

Representor unique Part A Ref *	A0418
Matter	3
Relevant questions nos	19

SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Stage 1 Hearing Statement

*Your unique reference can be found in the Schedule of Respondents (Schedule 3 of document SD014.01) at:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-planning/local-plan-review/draft-shropshire-local-plan-2016-2038-examination/examination-library/earlier-regulation-18-plan-making-stages-of-consultation/regulation-19-pre-submission-draft-of-the-shropshire-local-plan-consultation/>

Matter 3 – Development Strategy (Policies SP1 – SP15)

19. Is Policy SP14 justified effective and consistent with national policy? Should the corridors be marked on a map or plan? Is this policy consistent with other policies in the Local Plan? Is it the purpose of this policy to allow for significant growth in addition to that allocated in the Local Plan, including development in the Green Belt?

I believe that the strategic corridors should be marked on a map. As a recently-retired community leader I had never heard of the A4169 and A458 through Much Wenlock described as a Strategic Corridor. If I had, it is something I would have challenged because the volume of heavy vehicles passing towards and through the town cause traffic delays, infrastructure damage, and risk to health of residents and pedestrians and other road users.

in and around Much Wenlock, the A4169 bounds the AONB for 2.8 miles and the A458 cuts through it at Wenlock Edge for over half a mile. The A458 and A4169 either borders or cuts through $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the Much Wenlock Conservation Area. There is only a modest amount of employment, other than education (Wm Brookes School is the largest employer), retail, tourism and hospitality, in the town. Agriculture of course has a large part to play and during the harvest season in particular, the A4169, the A458 and the B4378 carry heavy machinery. It is not possible for a combine harvester (even with its cutting bed removed) to pass through the Victoria Road section of the A458 and through the lower part of the B4378 without clearing other traffic from the road first. There are no viable alternative routes. The town is already subject to heavy vehicles travelling from the M54 and Telford to the A49 at Weeping Cross. Cracked footways, uprooted steel bollards and damaged property in the town on this shorter route are testament to their impact.

It is worth also focusing on pedestrians. Around the Gaskell Arms junction, where the two A roads meet, there is the confluence of five roads - the High Street, the A458 towards Bridgnorth, the B4378 towards Craven Arms, the A 458 towards Shrewsbury and the A4169 towards Telford. For residents along Stretton Road (B4371) and along High Causeway and Victoria Road (A458), they cross the road to make their way to the shopping etc. area at the A4169 by its junction with the A458. They cannot safely walk up the A4169 to get away from the junction because there is no footway on that side of the road. Consequently, they have to employ quick wits and quick steps in order to cross safely. The A458 Victoria Road has a footway only on its northern side - the causeway. Even casual observation will demonstrate that this limestone structure is subject to several vehicle impacts, demonstrated by the volume of limestone lying in the highway. The railings around the pedestrian refuge at the side of the Gaskell Arms are distorted as a result of vehicle damage and the road sign outside the Windology retail unit is flattened by a vehicle that chose to mount the footway. The proposed development at Buildwas, Cressage, Much Wenlock and Tasley will only serve to make the challenge of crossing any of these roads more difficult - and more dangerous.

It is my contention that if the purpose of this policy is to allow for significant growth, the growth will manifest itself elsewhere and Much Wenlock will suffer as a result.

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Much Wenlock will act as a Key Centre and contribute towards strategic growth objectives in the east of the County, delivering around 200 dwellings and around 2 hectares of employment development. Policy S13 states that new housing and employment development will respond to local needs. Employment maybe, but experience shows that Much Wenlock is an attractive place to live and property prices tend to dictate that they do not serve local needs. Many residents have moved in from far away, and although they make a valuable contribution to all aspects of community life, many are not in employment, and ensure that property prices are high by Shropshire standards. There is inevitable conflict between residents' aspirations and the current volume of traffic. The promotion of a strategic corridor will exacerbate this issue.

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