

P21-3147 PL / LOO2v1

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Kerry Trueman
Programme Officer
Programme Officer Solutions Limited
Pendragon House
1 Bertram Drive
Wirral
CH47 OLG

Issued via email only: kerry.trueman@warrington.gov.uk

Dear Kerry,

**Response to CD28 Matter 6f Joint Statement on East-West Connectivity
For Taylor Wimpey, Bloor Homes, Lone Star Ltd and Mulbury Homes (Grappenhall) Ltd
Representor Number: 1431**

After the hearing sessions, Warrington Borough Council (WBC), Homes England and Miller Homes, provided a joint statement which considers the east-west connectivity between the SEWUE and South East Warrington Employment Area (SEWEA) (**CD28**). This letter provides our response to CD28, on behalf of Taylor Wimpey, Bloor Homes, Lone Star Ltd and Mulbury Homes (Grappenhall) Ltd.

We made comments on the east-west connectivity of South Warrington in several of our hearing statements, and I raised these matters during the relevant hearing sessions, notably those relating to the SEWUE. I therefore welcome the opportunity to respond to the CD28 as part of the examination of the Local Plan.

This response focuses on two principle matters of concern. The first relates to the mass transit route through South Warrington between the SEWUE and SEWEA on land which is out with the control of Homes England and Miller Homes. The second relates to the proposed widening of Grappenhall Lane and the inadequacy of the proposed shared cycleway / footway in this location.

Mass Transit Route

The Fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4) includes an indicative mass transit network for Warrington to ensure the transformational change to model shift sought in Warrington. The proposed network includes a cross-town centre route from Lingley Mere/Omega to the (as then) proposed Garden Suburb. Whilst the Council have noted that this is just aspirational, the plan itself still seeks to ensure that this infrastructure can be implemented at a future date (see Policy INF1.3.e

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and Policy INF2.1). Indeed, if not planned for or safeguarded properly now with appropriate policy requirements in place, development sites promoted through this plan could actually hinder the future delivery of this key transport objective/aspiration and it would be difficult to undo thereafter.

The Council's expectation is to see a suitable corridor for future mass transit to be delivered between the SEWUE and the SEWEA (see Policy MD2.27e, MD2.27g and item A4 in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan schedule for the SEWUE) which call for an improved east-west link to the A50, safeguarding land onsite for mass transit and the need for a 33m wide corridor between A50 link and Barleycastle Lane as set out in the IDP. This level of infrastructure and safeguarding is not achieved by the SEWUE.

CD28 suggests that the pinch point between the land held by Homes England and the roundabout junction of B5356 Grappenhall Lane and Broad Lane may require WBC to use Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers to deliver the mass transit route in this location. This is an area of land which does not include a safeguarded corridor for the future mass transit route. Until it is confirmed what land is required for a mass transit route it is currently unknown what extent WBC would need to use their CPO powers in this area and whether that approach would be effective. The Local Plan does not acknowledge that the use of CPO powers would be necessary to deliver the mass transit network, and nor has this lengthy and complicated process been factored into the Council's delivery/trajectory for housing development.

Ultimately, it has yet to be confirmed that the mass transit network proposed in LTP4 and aspired to throughout the Local Plan can be achieved between the SEWUE and SEWEA. Additional land is required to facilitate the delivery the mass transit network. A reasonable alternative to the use of CPO powers, and one which would assist with the delivery/trajectory of housing development, would be to safeguard the land located between that held by Homes England and the roundabout junction of B5356 Grappenhall Lane and Broad Lane, for the future development and the delivery of the mass transit route.

Shared Cycleway / Footway

Policy MD6.12.b of the SEWEA requires improved cycling and walking routes providing direct and attractive linkages to the existing and planned residential areas and amenities and making use of, where appropriate, the adjacent green infrastructure network.

As illustrated on the Proposed Strategic Cycle Network plan on page 11 of LTP4 Executive Summary, it is confirmed that the expected links between these two sites will deliver 'neighbourhood' standard cycle and pedestrian. These are defined as '**continuous segregated routes**'. The delivery of this network of routes is also a key pillar in LTP4 to ensure the model shift targets set are achieved.

The Department for Transport (DfT) Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20 (July 2020) recommends a minimum width of 3.0m for shared use routes carrying up to 300 pedestrians.

Drawing 70079931-001/PO3 of CD28 shows a continuous cycle lane but it is certainly not segregated from pedestrians and there is no barrier proposed (other than the kerb line) to vehicles. It is therefore a compromised section of shared footway/cycleway which must be narrowed to 2.5m for a length of 27m.

No photographic evidence has been provided to confirm this and whilst WBC has confirmed their acceptability of this narrower specification, we do not consider this has been looked at in sufficient detail.

The proposed arrangement pushes the road to the full extent of the adopted highway, leaves no room to address any level differences with the third-party land on either side, provide for adequate highway drainage, and removes the verge completely along the northern side, which does not accord with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges 'CD 127 - Cross-sections and headrooms'. Forward visibility would also be reduced to below the required standards, as it would cross Taylor Wimpey's land.

Moreover, no account has been made of the mature trees that exist along the southern stretch of Grappenhall Lane in this location (as noted in the image below). The works shown on drawing 70079931-001 shows that impact on these trees would be avoidance. Some may qualify as veteran trees or of sufficient standard to be protected by other means. Without any survey information, it is not possible to determine if paragraph 180c of the NPPF would be satisfied.





This is all along a road that will be heavily utilised due to the lack of a direct connection to the roundabout on Broad Lane and B5356. The route and proposed crossing points will also have to contend with the HMRC inland port site accessed off Grappenhall Lane near to Barleycastle Lane, where significant volumes of HGV movements occur.

Ultimately, WBC have been unable to confirm that the minimum width of 3.0m can be achieved along the east-west route between the SEWUE and SEWEA and that this will provide the level of suitable cycle infrastructure required to achieve meaningful modal shift and a safe level of access by cycling.

Yours sincerely

Sebastian Tibenham
Executive Director

