

Response 700

Respondent Details

Information	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

PART A - About You

1. Please complete the following: Please note the email address (if provided below) will be sent a full copy of the submitted response and a unique ID number for future reference (pdf attachment).

Name of person completing the form: John Prytherch

Email address: [REDACTED]

2. What type of respondent are you? Please select all that apply.

A local resident who lives in Warrington

3. Please complete the following:

Contact details	
Organisation name (if applicable)	-
Agent name (if applicable)	[REDACTED]
Address 1	[REDACTED]
Address 2	[REDACTED]
Postcode	[REDACTED]
Telephone number	[REDACTED]

PART B - Representation Form 1

1. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate? From the drop down list please select one option.

Draft Local Plan (as a whole)

2. Does your comment relate to a specific paragraph (s) or policy sub-number (s)? Please select one option.

None of the above

If a paragraph or policy sub-number then please use the box below to list:
This response is in general terms, mostly with reference to transport. Some paragraphs may be referred to.

3. Do you consider the Draft Local Plan is: Please select one option in each row.

	Yes	No
Legally Compliant	X	
Sound	X	
Compliant with the Duty to Co-operate	X	

5. If you answered 'Yes' to any of the options in question 3 then please give details in the box below the reasons why you support the legal compliance or soundness of the Draft Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible.

It is a good plan! I just want to make some general comments but wonder whether this computer will allow me enough space here.

You have just completed a Representation Form for Draft Local Plan (as a whole). What would you like to do now? Please select one option.

Complete the rest of the survey (Part C)

Subject:
Date:

FW: Local Plan and LTP4 response
18 June 2019 07:35:42

From:

Sent: 17 June 2019 14:01

To: Consultation

Subject: Local Plan and LTP4 response

This is my response to the Proposed Submission Version Local Plan (draft Local Plan) and on the fourth Local Transport Plan (LTP4).

I have attempted a response using the online feedback form. An Auto-reply has given me the reference number 119574610. But as this did not get far enough to enable me to make any of my intended comments, I hope this email will be an acceptable substantive response.

I would like to say how very grateful I am to all who have worked so hard to produce these two very realistic, positive and practical documents. I am generally in agreement with the tenor and vision of them both, especially with what they say about the need for more land for housing and employment related development, the proposed Garden Suburb and other policies. I realise that there will still be a huge amount of work to do before the plans can coalesce and the vision start to become reality. We still have some "significant unknowns" which will need to become more certain before definite plans can be made. But there is plenty here to go on. I hope that everything can be positively discussed. I do not share the generally negative, and frankly largely "nimby" attitudes being expressed by many in South Warrington, including the South Warrington Parish Councils' Local Plan Working Group and "Rethinking South Warrington's Future". So long as nearly everywhere is eventually served by trams of the new LRT system, we should be fine!

I hope it will be acceptable if I simply go through the documents with comment on the relevant points, and make some more general comments. Where I have not commented, I am generally supportive of the plans. Most of my points relate to transport.

The draft Local Plan introduction is very good, and the frankness of paras 2.1.57 to 2.1.59 about longstanding excessive car dependency is very welcome.

The content of Policy DEV4 is particularly good regarding the Fiddlers Ferry employment area. Paras 4.2.24 to 4.2.29 seem to have the present vision about right.

Policy INF 1 is excellent.

Para 7.2.5 figure 8 - the Bridgefoot link is fine, but it must not block the Low Level railway route (see below) nor the link from Arpley Junction to the WCML. Bridges must be built if necessary!

Para 8.3.8: Where the Transpennine Trail comprises part of the Low Level railway route (see below), its future planning and use must be subject to the primary use of that route being for rail borne transport; see below.

Para 10.1.4, 10.1.24 and 10.1.25, and Policy MD 1 para 42 are welcome, although how much of the vision of Port Warrington will actually come to pass is very uncertain. Section 14.7 of the Vision document also touches on this. Despite Peel ports' strong aspirations for growth in this area, the Ship Canal above Runcorn is really very quiet. If traffic were to grow significantly, the swing bridges would become a major issue.

Policies FM8, 9 and 10 are welcome and excellent in principle.

The LTP4 Executive Summary is excellent both in its analysis and vision.

5.2 The vision for 2041 should aim at a much greater reduction in car use. And the public transport should be more trams than buses.

6.2 This is thrilling! I had no idea that light rapid transit was being seriously considered for Warrington, and it is very good to see that quite a lot of "optioneering, feasibility, and design work" has already been done (though of course there is much more to do).

Generally I think the so far proposed routes, destinations and phases are good.

6.6 (and Vision document 6.4) The Mass Transit network must now move from concept towards reality. 10.2 is particularly good as integrating modes of transport smoothly is so important!

The Vision document Part A

The analysis is good, especially in section 4.

4.2 Bus services do need to be made more attractive, I suggest mainly by running more in the evening as in the rest of the day.

The Vision in section 5 is very good.

6.2.1 - the vision is excellent but the main question is light rail or BRT. See my comments below.

6.2.2 The uncertainties need resolving here - and I hope they soon will be!

Appendix B - The Transformational Projects Study by Mott MacDonald is most interesting. I have not had time to study it in full detail but my strong plea to Warrington transport planners is to go for trams rather than buses. I have made a few trips on the Leigh guided busway, and my own impression, as well as most of the comments that I heard, was that it is all very well as far as it goes but that a full Metrolink extension would have been so much better. The people of Leigh and places on the way to it feel that they have been fobbed off by a cheaper alternative to a proper tramway. BRT may cost less than light rail but its shortcomings will be regretted in the long term. Trams are better, smoother, faster, more environmentally friendly, in fact better in every way. Well worth the additional cost. If trams are decided on, the next question is what sort of trams, as the lack of uniform tramway standards in the UK still leaves scope for different and incompatible systems in different places. While most modern UK tramway systems are low floor, (and the Nottingham and older Sheffield trams are perhaps the nicest of these), I think high floor, Metrolink-compatible trams would be best, although these would need the construction of platforms. This is because it is quite possible that future extensions of Metrolink might link up with Warrington and its systems.

Apart from the evolution of optimal, tram-based choices for the LRT system, my main area of concern is the continued and revived use by rail borne transport of the Low Level route (whether high speed, mixed traffic, freight, local passenger, light rapid transit or any mix of them). I note, from Policy INF1 para 4 and from statements in the FAQs, that disused rail corridors are being protected against development. This is good. The route this most concerns, is the Low Level route. By this I mean the line from Ditton Junction, through the former Widnes South station, past Fiddlers Ferry Power Station, through Sankey Bridges and Bank Quay Low Level, then past Arpley Junction through Latchford and on embankment up to and down from Latchford Viaduct (this section being Deviation Railway No.3 in the Manchester Ship Canal Act 1885), before rejoining the pre-Ship Canal formation after Stockport Road, from Bradshaw lane through Lymm and onwards where it is now the Trans Pennine Trail. I note the statements in the FAQs, that the Council "does not intend to construct a road on the disused Latchford Rail Line". Another FAQ calls it the "Latchford Spur Rail line" although it was never a spur to anywhere but, until July 1985, a through route to Skelton Junction (and, until September 1962, also to Timperley). The FAQ answer that "further work will examine whether this mass transit network needs to use a pre-existing or new crossing of the Manchester Ship Canal" seems to keep open the possibility of restoration of the Latchford Viaduct section to use, and this is welcome. It is not good that it has just been decaying since 1985.

I have one question here, about the current status of a proposal for removal of the embankment and bridges between Latchford station (inclusive) and Latchford Viaduct (exclusive) and housing development all along this length, which was in the "scoping" part of the planning system in 2015-2017 under reference R 18/104, but for which the full planning application has, as far as I am aware, not been made. I hope this proposal has quietly gone away. If that full planning application were made, I would of course object to it on the ground of its precluding future heavy or light rail use.

The western section of the Low Level route, from Ditton, is currently still in heavy rail use but obviously has potential to become part of the LRT system serving the future Fiddlers Ferry employment area and providing a useful route to South and central Widnes, as well as perhaps a route to Ditton again if Ditton Junction were to reopen as an interchange. But (with reference, I think, to section 6.3 and Policies PT 17 and PT 18 in the LTP4 document) there is clearly potential for conflict over the western section of the Low Level route, between any LRT proposals and those for Northern Powerhouse Rail and the proposed Bank Quay Hub, if this route is chosen by NPR for linking Liverpool to HS2. This is a very live issue at the moment; while NPR have not published a route, some plans are being discussed on the internet. The concept of an interchange hub is good, but how it might be realised is a very big issue. If the hub is at Bank Quay, something with new, straighter platforms than the old ones on the Low Level might be possible. Outline plans recently published on railway fora have included ones with and without a lot of tunnelling in Warrington. One plan includes tunnelling under Grappenhall which I think would be crazy as the

tunnel would have to go very deep to pass under the Ship Canal and the Mersey. I hope there is not much tunnelling, because people should be encouraged to see all that Warrington has to offer and to visit it, and, if possible, to experience the magnificent views from Latchford Viaduct.

The Hub concept is good, and Bank Quay is probably its best place, but it must somehow be so designed as not to preclude LRT on the Low Level. The line is now very quiet since heavy use of Fiddlers ferry ceased, though it is still used by a few (automotive sector I think) trains and probably needs to continue to be available for heavy freight use until Fiddlers Ferry Power Station is finally closed and demolished (if that happens).

So we all await the publication of NPR's firm intentions, and there may be scope for much discussion and modification of plans. Hopefully both NPR and LRT can be accommodated.

An interchange station at Froghall Lane, where the WCML and CLC cross, is not really practicable, although this has been mooted many times. There is now too much housing development all around this crossing. Warrington Central is too important for the town where it is.

The other big debate, which the LTP4 document rightly airs (section 6.2.3 and Part B 10.4.3) is about the future pattern of services on the CLC line. Lots of possibilities are being discussed, including that of tram-trains from the Manchester end. While many people are aggrieved about the diversion of Transpennine Express services off the route, the retention of some services as express or semi-fast is expected, whoever is the operator. I think CLC services will be more oriented to local rather than long distance traffic.

Whatever happens, the whole route should be electrified. If the Office of Rail and Road would abandon its opposition to new third rail we might end up with DC to the west of Warrington Central and AC to the east of it, as was mooted in the 1960s. I am confident that whatever happens, the CLC will remain well used, with at least four services per hour each way, whatever their future pattern or orientation; - and they should all be electric.

One other issue which might interface with future plans for the CLC route, and with the HS2 proposals east of Warrington to which I think the Council are opposed, is the possibility of reopening, for freight, the Glazebrook to Wigan line as far as where it crossed the Chat Moss route near Kenyon, and a new connection with the Chat Moss line near there, enabling freight to access the connections at Parkside / Earlestown to the WCML; and by this means, to relieve some of the congestion in Manchester by allowing Trafford Park Freightliner, etc. workings to run this way instead of through the congested Castlefield corridor.

I regret that time precludes me from offering any further comment at this stage, but I do wish all concerned well in the working out of the Borough's future plans.

John D Prytherch





17 June 2019.