



10/11/2001

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Warrington Proposed Local Plan 2021-2038.

I am writing in response to the Proposed Local Plan with specific reference to the recently approved Peel Hall development (MD4) and the proposed Waterworks Lane development in Winwick (OS6)

I wish to register my concerns about these developments and the effects that they will have on Winwick village itself and the surrounding areas.

Context

Winwick is a rural village, which has a history dating back at least 1000 years. It is also the site of the last major battle of the second English Civil War and is acknowledged by Historic England as one of the best preserved battle sites with areas of significant architectural potential.

It has one of the major access roads to Warrington from the North running through it (the A49). The two largest roads in the village provide access to the A49, the M6, and the M62 from Croft, Culcheth, Leigh and beyond, via Myddleton Lane, and from Golborne, Lowton, and the A580 via Golborne Road. In addition two minor roads, Waterworks Lane and Highfield Lane provide access to and from junction 22 of the M6 and are frequently used as 'rat runs'.

Traffic calming features have been installed with limited success on Myddleton Lane and Golborne Road and a weight limit has been recently imposed on Golborne Road. However, this is not enforced and has made little difference to the number of HGVs travelling along the road. Other than that, these roads have remained substantially unchanged for at least a century and many of the other roads surrounding the village are narrow, rural lanes.

Concerns

1. Over-development of the village.

The number of houses within the parish boundary currently stands at approximately 2000 with around 700 of those houses being within the immediate area of the village centre. The Peel Hall development (MD4) that has just been approved by the Secretary of State will deliver an additional 1200 houses, whilst a further 17 dwellings have also been approved by WBC at the site of Delph Farm. Planning officers are also recommending that a further 27 houses be built at Houghton Green. These developments alone will result in an overall increase of the number of houses within the parish boundary by around 60%.

With regard to the immediate vicinity of the village, two major developments (Winwick Park and the Spires) have already increased the number of houses in the village from approximately 530 (in 2000) to over 700 currently (an increase of 30%). The proposed OS6 (Waterworks Lane/Golborne Road) development would increase it again to around 830 dwellings. This would represent an increase of nearly 60% in size since 2000.

The consequences of this over-development are discussed in further detail below.

2. Increase in traffic volume

The volume of traffic along the A49, Golborne Road, and Myddleton Lane has increased dramatically over the past 20 years, partly because of development in outlying areas and also as a result of growth in employment in the Warrington area. At peak times there is queuing traffic on all three roads and these two developments (MD4 and OS6) will inevitably increase the volume of traffic passing through the village. The Local Plan does not propose any significant improvements to the road network that would ameliorate the existing problems associated with congestion never mind the additional volume that will result from the OS6 and MD4 developments.

3. Increase in pollution and reduction in air quality

The Warrington area has already been identified as having the third highest number of deaths in the North West arising as a direct result of pollution (specifically PM2.5 particulates). A major source of these pollutants is from traffic exhaust. Winwick is subject to major congestion at times, with the main areas of standing traffic at junctions immediately adjacent to the village school. As discussed above, further development in the area will inevitably lead to additional traffic and, hence, pollution with the associated increase in risk to health. The lack of any recognition of this local problem and any proposals to reduce traffic through the village is a major oversight in the Local Plan.

4. Lack of school provision

Winwick primary school is already at capacity with no scope for further expansion. There is planning permission in place for 17 dwellings at Delph Farm, it is likely that there will be an additional 27 houses built at Houghton Green, and the Secretary of State has now approved the 1200 house Peel Hall development. The proposed nearby OS6 development of 130 houses will inevitably result in a further increase in the demand for primary school places. The Local Plan makes no provision for additional school capacity in Winwick itself to accommodate these escalating requirements.

5. Loss of green belt and unsuitability of OS9 for development

Phase 1 of the Parkside development has now been given approval, which removes a large area from the green belt just to the North of Winwick village for industrial usage. More green belt will be utilised in building the link road to junction 22 of the M6. The proposed development at the Waterworks Lane (OS6) site would remove yet another area of green belt from the village environs.

This site contains high voltage electric pylons and overhead cables and an old waste disposal pit, both of which limit the space available for building and constitute potential hazards to health. In addition United Utilities have preference that no development takes place on part of the site and have voiced their concerns about possible contamination risk to the public water supply. There are also UU assets on the site that would need to be protected before development could proceed.

The fact that this site is in existing green belt land, may compromise key water supply assets, and contains hazards which represent potential threats to health clearly makes the site unsuitable for development.

6. No provision for cycling

Whilst Winwick village is a rural settlement, access to and from the village is via roads that are highly utilised and have no existing provision for safe commuting by cyclists. For example, the main access route to Warrington A49 has no dedicated cycle path. There are also no cycle lanes for recreational access to facilities such as the Sankey Valley Trail. In fact, the only obvious provision within the village is on Myddleton Lane where there is a section of cycle lane around 100m long to bypass a traffic island. The Local Plan will inevitably result in

a significant increase in the volume of local traffic through the village and there is no evidence that the authors of the Plan have made any attempt to address this shortcoming.

7. Potential threat to a historic battlefield site

The proposed OS9 site is in the vicinity of an important, historic battlefield site i.e. the site of the defining battle of the second English civil war in 1648. This area is recognised by Historic England as one of the least best preserved sites from that period with significant archaeological potential.

The Local Plan has highlighted the importance of this historic asset, however it has made no attempt to specify IN DETAIL how the site should be investigated or protected in the event that the development was approved. The Plan simply states that *'development proposals will be expected to conserve and enhance the historic significance, appearance and integrity of and the ability to understand and appreciate the setting of the Battle of Winwick'*.

WBC have not already acknowledged or commemorated the battlefield site in any way, which is astounding given its significance. This bland statement in the Local Plan coupled with the lack of interest shown by WBC to this important area does not give confidence that conservation or enhancement of the historic significance would be enforced.

I hope that these comments will be taken into consideration prior to approval of the Plan.

Yours Faithfully

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