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## **Local Plan**

### ***Preferred Development Option Feedback***

#### **Flawed projection figures**

The figures are clearly flawed and based on out-of-date data. Targets were set before Brexit. The population is not now growing at the rate it was due in the main to the foreign labour force decreasing. The UK is no longer an attractive place for foreign workers. A weaker pound, limitations on access to the labour market by not allowing the free flow of people, means Europe is now the preferred choice of destination. That will result in the UK having less demand for housing.

BBC News on 10.8.2017 are already reporting a lull in the housing market spreading out from London to other regions in the South East and that is before the true impact of Brexit has actually kicked in. The North West usually lags behind London several years so such a lag will likely appear in this region in a few years time.

In addition, people are not now projected to live as long as previously forecast - <https://www.actuaries.org.uk> once again confirms there is now a lessening life expectancy meaning less demand for housing.

Given this compelling recent data, local councillors should be questioning Central Government about issuing more realistic revised-prediction figures because these plans are all based on flawed out-of-date figures and now appear grossly over ambitious. If people don't have the finances due to the post-Brexit economic deterioration, if there are less people in the country as the population doesn't have the same number of migrants, and if people are not going to live longer as previously thought, where exactly will the demand come from for all these new houses?

#### **Warrington residents not being listened to**

Warrington residents do not want expansion in business and population at the rate of the council's 'preferred development option'. Residents would much prefer a level that maintains the current balance of housing and employment. The councillors appear deaf to what people in the town are saying. Comments on the Warrington Guardian website, online petitions etc. should be clear evidence that the residents are strongly against these levels of growth and expansion.

#### **Motorway and internal roads cannot cope as it is**

The roads internal to the town are blocked on a daily basis. The canal constricts any adequate alternatives and the new Mersey Gateway bridge and its toll system is only going to increase the

traffic problems as many people will avoid such a costly route. The motorway network around the town already fails to cope in peak hours with current population levels and the expansion at the rate suggested would result in intolerable levels of congestion.

### **Wiping Out Burtonwood Green Belt Without Consultation**

Making the whole of Burtonwood "inset" from the Green Belt gives carte blanc in future to developers like Northern Trust to completely destroy most of the remaining green belt land in the vicinity of the village as they own 6 parcels of land around it and boast on their website that their plans for development will be "robustly argued". This is not what villagers want nor is the reason why villagers choose to live in a semi-rural location.

Building on the parcels of land beside Lumber Lane will forever kill off uninterrupted views from Green Lane of the Pennines and Peak District hills to the east and, for the residents of Rushton Close area, views of the National Heritage listed Sankey Viaduct. Both locations enjoy views across open farmland which would be destroyed forever. Any new build housing should be done as close as possible to the village centre and reclaiming of brownfield sites preferred over destroying Green Belt land. ■

The plots off Lumber Lane are prime farmland that are in continual rotational agricultural use all year round. Birds of prey, grouse and other wildlife such as foxes are often seen in the fields in that area. The area's rural character includes a garden centre nursery, horse riding stables and greenhouses. Building housing on the land near Lumber Lane will drastically wipe out its character.

### **Dangerous and inadequate roads in the Burtonwood area**

Lumber Lane is known to be a rat run from St Helens to the motorway with a large number of drivers speeding up to twice the 30mph speed limit and accidents frequently occurring. It would be highly negligent to build additional housing close to this road as that would greatly increase the likelihood of a fatalities.

Since the expansion of Omega, there is a known problem for pedestrians and cyclists in reaching their place of work from the Burtonwood direction. Any expansion of Burtonwood village housing should take this problem into consideration so any plan should to improving the road and cycle infrastructure to the south of the village.

### **Negative Impact on Burtonwood without Anything Positive in return**

In general, there does not appear to be any obvious advantages to increasing the village population as there are no plans to create any additional village amenities to what is there already. At best, there appears to be an acknowledgement that the current primary school and medical provisions would need improving but that is merely to try to meet basic minimum requirements and maintain the current ratio.

There is no existing secondary school in the village and no plans to create one so even more children will have to use transport to attend a distant secondary school. Expanding the population and making more people travel greater distances from outlying areas to 'inner-city' schools is not a very intelligent plan especially when roads are already jammed at peak times today.

## **Boundary with St Helens merging into one**

Fields north of Burtonwood village centre need to be maintained to keep a clear separation between the Warrington conurbation and that of St Helens as per green belt guidelines. The Northern Trust developer seems bullish on its own website how it also wants to build on land north and south of Lumber Lane. Building on either will make the boundary between St Helens and Warrington difficult to differentiate by virtually merging into each other. It would therefore be more sensible to use any land closer to the centre of the village before encroaching closer to a neighbouring border.