

**WARBURTON PARISH COUNCIL – Rule 6 Status**

**Proof of Evidence against appeal made by Redrow Homes Ltd for non-determination of Planning Application 98031/OUT/19.**

1. My name is Mark Priestner and I am representing Warburton Parish Council at the Planning Inquiry. I have been a member of the Parish Council since 1995 and have represented Warburton Parish Council at the Trafford UDP Plan Review Public Local Enquiry in 2002. I was born and raised in Warburton and farm the land to the east of the Appeal site and know the land in question well.
2. Warburton Parish Council has consistently objected to this land being considered for development, and for good reason, as the following Proof of Evidence will show.

**1. Planning Policy**

3. Policy R4 in the Revised Trafford UDP which is part of the current Development Plan for Trafford states that development on Protected Open Land will only be permitted where it is required in connection with agriculture and would not prejudice the future use of the land. The planning application of the appellant clearly does not fit into this category. The NPPF (paragraph 170b) advises to recognise the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. This land is good quality arable land, producing crops for the nation's needs, falling into categories 2 and 3a.
4. Policy L3 of the Core Strategy, in the current Development Plan, states that the release of greenfield land for development will only be allowed where it can be demonstrated that it would make significant contributions to the regeneration priorities of Partington that would address and reduce inequalities, improve accessibility to employment areas and improve the local environment. Clearly this application does not do this.
5. The Parish Council submit in this Proof of Evidence that the adverse impacts of approving the development proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework taken as a whole, as stated in paragraph 11 d ii of the NPPF.
6. The requirement in Core Strategy Policy L2 to provide Affordable Housing provision of 40 - 45% (the precise rate depending upon market conditions) has not been met in this planning application in Warburton. This application in fact does not include any affordable homes. The applicant's position, that the development would not be financially viable were it expected to provide affordable housing, due to abnormal costs, is contested. The site is a greenfield site with no known contamination and no other issues which would make it complex to develop. Abnormal costs should not include features which are already present and which the Appellant should have known about when they started their campaign to build on this land, and when they made their valuation of the land – namely, pipelines, powerlines, roads and footpaths (and a lack of when required) and flood plains.

## **2. Scale of Development**

7. The proposed development is in Warburton, which is in a WA13 postcode, and a totally separate parish to Partington to the north. Warburton is a thriving rural community where farming pre-dominates and where good quality Grade 2 and 3a land is presently growing wheat and potatoes to help feed the nation's population. At no time has it been more important than now to maintain agriculture and the security of the nation's food supply. The habitat for a lot of wildlife will be lost if this proposed development is allowed. Badgers, buzzards, kestrels, sparrow hawks, barn and tawny owls, bats, newts, frogs, skylarks and many other species of birds and mammals inhabit this area. The green space of Warburton between Lymm/Warrington and the built up areas of Manchester have been described as the lungs of Trafford.
8. Being a rural community, Warburton is culturally very different to Partington and as such has different views and aspirations to a residential settlement such as Partington, the emphasis being on agriculture and other rural activities and where people form a tight knit community.
9. The parish is growing at a sustainable rate, more appropriate to a rural community. Indeed 16 new homes have been built in recent years without negatively impacting on the character of the village and parish. However, the proposal to build up to 400 houses would dwarf the current village of 142 houses spread across the whole parish and have an adverse impact on the parish and its residents. The Village Design Statement published in 2004 states in its Summary of Guidance that any development in Warburton must respect the basic patterns of the settlement and land in terms of scale, character and design, blend in with the landscape and strengthen Warburton and its community spirit. It should blend in with existing buildings and respect the needs of all the community and not contribute to the already fraught traffic conditions. Clearly this proposed development does not do this.
10. The location of this proposed development will have an extremely damaging impact on an historic rural landscape, both the immediate impact on the two sites and the landscape and visual impact of both sites on a far wider area of Warburton.
11. Warburton has always had a strong historical association with Lymm. It has a Warrington postcode and residents tend to look towards Lymm for their daily needs in terms of shopping, schools and doctor's surgeries, etc. Any potential development in Warburton would need to demonstrate that the duty to co-operate with Warrington Borough Council has been effectively complied with, especially with respect to the provision of all necessary social and physical infrastructure.
12. Considering the potential development's proximity to Partington, it will also have a substantial impact on the local services there, such as schools, doctors and dentists, which are at capacity already. It is therefore a disproportionate level of growth given the scale of existing services and facilities.

## **3. Sustainability/Permeability**

13. The proposed development site lacks integration with the village of Warburton, being separated from it by agricultural fields with generally narrow country lanes. It also

lacks integration with Partington, being an isolated location with Red Brook flood plain acting as a barrier to movement, not capable of being crossed other than via the bridge on the main road, Warburton Lane, or a footbridge on a public footpath. The proposed development site is approximately a mile from the main shops in Partington by use of the footpath and up to a mile and a half by way of the footway on the A6144 road. The footpath, however, is steep and not suitable for those with restricted mobility.

14. The Appellant has proposed two new bridges to address concerns of connectivity, but one of the bridges merely duplicates the existing bridge on the aforementioned footpath, whilst the other proposed bridge would pass through ancient woodland, damage the former deer park pale, would need third party agreement and would negligibly reduce the walking distance to Partington shopping centre. The Parish Council question whether the scheme is deliverable given these issues, which naturally undermines the claimed benefits of the proposal. Moreover, the Parish Council do not regard it to be legally permissible to impose a Grampian condition to address this issue relating to the bridges. Partington local centre would be beyond what would be considered a reasonable walking distance, particularly with regard to the conditions of the routes and the range of amenities in the centre.
15. Partington suffers from geographical isolation and poor transport links. The proposed development would not support and could prejudice the regeneration priorities of Partington and could cause further separation. The proposal would create an unsustainable, inaccessible and isolated residential development which would not be sufficiently integrated to the existing settlement of Partington, contrary to Policy L3 of the Core Strategy or Paragraph 8 of the NPPF.
16. Given the weak accessibility and inherent problems with integrating this site with Partington, it is considered that the development would not function as part of Partington, nor function or integrate as part of Warburton, a small rural village. Instead it would operate as an isolated residential community, heavily reliant on private cars with limited integration between the existing communities of Warburton and Partington.
17. The Public Inspector for the Trafford UDP Plan Review Public Local Enquiry 2002 concurred when he stated that C8 land in the Partington Priority Regeneration Area be deleted under Policy A1 and proposal H13 from the PRA. In his report of 2002, the inspector stated:-

*“I have serious reservations about the suitability of this land for such extensive development.... land south of Partington would be poorly integrated with existing housing and community facilities, the road system, public transport and other infrastructure. The Red Brook and its flood plain would severely inhibit such integration, as would the associated wildlife corridor and Protected Linear Open Land. .... In my opinion, extensive development of this site would be unlikely to be sustainable.”*

In my view there are no material considerations that ought to change this conclusion.

Mark Priestner