

Stratford District Core Strategy Examination January 2016
Matter C (c) – Long Marston

(1) A ‘new town’ of 3,500 houses at Long Marston Airfield (LMA) has not been justified. This is not a suitable location for a new settlement. Despite the claims in the plan it is not a brownfield site for the most part. It is very open landscape and a key area of countryside south of Stratford-upon-Avon.

LMA as a location should be compared with Long Marston Depot (LMD) as a site for major housing. While 550 more houses are proposed at LMD in the Plan, this will not add much to the isolated housing developed there so far. It would be a more sustainable solution and make proper use of brownfield land to replace the main warehouse area of LMD and the rail sidings with housing and develop the site fully. This would also allow the Stratford-Long Marston - Honeybourne railway to be the main server of access to LMD as the enlarged settlement (Meon Vale as it is currently called) would extend to the railway line and a station could be easily built for it in the area of the current sidings.

There does not seem to be any comparative assessment of reasonable alternatives, yet LMD as the main focus is superior as a location to LMA.

(4) The South-western Relief Road would be damaging to the landscape setting of Stratford and harm the open Avon Valley. The Stratford Southern Relief Road was built along the old east-west railway trackbed as far as the North-south railway alignment and did not have a serious impact on the rural setting of the town. The SW Relief Road would be by contrast too harmful to be permitted.

(6) The alternative of reopening the Stratford-Honeybourne line with new track from Stratford station to Long Marston should be compared with the South-western Relief Road as an alternative. The line reopening would serve Long Marston effectively. Without it major new development at LMA or LMD would be in unsustainable locations. A bus service to Stratford (Q9) would in no way be an alternative – it would be slow and attract a low modal share, leaving most residents using cars to reach work or leisure destinations. See evidence from the Stratford Rail Transport Group (4548) on this in detail.