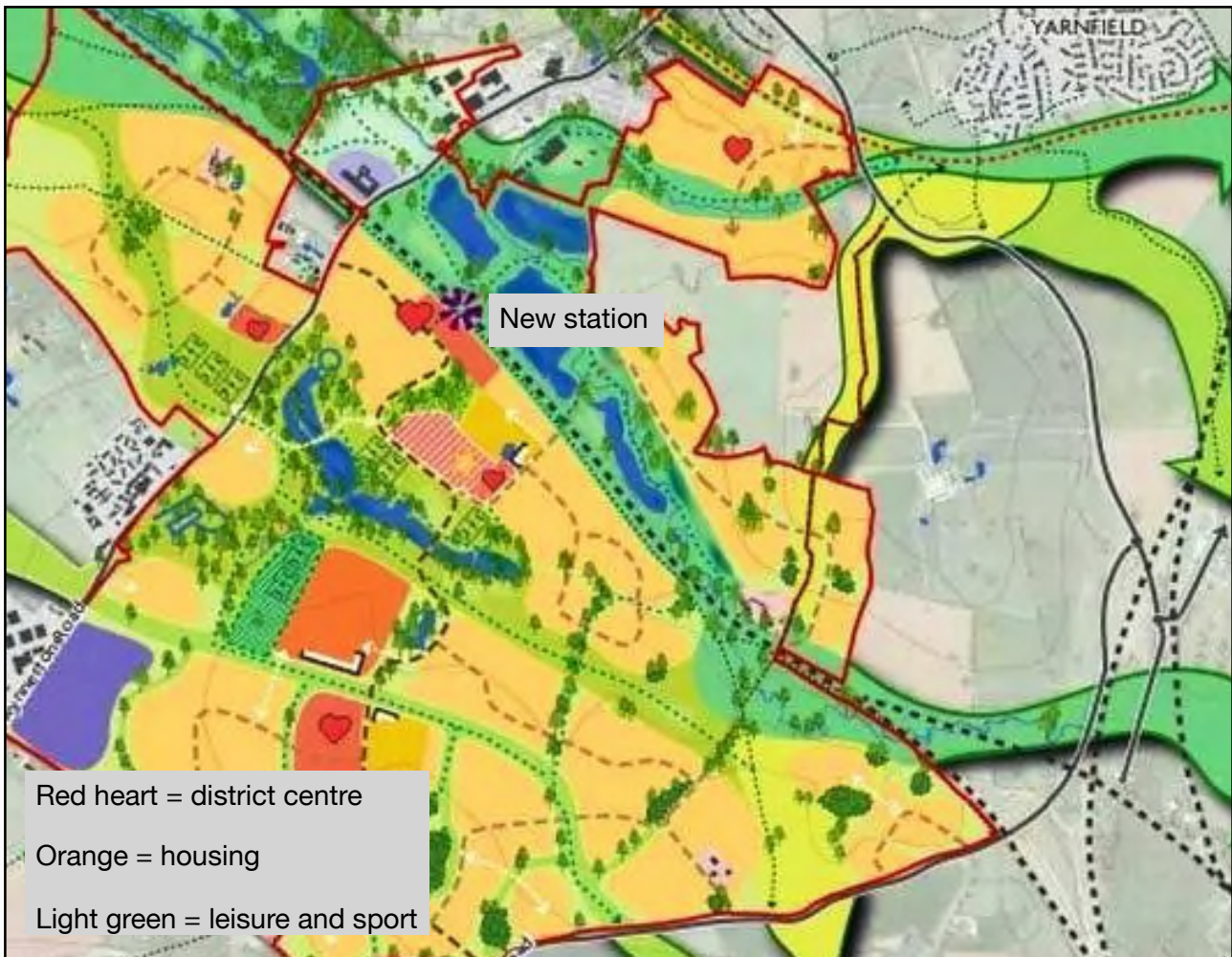


## NEW STATION AT MEECEBROOK



Earlier this year, we reported on proposed new stations. One, Meecebrook, got a universal, 'Where's that?' It's part of a plan for more than 10,000 new homes by 2040 as a 'Garden Village', five minutes north of Stafford. With the intention of minimising carbon emissions, an essential feature of the planning is a new railway station.

A feasibility report was commissioned from SLC Rail. It identified the best site for the station. On the map above, the black broken lines are railway. Just off from the bottom right hand corner is the former station at Norton Bridge and the line up the right hand side of the map is to Stone and Stoke. Diagonally to the top left is the West Coast Main Line to Crewe. The two tracks on the north east side of the formation are the Fast lines [125 mph] and the Slow lines on the south west side are arguably misnamed [100 mph].

SLC concludes all four lines need platforms, long enough for 8 car trains so the Slow lines would need realigning to make room for an island platform. The station would be served by two trains an hour each way. The service pattern by the time the station opens is likely to very different so modelling the timetable was not yet possible, but based on the current timetable, they suggest a Birmingham - Liverpool and a Euston - Crewe would call each hour, providing 24 calls each way a day.

Each stop here is calculated to add a three minute penalty to journey times (based on analysis of Penkridge), not a problem between freight paths on the Slow lines but reducing capacity on the Fast lines. When HS2 opens to Crewe, there may be capacity for other services here.

35% of journeys are expected to be to Birmingham, 22% to Stafford and 20% to London. The cost [at 2022 prices] is put at £54.5 million, which certainly seems optimistic and it has a medium BCR of 1.58. *Keith Flinders*

## THE RACE TO THE NORTH



*The 10.30 Euston to Glasgow Central on the Down Fast line races the 09.18 Euston to Glasgow Central via Birmingham, nearest the camera, on the Down Slow line, close to Meecebrook between Stafford and Crewe. The 10.30 is the former Royal Scot, for which Warrington is now the first stop, whereas the 09.18 will call at Crewe and then follow it to Scotland. The 09.18 is a 9-car set whereas the 10.30 is 11-car. Photo: Keith Flinders*