



Directorate of Transformation

**John R Harrison DipEnvP, MRTPI**  
**Assistant Director Planning**

PO Box 16, 52 Derby Street  
Ormskirk, West Lancashire L39 2DF  
Telephone: 01695 577177  
Website: [www.westlancs.gov.uk](http://www.westlancs.gov.uk)  
Fax: 01695 585113  
Email: [plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk](mailto:plan.apps@westlancs.gov.uk)

Jane Gowing  
Head of Planning Services  
Sefton MBC  
First Floor Magdalen House  
Trinity Road  
Bootle L20 3NJ

Date: 18 September 2013  
Your ref:  
Our ref:  
Please ask for: Peter Richards  
Direct dial no: 01695 585046  
Extension: 5046

Dear Jane

### **RE: Sefton Local Plan – Preferred Options consultation**

Thank you for inviting West Lancashire Borough Council to comment on Sefton Council's Preferred Options of the Sefton Local Plan. West Lancashire Borough Council welcomes this opportunity to continue the close working relationship with Sefton Council on planning matters and it is recognised that the need to co-operate on strategic planning matters between ourselves will only grow under the recent changes to the planning system.

To this end, West Lancashire Borough Council is glad to broadly support the Preferred Options of the Sefton Local Plan, particularly with regard to the selection of Option 2 with regard your housing requirement. Option 2 provides the appropriate balance for Sefton to meet its objectively-assessed housing needs within its own boundary and so minimises the negative impacts on neighbouring boroughs.

Both Option 1 and Option 3, as consulted upon in July 2011, have the potential to have significant negative impacts on West Lancashire either because Sefton would not meet its own housing needs (and therefore be reliant upon neighbouring boroughs to do so) or because Sefton would be seeking to grow beyond its needs (and so potentially detract from development opportunities in its neighbouring boroughs).

However, there are three areas of concern that West Lancashire Borough Council would like to raise with Sefton Council and request that Sefton Council look at how potential impacts could be mitigated through the Sefton Local Plan or that a particular allocation be reconsidered.

Firstly, there are a number of proposed development allocations (in Policies SR4 and SR5) that are located adjacent, or very close, to the borough boundary with West Lancashire, particularly in the Southport, Churchtown, Ainsdale and Formby areas. While West Lancashire Borough Council does not object to these allocations, we would wish to ensure that all potential impacts of these sites on land and communities within West Lancashire have been considered and that policy requirements for mitigation for any negative impacts on the West Lancashire side of the boundary are included within the Sefton Local Plan.

**Gill Rowe LL.B (Hons) Solicitor**  
**Managing Director (People and Places)**

**Kim Webber B.Sc., M.Sc.**  
**Managing Director (Transformation)**

Secondly, those same allocations have the potential to generate fairly significant traffic travelling through West Lancashire on the A570 and / or the local moss roads in the Western Parishes. Policy SR10 is supported when it prioritises "*Improved access to Southport from the east [A570 corridor]*" but West Lancashire Borough Council would welcome further detail or discussion on what these improvements may be, especially where the improvements are needed within West Lancashire.

In particular, the impact of increased traffic on the A570 on Ormskirk must be considered, as there is already significant congestion within Ormskirk and through-traffic travelling between Southport and the M58 contributes to this. Indeed, one of the reasons that the West Lancashire Local Plan 2012-2027 does not focus more development in the Ormskirk area is the added congestion this would likely cause, and so West Lancashire Borough Council would have concerns if additional traffic generated in Sefton were to add to this congestion in Ormskirk. Regard should also be had to the forthcoming West Lancashire Highways & Transport Masterplan from Lancashire County Council on this matter.

Thirdly, West Lancashire Borough Council wishes to express concern regarding the allocation of the two sites to the north of Lydiate as reserve housing sites (SR4.47 and SR4.48). These sites would be released from the Green Belt and, in the long-term, would likely be developed. The release of this land from the Green Belt would close the strategic Green Belt gap between Maghull / Lydiate and Aughton / Holt Green.

The village of Holt Green to the south of Aughton is only 1.5 km from the existing built-up area of Maghull / Lydiate. The release of these sites from the Green Belt would reduce this gap to less than 1 km. The gap to the main built-up area of Aughton would be reduced to 2 km. As such, given the potential impact on the purposes of including land within the Green Belt (in particular that of preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another), West Lancashire Borough Council would ask Sefton Council to reconsider the allocation of these sites and review whether alternative sites would have less of an impact on the purposes of the Green Belt, for example, sites on the western side of Maghull which do not form part of a strategic gap and are partially contained by the existing built-up area.

It is West Lancashire Borough Council's view that the release of sites SR4.47 and SR4.48 would be better considered as part of a cross-boundary strategic Green Belt review given that it affects a strategic gap between two settlements in separate authorities.

If you have any queries regarding our comments on the Preferred Options of the Sefton Local Plan, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or Peter Richards.

Yours sincerely,

**John Harrison**  
Assistant Director Planning