



21st September 2017

Local Plan Review - Preferred Development Option

Dear Warrington Borough Council,

I must object to Warrington Council's Local Plan - Preferred Development Option.

I understand that the proposal is for a 'Garden City Suburb' to the west of the A50 between the M6 and Appleton. This will involve the building of up to 9000 houses on Green Belt land. The villages of Appleton Thorn, Grappenhall and Stretton currently separated by fields would be swallowed up into one large urban area and lose their individual identity. Green Belt land should only be released for development under exceptional circumstances. I have yet to see any evidence that all other options have been exhausted. Will all brownfield sites be fully utilised for development prior to the release of Green Belt land? Fiddlers Ferry Power Station is likely to be decommissioned within the next twenty years. Has this area been considered as part of the Preferred Development Option? What proportion of houses in the new 'Garden City Suburb' will be affordable homes for new buyers? I would expect that anybody living in the new 'Garden City Suburb' would more likely commute to Liverpool, Manchester or even Birmingham due to the easy access to the motorway network rather than work in Warrington. Is the required number of houses being driven by the Council's ambition for Warrington to become a city even though residents have not been consulted and there does not appear to be any benefits to city status?

Also proposed is a new High Level Strategic Road to link the new development to the town centre. The plans show the route utilising the disused railway route between Thelwall and Bridge Foot. Warrington already has considerable traffic congestion especially in the Bridge Foot area and another road would only add to that. In addition, with the Runcorn Bridges charging tolls in the near future there is likely to be an increase in traffic travelling through Warrington to cross the River Mersey at the lowest point free of charge. The route of the disused railway is right through a residential area and would result in considerable reduction in the value of properties in the areas of Thelwall, Grappenhall and Latchford. It would have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of residents in these areas due to increased noise and pollution levels as well as destroying an established wildlife corridor. A section of the Trans-Pennine Trail would be lost which is used by many walkers and cyclists for recreational purposes. Surely this is something that should be encouraged and therefore protected. It is unlikely that a road would fit entirely within the track bed of the disused railway so Compulsory Purchase Orders may be necessary on properties along the route. Warrington has been named by the World Health Organisation as the second worst place to live in the North West based on levels of air pollution. I cannot see how additional road building will help improve the situation.

I find it totally unacceptable that such a radical plan for Warrington can be considered without any formal advice being given to residents in affected areas. The first notification I received was a letter from Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council which I received on Wednesday 30th August. That is six weeks into the eight week period originally arranged for consultation. In addition no consultation events were arranged for Thelwall, Grappenhall, Latchford or Appleton even though these are the most affected areas of the borough.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely

