

## Warburton Parish Council

### Statement of Case

This Inquiry concerns an appeal made by Redrow Homes Ltd (Agent WSP Indigo) for non-determination of Planning Application 98031/OUT/19 in respect of '*Residential development of up to 400 dwellings, including the creation of new points of access, provision of formal and informal open space, ancillary landscaping, car parking and highway and drainage works*'.

#### 1. Planning Policy

The development proposal is contrary to the development plan when read as a whole and there are no material considerations that otherwise justify the grant of planning permission.

The Parish Council submit that there is no justification for engaging the tilted planning balance within paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, given that footnote 6 issues in the NPPF are engaged.

Affordable Housing – the application for residential development to the east and west of Warburton Lane, proposes no affordable dwellings. This is clearly contrary to policy L2 (Meeting Housing Needs) of the adopted Trafford Core Strategy. Part L2.9 of the policy splits the borough into 3 broad market locations "*in order to take into account current issues relating to viability*". The application sites are within the "hot" location (i.e. Rural Communities) and this is accepted in the submitted planning statements.

#### 2. Scale of development.

The proposal for up to 400 houses on the two sites represents a massive influx into Warburton. Warburton currently has 142 houses and a population of around 300. The number of houses in Warburton has increased by 18% since 2004 with little impact on the character of the village. The introduction of so many new houses will have a huge impact on Warburton. It will also have a very substantial impact on Partington, where many local services are struggling to cope with numbers. Doctors and dentist surgeries have long waiting lists, primary schools are at capacity. Thus, this level of housing is contrary to the spatial strategy, it will lead to adverse impacts (such as out-commuting), and it will present a disproportionate level of growth given the scale of existing services and facilities.

#### 3. Sustainability/Permeability

The two sites are located to the south of Red Brook and are only connected to Partington to the north by Warburton Lane and a single public footpath towards the eastern end of the eastern site. It is approximately 1.7km from the western site to Partington village centre, comparing extremely badly with the 800m generally seen as appropriate for pedestrian links (quoted in Manual for Streets). Redrow have recently made two applications to construct footbridges to try and correct this problem. The footbridge in Site 1 merely replaces an existing footbridge. The footbridge in Site 2 and across the woodland floor we will object to. Despite trying to

comply with DDA, it has no real impact on the issue of connectivity to Partington, merely offering a very slightly amended route to the village centre at a considerable cost to the appearance of the woodland and to heritage assets.

The Parish Council are of the view that the footbridges are not a material consideration that can be relied upon, nor can a Grampian condition be attached to the permission to account for them.

Further, the Parish Council are of the view that the legibility of the routes (including the lack of footpaths) mean that the site is unlikely to be accessible by any other means than the private car. The Parish Council anticipate that the Appellant will provide evidence as to how it will provide footpaths leading to the Site.

The proposed two development sites are very much detached from Partington and we believe they will become isolated pockets of development completely disconnected from their surroundings. In effect they will become commuter homes relying on private transport. We suggest that this pattern of development is not sustainable and runs contrary to the overarching objectives of sustainable development identified in paragraph 8 of the NPPF.

#### 4. Landscape and Visual Impact Issues.

The Parish Council is concerned that the description of the site and therefore the extent of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is lacking in the ES. We have assumed that the original Design and Access Statement (March 2019) which contains references to roof heights of c. 5 metres to 12 metres (2.5 storey) has not been fully addressed in the revised D&A Statement (December 2019). The revised D&A Statement shows on the Indicative Layout buildings of 2 storey. We share the Inspector's concern (in the Case Conference Note) about the removal of the reference to the size of the development in the ES. We do not accept the Appellant's statement that the ES had been based on a worst-case scenario (maximum parameters of up to 400 dwellings, with a maximum height of 3 storeys with 25-30 dwellings per hectare). If this were the case, we submit that, for instance, the ZTV would be very substantially well beyond the Landscape Study Area (Figure 6.5 in Volume 3 of the ES). In addition, the Visual Assessment Tables in the ES do not appear to reflect the magnitude of impact of houses of 3 storeys in height (with an assumed height of 13.4 metres?). Much of our evidence on LVIA matters reflects these concerns and the apparent lack of a clearly-discernible description of the development.

The Parish Council will contend that the site is a valued landscape and the development of it would give rise to significant harm.

#### 5. Design Issues.

The Parish Council is extremely concerned over a series of design issues as represented in the revised Design and Access statement. This references NPPF Part 12 (paragraph 127) but we contend that every single point mentioned in the paragraph is then ignored in the design. For example, instead of concentrating on the townscape character Parish of Warburton or of Partington, it attempts to draw on the townscape character of both and even brings Dunham into consideration. The result

is a mishmash of townscape character which we strongly suspect is used to justify the use of Redrow Homes standard house types. The revised Design and Access Statement references the Design Review Panel of September 2019, in which, in respect of Site 1 the panel's concern was, *'The need to work on transitions and boundaries to prevent it becoming 'anywheresville''*. We are concerned that despite our village having a very specific, attractive and powerful 'Arts and Crafts' townscape character, the proposals simply ignore this in order to become 'anywheresville'. The Parish Council prepared a Village Design Statement in 2004; we note with disappointment that this has been entirely ignored in the Redrow proposals. Our evidence will expand on the above concerns.

We regard the 'Building for Life 12 Assessment' in the revised Design and Access Statement with concern and note that any project which awards itself a green score for each question, but then notes, *'As the application is in outline, some of the questions will only be able to achieve an amber score at the most, as securing a green would be dependent on the detail provided at reserved matters stage.'* should be a matter of concern.

## 6. Archaeology and Heritage Issues.

The Parish Council is extremely concerned over the damage to its heritage assets and their settings, both scheduled and non-scheduled. Nevell, Dr M. (1997) in 'The Archaeology of Trafford', states, *'Warburton, like Dunham Massey, retains many medieval elements making it the best preserved medieval landscape in the county'*. This is source of immense pride to the inhabitants of Warburton and one they are very keen to protect. Site 2 occupies the northern part of the former Warburton deer park and its remains are clearly to be seen in the landscape. It is a fundamentally important feature in the landscape of Warburton and an exceptionally valuable heritage asset in its own right. It encapsulates the heritage settings of very many listed buildings and structures both around its perimeter and within it. The whole layout of the village of Warburton has to a very great extent evolved around the form of the deer park. The Parish Council is also very concerned about the possible impact of the development on Coroners Wood and the woodland areas (both the scheduled ancient woodland and the non-scheduled woodland). There is a widely-established link between deer parks and ancient woodland and Warburton is no exception. Sewerage and surface water connections to the treatment plant to the north-west and to Red Brook have the potential to seriously damage the woodland and we wish to seek assurances that no works take place within the woodland as part of the development.

Site 1 occupies a very special landscape, a shallow river valley, sandwiched between the Warburton Moss to the south and east and Red Brook to the north. It is the setting for several listed buildings and represents a very tranquil natural separation between the suburban areas of Partington and the open country to the south.

In the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (DBA) (Issued December 2019 received by the PC 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020) there are clearly responses in the geophysical survey in the area of the park that the Parish Council's archaeologist interprets as trackways – not agricultural as indicated in the document.

He notes that November 2019 was very wet and when this geophysical survey was undertaken parts of the area were waterlogged. Even in those areas available for

survey ground conditions were not ideal for this kind of survey, suggesting that archaeological material might have been masked.

The DBA omits some of the published archaeology material relevant to the area, such as 'Warburton: Glimpses of rural life: the archaeology and history of a Cheshire village' published in 2015 and available from Trafford Local Studies Library in Sale. Nor is the map sequence complete – omitting the 1757 estate survey which records field boundaries and trackways within the redevelopment area.

Late prehistoric and Roman settlement activity has been located recently in similar river valley environments. This includes a development area at Whitecarr Lane on the Trafford/Manchester border and a development area east of the A5144 in Partington in 2019, immediately north of the development area. Both produced evidence for late prehistoric and Roman field boundaries implying nearby settlement activity. Our evidence will expand on the above concerns and others relating to heritage and archaeology issues.

## 7. Procedural Issues

The Parish Council resists the Appellant's attempts to amend the scheme. In the first instance, the Appellant contends that the changes go beyond the changes permitted through a Wheatcroft amendment. Secondly, the changes are significant and do cause prejudice to the Parish Council.

Further, the Parish Council reserves its position in respect to the Appellant's attempts to update the Environmental Statement.

The Parish Council have not had sight of the Appellant's section 106 agreement. However, it will wish to scrutinise issues in respect to title and what contributions are being offered.