

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

17th June 2019

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to provide my response and objection to the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2017 – 2037 (March 2019). I previously provided my response to the options appraisal stage for the Local Plan in September 2017 but having reviewed the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan, most of my previous comments have not been addressed and remain valid for this submission. As such, I have amended my previous response and am submitting it as my response to this Proposed Submission Version.

I would like to mention that I appreciate and acknowledge the requirement for additional housing stock and I support some additional (ideally more affordable) development in South Warrington where it is required on the existing safe-guarded land. However, the scale of the proposals (to develop a Garden Suburb of 7,400 homes) and the plans to build the majority on the green-belt is not desirable. Outlined below are my concerns:

TRAFFIC AND TRAVEL

- Warrington South has good access to the motorways and the current proposals state that there will be links to these existing motorways. However, these motorways are normally very congested, especially at peak times. Have Highways England been consulted to determine whether there is enough capacity to cope with such an increase in traffic (based on 7,400 additional homes it is likely that this would lead to an additional 29,600 AADT (annual average daily traffic)? Additionally, having used both junctions (M6 and M56) at peak times the local roads leading to the junctions are normally extremely busy at these times leading to long queues even before you access the motorways. These roads and junctions need to be considered to determine their ability to cope with additional traffic and what affect this will have on journey times for existing residents. The plan for an additional link road cutting through the Garden Suburb to join the A49 and A50 has no real benefit to aid congestion as the problem of traffic within Warrington (particularly in South Warrington) stems from the surrounding motorways being extremely congested and issues travelling across the Ship Canal if the swing bridges are off. In South Warrington there is little other option for travel other than private car (no rail links and buses are slow and expensive).
- Following on from my previous point, there are no sustainable transport options in this part of Warrington compared with North Warrington. Policy INF1 focusses on sustainable travel and transport which is fantastic, however there are no specific details as to how this will be achieved. There are no train lines through this South Warrington so no opportunity to add additional train stations. Should residents need/want to use the rail network the nearest stations are Bank Quay and Central, both located in the already congested town centre. The Council should ensure that sustainable travel is included within any development to

minimise the reliance on private car use (though NOT by reducing the number of parking spaces per house, this does not work to dissuade new residents to ditch the car, rather creates messy and unsafe developments/estates due to parking on all the surrounding roads) and improve the uptake in public transport (by making this more reliable and affordable) and cycling (by improving the existing cycling network especially into the town centre, ideally creating more segregated cycle paths to take cycles off the congested roads and onto dedicated cycle paths. This would encourage more people to take up cycling, especially children and more safety-conscious/nervous adults who would never consider taking their bike on our dangerous roads. An extension to the Trans-Pennine trail to facilitate this would be fantastic.)

- With regards to sustainability, are there any plans for alternative fuelled vehicles? Will FAST electric charging points be made available to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles? And how many? Will every home have this capability to make this truly a sustainable development?
- Warrington appears to have prioritised the car over any other mode of transport and unfortunately hasn't done the best job of that too considering the congestion through the town. This has been further exacerbated by the opening of the Mersey Gateway with its tolls with people will choosing to drive through Warrington bypassing the tolls. Traffic and travel through Warrington is only set to get worse. Something needs to be done before our travel infrastructure grinds to a halt and makes Warrington town centre somewhere best avoided by residents. Perhaps consideration of a congestion charge through the centre with an exemption to ALL Warrington residents would assist. This may also help when there are incidents on the surrounding motorways where the town centre becomes a diversion, although it can barely cope with the normal level of traffic.
- Policy DC6 includes mention of cycle paths, an extensive cycle path network (ideally off the roads) would be of great benefit to provide new residents the choice to use their bikes, whether for leisure or commuting and enable residents across the entire town with a safe network of cycle paths. If more paths were created off the roads this mode of travel could be become more popular, or at least additional cycle lanes (not combined with bus lanes) would help. If journeys to school were made safer for bike users, there could be an uptake in the number of parents and children cycling to school which would aid congestion around schools and also have health related benefits. Cycling on the road with children is considered dangerous. We should aim to take cycles off the road and onto a dedicated cycle network (incorporating the Trans Pennine Trail). Additionally, there are a number of locations along the Trans Pennine Trail where users have to utilise the road network, for example at Bradshaw Road/Thelwall New Road. Improvements could be made to the Trail to ensure that as little as possible is located on the road network.
- WBC needs to prioritise public transport, cycling and walking to try to ease the traffic congestion issues within Warrington, not just to aid the delivery of additional housing stock but now(!), before a single house is built.
- In the case of the South Warrington proposals, the council are proposing an additional 7,400 houses on mainly greenbelt land across Grappenhall and Appleton. On average if you consider 4 vehicle movements per day from each property that equates to an additional 29,600 vehicle movements per day onto our already incredibly stretched network. That in itself is not sustainable and already congested roads will become even more so and the current traffic problems that plague Warrington will be increasingly exacerbated.

CHARACTER AND GREEN BELT

- Whilst it is acknowledged that some additional housing is required, this should not be at the detriment to the open countryside and greenery surrounding South Warrington. The current plans are disproportionate to what additional housing is required in South Warrington and what wouldn't cause a detrimental effect on the existing character of South Warrington. South Warrington comprises a series of villages with their own unique charm, character and traditions such as individual Walking Days. The proposals would dwarf these villages and merge them all together. I am concerned that the greenery of South Warrington will be lost forever and the area will just become yet another area of urban sprawl. The appeal of this area making people want to live here is the access to open greenery and the opportunity to live in a village setting but with the bonus of being part of a larger town. The proposed Local Plan will destroy this. More needs to be done to preserve the open character of the landscape within South Warrington and the identity of each village, the current plans do not do this.
- As I mentioned in my introduction I do think that there does need to be further development in South Warrington as there is a need for further (good quality but also more affordable) housing in the area, as long as they are designed and built in keeping with the existing housing stock in the area in both density and style, although with the opportunity to use some innovative 21st century design. However, this housing should only be built on the existing safe-guarded land which is currently ear-marked for housing, not the greenbelt.
- Everything should be done to preserve the character of each village and their traditions in Warrington. Where additional housing is proposed in South Warrington (ideally on the safe-guarded land not greenbelt), these houses should be built to create a new little village of their own with its own character and charm. This village should be completely segregated from the other villages (using LARGE green spaces) to ensure it has its own identity and does not encroach on the existing surrounding villages. It should have its own village school, small local shops, play area and maybe a local pub to provide a centre to life in the new village. These should be designed as small villages to complement the existing surrounding villages and to safe guard the greenbelt as much as possible.
- Our greenbelt should be protected! We should be proud of our greenbelt and should be doing all we can to avoid building on this precious land. The residents of Warrington consider that the greenbelt belongs to all of us, not just the land owners or developers and as such, it is our gift to our children and our children's children. It should be preserved for generations to come, not sold off and concreted over all in the name of profit. Once the greenbelt is gone it is gone forever. Don't destroy something that doesn't belong solely to you, it belongs to all the residents of Warrington and we all should get to say what happens to it.

UTILITIES

- Policy INF3 outlines the requirement for utilities and how these should be dealt with during development. However, more detailed information needs to be provided regarding the potential impact on the existing utility networks including electricity, gas, water and wastewater. This is obviously dependent upon the size of the proposals but the requirement for additional electrical substations, a new wastewater treatment plant etc need to be considered. Additionally, the location of any such facility will need careful consideration to ensure minimal impact on existing residents.

- It would be environmentally beneficial if Warrington BC required each house to be capable of generating their own power, for example; ground-source heat pumps and solar panels.

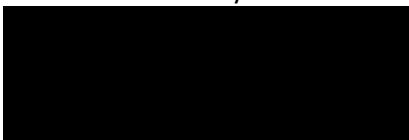
AIR QUALITY

- Warrington Borough Council has Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) where the concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are higher than the Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objective of 40ug/m³ on an annual basis. The source of these concentrations is road vehicles. Currently the plan for the approximately 7,400 additional properties in South Warrington is to provide links to these motorways. However, this will increase the number of vehicles within an AQMA (1) and have the potential to have a significant effect on air quality within this sensitive location. Additionally, there is likely to be a detrimental impact on the air quality at existing receptors local to the scheme. Any additional vehicle and congestion onto the existing network will increase pollutant concentrations. Specifically, if Stockton Heath is used as the main route into the Town Centre. Whilst Stockton Heath has not been declared as an AQMA, NO₂ concentrations were measured at 50.5ug/m³ and 35.5ug/m³ (compared to an AQS objective of 40ug/m³) in 2015 in Stockton Heath. Any increase in traffic through this area is likely to have detrimental consequences on local air quality in this area and may result in the declaration of a new AQMA.

I do hope that you will take mine and other fellow Warrington residents' concerns into full consideration and I hope you will not do anything to reduce the appeal of Warrington including access to green space and village life within a town, to either those of us living here or to our visitors. Finally, I would like to end with a quote from the '1969 Warrington New Town Consultants' Proposals for the Draft Master Plan' that a colleague shared with me recently. This is from the section of the plan which outlined the views of the children of Warrington:

'This final quotation seems to sum up the majority of the children's views: "have we to grow up in this town crowned by thick black clouds of smoke girded round by ten storey skyscrapers? To visit the museum to find out what a tree was or samples of grass before the Corporation built one thousand five hundred houses on every green patch? Or is there a small group of people going to stop the town from getting like this? I sincerely hope so."

Yours Sincerely



Sarah Naylor