

Warrington Local Plan Examination in Public

Submission No 2 from Cllr Peter Walker, Borough and Parish Councillor for Stockton Heath on behalf of Stockton Heath Parish Council

Matter 13: Air quality - para 16 & 17

I have now had the opportunity to study the air quality report, which the Borough Council representatives reported, during the discussion on matter 13, had informed the Local Plan. This report was not available during this discussion.

I now understand that the Borough has two monitors in the Town which can measure Pm2.5 particulates. One is located just off Selby St. and the other on Sankey Way. The monitor on Sankey way is recently acquired and is a Zephyr unit from EarthSense. Both these are located to the north of the town some two miles from Stockton Heath village. This submission refers to air quality in Stockton Heath and the negative impact on air quality that proposals in the submission version of the Local Plan will have.

No measurements of Pm 2.5 pollution have been taken by the Borough to inform how the proposals in the Plan will affect air quality in Stockton Heath.

As I said in my previous submission, a feature of Warrington is that there are two canals (the Bridgewater and the Manchester Ship) and the river Mersey running east/west across the Town. Most of the facilities that residents would need to access (railway stations, hospital, retail and employment parks, rugby league stadium etc.) are to the north. Traffic going north is funnelled through the A49, A50 and A56/A5060 to cross the waterways. The A49 runs through the centre of Stockton Heath village.

The additional traffic through Stockton Heath, from the developments proposed in the Plan to the south of the village, will cause the quality of the air to deteriorate even further.

I dispute the assertion in the air quality report that measurements of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) pollution will also provide a measure of Pm2.5 pollution. NO₂ pollution will decline over time as older diesels are phased out and there will be more electrically powered vehicles. Electric vehicles produce no NO₂, but will produce particulates (Pm2.5) from brake, tyre and road wear.

In 2019 Stockton Heath Parish Council installed an air quality monitor on the A49 in a residential area to the south of the village. The monitor measures several contaminants including NO₂ and Pm2.5. The monitor is also a Zephyr unit from 'EarthSense', an offshoot of Leicester University. The provenance of the monitor was attached to the previous submission.

The annual average for Pm2.5 pollution on this residential part of the A49 in the village, measured by the Parish Council monitor, is 7.7 micro grams per cubic metre of air. This is above the latest maximum average exposure recommended by the WHO. Much of the

additional traffic generated by the proposed new developments proposed in the Plan will use the A49. Air quality will further deteriorate.

Readings from the Parish air quality monitor were available to the Borough Council but have not been used in the 2022 air quality report which was used to inform the Plan proposals.

It is interesting to note that much of the land which is proposed to be used for the SEWUE was purchased by Warrington New Town in the 1970 s. In order to develop it, the New Town recognised that the existing infrastructure would be inadequate. They thought it essential to construct a new north/south expressway with a new, high level, bridge over the canals and river. The New Town was wound up before their plans were completed. More houses have already been built in the south and the existing infrastructure is even more congested.

Further major development to the south of Stockton Heath without the infrastructure needed to avoid more traffic through the village is not acceptable to the Parish Council.