

Statement of Case

Warton Residents Association (Rule 6 Party)

Appeal ref.: APP/R3705/W/25/3371526

*Site: Land south of Warton Recreation Ground, Orton Road,
Warton*

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Case sets out the Warton Residents Association's position in relation to the above appeal. On 6th October 2025, North Warwickshire Borough Council ("NWBC") resolved that it would have refused permission had it been the determining authority. The appeal scheme is opposed in full for reasons of conflict with the adopted development plan, disproportional scale in a Category 4 settlement, and cumulatively harmful infrastructure and landscape impacts. ¹

2. Policy Context

2.1 The North Warwickshire Local Plan (adopted September 2021) ("NWLP") provides the statutory framework. Policy LP2 places Warton in the settlement hierarchy as a Category 4 settlement. In such locations, development adjacent to the development boundary is to be considered on its merits, and typically limited to windfall housing usually on sites of no more than 10 units at any one time, having regard to viability, services and environmental constraints. The spatial strategy is to concentrate the majority of growth at higher-order settlements and protect the countryside setting of smaller villages. ²

2.2 The strategic objective to maintain separation between settlements and to manage growth proportionately is reinforced by the approach to "meaningful gaps" and rural character set out in the plan and by appeal precedent concerning the Tamworth–Polesworth corridor. ³

3. Proportionality and Settlement Role

3.1 Warton is a small rural village whose identity derives from a compact historic core and modest twentieth-century expansion. The adopted policy intent is that Category 4 settlements grow organically and not be swamped by large schemes (NWLP LP2). ⁴

3.2 The Curlew Close decision (30 June 2023) is directly on point. The Inspector recorded that Warton is a small village; that the scheme proposed 28 dwellings; and that this would "exceed the 10 units of housing by more than double... ⁵ result in a significant expansion on the outskirts of a small village." The Inspector found conflict with LP1 and LP2 and dismissed the appeal. This confirms that proposals substantially above the usual 10-unit scale undermine the plan-led strategy for Warton. ⁶

3.3 Amount of development in Warton. In light of §§7–8 of the Curlew Close decision and local evidence, proposals materially above the usual 10-dwelling scale constitute a significant expansion for Warton and have been found contrary to LP1/LP2. ⁷

3.4 Documented growth since 2016. Publicly available sources indicate substantial uplift in the housing stock at Warton over the last decade. The Polesworth Neighbourhood Plan evidence base records site allocation: H16 (Land north of Orton Road) for 128 dwellings, and consultation material notes "300+ new homes" delivered or in train in Warton since around 2015. In

February 2023 a further 71-dwelling scheme at Brookmill Meadows was approved, with completions reported by Warwickshire County Council in 2024/25. Taken together, these sources corroborate a move from a mid-2010s housing stock in the order of c.500 homes to in excess of 800 homes by 2025, i.e. growth of roughly 60% in a Category 4 village.⁸

4. Character, Landscape and Separation

4.1 Appeal precedent recognises the importance of maintaining a meaningful gap between Tamworth and Polesworth/Dordon and protecting rural character around the higher-order settlements' edges. Although that case relates to the western side of the parish, the Inspector's reasoning supports the Local Plan's strategic approach to settlement separation and avoiding cumulative erosion of rural setting.⁹

4.2 The appeal site projects beyond Warton's edge into open countryside. In combination with recent growth, further outward extension would unacceptably erode rural character and the perceptual separation between the parish's settlements, contrary to the development plan strategy.¹⁰

4.3 Best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. The appeal site forms part of the open agricultural landscape at the village edge. Inspectors considering nearby proposals have confirmed the agricultural character of land at Warton (Curlew Close) and, in the Tamworth–Polesworth corridor, recorded the loss of “best and most versatile” agricultural land as a harm. Given the continuity of land use and soils across this parish edge, the protection of BMV land is a material consideration here.¹¹

5. Infrastructure and Accessibility

5.1 Limited local services. Warton has a modest service base (primary school, one convenience shop, a club and a public house) and lacks many day-to-day facilities; this was noted in Curlew Close, where the Inspector found that “easy access to shops, services and job opportunities would heavily rely on the use of private motor vehicles.”⁶

5.2 Public transport: buses. The registered local services are Arriva 785/786 (Tamworth–Austrey corridor). The published timetable does not list a “Warton” stop; however, the route runs through Warton between “Polesworth Ankerside” and “Austrey Main Road.” On weekdays, the first corridor bus in the morning reaches Austrey Main Road at 07:04 and Polesworth Ankerside at 07:16 (Service 785), so a Warton pass-time would fall between those times. In the evening, the last corridor bus shown passes Polesworth Ankerside at 18:07 and Austrey Main Road at 18:22 (Service 786), again implying a Warton pass-time between those times. Saturday services are sparser, with first corridor services mid-morning and last services in the late afternoon/early evening (e.g., Polesworth Ankerside 11:07 / 17:07 and Austrey Main Road 11:22 / 17:22 on Service 786). In all cases, Warton is not timed, and actual pass-times fall between the Polesworth and Austrey timings. This limited timetable undermines realistic mode shift from the private car.¹²

5.2A Primary healthcare access. The nearest general practices for Warton residents are in Dordon and Atherstone:

- Dordon & Polesworth Group Practice, 162 Long Street, Dordon, B78 1QA (NHS “Find a GP”).¹³
- The Atherstone Surgery, 1 Ratcliffe Road, Atherstone, CV9 1EU (NHS “Find a GP”).¹⁴

There is no direct bus route from Warton to either surgery. The Arriva 785/786 corridor serves Warton and Polesworth but not Atherstone, while services linking Atherstone (e.g., Stagecoach 48A) run between Atherstone and Nuneaton, not via Warton. Dordon is served by services such as 766/767 (Nuneaton–Atherstone–Dordon–Kingsbury), which do not run via Warton. In practical terms, Warton has no public-transport access to its nearest GP surgeries.¹⁵

5.3 Rail. Nearest station and service frequency. The nearest railway station promoted by local developers is Polesworth. Polesworth receives a single northbound call per day, six days per week (Mondays–Saturdays), with no trains stopping in the opposite (southbound) direction. Consequently, rail is functionally unavailable for most everyday journeys to and from Warton. One can certainly leave Polesworth, but it appears one might never return.¹⁶

5.4 Conclusion on infrastructure. The appeal scheme would add car-dependent trips to a village with constrained services and a thin, daytime-oriented bus offer, in conflict with NWLP Policies LP1 and LP2’s aim to focus growth in the most accessible locations and reduce the need to travel by private car.¹⁷

5.5 Social and community impacts (cohesion, crime and anti-social behaviour). The recent pace and scale of residential growth in Warton has outstripped the community’s opportunity to consolidate and integrate new households. Residents report that newcomers have had limited time and structured opportunities to become part of existing networks and local associations, while long-standing residents describe a loss of everyday familiarity and informal social contact that previously underpinned neighbourhood resilience. Community groups and facilities are reported as operating at or near capacity, with waiting lists or reduced provision, constraining integration.¹⁸

Perceived increases in crime and anti-social behaviour. Residents’ statements describe a rise in incidents associated with the recreation ground and other communal spaces, including noise, late-evening congregation, minor vandalism and petty theft (e.g., damage to play equipment, fence panels and sheds), as well as vehicle-related nuisance (parking disputes and speeding on estate roads). While resident testimony is not a substitute for police statistics, these qualitative accounts are consistent and recent, and indicate pressure on informal social control during a period of rapid demographic change.¹⁸

Planning relevance. The Local Plan’s social objective (LP1) seeks strong, vibrant and healthy communities supported by appropriate infrastructure and safe environments. In circumstances where the existing settlement is still absorbing a substantial cohort of new households, and

where residents attest to weakened cohesion and elevated anti-social behaviour, introducing a further significant tranche of housing now would reasonably risk exacerbating these issues. A phased approach that allows the community to cohere, supported by targeted investment in facilities and youth provision, would better align with the plan-led strategy.¹⁹

5.6 Recreation ground parking pressures. Warton's recreation ground is intensively used at weekends by two very active football teams. Residents report that, during match days, cars are routinely parked on grass verges for almost the entire length of Church Road, with no off-street or formal overspill parking available in the village to accommodate this activity. The effect is to obstruct visibility at accesses, narrow carriageway widths, and displace pedestrians into the running lane, with knock-on implications for safety and residential amenity.²⁰

6. Overall Planning Balance

6.1 The proposal conflicts with the development plan read as a whole: it is disproportionate to a Category 4 settlement (LP2), extends into open countryside (LP1/LP2), and would foster unsustainable travel patterns given existing public transport provision. The Curlew Close decision confirms that materially larger-than-usual schemes at Warton run contrary to LP1/LP2 and have been resisted at appeal.⁶

6.2 No material considerations indicate that this conflict should be set aside. On the contrary, maintaining a plan-led, proportionate approach is essential to safeguard Warton's rural character and ensure that infrastructure is not outpaced by speculative growth.¹⁰

7. Conclusion

7.1 For the reasons above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Evidence cited

- North Warwickshire Local Plan (adopted September 2021).
- Appeal Decision APP/R3705/W/18/3196890 (Tamworth/M42 corridor – meaningful gap; BMV agricultural land).
- Curlew Close Appeal Decision (30 June 2023).
- Polesworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan (Reg. 16, 2024).
- Bus Timetable 785/786 Tamworth–Austrey (valid from 1 February 2025).
- Polesworth train calling pattern extract (single daily northbound stop; no southbound calls).
- NHS profiles: Dordon & Polesworth Group Practice; The Atherstone Surgery.

- Warwickshire/Stagecoach route listings: 785/786; 48A; 766/767.
- Warton Residents Association – Resident Statements bundle (2025).
- Warton Residents Association – Residents’ Photographs (2025).
- Warton Residents Association – Rule 6 Statement.

Footnotes

1. Warton Residents Association, Rule 6 Statement (submitted document).
2. North Warwickshire Borough Council, Local Plan (Adopted September 2021).
3. Local Plan, 2021; APP/R3705/W/18/3196890
4. North Warwickshire Borough Council, Local Plan (Adopted September 2021).
5. and
6. Planning Inspectorate Appeal Decision (Curlew Close, Warton), 30 June 2023.
7. Curlew Close Appeal Decision, 2023; Polesworth Neighbourhood Plan
8. Polesworth NP draft, H16: 128; Consultation Statement noting “300+ new homes”; News: 71 homes approved/completing
9. APP/R3705/W/18/3196890; Local Plan, 2021
10. Local Plan, 2021; Polesworth Neighbourhood Plan
11. Curlew Close Appeal Decision, 2023; APP/R3705/W/18/3196890
12. Arriva Midlands, 785/786 Tamworth–Austrey timetable (effective 1 February 2025), PDF.
13. NHS, Dordon & Polesworth Group Practice, 162 Long Street, Dordon, B78 1QA – <https://www.nhs.uk/services/gp-surgery/dordon-and-polesworth-group-practice/M84007>
14. NHS, The Atherstone Surgery, 1 Ratcliffe Road, Atherstone, CV9 1EU – <https://www.nhs.uk/services/gp-surgery/the-atherstone-surgery/M84019>
15. Warwickshire service list for 785/786; Stagecoach 48A Atherstone–Nuneaton; Warwickshire 766/767 route listing
16. West Coast Main Line calling pattern showing single northbound stop at Polesworth (image provided), corroborated by public timetable data.

17. Local Plan, 2021; Curlew Close Appeal Decision, 2023

18. Warton Residents Association, Resident Statements bundle (2025) – witness statements and logs concerning cohesion and ASB (submitted evidence) and local Crime Statistics.

19. Local Plan, 2021; WRA Resident Statements (2025)

20. Warton Residents Association, Residents' Photographs of Church Road parking during weekend fixtures (2025) – submitted evidence bundle.