

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#)
Subject: Warrington Local Plan - comments
Date: 13 November 2021 14:05:15

To whom it may concern ...

I am writing to offer my comments on the Council's proposals for our town's Local Plan.

1. Infrastructure: I have lived in either Hatton or Appleton for a total of 41 years and now consider myself to be 'local'. In that time I have seen enormous growth in the volume of traffic using Hatton Lane, Stretton Road and London Road, culminating in the now regular clogging up of the Owen's Corner roundabout and the traffic lights at the Cat & Lion public House. Given the developments currently under way around St. Matthews Church and School and those around the Dipping Brook area – and the total lack of any accompanying road infrastructure improvements designed to alleviate these traffic problems – I am left in no doubt that any 'promises' of infrastructure improvements as part of this significantly bigger development plan are, at best, mere wishful thinking and, at worst, designed purely as a sop to try and convince local people (never mind the poor, unsuspecting incomers who will have to try and cope with these traffic issues) that all will be well. Actual lived experience shows time and again that these improvements simply don't happen. I would also add that the problems I refer to above currently affect principally Stretton, Hatton, Appleton and Appleton Thorn. Once the bigger development seriously gets under way, stretching all the way down towards Grappenhall and Stockton Heath, an already tortuous traffic black spot around Victoria Square and the Ship Canal Bridge crossing would simply be impassable for large parts of the day. Warrington Borough Council's history of infrastructure management is, quite simply, appalling (look no further than Brian Bevan island / Bridge Foot in the rush hour for further examples). Without clearly delineated, fully costed and scheduled road improvements to be delivered early in the life of the development, this plan will massively expose that planning and provision weakness and cause traffic chaos in the entire south Warrington district.
2. Economic forecast: There appears to be no sound economic basis for the figures used to forecast the numbers of new houses included in the plan. The presumption seems to be based on wishful thinking – build anywhere between 2,400 and 4,200 houses and that will attract more people to the area (and hence increase Council Tax revenue and trade for local businesses). This approach totally fails to factor in other neighbouring expansion / development plans looking east towards Manchester, west towards Liverpool / the Wirral and north-west towards St. Helens / Widnes. What Warrington desperately needs is a business development plan that attracts large numbers of well-paid, professional-grade jobs to the area – NOT even more low-paid, low-skilled warehouse and distribution roles than we already have (that massively increase the traffic problems caused by the poor existing infrastructure). The type of roles that will be generated as part of the proposed development around the Barleycastle area are not going to provide the type of salary that would enable those workers to afford the types of houses included in the plan (notwithstanding the plan's commitment to provide a maximum of 30% so-called 'affordable' homes). This business development plan should be the pre-cursor to such large-scale residential developments, not an afterthought (if it's thought of at all!).
3. Green belt usage: I'm not a NIMBY – I no longer live in a property that borders the green belt so have no personal axe to grind and in any event, I fully understand and support the need for more housing. People have to live somewhere (I have four children and am fully cognisant of the housing needs of younger generations). However, there is a very large

amount of brown-field land available in and around Warrington that should be more fully utilised before even considering covering over our green belt. There are numerous environmental arguments in favour of this approach – air quality, environmental, agricultural, biodiversity, recreational and so on – as well as undertaking urban development approaches that would benefit regeneration of our Town Centre and surrounding areas, bringing a much-needed income boost to the town and its local businesses. The small-scale use of brown-field sites contained in the proposed plan are quite pitiful. The cynic in me fully realises that housing development costs on brown-field sites are higher than green-field and that housing developers can charge more for their new properties when in more ‘leafy’ and semi-rural locations (though how long they stay even semi-rural is debateable given the sheer scale of this proposed plan).

In short, I believe the plan as it stands totally fails to justify the sheer scale (and types) of housing and commercial development being proposed ; it will not deliver any meaningful (and already drastically required) infrastructure ; it will forever build over much needed and increasingly scarce green-belt land ; it will hugely increase the blight of traffic and related problems from which south Warrington already suffers and it will not deliver the type of regeneration that a town like Warrington needs. If this plan goes ahead in the current version, Warrington will remain a dormitory town for Liverpool, Manchester and Chester with inadequate local transport infrastructure that will, in fairly short order, make people who’ve moved into this new housing wonder why in the name of God they bothered and continue to deliberately (I say ‘deliberately’ due to the sheer scale of opposition already made known to this and previous plans) worsen the day-to-day quality of life for those of us already suffering from the poor planning and short-sightedness of our Council.

I totally oppose this plan that is, quite simply, NOT SOUND.

Regards,

Steve Pauline [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]