

Statement with respect to Matter 7b Site allocation, Culcheth.
Mrs J.M.Johnson ref 0903, Resident

I am pleased that Warrington Borough Council revised their initial Green Belt land take but strongly believe that this should be revised again to reflect what is now known about the urgency of addressing climate change and flooding, food security, the value of open land, whether Green Belt or Green Field, and air quality. More information appears daily. I refer to the report from the Environment Agency “working with nature” where the biodiversity crisis is described as an “existential risk to human survival”. This is on the government website dated 12th July 2022 and I assume will be an Inquiry document.

There is also paragraph 120 of the NPPF 2021, Making the effective use of land. Warrington has lost a large amount of good quality farmland, including that for the New Town expansion.

I also believe that alongside the New Town information the parallel expansion from windfall sites in outlying settlements should be made clear. Culcheth had WW2 training camps, some used afterwards for housing or as part of the expansion of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority from the 1950’s. There were converted buildings but also an extra expansion of “dormitory” housing onto open farm land. This can be seen on the Council’s interactive map comparing 1910 and 1960’s maps with the present day. The Home Office created housing for prison officers (Howard, Medway and Bentham Roads) which was sold to a developer who added more houses including Weaver Road. More recently Ariel Gardens was built on the prison officers club site and further Home Office land sold. The UKAE site on Wigshaw Lane became Pendle Gardens and Langcliffe Close.

In addition there were many windfall sites in Culcheth. The Health Service sites centred on Newchurch Hospital (including Doeford, Langden, Mitton and Hutton Closes), and beyond to the Fourways and Oakdene Unit sites off Twiss Green Lane.

These sites still provide windfall housing, such as the extension of Doeford Close, the conversion of the Fourways house to apartments and the development of Twiss Green Oaks next to the Newchurch site.

Mills and farms have also provided housing : Daisy Bank Mill Close (26 houses) the Swinhoe Development on Hob Hey Lane, Griddle Peters site in Glazebury. 40 flats at Gilbert Court in the village centre replaced a Kwik Save supermarket. Ribchester Gardens replaced a farm. Lawton Close, off Common Lane close to the village centre; has 5 houses with 3 on a farm site to the north and more recently 2 houses to the south. Church Lane had Paythorne Close, Parsonage Walk and Sawley Close together with adjacent houses on Church Lane and Avon Close.

Recently there have been other developments on brownfield and greenfield sites. These should be shown on library documents. 9 off Culcheth Hall Drive. 6 on Hob Hey Lane, 2 next to Fourways, 7 on Mee Brow plus 15 on the Mee Brow Trucks site. 14 on the M&S salvage site in Glazebury. 2 on Brookfield Road/Broseley Avenue. The permission for 10 houses on Church Lane I believe has lapsed.

This is not a complete list, nor in chronological order but demonstrates how Culcheth continues to progress.

Q1. I support the strong green belt assessments around Culcheth, recognising the importance of preventing sprawl and neighbouring towns merging into each other, but should not the two weaker areas be part of this? Both areas are farmed.

Q3. The openness of the Green Belt would be lost and the countryside encroached. The development would not help the ambition to regenerate/develop the town centre or assist in urban regeneration.

Q5 The development is large and the concern is that it is a ‘foot in the door’ for further expansion. Drainage and traffic on our local roads are a further concern.

10. With reference to the Evidence Library of Local plan options
06 Settlement profiles - outlying settlements 2017

Has this been updated?

Note the GP surgeries capacity is incorrect.

Culcheth Medical Centre is no longer on Thompson Avenue, as the building is now Dunky's Day Nursery and the surgery is now part of the CCA site on Jackson Avenue and so the capacity should be reassessed.

There are 2 pharmacies and several dentists but the key question is the amount of NHS dental provision- has this been assessed?

I have looked for information on flooding, which is a constraint. Plans show the Wellfield Wood Watercourse which starts in the area off Clifton Avenue, crosses Hob Hey Lane near the Electricity Sub Station and cuts through housing to cross Common Lane then Ellesmere road to continue North to emerge in Wellfield wood which joins the Jibcroft brook. The watercourse was enmained by the environment agency in 2003 and has an environmental protection zone. There has been flooding along the route.

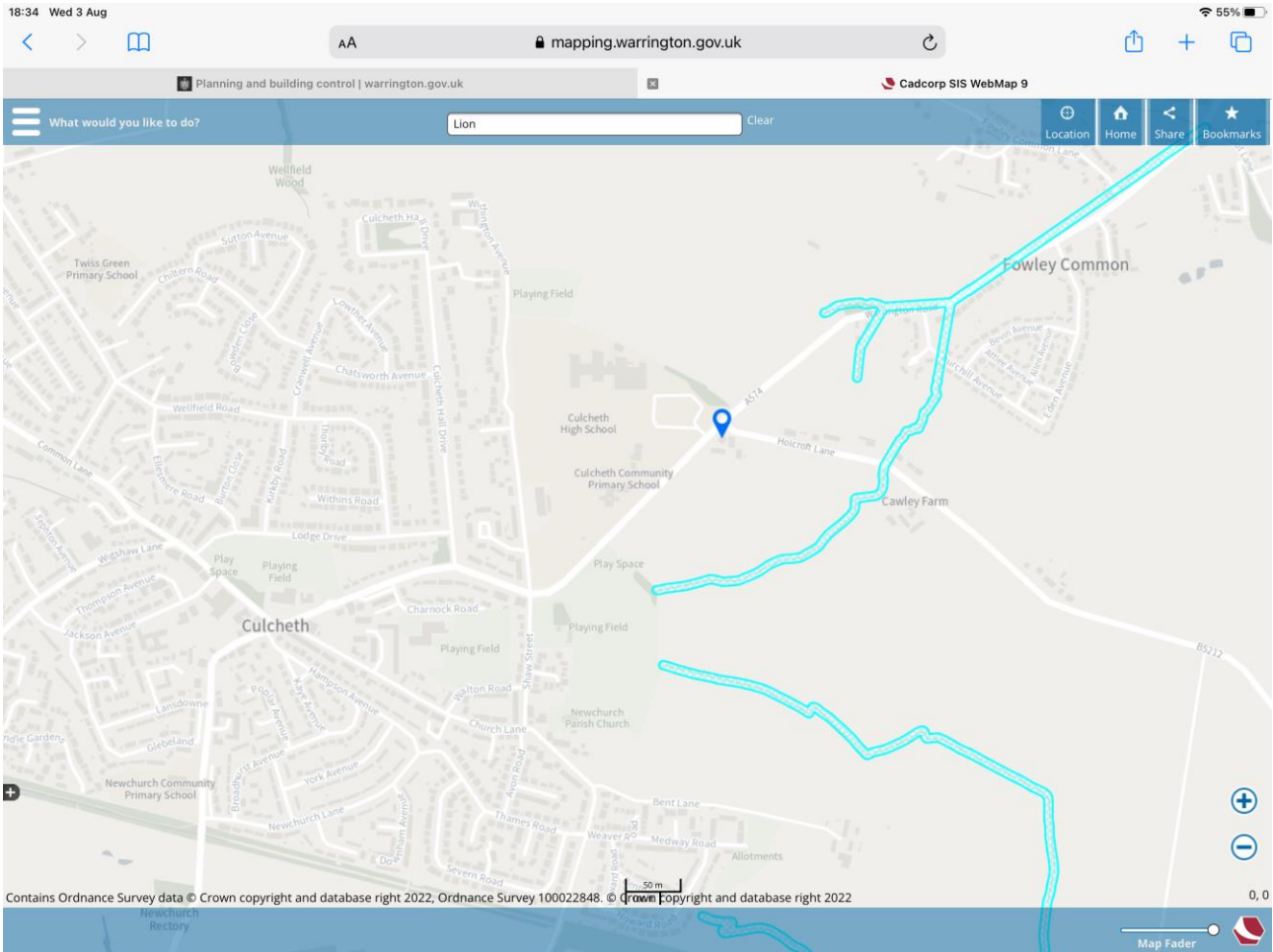
This is shown on the Culcheth Settlement Profile but I would expect a more detailed map to be in the Inquiry Library. Other areas of flooding are not shown.

The junction of Church Lane and Warrington road has been has been frequently flooded but is not on the map. I understand an approved application for 10 houses on Church Lane close to this junction expired whilst problems with the the site drainage were discussed.

The green in the centre of Culcheth has had to be drained with underground tanks connected to the local drainage along Warrington road. It is a necessary improvement but there will still be some surface water when we have the heavy rainfall which has become the norm.

Newchurch Parish Church has recently had to improve the drainage on the graveyard next to Shaw Street Recreation area, which also has drainage problems. I assume there are flood maps showing the drainage in this area as it is on the interactive map on the Borough Council website.

It would be helpful if United Utilities/ borough Council/Environment agency had a record of call outs for flooding



See below

The freshwater drains along Warrington Road cannot cope when there is heavy rain and this site 7b would make the situation worse.

How would this development affect air quality?

I am concerned that the site profile says there are no relevant planning applications and permissions for OS2. Planning applications involving Lions Den and part of OS2 have had the traffic on Holcroft Lane as a concern and I believe any access from the site onto Holcroft Lane would be unsafe.

Holcroft Lane is an old route linking Culcheth and surrounding villages to the Mersey Ford at Hollins Green. Today it links the A57 with the A574, Irlam to Culcheth and beyond and, together with Warburton Bridge over the ship canal, it links South Warrington to the North, avoiding motorways and the town centre.

It is important to realise the use of the existing road system and the problems with what could be an extra 400 more cars on the road

Our local roads are used because the beginning and end of the journey is on them

Because motorways can be avoided

Because motorways have to be avoided because of accidents, congestion and tailbacks. Do National Highways have a record of these?

Lorries use them as short cuts, rat runs, which have been noted in information on Glazebury but not elsewhere on the same road. The situation will be affected by the Parkside Link Road, which was intended to take vehicles to J22 of the M6 but is likely to encourage traffic cutting through Croft, Culcheth, Glazebury or Glazebrook.

Mrs JMJohnson

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