

11th November 2021

Dear Planning assessor,

Although it is appreciated to see your revised development plan for our local town and several locations reduced or taken out, my concerns as before still stand particularly in terms of the volume of green belt still proposed to be built on in the south of Warrington particularly that for employment in Appleton Thorn area. Particularly with regards to reduction of land for water absorption, we are seeing increased rainfall and more land taken for hard services will have an impact on in town that has many water networks and less affluent areas affected by flooding. Also the impact on road capacity and infrastructure, traffic and pollution through the corridor roads into Warrington through Latchford and increased traffic emissions, water level increase from rain and impact on health. Also I would like to see a requirement for developers to ensure planting vegetation and trees, installation of solar powers and rainwater recycling systems.

In particular my concerns stand as before on the following grounds:

The plan still has huge impact Environmentally and wary of its deliverability given the geographical nature of Warrington with its several water ways, surrounding motorway network and positioning.

- The loss of green belt will result in urban sprawl and damage to wildlife and public health.
- The suggested destruction of green belt is not evenly spread around Warrington, it is all planned for the south -what is the justification?
- What are the exceptional circumstances for the green belt to be build on?
- Why does Warrington need the thousands of extra homes on green belt and employment land rather than residing and regeneration?
- There be other incentives for families to do extensions and conversions as a way of increasing housing capacity also? The plan is too ambitious. I agree that homes may be needed and could be built sympathetically, but not to the extent proposed around the town centre (Latchford) or in the far south. We do not have the infrastructure to sustain any more traffic or medical resources to accommodate the significant increase in population.
- Where are the confirmed plans for a new hospital? The current hospital is already overstretched and serves severs Widnes, Runcorn, Halton and Warrington residents!

**Increased Housing /Loss of Green belt = Increased Traffic on existing roads & motorways
= Increased pollution from exhaust fumes and tyre dust = increases significant health issues
= Pressure on local Hospital & Doctors surgeries**

Warrington has the worst rate of small particulate pollution in the UK in 2018 (WHO AAQD v11 May 2018). A Reduction of the greenbelt in the south reduces the trees and vegetation currently absorbing some of the harmful gases, naturally filtering the air we breath. The air in Latchford on the major roads is toxic on walking into to walk. I am not social deprived, do not smoke or drink and eat a healthy diet, if I developed lung cancer (Warrington has above average rates of lung cancer) could WBC be culpability in the future?

In WBC's Air Quality Report (AQR) June 2018, it states that in 2016 4.9% (that is nearly 1 in 20) of deaths in Warrington could be attributed to particulate pollution. Furthermore, some Warrington areas, close to major roads, exceeded the levels of particulate pollution, which is recognised to contribute to the onset of cancer and cardiovascular disease. Traffic exhaust fumes and tier dust pollution is a significant contributing factor.

I wonder therefore, how WBC can justify spending over £230 million in land/building purchases to generate income, then state that ' monitoring at the worse locations (of pollution) has been proposed to gain further evidence, although there is a gap in funding at this current time' (AQR).

How is this acceptable? Is public health not important? Meanwhile large dense developments keep being built near major roads. How can councillors say, for example, that traffic & pollution generated from 160 & 189 dwellings passed for planning by Wilderspool Causeway & the Canterliver respectively, will not impact the local area? Why won't WBC invest in the monitoring the worst areas of pollution or actually engage in reducing traffic pollution?

Local hubs & less affluent areas of town

I appreciate the care given to increasing local hubs but I'm unsure still how this would impact those villages I speak of Latchford where I live.

Parking is very limited there is no easy access to a local swimming baths if you don't have a car and it is a poor area in comparison to the others in the south. It will see increased traffic from a development such as planned at Appleton Thorne and increase pollution.

How would this plan of protecting shops for further shops been built with things like parking for local residents and those working in the facility be factored in. Where are the planned sports facilities like a local swimming baths for easy access for people in Latchford or centre of town? We no longer have a town centre swimming baths. Is Victoria Park going to be further developed for such facilities? I would like to see CD's in the planning.

It is good to see the protection of some green spaces and maintenance of the Pennine Trail, but what more incentives are there for people using cycle pathways and walking. I walk to work up Knutsford Road and I regularly nearly knocked down by bikes because there isn't a clear designated path for them.

It was refreshing to acknowledge on the plan the need for spacious properties and well sized rooms particularly with more people working from home and this is likely to be a future going forward.

I would encourage any high density housing therefore also offer spacious affordable first-time buyers and those on lower incomes? Will those also include planting and garden spaces which often isn't on their priority list for spending if you are having a low income. All these things are important and backed by research for well-being and environmental impact. I would like to see more of this in the plan and making developers include these particularly when building cheaper properties.

Holding in mind many businesses are moving to more highbred homeworking, perhaps there needs to be a rethink of how many commercial properties we really do need in the area? Repurposed seeing areas that seem to be run down or closing down and areas such as Eddie Stobart for redevelopment if they are moving on.

Environmental impact of increased traffic, both in noise and air quality. Nitrogen Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxides, coarse and fine Particle Matter (PM10 & PM2.5) pollution from tyre dust and emissions (Oslo effect) have been found to contribute to increased illnesses and mortality (1, 2). Warrington, among other large towns/cities in the UK, has already missed the original deadline of 2010 to meet pollution limits. In WBC's Air Quality Report (AQR) June 2018 it states, that in 2016, around 4.9% (almost 1:20) of all mortality in Warrington was attributable to man-made particulate pollution. Areas close to major roads are noted as particularly high in nitrogen dioxide levels and exceed national standards.

In February 2018, Warrington's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) (3) report it notes that there are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) designated in warrington, one is around the major roads that lead into, and around, the town centre, including Knutsford Road, Chester Road, Wilderspool Causeway (all three in Latchford) and the other one monitors the motorways. It must also be noted that all four of the bridge crossings for the Manchester ship Canal are also in this area of the town. The AQMAs in Warrington linked to the major roads falls primarily in high deprivation areas which includes Latchford West and East. Latchford East had a significantly higher mortality rate **than any other warrington area** (regardless of depravity) for cardiovascular disease (CVD) (3). This is significant, as other illnesses cited as 'high' were consistently higher in less affluent areas of the town, suggesting low social economic status and associated factors, can not be considered accountable for the higher incidence of CVD alone in Latchford East. Research (4,5) shows that increased CVD is strongly associated with air pollution. DEFRA state that 'There is clear evidence that particulate matter (PM) has a significant contributory role in human all-cause mortality and in particular in cardiopulmonary mortality.' (7)

The Air Quality Assessment (AQA) report, commissioned December 2017, notes that at 4 out of the 6 diffuser monitoring sites in Latchford, exceeded the 40ugm levels for Nitrogen Dioxide annualised level [set out by WHO (6)]. However, the report **predicts** that additional traffic would have negligible effect on increasing this, a conclusion that is concerning as every little extra counts, particularly as levels are already high in the area and more local development sites are earmarked

Potential Increase in Traffic & Reduction in Air Quality - from:

- Extensive new housing on green belt with no detailed Infrastructure provided e.g. roads
- High density dwellings planned in the Town Centre - where will the traffic go?
- Extensive housing developments have already been built across Latchford with no new roads to support increased traffic and no infrastructure e.g. doctors surgeries. This has put additional pressure on three major roads already indicated as exceeding pollutants. In addition due to lack of amenities build with these developments, it has put additional pressures on policing e.g. Edgewater Park.
- Increased employment land up in Appleton Thorne/Grappenhall would result In increased traffic into warrington including HGV's.
- Additional vehicles travelling over the Cantilever when the bridges swing
- Vehicles travelling down Gainsborough road to access new link road, new homes & avoid swinging bridges
- No new roads in the East planned across the Manchester Ship-canal to alleviate traffic from the town centre or the south.
- Congestion/accidents on the M56 & M6 - cars divert through Latchford towards the town centre
- Mass employment land proposed to be built in the south has the potential to further increase lorries and cars travelling through latchford to and from motorway junctions. Why is Fiddlers Ferry that is due to be decommissioned in March 2020 not been allocated as a prime brown field suite for employment land?
- What is Peel's and Langtree's relationship with WBC in terms of financial rewar.

The LTP4 does outline plans to provide better public & cycle paths, park and ride systems and light rail trams, but this needs to be implemented now, not after all the planning has been completed. In addition there needs to be incentives to leave your car at home, more green planting, reducing the number of dense housing & keep our green spaces etc etc.

These measurements are urgently needed now before additional house, employment land and consequent traffic are even considered. Infrastructure and measures are required currently to alleviate the congestions problem we have in the east of the town particularly the south. Building in such density in this area will have catastrophic implications. Latchford is the bottleneck to the rest of the town and is already significantly congested at peak times and air quality on my way to work is particularly toxic. I would encourage the assessor to please look at the joint health studies were published in 2018 and the maps in the AQR of the Latchford area and see the notable effects increased housing will have.

Residents can help individually to reduce pollution, but it is very concerning when public elected local councillors, sitting on the transport and planning committees, do not adequately acknowledge or represent constituents' concerns on planning & traffic issues but are happy to take home the extra pay increments. The plan still seems set for thousands of extra homes and 381 hectares (approx 381 rugby pitches) still seems extremely high for the current resources of the town such as road networks and hospital facilities. However it is pleasing to see if it is very site now incorporated into the local plan as an area for regeneration of a Brownfield site.

The plans to build all the homes in the coming years are unrealistic and unjustified given the current economical climate in the town. However, to appreciate the enormity and devastation this would cause the area, you need to understand Warrington's geography.

We currently live between Manchester and Liverpool and therefore are in their flight path's. We are served by the Manchester ship canal, which carries daily ships with cargo between the two ports. We also have the Bridgewater Canal and the river Mersey running through the town. Therefore three swing bridges and one tall bridge must carry the traffic into the town centre and beyond.

This creates huge bottlenecks of traffic, increasing congestion and pollution. Warrington also is surrounded by three large motorways: the M56, M 62, and M6. When either or all have problems, the traffic is directed through the town. The proposal is to build on all the greenbelt area in the south of the town, which not only provides a green lung, it provides habitation for wildlife, and general well-being for the residents. Other infrastructures also would not cope with such increase including our overstretched hospital and doctors surgeries.

Air quality in Warrington is very poor along the main roads into town and even in Warrington Borough Council's (WBC) own reports it shows the severity of the pollution problem. The reduction in air pollution from traffic exhaust fumes and the smell over lockdown when traffic was minimal was significantly noticeable. However the proposal to build vast numbers of homes and employment land by the M56 and M6 junction would significantly increase Lorry flow and pollution from vehicles travelling to and from the site.

There has already been significant building of homes in the town in recent years, with no additional infrastructure added, including roads, doctors and services. WBC are building another bridge in the west of the town, but this will serve additional homes that is to be built. It will have little impact with all the additional houses that is proposed and will support only some of the additional traffic volume.

There is very real concern from residents, particularly in the south of the town regarding the destruction of greenbelt and increase in traffic and subsequent pollution. We are already experience poor air quality, the proposed plans do not hold any promise of this problem abating.

Kind Regards,

Melanie Wood



References:

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