suburban town, situated 7km South West of Bolton. The site is part of the Westhoughton North and Chew Moor Metropolitan District Ward, within the Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council area.
- 2.2 The site comprises 4.06 hectares of land. When Northstone acquired the site in March 2019, the land was primarily farmland with a scrap metal yard in the southern corner. The farmland was rented out as cattle grazing land. There was no public access through the site. Operation of the scrap metal yard had results in contamination of the land and a watercourse running through the site.
- 2.3 The site is bounded by a nature reserve to the east, school and leisure centre to the south a row of terraced houses to the west. The site provided some level of amenity value for residents of these terraced houses given their view of green space, but this was not publicly accessible.
- 2.4 Northstone commissioned various technical studies into the condition of the site to ensure the proposed development would not disrupt the benefits the site was providing as a natural asset. This included:
- An arboricultural impact assessment by Ascerta which identified the trees which would be affected by the development and ways to mitigate these impacts
  - An archaeological excavation statement by Wardell Armstrong which identified the remaining structure of a farm which had been located on site and allowed assessment of any archaeological findings.
  - An ecological appraisal report by Ascerta which identified the wildlife on site, such as birds, bats, badgers and hedgehogs and recommended mitigating measures.

## Connectivity and Amenities

- 2.5 The site is located 800m from Westhoughton Town Centre. It is 7km from Bolton, 9km from Wigan and 21km from Manchester city centre.
- 2.6 Silkash has excellent transport links. There is a bus stop within 250m walking distance of the site with links to Westhoughton town centre, Bolton town centre and Wigan. Westhoughton train station is 900m from the site and offers regular services from Wigan, Salford and Manchester. By road, the nearest motorway, the M61, is four miles from the site.

- 2.7 There are good levels of green space close to the site. Central Park is 0.2km to the west of the site. Cunningham Clough and Eatock Lodge nature reserves are also within two miles. Hall Lee Brook nature reserve is situated adjacent to the site, however without public access.
- 2.8 Withing 1km of the site there are three general medical practices and two dental practices. All of these services were accepting new patients in 2019. The Leigh infirmary and Royal Bolton Hospital are within 6.5km of the site.
- 2.9 Figure 2.3 lists some of the other services and their distance from the Silkash site showing there is good provision of services nearby, including schools and a leisure centre which are very close to the site.

Service/Facility	Name	Distance from Site
Education	Westhoughton High School	0.2km
	Sacred Heart RC Primary School	0.4km
	The Gates Primary School and Nursery	0.8km
Social	St Bartholemew's Church	0.7km
	Westhoughton Town Council	0.4km
	Westhoughton Library	0.4km
Lesiure	Westhoughton Sports & Social Club	0.4km
	Westhoughton Sports & Leisure Centre	0.2km
	Central Park	0.2km
Retail	Sainsbury's Supermarket	0.8km
	Co-op Food	0.5km
	Lloyd's Bank	0.5km
Food establishments	Casa Nostra Restaurant	0.7km
	McDonald's	0.8km
	Domino's Pizza	0.6km

Figure 2.3: Distances of local services

## Policy Context

At a national level, planning policy is directed by the National Planning Policy Framework, the central aim of which is to deliver sustainable development. Under the framework this means meeting three overarching objectives.

- An economic objective – “to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy”
- A social objective – “to support strong, vibrant and health communities”
- An environmental objective – “to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment”.

- 2.10 The framework also suggests that where the local authority is not able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing, as was the case in Bolton in 2019, development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved ‘without delay’.
- 2.11 The 2019 Greater Manchester Spatial Framework identifies an emerging requirement for at least 726 net additional dwellings per year in Bolton from 2018 to 2037. The framework notes that affordability in Greater Manchester has worsened over recent years, that there are cost barriers for people on low or variable incomes and First Time Buyers, and that new residential developments must play a full role in meeting this need. Smaller households are also found to account for over half the expected growth in households.
- 2.12 The Greater Manchester Strategy takes an integrated approach to placemaking “to create neighbourhoods of choice”. This approach examines how to deliver both housing policy and outcomes for health, education and skills, transport, commercial development, culture and leisure and public services.
- 2.13 Bolton Council's Core Strategy sets out the vision for Bolton to 2026. The vision of a ‘strong and confident Bolton’ identified the Silkash site as having capacity for 170 homes. Bolton Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Affordable Housing requires that on greenfield housing development sites, 35% of the total housing provision should be affordable.
- 2.14 The 2018/19 Westhoughton Town Council Action Plan identifies objections to housing schemes which pose risk to preservation of green belt and green spaces. The Silkash site is not included in this category. Other relevant issues highlighted by the action plan are the need for public planting, renovation of nature reserves and public rights of way and crime prevention.

## Local Socio-Economic Context

This section provides an overview of local socio-economic conditions at the Silkash site prior to development. It includes analysis within the following themes:

- Demographics
- Deprivation
- Employment & skills
- Land & property
- Health & wellbeing

### Demographics

- The population of Westhoughton was 23,800 in 2019, making up 8% of Bolton's population. Almost a quarter of Westhoughton's residents live within 800m walking distance of the Silkash site.
- Whilst Bolton's population has grown since 2011, Westhoughton's population has decreased slightly with its working age population decreasing by over 1,100 people. However, it still has a higher proportion of people who are working age compared to Bolton and the North West.
- Westhoughton has a notably high proportion of 45- to 75-year-olds, and lower proportion of people in their 20's. Bolton has a relatively high proportion of under 20-year-olds and 30- to 50-year-olds, but struggles to retain or attract people in their 20's.
- 14% of Bolton's population is of Asian ethnicity, compared to 6% of the North West population and 8% of England's population. The vast majority of Westhoughton's population are white, including within the 800m catchment area. Only 2% of Westhoughton's population are of Asian ethnicity.

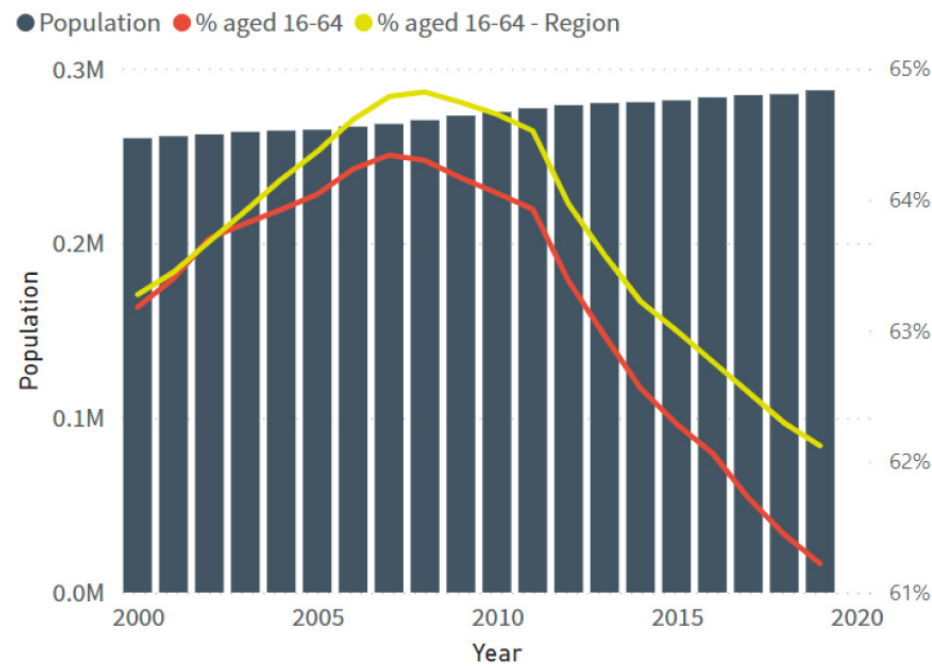


Figure 2.4: Population, and % working age in Bolton compared with the North West, 2000-2019  
 Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2019

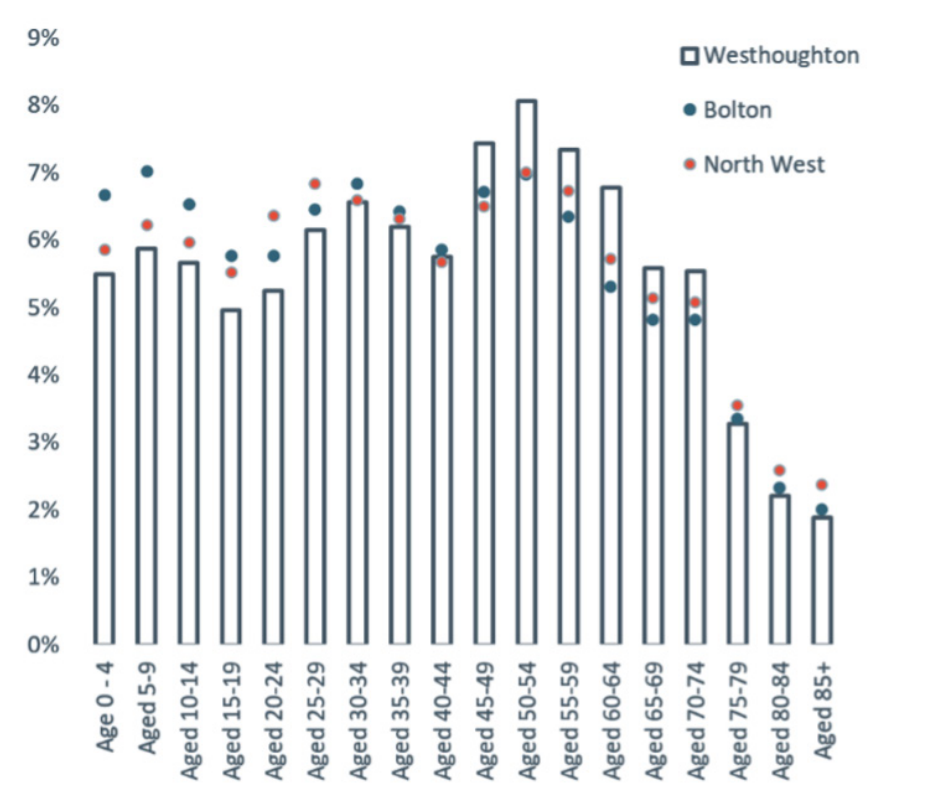


Figure 2.5: Population by age group in Westhoughton, compared with Bolton and the North West, 2019

2.15 As shown above, Bolton has a younger population than the regional average, with a larger proportion of 30-45 year olds and a smaller proportion of over 55s. However, it also has a smaller proportion of 20-29 year olds, suggesting that Bolton currently struggles to retain or attract people in their 20s. Westhoughton has an even lower proportion of people in their 20s and a higher proportion of 45-64 year olds than Bolton or the North West average.

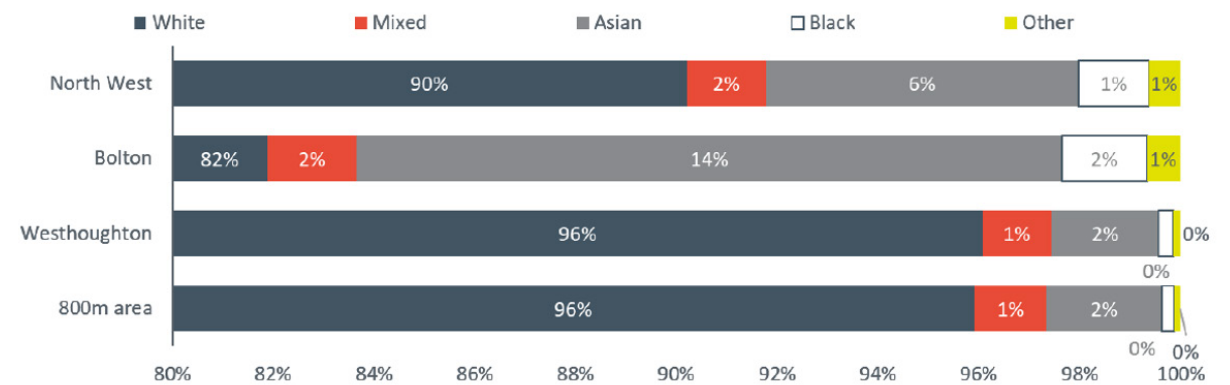


Figure 2.6: Population within 800m walking catchment, Westhoughton, Bolton and the North West by ethnic group, 2011  
 Source: Census, 2011



## Deprivation

- Bolton ranks in the top 15% of local authorities with the highest levels of deprivation. Almost a quarter of Bolton's LSOAs are within the 10% most deprived across England. Westhoughton does not experience this level of multiple deprivation, although two of Westhoughton's LSOAs are in the 20% most deprived in England.
- Westhoughton faces some specific deprivation issues associated with employment, health and crime. One of Westhoughton's LSOAs is within the 10% most deprived across England in terms of income, employment, and health and disability deprivation.
- Bolton faces particular deprivation issues associated with crime, health, employment and income. Over a quarter of Bolton's LSOAs are within the 10% most deprived for income across England, a third are within the 10% most deprived for crime indicators, a fifth within the 10% most deprived for health and disability indicators, and over 40% within the 20% most deprived for employment indicators. Education, skills and training deprivation and living environment deprivation are also issues for Bolton.
- In 2017/18, Bolton had a high crime rate of 127 offences per 1,000 people, compared to 98 in the North West and 83 in England as a whole. This rate has increased by 69% since 2010/11.

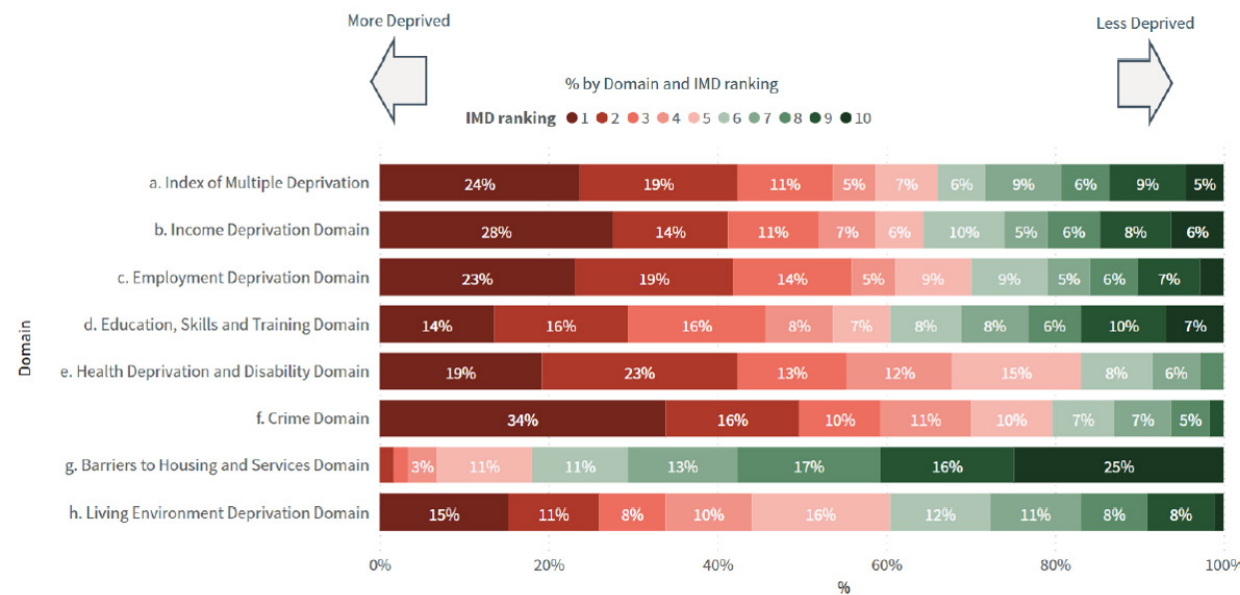


Figure 2.7: Deprivation ranking of areas in Bolton by IMD domain  
Source: MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2019

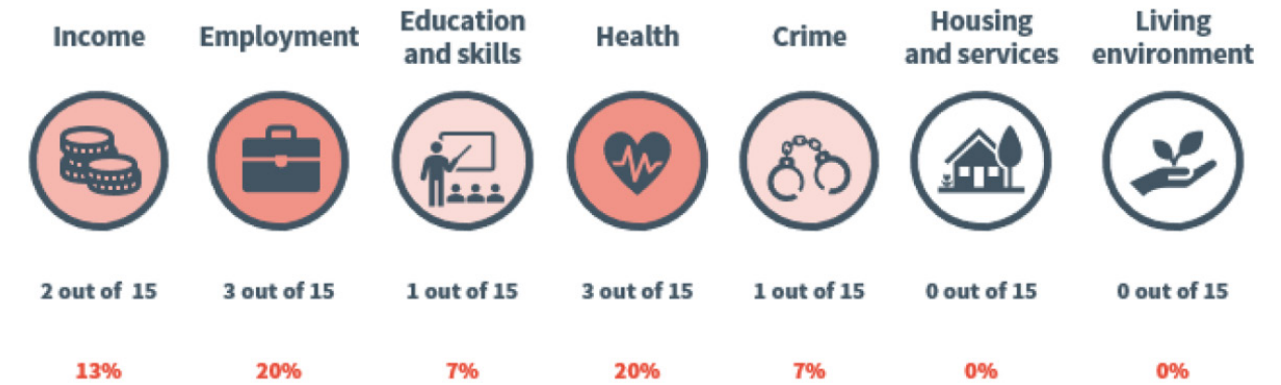


Figure 2.8: Westhoughton LSOAs in the top 20% most deprived nationally, by domain of deprivation, 2019  
Source: MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation, 2019

## Employment & Skills

- Bolton has seen rising employment at an annual growth of c. 2.5% from 2012-2019. Although job density has also increased since 2010, at 0.7\* it still represents an out-commuting area in which there are significantly fewer jobs than working residents. Further, the growth in employment only just recovered to pre-2008 recession levels as of 2019.
- The most prominent employment industries in Bolton are wholesale & retail, health & social work, and manufacturing. Around 5% of employment is in construction. Manufacturing and construction are important employment sectors for Westhoughton, employing 29% and 13% of the population, respectively.
- Local jobs to be lower-earning compared to jobs outside the borough, with Bolton's resident-based earning at 93% of the North West and 86% of the English average, whilst workplace-based earning are 91% of the North West and 84% of the English average.
- Unemployment rates are high with 5.5% of adult men (compared to a regional average), 9% of adult women (compared to a 4% regional average), and 13% of BAME adults (compared to a 7% regional average) unemployed in 2019.
- Employment rates have also been stubbornly low compared to the region, particularly amongst the BAME working age population with 56% employment compared to a 61% regional average.
- A high proportion of Bolton's working age population have no qualifications at 11% compared to 8.7% across the North West, and just a third have higher education qualifications.
- Primary and secondary schools within 800m walking distance from the Silkash site show good levels of achievement, above the average for Bolton, the North West and England. Bolton's key stage two school pupils show similar average levels of achievement to elsewhere in England and key stage four pupils show slightly higher levels of achievement.

\*number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population aged 16-64

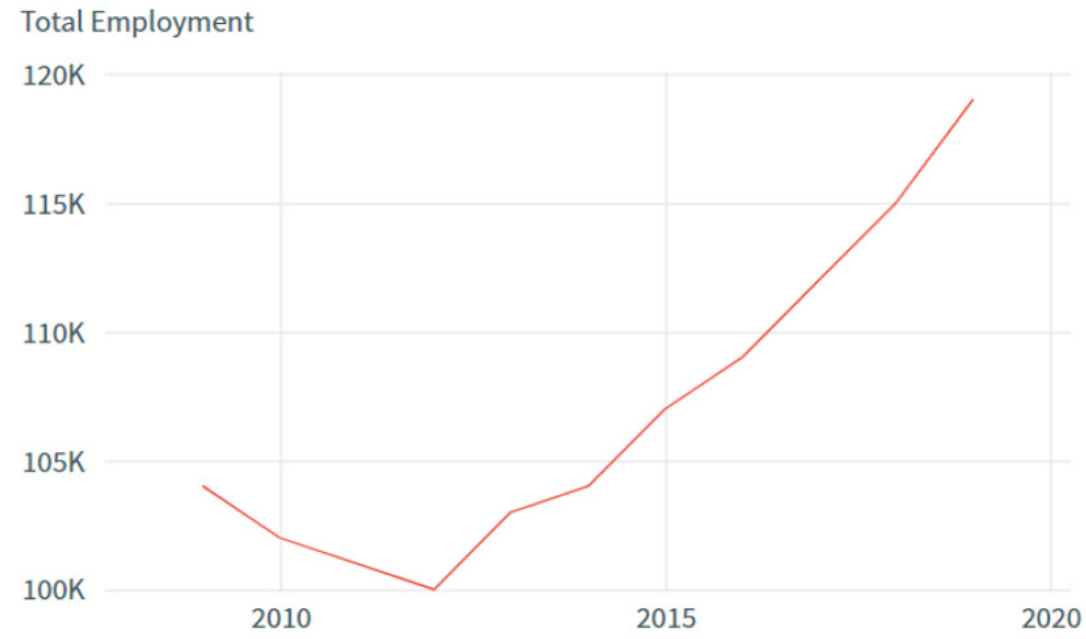


Figure 2.9: Employment in Wigan, 2012 - 2019

Source: ONS BRES, 2020

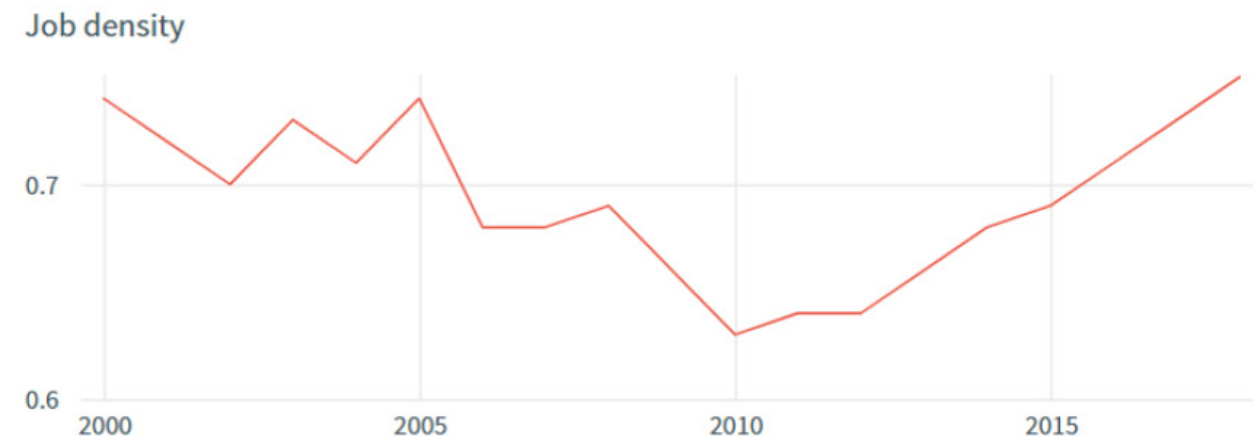


Figure 2.10: Job density in Bolton, 2000 - 2018

Source: ONS BRES, 2020

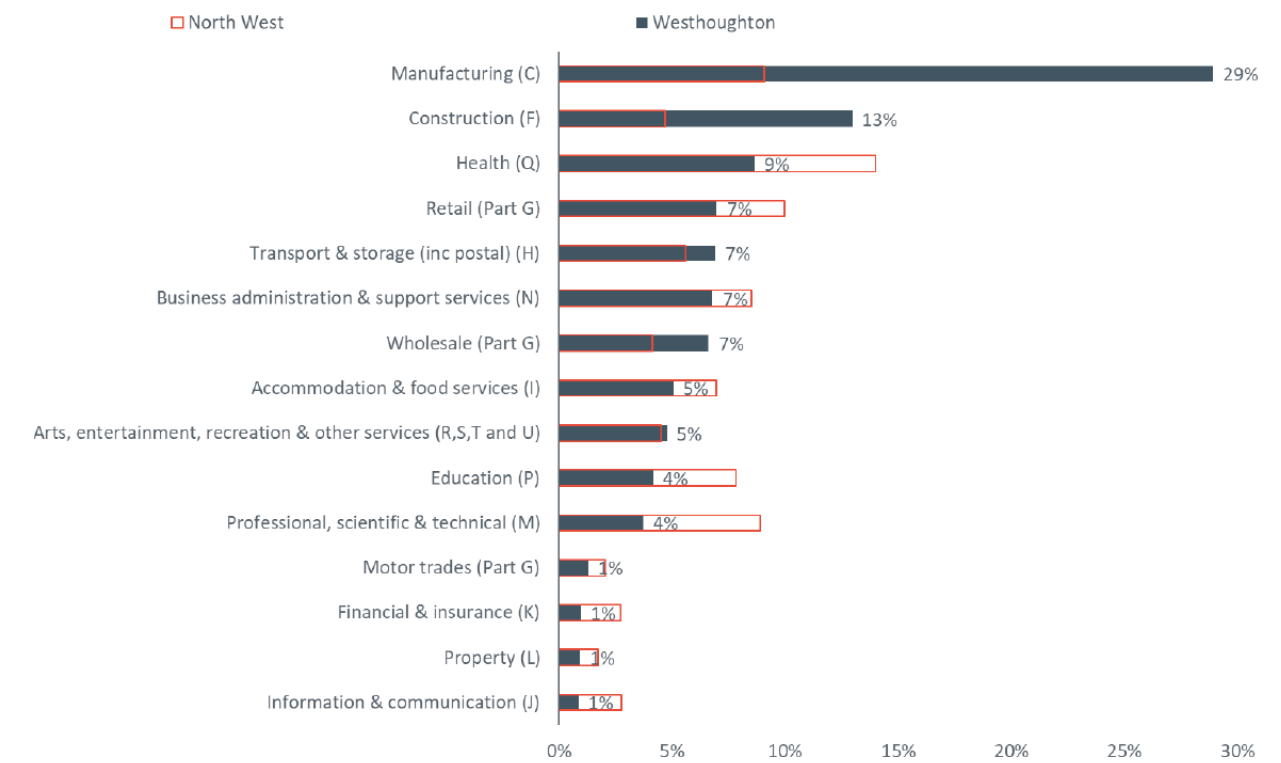


Figure 2.11: Proportion of employment by industry, Westhoughton compared with the North West, 2019

Source: ONS BRES, 2019

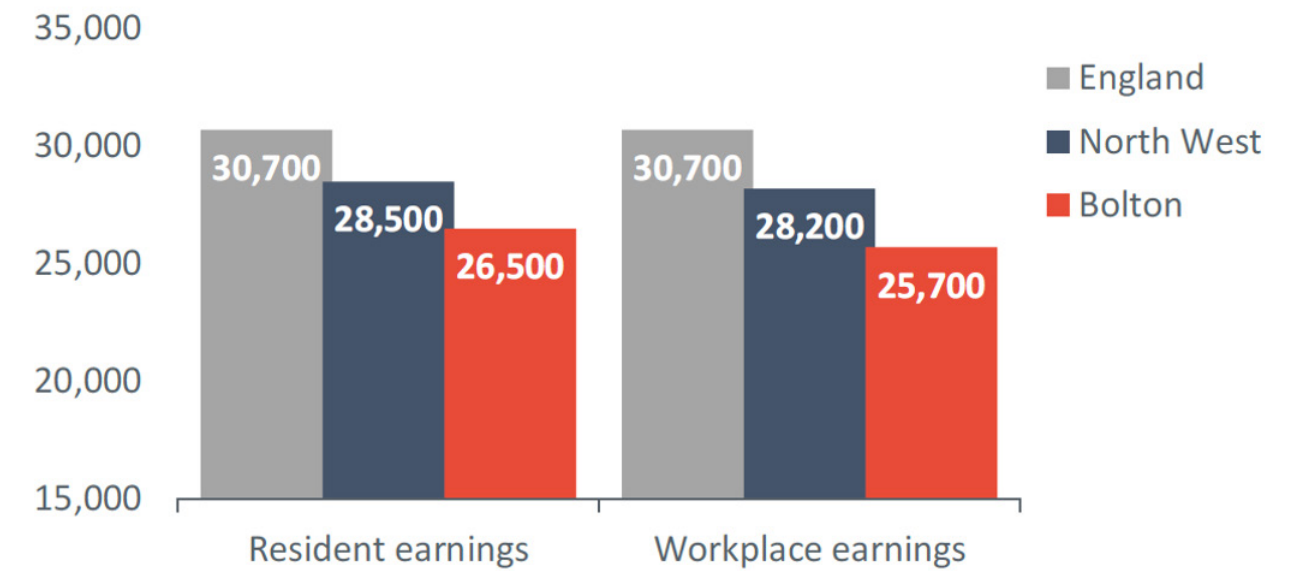


Figure 2.12: Resident and workplace-based earnings, Bolton and the North West, 2019

Source: ONS ASHE, 2019



Figure 2.13: Employment rates by demographic groups, Bolton and the North West, 2019

Source: ONS APS, 2019

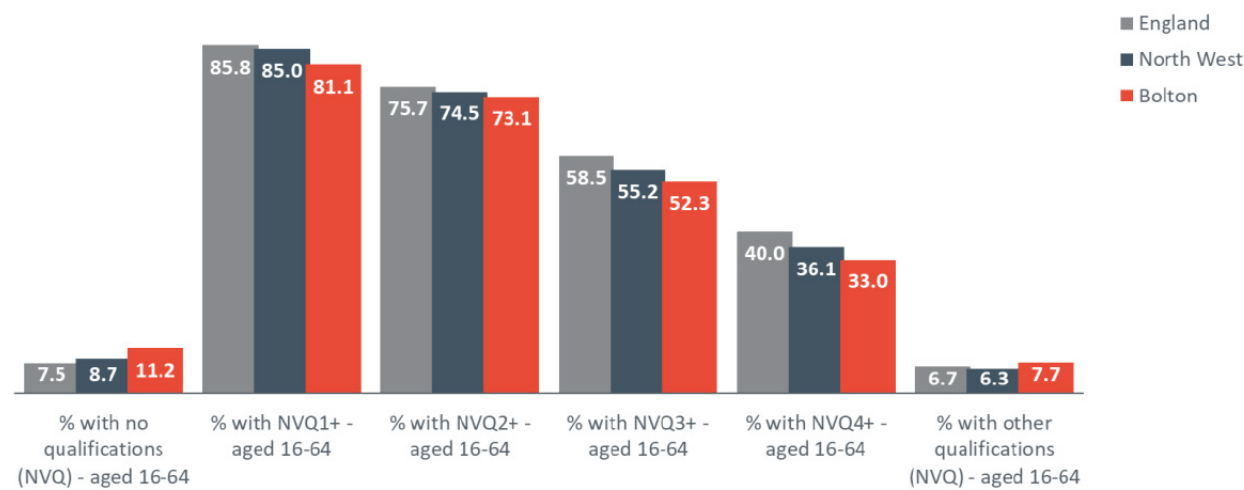


Figure 2.14: Qualifications of Bolton's workforce

Source: ONS APS, 2019

	Average percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, 2016-19	Average Attainment 8 score per pupil, 2018
England	65%	40
North West	64%	39
Bolton	64%	41
Bolton West (which includes Westhoughton)	70%	30
Within 800m walking distance from Silkash	77%	44

Source: Department for Education, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 performance measures, 2019

Table 2.1: School achievement

## Land and Property

- In 2019, there were 124,400 dwellings in Bolton, with just under 2,000 additional dwellings since 2015. This is an increase of 2%, which is lower than the proportionate increase in the North West and England.
- The median house price in Westhoughton is £166,800, which is £31,100 higher than the average in Bolton. This is similar to the average price in the North West but still below the average price in England. Since 2015, house prices have risen faster in Westhoughton than in Bolton, the North West and England, and faster still in the 800m walking distance area surrounding the Silkash site.
- The difference between Bolton and the North West and England is less pronounced in terms of house rental prices. Bolton's rental prices are 75% of the average for England, and 81% for 3-bed properties specifically. This may reflect a shortage of 3-bed properties for rent and strong demand for properties of this size from families.
- Gross disposable household income (GDHI) reflects the average amount of money available for spending or saving after tax, social contributions and benefits have been taken into account. GDHI per individual in Bolton is £5,600 less than the amount for England and £2,300 less than the amount for the North West and this gap has widened over the last decade. Since 2015, the ratio of median house price to GDHI has risen by 6% in Bolton, compared to only 3% in the North West.



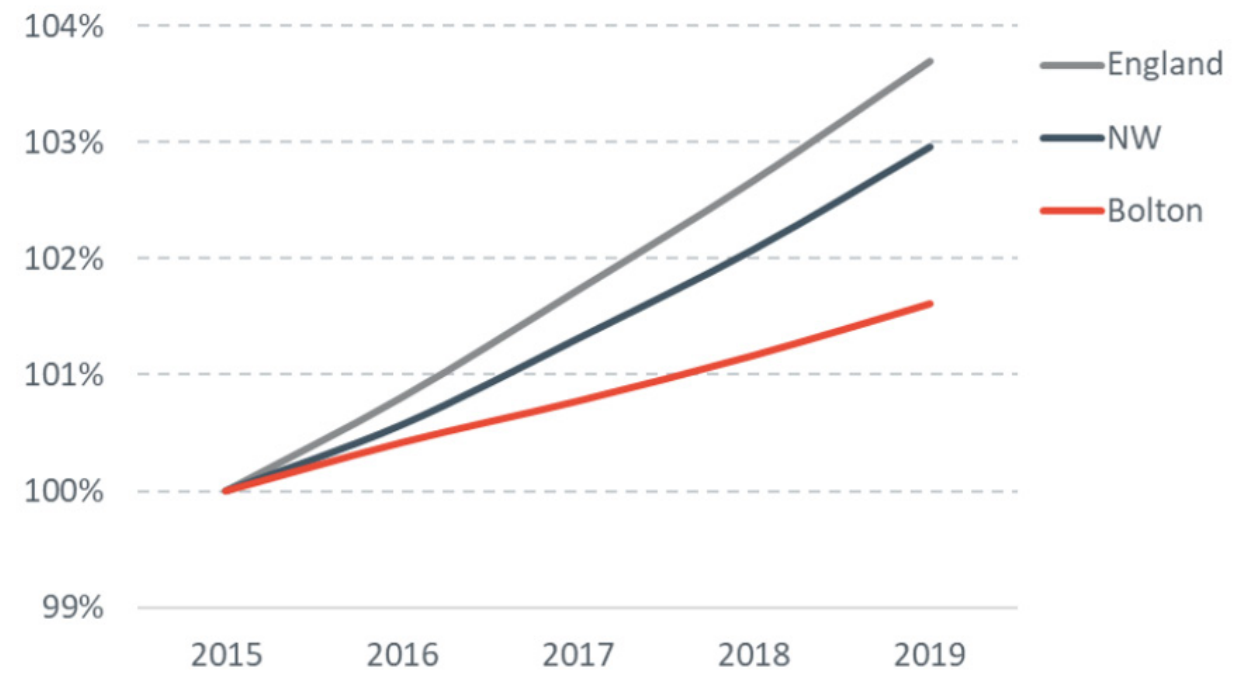


Figure 2.15: Growth in dwelling numbers since 2015, Bolton, North West and England

Source: MHCLG, Number of dwellings by tenure and district, England, 2020

	Median house price (£000s)	Percentage increase since 2015
England	245	15%
North West	167	15%
Bolton	136	17%
Westhoughton	167	21%
Within 800m walking distance from Silkash	141	23%

Table 2.2: Median house price paid, 2019

NORTHSTONE

	All	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed or more
England	£700	£675	£775	£1,320
Bolton	£525	£495	£625	£898
Value in Bolton as a proportion of the value in England	75%	73%	81%	68%

Source: Primary rental market summary statistics in England, 2020

Table 2.3: Median monthly rent values by dwelling size, October 2018 to September 2019



Figure 2.16: GDHI per individual by area, in 2015 and 2018

Source: ONS, Regional gross disposable household income: local authorities by NUTS1 region, 2020

## Health & Wellbeing

- Bolton's life expectancy is 80 years (averaging the rate for men and women), the same as North West life expectancy. Bolton's population however is expected to have fewer years of healthy life expectancy than the North West population and four fewer years than England's population.
- In Westhoughton, there is a slightly higher death rate amongst under 75s than in England as a whole (101.1 against an index where England=100). This largely reflects higher numbers of death from cancer and circulatory disease amongst under 75s (indexed at 109.5 and 107.6 respectively).
- Bolton has slightly higher levels of inactivity in its population than the North West and England. Only 35% of Bolton's population walk or cycle at least three times a week, down from 37% in 2015/16.
- Measures of wellbeing amongst people in Bolton are broadly in line with levels in England and the North West, across indicators of life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile, happiness and anxiety.

	Life Expectancy at birth	Healthy Life Expectancy
England	82	64
North West	80	62
Bolton	80	60

Source: Public Health England, Public Health Profiles, 2020

Table 2.4: Life expectancy and healthy life expectancy at birth, 2017-2019

Indicator	Westhoughton	England
Deaths from all causes, under 75 years	101.1	100
Deaths from all cancer, under 75 years	109.5	100
Deaths from circulatory disease, under 75 years	107.6	100

Source: Public Health England, Local Health 2019, Wigan

Table 2.5: Health Indicator Index

Area	Proportion of adults who undertake less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week	Proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling for any purpose at least three times per week
England	25%	48%
North West	26%	44%
Bolton	27%	35%

Source: Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2020 & Department for Transport, Walking and Cycling statistics, England, 2019

Table 2.6: Physical activity levels

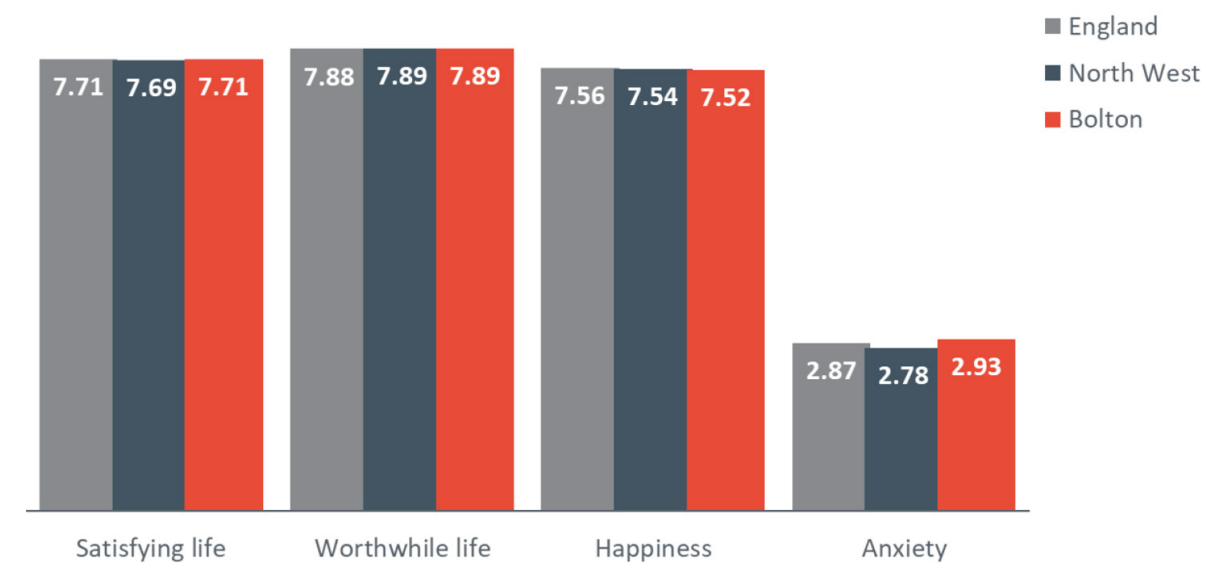


Figure 2.17: Wellbeing indicators, out of 10 (1 being low and 10 high)

Source: ONS, Headline estimates of personal wellbeing from the Annual Population Survey, 2019

# Stakeholder Context

Minimal stakeholder engagement has been carried out under the original 2016 planning application. After acquiring the site, Northstone commissioned Lexington Communications to undertake a comprehensive pre-application consultation process. This included:

- **Letters issued to politicians**, including ward members for Westhoughton North & Chew Moor, members of the Cabinet, the Clerk of Westhoughton Town Council and the local Member of Parliament to advise of the consultation and request meetings.
- **A leaflet distributed to 1,335 homes** in the area to provide an overview of the plans and information as to how residents could provide their feedback.
- **A consultation website** to provide further information on the proposals, as well as a facility to submit feedback via an online form. This received 51 responses.
- **Social media adverts** circulated to all residents living within 5km of the site to reach a wider audience. These sought to disseminate details about the plans and direct users to the website.
- **A community information telephone line and email address** were available throughout the consultation period. This received 10 responses via email and 2 via telephone.
- **A press release** issued locally to inform readers about the scheme and how feedback could be submitted.

2.16 The key issues identified through the consultation are summarised below, based on the evidence from NJL Consulting's Planning Statement, 2019.

## Housing need

- 24 respondents stated there was no need for new homes in the area, yet 28 respondents indicated interest in a house on the site and Bolton Council policy has demonstrated a shortage of homes in the borough.
- Most local residents cite 2-3 bed homes as the type of home needed locally, and 61% partly or fully agreed with an increase in the proportion of 2-3 bed properties compared to the Jones Homes proposal.

## Home design

- Residents identified a series of needs in terms of home design, including low-energy equipment, high quality kitchen technology and flexible spaces.
- They also suggested solar panels, triple glazing and insulation, maintaining of green spaces and avoiding use of ground pump heating in terms of sustainable and carbon friendly development.

## Green spaces

- Local residents reported a need for additional green spaces, and 7 respondents objected to the loss of open space.
- Bid boxes, allotments, hedgehog doorways and wild meadows were cited as means to impact ecology.

## Energy, transport and social infrastructure

- 6 respondents cited insufficient infrastructure to accommodate the development as a concern.
- 29 respondents cited issues relating to traffic increase as a result of the proposals.
- 19 respondents raised concerns on the pressure the development would have on the capacity of local GP surgeries and dentists.
- 12 respondents raised concerns regarding the strain on school places as a result of the proposals.



# 3. Using the Social Value Baseline

3.1 This section presents the social priorities identified as important for the Silkash scheme and summarises how the proposals were developed to respond to the needs, issues and opportunities identified during the baselining process. It also presents a summary infographic of the anticipated social value that the proposals will deliver.

## Focus areas for Silkash

Figure 3.1: Focus areas for Silkash



## Responding to the Focus Areas

3.2 Whilst the proposals for Silkash were developed in 2019 and early 2020, there are some clear ways in which Northstone responded to important drivers in terms of the site, strategic policy, local conditions and stakeholder views. These have been summarised below against each other of the identified social priorities for Silkash.

### Job creation

3.3 The baseline identified that construction is an important employment sector in Westhoughton. The delivery of a major new housing development has supported a significant number of construction jobs, with Northstone estimating it would create c. 160 new jobs and support a further 120 jobs through the supply chain. These benefits would be further enhanced by a social value focused approach taken by the contractor to target priority groups such as local people, the previously unemployed, NEETs, and BAME people.

### Skills & training

3.4 Being conscious of the opportunity for the delivery of the development to positively impact local socio-economic outcomes, Northstone set out an approach to providing skills and training opportunities and delivering local educational outreach activities. For example, by proposing to transfer their apprenticeship levy, the Silkash contractor was supported to deliver targeted apprenticeships to built local skills provision.

### Supply chain & local revenue

3.5 A key element of delivering social value is to take a considered approach to procurement and build an inclusive supply chain made up of local businesses where possible. This aspect also includes ensuring that the contractor and other suppliers are aligned in their commitments to social value. Northstone set out to ensure the supply chain of both contractors and suppliers was as local as possible, with all materials being sources from the UK (with the exception of windows).

3.6 Northstone also committed to making charitable contributions associated with the Silkash scheme. This included sponsoring Bolton's Lads' and Girls' Club (BLGC) to help 8-to-19 year olds facing a range of issues including isolation, loneliness and bereavement during coronavirus pandemic, as well as partnering with Bolton Council to support the delivery of Bolton's Winter Festival to support local businesses and boost community spirits.

3.7 There are also benefits associated with the completed scheme and the additional residents brought into Westhoughton, and it was estimated at pre-planning that the development will generate over £4m of additional spending every year for businesses in the local area. There were also anticipated fiscal benefits to Bolton Borough Council, estimated by Northstone to include £160,000 per annum Council Tax revenue generated and an additional New Homes Bonus payment.

### Community engagement

3.8 Northstone set out an approach for the scheme proposals to create a high quality but affordable product that is community focused, as well as sensitive to existing biodiversity and natural assets on the site. Having undertaken an extensive consultation exercise, the proposals were adapted to take into account the identified needs and preferences in the local community as well as concerns of neighbouring residents by:

- Flattening the site's dome shaped elevation to help reduce the visual impact of the site;
- Permeating the site entrance within the existing road network, with clearly defined access to the site;
- Delivering high quality landscaping and green spaces, and enhancing access to the local nature reserve;
- Taking an open and collaborative approach to how the £1.4m s106 contribution is spent to allow Bolton Borough Council to make this decision.

### Climate resilience & biodiversity

3.9 Core to Northstone's ethos is to encourage sustainable living, and Briary Energy was commissioned to deliver a bespoke energy strategy for the Silkash development. Building on the recommendations of the strategy, the proposals included the use of thermal fabric efficiency, air tightness and effective heating controls. It is proposed that each home is also fitted with a 12Amp fused spur to allow installation of an electric vehicle charging point as needed.

3.10 The proposals were also designed to be sensitive to the natural environment and biodiversity already present on the site. Planned actions included:

- Building a retaining wall to protect bluebells and woodland;
- Protection of a watercourse running through the site;
- Avoidance of disturbing bat habitats and badger setts;
- Avoidance of removal of vegetation during bird breeding season;
- Control of invasive plant species;
- Building of specific bird boxes and bat bricks;
- Inclusion of pollinating plans to encourage bees.

### Housing & affordability

3.11 The proposals sought to represent an exemplar for an affordable but high-quality housing scheme, directly in response to the Westhoughton, North West and UK context. In terms of the site, Northstone's plans to remediate contaminated site meant that a location which may otherwise face viability issues and risk being underused will actively contribute to the local housing need of Bolton with 150 new homes. The planned number of starter units further addresses identified issues associated with affordability in the local area.

3.12 The baseline identified that Westhoughton has a lower proportion of young working age people, as well as house prices which have increased more quickly than in Bolton or the North West. Given the barriers to first time homebuyers finding suitable homes within their price range as well as the construction findings that 2-bed and 3-bed homes are required locally, Northstone increase the proportion of smaller homes proposed at Silkash. In the final proposals, 74% of the dwellings were 2-or-3-bed starter homes.

### Health & wellbeing

3.13 The proposed designs prioritised resident health and wellbeing through the provision of plentiful green space and safe streets which prioritise pedestrians over vehicles, thereby encouraging people to spend time outdoors and engaging in physical activity. They also considered the importance of community wellbeing by designing in communal spaces for residents to socialise with their neighbours and the surrounding community. This included a welcoming frontage to the site to encourage permeability with the surrounding street networks rather than the housing estate being perceived as closed off. Specific design decisions included soft road edges to blur the boundaries of pavements, and minimised cluttering of the street by providing dedicated spaces for parked cars and bins.

### Quality of life

3.14 The proposals were also designed to focus spend on aspects that were anticipated to deliver the greatest quality of life impact in terms of good design. Northstone reviewed best practice in providing quality housing at a cost which is affordable to local people. Aspects of the proposed scheme which reflect this approach included:

- Use of good quality, long lasting building materials, which are standardised across the development;
- House designs with unusually high ceilings and large windows to boost light levels, and support resident wellbeing;



- Strong landscaping offer with mature trees and varied vegetation which is individualised to each street for ease of wayfinding and to encourage community use of the site;
- Adaptive designs that would continue to suit changing resident needs in the future, in response to emerging smart technology, social withdrawal as a result of technological advances, and the climate crisis.

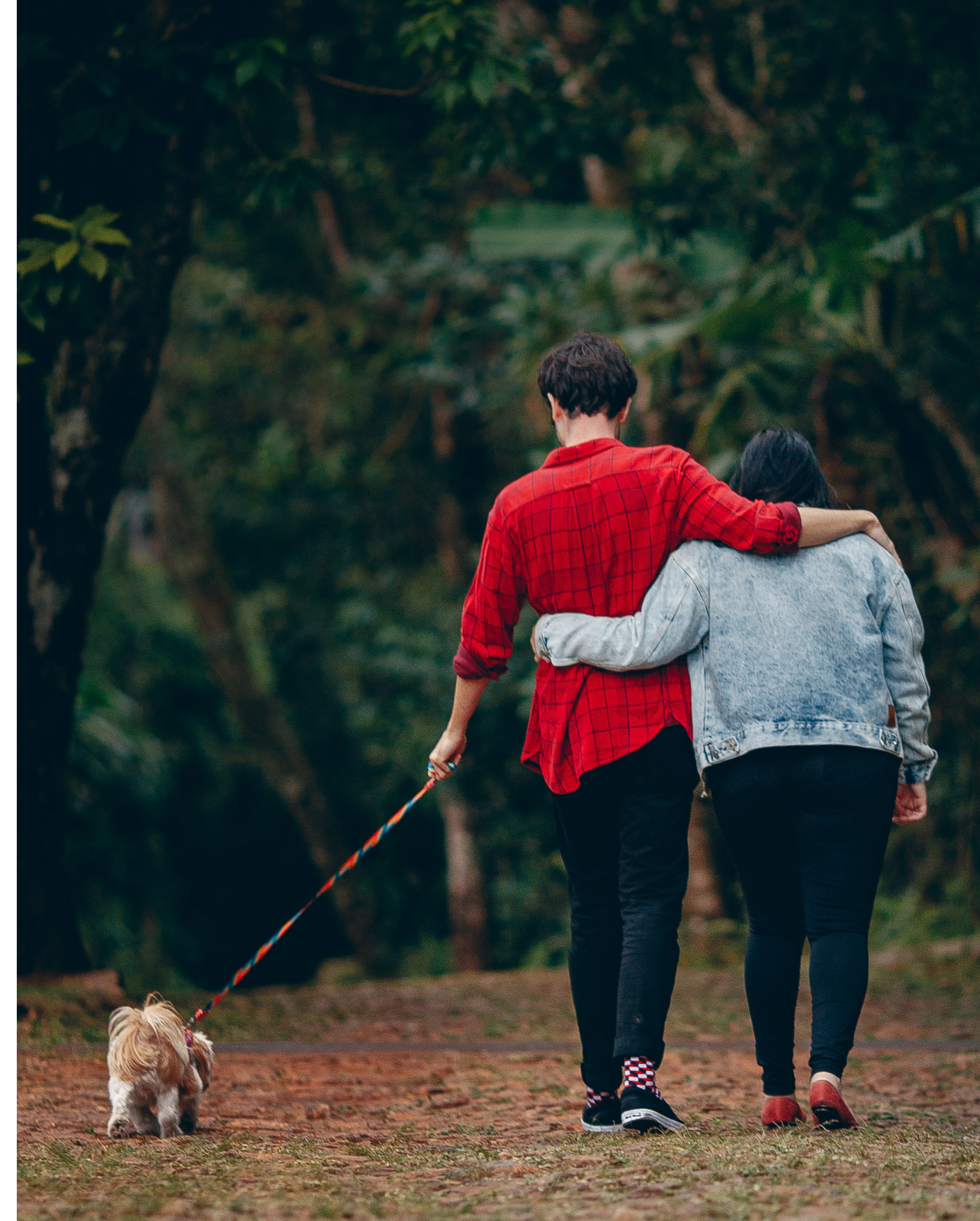
### Safety & security

3.15 The baseline clearly identifies crime deprivation as a significant issue for Bolton. The scheme proposals included some relevant elements, including garden design features to enhance security, as well as designing safe streets that prioritise pedestrians and make Silkash a safer place to be outside.

### Connection to nature

3.16 By proposing to build on the Silkash site, Northstone recognised the loss of a green view which the site provided for the neighbouring row of terraced houses. Northstone also recognised the challenges and opportunities presented by the neighbouring nature reserve.

3.17 To ensure both Silkash and local Westhoughton residents could benefit from local natural assets, Northstone incorporated six shared, green spaces into the proposals with varied landscaping, the use of mature vegetation and high quality elements like fruit trees. The planned new pathways into the nature reserve, supported by information boards to encourage its responsible use, further respond to key consultation feedback on the need for additional green spaces. These aspects are expected to support health and wellbeing outcomes by increasing time spent in nature as well as facilitating social activities amongst the community, contributing to quality of life priorities.





## Assessment of Potential Social Value at Silkash

The infographic below presents the results of an assessment of the value that the proposals could deliver across construction and once the scheme is complete and occupied.

