

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 October 2024 10:21
To: Local Plan
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Wirral Local Plan-Consultation on Maim Modifications

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Wirral Local Plan-Consultation on Main Modifications

Dear Sirs

[REDACTED]

I have been a member and supporter of WGSA and ITPAS for several years, and my responses that follow are largely their wording. You should know that I have also been in correspondence with Matthew Patrick, Wirral West's newly elected MP, and I have appended some of his responses to queries I raised with him following his election.

My responses apply to each Modification detailed on the Local Plan.

I have read and agree to the Consultation Data Protection Notice.

I have followed the stages of development of the Local Plan, which I support, and wish it to be adopted. This Plan is long overdue, and is vital for the future of Wirral and all its residents, and is "Sound".

I confirm that WGSA speaks for me in these responses, but I wish the below responses to be acknowledged, counted and recorded as my own views in their own right.

I also quote directly from Matthew Patrick's letter to me dated 7 October 2024:

"I am committed to protecting our environment and green spaces. I wholeheartedly support the Council's Local Plan to build new housing on brownfield land only."

"This Government's clear position means we can take the urgent action needed to build affordable decent homes, whilst also protecting the green spaces which are so valued here in Wirral West."

He concludes by advising that he has requested a meeting with the Minister of State for Housing, Matthew Pennycook, to discuss the concerns raised by many of his constituents.

Yours faithfully

Philip Thomas

Cc ITPAS-I thought you might be interested in Matthew Patrick's responses.

- a). **Regarding MM1 (Delivering Growth through sustainable low carbon regeneration):**
I/We very much support the confirmation that “exceptional circumstances to justify alterations to the Green Belt boundaries set out in national planning policy do **NOT** exist in Wirral”.
- b) **Regarding MM3 (Housing Need); also MM5 new Para D; MM65 re Appendix 4, and MM6:**
I/We support the Local Plan with the Total Supply figure of 11,814 net additional dwellings over the Plan Period (up to 2040) as it more than adequately caters for Wirral's real 'Housing Need'. I/We also support the recognition that the figure is “a reflection of levels that are currently demonstrably deliverable or developable” with the expectation that further sources of Supply will become available over time and as 'Regeneration' improves Market Confidence.
- c) **Regarding AM32 (Housing Need):**
For reasons given regarding MM3 and noting the Council followed legal advice in calculating 'Housing Need' (applying out-of-date Government-preferred Data to the 'Standard Method' producing a 'Need' figure acknowledged to be inflated), **I/we nevertheless support the Plan** as it is considered to be good and '**sound**' overall, is an urgent and overdue necessity to direct and control Development and Growth, but also because the first 'Plan Review' would give the opportunity to adjust the 'Housing Need' basis to recognise best practice and accurate Data (including Local Authority-level Census Data), thereby reducing the level of risk to achieving the required Delivery. **It is my/our suggestion therefore** that an additional note be included reflecting the suggestion that the first Review after Adoption of this Local Plan be undertaken using the best and up-to-date Data, methodology and a locally 'Objectively Assessed Need'.
- d) **Regarding MM40 (Policy WP8 Policy for the Rural Area – Agricultural Land):**
I/We consider that modification of the text has gone too far, resulting in the watering down of prescriptive protection of 'Best & Most Versatile' (B&MV) Green Belt Agricultural Land and also there is no mention of the Council Policy (unanimously voted through) **NOT** to release **ANY** 'productive agricultural land' for development, thereby maintaining or enhancing the Rural Economy and 'food security' which is increasingly vital in an uncertain world of conflict, international competition, depleted Nature, and Climate Change.

New Para A: the sentence, “areas of poorer quality land should be preferred” would be better to read, “areas of poorer quality land must be prioritised and instances of non-use justified.”

New Para B: the addition of, “significant” in the phrase, “significant loss of agricultural land” is supported but undefined as to extent. Suggest adding, “in the opinion of the Council”.