

## Robert Pearson



**Local Plan  
Planning Policy and Programmes  
Growth Directorate  
Warrington Borough Council  
East annexe  
Town Hall  
Sankey Street  
Warrington WA1 1HU**

**10 November 2021**

**Re: Draft Local Plan 2021**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Having looked through the documentation my principal observations are noted below, from which it is concluded that in its current form the Local Plan is **unsound**. In your subsequent considerations, I would be grateful if these observations are addressed.

### **Observations on Warrington Draft Local Plan**

- From the outset the Plan is fixated on building on green field sites in the south of Warrington without robust and valid justification.
- There is no evidence that the Plan includes the extensive land and plots owned by WBC.
- The SHLAA has been updated but relies on the 2016 call for sites. Why has the process not been repeated to provide up-to-date figures of land available - NPPF guidance requires an annual review of land availability.
- Government guidelines states that building on green belt land is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Before being allowed steps should be taken, e.g.
  - identification of brownfield sites and estimate of future sites becoming available. There is no evidence that all brownfield sites and unused land has been identified.
  - call to landowners and developers
  - compulsory purchase if necessary
  - conversion of office space into residential, as evidenced by recent planning applications.
- There is no mention in the Plan of the future of Warrington Hospital, which is imperative for the growing needs of the community. The very recent announcement of £6.5m is very welcome but only addresses a specific problem area.
- The 3 '125 year old' steel bridges across the Manchester Ship canal are always heavily congested with traffic; the Local Plan additional housing to the South of Warrington will make

this worse. As a corollary residents in the south of Warrington will not wish to travel to the town centre - continuing the trend of shops closing.

The Plan does not address these issues.

Also there should be a proper strategy approved by WBC for the effect of the closing of the 3 bridges when refurbished. Assuming sequential closing it could take several years. Peel Ports talk about a 'painting job'. It is evident that some corrosion is very substantial almost certainly requiring structural work.

- Climate Change - no consideration in the Plan of the following:
  - Home insulation - encourage better insulation
  - EV charging network
  - low carbon economy - incentivise businesses
  - move away from natural gas.-
  - Incentivise solar power, storage batteries and heat pumps

As a final comment, as it stands this plan would make the Warrington area an ideal location for developers/contractors because, contrary to the Government guidelines, the proposed Draft Local Plan would allow them to build houses on large 'plum' sites on greenbelt land rather than first having to develop brownfield sites!

Yours faithfully

Robert Pearson. BEng. Ph.d