



To whom it may concern –

I am against the WBC PDO because I think it is ill thought out – there is no long term strategy and there are many questions unanswered. Such a massive development needs proper planning, consideration and consultation with the people of Warrington.

Traffic problems

- There has been **NO** high level traffic survey included in the PDO. This is a must – no good guessing!
- Warrington is plagued by traffic chaos caused by its proximity to the M6, M56 and M62 motorways. This PDO has not considered this. People who live in Warrington already have a nightmare commuting very short distances when there are problems on the motorways due to traffic filtering through our town.

The planned infrastructure in this PDO is ill thought out. There are a number of potential problems which have not been addressed which will cause massive problems for residents.

- The proposed Howshoots Link from Grappenhall Heys to the M6 would become an alternative HGV route for traffic coming to/from Warrington and Runcorn areas, leading to even more traffic flowing through the A49 and A56 in Stockton Heath
- The new Mersey bridge crossing will mean residents have to pay a toll. There is concern that the Link new roads through South Warrington will attract traffic that would otherwise have used the Mersey crossings and therefore no revenue will be collected via the toll.
- The 'Eastern Link Road' from M56 Junction 10 to the north of the Manchester Ship Canal would cut right through the proposed new residential areas. On the downside, this would provide a new HGV access road to the Barleycastle Trading Estate (which, at the moment, is only accessible from the M6 junction). It would also provide an alternative route for traffic caught up in problems on the M56 / M6 motorways.

All of the above routes will result in the deterioration of the quality of life for current residents who will be subjected to increased noise, air pollution and vibration from the increased traffic flow.

In addition, the route the PDO suggest, the use of an old railway embankment and bridge to the west of Latchford Locks as a new strategic transport route, will be most disruptive to the people currently living in this area.

Official statistics tell us that Warrington has an unusually high proportion of car ownership – in the 2011 Census, 81% of Warrington households had access to at least one car / van with 39% having access to two or more cars / vans. Nationally, just over a quarter (26%) of households had no access to a car / van which was considerably higher than in Warrington (19%) Building a further 24,000 households in Warrington without substantial investment in sustainable transport options will just add to the already unacceptable traffic chaos.

Environment

The PDO does not include a high level environmental survey and consider the impact this will have on our environment.

In May 2016, the Guardian reported that the World Health Organisation found that Warrington

is the 2nd worst town or city in the North West for breaching safe levels of air pollution. According to the WHO, ambient air pollution is the greatest environmental risk to health and causes more than 3 million premature deaths worldwide each year. Although Warrington Borough Council claims to take air pollution seriously, recent council decisions suggest this is not the case (e.g. the new multi-storey car park in the town centre and the increasing bus fares / reduced bus services). Unless the Warrington transport infrastructure can be improved significantly through appropriate investment in sustainable transport, the level of air pollution will increase – this will affect all Warrington residents, not just those living closest to the new housing developments.

There has been no consideration to the diverse range of wildlife living in our local area and greenbelt, including water voles, bats, badgers and great crested newts to mention a few.

Healthcare, Doctors and Hospitals

Our local hospitals (Warrington and Halton) are already at breaking point and cannot cope with our current population.

Local GPs cannot fill vacant GP positions due to the current crisis in the NHS.

Almost all of the GP / medical centre in Warrington are operating at or near to capacity and cannot take on any more patients. New residents are unable to register locally at their GPs.

How will you cope with another 24,000 houses?

The PDO makes says it will provide new health facilities in the Garden City Suburb and the South West Extension. However, there is no mention of increasing capacity at Warrington Hospital. What hospital will they use? Are there any plans to increase our current hospital facilities? .

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Housing Density is questionable

WBC have used a housing density of 30 dwellings per hectare throughout the PDO.

Achieving a higher housing density in the town centre (such as apartments) of up to 40 dwellings per hectare could mean that a lower density could be achieved elsewhere in the PDO and as such would allow us to retain more of our Greenbelt. It would also give us flexibility on the type of housing mix to be offered – including suitable housing for our aging population.

A higher density in the town centre would meet the needs of many new potential home buyers for housing without gardens, close to the town centre for social life and close to public transport hubs to avoid needing cars, therefore not adding to our traffic problems.

WBC promised in their settlement Profiles which accompanied the PDO documentation -

“Any additional growth in south Warrington without significant investment in infrastructure will place unacceptable pressure on primary schools, health facilities and the local highways network and may have significant impacts on secondary provision in south and central Warrington. Incremental growth would not positively contribute to the Council’s New City Aspiration.”

I don’t see any of these burning issues being properly addressed here in your PDO.

All you will do is drive away people who can afford to move out of Warrington. Businesses will not want to locate here as traffic will become so bad no-one will want to live here and travelling around Warrington will become a nightmare and costly to their businesses. In fact, **Terry O’Neill (Leader of the Council) made a promise at the Executive Board** meeting in July when the PDO/LDP was announced that no development would take place before the roads were built!!!

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Massive and irreversible loss of Green Belt Land

The PDO proposes the release of significant greenbelt land to build 9,000 new homes over the

next 20 years.

Brownfield sites should be explored and exhausted before any building is permitted on Green Belt Land.

Paragraph 83 of **The National Planning Policy Framework** states that established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in **“exceptional circumstances”**. There is no definition of “exceptional circumstances”. WBC indicated on page 15 that they believe that these are exceptional circumstances, but their reasoning is unclear!!!.

This land is not ‘spare’ land, it is actively being used for agricultural purposes. In the current context of uncertainty following ‘Brexit’ and broader climate change, using no greenbelt land, or at least a smaller portion of it, should be considered.

This issue affects the whole of Warrington, it is not a South Warrington issue.

The economy

The promised rise in interest rates will come sometime soon. This will dramatically slow down the housing market – people will quite simply not be able to afford to buy houses.

Brexit – we have not seen yet the full impact of Brexit and this will have a huge impact on the housing market.

The People of Warrington do not want to become a City! This seems to be driving this PDO !

The PDO is based on an assumption of 1,113 new homes per annum over the next 20 years, equating to around 24,000 new dwellings. Although the reasoning for this assumption is discussed in the PDO, the conclusion needs to be challenged in light of the current economic environment – Brexit and interest rates. Being prudent and adopting a lower assumption of new homes per annum could significantly reduce the amount of Green Belt Land which would be needed for housing.

In various parts of the PDO, reference is made to Warrington ‘New City’. The aspirations of WBC to become a city are NOT shared by residents. Such aspirations appear to be driving a higher housing assumption and employment assumptions than may otherwise be necessary or realistic.

Sheer scale of the proposed Garden City Suburb

The proposal of a Garden City Suburb in South Warrington has horrified many of the residents who currently live in this area. The smaller villages such as Appleton Thorn, Grappenhall and Stretton, which are currently separated from one another by fields, will be completely engulfed by the new residential developments. This will completely change the character of the area and destroy its history and heritage.

The ability to access and enjoy green space is an amenity in itself and the loss of such a significant amount of green space will be detrimental to all residents, not just local ones

Stockton Heath is already over capacity

Stockton Heath is not mentioned specifically in the PDO but the impact of the Garden City Suburb and the Warrington South West Extension on this village will be enormous.

The traffic lights at the junction of the A49 and the A56 in Stockton Heath are already operating at capacity and the A49 flowing through the village is frequently at a standstill.

South vs north divide?

South Warrington is disproportionately affected by the PDO. North and Eastern Warrington are barely touched by the proposals. Why is this?

I would ask that the planners in WBC carefully revise them PDO and consult with the local community. To date, you have managed to alienate a large population of Warrington. I do hope you will be considering all these objections and comments and using them to plan a better Warrington for all of our futures.

Yours sincerely

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