

Marple Civic Society Response to Draft Local Plan – 20/12/25

Chapter name Our Strategy

Subject Strategic policy 1: Spatial strategy

Did you agree? Neither agree nor disagree

Comment

We agree with the following:

1. Prioritising brownfield development. In agreeing with the "brownfield first" approach, there should be a greater search to identify brownfield sites and places where a coherent approach to densification is possible

The protection of green belt is supported. Allocation of such sites for housing is opposed for a wide range of reasons including sustainability, car-dependency, social issues, infrastructure, landscape and loss of agricultural land.

12. Marple is a large district centre and it has a strategic role to play. Near to centre or in-centre development at appropriate densities could improve the economic viability of its existing facilities and enhance its cultural life.

15. The town centre first approach to retail and leisure is welcomed

17. Walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport should be prioritised

We disagree with:

10. Producing a plan that fails to meet the government target for development by 20% which in our view, and that of several professionals we have consulted with, is likely to put the whole plan in jeopardy at inspection.

17. Failing to produce a transport plan alongside the main plan document so the public can assess whether the aspiration that "core services and facilities are within easy reach of homes and workspaces"

is going to be met. The recently published draft GMCA Transport Strategy does not give any indication that public transport in the Marple area will be significantly improved in the short to medium term, particularly in regard to accessing such facilities as Stepping Hill Hospital.

Chapter name Providing for our communities

Subject COM 2: Community and social infrastructure

Did you agree? Neither agree nor disagree

Comment

At a recent public meeting held by Marple Civic Society, the provision of adequate health, welfare and social infrastructure for all those occupying the new housing proposed was a key concern of the majority of those present. It was second only to the travel problems perceived as likely to occur through proposed development.

Chapter name Our infrastructure

Subject INF 7: Integrated transport network

Did you agree? Neither agree nor disagree

Comment

At a recent public meeting held by the Civic Society, the pressure that would be put on local transport infrastructure, particularly private car transport, was perhaps the number one concern of people attending. We will be examining the new GMCA transport strategy in the near future but initial examination of it gives very little in the way of hope for the transport and travel situation in Marple improving.

Chapter name Our environment

Subject ENV 1: Protection of the natural environment

Did you agree? Disagree

Comment

There is a small area of open space bordering Marple District centre which is missing from the mapping, whether as an oversight or deliberately is not clear. We do not know who owns the undeveloped land adjacent to Union Road / Highfield Road but according to local residents this is a local amenity appreciated by them and in our view could be important as a "green lung" near to the busy Stockport Road. Significant tree cover in this space will aid local cooling effects in the increasingly hot summers expected in the future. We recommend this is designated as open space and investigated for nature recovery.

Subject ENV 2: Enhancing nature

Did you agree? Neither agree nor disagree

Comment

2.a.i. We doubt the wisdom of looking for a 20% NBG as this could potentially reduce gains in equally important areas such as improved sustainable travel, renewable energy generation and achieving high quality of design. As virtually all the construction that could take place under this plan will be carried out by private developers who must make a profit, they will perhaps argue that because of a 20% NBG requirement they cannot afford other "planning gains".

Chapter name Our homes

Subject HOM 2a: New residential communities

Did you agree? Neither agree nor disagree

Comment

List 1:

HOM 2.4 Land at Chadwick Street, Marple - 174 dwellings

Marple Civic Society (MCS) welcomed the SCUDS initiative as a positive step for Marple and it suggested several sites that may be considered

for development at higher densities including Trinity Street/Chadwick Street Car Park. It was thought that, on this site, a better designed car park (of the current capacity) could be designed alongside housing while creating the opportunity for improving the environment of Trinity Street. At no time did MCS suggest scrapping the car park on which the facilities in the town centre rely for their livelihood.

The proposed Stockport Local Plan allows for the building of 174 houses on 'Land on Chadwick Street'. An architect who is on our committee has calculated that the actual buildable area of the site is 0.7814h and to fit 174 houses on this site requires a density of 223 dwellings/h and this is more an inner city density than a suburban density. Given that approx. 120 public parking spaces must also be provided we question the achievability of such a density.

We support in-centre development for Marple, but do not support any loss of public parking upon which our retail centre relies either in the short term (during development) or the longer term (as a result of development).

List 2:

HOM 2.12 Compstall Mills - 130 dwellings

The development of this site is supported, subject to adequate active travel links through Brabyns Park to Marple Station and pedestrian routes to Ludworth School, traffic flow improvements for access to and from the development and protection of Etherow Country Park.

HOM 2.16 High Lane - 1,000 dwellings

The development of this site is not supported, not least because in the absence of a transport plan it is difficult to see how many of the policies elsewhere in the plan around active travel and controlling the impact on congestion can be met in this location. Poor public transport provision and an already choked road system do not allow for any expansion on this scale. The provision of facilities for the new residents is also of concern with the site being remote from the

existing village centre.