



## WRITTLE PARISH COUNCIL

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### **Representation of Writtle Parish Council including the Neighbourhood Steering Group to the Local Plan Main Modifications Consultation**

#### **Modification Number – MM41**

There is no comment about the removal of the green corridor and reliance on the wedge/green belt but it is essential that the separation between Writtle village and the western edges of Chelmsford is retained and enhanced that includes the Warren Farm development proposal, as identified as key aspect of the village's character as identified by the community.

With regard to Area 2 (map and the revised plan), whilst the Parish Council has accepted that there is a need for homes and services on the western side of Chelmsford that falls within their parish, as it is one of available areas of land in reasonable proximity of the city centre, the planned area under Area 2 has expanded westwards where inevitably the revised residential boundary has greater impact on the character and appearance of the northern part of the parish adjacent to the area that has had special status for some time for its landscape value.

The expansion of Area 2 is now beyond the current roundabout and proposed at the junction of Lordship and Roxwell Roads. Whilst this in part is identified for recreation, leisure and open space there is a significant area identified for travelling show people (1 hectare). This is at a highly visible part at the entrance to the village of Writtle from the west and an important village gateway. It has the potential to be altered in layout and extent within this designated area to adversely affect the character and appearance of this key entrance site, which landscaping alone cannot mitigate against. It was also a change that was made at a late stage, not only precluding local consultation/input, but also enabling the addition of around 100 additional dwellings into the area originally allocated, at the time of consultation period, with further associated pressures on the facilities/services and access to and within the Parish.

Moreover, there is a note in the policy that states that the location of both the TSP site and the recreation areas and Suds, can be decided through the Master Plan process. This rather dilutes

the Local Plan process where public consultation is more rigorous. The Master plan application relies more on applicant's involvement/proposals rather than employing policies, background papers and wider consultation and alike to inform the Local Plan designation of significant areas of this part of Area 2. It relies too heavily on an assumed involvement of the representatives in the Master Plan conception, which is not mandatory, where there is already a draft layout plan being considered by the Council. It is felt that this considerable departure from the previous smaller designation for Warren farm Area 2 would be harmful to the environment of the parish, and a change made at a late stage effectively denying meaningful local consultation.

There is a bus gate shown on the Area 2 plan where it is proposed that a 2-way bus route will join to Trent Road and then onwards to Melbourne Avenue to connect with the northern part of the city to access the train station and city centre. It is considered that the details of this bus gate have not been explored sufficiently to provide an adequate service eastward to link with the city centre. It is acknowledged by the ECC that there is insufficient capacity on the Roxwell Road for further buses to support the need for additional public transport for the 800 units along that road only. This road is already shown as at capacity and beyond, at peak times and whilst improvements are being undertaken to the junction with Chignal Road, further east in Rainsford Road it has been recognised that there is not the capacity for further buses to meet the need. If this is the case, and the bus gate is not a realistic option, the congestion generated by the increased use of private vehicles from the proposed new development will result in an inadequate bus service due to congestion, and therefore greater use of private cars and more congestion. This will result in traffic using alternative routes causing harm to Writtle village and the parish as a whole.

The Plan for Area 2 does not include a sufficiently large or well landscaped designation along the A1060, as you leave the City along the Roxwell Road, in order to provide an adequate transition between the urban area and the rural area, particularly as it is located on the fringe of the green belt to the south. This area has been identified as being visually sensitive to development, due to the combination of rising platform of the land and its open views to the south and west. An important Public Right of Way, the Centenary Circle, crosses the site and this is not shown to have sufficient protection from the proposed development. Similarly, there is still insufficient regard for the separation between the Chignal estate and the proposed development to respect the valley between the two areas, where these have been identified in the plan as a whole as requiring such respect.