

From: Marian Sample [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 November 2021 17:00
To: Local Plan
Subject: Objections to Local Plan

Good afternoon

I am writing to register my objections to the local plan, which can be summarised as follows:

- 1) The consultation process itself not sound, the vast majority of the greenbelt release takes place in the South East Urban Extension, all of the council run consultations sessions were held at the Halliwell Jones stadium north of the Bridgewater Canal, the Manchester ship Canal, the Mersey and the town centre whilst the vast majority of the greenbelt development is proposed for south of these water barriers. Consultation events run by the council with council officers present should have taken place in the south of the Borough. The failure to do this renders the consultation process unsound.
- 2) The case has not been made for the growth that is driving the increased housing numbers in the The Plan. The 2018 ONS data predicts significantly lower growth for the town, in fact a projected housing requirement of 458 homes per annum verses the plans 816 homes per annum. The Plan has not been adapted to take into account the latest data. Importantly the growth in housing numbers generated by the standard model are “not a target” but a starting point, this starting point should be amended to reflect the 2018 ONS data. Because of this failure to adapt the growth numbers driving the plans are not sound.
- 3) The case that is made for the green belt release not sound. The Plan refers to an annual “target”, may I remind you that, Christopher Pincher MP (Housing Minister) in parliament on the 2nd of March 2021 stated that, “the standard method for assessing local housing need is only the starting point in the process of planning for new homes it is not a housing target.” Instead it is a starting point. The Council appear to have used this as a target and then increased the numbers via further uplift of 10% generating a total requirement of 16,157 homes over an 18 year period. See also point (i) above.
The Plan, at point 4.1.10 of the document, Confirms that Warrington has an urban capacity of approximately 11,800 homes that could be built on brownfield sites, the annual “target” pre the 10% uplift of 816 homes (which I considered to be un sound and excessive), Implies that there is sufficient Brownfield land to support a 14 1/2 year building program. On this basis there is no need to release any greenbelt until sometime well beyond the first decade of this plan.
The priority of the Council should be renewal of the town centre and the development of Brownfield sites not release of the greenbelt.
There is no need for greenbelt release for well over 10 years using the councils own numbers if the Brownfield land available is remediated.
- 4) The Council have declared a climate emergency, the release of greenbelt is not sound in the face of the Council's own climate emergency, the government’s own declaration of a climate emergency and the global desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. When Brownfield land is available for use there is no sustainable justification for the release of greenbelt land on the outskirts of the town. The release of greenbelt in the countryside surrounding the town and in particular the South East Urban Extension will create further car dependent suburbs, leading to further congestion, pollution and negatively impacting the climate change agenda of the Town and the Country.
- 5) The plan is not sound in that it fails to address the already chronically overloaded road system in South Warrington. The bottlenecks of Stockton Heath, Latchford, junction 10 of the M56, Junction 20 of the M6, and London Road between Stockton Heath and junction 10 of the M56.
The limited contribution to the road network contained within the plan for the South East Urban Extension is a link road from Grappenhall Hayes to Dipping Brook Avenue with a connection to the existing road net work near Grappenhall Lane and a connection of a link road from Stretton Road to the A49 somewhere opposite the Spire

Hospital. These do not address any of the current issues of congestion rather it simply links areas within the already congested hinterland bounded by The Bridgewater Canal, the M6, the M56 and London Road.

Specifically there are no concrete plans to address the junction at Lyons Lane and the A49, or the Owens corner roundabout on to the A49, both of which, if these plans were to go ahead, would see significant additional traffic flows and further congestion.

The proposed new junction opposite the Spire Hospital has enormous potential drawbacks. If this is to be operated by traffic lights it would create a further worsening of the congestion that already sees vehicles backing up to the junction 10 of the M56. The implications of having traffic lights opposite the Spire and at the Cat and Lion will only increase the congestion on the A49 both northbound and southbound.

The proposal that in the short term there is a potential to link the A49 opposite the Spire to Spark Hall close, creates significant congestion at the junction of Stretton Road and Spark Hall close opposite Saint Matthews Church and Saint Matthews school.

6) The plan is not sound because it releases greenbelt immediately and will divert investment from the regeneration of the town centre and the Brownfield sites around the town. A sound plan would delay any greenbelt release until at least the first five years of the plan were completed at which time when the plan is reviewed The significant changes to lifestyles and work patterns caused by Brexit, Covid, and the climate emergency as well as the most up-to-date ONS data may well confirm that no greenbelt release is required to support the growth of Warrington. A sound plan would preserve the greenbelt when there is so much uncertainty regarding the real future demand for housing in the towns and cities of England.

7) The Plan is not sound, it's building the wrong homes in the wrong places, Warrington needs affordable housing of mixed tenure but this affordable housing needs to be near to the town centre with the facilities of the town centre accessible to those living in affordable housing. The plan does not deliver this in fact its target for affordable housing is only 20% for inner Warrington developments and 30% elsewhere.

8) The plan is not sound, the South East Urban Extension creates a continuous suburb merging Stockton Heath, Grappenhall, Grappenhall Hayes, Appleton, Wrights Green, and Stretton. Appleton Thorn is one field away from becoming part of this huge suburb stretching from the M56 all the way to the Bridgewater Canal. It runs contrary to the councils own stated goal of preserving the distinctive villages that surround Warrington, instead it merges all the distinct areas referred to above into one enormous suburb.

9) The plan is not sound, the opportunity to develop Fiddlers Ferry which has rail transport links to the town centre has been sadly missed, this location should not become an employment location but rather a new village built on Brownfield land with sustainable links to the town centre and beyond. There are already substantial number of buildings in the area which are available for office/retail and which are lying empty. The plan as currently drafted fails to capitalise on the opportunities that present themselves to the council for Brownfield land residential use at Fiddlers Ferry.

Yours sincerely

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