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**To:** [Local Plan](#)  
**Cc:** [andy.carter.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:andy.carter.mp@parliament.uk); [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Concerns about impact of Warrington Local Plan 2021  
**Date:** 28 October 2021 18:19:49

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Dear Warrington Borough Councillors,

As a resident of Appleton, I am aware that the proposed Warrington Local Plan 2021 will have a significant impact on the landscape and infrastructure of my immediate local area. As with the 2019 Local Plan I have attempted to submit my views via the online form, however this seems very complicated and to be more aimed at organisations who have a legal challenge to the plan. I am not a politician or a lawyer and so do not feel qualified to comment on the actual building plan suggestions, use of green belt land or whether the area actually needs additional housing up to the numbers being proposed. My concerns are more based around how the proposed plan will impact the existing infrastructure and community, so once again I do not think it is appropriate that I fill out that form. Following a conversation with a local councillor in the area, Joe Doherty, I therefore felt that the best way for me to raise my concerns for consideration would be via an email.

As a person with dyslexia, I was pleased to see that the council has made the Local Plan 2021 more accessible to understand in a variety of formats, including a video presentation and broken-down written sections, based on the different areas to be developed. As I work in central Manchester from Monday to Friday 8am-6pm and then have a 1.5 hour commute either way, I was also pleased to see that all this information was available easily online and that some consultation events were held at a range of times and dates outside of the working week this time too. However, it remains a shame that Borough Council in-person consultation events could only happen in central Warrington and not in the local community areas which will be primarily impacted by the plan.

Given the increased profile of environmental improvement I was also heartened to see that the council has reduced the amount of green belt land to be included in the 2021 Local Plan and increased standards for both indoor and outdoor spaces to help improve the wellbeing of residents. As a Warrington resident with a physical disability, I was also pleased that the council has committed to ensuring that all homes built as part of the local plan are accessible or can be adapted. However, given that the population of Warrington is getting older (stated in your presentation), and the numbers of town residents of all ages with a disability or long-term health condition is significantly higher than the national average (<https://www.midlandsandlancashirecsu.nhs.uk/download/Warrington-CCG-and-Halton-CCG-demographic-profiling.pdf>) in my opinion I feel that the council should commit to 20% of the homes being built to be wheelchair accessible by 2038.

Unfortunately, despite these headline grabbing attempts at creating a green Local Plan, resilient to population changes going forward many of the key concerns I raised in 2019 are still pressing following the publication of the Warrington Local Plan 2021. In relation to the South East Warrington Urban Extension, I feel the need to raise the following issues:

- As someone who commutes in and out of Manchester to Appleton every weekday, I am aware that the traffic light junction at the Cat and Lion Pub on the A49 is already very busy at rush hour with queues often extending back to the roundabouts at junction 10 of the M56 and Owens Corner. While there is now a plan to improve the infrastructure in that area as part of the local plan before additional houses can be built and this may reduce some of the traffic congestion

at peak times, I still suspect air pollution from vehicles in the area will still see a significant increase which may add to, rather than reduce, the number of Air Quality Management Areas in Warrington (*Warrington Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021 – 2038*, page 175), especially if large amounts of new housing and workplaces are built nearby. The planned down grading of a section of Stretton Road as part of this infrastructure proposal also has the possibility of dividing the village of Stretton in two – making transport access St Matthew’s church and school and Park Royal Hotel difficult for those living in the existing housing on the A49 and in the Hatton Lane area, without making a significant detour down Longwood Road, thus increasing local A49 traffic further, not decreasing it.

- Two of the key problems to be tackled by the 2021 Local Plan remain the need to regenerate the town centre and increase public transport usage. However, I cannot see how South East Warrington Urban Extension is going to help with this.
  - Bus services into town from the Appleton/Stretton area are currently minimal and fares are expensive (almost £5), to the point where many people feel if they have to go into town it is cheaper and easier to drive in and pay for parking. A lack of major road networks in the plans suggest to me that bus services are unlikely to get more frequent and less expensive without significant subsidy from the Borough Council, which I doubt they will be able to find the monetary resources for.
  - It is most notable that there are no additional waterway crossings proposed in the 2021 Local Plan in the South East area of Warrington. The current routes from the south side of the town into the centre are congested with heavy traffic and slow, single lane carriageways through residential villages. As soon as a boat comes up the ship canal all but one of the current routes to the town centre also then have further delays as bridges are closed to traffic so they can swing out of the way. As a result, many people in the Appleton/Stretton area already feel it is quicker and easier to go to Northwich or Manchester for their shopping, where there is a wider selection of shops than in Warrington town centre and/or they can shop in all weathers, eat out and enjoy entertainment – such as at the Trafford Centre. That’s if they go out to shop at all – online shopping is far more common these days, especially among middle class working families who this development is largely going to attract. The loss of Debenhams as the flag ship store in the Golden Square and the pandemic lockdowns have only heightened this problem as less people are going out to socialise regularly and do even more shopping online. Even if the plan did result in a regeneration the town centre so that people wanted to go there from the South East Warrington Urban Extension, with only the existing level of road infrastructure in place the number of Air Quality Management Areas in Warrington (*Warrington Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021 – 2038*, page 175) are once again likely to increase, or current ones exacerbated, by the proposals – particularly in the villages of Stockton Heath and Latchford.
- There remains a significant discrepancy between the ambitions of the Warrington Local Plan 2021 and the provision of enough community infrastructure facilities in the South East Warrington Urban Extension to meet demand:
  - The total housing proposed by the time the extension is complete will be equal to what was planned during the Local Plan of 2019, but the number of primary schools and health centres planned has decreased and the proposed form intake of the

secondary school has been reduced. How will the extension be 'future proofed' so there are enough community facilities to ensure all residents have access to leisure, education and health facilities as more houses are built over time?

- While the local plan states that the secondary school proposed for the South East Warrington Urban Extension should be central to the area being developed (*Warrington Updated Proposed Submission Version Local Plan 2021 – 2038*, page 194) all of the possible school sites marked on the Indicative Masterplan Framework map (*South East Warrington Urban Extension – A Deliverable Proposition*, pg. 9) appear to be on the edges of the development. The one site that is closest to being described as in the middle of the development also appears to be the smallest of the available school sites. With no additional surrounding ground how will the new secondary school expand as demand increases? Especially when an additional 1,800 houses are built after 2038?
- The latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan states that health centre in the South East Warrington Urban Extension will be built by the council but I assume it will still be up to the CCG to fund the staffing of this crucial piece of community infrastructure. It is well known that there is already insufficient access to primary health care in Warrington and we are chronically short of GPs. Additionally, Warrington Hospital needs replacing/upgrading and has had serious financial issues over the last few years for which the CCG have had to 'plug the gap'. Given this, how is the Borough Council going to ensure that health infrastructure is available in the extension given this it is quite possible the CCG will not have the money to fund the staffing of the health centre, and even if it does current recruitment drives for GPs in Warrington are failing, so trying to recruit even more will be futile.
- There is still no mention anywhere in the local plan for any Further or Higher Education provision south of the ship canal. As a result, any young people living in the South East Warrington Urban Extension wanting to remain in formal education or training post-16 will need to travel across the ship canal, the most direct route being via Stockton Heath Swing Bridge. Given that, as I have already stated, bus routes in the Appleton/Stretton area are minimal and expensive, this arrangement will just further add to the traffic congestion in South Warrington.

I hope that the council will take my concerns into account when considering and/or amending the Warrington Local Plan 2021. If you need any further information or clarification about anything I have said, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Miss Rebekah Goulston