



Objection to Proposed Development for Warrington

To whom it may concern

I wish to object to the proposals to the area in south Warrington, particularly the Grappenhall Garden City Suburb, on a number of grounds.

- Loss of greenbelt land: this land was put aside as it was recognised the importance of having open spaces for both agricultural and recreational use, along with the importance of maintaining the biodiversity of the local area. It appears this is no longer a valid reason when stacked up against the potential profits building on this land could bring. A few 'islands' of ancient woodland will not support a sustainable level of diversity in the area. We have a duty of care to protect our environment for future generations, something which will not happen if the majority of 'green space' created becomes manicured grass verges and planted borders. This space is even more essential given our location between the sprawling conurbations of Manchester and Liverpool.
- Loss of recreational space: many people, not just local residents, but also visitors to the town use the area for walking. This would be lost. Children would not have access to 'free play' and families would be unable to explore nature and exercise their dogs. For many people, a leisure centre is not an acceptable alternative - it is well recognised the benefits, both to physical and mental health, of 'fresh' air and the freedom to roam. Leisure centres are mainly indoors, require subscriptions to be paid and most definitely do not welcome animals.
- Loss of agricultural land: as a region we are losing large areas of agricultural land which has a significant impact on 'food miles'. The local government has a duty to protect our resources and promote sustainability.
- Travel congestion: currently, it is almost impossible to cross Warrington between 7.45 - 9.15am and 3.30 - 6pm. This has a significant impact on work and makes accessing childcare very difficult. Equally, to use local amenities in and around Stockton Heath, Grappenhall and Latchford is becoming increasingly difficult as you cannot get to these locations without encountering significant traffic congestion. Since the majority of households now have 2 cars, how is it possible for the road network to cope with thousands more vehicles? New roads may be planned, but these are needed for the current residents, and would not cope with an increased population.
- Educational facilities: although the plans incorporate a number of new schools, how will these be funded and supported? Schools do not have the funding to function 'half - full' so would only be opened towards the end of the proposed 20 year development plan. What

happens to the children currently living in the area. We have already had the traumatic experience of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] not being given a place at our closest high school (Bridgewater) because it was over subscribed. Fortunately, [REDACTED] was given a place on appeal due to a few pupils choosing private education and spaces becoming available. Ordinary working families who make significant contributions to the local community are not able to afford these school fees and their children would be left having to travel miles to a secondary school which in turn will have an even greater detrimental effect on the traffic situation in Warrington.

- Health facilities: current provision is inadequate. It is incredibly difficult to access a GP and should a referral be required the waiting lists are unacceptable. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Whilst a new health centre may feature in plans, this will not grant further access to other facilities including the hospital. It is regularly reported that the A&E department cannot meet its targets and is threatened with closure. There are limited beds available on wards and patients who do make it into A&E are left there as there are no beds available to admit them.

- Impact on housing costs: those of us who have invested in our properties are likely to see their value decrease as one of the major contributory factors to the value was the green space around them. Will residents be compensated for this? Villages will no longer exist and the communities within them will also be lost. This does not support any of the 'big community' policies that have been promoted by successive governments. The costs of the new housing developments are likely to be beyond the means of many working class families, simply due to their location 'south of the canal'.
- Lack of leisure facilities: south Warrington has seen very limited investment in these over the last 20 years. The current provision at Broomfields is quite frankly embarrassing - please visit the changing rooms and swimming pool if you are at all uncertain. A new leisure centre is essential for this part of town, but that is needed to support the current population, not a population with thousands more people. This appears to be a 'sweetener' to cover up the appalling lack of facilities already in the area.

There are many reasons why this development should not be allowed to go ahead. Surely, the council would be better off improving other areas of Warrington so they become desirable for people to become residents; brownfield sites which could be used instead of wiping our green spaces to extinction; infrastructures that could be developed so that our town can see traffic flow without the daily congestion adding hours to peoples working days. Once our greenbelt land has gone, it can never be replaced. It is commonly accepted that developers achieve a greater profit from building on virgin land, but is this profit really worth the health and appeal of Warrington and its residents?

[REDACTED]