



Dear Sirs

Warrington Local Plan Feedback

Further to the Public Consultation meeting held at the Pyramid, Warrington on 07/09/17, my wife and I would like to comment on the following points and question various issues.

- The consultation process was poorly advertised with many people unaware of the matter. A mail drop to individual properties would have been much better.
- The timetabling of the process was ill chosen and too short.
- With regards to the detail of the consultation meeting we were disappointed with the short video which was, at times, somewhat puerile in format. Many facts/numbers were voiced or displayed, but were rushed and consequently not easily assimilated.
- The online questionnaire/feedback form was unnecessarily skewed to the Council's position.

Issues

a) We were informed at the meeting that the Government's housing requirement for Warrington was 20,000. Is this correct? If so why are you identifying 24,000?

b) Why are private landowners and companies driving which areas of Green Belt should be identified for development? Surely the Council should be leading in this matter and, as such, not open to financial benefit! (Land values in South Warrington tend to be higher and therefore any building would generate higher income to developers) As an aside who are the main landowners?

c) You state additional housing is driven by an increase in employment opportunities. Surely a significant number of the associated increase in workforce will come from outside Warrington (Has this been modelled?)

d) Why has more than 90% of housing outside the central core been identified in SE Warrington compared with 10% in North Warrington. If the argument that new employment drives numbers of new houses holds good then surely the %age split should be different.

e) Infrastructure

Present infrastructure in South Warrington is overloaded particularly in respect of roads/transportation. This is drastically affected when problems occur on the motorways (particularly the M6 and M56). This was shown recently when the area was gridlocked for more than 6 hours. An additional number of houses would exacerbate the day-to-day problem, never mind the impact of the deleterious external influences.

Pressure on the existing antiquated MSC swing bridges together with Peel Holdings proposals for increased use of the Canal will also increase the risk of daily gridlocks.

The impact the new Mersey crossing will have on traffic in Warrington has yet to be assessed. The

Warrington New Town Development Corporation's 1970's traffic model for South Warrington identified the need for a new N-S high level crossing of the Ship Canal together with Northern and Southern Expressways to the North of the Ship Canal. We are now nearly 50 years on from that model. Car ownership has snowballed and as such the overall problem will worsen. Daily gridlocks will happen with consequential economic losses affecting desirability of new employment opportunities. A new traffic model is desperately needed both for now and the future. Whilst use of the old railway line is laudable no thought has been given to structural suitability, width and impact on adjacent housing etc etc.

The impact of 20,000 + new houses on existing sewers and sewage treatment will need to be assessed. Existing STW at Moore and Gatewarth may not have the necessary capacity.

20,000+ houses together with new roads etc will increase hardstanding areas and will significantly heighten flooding risk. Attenuation will be paramount particularly given the loss of Green Belt.

The need for additional GP practices will be frustrated by the lack of doctors etc. Existing practices have difficulty in dealing with present patient numbers.

f) Loss of Green Belt

The impact of Green Belt loss together with reduction in flora and fauna, on health and wellbeing, whilst unquantifiable, is nevertheless of serious concern. Once it's gone , it's gone!

g) Consultation and interaction with adjacent Authorities. No mention is made of this critical matter particularly with respect to joined up thinking/proposals.

Finally we note that whilst the Council's Director, Mr A Farrall, is keen to dispel the Council's aspiration to make Warrington a city, one only has to look at the wording on the plan ie "Garden City" to hold little credence to his statement. What is the Council's position?

In conclusion, we feel that whilst there is a legal requirement for Warrington to produce a Local Plan, what we have seen so far is a "knee jerk" reaction, with little thought having been given to sustainable development, overall impact and infrastructure.

We look forward to your responses on the above issues.

