

Warrington Local Plan


Objections & Observations on Policy OS2 – Croft

From:

17th June 2019

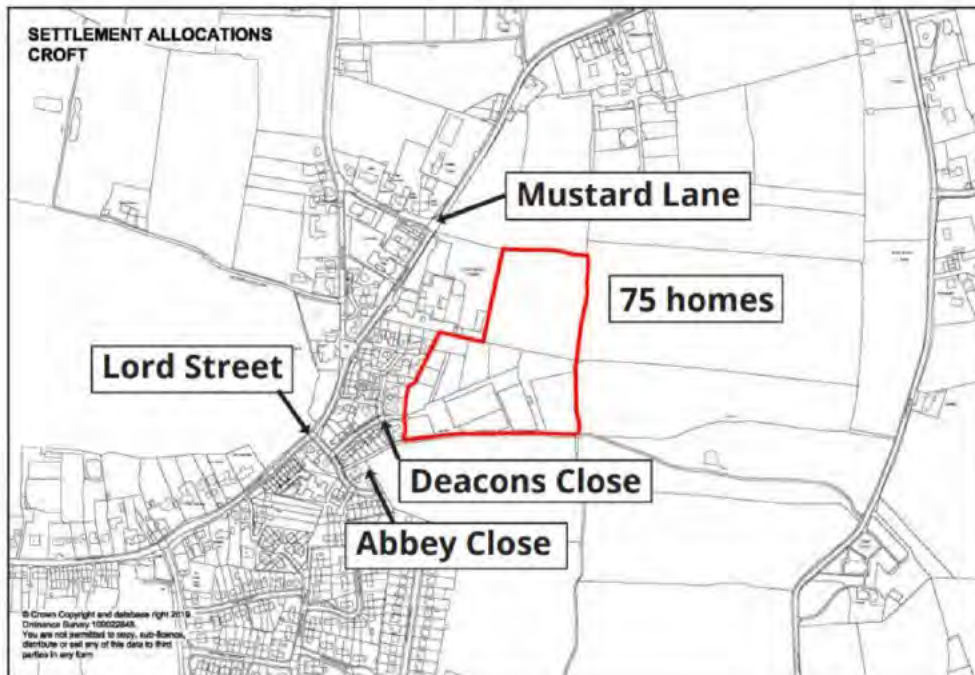
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This consultation response concerns the proposed removal from the Green Belt of land behind Abbey Close / Deacons Close in Croft village. 



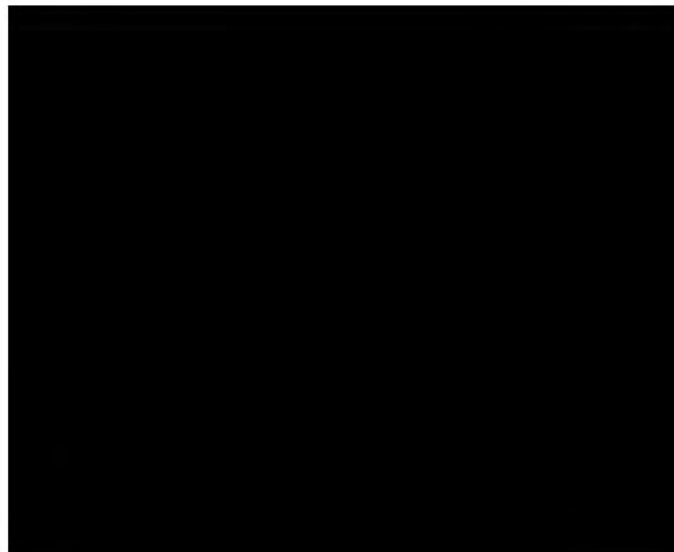
The proposed site OS2



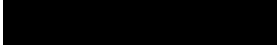
The satellite image below shows the centre of the village [REDACTED]



[REDACTED] Green Belt boundary



We are concerned that the construction of a housing estate on this land will have a significant effect [REDACTED]

 We are also seriously concerned about the increased traffic generated by such a major development which will require access through narrow residential lanes and travel through already congested village lanes. The impact of the construction phase is also of major concern.

Objections

1. I object in principle to the loss of Green Belt. It is an amenity not just to be used for human recreation but for the preservation of land for wildlife – flora and fauna – and to provide a green lung to combat pollution.
2. If this land is built on, it will be lost forever.
3. Croft village provides an opportunity for semi-rural living, limited in its availability in Warrington. A development of this major scale in the centre of the village will have a significant effect on the rural feel of the village and will diminish the variety of housing opportunities in the borough. It will be just like everywhere else.

4. 

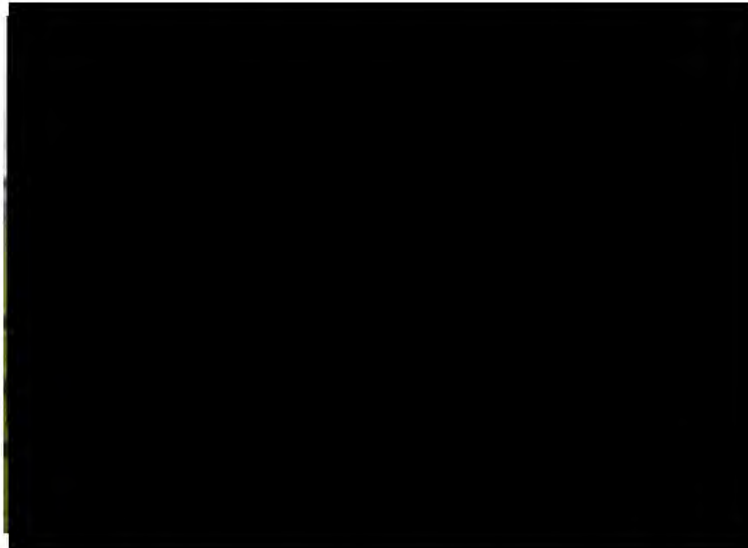
5. The land rises considerably to the East, as can be seen from the next photograph.



6.



7. Along the Green Belt boundary, there is a drainage ditch which regularly floods, as can be seen from the following photograph. [REDACTED] However, any building work, if it were to go ahead, must address this issue as ignoring it will result in property flooding.



8. The addition of a further 75 minimum houses is likely to result in an additional 150 vehicles, based on the current car ownership in the village. This will likely add 600-1000 additional vehicle movements during a weekday, most of them around peak travel times in the morning and evening.
9. Croft village roads are mostly narrow lanes. The main roads – Smithy Brow – Lord Street – Mustard Lane and Smithy Lane – are already congested during peak times, especially the junction by the Horseshoe pub which results in traffic backing up to Dam Lane most mornings. The addition of the extra vehicle movements will only exacerbate this.
10. Many times I have seen hold ups on these roads when two lorries or a lorry and bus meet. Particularly on the bends, the road is too narrow for them to pass each other without mounting the pavements. This will be exacerbated by increased traffic flows, especially if site construction traffic is allowed to use these village routes.
11. The suggestion that the site could be accessed via Abbey Close / Deacons Close is nonsense. [REDACTED] the traffic from the existing stud farm has never had an impact. It has rarely if ever amounted to more than, say, a dozen or so vehicles per hour at its maximum. The increase in traffic that would arise from 75 new properties would overwhelm these two narrow roads.

12. The existing houses on Deacons Close have inadequate provision for car parking and most of the time, there are vehicles parked on both sides of the road and on the pavements. Generally it is fine because there are currently few cars and people are courteous and let others through. The addition of so many additional cars trying to negotiate these roads will have a significant impact.



Typical parking on Deacons Close

13. These roads are totally unsuitable for use by construction traffic.
14. The existing access from Lord Street onto Abbey Close is inadequate. The sight lines when turning right into Abbey Close are not sufficient to be sure that a car is not approaching, even if the car is doing 30 mph. All existing users of this junction will bear out that they have experienced dangerous moments trying to make this turn over many years. Increased traffic movements will inevitably make this worse.



15. Croft Village has no shops or employment other than farming. It is a commuter village and as such trips for shopping and work must be by private car, taxi or bus. The bus service is poor, infrequent and unreliable and only runs at limited times. There are inadequate transport options for new occupants, other than the private car.
16. Pavements are narrow and blocked in part, either by overgrown vegetation or buildings (eg 30 Lord Street). The roads are already dangerous for pedestrians and will only become less safe with increased vehicles and more pedestrians from the proposed new estate.
17. Provision for cyclists in the village is non-existent. I have tried cycling from my house but it is extremely dangerous. Increased traffic will do nothing to improve this situation.
18. Similarly, Croft Village has little in the way of amenities. The existing Heath Farm stables at least provides countryside leisure activities consistent with a rural village and should not be destroyed forever.
19. I understand that Croft School is already running at full capacity. I believe that there is little scope to extend it without building on more green land. Inevitably, Croft residents living further away, such as at Kenyon or Churchfields / Wadeson Way, will be denied access to the school because of preference being given to residents of the new estate.
20. Croft School currently is a school in the countryside. With construction at its rear, currently open to fields, it will become just another school in a housing estate and pupils will lose the benefits that my children had when they were there.
21. As regards timing, the requirement for new houses is based on assumptions. These assumptions may prove to be wrong which only time will tell. The destruction of this Green Belt land early on will not allow for correction at a later date. At the very least, removal of this land from the Green Belt should be delayed for 10 years by which time there will be more clarity about the need for the volume of houses being proposed at this time.

In conclusion, I object to the proposed removal of this land from the Green Belt.



This is what will be destroyed forever if this proposal goes through