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Warrington Borough Council

Local Plan

Preferred Development Option

Regulation 18 Consultation

Standard Response Form

July 2017

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1: Contact Details (Compulsory)

Title: [REDACTED]

First Name: [REDACTED]

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Organisation (if applicable): Pegasus Group

Address: Suite 4b, 113 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 6DW

Phone Number: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Which best describes you? (tick ✓ one option only)

Resident in Warrington Resident from outside of Warrington

Business

Other, please specify

Agent acting on behalf of business owner

2: Questions

Question 1

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the need for new homes and employment land in Warrington over the next 20 years?

Response:

Question 2

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the number of homes and amount of employment land that can be accommodated within Warrington's existing built up areas?

Response:

Question 3

Have we appropriately worked out the amount of land to be released from the Green Belt, including the amount of land to be 'safeguarded'?

Response:

Question 4

Do you agree with the new Local Plan Objectives?

Response:

Question 5

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different 'Spatial Options' for Warrington's future development?

Response:

Question 6

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different options for the main development locations?

Response:

Question 7

Do you agree with our Preferred Development Option for meeting Warrington's future development needs?

Response:

Question 8

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the City Centre?

Response:

Please see attached letter

Question 9

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Wider Urban Area?

Response:

Please see attached letter

Question 10

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for developing the Warrington Waterfront?

Response:

Question 11

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Warrington Garden City Suburb?

Response:

Question 12

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the South Western Urban Extension?

Response:

Question 13

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for development in the Outlying Settlements?

Response:

Question 14

Do you agree with our approach to providing new employment land?

Response:

Question 15

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites?

Response:

Question 16

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Minerals and Waste?

Response:

Question 17

Having read the Preferred Development Option Document, is there anything else you feel we should include within the Local Plan?

Response:

29th September 2017

Warrington Borough Council
Planning Policy & Programmes
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
Warrington
WA1 2NH

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Local Plan Representation: Preferred Development Option
Warrington Local Plan 2017 Review

On behalf of our client, ASDA Stores Limited we hereby formally submit our representations to the Warrington Local Plan 2017 **Review's** Preferred Development Option (July 2017) consultation. Asda has general comments regarding the option for the Town Centre and Wider Urban Area having particular interest in the three ASDA stores located in the Borough at:

- ASDA Warrington (Cockhedge Retail Park) (A)
- ASDA Westbrook (Westbrook Shopping Centre) (B)
- ASDA Birchwood (Birchwood Shopping centre) (C)



Figure 1: ASDA Stores within the Borough

The consultation invites responses to 17 questions set out in the Standard Response Form, we respond to the selected Questions 8 & 9 on pages 4 and 5 of this letter.

In summary, these representations highlight:

- The ASDA Warrington store should be retained at its current location within the town centre;
- The ASDA Westbrook store should be retained within the District Centre;
- The ASDA Birchwood store should be retained within the District Centre.

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

National Planning Policy Framework

Local Plans should be consistent with policies in the NPPF. With regards to town centres, the Warrington Local Plan must be consistent with those policies under the heading *Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres* (paragraphs 23 to 27).

At the very outset, paragraph 23 of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period.'

Within the subsequent bullet points at paragraph 23, local planning authorities are tasked with a number of requirements when drawing up Local Plans. Those requirements we consider of particular relevance to the Warrington Local Plan are the requirement to:

'define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes';

'promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres';

And;

'allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres. It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability'.

The glossary of the NPPF defines town centres, primary shopping areas, primary and secondary shopping frontages, and main town centre uses as:

'Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. Reference to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.'

'Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).'

'Primary and secondary frontages: Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.'

'Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses'

(including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).'

The NPPF does not define district and local centres but Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth had useful definitions. The glossary in PPS4 defines district and local centres as:

'District centres will usually comprise groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library.'

'Local centres include a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre.'

Council's Retail Evidence

Retail Centres Report

The Retail Centres Report (2012) provides a comprehensive assessment of retail centres within Warrington and helped to form the retail centre hierarchy defined in Policy SN4 of the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy. The report establishes the current hierarchy of centres and analyses use classes and floor areas to make an assessment of the vitality and viability of the individual centres.

Warrington Retail and Leisure Study

The purpose of the 2015 study prepared by WPG is to provide an assessment of retail and leisure needs in the period up to 2030 and to review the performance at the District Centres of Birchwood, Westbrook and Stockton Heath. In regards to Birchwood and Westbrook the report concluded that **both were 'vital and viable centres'**.

Retail Hierarchy

The Warrington Local Plan should provide a detailed strategy for the town centre and define the hierarchy as appropriate below the principal town centre. The current retail hierarchy set out in Policy SN4 the Local Plan Core Strategy is:

- District Centres: Birchwood, Westbrook, Stockton Heath.
- Neighbourhood Centres: Chapelford Honiton Square, Penketh, Culcheth Village Orford Lane, Lovely Lane Latchford Village, Fearnhead Cross Poplars Avenue/Capesthorpe Road Lymm Village

- Local Centres: Barley Road, Thelwall; Holes Lane/Manchester Road; Bridge Lane, Appleton; Hood Manor Local Centre; Bruche Heath Gardens; Howson Road, Longford; Burtonwood Village; Knutsford Road, Latchford; Callands Local Centre; Knutsford Road, Grappenhall; Church Street, Howley; Lindi Avenue, Grappenhall; Cinnamon Brow; Locking Stumps Local Centre; Cotswold Road, Poplars; Longshaw Street, Bewsey; Croft Village; Marsh House Lane, Fairfield; Dam Lane, Woolston; Oakwood Local Centre; Folly Lane; Old Hall; Dudlows Green Road; Padgate Lane; **George's Precinct, Langley Avenue; Parksway, Woolston;, Glazebrook** Village; Station Road, Great Sankey; Glazebury Village; Warrington Road (East), Penketh; Gorse Covert Local Centre; Warrington Road (West), Penketh; Harrison Square, Dallam; Winwick Village; Hollins Green Village.

The Warrington Local Plan needs to identify a retail hierarchy which is reflective of the role and function of the town centre as the dominant retail destination in the Borough, and how it should continue to be the focus for main town centre uses. Indeed, to improve its existing role, the quality and choice of the retail offering should be retained.

With regards to ASDA's interest we make the following responses with regard to the Warrington, Birchwood and Westbrook stores.

PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT OPTION RESPONSE

Question 8: Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the City Centre?

The documentation prepared in support of the Preferred Development Option seeks to demonstrate that the development areas are capable of accommodating the level of growth required. The supporting documentation includes a Master Plan of the Town Centre and the Cockhedge Retail Park; referred to in the Master Plan as **the 'Cockhedge Quarter' (See Appendix 1 of this letter)**.

Fourteen (14) indicative development parcels are identified within the Cockhedge Quarter, a total of 283 new dwellings are proposed. Parcel C4, in which the ASDA Warrington Superstore is located is allocated for future mixed-use development with an envisaged 50% residential component equating to approximately 17 dwellings.

While ASDA are supportive of the major investment and redevelopment envisaged for Warrington town centre the following comments are made in response to the development concept for the site and Quarter:

- It is questioned how achievable the delivery of the preferred option is in reality. The ASDA Warrington store is subject to a long-term leasehold which exceeds the local plan's lifespan, and which ASDA needs to retain. Subject to terms ASDA would only consider the possibility of relocating if a viable, accessible and similarly sized site within the town centre was made available.

- Table 13 of the Preferred Development Option document projects a total housing trajectory for the City Centre of 3,526 over the twenty-year plan period. Warrington Town Centre **is the Borough's prominent retail destination and should continue to be the focus for accessible retail services.** The Local Plan will need to ensure that there is sufficient central services, facilities and amenities to serve the Borough in the face of the ambitious population increase. The loss of the store fails to promote competitiveness and customer choice within the town centre, compromises its vitality and viability and challenging the objective of Paragraph 23 of the NPPF.
- **Other established uses within the Quarter include a Wilkinson's, Maplin's, Gala Bingo, Argos and a medical centre.** The potential loss of these established uses will restrict the level of site availability for commercial uses.
- The business models synonymous with the **Quarter's** existing leaseholders require larger premises, the concept will ultimately result in the loss of such retail uses and commercial services from the town centre. Although it is appreciated that Warrington has out of town business parks that have the capability to accommodate uses that are more commonly associated with edge of centre sites, there will be a significant displacement of job opportunities and retail options which have strong links to the town centre.
- **The Preferred Option's development concept significantly alters the Quarter's existing urban grain, and will see the loss of retail centres which are characteristic to the town centre. Ultimately Warrington's city centre will lose its** distinctive character.

The town centre ASDA Superstore should be retained in the Local Plan. The retention of the store complements the envisaged mixed uses, promotes **the competitiveness of Warrington's town centre** and delivers continued choice and amenity for the people of Warrington. In reality ASDA is contracted to a long leasehold which significantly exceeds **the Local Plan's** 20-year period so the release of the site is extremely unlikely.

Question 9: Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Wider Urban Area?


The Preferred Development Option document advises that the council is proposing to follow the same approach to the Wider Urban Area to that set out in the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy. The retail hierarchy will be maintained and Westbrook, Birchwood and Stockton Heath will continue to be promoted as District Centres and the main focuses for retail and leisure uses outside of the town centre.


The WYG report highlights the importance of the ASDA Birchwood and Westbrook stores to their respective centres. The stores account for a large proportion of the study area's **convenience** goods expenditure at 5.8% and **6.7% respectively, therefore establishing them as the centres' anchor stores.**

The Local Plan’s proposed approach to the Wider Urban Area is supported and both Westbrook and Birchwood should retain their position as District Centres in the Local Plan, with both anchor ASDA stores remaining within those District Centres.

We trust the above representations are clear but should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Please keep us informed of any further consultations on the Local Plan Review and associated documents, using the contact details below.

Yours Faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.


Senior Planner

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Cockhedge Quarter

This area comprises Cockhedge Shopping Centre and the adjoining large scale, operational leisure and retail uses.

Many of the existing single storey structures being purpose built for their occupied uses.

The Quarter has strong transport links to the town centre.



Parcel Reference	Parcel Area (hectares)	Year Planned for Development	Planned Density per annum	Expected Yield (dwellings)	Main Use	Percentage Residential	Current Use	SHLAA	No of Landowners	Planning History	Comments	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	TOTAL
C1	0.81	Years 6-10	35	82	Mixed Use	80%	This is a series of vacant and redundant buildings, some of which are being marketed for purchase and continued commercial use.	N/A	11 landowners		Whilst it is not in the SHLAA, the site is vacant and no obvious reason why it couldn't be included in the longer term.	0	82	0	0	82
C2	0.43	Years 6-10	20	43	Mixed Use	80%	Gala Bingo and a Wilkinson's Store	N/A	1 landowner (CH129240)		The Gala Bingo building does not look in the best repair; however it is occupied and the site has not been put forward in the SHLAA nor is there any application, so it is removed.	0	0	0	0	0
C4	0.27	Years 11-15	20	17	Mixed Use	50%	ASDA Superstore and associated carpark.	N/A			This is an operational foodstore and car park that seems to be operating well. It has not been put forward in the SHLAA nor is there any application, so it is removed.	0	0	0	0	0
C5	0.24	Years 11-15	20	15	Mixed Use	50%	These parcels comprise of the Cockhedge Shopping Centre and separate retail units including Maplin, a furniture store and an enterprise car garage.	N/A			This shopping centre and associated units form the basis of these plots and have some established retail operators. The building does not look of a structure to place retail units above. This would need demolishing and rebuilding. None of these sites have been put forward in the SHLAA nor is there any planning application, so they are removed.	0	0	0	0	0
C6	0.31	Years 11-15	20	20	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C7	0.25	Years 6-10	20	25	Mixed Use	80%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C8	0.43	Years 6-10	20	43	Mixed Use	80%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C9	0.6	Years 11-15	20	38	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C10	0.45	Years 11-15	20	28	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C11	0.31	Years 11-15	20	20	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C12	0.29	Years 11-15	20	18	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C13	0.08	Years 11-15	20	5	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
C14	0.17	Years 11-15	20	11	Mixed Use	50%		N/A				0	0	0	0	0
	4.64			365								0	82	0	0	82
Amount and Proportion Occupied																
				283	77.53	82										