

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#)
Subject: Local Plan public consultation comments
Date: 17 June 2019 14:22:10

Please consider my comments when reviewing feedback from the public consultation on the proposed local plan.

These comments relate primarily to the Garden City Suburb in south east Warrington

1. Designated green belt is meant to be permanent, and should only be released in 'exceptional circumstances'. Warrington's growth is hardly 'exceptional'. The preferred option document talks of the remaining green belt being preserved for the next 20 years, but that claim is hollow – the green belt boundary was agreed 5 years ago, and now WBC plan to release 600 acres of it, and mostly in south Warrington.
2. WBC states that the plan has been developed considering all potential brownfield sites – but that does not appear to incorporate sites which are not available at present but are likely to become available within the planning horizon.
3. The Garden Suburb plan sees 4200 houses being built on green belt land. This would radically alter the look and feel of the existing communities there – especially Stretton which is currently a relatively small village centred round the Cat and Lion junction with ribbon development on the A49, Hatton Lane and Stretton Road.
4. The proposed Local Plan would see Stretton swallowed up in Village A, with its centre moved north east, away from the current centre. Why is Stretton to be expanded out of recognition while other areas such as Appleton Thorn appear to be protected from further development by surrounding green areas? Stretton's individual character should be retained as much as possible – not subsumed into urban sprawl. If Village A is to be developed, it should either expand Stretton on a sympathetic scale, or be separated from Stretton by green boundary areas, such as that proposed for Appleton Thorn.
5. The Garden Suburb Development Framework sets out Placemaking Principles (page 74) for the new Village A, but ignores that part of Stretton already existing on the A49 and in Hatton Lane. Thus the true nature of the existing village is subverted in the proposals. Likewise, Village B is discussed and planned as a new village, ignoring the fact that it is really an extension of the existing Grappenhall Heys and extending towards Appleton.
6. Within Table 7.1 it is stated "New proposals should look to retain and enhance existing local landscape settings, townscape and historic features which contribute to the character of the area." However, the same table later states "Key urban nodes areas, such as around the junction of Stretton Road and the proposed strategic corridors should be recognized through a change of scale up to four storeys..." The second statement is totally at odds with the first. Four storey buildings would be totally out of keeping with the current 1 to 2 storey housing in Stretton today.
7. Residential areas A1 and A2 are planned to be "high density" which would change Stretton from a semi-rural village into a very urban landscape which is unnecessary and damaging to the village character. If these areas are to be developed they should be done sympathetically.

8. The Local Plan targets building houses, rather than creating jobs (or creating the conditions to encourage new jobs). Building houses should be related to the needs of the community and the jobs created, not the other way round.
9. The proposed strategic corridor / distributor road from the A49 towards the new Garden Suburb areas should connect to the roundabout at Junction 10 of the M56, not onto the A49. Most of the traffic using the new distributor road will be travelling onto the M56 or going further south. Connecting the new road onto the A49 will create a huge bottleneck.
10. The A49 in Stretton is very busy during rush hours, and from about 4pm on weekdays traffic heading north from the M56 towards Warrington is often stationary, queuing from the traffic lights at the Cat and Lion back towards, and sometimes reaching, the M56 junction 10 roundabout. This congestion is going to get worse once the 3 developments already approved for 600 homes by Barratt in Stretton, Bloor Homes in Appleton Thorn and Barratt / David Wilson at Dipping Brook / Blackcap Road are completed, with hundreds more cars on the local roads. The A49 cannot cope with 5000 further homes being proposed unless it is upgraded or other new roads can take some of the traffic.
11. Planners have told me that the traffic movements have been modelled and the new developments will make very little difference to the traffic movements currently. This is obviously wrong. I can only assume that some of the basic inputs or model assumptions must be wrong, as hundreds of cars will be added to the local roads, many during rush hour and school run periods as the current local schools will not be able to cope with the extra pupils so parents will have to drive them further to school.
12. Air pollution and air quality will become a major issue in Stretton. Air quality targets are being breached already in Stockton Heath and elsewhere in Warrington, and the Local Plan does not appear to propose a sound, well thought through solution.
13. No new roads or bridges, other than the new Western Link, are being proposed to alleviate the traffic jams on key routes from south and south east Warrington into the town centre. The existing swing bridges over the Manchester Ship Canal will continue as bottlenecks, probably getting worse with extra traffic and more frequent bridge opening to facilitate Peel's planned increase in shipping. There may be a possibility of upgrading or replacing the high level bridge from Ackers Road to Station Road, but there does not appear to be enough strategic thought about the road connections on either side.
14. The proposed employment area near M6 junction 20 / M56 junction 9 appears to be mainly for logistics operations. It is unlikely that the jobs will be filled by people buying the houses in the Garden Suburb. Many of the new employees will commute to work from outside the area, mostly in private cars. Many people buying the in the Garden Suburb will commute to jobs elsewhere, away from Warrington.
15. The local plan does not do enough to regenerate the town centre, and creating large employment areas on the south east periphery will not help.

Thank you

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