



Dear Sir,

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan

I should like to make several points concerning Warrington Council's Proposed Development Option plans. I am very disappointed that our elected representatives should have chosen to put the P.D.O. into the public domain during August, a time that they must have known many people would be away and/or occupied with looking after their children during the school summer holidays. This appeared to be a cynical move to put the residents of south Warrington at a distinct disadvantage, particularly as there were no consultation events actually held in Grappenhall or Thelwall.

Many people moved into south Warrington over the years to enjoy the green spaces and closeness to open countryside in which to bring up their families. Any large scale development would remove this possibility from new residents and those of us who live here now. It is well documented that access to the natural world is crucial to our well-being and as a consequence our ability to function successfully both in personal relationships and in our workplaces. The proposed 7,000+ new houses would have an enormous impact on the whole of south Warrington, particularly from an environmental point of view. Seven thousand houses means a minimum of 7,000 cars, each probably making at least two journeys daily, not to mention the business traffic generated by the proposed schools, shops, offices and other businesses, all of which will add to the poor air quality that the Borough Council's own tests showed up. In 2015 the World Health Organisation rated Warrington as second-worst in the north-west of England for breaking its air pollution levels. I presume the Council is aware of this. The proposed development will only add to the number of people suffering from lung and heart diseases as a direct result of increases in the amount of pollution from increased numbers of vehicles.

The poor air quality in Warrington, coupled with the proposed huge increase in the population, will have an impact on the health services in the town. There is already a shortfall of over 50% in the number of General Practitioners required by the present population.

 Chapelford  and set aside for a new health centre is still to be developed. I feel that unless the planning permissions for the proposed developments insist that health centres and support services are built concurrently with the houses, thus attracting staff to occupy them, the new residents will find it increasingly difficult to access G.P. and dental care.

There is an urgent need to re-assess and re-organise the infrastructure in south Warrington. The imminent opening of the new toll bridge in Widnes and subsequent closure of the Jubilee Bridge make it very likely that more vehicles will choose to cross the Mersey in Warrington. When the swing bridges close, or the Thelwall Viaduct is shut or restricted in use, it can take many hours for the traffic in the town to resume its normal volume. If many thousands of vehicle journeys to and from south Warrington are added by the proposed development it will add to the air pollution, cause considerable driver stress and add thousands of pounds to the costs of many firms, even on normal days.

I accept that Warrington will have to find areas for development in the future, but there must be a hard look at other possibilities. There is surely scope for redevelopment of many of the town centre properties, at present standing empty, into good quality apartments, which would attract young professional people, and thus help to revitalise this rather unattractive part of Warrington. De-regulating Green Belt land must be a real last resort, not an easy option to procure pleasant places in which to build. 'Green lungs' are a vital part of any town or city and these need to be of a good size and varied habitat, not just a token small field or narrow thin line of trees linking areas of buildings. Development of the size and scale that is proposed will completely remove what is a very important asset to the whole of Warrington and its inhabitants.

Yours faithfully,

