

Ref: The Local Plan

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to object to the Local Plan.

The following are my main reasons for objecting to the plan.

Economic Growth

I am concerned that the economic growth targets are unrealistic.

I am very concerned that targets have been set by those with a vested interest, and that their predictions are much higher than official government figures.

The proposed levels of growth have never been achieved before in Warrington.

Sustainability is more important than over ambitious growth.

There is no clear strategy on the number and type of jobs the proposed developments would bring, or if the jobs would be offered to Warrington residents.

Some jobs would be in construction but obviously, not all these would be long term.

However, it is likely that some jobs would be as warehouse operatives.

It is likely that most houses in the plan would be unaffordable for warehouse operatives, meaning that employees would need to commute from other areas.

It is also likely that many warehouse operative jobs will soon be lost due to automation.

The planned number of housing is also much higher than government housing targets for the area.

I am concerned that much of the proposed housing will be unaffordable for younger and future generations of most Warrington families. This would potentially force them to stay with their parents or move out of the Warrington area.

Some of those able to afford the houses would move in from other areas. This would not provide any solutions for the people of Warrington.

I believe that no case can be made for the release of Green Belt before brownfield sites are considered.

The above demonstrates that the plan is NOT SOUND, nor is it DELIVERABLE.

Infrastructure

Before any growth can take place, an adequate infrastructure should be in place.

The existing road infrastructure in Warrington struggles to cope with the current situation.

I am concerned that the emergency services could be affected by excessive traffic in the town.

The Warrington Western Link (WWL) will not solve the traffic problems in Warrington. If anything, it will make matters worse as the road would open up land for further development resulting in even more traffic and pollution.

The WWL will also be used by many as an alternative to the tolled Mersey Gateway.

There are no clear plans of other canal crossings, just suggestions which are unfunded.

Plans for new roads, particularly in South Warrington, are vague.

However, infrastructure is not just about roads. It is about a sensible approach to the location of hospitals, health centres, ambulance stations, fire stations, police stations, schools, shops, power generation, sewerage, waste facilities, etc.

It is not clear how such facilities would be funded or when they would be built.

The cost to deliver a suitable infrastructure to cope with the amount of proposed development would be prohibitive.

It is unlikely the developers would fully fund such infrastructure. Therefore, I am very concerned that Warrington would have excessive development but no infrastructure to cope...

...or an infrastructure that would be more beneficial to the developers than the residents of Warrington, yet funded by the tax payer. This is not acceptable.

The above demonstrates that the plan is NOT SOUND, nor is it DELIVERABLE.

Air Quality & Environment

Warrington is already one of the most highly polluted areas in the UK.

Many green areas serve as pollution barriers.

Air quality would be reduced if our green spaces are developed.

Warrington Borough Council has a duty to create a plan that will help reduce current pollution levels and protect Warrington's residents from further increases in pollution.

I agree this is not an easy task. However, the plan as it is will most likely make matters worse.

Parts of Warrington are often gridlocked. It is clear there have not been any realistic traffic assessments undertaken.

The plan is very poor and will result in further reliance on the car. This will obviously have a detrimental effect on the air quality in and around the town.

If some of the proposed industrial developments go ahead, this will result in a significant number of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements in and around the town. This will cause further traffic problems and air pollution.

I am concerned about the loss of wildlife habitat.
For many species, this has not been considered in any detail.

If local recreational areas are taken away, people will travel by car to other areas resulting in more traffic and pollution.

Loss of recreational areas often has detrimental effects on health and well being, both physical and mental. Not only is this bad for individuals affected by this, it is also a further drain on the health services.

The distinctive character of the area would be lost forever if this plan is approved.

The above demonstrates that the plan is NOT SOUND, nor is it DELIVERABLE.

Green Belt

The five main purposes of Green Belt in the National Planning Policy Framework are;

...to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.

...to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.

...to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

...to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

...to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The plan does not meet the main criteria for releasing land from the Green Belt.

The above demonstrates that the plan is NOT SOUND, nor is it DELIVERABLE.

Fiddler's Ferry Power Station is due to close in 2020. This huge area of Brownfield site should be considered before the loss of any Green Belt land.

Thank you for taking the time to read my objections.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Mercer