

Representor unique Part A Ref *	A0418
Matter	2
Relevant questions nos	16, 19, 22, 25

SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Stage 1 Hearing Statement

*Your unique reference can be found in the Schedule of Respondents (Schedule 3 of document SD014.01) at:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/earlier-regulation-18-plan-making-stages-of-consultation/regulation-19-pre-submission-draft-of-the-shropshire-local-plan-consultation/>

Transport infrastructure

16. Who has the Council engaged with? When did this engagement begin, has it been active and ongoing and what form has it taken?

In the context of the Buildwas mixed-use planning application my awareness is limited to the highways appraisal conducted over the application period. This has been covered in detail in submissions to you by A0028 Much Wenlock Town Council and A0088 Much Wenlock Refresh Group, and I do not intend to repeat them. I support those representations.

I have concern about two important road junctions:

- a. the junction of the B4380 and the A4169 at the point that it crosses the River Severn adjacent to the site, and
- b. the junction of the A4169 and the A458 in Much Wenlock.

In consideration of the planning application these were largely dismissed.

a) is the subject of great concern by local residents who have witnessed serious accidents, mostly caused by vehicles failing to stop at the junction. It is necessary to stop, either to give way to traffic on the main road or because of the presence of stationary traffic. With the prospect not only of increased traffic arising from the Buildwas 1,075 homes etc. mixed use development, there is now also the prospect of a large leisure park accessing the B4380 near the junction of the A4169 - planning application 21/03090/FUL "Change of use of land to create a holiday caravan site including alteration of existing access, formation of internal access roads and footpaths and associated landscaping". This is described as including "120 static lodges/caravans and 35 touring caravan pitches".

b) will be further affected by Shadwell Quarry on the outskirts of Much Wenlock on the A4169, which has extant planning consent (09/02701/FUL) for the stationing of 53 holiday chalets - yet to be developed. This will deliver more traffic onto the A4169. And a planning application (21/05023/OUT) is under consideration for mixed use development of up to 550 dwellings, foodstore etc. at Tasley, on the Much Wenlock side of Bridgnorth. Also close by is the preferred site at Cressage for 60 dwellings. Together these 630 dwellings will pour more traffic onto the A458 and much of it will pass through Much Wenlock. This is without the prospect of 200 new dwellings in Much Wenlock - in the view of me and others an understatement of what is actually likely to be constructed during the plan period.

The Local Plan Review proposal says: "Any necessary improvements to the local and strategic road network will be undertaken, informed by consultation with Highways England and an appropriate Transport Assessment (including consideration of cumulative impact)." It is far

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from clear that any holistic approach has been taken in considering the cumulative impact of these developments on three sides of Much Wenlock. The Buildwas development offers £350,000 for highway improvements at the junction of the A458 and A4169 at the Gaskell Arms in Much Wenlock, but it is inconceivable in my view that this sum will be adequate in rendering the impact of increased traffic volumes harmless. That view was widely shared by residents who wrote and spoke to me prior to my stepping down as Shropshire Councillor for Much Wenlock in 2021 - and thereafter.

19. In overall terms, has the Council engaged constructively? What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue?

I do not believe that it has engaged either constructively or cooperatively within Shropshire. The dialogue with Telford & Wrekin Council and National Highways has been rather more consensual

The Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan states that "Heavy vehicles pass through the town on a daily basis in connection with quarrying operations and the use of former quarries for haulage and industry. In addition, bridge and road weight limits bring considerable volumes of heavy traffic through Much Wenlock on the A458 and A4169. Given its location at the heart of a network of important roads the Plan seeks to manage development arising in the parish to ensure that new development does not exacerbate existing problems." It is ironic that instead we are likely to see development just outside the parish boundary which may "have an unacceptable traffic impact on the wider town and the capacity and operation of its highway network."

Water resources/wastewater

22. In overall terms, has the Council engaged constructively? What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue?

DP19. Water Resources and Water Quality 1. Assurances should be sought from the appropriate utilities that the infrastructure will be sufficient to support any developments

Council response: The Council's Statements of Common Ground with Severn Trent Water and Dwr Cymru Welsh Water show that the water infrastructure requirements identified in the Councils Water Cycle Study can be delivered.

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My submission:

As regards the water supply, there is **no** mention of it in the Much Wenlock Place Plan other than in the context of the Buildwas 1,075 dwelling mixed-use development which says: "These are projects that may arise as a result of the Local Plan Review but are not currently agreed and no specific plans are in place. Any development will be dependent upon the outcome of the Local Plan Review and Green Belt Review and also upon the results of engagement with communities, neighbouring authorities, developers and other stakeholders, in order to explore the potential benefits of any managed development."

S13.1. Key issue raised:

46. Insufficient water supply and sewerage for existing demand. Shropshire Council has failed to cooperate with Telford Council and Severn Trent to ensure sufficient water supplies can be maintained.

Council response: [39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45 and] 46. "The evidence base for the Local Plan Review includes the Place Plans (documents which focus on local infrastructure needs in communities across the County), which are informed by proactive engagement with Town and Parish Council and Strategic Infrastructure Providers. It also includes a Strategic Infrastructure Implementation Plan, which is informed by the Place Plans. Place Plan Areas generally consist of a main centre, its surrounding settlements and rural hinterland. These documents have informed consideration of infrastructure requirements associated with development proposals within the draft Shropshire Local Plan. Within the settlement policies section of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, Place Plan Areas are used for the presentation of settlement policies, rather than as areas subject to draft policies. The Former Ironbridge Power Station site is presented separately as draft Policy S20 in recognition of the scale of the site. However, consideration of the infrastructure requirements associated with this development and its wider implications have been informed by the Place Plan and have/will be informed by appropriate technical studies. Additionally, the draft Shropshire Local Plan should be read as a whole. Draft Policy DP25 addresses infrastructure provision to support development."

The Statement of Common Ground between the Council and Severn Trent says "Adopted WRMP [water resources management plan] has planned for the increased demand based on the housing growth figures provided. If significantly higher growth rates are expected, we would need to reassess."

No regard seems to be paid to the chronic inability (or unwillingness) of Severn Trent to provide an adequate water supply to Much Wenlock and Broseley at times. Water pressure can be low, especially in those properties outside of Much Wenlock's built-up area, and those standing in two estates on higher ground. There is clear evidence that has been ignored of supply shortages which have required tankers to inject water into the system and/or bottled drinking water to be supplied.

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Examples include:

27th June 2018	<i>"@stwater not again this is getting beyond a joke now. If the water is going to be off for the 3rd night in a row how about ensuring we all have fresh drinking water. TF13 [Much Wenlock postcode] out again this better be reflected in our bill as well"</i> 9:23 PM · Jun 27, 2018
28th June 2018	https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/bridgnorth/much-wenlock/2018/06/28/water-company-asks-for-public-help-after-three-days-of-problems/
6th July 2018	https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/bridgnorth/2018/07/06/shropshire-households-lose-their-water-supply/
7th August 2018	Residents meeting - no follow-up: https://newsroom.shropshire.gov.uk/2018/07/future-fit-severn-trent-water-agenda-residents-meeting/
30th May 2020	https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/local-hubs/bridgnorth/2018/07/06/shropshire-households-lose-their-water-supply/



↑ Much Wenlock July 2018



As regards wastewater the Much Wenlock Place Plan states “Additional hydraulic capacity will be required at the Much Wenlock Wastewater Treatment Works during the plan period and a new discharge consent will also be required in order to ensure there is no deterioration of water quality under the Water Framework Directive, as outlined in the LDF

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Implementation Plan.” The Statement of Common Ground between Shropshire Council and Severn Trent Water has Much Wenlock flagged as amber, with **housing growth of 120 units**.

I submit that in times of heavy rainfall, the combined sewer’s current capacity is insufficient to prevent the flow from lifting inspection covers in the street. The Treatment Works is at capacity and there are frequent discharges into the Farley River. Residents in those properties have contacted the Environment Agency on several occasions with seemingly little effect. One with several hundred yards of the Farley River running through their property and who has contacted both Philip Dunne MP and me as the then Shropshire Councillor refers to obvious pollution. In one report dated 11 February 2021 11:57 (of many) to the Environment Agency they said:

“Where it [Farley River] passes through our property there is a small weir and an off stream pool and for months now a strong ‘bleach’ smell and foam is noticeable at the weir and the mill race at times of slightly raised water levels, also signs of raw sewage are often evident.

“This has been reported to you by telephone in the past. You did have a sampling device here for some years but this was removed several years ago. The pool had a good head of carp, roach, rudd and tench, and minnows were plentiful in the pool, brook and side streams, these seem to have disappeared along with all aquatic life. In spring and summer we are usually overrun with frogs and newts but not in 2020. We have always had resident dippers and kingfisher and daily visits from the heron but these have all disappeared since spring 2020 presumably through lack of a food source.

“At times of flood the brook firstly runs a mid-brown colour as it always has and then for days a dirty grey with a distinct sewage smell. Because of the frequency of minor flooding of the property (caused more by inappropriate development along the watershed rather than climate change, in my opinion) to protect the house and our neighbours downstream we allow the flood water to run and slow over our paddock and lawn areas. This is preferable to a flooded house again, but the water leaves filthy deposits and debris behind which in normal circumstances grass and nature would deal with. However, the presence of human waste changes this.

“Besides the host of germs carried down the brook, are traces of covid19 virus likely to be left? Is it safe for children to play and animals to graze? Are the hens’ eggs safe to eat?”

The Statement of Common Ground between Shropshire Council and Severn Trent Water has Much Wenlock described as ‘deterioration can be prevented’ with **190 dwellings over the plan period**. This appears to be inconsistent and there is a long way to go to put wastewater discharge on an acceptable footing before any more development can be contemplated.

Flood risk

25. In overall terms, has the Council engaged constructively? What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue?

No. This has been covered in detail in submissions to you by A0028 Much Wenlock Town Council and A0088 Much Wenlock Refresh Group, and I do not intend to repeat them. I support those representations.

I would, however, add that repeated calls by me as Shropshire Councillor until May 2021 for a study of the whole catchment fell on stony ground. The most recent flooding incident review in which I can recall being involved was that in February 2020. More than a dozen houses were affected by intrusive flooding in High Street, Sheinton Street, Hunters Gate and Forester Avenue. I visited most of the affected householders with, first, Shropshire Council's flood and water team (this was during a lengthy period where there was no flood & water manager in post), and secondly with Philip Dunne MP. We were able to see the damage caused by water and mud in properties along the High Street where water had flowed on its surface. In Hunters Gate and Forester Avenue it seems that the groundwater level rose and in one property the householder described how the water had 'come up through the floor'. This, in a house built less than twenty years ago. Calls for a solution to flooding for the whole town, to complement the two flood attenuation ponds constructed in 2017, appear to have been ignored. Instead unflinching reliance by the Council seems to be placed on a developer-led scheme. There is widespread scepticism locally that constructing more houses between Bridgnorth Road and Hunters Gate will alleviate flooding in that part of the town. And there is incredulity that it might be suggested that it should reduce flooding elsewhere. The drainage system and its maintenance are plainly unable to cope with the volume of water that flows through the town by the Gaskell Arms. On Thursday 26th May '21, for instance a report to FixMyStreet stated "5 road gullies completely full of debris and blocked". Unless steps can be taken to remedy this problem further development should be shelved.

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