

1. The Parish Council recognises the need for Warrington Borough Council to present a new Local Plan to the Government following the challenge in the High Court.
2. SHPC would question the length of the plan being 20 years, instead of adopting a 15 year plan as is more usual.
3. SHPC would ask WBC to consider whether it is necessary to accept the mid-range target of 1113 homes per annum over the 20 year period of the plan, when projected population growth over the period would only require approximately 15,000 homes.
4. SHPC would question the criteria used to calculate housing density - whether the densities have been adjusted across the proposed developments to reflect higher density of homes per hectare on brownfield sites or whether the same density ratios have been applied across all calculations, brownfield and green belt release. If the latter is the case, then a recalculation might result in a reduction in the amount of green belt release necessary to deliver the housing proposed.
5. SHPC is concerned and dismayed by the disproportionate loss of green belt area in the South of Warrington, with the resulting loss in boundary definition and the impact on wildlife habitat. In comparing Green Belt release across the borough, 93% of green belt release will fall in the south of Warrington.
6. SHPC does not support the objective W1, the transition of Warrington from a New Town to a New City, but does support the regeneration of Inner Warrington and would ask WBC for full commitment to the statement in that objective: "the delivery of strategic and local infrastructure, the strengthening of existing neighbourhoods". SHPC does not agree that the figure of 1113 homes per annum should be the target of development.
7. SHPC, whilst agreeing with the statement of objective W2, feels that the Preferred Development Option does not actually support that statement, as the Preferred Development Option clearly requires substantial Green Belt Release, which, in the opinion of SHPC is not "sensitive release", but rather insensitive if based on the housing target figures and other data that WBC are adopting in order to underpin this plan.
8. SHPC strongly supports the objectives W3, W4, W5 and W6, but is unable to pinpoint the areas of the Preferred Development Option where these objectives are outlined as being strongly met, in particular in relation to "new infrastructure" and in minimising the "impact of development on the environment".
9. SHPC would request that a full Environmental Impact Survey be carried out for the Stockton Heath area, in support of objective W6 – making "a positive contribution to improving Warrington's air quality".
10. SHPC would ask WBC to consider a reappraisal of Option 1 of the preferred high level spatial option, alongside a new consideration of the housing development target, as this option appears to perform well against the objectives of the plan and would reduce or eliminate green belt release.
11. Whilst SHPC notes the decision of WBC to follow Option 2 of the Preferred Main Development Locations, with regard to the provision of additional infrastructure such as schools and health facilities, recent developments, that have come with the promise of such infrastructure, have failed to deliver adequately.

12. SHPC would ask WBC to consider Option 4 of the Preferred Main Development Locations as being more sustainable, creating smaller communities and spreading development across the town, providing more choice, reducing the need for large infrastructure requirements and reducing transport impact, particularly with regard to Stockton Heath District Centre.

13. SHPC supports the need to provide Employment Land Locations and recognises the need to site such locations close to the main transport links. However, again SHPC would ask WBC to consider the data used in order to arrive at the potential 381 hectare requirement, in view of a reduction in forecast population growth.

14. SHPC supports the need for the provision of Gypsy and traveller sites, although it should be recognised that the existing sites are used by travellers who have settled and are no longer transit sites. SHPC would support the sensitive identification of future sites, particularly in those areas where travelling people frequently choose to make camp.

15. SHPC recognises the need to safeguard sites where mineral deposits exist, but such sites should only be safeguarded if there is viability in terms of extraction of the mineral deposits.

16. SHPC recognises the need to plan for waste disposal and the aim of WBC to be self-sufficient in managing that waste, with regard to the sensitivity of the environment. SHPC would highlight the need for additional infrastructure needed to service an increase in housing stock, not only in relation to domestic rubbish but also in waste water facilities such as sewerage treatment and grey water disposal.

In particular, SHPC would like WBC to consider the following in relation to the Preferred Development Option:

17. The need for robust infrastructure to be in place, particularly transport infrastructure and for written statements to exist that outline the transport infrastructure to be provided and the timeline of such provision. If the proposals for a Garden City Suburb are accepted, Stockton Heath will bear much of the impact of increased traffic flow as existing road infrastructure in the area is already at over-capacity.

18. The need for considered thinking to take place with regard to the crossing points of the Manchester Ship canal from the south to the north. If the proposals for a Garden City Suburb are accepted, then an additional 8,000 homes will equate to an approximate potential of between 10,000 to 16,000 additional vehicles in the south of Warrington. Existing infrastructure will bring those wishing to move from the south to the north of the town through the district centre of Stockton Heath, on roads already operating over capacity. The resulting congestion will be detrimental to the air quality of the area, which is already at critical levels. Indeed, under the New Town Development Corporation which sought to build 50% fewer homes, proposed infrastructure which was not delivered, could now be inadequate given the doubling in proposed homes and the fact that car ownership is now far in excess of that 25 years ago.

19. The PDO, which, whilst not detailing whether it will deliver an additional crossing, appears to identify a potential crossing in conflict with the Trans-Pennine Trail, which would be an unacceptable route and would not support the objectives of the plan, particularly W4. In addition, the provision of a crossing, whilst providing an alternative to existing routes from south to north, needs to be supported on the north side with additional road infrastructure in order to provide an efficient means to continue the journey across the town.

20. SHPC is concerned that there are no details relating to the supply of both affordable housing and social housing and no specific mention of the housing requirements reflecting the increase in smaller family units or provision for older people. Additionally, it is not clear how the building of a Garden City Suburb would support the supply of such housing, as traditionally homes in the south of the borough, and in suburbs in general, tend to be larger in square footage, built at lower density and therefore command higher market values.

21. SHPC would ask that development of green belt release land is not commenced whilst town centre and brownfield sites are still available as development sites and that additional brownfield sites which may become available (for example Fiddlers Ferry and Warrington Hospital) during the period of the plan are included in the brownfield calculation.

22. Finally, SHPC would like to comment that the consultation exercise was not efficient in reaching the population at the outset, being timed during school summer holidays and the traditional recess. Whilst it is recognised that the period was delayed due to the purdah period of the General Election, more could have been done to facilitate the wider publicising of the release of the document. The extension of the response period is welcomed.