



14th November, 2021

My response to the Local Plan (USVLP 2021)

The plan is not sound as the housing target is not justified. Warrington has an urban capacity of around 11800 homes (see point 4.1.10.). The annual housing target of 816 (which is a starting point, not a set target), is neither justified or deliverable. Using the ONS data for 2018 a target figure of only 458 is obtained. Therefore, using a more realistic figure of around 450 homes per year, which would be deliverable as shown by recent completions, would mean that brownfield alone could supply housing for over two decades. In addition, the previous local plan was only 7 years ago and preserved the Green Belt beyond the plan period. There is no need for Green Belt land release. Policy DEV1 is unsound as the the housing target is not justified.

The plan is not sound, the Green Belt on which the South East Warrington Urban Extension is proposed performs an important function of stopping the merging of distinct villages. It must remain to perform this function. Policy GB1 is unsound as land is being released which needs to remain in the Green Belt.

The town centre is in urgent need of regeneration, and should be the location for the vast majority of homes to prevent yet more car reliant housing. There has already been too much development in South Warrington without investment in the necessary infrastructure and sustainable transport. The plan is not sound as it does not do enough to address the shortage of affordable housing. Higher housing densities need to be used in and around the town centre so that the required 20% affordable homes becomes a significant number. This plan is unsound as it proposes the wrong houses in the wrong place. Policy TC1 is unsound as the needs of the area are not met.

The plan is not sound as the potential for the land at Fiddlers Ferry to be solely residential has not been considered. The area already has rail links, unlike the site of the South East Warrington Urban Extension and the other Green Belt sites earmarked for housing. This together with the unrealistic housing target determines that OS1, OS2, OS3, OS4, OS5, OS6, MD2, MD3 and MD5 are unsound as they are not justified and do not meet the needs of the area.

The plan is not sound as it does not recognise the serious congestion problems that already exist. It is of little use putting in link roads for new development when the road network surrounding the link roads is already at capacity. This is due to a chronic lack of investment in infrastructure and planning permission for development being granted when it is glaringly obvious that the development will cause further chaos on the roads eg Lymm Truckwash. Policies INF1 and INF5 are unsound as there is no evidence that they are deliverable or meet the needs of the area.

The case for the Western Link is unsound - previously it was claimed that the Western Link was required for the Peel Port development, which has now been scrapped. It will increase congestion as motorists try to avoid the toll bridges.

There is no justification for release of Green Belt for employment/economic use - the plan and policy MD6 are unsound. The previous plan in 2014 secured employment land beyond the end of the plan period to 2035, as large amounts of land were released at Omega. This plan seeks to use the unprecedented release of land at Omega to falsely raise the annual requirement. Taking the Omega supply out of the calculations results in less than half the amount of land stated in the plan. The South East Warrington Employment Area has no sustainable transport network. It would also increase air pollution in and around the motorway Air Quality Management Area, contrary to the plan policies. There are vacant employment units throughout Warrington and should the current economic turbulence continue, the economic land will be redundant.

The Council has declared a Climate and Environmental Emergency- the release of Green Belt is not conducive with this declaration. No Green Belt should be released until Part 2 of the Brownfield Register is completed, so that the number of houses that can already be built on brownfield is accurately assessed and the Local Plan is therefore positively prepared. The plan does not do enough to protect the environment, DC3, DC4 and ENV8 do not meet the needs of the area.

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