

Warrington Local Plan 2019 – Objection

We are writing to register our objections to the revised Warrington Local Plan that has been proposed by Warrington Borough Council to cover the period 2017 to 2037. Fundamentally our concern is that at a time when the world is recognising the damage we are doing to our environment the Plan involves an unjustifiable loss of large parts of the Green Belt and green spaces in South Warrington. The Plan also provides no clear propositions as to how Warrington will improve existing roads to accommodate all of the additional traffic that will come to the area as a consequence of this proposal.

Our objections to this Plan are principally associated with the following issues which Warrington Borough Council have not sufficiently explained or justified by:

Greenbelt:

- The loss of 600 acres of Green Belt has not been suitably justified by Warrington Borough Council in the Plan, surely the only benefactors would be the developer? Does this not contravene the Green Belt Boundary agreed 5 years ago?
- The plan reduces the Warrington's Green Belt by 11%, with nearly all the land coming from South Warrington, namely Appleton, Grappenhall, Stretton, Walton and Moore. If Warrington Borough Council are going to ignore the environmental warnings, shouldn't any release at least be a little more evenly spread across Warrington?
- The Council needs to look more carefully at all the brownfield sites that are available within Warrington rather than simply going for the cheap, easy option of destroying our Green Belt.
- At a time when the environment is central to all policies, why are Warrington choosing to ignore this issue, pursuing a Local Plan in which the environmental and ecological impact of the loss of such a large amount of the Green Belt has not been considered? The harm that this will do to air quality and environment of Warrington will be catastrophic for the next generation, regardless of the houses in which they live!
- Grappenhall's 'garden suburb' will result in a massive loss of Green Belt to accommodate over 4000 houses and warehouses. How ironic that there will be limited green space in the garden!
- The Green Belt is there for a purpose and I don't believe that the Council has justified it's proposal of releasing huge swathes of Green Belt land when there is no need. With any development of the proposed scale unnecessarily contravening the purpose of the Green Belt.

Housing & Economic Growth

- Approximately 5000 houses will be built in the 'garden suburb', destroying the Green Belt in the area and with no supporting additions to the existing road networks.
- The 1600 houses planned for Walton will triple it in size and remove part of the Moore Nature Reserve.
- Developers are likely to only be required to build a maximum of 30% affordable homes, which means that the workers in the warehouses and distributions centres that Warrington Borough Council see as central to its growth, will have to commute from outside the area not buy a house in Warrington.
- New houses in South Warrington are too far from both railway stations, necessitating car use across town when no plans have been presented as to how the existing road networks will be updated to accommodate the thousands of additional cars being brought into the area.

- Warrington Borough Council seems to have no understanding as to how development in Warrington should take account of development in Manchester and Merseyside. This Plan suggests that growth is driven by provision of new housing creating an economical benefit, in reality it is the other way round, surely the Council must recognise this and if so they have to develop a Plan accordingly.
- Warrington Borough Council do not justify in their Plan how it will break the pattern of commuting to Manchester and Liverpool for work, shopping and leisure that currently exists, therefore triggering the planned re-generation in Warrington.

Infrastructure, Congestion and Air Pollution

- No new routes are planned into town from the South East, with the Plan still reliant on 3 Victorian Swing Bridges which Warrington Borough Council do not even own or maintain!
- The proposed Infrastructure delivery Plan is reliant on an overstretch road (and bridge) network, with the M6 motorway constantly diverting through to clog Warrington. The Council need to justify how Warrington will function with 2 additional cars per new household on an already overcrowded road network, as currently it does not. We have no confidence that the infrastructure that is needed to support the Plan will be delivered by Warrington Council resulting in a dreadful state of congestion for the main parts of Warrington and the outlying areas.
- The proposed development and infrastructure delivery Plan does nothing to ease existing problems of traffic congestion and air quality, only making things worse. Is this what Warrington Borough Council want to leave the next generation of its inhabitants?
- Warrington has already been named and shamed by the World Health Organisation as being the second worst place in the North West for breaching safety levels for air pollution, so please can you tell us how this plan is going to improve the air quality for our town's current residents? We are also interested to know why the Council think that so many people would want to come and live here if the air quality is so bad and is only set to get worse with these proposals? The reason so many of us want to live in South Warrington is because of its beautiful areas of countryside. People come from all around the area to enjoy the green spaces, walk their dogs etc. so with obesity and mental health problems on the rise nationally, how can the Council justify losing so much countryside at the detriment to so many people's physical health and mental well-being?

Summary of our concerns

This Plan looks overly ambitious and unachievable, can Warrington Borough Council achieve this? Should they not be more practical in their aspirations and considering the pertinent question of how this Plan will impact on the environment consider a more practical Plan, that balances Brown and Green field site?

The Plans about the roads are at best vague. If the number of cars in Warrington is going to increase (as a consequence of houses), Warrington Borough Council need to provide a detailed Plan as to how the existing Road network will be improved to accommodate the increase in traffic. Currently, there is no recognition as to the fact that this will have a massive impact on the traffic flow through Warrington.

The Plan itself offers no detail as to how it will regenerate Warrington, whilst preserving the identity and character of our area. As this is the object of the police I would have expected a clear explanation as to how the Council hoped to achieve this.

The extremely special circumstances that are required to support development on Green Belt are not shown clearly at all in Plan. I believe that a much greater justification is required

by the Council for such a massive loss of the Green Belt, otherwise we simply risk losing our Green Belt land for the sake of what appears an unjustified and overambitious Plan which will threaten the integrity of Warrington's villages.

Regards

Rob and Kate Anderson

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