



WILLIAM WRAGG MP
Member of Parliament for Hazel Grove Constituency
13 Stockport Road, Marple, Stockport, SK6 6BD

Pam Smith
Chief Executive
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Town Hall
Stockport
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10th March 2021

Dear Pam,

High Lane Village Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2037 (HLVNDP)
Executive Summary Response- William Wragg MP

I would firstly like to thank the steering committee of the High Lane Village Neighbourhood Forum (HLVNF), whose tireless dedication and commitment to building this plan over the last four years has resulted in a comprehensive vision, providing for positive future development of the area. In line with Government guidance, the plan has now been submitted for formal consultation with the ambition of being ready for a referendum and ratification by the local authority in the not-too-distant future.

I am pleased to respond to the above consultation in my capacity as the local Member of Parliament for High Lane. I will respond to the consultation using the four key planning themes identified through public consultation by the HLVNF: transport, housing, greenspace and heritage.

Transport

As mentioned in the HLVNDP Planning Policy document, (p.14), a key concern for the people of High Lane is transport and congestion. With a major arterial road dissecting the village, the desire for more inclusive and a mixed transport provision is crucial to meet the needs of current and future residents.

Since the opening of the A555 on the boundary of the HLVNDP, (fig. 2.0), the village has suffered from significantly increased levels of traffic and congestion. Particular



'pinch-points' of this traffic are concentrated on the junction with Windlehurst Road and the A6. I welcome the commitment made in the plan to support measures to reduce car dependency, and for noise-reducing road surfacing to protect residents from increased air and noise pollution generated by an estimated 23% increase in traffic.

In line with this, I commend the work undertaken by representatives of the HLVNF to monitor air quality in December 2019 and compare it to air quality assessments between 2014 and 2015- before the A555 was opened. I recognise fully the level of local concern there is about air quality, particularly given the numbers of residents who contact me to discuss this issue. This concern is reflected in the Issues and Options consultation in which 91% report that they're concerned by poor air quality. I therefore welcome the local provisions set out in the plan that would complement national measures to improve air quality.

I note with great enthusiasm the requirement for any new properties to be provided with an appropriate EV charging point. Alongside this, a requirement for any developer to provide adequate storage capacity for bikes to support efforts to increase walking and cycling in and around the village. Such requirements will not only improve air quality in the village, but will also help to reduce long-term congestion issues.

Policy T2- Liveable Neighbourhoods and Sustainable travel plans will also help reduce the burden of 'rat-running'. Providing segregated cycle routes, in and around the village will help to encourage school children to cycle to school, reducing the need for vehicular transport. This will greatly benefit residents residing to the south of the HLVNF boundary, on the Hartington Road estate. I also welcome a commitment to install new links and access points to the Middlewood Way.

I welcome the general commitments seeking an improvement of the public transport offer to High Lane. I will continue to work with Stockport Council, and Transport for Greater Manchester, to lobby for improved public transport links for the village and explore any new opportunities that may arise should bus franchising come into fruition through powers devolved to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Housing

High Lane's inclusion in the draft Greater Manchester Spatial Framework is undoubtedly one of the main catalysts for the creation of the HLVNF. The proactive approach taken, by establishing the forum, shows that the community at large are committed to taking ownership of their requirements, and building a set of policies to support sensitive development in the area.



The removal of the High Lane allocation from the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, a campaign which I was pleased to help lead, offers a new opportunity for the forum to progress with this policy document, as it focuses on the current and future needs of its residents. Set out in Policy H1, Housing Scale and Mix, I am pleased to endorse the prioritisation of starter homes for first time buyers, suitable accommodation for older people and affordable housing. This way, local residents will be able to afford to remain in the areas that they choose more easily and will sustain the fantastic independent shops that the village enjoys.

I also welcome the statement set out in 5.34, in response to the Stockport Core Strategy Policy CS3, which requires mixed tenures for any new development in the area. This supports a brownfield first policy that I have long advocated- this would help re-generate parts of High Lane, whilst also providing much needed starter-home investment.

From this submission, it is clear that the HLVNDP is committed to working proactively with Stockport MBC as it builds its own local plan outside of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework. Whilst doing this, I would strongly urge Stockport MBC to build a stronger relationship with local stakeholders, as crucial 'buy-in' from local residents is ultimately the key to success in building a plan which the majority can support. I would also encourage greater transparency in the discussions that should be taking place with Cheshire East Council, as Stockport MBC remains a statutory consultee, in light of their desire to increase housing developments along the A6 corridor.

Greenspace

High Lane enjoys excellent access to beautiful open green spaces, crucial to our collective mental and physical wellbeing. Through the adoption of a brownfield first policy by the local authority in their local plan process, High Lane's greenbelt should be secure for generations to come. This is something I will continue the fight to protect in my role as the local Member of Parliament. Policies NH1, NH2 and NH3 set out in the HLVNDP prospectus send a strong signal to future developers how keenly the people of High Lane feel about their local surroundings, and this is something I endorse.

I am particularly encouraged by the stipulations set out in policy NH3 of the development plan – Protecting and Enhancing Local Wildlife. Government policy in this area is moving towards rebuilding lost natural habitats, and the policies in this proposed plan would complement actions to protect and enhance local biodiversity. Through policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, Stockport's Core Strategy and the new forthcoming local plan, commitments set out in the



HLVNDP signal widespread support for retaining and building provisions to offset detrimental impacts on the environment that some development incurs.

Heritage

Across the High Lane Village Neighbourhood Area, as set out in fig. 2.0, there is a vast array of important built heritage assets. As stated in 7.1, the HLVNDP is conscious of the village's role in protecting existing assets of local importance. The document sets a range of sites of local heritage, and in 7.25, explains the way that in successive consultation processes facilitated by the HLVNF, protecting this heritage is of upmost importance to the people of High Lane as identified in the Issues and Options paper. Policies HD1 and HD2 complement existing planning policy associated with local and listed planning controls but sets out policies such as developing a new High Quality Design Code for the HLVDP are a step in the right direction for community ownership and oversight of future developments.

I am pleased that HD2 welcomes innovative, modern architectural design to compliment the village landscape. Windlehurst Road and Andrew Lane enjoy a significant diversity of styles which enhance the local built environment. Whilst future development should be sensitive to the existing heritage and architectural landscape, the HLVNDP sets out a policy which invites innovation and imaginative designs for future development.

I am pleased to respond to this consultation, and I look forward to the examination stage of the neighbourhood plan, in accordance with provisions set out in the Localism Act 2011.

I look forward to continuing working with the HLVNF as this process continues.

Yours sincerely,

William Wragg MP

Member of Parliament for the Hazel Grove constituency