

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Plan](#)
Subject: WBC Local Plan comments
Date: 14 November 2021 13:39:27

I write as a resident of the area for over 20 years.

The revised WBC Local Plan (October 2021) may not be as flawed as its predecessor but is unsound and undeliverable.

The plan relies on a presumption of economic growth to drive it, but does not properly explain how this will be achieved. The underlying assumptions are unrealistic. There is a presumption that building houses will create employment. The reality is that house building of this sort primarily creates profit for the developers and their financiers, but does not create affordable homes for local people on average incomes. The target housing will be sold to commuters for the south Manchester and Merseyside areas, or to buy-to-let landlords (as is already happening at Appleton Cross).

The main source of growth envisioned seems to be logistics and distribution services, which will turn the area into a series of low-rise warehouses and depots, not an interlinked set of living communities. This also relies on transportation and infrastructure. There are major pinch points on bridges and road junctions, and the plan does not offer a solution here. This is not sound.

The plan does not take a realistic view on the drastic steps that are necessary now (nationwide, and worldwide) to address the climate emergency, where reducing transport emissions is only one of many things that must be done. This is not sound in 2021 and onwards.

The plan states that there are exceptional circumstances to permit the release of Green Belt land. I do not see the logic of this, and it is not sound. The reason for releasing Green Belt appears to be to enable the development of housing (for the profit of developers, primarily) and the build of warehousing and logistics hubs which will increase heavy traffic, but due to modern automation, will not create many jobs for local people. There is not a proper plan for use of brownfield sites to create affordable family housing. There has not been a proper environmental and ecological impact study of this use of Green Belt. Furthermore, I understand that planning decisions in about 2015 confirmed the Green Belt boundary for the next 20 years - was this worthless? This plan will lead to further sub-urbanisation and commuter dormitories, which will damage the character of the area, and is an obsolete 20th century solution when we are all facing 21st century problems. I also question whether the Green Belt release would be permitted under clean air legislation, as it will increase traffic substantially.

Infrastructure planning is weak. There is no concrete plan to address the well known problems with pinch points in the local road network, or the antiquated canal crossings, and no concrete statement on funding. There is no concrete integrated planning for the educational, health, sport and community facilities which are needed today by Warrington.

My view is that the most likely outcome of this plan as it is today would be:

- 1) the building of housing estates for the financial benefit of developers;
 - 2) the building of low employment logistics facilities, again for the financial benefit of developers and the operational benefit of their users;
 - 3) a failure to deliver integrated infrastructure improvements fit for the 21st century;
 - 4) a failure to deliver educational, health, sport and community facilities;
 - 5) an unsatisfactory level of revenue to WBC from business rates;
 - 6) nothing that compensates for the loss of Green Belt, coupled with the very bad precedent of releasing Green Belt;
 - 7) damage to the character of the area, and a degraded quality of life for many people.
- This is all unsound.

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