

DAVENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Vicky Stock, 6 Grovemount, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 8LY Tel: 07443 579 057
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16th September 2016

Spatial Planning
Cheshire West and Chester
The Forum Offices
Chester CH1 2HS

Email: spatialplanning@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Dear Sirs,

LOCAL PLAN Part 2 Consultation

Please find Davenham Parish Council's response to the questions in the Local Plan Part 2.

QUESTION 15

We support this approach; we would however like to make the following comments:

- N2 – We would ask for more clarification on proposed measures.
- 4.4 and 4.5 – We would ask you to include/take into account Moulton's emerging Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.7 We believe this should read to the 'North **and West** of Northwich' not just North as re-development of the TATA site in Lostock looks potentially to be developed in the near future.

Often, by default, land intended for employment purposes becomes warehousing. The latter generally has a far greater adverse visual impact and results in significantly lower employment levels. There needs to be clarity as to what kind of commercial development is intended on any particular site.

QUESTION 16 - N2 F – Land to the West of King Street - 23ha, class B8

We do not support this approach. We object to the use of this site being brought forward/considered for development for a number of reasons:

Highways

We have major concerns about the impact on the highways that this development would have. Traffic has already increased in recent years with road-users now using Church Street as a short-cut to avoid the Gadbrook Park congestion. With the junction re-opening at Hartford Road on the A556 we expect to see further increased traffic using the village as a rat-run. Additional roads being created in our opinion would not solve this problem but only create a bottle-neck somewhere else.

Although we assume a new access road will be created onto the A530 this traffic will still need to join the A556 and therefore the current proposal does nothing to alleviate current pressure on the roads and would put added pressure on Church St, Hartford Road and the Davenham village centre.

With this already being a highly congested area with work traffic we suggest that rather bringing more businesses to the Gadbrook Park area it would be more appropriate to spread the employment load on to the brownfield land available throughout the Northwich area.

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Impact on Open Countryside, Woodland & Hedgerows/Conservation Area

We have major concerns that the proposed development eats into open countryside (which as mentioned in the Local Plan you wish to protect) and backs onto the conservation area along the canal. The buffers between the two are outside of the settlement area. The measures of protection given in N2 need further clarification/detail as to what those measures would include. In our opinion they are too vague. The measures currently seem to conflict e.g. the countryside must be protected but there appears to be a 'get out clause' to use green field sites for employment use. In our opinion this could open the flood gates for more countryside being used if the criteria is for employment purposes.

The development of this site would severely impact on the Local Wildlife in the area. We note that there are approximately seven fields on this proposed site and the majority of the field boundaries are defined by established hedgerows which all connect to the extensive mature woodland at Marshall's Gorse, forming important wildlife corridors that would be degraded should fragmentation occur resulting in loss of connectivity to and from the woodland.

Previous development has already encroached on the Northern edge of the Woodland. The area is a medium area of Bio-diversity and the woodland, wildlife and hedges must be protected at all costs.

Landscape Character

In building an evidence base for the Davenham and Whatcroft Neighbourhood Plan, the Parish Council commissioned a report from Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Part of his report provided a Landscape Character Assessment which included sites N2 E & F. The Western half of N 2 F. is categorised as River Valley and the Eastern half of the site categorised as East Lowland Plain. The Eastern boundary of the proposed site would bound the Trent and Mersey Canal.

The Davenham and Whatcroft Neighbourhood Plan aims to protect landscape character, while ensuring that through sympathetic choice of structures that do not dominate the skyline.

The open character of the countryside means that structures such as overhead power-lines, major roads, railways and urban landscapes are particularly prominent and diminish the areas rural character. Any major development of the proposed site for employment land, will inevitably be damaging to the landscape and have negative impact for wildlife, ecology and the route of the Trent and Mersey Canal.

As mentioned, we strongly object to this site being used for development but should development be inevitable and out of our control, we would expect to see a significant landscape buffer (at least 15 metres as per our emerging Neighbourhood Plan) to any residential properties (Pear Tree Farm dwellings) and to the full extent of the Southern boundary of the site to reduce the impact on the open countryside and provide a compensatory wildlife habitat. We would not want access onto Davenham Road. Any new access being onto the A530. We believe the development of the site should be limited to the North of the site and not extend beyond the brook. This would act as a natural boundary.

Brownfield sites within the Northwich urban area should be used first. While Green field sites are continually allowed to be used, developers will never consider brown field sites. There are many other brown field sites in the Northwich area that could and should be considered before this site, such as the Winnington Tata site and the Lime beds on the opposite side of the A556. With Northwich being an area of such rich industrial heritage it is hard to believe that there are not more suitable sites than this one.

Question 27 - GBC 1

We do not agree with this approach as it is considered to be a bit vague and, it seems can be overridden for 'employment' reasons. Please see the following comments:

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- ‘...development must be of an appropriate density whilst **fully** respecting the character of the surrounding area.’ Please note that the further development at Gadbrook Park would not respect the character of the surrounding area.
- ‘...development on greenfield land outside of settlements will only be permitted where **necessary** to meet the levels of development...’ – please define the word ‘necessary’.
- 7.1 – ‘...the plan does not support the unnecessary loss of greenfield land and countryside.’ Please define ‘unnecessary’ or better still omit the word ‘unnecessary’.

Question 32 – GBC6 – Key Settlement Gaps

We believe that this approach is generally a step in the right direction but would ask you to consider making these statements more positive and robust by rewording as follows:

7.29 – “Development ~~may~~ **will not** be permitted within Key Settlement Gaps where:

- “The development **would** ~~not~~ result in the coalescence of settlements.....”
- “The development **would** ~~not~~ result in a significant increase in indivisibility between settlement edges where.....”
- “The development **would** ~~not~~ harm the perception of openness....”
- “The development **would** ~~not~~ serve to materially alter....”

Again we would really like to see further definition of measures.

We would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of these comments on the CW&C Local Plan part 2 consultation document and questionnaire.

Yours faithfully

Vicky Stock
Davenham Parish Clerk
On behalf of Davenham Parish Council