

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir / Madam

I am writing to raise an objection against the Warrington Preferred Development Option (PDO). Particularly the part that affects the Grappenhall / Stretton area.

I live [REDACTED] in Grappenhall, very close to proposed new transport route and the new housing south of Warrington.

My first concern is that there are a huge number of homes planned for south Warrington in the Grappenhall / Stretton area (~7000).

It feels like this area in particular is taking the brunt of need for development and I would like further information as to why this area should take such a big impact and why further brownfield sites are not being considered.

A large proportion of the development south of Warrington has been proposed to be built on green belt. As I'm sure you are aware, greenbelt is hugely important in reducing impact of the Warrington conurbation on the surrounding areas and provide a habitat for nature and access for the local population to open space, which offers opportunities for outdoor activities and clean air. As a resident of south Warrington, I have chosen to live here partly due to the ready access to green space. Numerous studies highlight the positive impact that green space has on mental health and wellbeing. The extensive development essentially wipes out this green space and much of our access to it. It certainly won't provide the same opportunities for outdoor activities that it does at present and the urban sprawl that will result from the PDO will have a significant negative impact on air pollution in the area.

Extensive development south of Warrington will also have a huge impact on traffic (if every new household had two cars, across Grappenhall, Stretton, Walton and Moore areas there would be an extra 18000 cars on the road in this area every day). Traffic is already extremely congested, with the new bridge tolls in Runcorn / Halton, even if the Western link is constructed, I cannot see that Warrington is going to become any less severely congested. Additionally, the local motorway network is already under real strain and further development in this area would result in greater impact on the most congested points on the motorway network; for example at the M56 / M6 junction. Will this be considered in the transport models?

I am also particularly concerned about the proposed transport route connection from Bridgefoot to the new development in Grappenhall via the old high-level bridge and TransPennine trail. The trail itself is important for walkers and cyclists and for us it is our closest access to green space and walkways. Specifically, the TransPennine trail offers a quiet cycling route away from traffic and is party of the national cycle network. The route also offers walkers with children, such as myself, a safe environment for walking and leisure that other routes do not, e.g. those along roads or along the Bridgewater canal (where the footpath alongside the water is very narrow and uneven). The wide flat route allows buggies and bikes to be used and the route to be enjoyed by many. The trail also acts as an important corridor for wildlife in the Grappenhall area. Please could you send me further information on the transport modelling that will be conducted to confirm the suitability and impact of this route? Please could you also share with me the decision-making process and transport methods under consideration for this route? E.g. would this be a train or tram line or will this be a route for cars? A train or tram line would clearly reduce the impact of this route on the local area (i.e. less noise and air pollution). If this route was a roadway I see no benefit to feeding further traffic into an already gridlocked Warrington centre area.

Could you provide me further information on why this route has been selected? For example; what pieces of information and data were used to make this proposal and what alternative routes were considered and why were they not selected? I attended the public consultation in Lymm on the 22nd August and tried to find out more about proposed route but no one could provide me with any information on this part of the proposal. The only response I was given was that it had not really been thought through so no details could be provided. I found this extremely frustrating, given how much of an impact this route, marked on the PDO maps, has already have the on the saleability of my house.

How much effort has gone into considering the viability of such a route? Could you comment on whether the old bridge need to be re-built, how much this would cost and how much the route would impact those living close to the bridge and TransPennine trail in terms of quality of living (noise), air quality, etc? Will the historically important nature of the bridge be considered and would the aesthetics of the old bridge be maintained if any development were to occur?

I am also very upset about the poor communication of the PDO. Talking to many living locally, I believe that many felt that publicising the plans and dates of the public consultation meetings only via the WBC website was not sufficient to raise awareness amongst the affected residents. Please could you comment on why those, including myself, who could be severely impacted, both in terms of quality of life, health and loss of investment due to a potential reduction in my house price, were not contacted directly to invite us to attend an event? Many residents are still unaware of the plans and those that know, including myself, have only found out through local resident campaigns and the press. This means that many will miss their opportunity to express their concerns. Do you have any data on the percentage of those in directly affected areas that are aware of the current preferred develop option proposals? Could you comment on the steps you will take to prevent this situation occurring again in the future?

I also have concerns of the loss of large swathes of the nature reserve near Walton and Moore – this area is important for migratory birds and other species to thrive alongside housing, minimising, to some extent its impact. Given the extensive development prosed, the loss of this area would have a huge impact on the available habitat for wildlife.

There feels like there is little provision for health care within the local plan. Warrington Hospital is already at capacity and struggling to cope with demand. Have you considered what measures would be necessary to meet the health care needs of a significantly larger Warrington population resulting from the PDO? How would this be achieved? What additional funding would be provided and through what means? What assurances can you make that this won't affect access of the current residents, including myself and my family, to quality and timely healthcare in the short and the longer term?

My final question concerns the involvement of Peel Holdings in proposing the preferred development option. They seem to be benefiting hugely from many of the planned developments that are having such a negative impact on the current population of south Warrington (e.g. the proposed port on the ship canal near Moore and also the potential to write-off the huge liability they have in owning the unused railway bridge if it is sold off to or invested in by the council as a transport route). Please could you provide details about the involvement of Peel Holdings in establishing the PDO and also whether any Warrington councillors have a personal business interest in Peel holdings or its associates?

Looking forward to hearing our response.

Yours Sincerely

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