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WARRINGTON
Borough Council

Warrington Borough Council

Local Plan

Preferred Development Option

Regulation 18 Consultation

Standard Response Form

July 2017

2: Questions

Question 1

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the need for new homes and employment land in Warrington over the next 20 years?

Response:

- ① Why is it a '20' year plan? Government requirement? Does the national 'office of national statistics' have existing data/statistics for 20 years?
- ② P.D.O. document references certain key numbers as given "fact" without links to source material or considering alternative calculations.
- ③ Projections for need are based on data collected prior to the Brexit referendum. Does this impact on economic, demographic and migratory expectations?
- ④ How does this fit with the methodology and data underpinning the Government's September 2017 proposals for a nationally consistent approach. Also is it in-line with the current white paper on housing to be published during the final week of September 2017.
- ⑤ The PDO doesn't take into account the decommissioning of Fiddler's Ferry and the availability of an enormous brown-field site which will require regeneration in the not so distant future.

Question 2

Do you have any comments to make about how we've worked out the number of homes and amount of employment land that can be accommodated within Warrington's existing built up areas?

Response:

- ① Is it WBC vision to make Warrington a city? The document refers to 'city' on numerous occasions. Have the residents of Warrington been consulted on this? "New city" has this been expertly assessed as the needs of the town or a city?
- ② In reference to my response to question one, how accurate is the calculation for housing needs? Have Warrington Council officers undertaken the necessary transport/air quality surveys and ecological surveys to inform the plan.
- ③ Transport and air quality are already problems for existing built up areas, consider the air quality of residents living/travelling through 'Bridge foot' during peak times.

Question 3

Have we appropriately worked out the amount of land to be released from the Green Belt, including the amount of land to be 'safeguarded'?

Response:

- concerns that WBC are reclassifying the Green Belt 'exceptional circumstances' are these justified?
- The plan promotes, doesn't protect from Urban Sprawl. It will destroy the character of all South Warrington villages and local parishes will lose identities.
- Have the Environmental Impact and loss of habitats been considered, for local wildlife. This will have a major impact on the countryside and the environment.

Apart from the poor communication and engagement with residents, the council officers have failed to carry out the necessary ecological, transport and air quality surveys that would have informed a more sustainable plan.

Local residents deserve a higher standard of disclosure and transparency than has been shown to date.

Question 4

Do you agree with the new Local Plan Objectives?

Response:

~~NO~~

My main reasons for objecting to the PDD are;

- ① The inadequacy of the consultation process, (please see my response to question 17).
- ② The miscalculation of the 'Housing' needs (please refer to my responses for question 1)
- ③ The lack of exceptional circumstances for reclassifying the Green Belt. Not all brown field sites have been considered fully, for a twenty year plan.
- ④ The flawed vision of making Warrington a City. The plan promotes and doesn't protect from Urban Sprawl.

Question 5

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different 'Spatial Options' for Warrington's future development?

Response:

- who will profit from this Urban Sprawl?
- who will pay for the infrastructure associated with the plan? The up-grades and associated road-works, new Strategic transport links and environmental enhancements required from this very destructive local plan?
- will it be WBC or land/property speculators? who will be prime beneficiaries?
- No evidence of bus companies/operators appear to have been consulted or that public transport has been part of the integral infrastructure.
- Roads, lanes and places like Latchford village will be affected by severe traffic congestion.

Question 6

Do you have any comments to make about how we've assessed different options for the main development locations?

Response:

- The plan is about quantity not quality - WBC should be considering improving quality of the urban environment in Warrington.
- The PLDP document is an imbalanced report in that whilst it says much about South Warrington 'development'. It says virtually nothing about how it intends to improve the urban environment in North Warrington. Especially the Town Centre which has significantly deteriorated over the years. Any local plan should focus on improving quality, bringing the town's communities together and not accommodating urban sprawl.

The quality of consultation with the public has not been satisfactory.
(please refer to my response to question 17)

Question 7

Do you agree with our Preferred Development Option for meeting Warrington's future development needs?

Response:

NO, I feel WBC need to revise their vision. The plan relies on 'city' status with unrealistic economic and population growth.

"Warrington means Business" master plan does not include a Garden City Suburb, so why build one?

The plan is not flexible and doesn't make use of all brown field sites throughout Warrington before taking green belt land.

The so called "Garden city" suburb to the south of Warrington will merely function as suburbs to Manchester, Chester and Liverpool, due to proximity to motorway network. The incoming residents will most likely not be employed in Warrington.

The impact of the plan on existing infrastructure and services in the Warrington area, many at saturation point,

Question 8

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the City Centre? Town Centre?

Response:

- City Status will put pressure on Warrington Town Centre to demolish even more of Warrington's unique architectural heritage and replace it with characterless and clone-town buildings.

The new mega-structures in the town-centre are not harmonised with the traditional historic character and scale of the town centre.

In Fig. 4, 'City Centre' there are no existing or proposed conservation areas. Are WBC committed to urban conservation. Does WBC have a Conservation officer? What will happen to buildings like the Water Tower and Furniture works in the Town Centre?

Question 9

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Wider Urban Area?

Response:

In the name of democracy, transparency and accountability, it would be helpful if residents of Warrington were informed of the identity of property speculators, land owners, property owners, co-operate bodies and other vested interested parties, who would or are most likely to benefit financially from the proposals of the PDO. This should include councillors, ~~co-operate~~ ^{corporate} and non-corporate functionaries and decision makers.

I feel as a resident of Warrington, I should be represented by my local ward councillors, whom I along with fellow residents have elected into office. In Latentford, I feel we are not truly represented as our councillors have a 'conflict of interest' with the PDO and other roles/responsibilities they have for WBC.

Question 10

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for developing the Warrington Waterfront?

Response:

Lack of detailed plan with regards to Warrington waterfront and transportation.

Has a detailed traffic computer model been tested for the road network. The plan omits details of the huge traffic/transportation implications for Warrington.

The implications for the whole of Warrington, especially South Warrington, Latchford and West Thelwall are potentially disastrous. What is a 'strategic link route' as indicated on your planning maps?

There is no detailed transport/traffic/road infrastructure chapter in the plan.

How can I assess the plan, if I do not have the full picture?

Surely infrastructure needs to be in place before housing?

Question 11

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the Warrington Garden City Suburb?

Response:

- Will this merely function as a suburb to Manchester, Chester and Liverpool with its proximity to the motorway network?
- Will the residents of this so-called Garden City suburb commute elsewhere to work?
- Why use Green Belt land when all brown field sites haven't been fully explored. Fiddler's Ferry site for example after it is decommissioned
- Loss, destruction of local villages, ancient woodland, woodland and wildlife habitats.
- Promotes urban sprawl.
- Increase in noise and pollution levels along already congested transport links/roads.

Question 12

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for the South Western Urban Extension?

Response:

The proposals for Warrington will require more disruptive road widening and engineering works to accommodate increased traffic. New housing population will create even more intense traffic congestion and pollution throughout the town. Thereby negating any benefit which might accrue from the proposed western by-pass to the town centre.

Charges for the new Runcom/Widnes and existing Runcom/Widnes bridges will encourage drivers to use Warrington Town Centre as a crossing point for the Mersey river and Manchester Ship Canal. Warrington Town Centre can't cope now when there is a problem on the motorway network.

Question 13

Do you have any comments to make about our Preferred Development Option for development in the Outlying Settlements?

Response:

- Significant loss of rural character of South Warrington villages. Plan promotes Urban Sprawl and doesn't protect the character of the villages. Local Warrington parishes will lose identity.
- Environmental Impact and loss of habitats have not been considered in the plan.
- Plan lacks detail, how will it preserve and enhance the urban quality of Warrington?
- Have reports/analysis taken place on the Environmental Impact?

Question 14

Do you agree with our approach to providing new employment land?

Response:

- Will the new employment land create even more intense traffic congestion and pollution through-out the town?

- Is it WBC aim to create the conditions to allow the private sector to thrive? At the cost of what? It's current residents.

I understand in the current economic climate as a town we are under-going a dramatic change however we are a town not a city.

- Implications for resident's neighbouring proposed new employment land. Have their views been sought?

Question 15

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites?

Response:

- If WBC are currently in the process of updating its Gypsy/Traveller needs Assessment, how can it propose that it needs 30 pitches (As per Table 10 in PDO). Would it not be better to complete the needs assessment first?
- Where in the PDO is reference to research done to identify a Transit site for Gypsy/Travellers?

Question 16

Do you agree with our suggested approach for dealing with Minerals and Waste?

Response:

- Currently Warrington Waste Disposal Authority relies upon the waste Transfer Station in Halton Borough. They will be unable to accommodate all the housing proposed in the PDO. Where will our waste be processed?
- Currently waste landfill is exported out of the area. What will happen with waste landfill in the future? This will most likely be by export to other authorities which other authorities?

Question 17

Having read the Preferred Development Option Document, is there anything else you feel we should include within the Local Plan?

Response:

- concerns over consultation process,

- ① Timing of the process - during main school holiday period, when families are away.
- ② Access to information - online process what about people with no internet access, elderly, low income families when I attended the library no form was there, had to collect form from a friend and photocopy it.
- ③ Consultation meetings - not advertised enough (only knew through a leaflet dropped by local resident's group). Where? When? How were these advertised?
- ④ Communication from WBC very poor for Warrington Residents, why did I only find out about this from a local group - not the council itself.
- ⑤ Location of consultation meetings - why not in local areas for people to attend? I live in Latchford had to attend in Strutton.
- ⑥ Quality of maps used at consultation meeting, very poor - out of focus and placed too low down for people to read.