

7th September 2017



Warrington Borough Council's Local Plan Preferred Development Option Consultation

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for consulting and inviting comments from Manchester Airport on your Local Plan Preferred Development Option Consultation. We are supportive of the direction of the Local Plan in guiding community involvement in planning matters and welcome the intended promotion of community participation in the planning system.

Introduction

The role that Manchester Airport plays in the City Region is not mentioned in the Local Plan Preferred Development Option Consultation and there is no mention of the local or regional contribution Manchester Airport makes to the local economy or the North West region as a whole.

Manchester Airport is the largest airport outside of the South East and the UK's third busiest airport, handling around 27 million passengers in 2016. The Airport serves more than 225 destinations worldwide and enjoys significant cargo operations. As the primary international gateway for the North, Manchester Airport provides crucial links with overseas markets and is recognised as a key driver of the North West Economy. The Airport employs 22,000 people on site, with a further 45,000 jobs in the wider region. The Airport generates an estimated £925 million of GVA for the North West region.

Commentary – High Level Strategic Objectives

As a major business, transport facility and economic hub located in close proximity to the borough, it is imperative to consider how such influences impact upon the borough when developing your Local Plan Preferred Options, and to ensure that an appropriate policy framework is put in place to enable Warrington to benefit from and contribute to the economic advantages and transport facilities that Manchester Airport brings to the region.

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The Borough of Warrington is well placed to contribute towards and benefit from economic growth at Manchester Airport. The value of good connectivity to the airport along the M56 should be given priority within the document, with details of how this connectivity could be used to facilitate the growth of businesses within the borough. Existing local businesses could be opened up to international markets, with well-developed road and public transport links already in place to facilitate this.

The value of the airport in terms of its economic contribution to the borough is not evidenced in the Local Plan Preferred Options document.

Warrington Garden City Suburb

The proposed Warrington Garden City Suburb and employment development at Junction 9 of the M56 are intrinsic parts of the Preferred Development Option Document. The wider site to the south east of Warrington Town Centre is located 14km to the west of Manchester Airport, with an approximate drive time of 20 minutes, directly east along the M56.

The Land at Junction 9 of the M56 is detailed as being the cornerstone of the borough's future employment provision, along with Warrington Waterfront. It is remiss to not consider the potential for aviation and airport related development at the site.

Additionally, given the number of jobs provided at the airport, it would be beneficial to consider the relationship between the proposed populous of the new Garden City Suburb and Manchester Airport. Both in economic and social terms, including public transport and potential earnings brought into Warrington.

Given the scale of the proposed urban extension and the requirement for a network of new distributor roads, a new secondary school, up to 4 new primary schools, a major new park, district centre, health facilities and leisure facilities, as detailed in section 5.33 of the Warrington Borough Council Local Plan Preferred Development Option Document a Masterplan will be required for the potential development. Manchester Airport would appreciate being included in any future discussions surrounding the preparation of the masterplan.

Further Development Options

The Local Plan Preferred Development Option Document provides further specifics for development including, Warrington New City, City Centre, Warrington Waterfront etc. One option is the development of a South Western Urban Extension. Our comments on this are as above for the proposed Garden City Suburb.

Commentary – Strategic Objectives

We are supportive of the range of strategic objectives that have been identified in the Preferred Options document and particularly welcome objective W1 and W4.

We agree with the intention of W1 to promote economic growth within Warrington and transition the town into a city. Supporting transport measures and improved accessibility will be an

important means of securing economic growth and competitiveness. As discussed above including details of how Manchester Airport can support this growth and transition would offer a foundation for economic growth.

Additionally, Manchester Airport fully support Objective W4 as an efficient and sustainable transport network will be essential to delivering the overall vision for the Borough.

Given Warrington's prime position on the junction of the M56 and M6 we would suggest including the scope for the enhancement of links to national and international infrastructure (such as Manchester Airport).

Ensuring there are effective transport links and improved accessibility between Manchester Airport and the Borough is vital. As detailed above, these connections are not only of benefit to the borough's residents who are travelling as passengers or working and accessing job opportunities at the airport but also help to unlock economic benefits that can help deliver growth within Warrington (as above, including the vision for an urban extension to the south east of the town). The Airport provides rapid international access that is important to many modern businesses, provides a link with overseas markets, helps businesses to transport people and goods, and win new business. Thus it is conveniently located for many of Warrington's existing businesses to benefit from and is a major influencing factor in attracting new businesses to the Borough and ultimately enabling the Borough's businesses to grow their contribution to the regional economy.

Transport for Greater Manchester are currently exploring opportunities for enhanced access to Manchester Airport from the surrounding areas. A potential stream of business growth within Southern Warrington and the proposed Urban Extensions is the possible introduction of Park and Ride Schemes associated with the airport.

Commentary – Further Issues – Housing & Employment Targets / Gypsy and Traveller Sites / Call for Sites

We do not have any specific comments regarding the proposed figures of housing and employment growth (aside from those above, relating to the connection between growth and Manchester Airport). We would like to emphasise that many of the sites proposed in the call for sites benefit in terms of their connectivity to Manchester Airport and the associated economic benefits identified above.

The direct links to Manchester Airport from Warrington Railway Station should also be cited as a strength attributed to the Warrington Town Centre. Similarly, the convenient motorway access that is afforded to both the existing town and proposed Urban Extensions will be advantageous in terms of providing convenient access to Manchester Airport that new or existing businesses in Warrington may seek

Commentary – Other Considerations

Further to this, we also have a role as a statutory consultee in the development management process due to our official designation as a safeguarded aerodrome (selected on the basis of

our importance to the national air transport system). This is to ensure that the safe operation and development of the airport is not compromised in any way by potentially hazardous development and activity in its vicinity. In order to determine the safety implications of a proposal there is an established safeguarding process between local planning authorities and safeguarded aerodromes.

Legislative provisions regarding the process of Aerodrome Safeguarding are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Safeguarding Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas) Direction 2002 (ODPM Circular 1/2003). Manchester Airport is an officially safeguarded aerodrome and under Circular 1/2003 local planning authorities within Manchester Airport's safeguarded area are obliged to consult the Airport on planning applications for developments that have the potential to impact the safe operation of aircraft or that may prejudice the Airport's future development.

Safeguarding maps are issued to Local Planning Authorities by the CAA and these show the extent of the safeguarded area and set out the requirements for statutory consultation with the Airport. For Warrington this includes all buildings, structures, erections or works exceeding 90m in height, any proposal within 13km of the aerodrome with the potential to attract birds (e.g. significant areas of landscaping, water bodies, nature reserves, bird sanctuaries, waste facilities, sewage works, mineral extraction or quarrying), all proposals connected with an aviation use within 13km of the aerodrome, and all applications for wind turbines throughout the whole of the Borough.

Warrington Borough Council must therefore, before granting planning permission for a development of land falling within the criteria indicated on the Safeguarding Map, consult the Airport as Statutory Consultee to the planning process.

A robust all-encompassing safeguarding policy would therefore be of benefit in order to protect the aviation operations of Manchester Airport. We recommend the following text to be included within the relevant Development Management Policy – "Development which would adversely affect the operational integrity or safety of Manchester Airport or Manchester Radar will not be permitted." This should be accompanied by an explanation of why the policy is required.

As above, Aerodrome Safeguarding does not just apply to wind turbine development and as per our response to the Draft Statement of Community Involvement we welcome the reference that has been made in Table 5 to ODPM Circular 1/2003 – Safeguarding Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas, and to the acting Aerodrome Safeguarding Authorities.

However, as detailed in our response of 6 February 2014 the text that has been cited here does not address safeguarding consultation procedures in their entirety and we would therefore also encourage you to formulate a specific policy relating to Aerodrome Safeguarding in general. Other types of development may also pose a threat to aircraft and aviation systems, for example by reason of height or attraction of birds, and planning applications that fall within Manchester Airport's safeguarded area will need to be assessed against the various safeguarding criteria.

Thank you again for providing Manchester Airport with the opportunity to comment on your draft Local Plan Preferred Development Option Consultation. We hope that our comments have been useful but please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or wish to discuss any of the points made in more detail. Thereafter, we would be grateful if you could include us in any future correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

