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Managed Growth and Communities Directorate  
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Council House  
Manor Square  
Solihull  
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15 March 2019

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr Palmer,

**Draft Solihull Local Plan Supplementary Consultation**

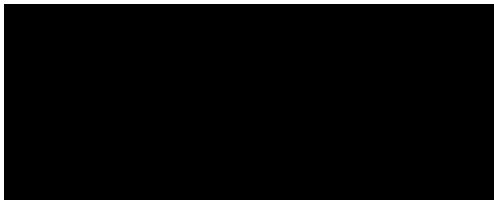
Worcestershire County Council (WCC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the above consultation.

As the Local Plan is developed we look forward to ongoing engagement with Solihull as a neighbouring authority on cross-border matters, including transport and education infrastructure. We anticipate that this work will culminate in inclusion of cross-boundary infrastructure in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Solihull, supported by a Statement of Common Ground and Duty to Co-operate agreement between the two authorities.

Some more detailed specific comments follow in the next two pages.

If you require any further clarification on these points, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Emily Barker  
Planning Services Manager

**Emily Barker**  
Planning Services  
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## **Children, Families and Communities**

Children Families and Communities welcome the opportunity to comment on the Solihull Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council borders the north east Worcestershire district of Bromsgrove and therefore consideration has been given to potential cross-boundary pupil migration.

The Solihull Draft Local Plan sets out proposed development on the west of Solihull covering the Dickens Heath and Shirley areas, which are referenced as the Blythe Area and listed for future development as site 4 (West of Dickens Heath – 350 dwellings), site 11 (The Green – 640 dwellings), site 12 (South of Dog Kennel Lane – 1,000 dwellings) and site 26 (Whitlock's End – 300 dwellings). These sites are of particular interest to WCC's Children, Families and Communities directorate due to the locality of the sites and the current and potential migration of pupils between Worcestershire and Solihull. It is noted that the inclusion of a new two-form-entry primary school has been included in the draft proposals for the Blythe Area to mitigate the impact of housing development, thus increasing capacity in the primary phase of education.

The Woodrush Community High School in Worcestershire has direct links with the adjacent Dickens Heath area, as Tidbury Green Primary School in Solihull is a named school for pupil admissions. Any proposals for this area may impact secondary school provision in Worcestershire as a result of housing development. WCC's Children, Families and Communities directorate would therefore welcome the opportunity to be included in any future consultations on education provision in this area that may impact on Worcestershire provision.

## **Transport**

It is clear from the Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation that several suggested allocations will have an impact on Worcestershire's transport network, but at present the extent to which this impact will occur is not known. We understand SMBC will shortly be commissioning detailed transport modelling. Once this work has been completed we would wish to review and then agree appropriate multi modal mitigation measures within both Solihull and Worcestershire to mitigate any impacts from the proposed growth.

Some of the specific current issues that need to be considered are:

### Access to Strategic Network/A Class roads

The nearest motorway junctions are M42 J3 and J4, with both having known capacity constraints. There is a scheme scheduled for implementation for J3 in

the next 12 months which will improve the current situation but, given the trips generated from the proposed developments, this will soon be nullified. Further, there are existing capacity constraints on the A435 from the Maypole roundabout onwards into Birmingham, which will have an adverse effect on an already constrained network.

### Local roads

The local roads are currently at capacity and transport modelling is necessary to understand the capacity of the local roads to accommodate further traffic generated from new development. In addition to understanding the additional trips generated from new development, the Local Plan must also consider the design of the local network. Local roads are considered to be inadequate to cope with the increased number of trips generated by developments of this size, and significant mitigations are required. Carriageway width is constrained in places, pedestrian facilities are poor, with footways either non-existent or below modern standards, and there is no appropriate on-road or off-road cycling provision. All of these factors must be considered in the location of development and any proposed transport mitigations. Highways England will be a key consultee on this Local Plan as the effect on their network will be significant.

There are a number of 4-arm junctions in the area (some of which are staggered, with poor visibility) that will require significant improvement, albeit they are mainly in Warwickshire. The junction of Haslucks Green Road and Truemans Heath Lane will require significant engineering. Houndsfield Lane is unsuitable in its current form to accommodate an increase in traffic, not least because of known drainage issues. As a result of the capacity constraints which already exist in the network, rat-running is a problem along these narrow rural roads.

### Rail Infrastructure and Services

The parking capacity at stations along the corridor (Whitlock's End, Wythall, Earlswood, The Lakes and Wood End) is poor, as is the level of service provided. A detailed corridor study is required, as rail could be a significant mode of choice and will help mitigate the effect on the highways network. A new station to replace some smaller stations should be investigated. A major issue at Whitlock's End, apart from car parking capacity, is access by walking and cycling. This study would require input from all key stakeholders, not least the surrounding local authorities, WMRE and local user groups.