

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Response to Consultation on Warrington Local Plan 2021
Date: 03 November 2021 23:55:19

Dear sir / madam,

My name is Laurence Panes and I currently live at [REDACTED] but I have been a Warrington Resident for over 40 years.

The purpose of this e-mail is to express my views on Warrington's Local Plan 2021.

I believe the plan should be rejected because it isn't sound.

I hold this view because:-

1. The plan proposes to remove 580 Ha. of Greenbelt without a proper justification. The predicted need for new housing is based upon questionable assumptions of an ever-increasing population coupled with a continual reduction in average household size. Documents supporting the plan show that brownfield sites within the borough have the potential to satisfy much of the predicted need so it makes no sense to irrevocably sacrifice precious Greenbelt to meet a need that may well not exist. The need is predicted using the Standard Model which is not mandatory and other predictions can be used in "exceptional circumstances". Now Greenbelt land may only be used in "exceptional circumstances" so it therefore follows that the council must consider other predictions and demonstrate that there really is no other choice. I do not believe that they have done this. Indeed they have a duty to liaise with neighbouring authorities who doubtless have their own issues and are said to be unable to meet any of Warrington's predicted housing needs but has this claim really been robustly tested by taking a regional approach rather than a parochial one? Once the land has lost its Greenbelt status, developers are likely to prioritise building on it over brownfield sites. The plan does not appear to include any means of ensuring that brownfield land is used first.
2. The plan proposes a Southeast Warrington Urban Extension, ultimately comprising 4,200 new homes, to be built on land that is currently classified as Greenbelt. The scale of this development will change the character of South Warrington, particularly in Stretton where I live. Whilst the plan does propose new educational and primary health facilities and some local retail, it does not robustly prevent residential development unless these exist. Furthermore, the main facilities and employment areas will remain north of the Mersey so the number of north-south journeys will increase dramatically. The planned road improvements simply direct traffic onto the already-overloaded A49 and thence through Stockton Heath where peak pollution levels are already above acceptable limits. The plan references a traffic assessment but this assumes that Warrington's LTP4 is fully delivered including the Mass Transit System. LTP4 relies heavily on persuading residents to make more use of public transport, cycling and walking rather than simply improving roads. The bus service to and from Stretton is infrequent and does not run at all in the evening. LTP4 claims that Warrington is "largely flat" and therefore suitable for journeys by bicycle; however south Warrington is built on the slope of a north-facing hill rising some 70m above the town centre. This is likely to limit the number of

north-south journeys made by bicycle or on foot! The Mass Transit System is not included in the Local Plan and no route has been published for the proposed line running from the Lymm Interchange to the Town Centre via Appleton Thorn and the Southeast Urban Extension. Indeed it is hard to see where such a route might cross the existing residential areas between Stockton Heath and Grappenhall. Given these challenges, no plan which does not include detailed solutions to fully deliver LTP4+ can be considered sound. South Warrington is home to many families with young children. It is unreasonable to expect busy working parents to use public and active modes of transport for the majority of their local journeys. LTP4 is unrealistic and undeliverable in South Warrington so the proposed Urban Expansion there isn't sound.

3. I am also particularly concerned that the proposals to modify the Cat and Lion junction near to where I live will not deal with the inevitable increase in journeys via the M56, the Mersey Gateway and, if built, the Western Link Road. The Cat & Lion junction is already extremely busy with poor lines of sight and long waits at the traffic and pedestrian lights. The plan to block Stretton Road and provide a second junction some 400m south will slow down north-south and east-west traffic as well as lengthening local journeys. No major development in South Warrington should be permitted until the capacity of this junction has been improved without damage to the character of the village. I doubt this will be possible. Also, the village of Stretton was bisected by the M56 some years ago and the pedestrian and bicycle access across M56 Junction 10 is already hazardous (and therefore little-used) due to fast-moving traffic on the roundabout and slip roads coupled with poor lines of sight. The additional traffic resulting from this plan can only make this situation worse and further isolate the two halves of our village from each other.
4. The plan does not take account of the impact of Brexit, Covid 19 and also of the Government's shifting attitude to building on greenfield land. The long-term impact of these major events and recently-signalled Government policy changes will not be known for some time so it makes no sense to sacrifice precious greenbelt yet - if ever.
5. I believe the plan should be amended to focus predominantly on redeveloping brownfield land for the foreseeable future and to eliminate the proposed Southeast Urban Extension.

Regards

Laurence Panes

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows