

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#)
Subject: Comments on and Objection to Warrington Local Plan
Date: 07 November 2021 22:14:29

Dear Warrington Borough Council,

Please find below my comments on and objections to the Warrington Local Plan 2021. My comments focus on the South Warrington Extension, but do touch on other areas of the broader plan.

Providing comments on the local plan for the public

- I found the online form for submitting comments difficult to follow. To ask respondents (many of whom are local residents / lay people) to comment on the legality of the proposals without a choice to indicate if they are qualified / informed enough to do so in my view is potentially inappropriate. I understand the need to capture sufficient detail on respondents and queries, but the number of drop down options and general complexity simply does not take into account different levels of understanding and IT literacy. The Council in my view would have benefited from designing this form in cooperation with groups representing members of the general public.

Release of green belt and environmental impact

- I found the arguments for release of the green belt and impact of this unconvincing. They seemed to be justified based around use of road boundaries and not much else, and whilst impact on the environment is acknowledged, but I couldn't find description of impact on wildlife, drainage, woodlands and natural habitats. I could find no reason why green belt release was even first considered in this document (e.g. other brown sites not appropriate or available?). The Council should reconsider their plans for release of green belt when at the same time we have COP26 Glasgow where our own Prime Minister is leading efforts to save our natural environment and way of life.

- In the South Warrington region where I live, I am greatly concerned by the lack of detail I found apparent with regards to the impact of these proposals on and proximity of housing to the Dingle, dipping brook and green lane woodland areas. There is already historical housing close to this important natural area and I am concerned about drainage, seasonal water levels (dried out in summer, flooding in winter) and wildlife impact. I think the Council must work with the Woodland trust to plan their proposals, and in my view scale back housing plans in the vicinity of the woodland areas along lumb brook road, Witherwin Avenue, Dingle lane and Dodds lane whilst also creating new areas to ease the environmental impact of their proposals. It is important to expand on areas of natural beauty, protect the existing woodland areas whilst also more clearly distinguishing village areas using these areas and green belt.

South Warrington Extension

- the proposals as they stand in my view destroy the distinctive nature of the area in terms of villages. It is no longer possible to separate Appleton, Grappenhall Heys, Stretton, Appleton Thorn and Wright's Green in these plans. I think it is important to scale back housing to leave clearer boundaries between them, e.g. along lumb brook road and Dodds lane. Otherwise this would create the urban sprawl the Council says it has avoided in the plans.

- in the main Warrington Local Plan, it is stated that 2400 houses will be built 'during the Plan period.' It then emerges in the South Warrington Plan that it is more than 4000 homes over a longer period. In my view this discrepancy is concerning and the Council are appearing to me trying to obscure from the public their true intention in terms of housing load. This can be interpreted as misleading in my view, and there should be one lower figure than 2400, without confusion and restricted to a time period with a legal commitment to build no more. Even the 2400 figure seems very high as this does not affect the birth rate in Warrington and nationally at this time, which are at record lows. Whilst I do not contest the current acute need for particularly affordable housing, the scale of the developments and type in South Warrington do not reflect this affordable housing need or long term trends in need, resulting in the risk of longer term inappropriate type and over supply with corresponding devaluation of the areas prices. We also need clear legal protection for the rest of the green belt surrounding south Warrington and Warrington as a whole before further housing commitments.

- whilst the addition of schools and recreational areas was nicely planned in my opinion, the transport infrastructure plans were vague and I am very concerned about the lack of exploration of rail linkage and adequate strengthening of motorway links and roads/cycle paths/bus only routes to the town centre. South Warrington is already suffering with regular road traffic congestion and pollution and these plans will significantly increase this in my view, going against COP26 and commitments by our government. I would in

particular like to see serious consideration of how we could extend rail linkages to South Warrington in future. We need road and rail infrastructure plans clearly defined and costed in advance of the housing and business proposals to adequately judge if they can be supported.

Business expansion area South Warrington

- the scale of this expansion is dramatic and feels completely unnecessary to me given the size of the existing industrial site. I found the arguments for the scale of expansion here unconvincing and once again they would add considerable pressure to the road network and motorway junction particularly alongside the housing plans, which would risk significant problems for residents.

I hope you find these comments helpful as you make further plans for the area.

Best wishes,

Richard Keers,

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