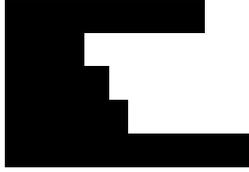


St Helens Borough Local Plan – Hearing Submission

Mr Steve Muskett



Further to my original submission from 11th March 2019, I would like to add the following comments, observations and objections given the various updates and the responses from the Council to numerous PI questions.

Matter 2 – Issue 2 – Q5

The Council have stated the need for an uplift to the housing figure given the economic growth aspirations.

Hugely exaggerated aspirations at that. The Omega development in Warrington, whilst fantastically has “created” 6500 jobs, it was first marketed as creating 24,000. I say “created” because many of those jobs have simply migrated from elsewhere, they are not new jobs.

Plastic Omnium for example, one of the few manufacturing companies on the Omega logistics park, were awarded business from JLR in Halewood. However, this was simply manufacturing that transferred from Magna (Decoma) in Halewood, to Warrington.

Jobs lost in Halewood, were “created” in Warrington, hundreds of them. From highly skilled engineers to lower and semi-skilled production operatives moved from the Halewood site to Warrington.

The same can be said of The Hut Group, Asda and Royal Mail to name a few; all consolidating and shifting operations without actually creating new jobs.

The inflated figures situation was repeated at the Florida Farm development, which was marketed as creating over 2500 jobs and has only resulted in around 300. 300 jobs is still 300 jobs that were not there before, but we cannot continue to base decisions on these false, hugely inflated figures, especially as more and more tasks will become automated.

During the Parkside enquiry, the topic of higher skilled jobs versus logistic jobs was discussed.

Creating employment opportunities for higher skilled workers was dismissed as those skill sets do not currently exist in St Helens.

Therefore, that would mean an increase in commuting workers, and increasing cars on the roads and travel was not a scenario anyone was looking to push forward.

By definition then, the lower skilled jobs that would be created by warehousing and logistics, are more suitable for St Helens residents so as to avoid that travel, congestion and pollution that would be created by excessive, additional journeys.

To take that logic further, it would probably be a fair assumption that the vast majority of those people already living in St Helens who those jobs would be created for, already have a house.

So then, why does there need to be an uplift of any figure to the housing needs let alone an increase of 10%?