

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 November 2021 20:24
To: Local Plan
Subject: Consultation response - objection

Good evening

Please see below response in objection to draft plan, please confirm receipt

Red Barn

[REDACTED]

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Warrington Draft Plan Response 2021

I am writing to you as an extremely concerned and dissatisfied resident of Thelwall Heys, Warrington to register my dismay and distress with regard to the Warrington Draft Local Plan 2021 which we now understand to include Thelwall Heys.

Please note that our comments whilst specific to Thelwall Heys here apply to the approach taken to the entire Warrington Plan.

As residents of Warrington since 2009, we have made a life and settled into the community here. In 2017 we were pressurised to move from our much-loved home in Broad Lane, Grappenhall in response to our concerns about the impact and development outline in the previous draft plan. As a result, we purchased a property in the small rural enclave at Thelwall Heys. After careful consideration about the move, we were assured that the area was protected from development in the medium/long term and as such took the decision to settle here in what we envisaged would be our home for many years to come in which we have invested significantly financially and emotionally.

How wrong we were – here we are only 4 years down the line, and we have been presented with a situation whereby, without any consultation, yet again we fall right in the middle of one of the proposed development areas.

We are at a loss as to understand any fundamental change from when this proposal was originally raised and rejected on a number of occasions previously. The principles raised at that time still stand today and the upset caused amongst our community cannot be underestimated.

We are of course accepting of the world we live in, the population need for housing and infrastructure, supporting the employment sector, a general improvement of the area where we reside and the rationale behind levelling up and improving the economy. Warrington as a town centre is neglected and poorly served by its existing infrastructure compared to some of the surrounding areas and common sense tells us, it is clear that a sensible and proportionate plan is required.

That said, we cannot accept the rationale for this development – the economic calculations simply don't add up in terms of volumes of properties, affordability, infrastructure, environmental impact and detriment to the green belt. There is no evidence to link the plan to the development in the surrounding cities of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester to indicate that this is a well-planned and adequate strategy. At a time of national crisis due to the pandemic, it would appear that Warrington Borough Council are taking full advantage of the demoralised public to push through an under-handed and ill-conceived plan. Had it not been for neighbourhood discussions, then we would not have even been aware of these proposals. There has been no direct communication to each affected independent house holder by the

Borough Council, this in itself is wholly unacceptable. Many residents are unaware of the need to respond yet again to this consultation, particularly if they have responded previously to earlier iterations.

Our key concerns relate to the following points:

- The government have committed to a programme of reduction of green belt use for development having outlined their policy recently which the Prime Minister has recently reiterated. Removal of this area from the Green Belt is neither sound nor justifiable; development of other brownfield sites would make far more sense. The unique social and heritage character of Thelwall Heys, the property and its surrounding area and its value to Warrington as a whole have been totally ignored. There are no exceptional circumstances that allow for development of this piece of Green Belt, and South Warrington has been targeted in this inequitable manner. Thelwall Heys is noted for its high-quality agricultural land as opposed to areas of lower quality land, and in the light of climate impacts should be protected for the long term.
- Heritage – little attention has been paid to the impacts identified in the risk assessment at Thelwall Heys which clearly states the considerable detriment to the area itself.
- The environment and ecological impact of the loss of green belt at Thelwall Heys has clearly not been assessed in detail or with integrity for the following reasons:
 - o The protection and sanctuary of a much-varied local wildlife, consisting of mature trees, hedgerow, the canal, water life and many varieties of wild birds, plants and animals, bat protection orders, horses in surrounding paddocks have not been assessed in this plan due to the short consultation period
 - o Very limited green belt left in this area. Development will impact not only on the conservation area of Grappenhall Village and further reduce its appeal as a historic village as noted in the Domesday Book. This has already been impacted severely by the derelict nature of the Village Rectory, the development of the Walled Garden and the area left abandoned at Grappenhall School. Further development only reduces the appeal through pollution, traffic impacts and environmental damage
 - o The close proximity to the quiet appeal of the TransPennine trail and surrounding views are heavily impacted, this is meant to be an area of tranquility, nature and open space to serve public enjoyment which will be disturbed by this development. This is the one of the last open spaces in this area alongside the canal and will have significant detriment to those using it as a point of recreation and relaxation – again where is the learning from the pandemic and the impact on the well-being and mental health of the population. The social value and impact of this plan disregard the community as a whole and the protection of areas that matter to its residents.
 - o Those who reside within Thelwall Heys will suffer directly as a result of the loss of Green Belt around their properties environmentally, and this will cause significant harm to the wildlife in direct proximity to their properties.
 - o Water levels are already an issue in this area and further destabilisation will only add to this problem in the longer term causing potential for further issues and damage in the longer term. Warrington has only this week been raised as an area of concern due to flood risks.
- Infrastructure – the planned development of Thelwall Heys does not offer any consideration for the already stressed services, education, and lack of health and social care facilities. Currently there is no capacity in GP and dental surgeries, Warrington Hospital is repeatedly overwhelmed and incapable of dealing with routine healthcare and providing adequate emergency services. There is insufficient provision for education and very limited facilities for children within the immediate vicinity.
- Congestion and Air Pollution – the area is already hugely impacted by the pressures of congestion and air quality as a result of the junction at M56/M6/A56/A556/Latchford swing bridge/Cantilever bridge – the increase in traffic will simply overwhelm the area which is already incredibly challenged due to the motorways inability to cope, the swing bridge and general volumes. Stockton Heath as the nearest village is already under significant traffic pressure and this will only serve to

make it worse. Incoming traffic to the new distribution centres will only add to the burden with overall volumes and pollution by increased hauliers.

- Of significant concern, the increase of traffic for over 300 homes in addition to that already outlined in the Appleton area is simply untenable and will lead to further disruption, accidents and other related issues. The proposed development is not close to train links and therefore will only serve to increase road traffic. Cliff Lane is already dangerous due to the speed and volume of traffic, accidents will only increase, specifically if children are crossing this road from the proposed development to walk/bike to school. Only last week due to gridlock around the area, I was unable to get to Altrincham via any route to attend a health crisis with my elderly mother of 82 years old. There has been no consideration for the emergency vehicles that require access to the motorway framework from across Warrington and the impacts of the surrounding traffic pressures.
- There has been no meaningful communication with local residents to indicate the rationale for this development and indeed, it would appear that there has been a total lack of transparency of those involved in the negotiations. The world and ego of politics of those involved appears to be the driving factor, rather than the pragmatism of sensible development and planning decisions.
- Disruption – there has been no account taken of a programme that will last for around 10 years to the area for what amounts to a relatively small number of properties when taken as a proportion of those required overall, and thus makes little impact to the perceived wider need. Surely it would be more sensible to focus on the larger programmes of building where infrastructure projects will be made readily available, and to set a programme of reassessment of the volume of numbers required as the economy moves forward and rebalances post COVID recovery. Existing residents of Thelwall Heys will suffer years of disruption and inconvenience from the development project. Little consideration appears to have been applied with regard to the impacts.
- Investment – as relatively affluent areas in South Warrington, these developments will only serve to drive people out of the area to alternative locations thus achieving the reverse of that suggested. The exodus of people with disposable income will lessen investment and regeneration of the area rather than improvement. The proposed “affordable” housing will still not be affordable to the majority only increasing the burden.

The overall plan appears to rely heavily on uncertainty and key deliverables that have little or no evidence to support them. Key services and challenges have been overlooked with limited focus and objectivity. As a result of the above, and many other associated factors, too many to detail in the level they warrant, I wish to register our firm rejection of this plan. We look to the Borough Council to hear our objections and remove Thelwall Heys from this plan.

Regards
Anne Lamb