

Warrington

Tel:

Local Plan
Planning Policy and Programmes
Warrington Borough Council
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
WARRINGTON
WA1 2NH

11 June 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

WARRINGTON LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

I have lived in Warrington nearly all my life, some [REDACTED] years, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I believe I am well qualified to comment on what is now being proposed under the Local Plan. Added to this, I have spent my career as a [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ppleton, an area of the borough that has seen a large amount of redevelopment and loss of green space, with yet more development proposed, increasing traffic problems, ecological and environmental damage.

I would like to object to the Local Plan on the following basis:-

- The Plan period covered is for 2017 - 2037 instead of the normal 15 years. I see no need nor justification for this especially in a time of such economic uncertainty and changing legislation e.g. Brexit and government's focus on climate change which will undoubtedly impact upon future housing and employment requirements and, indeed, transportation.
- There is simply no justification for the predicted growth - it is far too ambitious and unrealistic for a town of this size and location. Past growth does not support the forecasts and will result in an oversupply of housing and employment land resulting in needless loss of green belt and providing a perfect opportunity for developers to "cherry pick" the most attractive sites for development.
- There is no need for the volume of housing and mass of employment land proposed. There is no housing crisis in Warrington yet the delivery proposed is over and above the government's targets - massively more than is needed or capable of delivery. The numbers used by the Council in preparing the Plan overstate the requirement for housing and do not therefore justify the loss of green belt. There is sufficient

employment land elsewhere in the borough to accommodate need and potentially expand the employment base without creating new areas which would be wholly dependent on road infrastructure and unlikely to be served by public transport links.

- There is no need nor proper justification for release of land from the green belt for development. The green belt was established to prevent urban sprawl. It provides strict boundaries to protect swathes of open countryside from development keeping land permanently open and can only be released in very special circumstances. The Local Plan proposals erode and damage these protected areas encouraging urban sprawl, impacting on ecology and threatening biodiversity. Any new development should be focused on brownfield sites and/or greenfield sites outside the green belt. The Local Plan does not prioritise development of existing brownfield sites as it should.
- The proposals will cause unnecessary harm to air quality and local ecology. The existing roads are already congested and this will only increase with more development adding to health risks and safety issues. The proposals contained in the Transport Plan do little to alleviate this.
- The proposals will destroy the unique character and distinctive nature of existing villages threatening their very integrity - the impact of the resultant urban sprawl.
- The existing poor and inadequate highway infrastructure is unlikely to be improved prior to development taking place and meanwhile the congestion and environmental damage will only get worse. Importantly, the Plan does not provide any basis to guarantee infrastructure provision ahead of development e.g. schools, doctor's surgeries/clinics, local shopping and public transport facilities.
- The Plan appears to take no cognisance to what is being proposed by neighbouring local authorities in particular Merseyside and Greater Manchester which will undoubtedly have an impact on the assumptions of the Council in assessing need for new housing and employment within the borough.
- Concentrating development in the south of Warrington will do nothing to promote the regeneration and/or renaissance of the town centre - it would simply encourage commuting to and from Manchester and Liverpool which flies in the face of climate change, air quality and zero-carbon commitments: the proposed 4 - lane highway from Stretton roundabout through Pewterspear to Dipping Brook and on to Grappenhall, if implemented, will encourage more commuter traffic and result in massive ecological damage and environmental impact: a loss of air quality and noise pollution.

For the above reasons I consider the Local Plan to be flawed and undeliverable - it is simply unsound.

Yours faithfully

Christopher P Fox 