

North Warwickshire Local Plan Examination Update November 2020 - Site H2 - IWA response

In response to the invitation at paragraph 7 of INSP5B to submit focussed written responses in place of participation in hearing sessions, we would like to respond to paragraph 64 concerning Site H2 Land NW of Atherstone off Whittington Lane, as below:

Introduction

The Inland Waterways Association (IWA) is the membership charity that works to protect and restore the country's canals and river navigations for public benefit. IWA is a national organisation with a network of local branches and volunteers who work with navigation authorities, national and local government, and a wide range of voluntary, private and public sector organisations for the benefit of the waterways and their users.

The Lichfield Branch of IWA has considered this matter in relation to the environment of the Coventry Canal and the interests of its users. The Coventry Canal is a historic waterway and a valuable amenity and recreational corridor providing leisure boating, walking, angling, cycling and nature conservation benefits to the area.

INSP5B

64. For consistency with the NPPF2012, and provisions of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, how should allocation H15 address heritage assets?⁴² Similarly in respect of site H2?⁴³ Unless there is site specific justification for a differential approach in one location compared to another, for consistency heritage requirements should be expressed identically.

Superscript 43 references ALP43 but this should presumably be ALP42, the Pegasus Group response.

This proposes some further changes to the wording of the policy for site H2 relating to heritage assets, which IWA considers acceptable.

With regard to the suggested 'consistency' of heritage requirements, IWA considers that these are site specific, that there are significant differences between the church and memorial in H15 and the canal and farm in H2, and that the text should address the specific heritage assets of each site.

Coventry Canal

The Coventry Canal within site H2 includes two of the canal's locks (specifically Lock 8 and Lock 9 of the Atherstone flight) and also Whittington Road Bridge 46, all of which are Grade II Listed. But importantly, the whole canal is a (non-designated) heritage asset. The policy wording should acknowledge all of these heritage sensitivities.

In IWA's Position Statement on Site H2 (PS.M9.17 of April 2019) we asked (at 16) that there be a clear commitment to protect the recreational and heritage corridor of the Coventry Canal from the adverse effects of the development by including an additional requirement that:

"housing will be set back behind a broad buffer zone along both sides of the Coventry Canal, forming a continuous corridor of open amenity land to help preserve and enhance the canal environment. This corridor can encompass Public Open Space, parkland, woodland, wildflower meadows, sports fields, children's play areas and informal recreation space."

We would ask that further consideration be given to including this requirement in the policy.

Regards,

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Planning Officer

Inland Waterways Association, Lichfield Branch