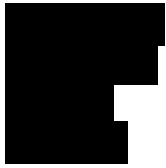


Maureen Davies



14 November 2021

Planning Policy and Programmes
Warrington Borough Council

Dear Sirs

Local Plan 2021 – 2038 dated 21 September 2021

I refer to the above proposed Plan and wish my concerns to be noted. I do not have time to read seven hundred pages and associated references to planning laws, so this response is rather generalised.

The proposed Plan does not sufficiently take into account the issue of climate change and its impact in Warrington and surrounding area. This is at the forefront of our minds at the moment, the UK having hosted the recent deliberations at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

I believe there is an opportunity for Warrington BC to become a leader in this field and not waste the opportunity to develop a Plan which will benefit local people in the areas of housing, transport, air quality, reduction of carbon emissions etc. What are Warrington Borough Council's targets and how is this addressed in the Plan?

Housing – modifications to the original Plan are noted, however, there is still a predominant focus on building on the green belt with larger houses being the main part of such projects. A Plan for the future should include building for the needs of young people as a starting point as they will be growing up during the lifetime of the Plan.

I put forward that building on brownfield sites, particularly those in or near to the town centre, will better serve young people's needs, obviously an ongoing requirement. Younger people will not be able to afford deposits on, say, a 3 bedroomed house, until they have established themselves on the housing ladder. Development in the Plan is heavily weighted towards housing on the outskirts of the town which then impacts negatively on the environment, necessitates infrastructure changes which are not always compatible with the current transport network, and does nothing to help those without a car.

The town centre could be regenerated by having access to a variety of venues aimed at younger people, whilst also encouraging senior residents into the town with daytime activities and social interaction, thereby assisting in addressing health and loneliness issues. If the brownfield sites were utilised to provide lower cost flats, town houses and social housing

there will be areas with easy access to the town and which also cut down the negative impact of transport emissions.

This leads me on to the linked matter of transport. The M6, M56, A49, A50 and A56 barely cope with the amount of traffic using these roads at the moment, particularly at peak times. To put even more cars, vans and lorries on these roads is in no way forward thinking. Different solutions to housing, such as outlined above, will at least not make the situation worse. Building an urbanisation within the boundaries of these roads, in addition to extra industrial and commercial units, will impact on air quality, create more congestion and does not even begin to right the bad situation we have now.

Whilst accepting that the Council must meet figures set out by the Government, these are minimum requirements and the amount of new housing on green belt in the Plan far exceeds that.

There can be no justification for the amount of new homes proposed or for green belt land to be taken away around the M6/M56 interchange. The motorways constantly have huge queues, whether through high volume (again impacting on air quality and emissions), or accidents leaving a lane or lanes closed.

Any additional employment around this junction cannot be guaranteed to be taken up by local people. This could lead to more congestion as employees would no doubt have to travel by car to go to work.

Going back to environmental issues, the Council has spent a large amount of their budget on consultants etc. Would it not be more advantageous in the future to help lower income families and senior members of the community in practical ways, which have a less detrimental impact on the environment? Part of the budget could be spent on providing free loft insulation, for example. This should primarily be aimed at people who are senior citizens or on categorised benefits. The difference this will mean to people in Warrington now, to have the benefit of less household expenditure at a time when heating costs are soaring, is also in line with seeking to reduce emissions. Whilst practical solutions to heat loss are not always associated with environmental aims at higher levels, it nevertheless provides two significant objectives, lowering emissions and saving money.

I believe it is necessary to use the words 'not sound' in objections, and wish it to be known I strongly object as this plan is NOT SOUND in it's desire to concrete over huge areas of Green Belt, it's totally inadequate target of only 10% of energy needs coming from renewables (meaning 90% is allowed to come from fossil fuels) and it's lack of forward planning in the light of changes in society to office needs (people working from home) and ordering shopping online, not visiting retail outlets.

I, therefore, do not accept this Plan in its present form to cover the ongoing requirements of the Town and Borough.

Maureen Davies