



North Warwickshire
Borough Council

Steve Maxey BA (Hons) Dip LG Solicitor
**Assistant Chief Executive
and Solicitor to the Council**

The Council House
South Street
Atherstone
Warwickshire
CV9 1DE

Gary Palmer, Planning Manager (Development)
Policy and Spatial Planning,
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

Emailed to: psp@solihull.gov.uk

Switchboard : (01827) 715341

Fax : (01827) 719225

E Mail :

Website : www.northwarks.gov.uk

This matter is being dealt with by

: |

Direct Dial : [REDACTED]

Your ref : |

Our ref : |

Date : 01th February 2017

Dear Mr Palmer

Solihull Local Plan Consultation – Additional comments following LDF Sub-Committee meeting on 29th February 2016

Thank you for consulting the Borough Council on the Solihull Draft Local Plan, Regulation 18 Document consultation. I can confirm an initial Report on the consultation was considered at the Planning & Development Board on Monday the 16th January.

I have attached a copy of the Report and its Appendices to this letter for your attention and information as part of the Borough Council's response to the Solihull Local Plan consultation. Following consideration at the Board, Members from the Borough Council would wish the following additional comments to be highlighted and noted as part of the Council's consultation response.

The Borough Council recognises and welcomes that the Plan fully addresses Solihull's own Objectively Assessed Housing needs and notes the emphasis the plan places on Economic Growth and regeneration of areas such as Chelmsley Wood. Nevertheless, Members highlighted the potential huge implications on North Warwickshire of the development and growth at Solihull, particularly with reference to the "UK Central" proposals and the development around the HS2 Hub Interchange station. There are significant local concerns over the impact this proposal will have on the local, rural highway network and rural settlements from increased traffic flows and levels. Measures need to be considered and included in the Local Plan review to address any potential adverse impacts, in parallel with maximising connectivity to the HS2 Interchange station.

Access to the rural road network should be restricted and focussed on local services and local settlement access only, with Interchange Station Traffic concentrated, directed and routed onto the Strategic Transport Network only. Where necessary, to avoid traffic conflict with local traffic and adverse impacts on rural settlements (particularly from heavy construction traffic and "rat running" by commuter and interchange traffic avoiding congestion points/routes), some route and road closures should be considered as an option.

The Board Report and Borough response also highlights by the potential implications arising from the shortfall from Birmingham, which re-inforces the need for this to be reflected in the review of the plan. Members noted that the Plan indicates a modest response to Birmingham's shortfall and wish to express major concerns that the level proposed at 2000 dwellings only

does not significantly or sufficiently address both the scale of the shortfall identified in the Birmingham Plan and the clear and significant links and relationships that Solihull has with the Greater Birmingham area. This is considered particularly relevant in view of the proposal in the North Warwickshire Local Plan to test accommodating a figure of 3790 dwellings to address the Birmingham Shortfall and when the comparative infrastructure and services available in both authorities (North Warwickshire and Solihull) are considered and the significantly higher levels of commuting traffic and travel to work relationships between Solihull and Birmingham, both local and strategic.

Members also wish to stress strongly that the Solihull Local Plan should take account of, and address the highway infrastructure capacity wider than simply within the Metropolitan area and across the boundary into North Warwickshire, and note the need to address and minimise the traffic levels and impacts on the rural settlements and rural road network and seek to separate local traffic and networks from the strategic traffic, that is both generated by and servicing the growth in Solihull, the shortfall from Birmingham and the construction and eventual commuting traffic to the HS2 Interchange Station.

The Borough Council would wish to see the above issues clearly addressed through the Solihull Local plan process and would seek to maintain an objection to the Plan if it is not clearly indicated that the Plan will address both the clear traffic flows and highway infrastructure impacts on North Warwickshire Borough and the implications from inadequately and insufficiently addressing the shortfall from Birmingham at a level that reflects the clear and significant strategic and local relationships and links between Solihull and Birmingham.

I trust that you will find the above useful and look forward to on-going discussions on how Solihull will deal with the expected growth and consider any implications on this Borough. I have attached the Board Report and previous comments as an Appendix to this letter, to reinforce the objection above and restate earlier concerns that have been expressed at earlier stages of the Solihull Plan process.

Yours sincerely



Dorothy Barratt
Forward Planning & Economic Strategy Manager

1 **Summary.**

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the consultation on the Solihull Draft Local Plan.

Recommendation to the Board

- a That Members take note of the consultation of the Solihull Draft Local Plan which runs from 5 December 2016 to 30 January 2017; and**
- b To forward any comments Members may raise following consideration of the issues at this Board.**

2 Consultation

- 2.1 A copy of the report has been forwarded to Councillors Waters, Reilly, Sweet and Simpson.
- 2.2 The Solihull Draft Local Plan, Regulation 18 consultation commenced on Monday 5 December 2016 and runs to 30 January 2017.

3 **The Local Plan Review consultation (Dec 2016)**

- 3.1 Solihull Council has published the Solihull Draft Local Plan, Regulation 18 document for consultation. The consultation documents are available on www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr. The Council is seeking views on the revised policies and proposed site allocations for housing and employment land, in addition to those in the existing Plan. The Council is also publishing the updated evidence base.

- 3.2 Members may recall the Borough Council previously commented on the Solihull Local Plan Review Scope, Issues and Options following consideration at the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on Monday 29 February 2016. I have attached the Borough's previous comments as Appendix A to this report.

...

- 3.3 Responses to the Plan consultation should be received by midnight on Monday 30 January 2017. However, in view of the impending release of a number of evidence base documents, yet to be published, and in order to enable Members and Officers and North Warwickshire to respond within a reasonable time to any issues those documents raise, North Warwickshire Forward Planning team

have requested an extension of time to respond to the Plan and associated documents from Solihull's Policy and Spatial Planning team.

- 3.4 The extension requested is until the week ending 12 February 2017 to enable a further Report to be taken to members for consideration at the 6th February Planning and Development Board, if necessary. A response is awaited and any confirmation will be provided to Members at the Board on the 16th. The extension would also allow a more detailed response, particularly to the series of questions specifically asked in the document in relation to the Plan's approach, policies, proposals and site allocations.

4 **Plan Proposals**

- 4.1 Following earlier consideration of a number of options the Plan indicates the locations where growth should be focused and land released from the Green Belt which are as follows:

Growth Option E (The UK Central Hub Area & HS2):

- Land to the east of the NEC

Growth Option F – Limited Expansion of Rural Villages/Settlements:

- Land to the east of Hampton-in-Arden
- Land to the west of Meriden
- Land south and south east of Balsall Common

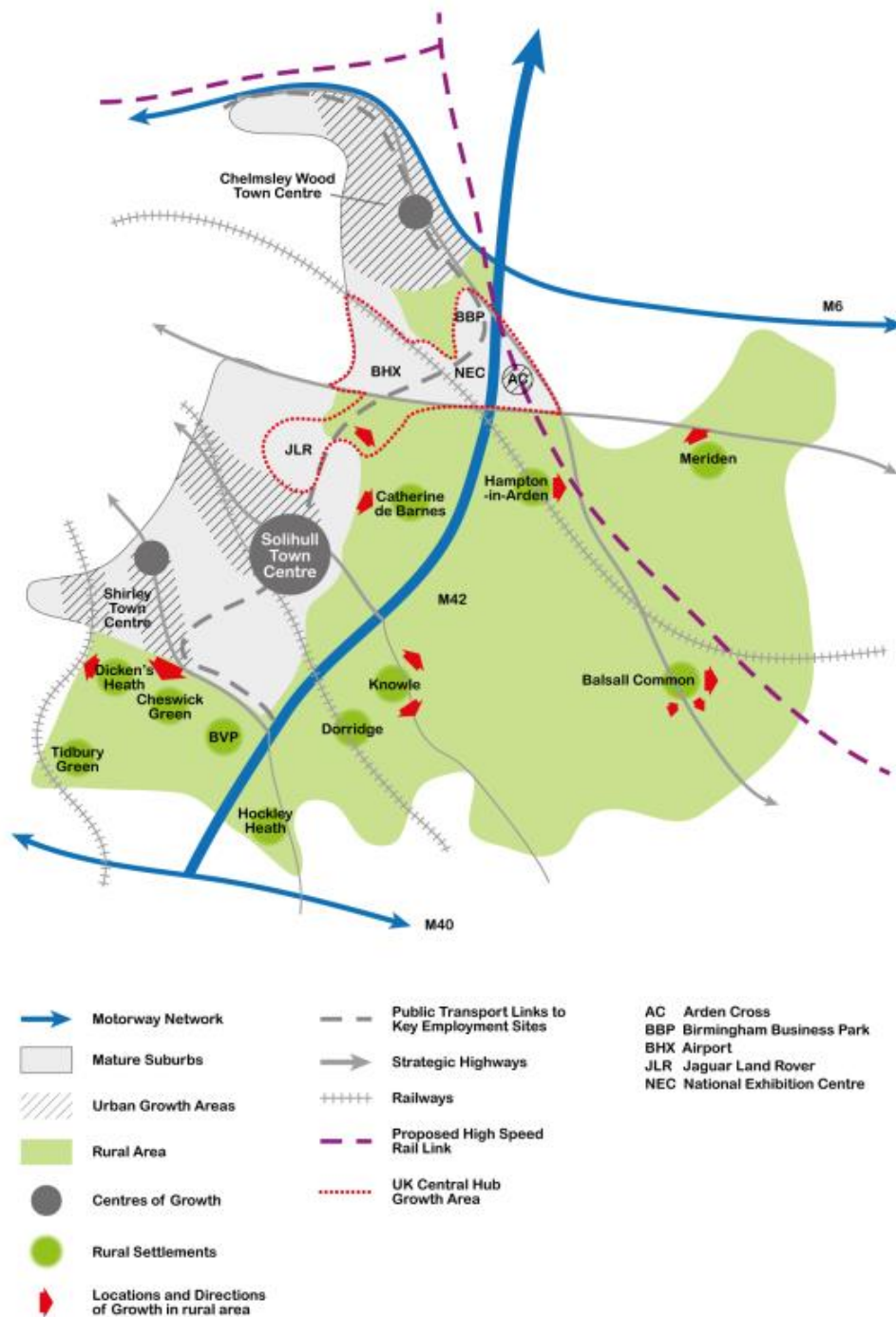
Growth Option G – Large Scale Urban Extensions:

- Land to the north east of Damson Parkway
- Land south of Shirley (either side of Tanworth Lane)
- Land east of Solihull (between Lugtrout Lane and Hampton Lane)

Growth Option G – Significant Expansion of Rural Villages/Settlements:

- Land west of Dickens Heath
- Land south of Knowle
- Land north east of Knowle
- Land north east of Balsall Common

These growth locations are shown in the following diagram:



4.2 A number of Site allocations have been proposed, with an indicative average density of 36dph, to address the Metropolitan Borough Council’s housing requirement. However, the Plan does note that the boundaries of these sites has **not** been fixed (Para 224) and further work will be undertaken on the options to be taken forward and included in the submission version of the plan.

4.3 The Borough Council congratulate Solihull in delivering a Local Plan that addresses their current housing needs, as identified in the November 2016 SHMA. However there are serious concerns over the lack of adequate response to the shortfall of 37900 arising from the Birmingham City Development Plan, and identified in the modifications to the Plan MM2 and MM3, which indicate that the focus of the search for capacity to address this

shortfall will be within the authorities including The Black Country, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Solihull, North Warwickshire, Tamworth, Lichfield, Cannock Chase, South Staffordshire and parts of Stratford-on-Avon.

- 4.4 Through the Duty to Co-operate and in conjunction with adjoining authorities North Warwickshire have pro-actively addressed this issue in their own recent Local Plan process through examining levels of inward and outward commuting within the appropriate Travel to Work areas (using recent work by Metro Dynamics for the City of Wolverhampton) and determining an appropriate level of housing to accommodate from this shortfall. This approach or similar does not appear to have been seriously considered or undertaken for the purposes of the Solihull Local Plan Review and there is no clear rationale or evidence to help determine or indicate what the relevant level of additional housing Solihull should be accommodating to address this shortfall.
- 4.5 The work noted above examined the relationships and similarity between authorities in the Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEPs. This document's findings showed the largest travel to work commuting flows in or out of the authority were between Birmingham and Solihull, and also that some of the largest Migration inflows and outflows were between Birmingham and Solihull.
- 4.6 The ONS in 2011 indicated that of people/residents travelling to work in Solihull, 36% of the total of all trips were between Birmingham and Solihull.

Local Authority	Number of Residents	% of Total
Solihull	32,114	39%
Birmingham	29,458	36%
All Solihull Residents Travelling to Work	81,316	100%

Source: ONS Census 2011

The number of Solihull residents travelling outside of the borough for work (49,202) is exceeded by the number of people living outside of the borough and travelling in to Solihull for work. (51,403). This work and other similar assessments would appear to indicate that the level of housing proposed to address the shortfall of housing in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area (GB HMA) is insufficient at 2000 to truly reflect the links and relationships between Solihull and Birmingham.

- 4.7 This is of particular concern for North Warwickshire given the clear economic, housing and transport links and relationships Solihull has with Birmingham, which are far greater than those between North Warwickshire and Birmingham. This gives rise to concerns that if Solihull does not adequately address this issue the knock on effect on North Warwickshire will be further development pressure, both within and outside North Warwickshire's Green Belt and on settlements in an authority that (in comparison to Solihull) significantly lacks the infrastructure and service capacity to accommodate the levels of development likely to arise.
- 4.8 Similarly the Plans emphasis on regeneration, economic and employment growth and opportunities to 'deliver Solihull's future economic success' and 'enhance Solihull's competitive advantage' should be matched and balanced with housing growth that reflects the above relationship with Birmingham and wider sub-region, a "balance" sought and supported by the National Planning Policy Framework guidance (para 37).

5 Observations

- 5.1 In summary the following comments are considered relevant to the Solihull Local Plan Review consultation;
- The SHMA supporting the Plan for Solihull appears to deal only with their local need and not adequately address the wider GB HMA needs and shortfall. (Note Para 7.32 of SHMA; “*The OAN above does not consider any additional homes SMBC might provide to address unmet need from elsewhere in the HMA*”).
 - It is to be supported and encouraging that the Plan deals with the whole of their local need.
 - It is to be supported and encouraging that the Plan agrees that it is the appropriate time for dealing with the Birmingham City Council shortfall, and that the shortfall will have to be met elsewhere within the Housing Market Area (HMA) (or other nearby areas) such as Solihull. (Para 4 of Plan)
 - However, there is no clear rationale of how Solihull have got to 2000 dwellings figure (para 211) for dealing with the GB HMA shortfall, particularly in view of the clear , historic, transport routes and links, commuting and travel to work links the Plan notes/highlights elsewhere. This is considered a potentially serious failing in the Plan in terms of adequately addressing the “Duty to Co-operate”, given the clear shortfall in need identified in the Birmingham City Local Plan, noted in the proposed Modifications to the Plan, and the comments from the earlier Solihull Local Plan Inspector. The Solihull Plan indicates the additional 2000 houses are specifically to address the strategic housing needs study (SHNS) 37,500 dwellings shortfall for the whole HMA, which was undertaken in 2015 over the period 2011-2031, but does not address the larger shortfall indicated in the Birmingham Development Plan Modifications of 37,900 homes, including about 14,400 affordable dwellings, within the Development Plan’s period.
 - The Plan notes that as the Birmingham airport expansion proposals aren’t firm they have not reflected them in the Plan. Although the Plan seeks to “*maximise the capacity and benefits of the recently extended runway at Birmingham airport*”, Solihull are happy to look at putting any expansion proposals or considerations in the next version of the Plan.
 - Nevertheless, the Plan needs to maximise development opportunities at a transport hub, which could be a combination of the HS2 International Interchange with any proposals for Airport expansion, and maximising links into the Birmingham Metropolitan area and opportunities of future links into North Warwickshire and Coventry as part of the wider Midlands Connect work and ‘Movement for Growth’ strategy.
 - Topic papers are being prepared and will be put on their website. The Borough Council may need to respond to these documents and their findings once published.
 - The Sustainability Appraisal is not yet available and should be on the website by the New Year.

- 5.2 Due to the stage of the Local Plan and the outstanding additional evidence base documents still awaited, there are still outstanding issues which will only be able to be answered as the Local Plan progresses. Further comments may need to be made to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council once these documents have been examined to address any issues or concerns they may raise. This is the reason for the request for extension to the period for comments and representations to the Solihull Local Plan Review.
- 5.3 This Report should form the basis of the initial response to the Solihull Local Plan Review along with re-iteration of the Borough's previous comments attached as Appendix A to this report (which are considered still to be relevant to the current Plan), with the caveat that further comments are likely to be forwarded to Solihull once the additional evidence base documents are published. Any additional comments from Members will be added following consideration of this Report and the Plan consultation.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Human Resources Implications

- 6.1.1 Greater staff and member involvement may be required in the development of the Solihull Local Plan than previously due to the cross border issues and in particular the provision of housing, the need to address the shortfall in the GB SHMA, HS2 and UK Central implications and possibly employment land and housing balance.

6.2 Links to Council's Priorities

- 6.2.1 The Local Plan has links to all of the Council's priorities.

The Contact Officer for this report is Dorothy Barratt (719250).



North Warwickshire
Borough Council

Policy and Spatial Planning,
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

Emailed to: psp@solihull.gov.uk

Steve Maxey BA (Hons) Dip LG Solicitor
**Assistant Chief Executive
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The Council House
South Street
Atherstone
Warwickshire
CV9 1DE

Switchboard : (01827) 715341

Fax : (01827) 719225

E Mail :
dorothybarratt@northwarks.gov.uk

Website : www.northwarks.gov.uk

This matter is being dealt with by

: |

Direct Dial : [REDACTED]

Your ref : |

Our ref : |

Date : 01st March 2016

Dear Mr Palmer

Solihull Local Plan Review – Additional comments following LDF Sub-Committee meeting on 29th February 2016

Further to my earlier letter of the 22nd January 2016 regarding a response from the Borough Council to the Solihull Local Plan review I can confirm a Report on the consultation was considered at the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on Monday the 29th February.

I have attached a copy of the Report and its Appendices to this letter for your attention and information as part of the Borough Council's response to the Solihull Local Plan Review. Following consideration at the Sub-Committee, Members from the Borough Council would wish the following additional comments to be highlighted and noted as part of the Council's consultation response.

Members highlighted the potential huge implications on North Warwickshire of the development and growth at Solihull, particularly with reference to the "UK Central" proposals. There are significant local concerns over the impact this proposal will have on the local, rural highway network and rural settlements from increased traffic flows and levels. Measures need to be considered and included in the Local Plan review to address any potential adverse impacts, in parallel with maximising connectivity to the HS2 Interchange station.

Access to the rural road network should be restricted and focussed on local services and local settlement access only, with Interchange Station Traffic concentrated, directed and routed onto the Strategic Transport Network only. Where necessary, to avoid traffic conflict with local traffic and adverse impacts on rural settlements (particularly from heavy construction traffic and "rat running" by commuter and interchange traffic avoiding congestion points/routes), some route and road closures should be considered as an option.

This is also highlighted by the potential implications arising from the shortfall from Birmingham, which re-inforces the need for this to be reflected in the review of the plan. The implications of the Green Belt Review for Solihull, and indeed the Borough's own Green Belt Review also highlight the pressure on this location. The Solihull Local Plan Review should

note concerns that any development growth must take account of, and address the highway infrastructure capacity, the need to address and minimise the traffic levels and impacts on the rural settlements and rural road network and seek to separate local traffic and networks from the strategic traffic, that is both generated by and servicing the growth in Solihull, the shortfall from Birmingham and the construction and eventual commuting traffic to the HS2 Interchange Station.

I trust that you will find the above useful and look forward to on-going discussions on how Solihull will deal with the expected growth and consider any implications on this Borough.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Dorothy Barratt.

Dorothy Barratt
Forward Planning & Economic Strategy Manager

1 **Summary**

- 1.2 This report seeks Member approval of a letter sent to Solihull in response to their consultation on the scope, issues and options for a new Local Plan to meet their deadline of 22 January 2016 for any comments.

Recommendation to Executive Board

- a That the letter in response to the consultation by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council is endorsed; and**
- b Any additional comments by Members be forwarded on to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.**

2 **The Review**

- 2.1 Solihull Council has published the Solihull Local Plan Review Scope, Issues and Options document for consultation. The consultation documents are available on www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr. The Council will use the responses to help to develop a Preferred Options document, which will be consulted on in autumn 2016.
- 2.2 The consultation marks the start of the process to review the existing Local Plan which was adopted in December 2013. This first stage focusses on scoping the local plan review; determining the issues that the review will need to address; and the identification of broad options for growth.
- 2.3 As part of the review of the plan, the Council will also identify what land is available for new development and have made a call for potential development sites.

3 **Previous Comments**

- 3.1 Solihull consulted on a document called "*HS2 Interchange Local Area Plan*" in 2015 to consider the area around and the potential development in and around the HS2 Interchange Station. It is now envisaged that the new Local Plan will cover this area in detail and so work has now stopped and transferred to this new Plan. We have asked therefore that our previous comments which are attached as Appendix B are also considered as part of this consultation.

4 **Observations**

- 4.1 In order to meet the deadline for comments officers sent the letter attached at Appendix A.
- 4.2 Due to the stage of the Local Plan there are many outstanding issues which will only be able to be answered as the Local Plan progresses. One of these is how the shortfall of housing from the GB HMA is going to be dealt with from Solihull's point of view.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Human Resources Implications

- 5.1.1 Greater staff and member involvement may be required in the development of the Solihull Local Plan than previously due to the cross border issues and in particular the provision of housing and possibly employment land.

5.2 Links to Council's Priorities

- 5.2.1 The Local Plan has links to all of the Council's priorities.

The Contact Officer for this report is Dorothy Barratt (719250).



North Warwickshire
Borough Council

Policy and Spatial Planning,
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

Emailed to: psp@solihull.gov.uk

APPENDIX A

Steve Maxey BA (Hons) Dip LG Solicitor
**Assistant Chief Executive
and Solicitor to the Council**

The Council House
South Street
Atherstone
Warwickshire
CV9 1DE

Switchboard : (01827) 715341

Fax : (01827) 719225

E Mail :

Website : www.northwarks.gov.uk

This matter is being dealt with by

: |

Direct Dial : |

Your ref : |

Our ref : |

Date : 22nd January 2016

Dear Mr Palmer

Solihull Local Plan Review

Thank you for consulting the Borough Council on the Scope, Issues & Options consultation document. Unfortunately due to the timing of meetings it has not been possible to take the consultation to a Board meeting. However I will endeavour to take the document to the next available meeting which is likely to be the end of February. If there are any additional comments I will pass those on. This letter therefore provides officer views of the consultation at this stage.

We would like to see the Borough Council's previous comments relating to the HS2 Interchange and Regulation 18 consultation to be taken into account.

It is agreed that the review of the plan should look forward to 2033 as there is a need to have 15 years post adoption.

The shortfall from Birmingham is now clear and will need to be reflected in the review of the plan. Officers are pleased to see it is recognised this review can help to address this shortfall.

Again officers are pleased to see that a Green Belt Review will be carried out and this will be carried out in accordance with the methodology agreed with the local authorities through the GB HMA Technical Officer Group.

The IDP may need to identify infrastructure required and provided for in North Warwickshire as a result of development close to the Borough boundary. On-going discussions will be required in relation to UK Central as well as the other growth locations once these are more clearly defined.

In relation to transport North Warwickshire Borough Council made comments on the West Midlands Transport Integrated Strategy. This Strategy only covers part of North Warwickshire. However issues may be identified elsewhere in this Borough. Further discussions between our two local authorities including Warwickshire County Council will be required to ensure that matters are not missed and are dealt with effectively.

The Meriden Gap is mentioned throughout the document but exactly where this lies and why it is important is unclear. Further evidence is required to understand the concept of the Meriden Gap better. It would be helpful for this to consider if exact boundaries are required and how it will shape the future development of the area between Coventry, North Warwickshire and Solihull.

The consultation document gives the impression that connectivity to the HS2 Interchange station is to a dispersed wider population. Indeed the Borough Council in its comments on the HS2 Action Plan wanted to see improvements to the accessibility of the new station with the existing population. However it was not envisaged that through this connectivity new housing would be dispersed but would be focussed within the Borough of Solihull itself.

Gypsy & Travellers – the need is identified up to 2027 and it is only queried as to whether this should be rolled forward to run concurrently with the Plan period.

It is agreed that there should be the additional challenge “*O Addressing the need for housing, in the context of the significant shortfall in the Housing Market Area*”. This challenge will be very important. The Council will be interested to see how Solihull proposes to deal with this issue and to discuss further any cross-border issues arising from those choices.

There are two matters of correction:

1. Not all the local authorities that are working to develop a solution to the housing shortfall are members of the GBSLEP so are therefore not constituent authorities. (Para 46)
2. Para 51 is incorrect as the numbers will be known before a spatial strategy is produced for the wider GBSLEP area. As stated above not all the local authorities working on a solution for the HMA such as North Warwickshire are within the GBSLEP and therefore are not party to that strategy.

I trust that you will find the above useful and look forward to on-going discussions on how Solihull will deal with the expected growth and consider any implications on this Borough.

Yours sincerely



Dorothy Barratt
Forward Planning & Economic Strategy Manager



North Warwickshire
Borough Council

Policy and Spatial Planning
Solihull MBC
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

Emailed to: psp@solihull.gov.uk

APPENDIX B

Steve Maxey BA (Hons) Dip LG Solicitor
**Assistant Chief Executive
and Solicitor to the Council**

The Council House
South Street
Atherstone
Warwickshire
CV9 1DE

Switchboard : (01827) 715341

Fax : (01827) 719225

E Mail : |

Website : www.northwarks.gov.uk

This matter is being dealt with by
:Dorothy Barratt

Direct Dial : [REDACTED]

Your ref :

Our ref :

Date : January 2015

Dear Mr Harrison

**Proposed Local Area Plan for HS2 Interchange & Adjoining Area
Initial Consultation (Regulation 18) Consultation**

Thank you for consulting the Borough Council on the above document.

The document was presented to the LDF Sub-committee on 21st January 2015 and the comments below were supported.

The Borough Council would like to bring to your attention the following issues that it considers should be part of the development and progress of a Local Area Plan for the area around the HS2 Interchange Station.

1. Green Belt. The land in question all lies within the Green Belt. The Borough Council would recommend that a Green Belt Review is required to form part of the evidence base for the release of any of this land from the Green Belt. As a study has not yet been done it is unclear whether this site should be excluded from the Green Belt.
2. Sensitivity of the land and buildings surrounding this area should also be assessed. For example Packington Estate, a historic park and garden, lies to the east of the A446. Any sensitivity work should address any potential adverse impacts.
3. An options appraisal that looks at reasonable alternatives should also be undertaken. For example sites on the western side of the M42 may in fact be preferable for development rather than developing around the interchange station itself. The HS2 station will involve the development of people movers over the M42 so this option may be acceptable. Various options should be tested prior to the assumption that the site around the station is the optimum site.
4. Any development in this area should seek connectivity both to the local community in and outside of Solihull. For example: improved connectivity to Coleshill and rural areas within North Warwickshire. Specifically this would be public transport (bus and rail), cycling and walking. With the impact of HS2 being felt at some distance this connectivity should be considered in a much wider context than would normally be the case due to the type and nature of the station.

5. The issue of rat running needs to be considered and solutions introduced. The principle focus of road access should be directed to the main roads within the sub-region rather than through the many country lanes and local roads in the area.
6. Linkages to other sites providing employment opportunities should also be considered. In particular there will be strong synergies with MIRA Technology Park and Enterprise Zone. Linking those wanting jobs will also be important
7. Road transport implications – current assessments only consider the 7,500 potential cars to the train station. Further development around this area will require much greater and imaginative road solutions.
8. A Garden City approach gives the impression of low density development interspersed with green areas for walking, cycling and biodiversity. However the area around the station is a triangular restrained area. With parking for 7,500 cars at the station it will be important that these are provided in a way that allows for the comprehensive and most productive use of the site. It is difficult to see how the two fit together if surface parking is provided.

I trust you find the comments above useful. The Borough Council would like to be involved throughout the process and I am sure as ideas develop other issues may emerge.

Yours sincerely



Dorothy Barratt

Development Manager