



Stretton Parish Council

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Dear Kerry

WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
Respondent reference number 2385 – Stretton Parish Council
Statement - Matters 3 Spatial Strategy

(In relation to Transportation issues pertaining in particular to the proposal SEWUE/SEW Employment Area).

Since the early 1970's South Warrington has undergone significant major development on predominantly land which was zoned for development under the 1973 Warrington New Town Outline Plan – following the New Towns designation in 1968.

A key element of the New Town Outline Plan was a proposed North/South expressway (N/SE) involving the construction of a New High Level Bridge (HLB) over the Manchester Ship Canal and provision of an additional road spur at Junction 10 of the M56. The aim being to relieve the existing North/South traffic issues on the A49, A50 and the operational problems associated with the Victorian swing bridges that cross the Manchester Ship Canal.

At the Public Inquiry into the Warrington New Town Outline Plan in 1972, Cheshire County Council (Highways Authority) stated that not more than 1,000 new homes should be developed South of the Manchester Ship Canal until all necessary transportation infrastructure was implemented i.e. N/SE and HLB.

The purpose of this housing limitation was to avoid putting additional traffic on to an already accepted congested road system, in particular the A49 that runs through the centre of Stretton Village.

Throughout the 1970's both Warrington Borough Council and Cheshire County Council made clear their views and concerns on proposed major development within South Warrington. In particular that any further development above the 1,000 new homes be incremental and not on a 'blanket' approach as initially proposed by Warrington New Town Development Corporation and such development would be on a limited basis until the construction of the N/SE and HLB.

It must also be noted that there was considerable local opposition (including Stretton Parish Council) at the time to the Warrington New Town Development Corporation's development proposals.

The recommended 1,000 new homes threshold was actually reached in 1980 (over 40 years ago) and since that time further major housing developments have been undertaken in South Warrington (Dudlows Green, Pewterspear, Stretton, Appleton Thorn, Grappenhall Heys, etc), which amount to circa 1,500 new homes. Further planning approval for another 800 new homes (Appleton Cross and Grappenhall Heys) have also been granted and these are currently under construction. All of the new housing developments have been undertaken **without** the provision of the accepted transportation infrastructure requirements.

In addition to the new housing development Warrington Borough Council also approved the redevelopment of Stretton Airfield (New Barleycastle Industrial Estate) which has further exacerbated traffic issues and congestion on to the local (unmodernised) highway network. It must also be noted that over the past 30 years the following major developments have also been undertaken within Stretton Village boundary.

- Upgrade of the previous Old Vicarage Hotel into a 4 star 146 bedroom hotel, leisure complex and wedding venue (Park Royal Hotel).
- Provision of a new Private Hospital (Spire).
- Conversion of two former farmhouses into public houses/restaurants (Stretton Fox and the Partridge Hotel).
- Provision of a new Premier Inn Hotel (Cat and Lion).
- Applejacks Adventure Farm.
- Walnut Tree Business Park and The Hollies Farm Shop/Café

All of the above developments have significantly increased traffic movements within Stretton village.

The Warrington Local Plan proposes a further minimum of 2,400 new houses (SEWUE) be constructed within the Local Plan period and a potential for a further 1,800 beyond that period, equating to a possible further 4,200 new homes. Contained within the initial 2,400 approximately 700 will be sited within Stretton Village, which will double the size of our village.

In terms of a new highway infrastructure Warrington Borough Council proposes only to build a minor link road between Stretton Road and Tarporley Road (A49) which will create a further road junction on the already busy A49. Furthermore, Warrington Borough Councils indicative master plan for the SEWUE proposes a ring road system that utilises the existing highway network and filters traffic from the proposed new developments onto the already congested A49 and A50.

Warrington Borough Councils local Plan proposals revert to the original Warrington New Town Development Corporation 'blanket' approach to South Warrington **without** implementing the originally planned and/or provision of an adequate transportation infrastructure for the Area. These actions are contrary to the principles of orderly Planning in terms of land use and sustainable transportation.

As stated earlier, WBC identified in the early 1970's the inadequacy of the existing highways within South Warrington. Since that time the Council have not undertaken any material improvements to either the A49 or A50 and it is conservatively estimated that traffic movement over the past 4 decades has doubled.

Therefore, Stretton Parish Council request Warrington Borough Council explain on what grounds did they permit/approve the construction of over 2,500 new homes in South Warrington, above the original threshold of 1,000, without undertaking the envisaged major highway infrastructure requirements (N/SE and HLB)?

Furthermore, can Warrington Borough Council now clarify on what basis/grounds can they justify proposing a further 4,200 new homes (SEWUE) and the SEW Employment Area without first delivering the previously accepted highway infrastructure requirements?

Yours Sincerely




For and On Behalf Of
Stretton Parish Council