

Local Plan Response – Inspectors Modifications - March 15, 2023

From Stockton Heath Parish Council

Stockton Heath Parish Council (SHPC) would like to make two observations.

1, SHPC welcomes and approves the removal of the South East Warrington Employment Area (SEWEA) from the Plan and that the land, it would have occupied, will remain as 'Green Belt'.

Quite separate from, but linked to, the consultation that SHPC is responding to in this letter, the Parish Council is alarmed and puzzled that there is recent notification of an appeal to the Secretary of State concerning planning application 2019/34799. This is for the construction of up to 287,909 square metres of employment floorspace which would occupy approximately 70% of the land which the Local Plan inspector says should remain as green belt.

The assumption must be that, if the appeal is successful, approximately 70% of the land the Local Plan Inspector says should be put back into green belt, will be built on. This needs to be clarified.

2, SHPC does not welcome the South East Warrington Urban Extension (SEWUE), but accepts that the inspectors of the Local Plan are content with the proposal.

Below is section 3.3.31 from the consultation document:

'A key priority for the Local Plan is to ensure the phasing of development is related to the delivery of infrastructure. In particular, the large allocation sites, including the South East Warrington Urban Extension, require extensive new infrastructure and improvements to existing infrastructure to support new development.'

SHPC wish to strongly emphasise that the extensive infrastructure required to support the SEWUE must be in place before any construction starts. Already many of the current developments to the south of Stockton Heath village join to the A49 which runs through the centre of the village. This takes much of the traffic generated by the new developments. This creates congestion and poor air quality.

The SHPC air quality monitor, located in a residential area of the A49 in the village, recorded, over the last four weeks, an hourly average of 6.92 micro grammes per cubic metre of the particulate pollutant PM2.5. The World Health Organisation latest recommendation for PM2.5, is no more than an average per 24 hours of 5 micro grammes per cubic metre over a 12 months period.

The SHPC strongly emphasises that the SEWUE must not be allowed to add to this. We endorse the sentence 'A key priority for the Local Plan is to ensure the phasing of development is related to the delivery of infrastructure'.