

BARBARA KEELEY MP

Labour Member of Parliament for Worsley and Eccles South

First Floor
37 Manchester Road
Walkden
M28 3NS

Tel: 0161 799 4159
Fax: 0161 799 5829
www.barbarakeeley.co.uk

Draft Local Plan consultation
Spatial Planning
Salford Civic Centre
Chorley Road
Swinton
M27 5BY

13 January 2017

To whom it may concern

Salford Council Draft Local Plan Consultation on the Draft Plan 2016/2017

I am writing as the Member of Parliament for Worsley and Eccles South to respond to the consultation on Salford Council's Draft Local Plan.

I have outlined below the points that I would like to ensure are considered at this stage of the consultation process.

It is essential that Salford's Local Plan is developed alongside local residents and that it respects and works within the parameters of what is best for our city and our people.

I want local residents to be able to access good quality jobs and to have a good standard of living. Like many local people, I also want to see our precious open spaces protected and real workable solutions to our transport problems developed.

The challenge for Salford Council is to develop proposals that will encourage the efficient use of land. The protection of our green spaces and the regeneration of brownfield land across the city should be the driving force behind the Local Plan.

Over the last couple of months I have met a number of my constituents and listened to their views on the draft proposals. From our conversations I know that there is a great deal of anger over proposals to develop local Green Belt and greenfield land.

The strategic aims of the Local Plan must be balanced and must work to support both the current and future needs of local residents.

Proposals to develop land in the Green Belt

I am concerned about draft proposals to alter the designation of significant areas of Green Belt land in Worsley and Eccles South.

Over the last 11 years as the local MP, I have repeatedly expressed concerns about the suggested release of Green Belt land and have opposed the inappropriate development of greenfield land. I have presented a petition to Parliament signed by residents in Irlam and Cadishead calling for assurances that their local green spaces will be protected.

I made my views clear in response to consultations on Salford's Core Strategy document. I have spoken out against damaging planning applications that have threatened green open land at planning meetings and at planning inquiries over the last 11 years. And I have made these views clear in my recent response to the consultation on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

The five purposes of Green Belt are clear:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.¹

There are substantial health benefits in accessing this land for recreation and leisure purposes and ultimately this land can improve quality of life for local residents. Green space is an important environmental asset for local communities, particularly in otherwise urban areas.

The loss of this land could lead to urban sprawl and countryside encroachment and it could result in areas of vacant brownfield land being overlooked for development.

Once this land is released from the Green Belt I am concerned that it will set a worrying precedent for the future of other areas of our protected green space. In effect this decision could open the floodgates for further changes to our Green Belt policy.

In response to concerns that I and other MPs raised about the protection of Green Belt land earlier last year, the former Planning Minister Brandon Lewis said that:

“The Government has put in place the strongest protections for the Green Belt. The Framework makes it clear that inappropriate development may be allowed only where very special circumstances exist, and that Green Belt boundaries should be adjusted only in exceptional circumstances...we have been repeatedly clear that demand for housing alone will not change Green Belt boundaries.”²

National planning policy on the Green Belt is very clear. This land should **only** be developed in the most exceptional of circumstances. It should be protected from development wherever possible. The case simply has not been made for this to happen. The exceptional circumstances do not exist.

It is unfair to develop these areas of land, which are highly valued by the local community, in an otherwise urban environment in Salford, in order to meet targets set for the whole of Greater Manchester.

In October 2014 the Conservative-led Government updated online Planning Practice Guidance. The aim of this was to reaffirm local authorities' abilities to:

“safeguard their local area against urban sprawl, and protect the green lungs around towns and cities”³.

¹ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/9-protecting-green-belt-land/>

² Letter from Brandon Lewis MP, Minister of State for Planning and Housing, 7 June 2016

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/councils-must-protect-our-precious-green-belt-land>

On whether housing and economic need overrides constraints on land use like Green Belt the Guidance states that:

“The National Planning Policy Framework should be read as a whole: need alone is not the only factor to be considered when drawing up a Local Plan.

The Framework is clear that local planning authorities should, through their Local Plans, meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole, or specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. Such policies include those relating to sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives, and/or designated as sites of special scientific interest; land designated as green belt, local green space, an area of outstanding natural beauty, heritage coast or within a national park or the Broads; designated heritage assets; and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.”⁴

While I welcome plans to introduce more affordable housing to ensure that more local people are able to get on to the housing ladder, the need for affordable homes is not considered to be sufficient justification for removing these areas of land from the Green Belt. The NPPF makes it clear that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as “inappropriate” for the Green Belt. While there are some exceptions, the development of affordable housing is not permitted as one of the exceptional circumstances.

The Government’s 2014 web-based Planning Practice Guidance sets out that unmet housing need in a particular area is unlikely to meet the “very special circumstances” test to justify Green Belt development:

“Unmet housing need (including for traveller sites) is unlikely to outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and other harm to constitute the “very special circumstances” justifying inappropriate development on a site within the Green Belt”.⁵

Local green spaces serve as a green lung for otherwise urban areas of Salford. People from Worsley and Eccles South have been active in campaigning to protect this land from development.

I support a brownfield first approach to development. I understand that Salford Council has tried to prioritise the redevelopment of brownfield sites.⁶ Moving forward with the Local Plan we now have a real opportunity to progress this work and to safeguard our green open spaces.

As a city our focus should be on bringing back to life empty or neglected sites that were once home to industry and to achieve this a strategy for regeneration is essential. I encourage the Council to continue with work to ensure that these sites are developed now and not overlooked in favour of the more attractive sites that would likely be cherry picked by developers.

The development of brownfield sites first is a more sensible approach to house building. These areas tend to be closer to urban centres and near to existing infrastructure. Intelligent planning on the future of these sites could encourage local regeneration.

⁴ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment/stage-5-final-evidence-base/>

⁵ Planning Practice Guidance, [Housing and economic land availability assessment, Methodology – Stage 5: Final evidence base](#), 6 March 2014

⁶ Brownfield comes first why brownfield development works, CPRE, March 2016, p4

The decisions that are taken on the future of our Green Belt will impact not only current residents but future generations of Salford residents.

Government policy on protection for the Green Belt is outlined in S9 of the National Planning Policy Framework, clearly states:

“The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.”⁷

It also makes clear that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate for the Green Belt. The development of Green Belt and other green open spaces in Salford would mean less open space in an already built up city and ultimately the people who live, work, travel or take leisure in these areas will be adversely impacted.

The benefits of this land are well documented – recreational, environmental, agricultural and health and wellbeing.

According to the report *Turning the Tide on Inactivity*, out of nine regions⁸ the North West has the second highest percentage of adults who are physically inactive. According to the same report, Salford is 148th⁹ most inactive (out of 150 local authorities) with 39% of adults being classed as inactive. This inactivity is estimated to cause 382 premature deaths (per 100,000/population each year) and cost £25.6m (overall cost of inactivity per 100,000 people to local authorities annually).¹⁰

Green spaces also provide a longer term positive effect on life satisfaction and are good for people’s wellbeing. A study published in 2013 found that living in an urban area with green spaces has a long-lasting positive impact on people’s mental well-being. Researchers found that moving to a green space had a sustained positive effect:

“...on average, individuals have both lower mental distress and higher well-being when living in urban areas with more green space. Although effects at the individual level were small, the potential cumulative benefit at the community level highlights the importance of policies to protect and promote urban green spaces for well-being”.¹¹

According to research from the University of Washington:¹²

“Encounters with nearby nature help alleviate mental fatigue by relaxing and restoring the mind. Within built environments parks and green spaces are settings for cognitive respite, as they encourage social interaction and de-stressing through exercise or conversation, and provide calming settings. Having quality landscaping and vegetation in and around the places where people work and study is a good investment. Both visual access and being within green space helps to restore the

⁷ National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, S9 Protecting the Green Belt, paragraph 79.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

⁸ Turning the tide of inactivity, http://ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Turning_the_tide_of_inactivity.pdf

⁹ Turning the tide of inactivity, http://ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Turning_the_tide_of_inactivity.pdf

¹⁰ Turning the tide of inactivity, http://ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Turning_the_tide_of_inactivity.pdf

¹¹ “Would you be happier living in a greener urban area? A fixed-effects analysis of panel data”, White, Mathew; Alcock, Ian; Wheeler, Benedict; Depledge, Michael. *Psychological Science*, 2013, Vol. 24, Issue 6.

¹² https://depts.washington.edu/hhwb/Thm_Mental.html *Green Cities: Good Health*

mind's ability to focus. This can improve job and school performance, and help alleviate mental stress and illness.”

The research highlights the following:

- *The experience of nature helps to restore the mind from the mental fatigue of work or studies, contributing to improved work performance and satisfaction.*
- *Green spaces provide necessary places and opportunities for physical activity. Exercise improves cognitive function, learning, and memory.*
- *Outdoor activities can help alleviate symptoms of Alzheimers, dementia, stress, and depression, and improve cognitive function in those recently diagnosed with breast cancer.*
- *Contact with nature helps children to develop cognitive, emotional, and behavioral connections to their nearby social and biophysical environments. Nature experiences are important for encouraging imagination and creativity, cognitive and intellectual development, and social relationships.*
- *Symptoms of ADD in children can be reduced through activity in green settings, thus “green time” can act as an effective supplement to traditional medicinal and behavioral treatments.*

Green spaces offer many benefits to people who live near them and visit them and to the places they are set in and to the nature that they host. These areas of land are important assets and like many local people I want to see them protected from development for the benefit of future generations.

Objections to specific policies outlined in the Salford Council’s Draft Local Plan

H3/4 Western Cadishead and Irlam and EC4/1 Port Salford expansion

Both sites sit on mossland and the Draft Local Plan states there will be a loss of peat as a consequence of developing the land.

I understand that the land is Grade I Agricultural land, which means it is excellent quality and has either no or very minor limitations for agricultural use. A range of agricultural and horticultural crops can be grown on this land and yields are high and less variable than on land of lower quality. This would mean that in order to bring forward these significant developments Grade I Agricultural land will be lost.

The NPPF directs local planning authorities to seek to use poorer quality over higher quality agricultural land:

“Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality.”¹³

Given the trend for locally-sourced food and fuel, I believe that we should be focusing our efforts on making the best use of this land in a sustainable way.

The mossland is a tract of countryside of great value to those living in surrounding urban communities. In addition to its agricultural importance, it has great potential for informal recreation for those living in Salford. This land is also important for nature conservation and particularly for birdlife.

¹³ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/policy/achieving-sustainable-development/delivering-sustainable-development/11-conserving-and-enhancing-the-natural-environment/>

Referring to Policy EC4/1, the policy makes clear that even with the Green Belt around the site being retained, the expansion “*is likely to have a significant visual impact, and it will be very important for it to be integrated into the landscape as far as possible...*”

I am concerned that, by including these policies, Salford Council could be setting a worrying precedent. The mosslands should be managed and restored to ensure that their carbon sequestration potential is realised.

H3/1 Land East of Boothstown (Boothstown and Ellenbrook, and Worsley)

I understand that this site refers to Green Belt land located next to the RHS Garden Bridgewater site. I am concerned that we would lose green space to make way for ‘upmarket homes’ and also that even more traffic could be adding to the congestion in an area already identified as a traffic hotspot.

H3/2 Land west of Boothstown (Boothstown and Ellenbrook)

The draft proposals for this Green Belt land could mean that green space at this site would be lost to make way for a substantial housing development on the East Lancashire corridor. This is a stretch of road which is renowned for congestion. It does not seem sensible to be pressing ahead with developments of this scale in areas which are struggling to cope with current traffic volumes.

H3/15 Hazelhurst Farm (Worsley)

H3/16 Land north of Lumber Lane (Worsley)

Again, developing homes on this scale at these locations is a cause for concern given the history of local traffic congestion on the main routes around the site.

H3/8 Land West of Burgess Farm (Little Hulton)

I do not believe that proposals to use this site for development should be included in the Plan. Like many local residents I opposed the earlier development of the land at Burgess Farm. This area already suffers from traffic congestion and the strain on local services as a result of large numbers of residents moving into this area will be significant.

I am concerned that if this site is outlined for development, this will exacerbate these problems and will adversely impact the quality of life of local people. The views of local people must be respected and proposals for this land should be developed in line with their wishes.

I object to the inclusion of the proposals outlined above. I ask that these proposals be removed from Salford Council’s Draft Local Plan and that work be carried out to secure the future of these green spaces, free from the threat of development.

Support for the following policies:

G15/5 WB001 SA22 Broadoak North

G15/5 WB002 SA24 Broadoak South

G15/5 WB003 SA19 Land at Beesley Green

G15/5 WB004 SA19 Land at Crossfield Drive

I welcome plans to add the sites listed above to the Green Belt and designate them as local green space.

I was deeply concerned to hear that despite the strong case that was fought by me, local people and Salford Council that the decision has been taken to re-open the appeal.

I agree that as is stated in the Draft Local Plan document “*These individual parts of the West Salford Greenway are demonstrably special to the adjacent communities...*” and that the “*area has a wider strategic significance in terms of the contribution it makes to the character of West Salford, including through some distinctive views.*”

As the Draft Plan makes clear, this land has an important role in terms of “*protecting the setting and special character of historic settlements, and the southern part for having a strong sense of openness...*”

I will continue to oppose plans to develop this land for housing. I hope that by designating the land as Green Belt Salford Council will be able to protect this green open space so that it remains undeveloped.

Concerns relating to traffic and transport

I have concerns about the impact that the quantity of housing and industrial development proposed above could have on the local road network and on public transport.

In and around Worsley and Eccles South local roads, infrastructure and transport capacity struggle even at existing demand levels. The loss of green space and the large scale development proposals for the constituency will exacerbate these congestion problems. There are few solutions which have been put forward to try to tackle the current congestion.

The local road and motorway network is already at the point of gridlock at peak times and due to sports or other events affecting the network. The introduction of a “Smart Motorway” scheme on the M60 along the Worsley and Eccles stretches of the road will not resolve the acute problems we now have with traffic congestion. Indeed, work to change the M60 to a Smart Motorway has been on-going for some time, causing significant disruption even before the scheme is up and running.

At the end of 2015 I started a campaign to try to get senior transport officials to tackle the problems that local people face on our roads now, and to suggest solutions for the future. No short or even medium term solutions were forthcoming.

During a traffic summit I was told that between November 2014 and November 2015 traffic on roads in Salford had increased by 3.6%. This is more than three times the 1.1% average increase in traffic across Greater Manchester. With roads and motorways in Salford full to capacity at peak times, accidents or an event at a stadium or the Trafford Centre can now cause gridlock.

We need to look at tackling the current problems first before pressing ahead with future largescale developments that will exacerbate local traffic congestion.

Plans to encourage people to commute via public transport are welcome, but for this to work the confidence of commuters must be won first. For now, many people do not have that confidence and would rather travel by car. I receive regular complaints from constituents about public transport. These issues need to be dealt with now.

The M60 is a critical part of the North West transport network in England. However the mix of local traffic and strategic traffic, together with the design of the road, exacerbates congestion and environmental problems.

There is a real fear in Worsley and Eccles South that more development will further exacerbate current levels of traffic congestion. According to the *Manchester North West*

Quadrant Study – Stage 3 Report¹⁴ by the Department for Transport, Highways England and Transport for the North:

“future development proposals in and around the study area will create additional residential, employment and distribution trips and will further impact the transportation network thus compounding existing problems...”¹⁵

And:

“The existing poor performance of the motorway network in the Manchester North-West Quadrant means that the majority of the sections of M60 between junctions 8 and 18 fall within the worst 10% of national motorway links in terms of journey time reliability. Furthermore, when incidents occur there are few viable alternative routes for traffic to use as the alternative routes already experience high levels of congestion and consequently the network takes a long time to recover from issues resulting in prolonged congestion, lost productivity and environmental dis-benefits.”¹⁶

The study also states that:

“Even taking account of planned improvements both to the road network and to public transport, the anticipated impact of the forecast traffic growth over the next 20 years is that the motorway network within the study area will experience further worsening of the identified problems which will limit economic growth potential of future developments.”¹⁷

The M60 in Salford is already operating at capacity and experiences significant operational issues and:

“...Committed and planned developments will exacerbate this and could constraint further development aspirations and opportunities as well as impacting potential inward investment to the area.”

“Transport and transport related problems in Manchester’s North-West Quadrant already present barriers to economic growth and will only worsen over the coming years. The case for change is therefore based on the interrelated transportation and economic needs of the north. Importantly, if the capacity constraints on the motorway network in the Greater Manchester area (and their impact on the wider transport network in the north) are not addressed, they will; hold back growth across the region; make the aspirations for the Northern Powerhouse harder to achieve; and, see worsening transport and environmental issues.”¹⁸

¹⁴ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571391/manchester-north-west-quadrant-strategic-study-stage-3-report.pdf

¹⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571391/manchester-north-west-quadrant-strategic-study-stage-3-report.pdf Page 5

¹⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571391/manchester-north-west-quadrant-strategic-study-stage-3-report.pdf Page 15

¹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571391/manchester-north-west-quadrant-strategic-study-stage-3-report.pdf Page 16

¹⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/571391/manchester-north-west-quadrant-strategic-study-stage-3-report.pdf

In order to encourage residents to travel by public transport their trust must be regained. That will simply not be achievable if passengers are still forced to use services that are stretched to capacity and that are unreliable.

Poor Air quality

Further development, particularly through the development of our green spaces, in Worsley and Eccles South could also have an impact on the health of local residents due to increased air pollution from the additional car movements. The recently published Greater Manchester Low Emissions Strategy states that:

“Poor air quality has a real and significant effect on people’s lives, contributing to cancer, asthma, stroke and heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and changes linked to dementia. Long-term exposure to out-door air pollution is understood to be a contributory factor in deaths from respiratory and cardiovascular disease...”¹⁹

The impact of poor air quality is significant. Clearly a focus on addressing these concerns is critical. While I support actions to reduce air pollution through measures such as the introduction of sustainable public transport, this alone will not solve the problem.

There is much evidence to suggest that air pollution causes significant harm to the environment and to the health of our communities. Transport is the biggest source of NO₂ and PM₁₀ and is a major contributor to carbon emissions. Motorways are a major contributor to emissions and as is highlighted in the consultation the whole of the motorway network in Greater Manchester falls within the Air Quality Management Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability, planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. The effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, the natural environment or general amenity, and the potential sensitivity of the area or proposed development to adverse effects from pollution, should be taken into account...”²⁰

We already have significant problems with air pollution and poor air quality in Worsley and Eccles South constituency, due to the volumes of traffic and traffic congestion on the three motorways, (the M60, the M62, and the M602) and the local road network.

In 2013 the Supreme Court confirmed that:

“...the Government is in breach of the EU Air Quality Directive leaving the UK open to enforcement action at the national or European level. ...Nitrogen dioxide is exceeded in Greater Manchester at roadside locations and in busy town centres. Defra forecast that compliance with nitrogen dioxide limits will not be achieved until 2020 in Greater Manchester...Pollution from road traffic is the most significant cause of poor air quality in Greater Manchester.”²¹

¹⁹ Greater Manchester Low Emissions Strategy December 2016 - P8, Para 2.2

²⁰ National Planning policy Framework, March 2012

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

²¹ <http://www.greatairmanchester.org.uk/LatestNews/default.aspx?itemID=23>

Poor air quality can have serious consequences for both human health and the environment. More people die prematurely every year because of air pollution than in road traffic accidents. Poor air quality and climate change are linked as both result from the combustion of fuel.

The main pollutants of concern in Salford are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀). The main source of pollution in the city is transport. Nitrogen emissions affect lung function and increase the risk of respiratory problems. They may exacerbate asthmas and increase susceptibility to infections.

In 2012 at the Salford M60 monitoring Station at junction 13, the permitted level of Nitrogen Dioxide was exceeded on 260 days, an increase from 248 in 2011 and 2010. This was the second highest rate of Nitrogen Dioxide levels recorded in Greater Manchester in 2012 (behind only the Manchester Oxford Road station which recorded 296 days as exceeding the limit).

According to the Greater Manchester Emissions Inventory 2010 Update Report from June 2013²², motorway emissions for Salford are the worst in Greater Manchester and often double that of neighbouring districts. For example there are 813 tonnes per year of Carbon Monoxide in Salford compared to 482 tonnes in Manchester and 320 tonnes in Trafford. In terms of Particulate Matter, Salford levels are at 106 tonnes per year compared to 59 tonnes in Manchester and 39 tonnes in Trafford.

The mortality figure for Salford attributable to air pollution is 5.9%, which is higher than the average for England of 5.6% and much higher than the figures for some parts of the country.²³

Reported respiratory problems in Salford, such as COPD and asthma are significantly worse than the average in England. Reported prevalence of COPD for Salford Clinical Commissioning Group was 2.8%²⁴ - significantly worse than the England average (1.7%) and higher than the average for the North of England Commissioning region (59 out of 68 Clinical Commissioning Groups in the region). This prevalence of respiratory disease has risen from 2% in 2005.

In 2013 the Highways Agency announced it had shelved plans for all-lane running on the M60 between junctions 8 and 18 due to poor air quality.

Given the severity of the problems we currently face with air pollution exceedances and the potential impact this could have on the health of local residents, it does not seem sensible to bring forward proposals to add to the volume of traffic congestion and to pursue policies that would lead to the development of the Green Belt or greenfield land.

Strain on local services

I have serious concerns about the lack of consideration given to how local services like GP practices will cope with added demand from these new housing developments.

The strain that GP practices across the country are now under due to swelling patient numbers is widely known. Without adequate Government funding these problems will intensify.

²² <http://www.gmtu.gov.uk/reports/emigma/HFASReport1750v1.0.pdf>

²³

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332854/PHE_CRCE_010.pdf

²⁴ https://www.aquanw.nhs.uk/Downloads/IOP/COPD%20-%20CCG%20reports/Salford_CCG.pdf

In Salford the general demand on our medical practices is already high. I have raised concerns on a number of occasions about increasing demands caused by the number of extra people moving into the catchment area of local GP practices.

I have had issues raised with me by local GPs about increases to their list sizes, with one practice seeing an increase of 15% in one year. GPs tell me there are no extra resources available to manage the demand. Most recently, one local GP practice has been allowed to close its practice list to new patients.

New housing developments across the constituency are placing additional pressure on both our local GP services and our schools. Over the last few years I have raised objections to planning applications which I consider inappropriate for the area. In my objections I have routinely highlighted concerns about the impact additional housing could have on local services. This includes the impact they could have on the services provided by GP surgeries to patients.

GPs have told me that they are not consulted about the impact of a planning application on their practices. It appears that the impact of housing developments and the associated local population growth on local GP services is not being given proper consideration in the planning process. I am concerned that this is an issue which is being ignored and as a result our GP services are starting to reach breaking point in parts of Worsley and Eccles South. This situation is not sustainable.

Proposals in the Draft Local Plan do not take into account the impact that sizeable developments could have on local health services and other local services. If these problems are not being addressed now, how can local residents be assured that the future development plans will not adversely impact them?

The provision of allotments

I support the view that it is essential that Salford Council puts in place a policy on allotments related to residential developments and the Green Space policy.

We need a strong policy which ensures the creation of further allotments as residential development goes ahead in Salford. I believe that a clear policy should be developed and an achievable target should be set for the creation of further allotments.

Allotments have a number of benefits. They are an excellent way for families to grow their own fruit and vegetables, thereby promoting healthier eating. They also promote a healthy lifestyle and allow the opportunity for low impact exercise outdoors. They have many health benefits and can also contribute to tackling climate change and helping to promote biodiversity.

The demand for allotments in Salford is high and clearly there is a need for more to be made available. I support proposals outlined under Policy R2 to ensure a minimum of 5,000m² (or 0.50 hectares) of allotments per 1,000 households.

With this in mind, I welcome proposals contained in policy H4/2 Former Swinton Wastewater Treatment Works and surrounding open land, Swinton South which make clear that replacement allotment provision will also need to be incorporated within the site, as there is a shortage across the city. As this recognises there is a need for increased allotment provision.

In Summary

I believe that giving the go ahead for large areas of local Green Belt land to be developed is not the right approach for Salford and that it ignores the wishes of many local people.

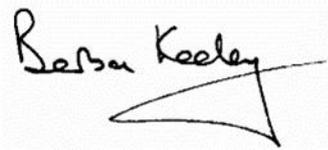
The proposals I highlight above would add great strain to our already overstretched local infrastructure and run counter to aims to tackle serious environmental concerns, including tackling poor air quality and we would lose areas of green space which have so many benefits.

Real improvements must be made to local public transport to regain the trust of commuters. We need a concerted effort to tackle the intolerable levels of traffic congestion, with plans to achieve improvements which start now.

I object to plans to develop on the Green Belt and on our green open spaces and I call for a rethink on policies that would see Salford lose these areas of land.

Please consider these comments as part of the consultation process. I look forward to being involved further with Salford Council's Local Plan consultation as the process develops.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Keeley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Barbara Keeley MP
Member of Parliament for Worsley and Eccles South