

Dear Sir/Madam

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan. Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation

I wish to object to the current Preferred Development Option for the following reasons:

- The Public consultation was not adequately advertised and held throughout peak holiday season. I only became aware of these development options, which will have a massive impact on my family, through personal social media. Many of my neighbours are elderly and do not have access to social media or the online documents that WBC are relying upon.
- Public notices were put in the Warrington Guardian and Westmorland Gazette ⁷⁰ ~~6.116~~ miles from Warrington! The public notice in the Warrington Guardian online was not simple to find. According to their own statistics, only 53% of people read the Warrington Guardian – figures from April 2010. The current distribution numbers for the Westmorland Gazette (distribution of approx. 30,000 printed copies).
- The Supreme Court against Haringey Borough Council set a benchmark for the standards of local authority consultation. This includes the fact that if a person is to be worse off as a result of the proposals then they should be contacted directly by direct mail, notices, posters etc. As our house will effectively be in the way of the proposed Strategic Link we ought to have been made aware of the plans from the council, not find out through fluke and personal social media.
- I note from your Consultation on the proposals for the Centre Park Link that the plans and consultation events were publicised via social media, direct mail, posters, leaflets, email etc and that 7 consultation events were held with a total of 759 attendees ie an average of 108 attendees per event. What is the population of Warrington and what percentage does this represent? One of these events was at the Village Hotel on 5th July attended by a total of 10 people, during a period when the gym at the Village is used significantly. As a user of the Village Hotel, I was completely unaware of this event so question the publicity surrounding this consultation. Ten consultation events were scheduled for the Preferred Development option, can I ask how these events were publicised? I have not received any information in leaflet, email, direct mail etc from Warrington Borough Council. Additionally, considering Latchford, Thelwall and Grappenhall will be significantly impacted by these plans, there have been no local consultation events. How many attendees did

you have at events prior to the one at Lymm Village Hall on 22 August ie prior to affected residents being made aware of the plans via personal social media.

- The social media group have been accused of scaremongering and councillors have referred to the line on the map as simply that – however this line will potentially mean my home becoming subject to a compulsory purchase order in the near future. This line has also immediately impacted the housing market in the affected areas.
- Documentation around the PDO is lengthy and too large to download or email easily. If you do not have online access, any information is difficult to get hold of and many of my neighbours were completely unaware of the Preferred Development Option.
- Public consultations being held prior to the infrastructure feasibility study results being completed and published. Council representatives have been unable to answer whether the feasibility study is taking place on all 5 reported options or just the preferred development option.
- Residents of Latchford East have not had representation or support from our Local Councillors – Karen and Hans Mundry. Both councillors have a conflict of interest. Hans Mundry is on the Executive Board representing Highways, Transportation and Public Realm. Both have not responded to several requests for contact/questions answered, etc. Appreciation has to be given to Maureen McLaughlin for coming away from her direct ward of Latchford West to attend a meeting of concerned residents at the Kings Club.
- Use of outdated and unclear maps when presenting plans at the public consultations. For example, the bowling green at the Kings Club on St Mary Street, Latchford, is marked as green space, yet a planning application for housing (Application Number: 2014/24178) was approved in February 2015, making the current illustration being used in the PDO 2 years out of date P35, Preferred Development Option Final July 2017, figure 4.
- Western Link Red Route has been agreed, pending further public consultation. This proposed route will divert traffic away from the Bridgefoot area of town and up towards Great Sankey. The suggestion of using the Transpennine Route and disused railway which runs adjacent to St Mary Street and beyond through Arpley Junction, would only serve to divert further traffic in the same direction is towards the A57 / Great Sankey. It would not solve congestion caused by traffic trying to head up Manchester Road towards Woolston, particularly when there are problems on the M6.
- Majority of the proposed housing to be located in the least densely populated and more expensive areas of the town. Whilst I understand there has to be a percentage of 'affordable' housing in all new developments, under Warrington Borough Council's affordable housing criteria, I would not be eligible. If the proposed housing are to be sold around the current market value of houses of the area, I, and many others, would be unable to afford a house to move to when my own house is subject to a CPO due to it becoming a bypass.
- Future employment figures suggest an influx of workers into the area needing housing, however what type of employment is projected? There are currently large warehouses accommodating Amazon, Brakes, Hermes etc in North Warrington however these companies employ workers on the national minimum or national living wage eg currently £7.50 per hour / c. £14,625 per annum. These workers cannot currently afford housing in WA4 and there are no sufficient transport links up to these employment areas to avoid adding further car congestion onto the roads.
- The council have continually led residents to believe that the volume of housing required is something set by Government when it is WBC who have calculated the volume requirement. Furthermore the Government have recently announced that the housing requirement calculation methodology has been amended. Will WBC be amending the calculation accordingly?
- Unreasonable of the council to base calculation of the housing requirement on figures produced:
 - pre Brexit announcement
 - when it was believed that the HS2 line would require a stop in Warrington

- There is enough Brownfield land in the area to build 15,000 houses. Potentially enough to meet a reduced housing requirement. Therefore allowing the council to protect and preserve existing green belt land.
- 2016 study by the World Health Organisation Warrington was recorded as having the 2nd highest air pollution levels in the North West which has an impact on health and mortality in the area, putting pressure on our already overstretched hospital. Why would the Council wish to increase pollution levels further by increasing congestion and removing green belt?
- Areas of Grappenhall & Thelwall are already prone to flooding, without the removal of green belt land. What research has been done to the potential of flooding in this area, proposed for new housing.
- While it may appear convenient for the council to repurpose the railway embankment have the following point been considered:
 - state of disrepair of the high level bridge
 - integrity, form and strength of the embankment
 - destruction of wildlife/protected species habitats for today's residents but also our children.
 - Heritage and preservation of local history e.g Knutsford Road bridge cited in the Unitary Development plan as being of significant local, architectural and historical interest.
 - Destruction of TPT amenity which is currently a well-used nature path utilised by walkers, runners and cyclists and part of the National Cycle Route Network
- The Preferred Development Option will considerable blight surrounding houses and neighbourhoods and destroy the community feel which attracts and retains residents in the areas around Warrington.
- The consultation and online documents do not adequately explain what happens with the 'strategic transport route' once it reaches the bridge at Wash Lane. The railway adjacent to St Mary Street is currently used for freight services by Fiddlers Ferry presumably until it closes in 2019. What will happen then? Use of the railway embankment from Wash Lane, down St Mary Street and through to the Town Centre would provide an ideal alternative route and means of getting into town ie cycle and walk, especially if further housing is approved on the embankment currently owed by ADS (Call for Site ref R18/104). Additionally, the Warrington Means Business document refers several times to a 'sustainable transport route proposed along the old railway line (P53 v2) and 'Positively using the former rail line as a sustainable transport route into the heart of the new business district) (P52 v2). Reference to this route also appears in the Centre Park Link proposals and numerous other WBC Planning documents. It appears to be a done deal, yet as a resident of the area which would be directly affected by these plans, I have not had a single piece of information directly from the council to make me aware of the plans or the right to object.
- What is going to happen to Fiddlers Ferry when it does close? Could it be redeveloped similar to Battersea Power Station to provide housing, using a brownfield site and saving our green belt?
- Call for Site R18/104 has clearly defined plans for housing that the developer appears to have done all the major upfront research and considerations for. Should this be approved for housing, I feel it would improve the immediate waterside area along the Manchester Ship Canal providing similar housing to the flats currently in place, however this would use part of the railway embankment currently outlined for a possibly strategic road. Have alternative routes been considered?
- The plan does not appear to consider future alternative transport needs to ease congestion or pollution. Warrington South do not have a rail/tram service or stations to allow residents alternative ways to commute. Surely the council ought to be considering improving transport links to Manchester and Liverpool from South Warrington rather than focusing all resources in the North?
- The 'strategic bus route' over Cantilever Bridge does not consider inadequate weight limit of that bridge. Who will pay for the essential upgrading, ongoing maintenance and basic caretaking of this bridge?

- The Western Link and Centre Park Link plans are developed around providing additional crossings to the Manchester Ship Canal, but the Preferred Development Plan does not appear to see the value of maintaining the current swing bridges/Cantilever and perhaps developing a further bridge that could divert traffic from the town centre and up towards Manchester Road, Woolston. The area immediately over Latchford Swing Bridge, up Grange Avenue and onto Kingsway is a current congestion area which regularly comes to a standstill if there is a problem on the M6 with the current population. This area cannot cope with further traffic.
- Representatives at the Stretton consultation said that Warrington Hospital is fully involved however they appear to have now been sent away to decide how best to fragment services. Increased population will place a significant burden on an already over-stretched and under-resourced NHS service.
- There is a national shortage of general practitioners, community carers, mental health practitioners, etc. Additional housing would add further burden on current facilities already stretched to capacity.

Overall I wish to express my dissatisfaction at the lack of consultation on the Preferred Development Option by Warrington Borough Council and the significant stress and anxiety that these plans have caused myself, family and neighbours. Until the outcome of this consultation period is known and a Local Plan development, this anxiety will remain. In the meantime, with the threat of a bypass running through our house (or a blue line to WBC) and unknown plans for South Warrington, it will be difficult to sell our property or move.

Yours faithfully