

WARRINGTON WHERE BUSINESS CONNECTS





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FOREWORD

Welcome to Warrington's 25th Annual Property Review. It is quite the achievement to have reached the quarter century mark for this publication, which provides such an invaluable insight into our property development and investment market.

I am pleased, in this 25th anniversary edition, that we are able to report that despite some ongoing uncertainty in investment spending nationally, Warrington continues to buck trends and take big strides forward.

The past 25 years have seen Warrington transformed. We have become a real business leader, with a year-on-year growth that outstrips many other UK towns and cities. During this period the economic value of the town, as measured by GVA (Gross Value Added) per head of the population, has increased by two thirds.

This prosperity endures. Warrington retains its position as a connected, entrepreneurial place to do business, and the new investment we are seeing coming into our town gives us every reason to feel confident about our ongoing growth. In business, we all know that confidence drives commercial competitiveness and success.

The resilience and innovation of our business sectors has left us in a strong position to overcome the challenges of recent years. Now, we are looking forward with real optimism.

Over the past 12 months, our commercial property market has enjoyed a number of success stories. As ever, within this year's Property Review, you'll find a range of independent statistics which reflect Warrington's positive economic journey.

Notable achievements include a number of significant office and industrial transactions and a high performing year for industrial take-up, demonstrating that demand here remains high and buoyant.

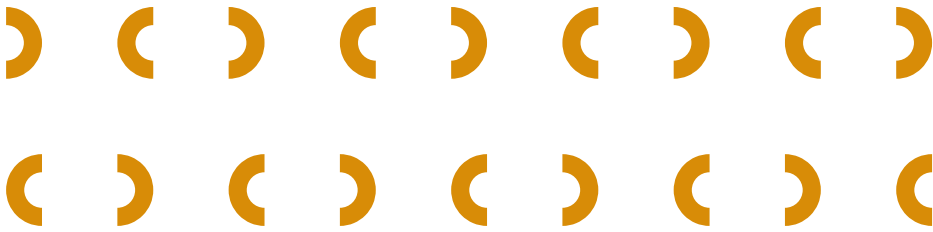


Image: Professor Steven Broomhead MBE

“

WE HAVE BECOME A REAL BUSINESS LEADER, WITH A YEAR-ON-YEAR GROWTH THAT OUTSTRIPS MANY OTHER UK TOWNS AND CITIES.

”



Our £22m Town Deal programme continues to deliver, with the opening of a brand new state-of-the-art Health and Social Care Academy at Warrington & Vale Royal College, bringing together partners in health, adult and children’s social care. Meanwhile, we are looking forward to the imminent opening of our new bus depot, which will support one of the largest all-electric bus fleets in the UK. Five more transformational Town Deal projects will follow, including a new digital enterprise hub and a construction and civil engineering centre.

Our leisure and retail sector remains buoyant, with our transformative Youth Zone now open and enjoying almost 60,000 visits in its first nine months. Nearly all units are now filled at our Time Square development, with the opening of New York-inspired restaurant and bar concept, Parlour, the latest success story.

There has been excellent progress in some of our key housing schemes, with the Council’s own housing company – Incrementum – completing work on 161 eco-friendly properties for rent and affordable rent in Great Sankey and Birchwood. In the town centre, there has been huge demand for the 500 new-build properties within the £23.7m Rivers Edge development.

Work is also underway on a new strategic review of employment skills in Warrington. The Warrington Skills Commission – made up of representatives from a broad range of sectors – has begun a new public debate on skills needs and opportunities required for Warrington’s current and future workforce and economy. It’s part of the work to secure the economic success of the borough for decades to come.

And let’s not forget another key achievement for Warrington in 2022 – our role as a host for the Rugby League World Cup (RLWC). In particular, we can be proud of hosting the full, inaugural Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL) World Cup, which has helped raise the profile of the sport on the international stage, as well as showcasing Warrington as a national centre of excellence for disability rugby.

Indeed, there is much to be proud of and excited about in Warrington as we look towards a successful future, for our economy and for our people.

I trust you find this, the 25th Warrington Annual Property Review, a useful and insightful read. Here’s to the next 25 years!

Professor Steven Broomhead MBE
Chair, Warrington & Co.

Image: RLWC21 Quarter Final at Halliwell Jones Stadium



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONNECTED THINKING

The 25th Anniversary of the Warrington Annual Property Review seems a significant time in which to reflect and look back. In the very first of these reports, published in 1999, the foreword stated:

“Warrington’s property market has prospered in parallel with the success of its businesses. It is a location sought after by occupiers, developers and investors alike.”

Whilst relevant in its own time, that statement has certainly only seemed to prove more prophetic as the years have progressed. In fact, this year’s Outlook Report from Centre for Cities places Warrington in the top 10 cities with the highest number of businesses, whilst it ranked third in the cities with the highest proportion of private sector jobs.

Since that initial report, subsequent Warrington Annual Property Reviews have reported office and industrial transactions to a total of 3.01 million sq m – or 32.36 million sq ft of floorspace – definitively demonstrating that Warrington’s appeal to occupiers, developers and investors has not diminished in 25 years.

INVESTMENT

Whilst there was a marked uncertainty in investment spending in 2022, a number of notable transactions reported throughout the year do suggest that there is still a positive level of investor demand in the region. With significant office and industrial transactions reported, the hope still remains that this appetite will continue to increase as the country tries to find its feet after another period of economic uncertainty.

- A total of 15 investment deals were reported in 2022, of which eight were office properties. These office transactions accounted for 75 percent of the disclosed investment spend
- Activity in the office sector saw the trading of Spencer House and several buildings on The Links, both in Birchwood. Two fully occupied buildings on Lakeside Court at Centre Park were also sold in a deal worth £2.9 million
- Significant industrial transactions included the sale of Zodiac on Gemini Business Park and the acquisition of a block of four units at Adlington Court in Birchwood. The former was purchased by USA-based Barings, with London & Associated Property purchasing the latter 2,346 sq m of space for £2.3 million.

OFFICE

Over 592,000 sq m – or 6.38 million sq ft – of office space has transacted across 25 years of the Warrington Annual Property Review, a number that well eclipses the whole of Warrington’s estimated 5.7 million sq ft of office stock. Although remaining robust against the long-term average, take-up in 2022 took a slight dip on the previous year as occupiers increasingly look to maximise the efficiency of their office space.

- 15,081 sq m was transacted across the year, comprising 30 deals above 200 sq m, the second highest number of transactions across the last three years
- Leasehold deals unsurprisingly made up 77 percent of all transactions at an average rent of £157.09 per sq m. Seven freehold deals were also reported, totalling 3,201 sq m
- The largest deal of the year saw the National Crime Agency occupy 300 Longbarn Boulevard in Birchwood. The deal was secured for £161.46 per sq m in a deal which saw the agency expand from the neighbouring building Birchwood Corporate which they have occupied since 2009.



2ND
HIGHEST
REPORTED
TOTAL
INDUSTRIAL
SQ M
TRANSACTIONED
IN PAST 8
YEARS

INDUSTRIAL

Industrial take-up in 2022 reflected a national trend toward a robust big-box market. Warrington continued to demonstrate its integral position in the region’s logistics infrastructure with a total of 144,133 sq m transacted throughout the year – the second highest reported total in the previous eight years.

- Four significantly large deals, over 15,500 sq m, were reported, with activity in Appleton, Dallam, Lingley Mere and Omega. This included the year’s largest deal to inward movers Kammac, as well as expansion space for online retailer Amazon
- The year’s average rent achieved was £88.33 per sq m, with the prime rent at a notable £161.46 per sq m at Gateway 49 Trade Park. Rents remained robust throughout the year, with 60 percent of deals achieving at least £80.00 per sq m
- The ever-present churn in Woolston, Birchwood and Gemini / Winwick accounted for 50 percent of floorspace take-up in 2022, cementing the continued importance these local centres provide to the town’s industrial market.

RETAIL AND LEISURE

With the completion of the Warrington Youth Zone, alongside new openings at Time Square and beyond, there are a number of notable good news stories to highlight this year.

- Warrington Youth Zone was completed in the summer, with the £7 million development brought to life by Caddick Construction. The centre is now fully operational with over 2,000 registered members
- Independent bar Parlour opened in Time Square, occupying a 360 sq m unit in the heart of the development
- Construction is underway on the former Arnold Clark premises at Gemini, with a 1,330 sq m retail building to take its place via occupier Aldi. With an additional warehouse and office facility the new site is estimated to total approximately 1,800 sq m.

RESIDENTIAL

It was another turbulent year for house prices, with research from Halifax detailing a year of two halves – buoyant in the first, with values flattening further towards the end of the year.

- Property portal Zoopla recorded an indicative total of 1,463 sales in Warrington throughout 2022, with the 40 percent majority accounted for by semi-detached houses
- Data supplied by Warrington Borough Council indicated a gross completion of 711 houses in the 2021/22 monitoring period. These comprise scheme completions in Appleton, Lingley Mere and Omega
- Outline plans have been approved for a 900 apartment scheme on the 2.4 ha site currently occupied by the Cockhedge Shopping Centre. The plans also comprise a hotel as well as over 18,500 sq m of commercial space.



1,463
HOUSE SALES



15
INVESTMENT DEALS



COMPETITION

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“ WARRINGTON HOSTED THE TOURNAMENT’S FIRST EVER PHYSICAL DISABILITY RUGBY LEAGUE (PDRL) WORLD CUP ”

ECONOMY

It was a positive year for Warrington both on and off the pitch, with the town coming into sharp focus for its role in the Rugby League World Cup 2021 which proved to be a real game-changer, particularly for disability sport.

Making history in October, Warrington hosted the tournament’s first ever Physical Disability Rugby League (PDRL) tournament. Hosting the full, inaugural PDRL World Cup certainly helped raise the profile of the sport on the international stage, as well as putting Warrington on the map as a centre of disability sporting commitment and excellence. The tournament’s profile was further boosted by the involvement of Channel 4’s *The Last Leg* comedian Adam Hills MBE, who was part of the Australia PDRL team. The draw for the matches was held on *The Last Leg* show, and Adam also took part in a *Good Morning Britain* interview to promote the tournament at Victoria Park.

In 2020, the council worked with the Wolves Foundation to successfully secure £600,000 from the RLWC2021 “CreatedBy” legacy fund, to support the development of a rugby league centre of excellence at Victoria Park. The council matched this funding to deliver a £1.2m project – including a new, state-of-the-art 3G pitch. This set the scene for the newly developed facility to become the host venue for the first ever PDRL World Cup, as well as serving as an additional training base for visiting teams during the World Cup and becoming the second home of Warrington Wolves.

Away from sporting endeavours, it was heartening to see that in this year’s Outlook Report from Centre for Cities, Warrington is reported to be in the top 10 cities with the highest number of businesses and ranked third for the highest proportion of private sector jobs. Whilst the main headline from the Outlook Report focused on the country’s growing unemployment figures following the wake of COVID-19, it was also notable that Warrington ranked eighth in those cities with the lowest claimant count rate for unemployment benefits.

These statistics come off a positive year for Warrington, one in which the previously reported Town Deal programme took a significant step forward, with funding for all seven projects being given the green light by the government. The entirety of the £22.1 million funding has now been unlocked following approval for each scheme by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This follows the initial proposal submitted by Warrington’s Town Deal Board in 2020, which detailed a new vision to invest in the future of Warrington. The Board consists of a group of political, business, cultural, community, leisure and education leaders.

The seven projects incorporate a bus depot, digital enterprise hub, health and social care academy, health and wellbeing hub, advanced construction and civil engineering centre, remastered cultural hub at the Pyramid and a comprehensive active travel programme. The projects came about following extensive public and stakeholder engagement.

Warrington Borough Council submitted its updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan to the government in April, with public hearings taking place in September. Under government policy, every local planning authority is expected to deliver sustainable economic growth through up-to-date Local Plans, which contain strategies and initiatives to achieve their aims.

Warrington's Local Plan aims to drive forward growth and development and help deliver the homes, jobs, transport infrastructure and community facilities the borough needs, while protecting the Green Belt as much as possible. The Plan will deliver around 15,000 new homes over the period up to 2038 and over 170ha of employment land. The majority of development will be focussed within the existing urban area, complemented by a major urban extension in south east Warrington and the redevelopment of the former Fiddlers Ferry power station for employment and housing. Following Examination of the Plan in 2022, the Council has consulted on Main Modifications in line with the Planning Inspectors' recommendations and anticipates the Plan will be adopted in autumn 2023.

Plans are ongoing for the full refurbishment of the Stockton Heath swing bridge, with works targeted to take place in 2023. This will involve Peel Ports investing around £6 million in undertaking a complete structural, mechanical, electrical refurbishment and repainting programme to improve the longevity of the bridge, which links Stockton Heath village to the town centre and the north. It is estimated that the works will take nine months to complete, with the bridge intended to be closed to all travellers – on foot, bike and car – for the duration.

Looking forward, plans for the redevelopment of the former Fiddlers Ferry Power Station have been revealed by new owners Peel L&P. The proposal incorporates the demolition of the existing structure to allow for a complete redevelopment of the initial 90 acre brownfield site. Over 125,000 sq m of employment space will be constructed, spread across four units, alongside a minimum of 1,760 new homes. The plans estimate that the redevelopment would be worth £125 million per year to the local economy, as well as more than 452 construction jobs per year for each of the four-year build plan. Overall, the 820 acre location will take up to 15 years to complete, with plans to also create extensive new parkland and wildlife areas to enhance the environment. The site will be delivered in partnership with Peel L&P's homebuilder Northstone and specialist UK logistics development business PLP.



£22.1M

ENTIRETY OF THE TOWN DEAL FUNDING HAS NOW BEEN UNLOCKED

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INVESTMENT

Where other markets showed signs of resilience, there was perhaps a level of uncertainty displayed throughout 2022 in the investment market. Total investment spend dipped, although the number of deals rose slightly, buoyed by a slight increase in office trading.

Research from JLL suggests that this was the case across the country, detailing a national fall in investment volumes each quarter. The consultancy details that “[2023] will begin much as 2022 finished, with challenging macro-economic conditions and uncertainty around pricing resulting in weak sentiment and subdued investment activity [but] over the course of the year we expect these conditions to markedly improve.” Similarly, property consultancy Allsop suggest that investors will begin to see “increased competition to secure assets throughout the year once the market is comfortable with pricing adjustments.”

A total of 15 investment deals have been reported throughout 2022, comprising a reported investment spend of £18.89 million. Due to the confidential nature of some transactions however, some achieved prices have not been disclosed. Eight of these deals were office transactions comprising 18,338 sq m of space and accounting for just over 75 percent of investment spend.

Image: Spencer House



Images: The Links, Birchwood



Spencer House was the subject of much activity in 2022, with the whole building being purchased by Evolve Anchor Ltd off MDSR, who themselves only purchased the building as part of a portfolio sale in 2020. Later in the year, Evolve subsequently sold part of the building to a private purchaser at a value of £5.4 million. With this section of the building occupied by Bridgewater NHS on a 15-year lease, the sale reflected a Net Initial Yield of 6.95 percent.

The Links in Birchwood also came into focus following the separate transactions in which Frankel Brow purchased five buildings at the Birchwood office park. Following the initial purchase of St Andrews House, Lytham House and Birkdale House at the start of the year, the property company subsequently expanded their ownership on the site via the purchase of Durnock and Muirfield House for a further £1.24 million. At the point of purchase, Birkdale House was occupied by public services company Serco, with Durnock and Muirfield House housing non-destructive testing specialist Sonomatic. The vacant buildings have since seen a comprehensive refurbishment.

Outside of Birchwood, buildings 1 and 2 Lakeside Court on Centre Park were traded by Herbert Street Partnership to Townson Estates in a deal worth £2.9 million. With the buildings, which total 2,020 sq m, occupied by NHS Warrington and online skincare supplier Skin City respectively, the deal represented a Net Initial Yield of 9.87 percent.



£18.89M
TOTAL INVESTMENT
SPEND 2022



3

SIGNIFICANT INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT TRANSACTIONS TOTALLING...



16,834
SQ M OF SPACE



Three significant industrial investment transactions were reported throughout the year, totalling 16,834 sq m of space. This included the sale of Zodiac, a 11,984 sq m timber frame modular factory in Gemini Business Park as part of an eight-strong industrial asset portfolio purchased by Barings Real Estate. The investment management firm, with headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina purchased the 140,000 sq m portfolio from NFU Mutual for a reported £234 million. Zodiac itself is occupied by Countryside Properties, who signed a 15-year lease in 2018, with the other properties in the portfolio located in the Midlands and South West.

London & Associated Properties PLC (LAP) has purchased a block of four units on Adlington Court. The £2.3 million acquisition brings 2,346 sq m into the company's ownership, in units between 400 and 700 sq m, alongside the scheme's common areas. The estate itself comprises 18 industrial units across two blocks, the majority in multiple ownerships between investors and owner occupiers. The four purchased by LAP let to The Lowton Motor Company, AT Plant Services and Drivetrain. The deal also included the freehold reversionary interest in the Gorse Covert Day Centre, currently held on a long lease to Warrington Borough Council.

Elsewhere a further four investment deals were reported, including the sale of the site now housing the new Sainsbury's Local store on Manchester Road in Woolston for £1.05 million at a Net Initial Yield of 5.06 percent. In addition, The Alderley Group, who are on-site at the residential redevelopment of the former Chevy's Bar in Padgate, purchased The Vicarage on Palmyra Square and the 60-bed elderly care facility Brampton Lodge in Appleton was purchased by Octopus Real Estate.

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Property	Vendor	Purchaser	Size (Sq M)	Price (£M)	Tenant	Income (£/pa)	Net Initial Yield (%)	Agent(s)
OFFICE								
Spencer House, Birchwood	MDSR	Evolve Anchor Ltd	4,686	Undisclosed	Multi-Occupied	232,679	Undisclosed	CBRE
310 Europa Boulevard	Threadneedle	Hurstwood Holdings	2,531	Undisclosed	Multi-Occupied	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	B8 Real Estate
St Andrews, Lytham & Birkdale House, The Links, Birchwood	London & Scottish	Frankel Brow	2,408	2.750	Serco (Birkdale House)	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	BE Group / Knight Frank
1 & 2 Lakeside Court, Centre Park	Herbert Street Partnership	Townson Estates	2,020	2.900	NHS, Skin City	304,638	9.87	PK3 Agency
Spencer House, Birchwood	Evolve Anchor Ltd	Private Purchaser	3,299	5.400	Bridgewater NHS	400,000	6.95	CBRE
1-3 Birchwood Office Park, Crab Lane	Cameron Mackintosh Ltd	Glenbrook Property	1,856	1.735	Galliford Try, EOS Solutions	279,500	15.00	Cushman & Wakefield
Durnock & Muirfield House, The Links, Birchwood	Sonomatic	Frankel Brow	1,352	1.237	Sonomatic	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Unrepresented
490 Knutsford Road	Private	Hummingbird Home Care Ltd	186	0.255	Multi-Occupied	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Read Property Associates
INDUSTRIAL								
Zodiac, Gemini	NFU Mutual	Barings	11,984	Portfolio	Countryside Properties	Portfolio	Portfolio	Acre / CMS / Knight Frank / Burbage Realty
630 Europa Boulevard, Gemini	Breck Holdings Ltd	MLI Assets	2,504	Undisclosed	Kyocera Senco Ltd	168,023	Undisclosed	B8 Real Estate
Adlington Court, Risley Road	Cordatus Property	London & Associated Properties PLC	2,346	2.385	Multi-Occupied	120,000	4.74	Edwards & Co
RETAIL								
11 Manchester Road	Private Individuals	GBB Estates Ltd	1,619	1.050	Sainsbury's	56,000	5.06	Read Property Associates
31 Walton Road	Private Individuals	Bruntwood Enterprises	232	0.525	Craft Punkz	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Read Property Associates
OTHER								
The Vicarage, Palmyra Square	Private	The Alderley Group	0.1 acres	0.650	N/a	N/a	N/a	Read Property Associates
Brampton Lodge, Bridge Lane, Appleton	Safe as Houses	Octopus Real Estate	60 beds	Undisclosed	N/a	N/a	N/a	Undisclosed





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**SPENCER HOUSE WAS
THE SUBJECT OF MUCH
ACTIVITY IN 2022**

”



OFFICE



In 25 years of the Warrington Property Review just over 592,000 sq m – or 6.38 million sq ft – of office transactions have been reported. This total floorspace eclipses Warrington’s complete office stock, highlighting the sheer amount of activity in the town over this significant period of time. Activity across this period has resulted in an average of 34 office deals being completed each year in the town, as well as an average floorspace take-up of almost 24,000 sq m.

2022 saw a slight reduction in both deals and take-up on the previous year but still remained relatively robust against long term averages. A total of 15,081 sq m floorspace was transacted across the year, comprising 30 deals, which was still the second highest number of transactions within the past three years.

The reduction in total transacted floorspace over the last 12 months is potentially indicative of the trend towards occupiers increasingly looking to maximise the efficiency of their office space. As collaborative, hot desking and break out spaces become more popular with companies looking to accommodate staff retuning to the office, occupiers are increasingly looking towards new ways in which to make their space work for them and their staff.

Leasehold deals in 2022 accounted for 77 percent of all those reported, with leasehold take-up similarly accounting for almost 80 percent of the total. Over 11,500 sq m of office space was transacted over 23 leasehold deals and at an average rent of £157.09 per sq m, an increase on the £150.90 per sq m reported for 2021. Lease terms also remained robust, with an average of five years achieved across the year. Added to this, there were at least two reported instances of deals completed on a 10 year basis – with Atos occupying the first floor at 110 Birchwood Boulevard and Certas occupying a further 1,186 sq m at Allday House, both in Birchwood.

The year’s largest deal saw the National Crime Agency (NCA) take occupation of 300 Longbarn Boulevard, a 1,935 sq m building in Birchwood. The deal was secured for £161.46 per sq m in what became an expansion for the NCA with the agency having also occupied the neighbouring building Birchwood Corporate since 2009.

Freehold take-up in Warrington generally accounts for 20 percent of the yearly total and 2022 remained robust in this regard. There were seven reported freehold / long leasehold deals comprising 3,201 sq m, or just over 21 percent of take-up. The largest of these saw the sale of the 957 sq m 330 Firecrest Court on Centre Park to Four Synergy Group for £1,502.45 per sq m. There was also notable activity at Trident Business Park in Birchwood where two office buildings, the 666 sq m Fontwell House and 307 sq m Aintree House traded to owner-occupiers Wain Group and Malcolm Hughes Land Surveyors respectively. The acquisition of Fontwell House saw Wain Group expand its holding in Birchwood, with its existing office on Daten Park in Birchwood having also undergone a full refurbishment in 2022. The two offices will now accommodate nearly 100 members of staff.

Birchwood continued to demonstrate its eternal appeal to office occupiers, with almost two-thirds of deals accounted for by the area, including eight of the largest ten deals. Elsewhere however Centre Park boasted a further four deals, including the year’s largest freehold transaction and amounting to over 12 percent of total take-up. Other deals were also reported in Winwick Quay and the town centre.

Birchwood Park itself reported a successful year of activity with more than 700 sq m of space transacted in the first half of 2022 alone, in deals to 16 occupiers encompassing a range of sectors. At the same time, 34 businesses also committed to remain part of the Park’s business community through lease renewals on almost 1,000 sq m.

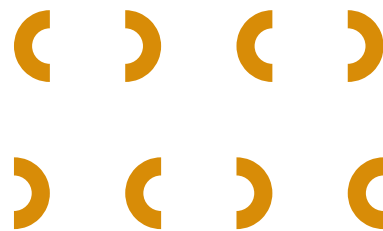


592K

**SQ M OF
OFFICE SPACE
TRANSACTIONS
OVER 25 YEARS**



Image: Allday Reception



Two of the new occupiers on site include waste management company Tradebe and global engineering company SEMP, who have both set up new Northern Hubs at Chadwick House. Both deals were completed on five-year terms and at a rent of £156.08 per sq m. With more than 80 sites across the world Tradebe's new 577 sq m office is intended to bring together a number of functions, including customer services. SEMP have relocated from Manchester having recently worked on infrastructure projects including bringing forward Transpennine's 'Route Upgrade' project. With a rapidly expanding core team and a network of more than 100 associates, SEMP made the decision to take up a larger office space in the 258 sq m Suite E at Chadwick House.

Another notable deal, responsible for this year's prime office rent of £226.04 per sq m, is FX Cartel's occupation of part of 304 Bridgewater Place. The foreign exchange trading and education experts took 287 sq m of space in the building on a five-year lease, with the space to be home to over 30 traders, in addition to more than 600 members that the company will be training remotely across the globe. FX Cartel provides education and training to those working in the foreign exchange trading space (also known as FX trading), which involves the conversion of one currency into another, one of the most actively traded markets in the world.

Last year's largest office deal saw the University of Chester purchase Mersey Bank House off Kew Developments for £936 per sq m. This year the University announced plans to convert the building into a "digitally rich" campus, replacing the Padgate facility which is now planned to be sold to a residential developer. The three-storey building has been vacant since 2018 and the University now plans to redevelop the property into a centre for its education and nursing courses that features "digitally rich, agile and flexible" spaces. Once complete, the property is intended to be renamed the Sarah Parker Redmond Building, after the black women's rights and anti-slavery campaigner who travelled to Warrington to give a series of speeches in the 1800s.

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77%

**OF ALL DEALS REPORTED
WERE LEASEHOLDS**



Property	Vendor / Landlord	Tenant / Purchaser	Size (Sq M)	Rent / Price	"Lease Term (Years)"	Agent(s)
300 Longbarn Boulevard, Birchwood	Marshall CDP	NCA	1,935	£161.46	15	Avison Young / JLL / Knight Frank
First Floor (Part), Allday House, Birchwood	Pin Properties	Certas	1,186	£177.61	12	Cushman & Wakefield / JLL
330 Firecrest Court, Centre Park	Prime Property Consultancy	Four Synergy Group	957	£1,502.45	Freehold	BE Group / JLL
First Floor, 110 Birchwood Boulevard, Birchwood	Frankel Brow	Atos	946	£193.43	10	BE Group / Knight Frank / Avison Young
850 Birchwood Boulevard, Birchwood	Frankel Brow	Done Brothers Betting	811	£161.46	2	BE Group / Knight Frank
Suites 10, 16 & 16a, St James Business Centre	Langtree	Warrington Borough Council	753	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Roberts Vain Wilshaw
Fontwell House, Trident Business Park, Birchwood	St Modwen	Wain Group	666	£1,345.50	Long Leasehold	BE Group
106 Dalton Avenue, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Babcock	Amentum	650	£204.52	5	Savills / Lambert Smith Hampton
First Floor (SE), Chadwick House, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	Tradebe	577	£156.08	5	BE Group / JLL
Unit B, Concentric, Birchwood	CEG	Apogee/HP	548	£172.22	10	Avison Young / JLL
Ground Floor, 2 The Square, Birchwood	Orbit Developments	Lifeways	504	£160.92	5	BE Group / Savills
First Floor, St Andrews House, The Links, Birchwood	Frankel Brow	Angel Advance	474	£134.55	5	BE Group / Knight Frank
3-5 Wilson Pattern Street	Johnstone Acquisitions	A McClusky	413	£1,334.74	Long Leasehold	Morgan Williams
Unit 11a, Olympic Park, Birchwood	Prime Property Consultancy	Buddha Group	380	£156.08	5	BE Group / JLL
Unit 12b, Olympic Park, Birchwood	Private Individual	Leef Property Management	373	£1,395.77	Freehold	BE Group / Morgan Williams
2 The Square, Birchwood Boulevard	Orbit Developments	ECG Facilities Services	372	£160.92	5	BE Group / Savills
First Floor, 710 Mandarin Campus, Centre Park	Moorland Property Solutions	Tata Consulting	314	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	Roberts Vain Wilshaw / Savills



Property	Vendor / Landlord	Tenant / Purchaser	Size (Sq M)	Rent / Price	"Lease Term (Years)"	Agent(s)
Aintree House, Trident Business Park, Birchwood	CMYK Digital	Malcolm Hughes Land Surveyors	307	£1,463.90	Long Leasehold	BE Group
304 Bridgewater Place, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	FX Cartel	287	£226.04	5	BE Group / JLL
First Floor, 720 Mandarin Court, Centre Park	Morgan Williams	Cogent	285	£129.17	5	Morgan Williams
1 Quay Business Centre, Winwick	Bauer	Gavgo	283	£156.08	5	BE Group / Roberts Vain Wilshaw
Cygnat House, Centre Park	Keate Property & Trading	CAERUS Assets Ltd	275	£1,537.42	Freehold	Canning O'Neill
Ground Floor (Part), 104 Dalton Avenue, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	Vaultex UK Ltd	260	£188.37	5	BE Group / JLL
Suite E, Chadwick House, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	SEMP	258	£156.08	5	BE Group / JLL
Unit 8, Quay Business Centre, Winwick	Bauer	Power HQ	241	£112.91	5	BE Group / Roberts Vain Wilshaw
Chadwick House, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	IGPP Ltd	226	£156.08	5	BE Group / JLL
The Engine Rooms, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	Richter Associates	200	£242.19	5	BE Group / JLL
Duchess House, 96 Wilderspool Causeway	Safe Laser Care Pension Scheme	Manchester Construction Group	200	£2007.49	Freehold	Morgan Williams
Unit 5, Causeway Park	SIGMA	SW Projects Management Ltd	200	£80.73	1	Read Property Associates
15 Quay Business Centre, Winwick	Bauer	UK Cargo Logistics Services	200	£156.08	5	BE Group / Roberts Vain Wilshaw



Image: Longbarn Boulevard

INDUSTRIAL

Images: Warrington 379, Dallam Lane



Despite factors producing an uncertain economic landscape, take-up for big box units remained robust in 2022. Research from Avison Young details a total of almost 490,000 sq m of large-scale industrial take-up in the North West, over 170,000 sq m above the five-year average. Within this context, Warrington continued to perform remarkably well in the industrial market, further establishing its position as a strategic and integral part of the region’s logistics infrastructure.

Throughout the course of 2022, a total of 144,133 sq m of industrial floorspace transacted, comprising 50 deals. A strong performance, the total floorspace marks the second highest take-up total in the previous eight years, second only to the take-up reported in 2020 which then included 54,296 sq m of deals at Omega to Gousto, Jungheinrich and Royal Mail.

With a reported 50 deals, 2022 marks the highest deals total in the last five years. 19 of these were over 1,000 sq m, with four of those significantly larger at over 15,500 sq m, demonstrating a varied demand for industrial stock across the full range of supply.

As ever, the majority of deals were completed on a leasehold basis with indeed only one freehold transaction reported all year. This was the sale of Unit 10, Tatton Court in Woolston to PRI for a reported value of £1,037.97 per sq m. Across all leasehold transactions, the average reported lease was eight years, albeit over 50 percent of deals were completed at a term of ten years or more and two achieved a term of at least 20 years. Just over ten percent of deals were completed on a three-year term, demonstrating the willingness of occupiers to commit to space on a much longer term generally throughout the year.

The average rent achieved in 2022 was £88.33 per sq m, with the prime rent pushing to a notable £161.46 per sq m achieved at Gateway 49 Trade Park. Landlord Network Space signed up Würth UK to a 711 sq m unit on a ten year lease. There were a number of instances throughout the year where rents of over £100 per sq m were achieved, including transactions at Melford Court in Woolston, Europa Boulevard on Gemini Business Park and at Birchwood Park Werfen took a ten year lease on 715 Eddington Way at £113.02 per sq m.

Unlike the previous two years, 2022’s largest industrial deal did not take place on Omega. Instead, third-party logistics provider Kammac let Warrington 379, a 35,205 sq m warehouse which sits adjacent to the Halliwell Jones Stadium in the town centre. The Skelmersdale-based occupier agreed to a five year term at a rent of £52.96 per sq m in a move that sees their current warehousing portfolio expand to approximately 280,000 sq m.

£88.33 PER SQ M
WAS THE AVERAGE
RENT ACHIEVED IN 2022



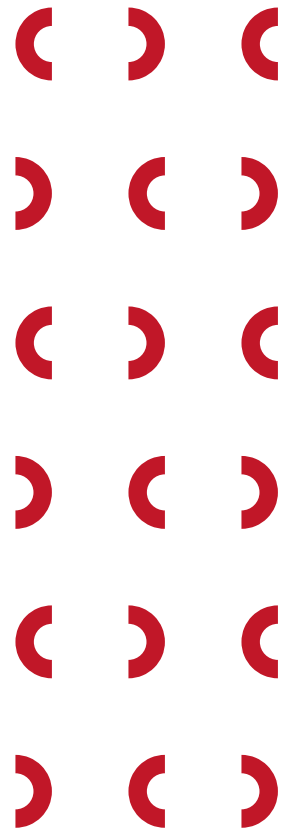


In Appleton, frozen food chain Farmfoods agreed to a 25-year lease at Super W, a new 22,867 sq m industrial unit developed by Tungsten Properties with both BREEAM Very Good and Net Zero Carbon Accreditations. Tungsten Properties purchased the 4.45 ha site in 2020 and planning permission was granted in early-2021. Farmfoods operates more than 300 stores and four distribution centres, including an existing facility in Warrington, which it plans to retain and continue to operate from.

Elsewhere the big box activity was, as ever, centred on Omega and the nearby Lingley Mere as Canmoor let Alpha 167 to Sykes Seafood on another extensive 20-year lease. The deal was achieved at £84.50 per sq m, with the 3 ha site intended to serve as the company's new head office, whilst offering cold storage and distribution solutions closer to its existing factory in Sefton. At Omega, Amazon also extended its footprint, taking 20,932 sq m of space, in addition to the 18,875 sq m it took on site last year, the year's largest reported deal.

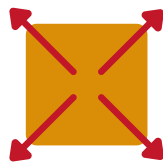
The table below details transactions by area, illustrating the sustained importance of regional logistics hubs at both Omega and in Appleton. 70,599 sq m, almost 50 percent of total take-up was completed across both areas, comprising six deals. A number of smaller, sporadic areas across and surrounding the Town Centre (including areas such as Dallam and Howley) were also well represented, especially as the year's largest deal saw the letting of Warrington 379 on Dallam Lane.

Elsewhere the smaller hubs of Woolston, Birchwood and Gemini / Winwick accounted for over 50 percent of the year's total deals, comprising 22,765 sq m, demonstrating the critical importance of churn in these areas year-on-year.





35,205

**SQ M WAREHOUSE,
WARRINGTON 379 WAS
LARGEST INDUSTRIAL DEAL**



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Omega West is being delivered by Miller Developments, an M2 Group Ltd company, supported by Warrington Borough Council, St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council, and the Cheshire & Warrington LEP

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WARRINGTON INDUSTRIAL DEALS (2022) - LOCATION

Area	Number of Deals	Total Floorspace (Sq M)
Town Centre / Misc. (incl. Dallam, Howley, etc)	13	49,911
Omega / Lingley Mere	2	36,454
Appleton	4	34,145
Woolston	12	8,323
Birchwood / Risley	8	8,209
Gemini / Winwick	8	6,233
Penketh	3	858
Total	50	144,133

Source: BE Group, 2023

Following the reporting of the Royal Mail’s occupation of 32,000 sq m at Omega in 2019, the warehouse was opened as a parcel super-hub in June last year. The opening was the first of two super hubs, the second to be located in Daventry, in an investment worth £900 million. The building is intended to handle 800,000 parcels a day, rising to 1.5 million when both sites are operational. Investment in the super-hub sites comes as a result of shifting patterns for Royal Mail, with the automation of parcel sorting taking a higher priority to letters, for which volumes have reduced in recent years. The new facility is expected to create more than 600 jobs.

November saw the completion of Gemini8, a joint venture between developer Chancerygate and global real estate investment and property manager Hines. Situated on the final plot at the wider Gemini8 Business Park, the development comprises 18 high specification Grade-A warehouse units ranging from 350 to 1,500 sq m. The scheme itself was pre-sold to real estate private equity firm Northwood Investors at the end of 2021.

Construction commenced in June on a new speculative development scheme at Birchwood Park, with nearly 15,000 sq m of industrial set to be built. Construction on the third phase of the Park’s Cavendish Warehouse scheme is set to complete by the end of Q1 2023 and will comprise two 1,765 sq m warehouses, a 2,695 sq m warehouse and a larger 8,732 sq m warehouse. Each of the four new, high-quality warehouses will offer above industry average office content, designed to support companies that need large industrial units to accommodate a range of uses, from labs to production space. This latest wave of construction follows a highly successful second phase of the Cavendish Warehouse development, which was completed in 2020 and which saw all units let within nine months.



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In August, United Utilities was granted permission to develop 6,500 sq m of logistics space on the northern edge of Lingley Mere Business Park. Warrington Borough Council gave outline approval for the project, although the scheme's exact layout has not yet been decided. Architects have drawn up two possible configurations for the 1.8 ha site, with potential options including a single, mid-box unit, and a multi-let complex with a series of smaller units across two sheds. The site currently has consent for an office development, however the demand seen for logistics space at Omega and beyond across recent years has prompted a change in approach.

Planning has been secured by developer Evo Industrial on a logistics scheme in Lingley Mere, with plans proposing a net zero carbon development. Evo Warrington 89 will be located on Omega Boulevard, with the planned 8,250 sq m property to comprise a specification including recycled material, solar roof panels and EV car charging points. The new scheme would mark the developer's fifth net zero carbon building, with the building's launch scheduled for Spring 2023.

Network Space has acquired a 4.8 acre site on Winwick Road from the National Grid. Located approximately 1 mile from Junction 9 of the M62, the site fronts the A49 and is positioned next to Gateway 49, an industrial scheme comprising 30 units which Network Space brought forward between 2005 and 2009. The developer has now advised that they are preparing a planning submission to bring forward a multi-let industrial development of approximately 9,000 sq m, with a view to commencing work in 2023.

144,133 SQ M

FLOOR SPACE FOR WARRINGTON INDUSTRIAL DEALS IN 2022



Property	Vendor / Landlord	Tenant / Purchaser	Size (Sq M)	Rent / Price	"Lease Term (Years)"	Agent(s)
Warrington 379, Dallam Lane	M&G	Kammac	35,205	£52.96	5	B8 Real Estate / Knight Frank
Super W, Lyncastle Road, Appleton	British Airways Pension Trustees Ltd	Farmfoods Ltd	22,867	£74.38	25	Colliers
Unit 3, Phase 2, Mountpark Omega	Mountpark Logistics	Amazon	20,932	Undisclosed	Undisclosed	JLL / CBRE
Alpha 167, Lingley Mere	Canmoor	Sykes Seafood Ltd	15,522	£84.50	20	B8 Real Estate
Howley 80, Howley Lane	UK Industrials 2 Ltd	ESS	7,287	£69.86	10	B8 Real Estate
1-4 Stretton Green, Lyncastle Way, Appleton	Threadneedle	100 Percent Group Ltd	5,017	£53.82	10	Roberts Vain Wilshaw / JLL
Unit C & D, Appleton Industrial Park, Appleton	High Row Storage	Nationwide Platforms Ltd	3,883	£65.66	10	Morgan Williams
1a Hawleys Lane	PDM DeBury	Evoqua	2,786	£78.58	10	Cushman & Wakefield
Unit 3D, Warrington South Distribution Centre, Appleton	Mileway	Youngs Transportation & Logistics Ltd	2,378	£80.73	5	B8 Real Estate
26-27, Melford Court, Hardwick Grange, Woolston	4th Industrial	Dreams Ltd	2,105	£94.49	10	Knight Frank / B8 Real Estate
Unit F, Taylor Business Park, Risley	Ribston	McQueens Dairies	1,812	£72.65	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 715, Eddington Way, Birchwood Park, Birchwood	Warrington Borough Council	Werfen	1,672	£113.02	10	JLL / B8 Real Estate
Unit 7, 18 Eagle Park Drive	Mileway	RIV UK Engineering Ltd	1,362	£96.88	15	B8 Real Estate
24 Kingsland Grange, Woolston	PBM Debury Limited	United Rentals UK Ltd	1,301	£153.71	15	Colliers
Unit 9, Taurus Park, Gemini Business Park	PREC Red Lion PropCo 3 S.à r.l.	Under Floor Heating Trade Direct Ltd	1,225	£86.11	10	JLL / B8 Real Estate
Unit 4, Gemini Business Park	LaSalle Investment Management	Threes Company (Catering) Ltd	1,169	£83.42	15	JLL
Unit B2, Taylor Business Park, Risley	Ribston	Cancer Research UK	1,161	£75.35	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 12, Cameron Court, Winwick	Coal Pension Properties Limited	SIG Trading	1,152	£72.87	5	JLL
Unit B1, Taylor Business Park, Risley	Ribston	Amco Giffen	1,145	£75.35	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit 7, Bowood Court, Winwick	Georgetown Carr Ltd	Jones Lighting Ltd	942	£64.69	3	Roger Hannah
Unit B, Origin Court, Birchwood	Peloton Real Estate	Betfred	941	£107.64	10	BE Group / Savills
GF, FF, Transport Depot & Offices, Marsh House Lane	Undisclosed	Brit-Tipp Ltd	804	£149.30	15	Lamb & Swift Commercial
Unit 6B, Westway 21, Chesford Grange, Woolston	Threadneedle Pensions Ltd	Air Compressors & Tools Ltd	790	£74.81	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit 2, Westway 21, Chesford Grange, Woolston	Threadneedle Pensions Ltd	Sixteen3 Ltd	757	£74.81	10	Knight Frank / B8 Real Estate
Unit C3, Taylor Business Park, Risley	Ribston	Grosvenor Power Services	718	£80.73	10	B8 Real Estate

Property	Vendor / Landlord	Tenant / Purchaser	Size (Sq M)	Rent / Price	"Lease Term (Years)"	Agent(s)
Unit 1, Gateway 49 Trade Park	Network Space	Wurth UK Ltd	711	£161.46	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit 28, Melford Court, Hardwick Grange, Woolston	4th Industrial	A Lafont Ltd	697	£78.04	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 252, Europa Trade Park, Europa Boulevard	Peloton Real Estate	Fuel Hub Ltd	592	£96.88	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 10, Tatton Court, Woolston	Paul Radford	RPI	547	£1,037.97	Freehold	Roberts Vain Wilshaw
Unit 12, Colville Court, Winwick	LaSalle Investment Management	Maverick Live Ltd	518	£87.51	5	JLL / Knight Frank
Unit 17, Tatton Court, Woolston	Whinmoor Estates	Vaultex	485	£80.73	5	Roberts Vain Wilshaw
Unit 21, Grosvenor Grange, Woolston	Undisclosed	Modern Milkman	465	£86.11	5	B8 Real Estate
Ensphere House, Taylor Business Park, Risley	Ribston	Amco Giffen	391	£107.64	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit E5, Trident Business Park, Birchwood	St Modwen	Synergy Engineering	369	£96.88	5	BE Group
Unit 3, Gatewarth Industrial Estate, Penketh	Warrington Borough Council	Vzones Ltd	363	£49.51	5	Morgan Williams
Unit 16, Gateway 49 Trade Park	Network Space	Golf Clubs 4 Cash	349	£102.25	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit 222, Europa Trade Park, Europa Boulevard	Peloton Real Estate	Vogue Ceramics Ltd	348	£96.88	10	B8 Real Estate
Unit 21, Rufford Court, Hardwick Grange, Woolston	Undisclosed	Rock Breakers Ltd	344	£80.73	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 244, Europa Boulevard, Gemini Business Park	Peloton Real Estate	Superglide Stairlifts	287	£102.25	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 18, Wharf Industrial Estate, Wharf Street	Langtree	DCE Agency	279	£86.11	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 7, Grosvenor Grange, Woolston	Undisclosed	Redline Automotive Ltd	279	£86.11	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 18, Melford Court, Hardwick Grange, Woolston	4th Industrial	Private Individual	279	£107.64	5	B8 Real Estate
Unit 17, Melford Court, Hardwick Grange, Woolston	4th Industrial	Auto Windscreen	274	£109.04	6	B8 Real Estate
Unit 12a, Penketh Business Park, Penketh	Caisson Investment Management	St Rocco's Hospice	256	£96.88	3	B8 Real Estate
Unit 2, Penketh Business Park, Penketh	Caisson Investment Management	Everbest Logistics Ltd	239	£96.88	3	B8 Real Estate
Engineering House, Howley	PTS Property	RM Installations	232	£114.10	5	Roberts Vain Wilshaw
89 Capesthorpe Road	Warrington Borough Council	Rugby Sprogs	232	£43.06	3	Read Property Associates
Unit 1b, School Brow	Undisclosed	Quickmove Logisitics Ltd	232	£75.35	5	Read Property Associates
Unit 1c, School Brow	IGP Investments Ltd	Locker Wire Weavers Ltd	232	£75.35	3	Read Property Associates
Unit 17, Wharf Industrial Estate, Wharf Street	Langtree	Eat Fruit	200	£86.11	3	B8 Real Estate

RETAIL AND LEISURE



Image: Parlour, Times Square

Warrington made great strides with its retail and leisure offerings in 2022, incorporating movement at the town’s flagship Time Square development, as well as the completion of Warrington Youth Zone in the Stadium Quarter.

Construction on the £7 million youth centre was completed by Caddick Construction in the summer, following a two-year programme on behalf of national charity OnSide. The centre will complement the charity’s existing centres in Wigan, Bolton, Oldham, Manchester, London, Chorley and Birkenhead. Now home to the well-established Warrington Youth Club charity, the centre is open seven days a week with over 2,000 members registered.

The facility now incorporates a number of features including:

- Indoor climbing wall
- Four-court sports hall
- Training kitchen
- Dance and drama studio
- 3G rooftop kick pitch
- Arts and crafts space
- Gym
- Music studio with recording capabilities.

Independent bar Parlour has launched its first venue in Time Square. Directors James Wrigley and Tom Buckley have joined forces to bring their collective hospitality and finance experience together to form the enterprise, which now occupies 360 sq m in the heart of Warrington town centre. The business partners raised more than £500,000 of private investment, including from three local investors, to support the launch with their aim to bring a slice of New York to the town. The menu includes a specially created menu of 22 inch pizzas, small plates and salads, as well as a collection of craft beers, cocktails and wine.

Time Square also joined in with the Christmas festivities as the town centre was transformed for a Winter Wonderland weekend in November. The event filled weekend, which saw market stalls set up both outside the market hall and on Bridge Street, was brought to Warrington by We Are Warrington Bid and Culture Warrington. The events also saw hundreds of people take part in a lantern parade ahead of a light show in front of the Grade I Listed town hall, which saw images projected onto the building itself.

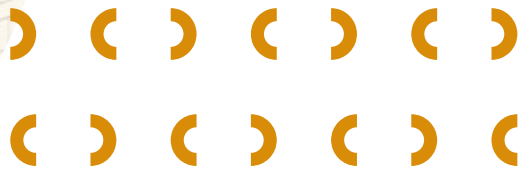
Warrington’s capacity for events also looks set to continue into the future with news that the Parr Hall was named ‘Music Venue of the Year’ at the WAM Awards, following a public vote. Other shortlisted venues for the awards, which aim to celebrate the amazing local talent on offer, included Warrington’s Friars Court / FC2. The historic music hall has been a mainstay in Palmyra Square for 127 years and has seen many famous bands and musicians tread its boards, from The Rolling Stones and The Who to the Stone Roses, Arctic Monkeys and James.



£7M
YOUTH ZONE
CONSTRUCTION
COMPLETED



Image: Youth Zone, Stadium Quarter



It is therefore quite timely then that the Palmyra Square Arts Centre is to be upgraded and expanded under plans being led by Warrington Borough Council. Plans for the 3,000 sq m Pyramid Arts Centre, which fall under the schemes detailed to benefit from a share of the £22 million Town Deal award, include increasing its capacity from 220 to around 400, after a study on Warrington’s events spaces identified a gap in the market for such a venue.

The WAM awards were held inside The Brass Monkey, a brand new sports bar and part of the multi-million pound transformation of former Co-op and TJ Hughes Department store on the corner of Sankey Street and Cairo Street. The development, named The Hive WA1, is a three-storey corner building covering almost 7,500 sq m, including a second floor ballroom which was a popular spot for US Army servicemen based at the Burtonwood Airbase. NMT Entertainment Ltd submitted the plans which cover the conversion of the building into a one-stop destination for both work and play. The ground floor space is being transformed into 26 retail units, with the first floor now operational as The Brass Monkey. The new facility includes a cocktail bar, shuffle boards, pool tables, live music and big screens for major sporting events.

The nearby Cabinet Works site on Barbould Street has now also been taken to market, following its demolition in 2018. The 0.16 ha site has been cleared with a view to attracting a hotel or associated leisure scheme in a bid to further enhance the town centre’s offering.

In regard to the retail market more specifically, The Derwent Group has submitted an application to redevelop a 3,300 sq m retail unit at JunctionNINE Retail Park in Warrington. The facility has been pre-let to Home Bargains, with the occupier looking to significantly expand its presence in Warrington and indeed already occupying a 1,320 sq m unit on the popular retail park. The application accounts for the third phase in the development of the Park and will ultimately provide a further 4,500 sq m of retail accommodation. Another 3,700 sq m of space is planned for the fourth phase, to be developed on a pre-let basis.

Discount retailer Aldi is moving forward with plans to redevelop the former Arnold Clark building on Europa Boulevard in Gemini. Planning permission was granted in September and construction is already underway on the site. The retail building will amount to around 1,330 sq m, with additional warehouse, staff and office facilities totalling approximately 1,800 sq m supplemented by 125 car parking spaces. The site was last occupied by Arnold Clark, before the car retailer’s relocation to the opposite side of Europa Boulevard at the former Toys R Us building in 2021.



Image: Warrington at Christmas

Working

Collaborating

Living

in Warrington



Image: Foxwood



“
**PANDEMIC-DRIVEN SHIFTS IN
HOUSING PREFERENCES AND
LOW INTEREST RATES KEPT
TRANSACTION DEMAND ELEVATED**
”

RESIDENTIAL

According to research by Halifax, the UK housing market remained buoyant in the first half of 2022, as “pandemic-driven shifts in housing preferences and low interest rates kept transaction demand elevated.” Conversely, house prices flattened from mid-year, falling further towards the year end, with the increasing cost of living putting more pressure on household finances and rising interest rates pushing up mortgage costs.

The same research suggests that “this downward trend will continue into 2023, with house prices expected to fall next year by around 8 percent. However, forecast uncertainty remains high given the current economic environment.” A fall of that level would place the UK average somewhere around April 2021 and see a reversal of some of the gains made during the pandemic period.

The data in the Table below details house sales in Warrington throughout 2022 according to residential property portal Zoopla. Whilst not necessarily an accurate depiction of all sales, the data nonetheless provides some guide as to trends within the local market. The property site detailed 1,463 sales with semi-detached sales accounting for 40 percent of that total. Almost 30 percent of sales were for terraced properties, with 20 percent for detached properties. With a reduced number of transactions on last year’s 2,100, average prices were conversely seen to have increased across the board.

WARRINGTON HOUSE SALES (LAST 12 MONTHS)

House Type	Sales	Difference to 2021 (+/- %)	Average Price (£)	Difference to 2021 (+/- %)
Detached	294	(71)	405,711	5
Semi-Detached	592	(33)	247,567	11
Terraced	428	(21)	180,631	7
Flats	149	14	131,292	11
Total	1,463	-	241,300	-

Source: Zoopla (as of 7th February 2023)



Image: Sycamore Lane

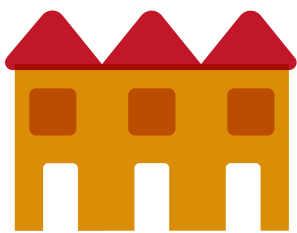
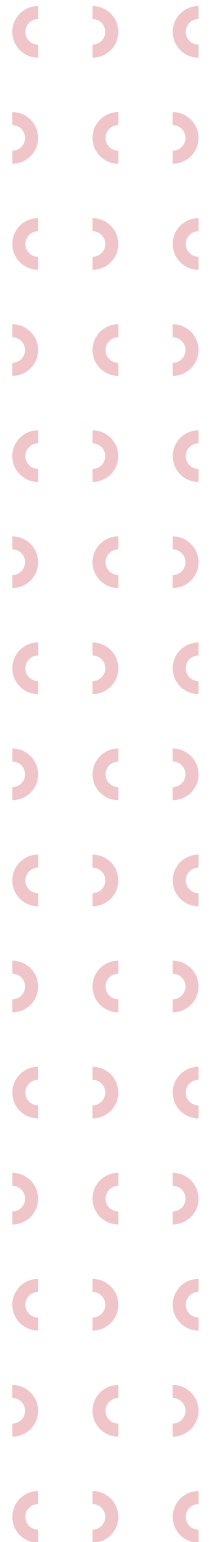
Expanding the scope to look at future supply, Warrington Borough Council has provided annual housing completion data for 2021/22, indicating a gross completion total of 711 houses. Of these, 110 were affordable. Notable site completions in the monitoring period include the sites formerly known as Land at Pewterspear Green in Appleton, alongside the schemes at Phase 2 at Lingley Mere and Phase 1 at Omega.

Another significant site now in the spotlight is The University of Chester’s Padgate Campus, which is to be sold to a residential developer. The decision was taken to sell in March, following the University’s relocation to Time Square and Mersey Bank House in the town centre. A formal sales process is underway with the University seeking a developer to “fulfil key University objectives, including construction that meets high standards of environmental sustainability and delivers a positive long-term legacy.”

Outline plans have been approved on a 2.4 ha site in Warrington town centre, primarily occupied by the Cockhedge Shopping Centre. Approval for 900 apartments, more than 18,500 sq m of commercial space and a hotel has been granted for the land bounded by Scotland Road, Buttermarket Street and Crown Street. The plans were put forward by Cockhedge Property Unit Trust and Warrington & Co, which also involve the initial demolition of 19 units including retail and café premises, the largest occupied by ASDA.

Approval has also been recommended on a scheme in the Stadium Quarter, at 31-35 Winwick Street. The development comprises a seven-storey building which will accommodate 26 residential apartments, 400 sq m of ground floor commercial floorspace and an amenity garden alongside a cycle and bin storage. The applicant UB Services UK Ltd details no parking in the plans, but the development would include two private vehicular access tracks which run on the northern and southern site boundary.

Planning permission has been secured on a four-storey scheme to be constructed on the site once occupied by Arpley House on Wilson Patten Street. The scheme has been brought Forward by Park Equity Invest Ltd and designed by Falconer Chester Hall. The development, which leans on the red brick characteristics of the surrounding area, will comprise 76 apartments along with basement parking and cycle store.



30%
OF SALES WERE
TERRACED HOUSES

20%
OF SALES WERE
DETACHED PROPERTIES



Leeds-based Priestley Construction has been appointed by IP Properties to carry out work on the redevelopment of the former Dawsons music shop on Sankey Street. The £2 million residential development will comprise 14 new apartments across the upper floors and rear of the property, along with an office and retail units on the ground floor.

Housebuilder Bellway has submitted plans for a major housing scheme in Lymm. The plans form the second phase of development, with 64 homes already under construction having been granted planning permission in 2019. The second phase is split across two plots, with 143 houses planned in all, alongside a primary healthcare facility of up to 1,600 sq m. The £23.5 million project is anticipated to create 99 full-time construction jobs during a planned 48-month build period.

Towards the end of the year plans were given the go-ahead to demolish the disused Vicarage on Palmyra Square North. The former Holy Trinity Vicarage site is to be redeveloped, subject to condition, to create 23 new apartments all with either one or two bedrooms. The two-storey structure was built in the mid-1900s and has recently been the subject of a number of planning applications – original development plans were submitted in the summer of 2018 and were subsequently downscaled in 2019 before being withdrawn.



1,463

SEMI-DETACHED SALES, MAKING UP 40% OF TOTAL SALES

Following planning approval for residential development on two Warrington sites, Incrementum Housing has reported the completion of 161 properties across both developments. Plans to build 69 properties at Chatfield Drive in Birchwood and 92 properties at Sycamore Lane in Great Sankey were approved in 2020 and the Council has now reported not only the completion but the full occupancy of both schemes. All 161 properties, a mix of two-storey houses and apartments, were available for both private and affordable rent. The two sites are the first to be developed by Incrementum Housing as part of its emerging build-to-rent strategy, with Homes England having provided construction funding to help deliver the scheme.

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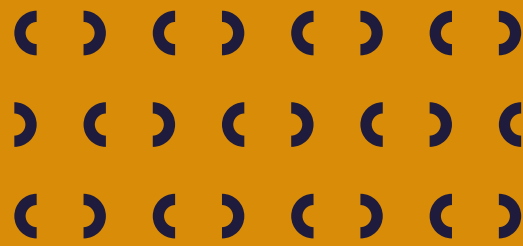
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hello@redwoodbank.co.uk
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LOOKING FORWARD

Whilst it is tempting to take the 25th Anniversary as an excuse to look too far forward, I did that last year with a 10 year outlook. I also considered the potential impact that the three interlocking factors of local plan, integrated rail plan and the net zero agenda will have on investment and development in the next 10 years. So perhaps it is useful to have a look at progress, to see if the goals and ambitions are still realistic and consider if we need to develop anything else that will help us in achieving our ambition for the town.

Warrington's ambition is set out in a number of interwoven documents but for us the economic and regeneration strategy within Warrington Means Business and the Town Centre Masterplan are our core documents. Whilst we have spoken before about refreshing both of these, it is interesting to see that irrespective of what forum they are taken into, both documents still have great validity and stand up well to detailed assessment.

They set out a coherent approach to regeneration (and to a certain extent masterplanning) and have been used to re-enforce our assertions within the Local Plan consultation and formed a core part of our response during the recent call for Investment Zones. I think these documents set out a platform of certainty that will always require change, but not wholesale change, and still give us the basis on which to move forward.

In tandem, following the examination in public we can now see the probable final shape of the Local Plan and whilst we still have a few procedural stages to go, it is in its final stages and gives us a good regulatory basis on which to deliver certainty in our forthcoming developments.

The town centre has realised many of the projects that we mentioned last year, with New Town House now demolished and its outline planning for residential development alongside Cockhedge approved and Academy Street now nearing full occupation. The new Bus Depot is complete and occupied, leaving the old depot ready for demolition and re-development. This enables the delivery of the masterplan for Southern Gateway, complimented by securing the new Digital Hub at the soon to be refurbished St James Business Centre, with revised proposals for Bevan Mews.

We continue to make great strides in relation to de-carbonisation. There is a wide ranging series of programmes underway ranging from centralised power and heat networks within the town centre to the retrofit of housing. Investment undertaken directly by the Council has resulted in the ability to power Council owned property solely from renewable power from our 3 solar farms and as we generate more than we use, this benefit is also potentially available to other commercial users within Warrington.

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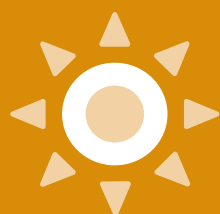


Image: New Bus Depot



Image: Cockhedge Redevelopment proposed site plan



“
EDUCATION AND HEALTH AND CARE PROVIDERS NEED TO BE CONSIDERED IN GREATER DETAIL THAN WE HAVE DONE SO FAR.
 ”

Image: Roebuck Plaza



On a wider basis the plans for Bank Quay Gateway continue to progress. These plans were a desire to see Wilson Patten Street more closely aligned to the Town Centre. Recent requests from Government looking for the development of integrated plans around key infrastructure opportunities such as Bank Quay station utilising new brownfield opportunities within the Unilever site, means that our story in relation to comprehensive regeneration and development is much improved and now goes far beyond the requirements for just Wilson Patten Street.

The proposals for Bank Quay have been further developed through the call for Investment Zone sites, which like the administration calling for them, was short lived but has had a lasting impact, as it enabled us to make further steps in understanding just how important this could be for Warrington as a whole.

The revised approach to bidding for support for projects is also changing the landscape of how we enable this change. We have been relatively successful with the Getting Building Fund, Town Deal and Shared Prosperity Fund, but less so with brownfield land remediation and Levelling Up. We need to make sure that the catalyst that this money can provide is maximised, enabling not just physical regeneration such as the bus depot, but also the activation and animation of the town centre. This is through projects focussed on education and training in the Health & Social Care Academy, the Advanced Construction & Civil Engineering Centre and with the Digital Enterprise hub, further strengthened through initiatives such as the Warrington Skills Commission and Climate Emergency Commission.

Whilst the Property Review quite rightly focuses on the main commercial demands for real estate we also need to have one eye on less regular demands within the town. We are aware that health and social care services have an evolving remit and that their ability to deliver these very often requires a reconfiguration of property and accommodation needs. All organisations will have the common drivers of seeking to recruit and retain staff, who have evolving expectations of their workplace, which range from location near public transport; to zero embedded carbon; to on site amenities such as gyms and childcare and a desire to be able to take advantage of a lively town centre setting.

This is anticipated to drive competition for appropriate sites and developments. In particular the demands for education and health and care providers need to be considered in greater detail than we have done so far.

Warrington is, of course, well placed to respond to this. Public transport both locally and regionally is excellent, if somewhat still underused and an evolving town centre leisure offer is starting to attract more people to live and work. We are fortunate in that we have the sites such as Bank Quay to be able to deliver the development. Our challenge is how all the requirements can be understood in the detail required to fully appreciate how we knit new sections of town around Bank Quay and Southern Gateway into the existing fabric of the town in a way that we can clearly articulate.

So as we look forward our approach to the next phase of regeneration will be with a joined up and coordinated multi agency approach to government, to secure funding to enable new developments in well serviced places that can help meet our collective net zero carbon targets. This approach should be successful. Ones with significant brownfield land should not only have the best chance of success but should also come to the front of the queue in a competitive process.

Many of these bids require multi agency working across differing organisations both public and private and this approach is something that I think Warrington & Co and its partners are particularly good at. To really be successful at securing this funding for large regeneration and development projects, I think we are being challenged to work at greater scale. This involves more strategic partners who are able to bring greater levels of investment around areas such as rail infrastructure, but working with us to be able to articulate the economic and regeneration benefits that this investment brings.

I think it is this that has come to the fore more than anything else over the last year – the transition in Warrington requires support, principally from central government and success in this requires a coherent and joined up story to be told.

In summary, I think the ambition set out in our core documents is still valid and we continue to demonstrate that we can successfully work with partners forming a coherent picture to government to deliver this ambition.

The sobering thought is that we now have nine years of the 10 year outlook left. Acceleration feels to be the way forward, to really take advantage of the massive benefits that Warrington has to offer.



John Laverick
Managing Director,
Warrington & Co.

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”



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St James Business Centre
2022 Key Business Stats
 • 15,300 sq ft Renewed
 • 14% (9,000 sq ft) New Lettings
 • 3% (2,200 sq ft) Existing occupiers upsizing

Wharf Industrial Estate 2022 Key Business Stats
 • 18,362 sq ft Renewed
 • 9% (8,514 sq ft) New Lettings

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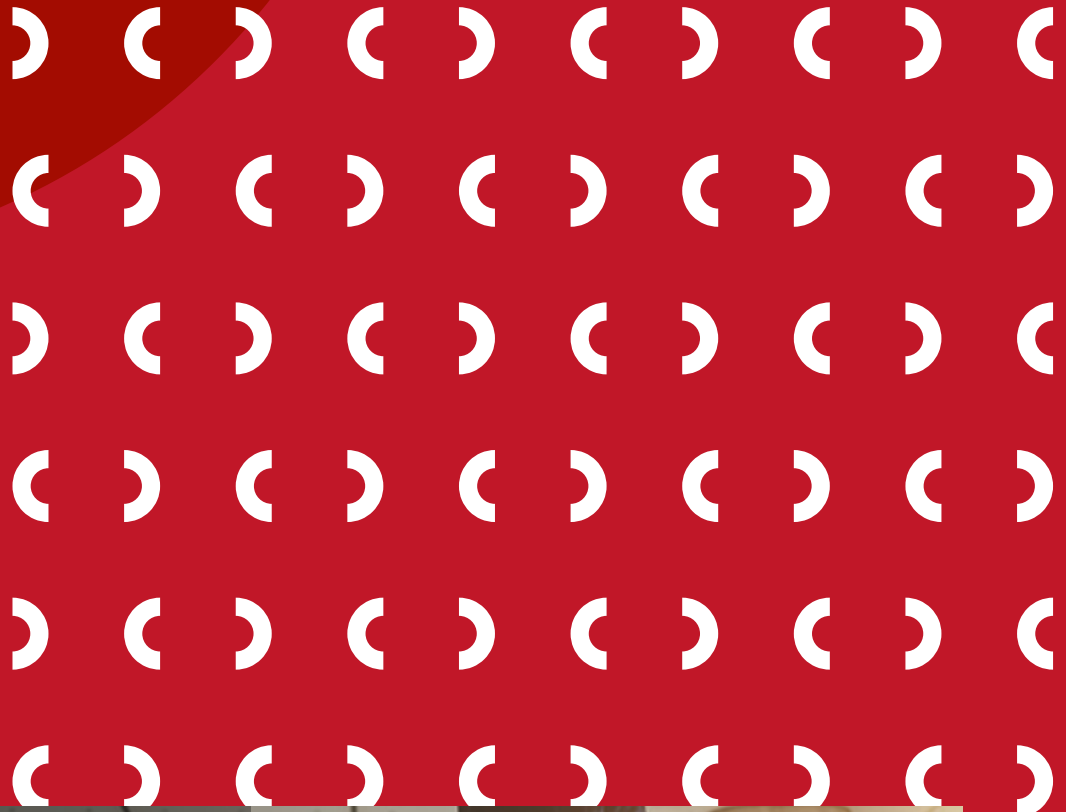
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BE Group, First Floor, 501 Birchwood One Business Park, Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7GB

Tel:	01925 822 112
Webpage:	www.begroup.uk.com
Email:	vincsandwell@begroup.uk.com
Twitter:	@BEGroup_UK



Image: Warrington at Christmas



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