

Proposed Submission Version Local Plan

PART A - About You

1. Please complete the following:

Please note the email address (if provided below) will be sent a full copy of the submitted response and a unique reference number.

Name of person completing the form: Diane Cresswell

Email address: [REDACTED]

2. What type of respondent are you? Please select one option only.
If you are an agent please select the type of client you are representing.

A local resident who lives in Warrington

3. Please provide your contact details:

	Contact details
Organisation name (if applicable)	-
Agent name (if applicable)	-
Address 1	[REDACTED]
Address 2	-
Postal Town	[REDACTED]
Postcode	[REDACTED]
Telephone number	[REDACTED]

PART B - Representation Form 1

1. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

From the drop down list please select one option.

Plan as a whole

3. Do you consider the Draft Local Plan to be: Please select one option in each row.

	Yes	No
Legally Compliant	X	
Sound		X
Compliant with the Duty to Co-operate	X	

4. If you have answered 'No' to any of the options in the above question then please give details in the box below of why you consider the Draft Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate.

Please be as precise as possible.

The priority should be to develop these ALL brownfield sites as they are released, rather than commit to the use of Greenbelt.

5. If you answered 'Yes' to any of the options in question 3 then please give details in the box below the reasons why you support the legal compliance or soundness of the Draft Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate.

Please be as precise as possible.

I can see no evidence that the Plan is not legally compliant. The consultation process appears to be running as it should. The problem is with the Plan itself.

8. If you wish to upload documents to support your representation form then please select 'choose file' below. You can upload a max number of 2 files (up to 25MB each).

If you are submitting more than one representation form please note: If this file upload supports more than one representation form then please do not attempt to upload the same file on subsequent forms. On additional representation forms please use the comments/file description box to type in the 'name of the file', or 'see previous form'.

If the file upload is a different document for additional representation forms then please continue to upload the file as normal.

- File: Objection to Local Plan 141121.pdf - [REDACTED]

Comments/file description

Letter setting out areas of Objection

You have just completed a Representation Form for Plan as a whole.

Please select what you would you like to do now?

Complete the final part of the form, Customer 'About You' questions and submit response **(Part C)**

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Warrington Borough Council
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
Warrington
WA1 2NH

14 November 2021

LOCAL PLAN

Dear Sir

We are writing to reiterate our deep and ongoing concerns about the proposed development of Warrington as expressed in the updated Local Plan. Our Objection centres on the following areas.

The Plan appears to be driven by a desire to maximise housing development, well beyond what the proposed local economic development will require. There is no clear economic plan for South Warrington other than major, automated logistics facilities close to the M6/M56 which will create low numbers of relatively low paying jobs. Consequently these employees will have to travel in from other areas. The plan mentions a reduction from 4200 to 2400 new homes in the South West Urban Extension, but crucially this reduction only applies during the planning horizon to 2038. No doubt shortly after 2038 more homes will be built in South Warrington, and in fact the term Garden Suburb appears several times in the document, so that ambition on behalf of the Council still stands. The Plan simply creates homes for commuters into Manchester and Liverpool – who will choose to drive because the two railway stations in the Town Centre are 5 miles away through heavily congested roads.

The rate of development at an average of 816 m new houses per year is still well above Warrington's historical peak of 545 new houses per year, and may also exceed Government guidelines. Essential infrastructure for Health, Schools and Social Care, and civic facilities such as Libraries, Parks and Playing fields, would also need to be in place, but in past development (e.g. 2000 homes at Chapelford) the infrastructure has been slow to materialise. Infrastructure 'lag' will be exacerbated with the much faster rate of development proposed.

The Plan again takes the easy option to build extensively on Greenbelt in the South of Warrington rather than phasing development as brown field sites come available. Greenbelt land should only be used as a last resort and where wholly justified. Greenbelt exists to check sprawl, prevent the merging of settlements, to stop encroachment into the countryside, to preserve historic settlements and to assist in regeneration. Use of Greenbelt, heavily focused in South Warrington, completely ignores these criteria which govern the release of Greenbelt for development. Just because this land is in public ownership does not mean that it is right to obliterate an area of natural beauty and historic villages which are an asset for the town as a whole. Its destruction would be nothing short of civic vandalism. The proposed Plan mentions it has reduced the use of Greenbelt from 1210 hectares to 580 hectares of which 316 hectares will be for employment. This is a step in the right direction, however the nature of the employment is not described. If it was about creating high value jobs then this point would be made, rather it will be further highly automated logistics depots with few, low-paid jobs on offer. Of course further Greenbelt will be utilised for housing in future once

this proposed plan has opened the door for its use in South Warrington (Sect 10.2.2) as a resurrected Garden Suburb which will destroy the character and distinctiveness of the area while contributing absolutely nothing towards the regeneration needs of the Town Centre.

A viable Transport Plan must be delivered alongside the Local Plan. Warrington is already severely congested with the added complications of the River Mersey, the Bridgewater Canal and the Manchester Ship Canal with its three Victorian Swing Bridges plus a restricted high level bridge. However, only one absolutely new crossing is proposed, the Western Link from Walton to Sankey Bridges, and there is mention of a new highlevel crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal (which would replace the currently signed 'Weak Bridge' which is limited to cars and LGVs). The first part of the Western Link from Walton to Bank Quay is already completed and does at least mitigate against the risk of missing a train. There are mentions of other major road developments to take the pressure off Bridgefoot and the Town Centre in general. ***However if we make it too easy to drive through Warrington are we likely to attract traffic which doesn't wish to pay the Tolls to cross the Mersey at Runcorn?***

Overall LPT4 lacks concrete proposals to address the transport needs of a much enlarged Town and does not take account of affordability nor address realistic timescales. Travel time into the Town Centre by car is already prohibitive and further development will only increase traffic along roads which are already beyond their intended capacity. The plan emphasises that shorter journeys in the Town Centre should be on foot and bicycle, which makes sense for both air quality and road safety. However, if you live away from the Town Centre, as many people do, there is still the problem of how to travel into the Town Centre, or indeed anywhere, unless you travel by car. Bus services in South Warrington are very infrequent which is isolating for the young and the elderly and young mothers with children in tow. The Time Square Development includes a huge new car park, which illustrates rather well the lack of foresight or willingness to make public transport work for everyone. The air quality in Warrington is already at a grossly unacceptable level and implementing the Plan will make it worse along the major highways due to increased traffic. The Council should therefore not commit to large scale development until there is certainty about an environmentally friendly transport infrastructure, be that a mass transport system or some other means.

Brownfield land should be developed ahead of Greenbelt land

It is laudable that the Plan includes the regeneration of the Fiddlers Ferry site. However it is also hard to believe that this step had not been considered at the time of the 2019 Plan, when it was already well-known that Fiddlers Ferry would be closing in 2020. This deliberate omission from the 2019 plan suggests that there are further brownfield sites, known to the Council, which will become available within the planning horizon, as well as those it is acknowledged will become available beyond 2038. The priority should be to develop these ALL brownfield sites as they are released, rather than commit to the use of Greenbelt, just because it is easy to do.

We recognise that there is a national need for more affordable, family housing close to centres of employment. The Plan does not meet this strategic need, rather it simply turns South Warrington into a massive commuter hub. There is no major proposal, like HS2, to justify building houses on this scale on the southern outskirts of Warrington. The ability to deliver this scale of development with the necessary infrastructure, over the next twenty years, is highly questionable. In summary the Plan is not sound.

We request an acknowledgement that the Council has received this Objection.

Yours faithfully

Dr John R Cresswell
Dr Diane M Cresswell