

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#)
Subject: LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION OBJECTION AND COMMENTS.
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LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION OBJECTION AND COMMENTS.

I wish to submit my objection to the local plan. The plan will destroy the distinctive nature and character of South Warrington. The addition of a minimum OF 4200 new homes in addition to what has already been approved in Grappenhall, Appleton, Stretton and Appleton Thorn will result in the loss of nearly 1000 acres of the Green Belt. I am sad to see the late addition of the Thelwall Heys site with the proposed addition of 320 plus houses and removal of land from the Green Belt, this is an area of natural beauty and I believe the last minute addition of this land to be an ill thought out quick fix. The green belt boundaries were only confirmed 7 years ago and the plan was supposed to be good for 20 years.

There should be no release of green belt land. There is no proper justification for the loss of Green belt within the plan. The Council needs to look more closely at the use of brown field sites rather than take the irreversible decision to use green belt. The Council needs to do more to encourage developers to prioritise building on brown filed sites with affordable housing.

Thelwall Heys is a beautiful area with a unique character that forms part of the barrier preventing Thelwall from sprawling into the countryside. It also protects the Bridgewater canal maintaining a rural peace and quiet and an area that is very much enjoyed by residents. This has been extremely noticeable during the Covid pandemic, an area highly valued by local residents and where people can relax and enjoy the wildlife and walking which has had a positive impact on mental health and wellbeing during difficult times.

A thorough evidence based heritage impact assessment has not been completed and neither has a thorough wildlife assessment been carried out which is not acceptable on such an important site.

In 2004 environmental surveys of Thelwall Heys found 32 different bird species several deemed to be of high importance. The six week consultation has not allowed time for crucial assessments to take place and this is not acceptable. This area was deemed to be distinctive and this has not changed regarding habitat for endangered birds.

Thelwall Heys was identified in 2004 as having Special Landscape Status. Warrington Borough Council commissioned a landscape appraisal of Thelwall Heys and referred to Thelwall Heys in their submission to the public inquiry for their Unitary Development Plan as "a landscape type worthy of special landscape character status due to its small-scale landscape of pasture, mature trees and hedgerows" The area was deemed to be distinctive and this has not changed.

Thelwall Heys is high quality agricultural land with a grade 2 listed property on it. Any building around the house would destroy its character and that of the other characterful properties surrounding the site, there appears to have been little thought put into this hence the lack of a thorough evidence based heritage impact assessment so therefore inferring an easy win!

DEFRA surveyed the land in 1995 and found that 68% of the land is top quality agricultural land grade 1 and 2, 31% is grade 3a agricultural land which means in comparison to the rest of Cheshire which has 15% of grades 1 and 2 and 20% across the rest of England Thelwall Heys is top quality agricultural land.

The site has ponds that were surveyed in 2004 and found to have rare water life. The environmental report stated clearly that if the land was developed these habitats would be lost along with their inhabitants.

This area is prone to flooding and again documents from 2004 state that surface water from other local areas naturally makes its way to the Mersey by flowing along water courses that include Thelwall Heys. It takes little rain to flood Cliff lane and the surrounding roads which have historic flooding problems going on for many years that have never been resolved. If Thelwall Heys was built on there would be nowhere for the water to go thus causing further flooding to property and roads in the area. Again a thorough flood risk assessment should have been done but this does not appear to be the case.

Access to Thelwall Heys would have to be via the A50/Cliff lane, this is already a very busy road where people drive at excessive speeds. For example in April 2021 Cheshire police monitored the A50 and found that in a 24 hour period over 92% of vehicles were speeding which was 6500

people. This is a 30mph limit! Over 3000 vehicles were travelling at 40 & 50 mph and over 2000 between 50 & 60 mph, the highest speed was 80mph. Access to Thelwall Heys by 600 plus vehicles would pose a serious safety concern and add further congestion and pollution.

The building of property on this beautiful site will irreparably damage the area and result in the loss of open green space and wildlife that is enjoyed by people using the TPT and the Bridgewater canal.

The new plan says that building on Thelwall heys will have no material impact upon the Green belt but this overlooks the value it makes as a special landscape. In 2005 the Inspectors report from the public inquiry into the Unitary Development Plan states that "the inspector agrees that Warrington is right to define its Green Belt boundaries around the town and its larger Villages. He also states Thelwall Heys does fulfil Green Belt purposes and is worthy of protection from inappropriate development and should be included within the Green Belt.

There is major congestion in this area on a regular basis due to constant issues with the motorway network which gridlocks the area and the town for prolonged periods of time and there is no proposal to ease existing problems regarding congestion or air quality and no consideration given to the fact that public transport is very limited and unreliable with people not able to travel for example to work, town centre or train stations by bus, there is no bus travelling to or through Latchford from Thelwall, Grappenhall or Lymm. Housing developed would not be affordable to local people but would be high value property. The plan does not show convincingly what the exceptional circumstances are for development in the Green Belt.

In summary there is no justification for any development or removal of Green Belt status at Thelwall Heys, proper assessments and surveys have not been completed. The Council has not valued the importance of the Green belt status of this land and the fact it is identified as "a landscape worthy of special landscape character status" Thelwall Heys has only been added as a quick fix prospect.

The six56 employment area next to junction 20 would require 137 hectares of Green Belt release putting additional logistics sites next to an already congested motorway junction does not make sense and this would not create jobs for local workers as they could not afford to live nearby and there is no public transport infrastructure, it would quite simply just create more traffic more congestion, more commuters and more pollution at a time when we should be pushing forward to repair the damage already done regarding global warming, air quality and pollution.

The Rushgreen Road site in Lymm has the positive of having a new health facility however a negative is the increase of traffic on Rushgreen Road which is busy and narrow in places. The site is highly visible from the canal and lessens the gap between Lymm and Oughtrington.

The combined Statham sites are prominent when approaching Lymm from the west and would lessons the gap with Thelwall. It is also close to the grade 2 listed Statham Lodge and near to the motorway which will increase noise and air pollution. Statham has had serious flooding problems in recent years and I believe building on this land may cause further flooding issues.

I believe the plan is not sound.

There is no justification, reason or evidence to remove Thelwall Heys from the Green Belt or develop the site.

There is no justification for the scale of Greenbelt release across the plan.

There is no need for the volume of housing and mass of employment land.

There is no need for the harm to air quality and local ecology.

There is no need to destroy the character and landscapes of our villages.

There is no explanation on how the already poor transport infrastructure of South Warrington can cope with increased levels of traffic and congestion.

There has not been enough consultation by the council with no face to face consultation done other than Halliwell Jones Stadium. This should not have been the only venue.

Cllr Wendy Johnson

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