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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:

- Inadequate public consultation without adequate advertising and held throughout peak holiday season. I had to find out about it via Facebook which is totally unacceptable. The level of communication has been shockingly ineffective and deliberately vague. I believe the consultation period to be a sham exercise given the way the whole thing has been handled by Warrington Borough Council and its officers. The level of transparency has been shockingly low – this is the UK in 2017 for goodness sake, a democracy.
- 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.
- Use of outdated and unclear maps when presenting plans at the public consultations. Extremely difficult to make sense of what was actually being proposed and conflicting responses from council officers as to what some drawings on the maps actually represented.
- Conflicting answers have been given to the same questions asked at the Lymm and Stretton public consultation meetings. If representatives are unable to get the councils message across consistently, what hope does the public have to digest and comprehend the limited information being supplied?

- Warrington Council have failed to conduct future economic/employment studies to understand the implications of employment needs and the land required to support the types of jobs that would potentially be required. Technology, Brexit, trends in employment, public transport links etc all need to be taken into account.
- Misleading of the council to lead the public to believe that the volume of housing required is something set by Government when it is WBC who have calculated the volume requirement. Just a few weeks ago, the government published a housing formula which would in fact result in Warrington requiring much fewer homes than the plan suggests. Therefore the calculation used in the PDP is flawed and the 24,000 figure will not stand up to scrutiny.
- 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
 - recent Government announcement of revised housing requirement calculation methodology.
- 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.
- Majority of the proposed housing to be located in the least densely populated and more expensive areas of the town. Unaffordability but high council tax implications.
- There is no requirement from the government for councils to have a 20 year plan. A less onerous 10 year plan would meet the requirements and allow for economic/technological/Brexit and HS2 (and other national infrastructure initiatives) to be better understood and plans can be created accordingly to meet those opportunities/challenges in a more manageable way. Government housing targets have recently been scaled back and the PDO in no way reflects this
- 2016 study by the World Health Organisation Warrington was recorded as having the 2nd highest air pollution levels in the North West. Impact on health and mortality. Why would the Council wish to increase this further? In addition to this, it was clear during the hastily arranged consultations, that the council didn't have a plan to combat this!
- While it may appear convenient for the council to repurpose the railway embankment considerations:
 - state of disrepair of the high level bridge
 - integrity, form and strength of the embankment
 - destruction of wildlife/protected species habitats

- 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
- Considerable blight to 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 'strategic bus route' over Cantilever Bridge does not consider the inadequate weight limit of that bridge. Who will pay for the essential upgrading, ongoing maintenance and basic caretaking of this bridge?
- PDO document attempts to justify why Option 1 has been discounted and why Option 2 is the preferred. No mention of options 3, 4 or 5?
- Representative 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 service.
- What about secondary care? National shortage of general practitioners. Community carers..... Hospital prevention teams..... mental health practitioners etc?
- Destruction of wildlife and its habitat around the areas of proposed development given no feasibility or research studies have been performed to understand the impact of such massive development.
- Flood Risks – the area around the Manchester ship canal is a flood plain. Building a concrete fly over type bypass would potentially cause more flooding in the area.
- Current volume of traffic is already unsustainable. Building thousands of houses will make the situation much worse. The suggestion that building a fly over road over the Manchester Ship Canal is not going to make any difference to support more houses/cars and people. Building more roads is never the answer, and in Warrington in particular, given the many motorway networks that combine/connect the simple fact is that the traffic will still bottleneck and Warrington will still be gridlocked. In fact, the problem could be further exacerbated by people using it as a cut through to avoid Mersey Gateway charges.
- Moody's have now downgraded Warrington borough council as the council has demonstrated a higher risk appetite relative to other councils by funding significant

investment initiatives through increased debt and the projected outlook is negative as far as Moody's is concerned. This raises huge concerns over Warrington Council's ability to manage and fund such a huge investment project such as this.

- Warrington Council's ambition to move to a city status is not an ambition I share. I chose to live in Warrington, and, in particular, Thelwall, because it is NOT a city. I live in a village. I have no issue with reasonable levels of housing but not on the scale Warrington Council are suggesting.
- Warrington Council have a duty to protect green belt land as detailed in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 79 to 92. Under this absurd development plan, Warrington Council will be failing utterly in that duty. The green belt must not be sacrificed for housing, especially as there are more brown belt develop areas which must be explored first. There is a total lack of exceptional circumstances for reclassifying the Green Belt.
- Public transport is currently shockingly poor and the PDP does not refer to how future improvements/links to support development could be utilised which would in fact reduce the need for more roads.
- At no point during the local elections were constituents informed that there was a proposal for this level of housing and certainly for Grappenhall, the quoted 9,000 homes in this plan was never discussed or raised. As such, I feel strongly this council do not have the mandate to pursue this development plan in its current guise.
- I have massive concerns about the links between the Executive Committee of Warrington Borough council and property developers, in particular Peel Holdings. Developers are not independent in the process and I have no confidence that any level of objectivity will be maintained. Developers have long term plans and these plans appear to dovetail nicely with the aspirations of Peel Holdings in particular.
- Warrington Council have failed to carry out the necessary ecological, transport and air quality surveys that would have informed a robust and sustainable plan. Instead, the council have wasted money coming up with these half- baked plans while ensuring that they communicated as little and as opaquely as they possibly could. This could be for one of two reasons a) to get away with it without having to engage with their constituents or b) no real thought went into this and they just decided to throw the kitchen sink at it and hope for the best.

I am hugely disappointed that I have had to write this letter as I feel Warrington Borough Council and its officers involved in this proposed plan have completely let their own constituents down. The level of distrust and upset these plans created by YOU have caused to our community (North, South, East and West actually) is immense. The way it's all been handled by YOU has exacerbated things massively. As such, I strongly object to these plans in its entirety.

Yours sincerely,

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