

Bootle AAP: Site Selection Report – Executive Summary (August 2024)

1. This Technical Paper sets out the Site Sustainability Appraisal and Site Selection Assessment Methodology for the Bootle AAP. It includes criteria, analysis and assessment, and conclusions. It shows how and why decisions have been taken on housing and employment sites and area-based regeneration opportunities in Bootle Area Action Plan. The analysis and assessment include tables showing an overview of the assessment for each site. More detailed pro formas for each site are shown in Appendices.
2. As well as sites identified by the Council, the suitability of other sites has also been assessed as part of the site selection process for the Area Action Plan. Three sites were put forward in 2023/24 as potential housing sites during the consultation ‘call for sites’ which forms part of the Council’s annual assessment of housing sites.
3. It should be recognised the Area Action Plan does not set out a housing or employment land requirement; this is the role of the Sefton Local Plan. Its policy MN1 sets out Sefton’s housing and employment requirements for its plan period; that is, until 2030. However, whilst Bootle Area Action Plan does not set out a housing requirement, there is still a need to identify land for housing. Bootle is Sefton’s second largest town, and the Area Action Plan will cover the period to 2040.
4. In order to identify potential sites and areas to take forward in Bootle Area Action Plan a 4-part site selection methodology has been followed, as set out below:
 - a) **Access to Services** – an assessment of the proximity to nearby services
 - b) **Site specific / Wider Benefits** - site specific benefits that could be provided, and wider benefits / needs that could be met
 - c) **Constraints to development** – an assessment of the constraints affecting the site, including such things as ecology, contaminated land, air quality and flood risk.:
 - d) **Delivery Considerations** – an assessment of the deliverability of the site, including owner intentions, viability, factors that could reduce net developable area, etc.
5. The sustainable regeneration context of the Plan is also relevant to site selection. Bootle’s industrial past has left a legacy of contaminated, under-used and derelict sites and/or buildings across the Plan area, in a part of Sefton with relatively low land values.
6. The assessment showed a broad degree of conformity between many of the sites. For some criteria, this was to be expected (for example, in relation to all sites providing regeneration benefits). For other criteria, this became apparent during the detailed assessment of each site. For example, almost all sites were highly accessible against all criteria except the short accessibility distance of 240 m to community parks. Although in fact this is perhaps unsurprising, as it reflects Bootle’s central urban context and generally good accessibility.
7. Generally, the main criteria where there were more differences between sites related to flood risk, ecology, air, noise, light pollution, ground conditions and contamination. In three cases, exceptionally, potential housing sites had one or more severe constraints or delivery issues affecting development.

8. All of the sites have viability issues, but this has not hindered the submission of planning applications for housing and employment (re)development on a number of them. This indicates that potentially there are ways to overcome viability issues, for example if external funding becomes available.
9. The broad similarity between many sites / areas in the Bootle Area Action Plan area reflects both the character of the plan area and its sustainable regeneration context. Relevant factors include the legacy of Bootle's industrial past such as contaminated, under-used and derelict sites, land and/or buildings in an area with relatively low land values. The Area Action Plan focus is on regenerating sites and areas which are part of Bootle's industrial legacy. Many of these are derelict, under-used or have no active uses. In practice, the site selection assessment is less about choices between sites and more about the choice between promoting regeneration opportunities for each site or leaving it in its current (poor) condition.
10. The site selection assessment and analysis show that six housing sites should be included in the Bootle AAP:
 - BH1 Peoples' site, Linacre Lane
 - BH2 Coffee House Bridge, which is also a Regeneration Opportunity Site (policy BAAP23)
 - BH3 Site of the former Bootle Gas Works, which is also in the Hawthorne Road / Canal Corridor Regeneration Opportunity Area (policy BAAP20)
 - BH4 Site of Litherland House, Litherland Road, which is also in the Hawthorne Road / Canal Corridor Regeneration Opportunity Area (policy BAAP20)
 - BH5 Site of former Johnsons Cleaners
 - BH6 503-509 Hawthorne Road, which is also in the Hawthorne Road / Canal Corridor Regeneration Opportunity Area (policy BAAP20).
11. Three housing sites had one or more severe constraints or delivery issues affecting development. This report explains why these potential housing sites should not be taken forward. The former Rawson Road Primary School site allocated in the Local Plan is not allocated largely due to severe air quality constraints. For Poets Park this is due to severe green and blue infrastructure and flood risk constraints. For The Triad the assessment is more nuanced and multi-faceted. Notably, while redevelopment of site could contribute to the wider regeneration objectives in Bootle this would need to be balanced against loss of existing retail/ pub and incidental residential uses on the site, and any remaining existing office uses.
12. The site selection assessment and analysis show that all potential employment sites should be taken forward as employment sites in policy BAAP12 in Bootle Area Action Plan:
 - BE1 Canal Street/ Berry Street
 - BE2 Maritime Enterprise Park
 - BE3 Hawthorne Road/ Aintree Road which is also in the Hawthorne Road / Canal Corridor Regeneration Opportunity Area (policy BAAP20)
 - BE4 Kingfisher / Orrell Mount
 - BE5 Land between Regent Road and A565
 - BE6 Bridle Road

- BE7 Bootle Office Quarter (discussed in the next section as an area-based Regeneration Opportunity under policy BAAP5)
 - BE8 Atlantic Park
 - BE9 Senate Business Park.
13. The site selection assessment and analysis show that all potential area-based and regeneration priority sites and areas should be taken forward as employment sites in policy BAAP12 in Bootle Area Action. This includes the wider area-based policies for a range of appropriate uses for:
- Bootle Central Area (BAAP3), which includes BAAP4, BAAP5/ BE7 and BAAP6
 - Bootle Town Centre (BAAP4)
 - Bootle Office Quarter (policy BAAP5 and the employment site BE7 in policy BAAP12)
 - The Civic and Education Quarter (BAAP6).
- It also includes two Regeneration Opportunity Areas focussing on employment-led or non-housing regeneration: Bootle Village Opportunity Area (BAAP21) and Open land between Irlam Rd & Asda Store Regeneration Opportunity Area (BAAP22). The Coffee House Bridge Regeneration Opportunity Area (BAAP23) has the same boundary as housing site BH2 and was assessed as a housing site (above).
14. The assessment and analysis include three regeneration sites within the Hawthorne Road/ Canal Corridor Regeneration Opportunity Area:
- BR1 Land to the North West of Linacre Lane & Hawthorne Road Junction
 - BR2 Land South of Linacre Lane between Hawthorne Road & Canal
 - BR3 Land between Hawthorne Road and Vaux Crescent/Place.
- Broadly these are sites where uses acceptable in principle would include residential uses, uses compatible with residential use nearby and on-site in longer term which help support regeneration; and uses consistent with current (mostly employment-related) uses
15. The Council and/or large organisations are major landowners in the areas/sites in Bootle Central Area. The Council is keen to seek regeneration and redevelopment. As such these sites will be taken forward in Bootle Area Action Plan. While owner intentions for areas/sites BR1, BR2, BR3 and BAAP21 and BAAP22 are not known, it is considered that they should be taken forward in the Area Action Plan in part because of the regeneration opportunities they offer.
16. Overall, therefore, Bootle Area Action Plan takes forward six of housing sites, nine employment sites and a range of area-based regeneration opportunities. The assessment and analysis also show why three potential housing sites should not be taken forward in Bootle Area Action Plan.