

Warrington

15 June 2019

Dear Sir

As residents [REDACTED] we are writing to voice our strong objections to the developments proposed in Warrington Borough Council's local plan for this area. We understand that an assessment will be made as to whether the proposals are sound and that soundness is defined as justified, deliverable, meets the area's objectively assessed needs and is in line with government policy.

We believe that the proposals are unsound for several reasons:

- The assessed requirement for housing is significantly inflated. Official population figures suggest that the area will require another 528 houses per annum whereas the proposed plan assumes a requirement for 945 a year. While we accept that it is necessary to plan for population growth, we do not understand why such a high figure has been proposed for this area, especially when it will have such an adverse impact on the quality of life of local residents. With more realistic projections, most, if not all, of the land requirements for the town could be addressed by focusing on brown field sites.
- The plan requires the release of Green Belt land. The current Green Belt provides the population of South Warrington with open spaces which offer opportunities for outdoor activities and access to clean air. The negative impact of pollution on health, particularly on children, is now better understood and is rightly receiving increased attention. The Green Belt between current housing developments and the M6 and M56 affords open countryside which allows some gases and particulates to disperse. Not only will a significant amount of this will be lost if the plan is implemented, but also, proposed housing, industrial development and warehousing on current Green Belt land will increase pollution in the area. Furthermore, it will erode precious countryside that allows local residents to enjoy a natural environment and provides a habitat to wildlife that is increasingly endangered.
- The planning timescale is 20 years, which is excessive. With ongoing changes in society, surely more brown field sites are likely to become available for housing that have not been factored into the plan, possibly avoiding the requirement to use Green Belt land at all?
- South Warrington already suffers from chronic traffic congestion at certain times. The Manchester Ship Canal and Bridgewater Canal have limited crossing points and the local road infrastructure is already inadequate for the area. There are already ongoing housing and scheduled developments in the area that will exacerbate the situation. The local plan fails to address the current issues and does not appear to recognise or deal with the further problems that the additional housing, industrial development and warehousing will bring.

The rationale for the scale of development in the plan is baffling. We do not understand why proposals have been submitted by Warrington Council representatives that will have such a negative impact on the area for which they are responsible. For the first time in my life, I (Steven Whitfield) spoke last week to my MP who has pledged to oppose the loss of Green Belt land for development.

We hope that the review process is sufficiently robust to recognise that this plan is unsound; that the loss of valuable Green Belt land is unjustifiable; and that the character of this area and our local environment is being unnecessarily ruined.

Yours faithfully

Steven Whitfield  
Jacqueline Whitfield