**SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION EAST OF HALEWOOD**

**HALEWOOD TOWN COUNCIL RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON DRAFT MASTERPLAN**

*The following represents the response from Halewood Town Council (HTC) following Members consideration of the draft Master Plan (February 2019) at the Town Council meeting held on 21st March 2019.*

In welcoming the proposed development and the opportunity to comment on the draft Master Plan, using table 3.1. as a reference, Members wished to make the following responses:

**Geo-environment** – Members personal historic knowledge is that, within the site, there are disused (coal) mine shafts which do not seem to be referenced anywhere within the consultation documents. Naturally, the existence of such is a major factor and must be thoroughly investigated and addressed as part of the final Master Plan.

**Heritage and Archaeology** – The Grade 2 listed resting place of ‘Blackie the Warhorse’ must be maintained as a focal point and destination in any development, and it would greatly benefit from a memorial

Referencing interred remains, it is also relevant to mention the existence of the graves of animals within the RSPCA site. What is planned for these?

**Transport** – Theproposed development will bring undoubted strainon thetransport provision in Halewood. Theopportunity should therefore be taken to undertakemajor research to address the overall transport requirements of the township. Specifically, public transport, in which regard, the Master Plan acknowledges that in respect of rail transport, ‘the frequency of services to and from Liverpool and Manchester to the station (Halewood) is low’. A great deal of work was undertaken in 2016 (?) on a proposal to develop a station (Halewood South) on land which forms part of the SUE site. Feasibility work was completed, supported by KMBC and Halewood Town Council, only for it to be dropped by Merseytravel. The proposed SUE gives new impetus to this proposal.

In relation to bus services, direct links to / from the SUE to the main ‘bus terminal’ at Halewood Shopping Centre in Leathers Lane are a must and once again, the services that will be developed to serve the SUE require to be integrated into an improved provision with particular reference to services serving hospitals.

The proposal that the access roads into the SUE are ‘inward facing’ rather than facing away from the town is welcomed as are the proposed upgrading to junctions.

The opportunity must be taken to eradicate the dangerous bend in Baileys Lane.

**Ecology** – The Town Council very much welcomes the proposal to retain and enhance Finch Woods and suggests consideration be given by KMBC to using part of this area as a Memorial Ground for cremated remains.

Any boundary hedging to the SUE site must be such that it does not impede the vision of motorists and other road users.

**Education**  - It is noted from table 7.3. KMBC has identified a pupil generation rate of 0.3 pupils per new home, which by extrapolation, based on 1,100 homes this equates to 330 potential pupils, slightly more than a 1.5 form entry primary school. The Master Plan acknowledges that space in existing primary schools is limited but goes on to say that capacity will be provided by extensions to existing schools. Accepting that 330 pupils will not ‘appear overnight’, recognising that significant funding will need to be identified not only within KMBC but via the Voluntary Aided and Academy Sector, work needs to start as soon as possible on a detailed plan of how this and early years provision is to be accommodated.

It is also relevant to reference the recent announcement that Halewood Academy has no spare places in Year 7 in September 2019. If this trend continues and it does potentially impact on the SUE, two issues arise;

* how is this capacity to be accommodated
* the decision by the Academy Trustees to cease 6th form provision on the site, should be revisited.

**Heath** – As with education, the SUE will bring additional pressure on health provision in the town ship with many residents already unable to access services within the area. Early discussions must take place with the appropriate NHS body about how this demand is to be satisfied.

**Public Open Space** – Table 3.1. references ‘Halewood Community Area’, it is unsure exactly where this is! Reference has already been made to the retention of Finch Woods but adequate general amenity space should be provided within the development to KMBC standards.

Turning to the overall issue of **Residential Development** - references in paragraphs 5.17 – 5.18 and 5.20 - 5.23 of the draft Master Plan are welcome. However, in relation to para 5.19, it is of concern that this provides a ‘loophole’ to developers should this requirement render the development unviable.

In relation to ‘tenure’ unless it is linked to some form of ‘shared ownership’ the properties sold a ‘freehold’ be truly that and not be subject to any leasehold attracting ground rent.

**G MacKenzie**

**Town Manager**

1st April 2019