

**LAND AT CHERRY LANE, LYMM, WARRINGTON, WA13 0SZ**

**FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS TO THE WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN REVIEW**

**PLANNING STATEMENT**

**JUNE 2019**

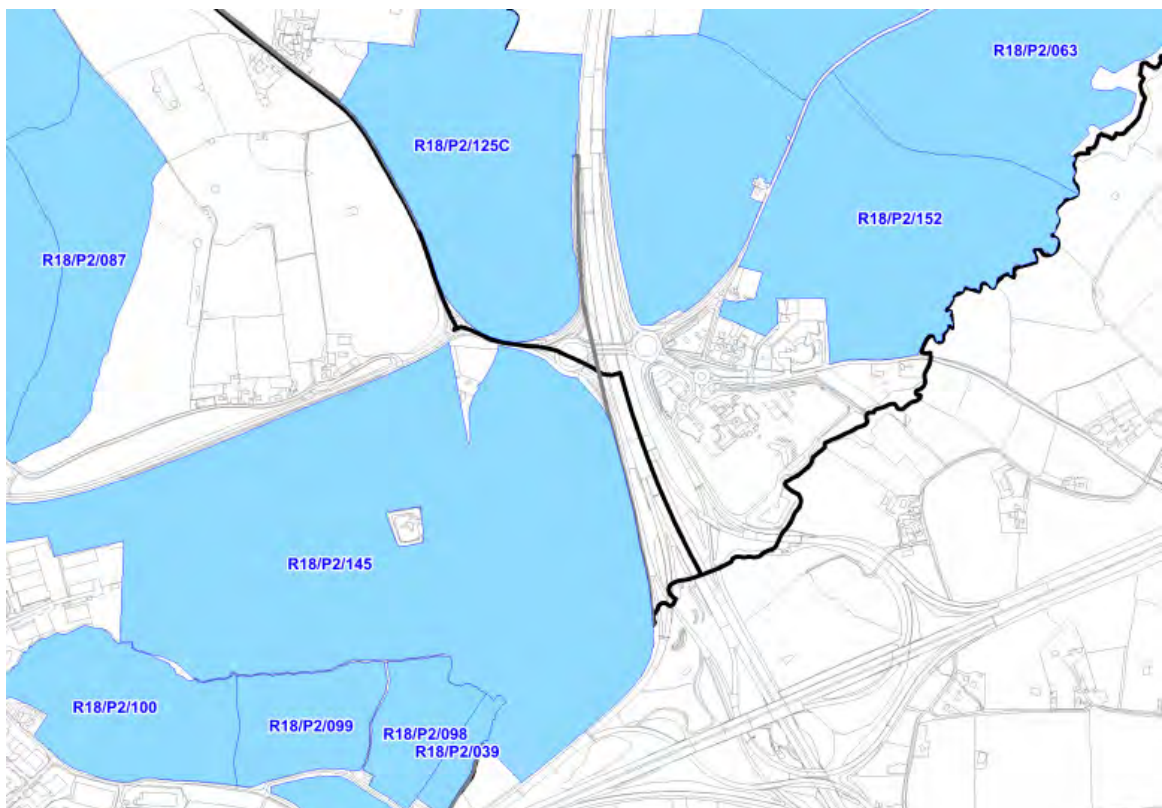
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- 1 This statement is provided on behalf of C4 Land Ltd to respond to the published Draft Submission Version of the Warrington Local Plan which was on deposit for public consultation 17 June 2019.
  
- 2 This document should be read alongside the statement, form, plan and market commentary lodged with the Council in July 2018 which sought the allocation of the 55 hectares of land shown edged by a red line on the cover of this statement for development purposes, primarily in the form of additional employment land to take advantage of the site's geographical location and the road transport network which wraps around the town and its outlying commercial areas.
  
- 3 In essence, the previous representation recognised that the Council's own Economic Development Needs Study (EDNS) of October 2016 had stated that further land is required to allow sites to come forward in a strategic manner to create jobs and encourage business, with the land subject of this representation considered to be ideally placed to assist with this objective.
  
- 4 The EDNS also confirmed that with a realistic supply of 69.68 ha remaining at Omega at that time, stakeholders are now considering further strategic-scale sites in the Borough, particularly in South Warrington with access to the M56. This is precisely where the land at Cherry Lane is situated, thereby making it an ideal proposition for phased development.

- 5 In terms of land requirement, the EDNS confirmed that the Borough has an additional land need of 276 hectares up to 2037, with the 55 hectares of land put forward by the Cherry Lane site greatly assisting the Council in satisfying this objective for additional land.
  
- 6 A review of the documentation released by the Council regarding the Draft Local Plan (DLP) confirms that representations have been made to seek the development of land which stands to the north and east the subject land as well as land to the west across the M6 and to the south west across the M6 junction roundabout, as indicated on the plan below:

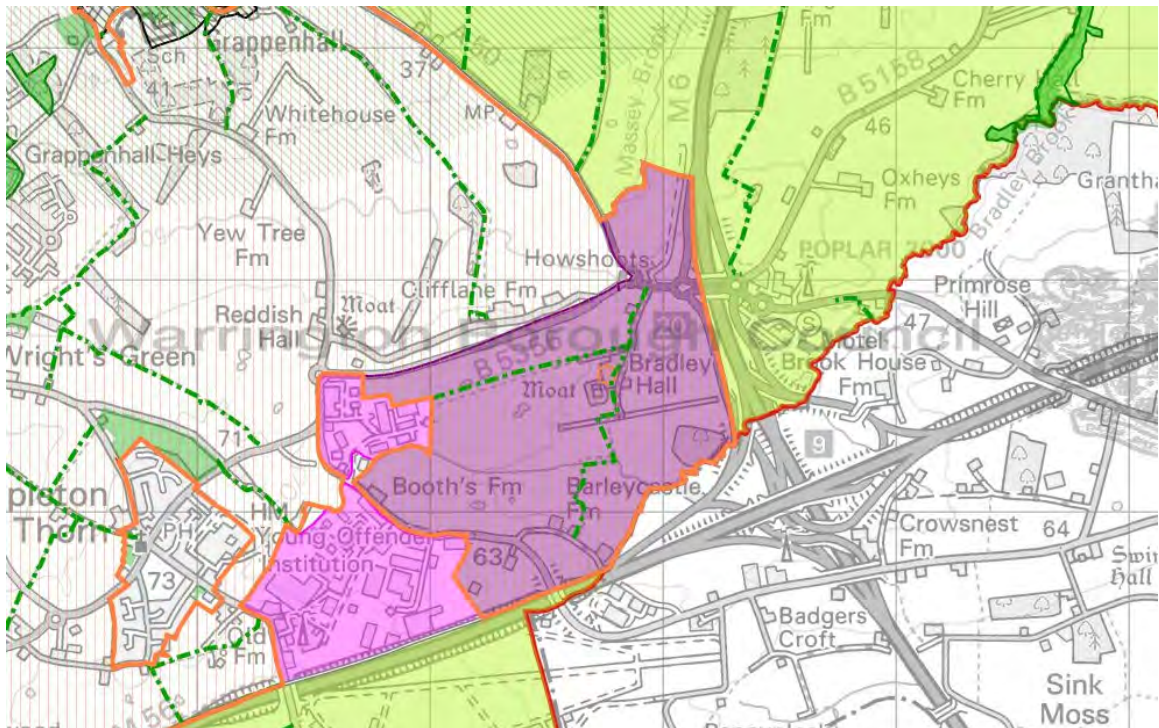


7 The three nearby representations indicated on the above plan can be summarised as follows:

- RP18/P2/063 – by the High Legh Estate, proposing employment, housing, retail and leisure uses.
- RP18/P2/125C – by Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd, proposing housing.
- RP18/P2/145 – by Langtree Property Partners, proposing employment use.

8 The representations put forward for the Cherry Lane land by C4 Land is allocated reference R18/P2/152 on the draft proposals map.

9 In response to the representations, the Council have published their Proposals Map for the DLP, an extract from which is shown below:



- 10 C4 Land are concerned to note that the area to the south west of the M6 roundabout is allocated on the draft plan as an Employment Allocation under draft Policy DEV4 which expands the existing employment area onto the only open area between it and the motorway, thereby obliterating any remaining open space on the western side of the M6 junction which will be to the detriment of the area.
- 11 In addition, it is further noted that the area to the north of the proposed Employment Allocation is denoted as part of the Warrington Garden Suburb under draft Policy MD2. This again serves to remove all aspects of open land between the existing urban area and the M6 by the wholesale removal of land from the Green Belt.
- 12 The allocation of land to the west of the M6 would be contrary to the primary purposes of including land within the Green Belt as defined by paragraph 134 of the National Planning Policy Framework as being to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another. Developing the land as shown on the allocation draft plan would be contrary to these objectives.
- 13 Conversely, the land allocation sought by C4 Land would simply provide additional employment land adjacent to the motorway junction on the M6 which abuts existing built development to the south in the form of the fire station/ residential development and has the motorway services to the south.

- 14 In addition, the western boundary of the C4 land is formed entirely by the M6 and Cherry Lane runs to the east, which dictates that the subject site has defensible hard boundaries on three sides lending further credence to it representing a prudent use of land via an appropriate-scale extension of built development, unlike the proposed allocations to the west of the M6.
- 15 In regard to the content of the DLP policies, it is noted that the Council accept at the outset that it is not possible however to meet all of Warrington's development needs within the existing urban area, and that the spatial strategy of the DLP has therefore been developed in order to meet the need for new homes, employment land and retail supported by wide-ranging infrastructure improvements. C4 Land welcome this recognition that Green Belt land is required to be released, but strongly disagree with the manner in which it is proposed which will effectively serve to remove any open spaces and gaps that currently exist between built development and prevent urban sprawl.
- 16 The DLP also notes that it is not possible to meet all of the employment land requirements within the existing urban area which means there is a need for provision of around 213 hectares of employment land through Green Belt release. It is also suggested that the Council has considered potential employment sites on their own merits, with regard to their ability to meet market demands and a range of detailed site and sustainability criteria, including location, means of access and Green Belt performance. The release of the land at Cherry Lane would be in full accordance with these criteria.
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- 17 The recognition within the DLP that if the Council does not release additional land for employment, then in the medium and longer term Warrington's status as a key driver of the North West economy will be threatened is also welcomed by C4 Land. The DLP states that as land is used up, potential development and investment could be lost to other regions of the UK and potentially overseas, and adds that the EDNS (referred to above and in the initial representations made by C4 Land) is clear that there is already suppressed demand for employment land.
- 18 Policy DEV4 of the DLP seeks to ensure there is a sufficient supply of employment land to support Warrington's economic growth in the long term. With this aim in mind, the policy proposes a number of allocations to meet the identified needs over the Plan Period and beyond, including the proposed 116 hectares of land within the proposed 'Garden Suburb' as described earlier. The justification for this allocation is stated as being its location at the junction of the M6 and M56 which will meet a large proportion of the Borough's identified B8 requirement. It is also suggested the allocation will benefit from proximity to the Garden Suburb's district centre and planned improvements to road infrastructure.
- 19 The allocation proposed for Cherry Lane would also be in full accordance with the locational benefits as described for the Garden Suburb, but with the added significant advantage of retaining the key open space of the Green Belt which currently separates the existing employment land from the M6 and benefits the area by providing a visual break between development.

- 20 Given the above, C4 Land recognise the need for additional employment land as set out in their previous representations and welcome the recognition of this matter by the Council. However, it is the manner in which the large-scale land allocation to the west of the M6 is proposed which is of concern given the urban sprawl that would result, and it is therefore trusted that due consideration can and will be given to the Cherry Lane land given that it is better placed than other representations in the area and will serve to make a vital and positive contribution to the Borough's acute need for additional employment land as defined in the Council's Economic Development Needs Study.
- 21 It is considered that this statement, alongside the detailed information already presented in July 2018, provides the necessary background for the Council to rethink their strategy and include the land allocation as requested within the emerging Local Plan.