

Brenda Pearson



10 November 2021

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

Re: LOCAL DRAFT PLAN PROPOSALS 2021

I write to record my objection to and indeed rejection of WBC Local Plan 2021 proposals as I believe they do not accurately represent the needs of the Warrington area, being based on out of date data, does not follow Government guidelines on Green Belt use for development and does not address the need for improved/additional infrastructure should these proposals go ahead. I believe therefore that this plan is UNSOUND.

GREEN BELT USE SOUTH WARRINGTON

Current Government policy is for green belt land to be used only where absolutely essential where brownfield sites are unavailable. The local plan does not address use of brownfield sites but instead focuses on greenbelt – obviously a much more attractive option for developers being simpler and of course much more profitable to them. This was the case in the earlier Local Plan and WBC have obviously ignored the widespread objection to this approach.

The majority of houses proposed for Green Belt areas are in South Warrington and the majority of these are NOT AFFORDABLE HOUSING. Most of the proposed homes will be in higher price brackets – more attractive to the developers but also one might speculate more attractive to WBC as they will command higher rateable value.

The greatest need is for affordable housing and the Local Plan does not address the use of cheaper sites – brownfield of course, or refurbishment of unoccupied houses and offices. Warrington town centre is in need of

regeneration and mixed urban development would make sense. It is difficult to imagine how development of South Warrington's Green Belt would boost Warrington's town centre for several reasons:

- Access into Warrington town centre is restricted by lack of reliable public transport and the narrow and therefore congested canal crossings. Moreover these bridges are in such poor condition that closure of one or more for essential maintenance will soon become unavoidable. There was a plan for a new bridge but this seems to have abandoned.
- It seems safe to assume that prospective buyers of the more expensive houses will not work in Warrington but in and around Manchester/ Liverpool environs. Having already lost its two flagship stores, they are also unlikely to shop in Warrington when there are easily accessible out of town shopping centres with parking, cinemas, dining facilities (Gemini, Trafford, Cheshire Oaks for instance).

In addition, the proposed plans for development of South Warrington's Green Belt give little consideration to the improvement of infrastructure in terms of medical facilities, schooling, traffic volume, public transport, air pollution, leisure facilities. These are of great concern and must be addressed before any future development is even considered. Even now the A49 quickly becomes a virtual car park with any problem on the nearby M56, or raising of the bridges. Already hundreds of houses have been built at Stretton/Pewterspear and many more are currently being constructed along Black Cap Road, with no additional facilities, just less green fields and much more traffic.

The proposed development South of Warrington will also be to the detriment of those living north of the river who use these beautiful green spaces as nearby amenities for walking, cycling and simply enjoying nature.

Building on, and thereby destroying, green belt areas such as this with its natural wild life and fauna, should only be as a last resort and I plead with WBC to rethink these plans – they are UNSOUND.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Brenda Pearson