



16 June 2019

Local Plan
Planning Policy and Programmes
Warrington Borough Council
New Town House
Buttermarket Street
Warrington
WA1 2NH

Dear Sirs

RE: LOCAL PLAN

Having carefully considered the Local Plan, viewed the displays and discussed various aspects with Council representatives at the Halliwell Jones Stadium we believe that the plan is not sound for the following reasons:

The plan period is too long. It should be 15 years not 20 years. A shorter period would mean fewer houses, if any, need to be built on Green Belt land.

The economic growth forecasts are too optimistic. There is uncertainty regarding the economy and forecasts should be downgraded including that of new jobs.

According to a government minister housing targets should be decided locally. Forecast numbers are unrealistic and the latest 2016 population growth figures should give a starting point not those of 2014.

More affordable housing is needed. The high value houses planned in the south will not be affordable and will be bought by out of town commuters, leading to more congestion on the roads.

Brownfield sites should be built on first. Developers should not be allowed to build on green field sites except as a last resort. In Lymm we have already seen Bellway Homes start a housing development at Tanyard Farm off Rushgreen Road near to the Sainsburys store with no added infrastructure in the village or to Rushgreen Road itself. The very special circumstances required to release Green Belt have not been demonstrated for this and other proposed developments. National Planning Policy Revisions have strengthened the protection of the Green Belt.

Too much emphasis has been placed on logistics and distribution which, due to automation, generate fewer jobs. These are 24 hour businesses requiring considerable space and huge numbers of vehicle movements.

The Council's vision is for a vibrant town centre surrounded by attractive countryside and distinct settlements. The proposed plan would destroy the identities of Walton, Grappenhall, Appleton Thorn and Stretton. It would further increase the size of Lymm without any appreciable added infrastructure including schools, shopping facilities, parking and road improvements that would be required to support the proposed new dwellings.

We have already experienced vehicle gridlock and the associated reduction in air quality on normal days at shopping centres in Warrington (eg Riverside Retail Park). How on earth will those centres cope with an additional 5000 new homes and associated vehicles with no suitable infrastructure improvements being proposed.

Congestion is already a big problem on roads in the south of Warrington and at Junction 20 of the M6. Infrastructure must be built before houses, not afterwards, in anticipation of increased traffic not only due to future residents but also vehicles involved in the construction of the proposed houses and businesses. Having attended the displays and consultation at the Halliwell Jones stadium it is obvious that the Council have no plan to improve the road system at Junction 20. It is not satisfactory simply to leave this to Highways England, it needs to be factored into the proposals at an early stage.

Warrington has a poor record for air pollution. Additional vehicles will only make matters worse. We will be losing green spaces which are recognised as being good for air quality, wellbeing and mental health. Part of Moore Nature Reserve will also be lost.

