





Dear Sir/Madam,

Preferred Development Option

I would like to register my objections to the Preferred Development Option (PDO) as displayed at the Park Royal Hotel, Stretton, in September 2017.

1. It would be expected that the proposal would initially address the current problems of the town and then build on this to produce a viable plan for the future. It has been documented that Warrington has one of the worst polluted atmospheres in the northwest of England. The traffic congestion has been getting steadily worse as the town has developed, so much so that the A49 in Stockton Heath is now being mentioned on national radio (Radio 2) in their traffic reports.

The PDO does nothing to address these problems and indeed would actually make them worse.

2. I am concerned that there is no justification for the projected business growth in the town. The figure seems to have been plucked from mid air and then used to justify increased housing demand. I agree that in recent years Warrington has been very successful in attracting business to the town but this growth rate cannot be sustained for several reasons. The town is running out of business space and given the air pollution, the traffic congestion and the costs of parking in the town I cannot see that many businesses will be attracted to the town. Indeed, 

3. The projected housing need is in some respect based on the projected business needs and resulting population growth. But, the numbers do not make sense as given an average occupancy rate of 2.3 people per house, which is a commonly used calculator, the number of dwellings needed is substantially less than the 24 000 given in the plan. Given that the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration (EDER), Mr Andy Farrall, stated that some 16 000 dwellings could be built on identified brown field sites, enough for 15 years worth of building, one must question the need for the green field sites indicated in the PDO. Indeed brown field site development would be much preferable to creating an urban sprawl stretching from the east of Manchester up to and including Liverpool.

4. As far as transport and traffic are concerned, the PDO fails on all accounts. While I agree that a western bypass is essential to relieve traffic at Bridge Foot, the plan does not address the problems due to shipping on the canal and, more importantly, traffic congestion when there is a problem on the M6 motorway. Such problems turn Warrington into one big parking lot as seen recently when the M6 was reduced to one due to expansion plates being dislodged in the carriageway. The ship canal is at present crossed by one high level bridge, the Cantilever (3 ton limit) and three swing bridges. These bridges were all constructed circa 1894, over 220 years ago. Since then Warrington has grown out of all recognition and the Borough Council and its predecessors have done **exactly nothing** to improve the road connections across the canal. The PDO totally ignores this problem.
5. There is a line on the plans for the PDO which indicates a route over the canal utilising the Trans Pennine Trail (TPT) with the route starting from the A50 near the dogs home and going to the east before curving onto the TPT crossing the canal via the present high level railway bridge and then into Latchford. This route was described by the EDER as a possible bypass. Since when does a bypass funnel traffic into a town? The purpose of a bypass is to take traffic around the town. I am amazed that the EDER is not aware of this. When pressed he said it could be used as a bus route but it is not obvious who would use it or why they would use it or where would it lead to? He then went on to add that it may be used as a cycleway, the same comments apply. In fact if only to be used as either a cycleway or bus route the costs would be prohibitive given that the 3 bridges concerned have received no maintenance for the last 35 years when the railway ceased to operate and the modifications needed to the TPT and its bridges to accommodate traffic. Major repairs would be needed to make the bridges useable, suicide proof and vandal proof to prevent vandals throwing objects on to ships passing below.
6. The PDO document itself seems to have been written with the sole purpose of confusing the reader. There is no logical progression as to where figures come from and the links to other documents do not work, merely directing the reader to the standard comment sheet. Strange as we have been advised that standard replies will be bunched together and counted as one! Numbers seem to have been plucked out of nowhere and the figures contradict each other. In Paragraphs 2.6 to 2.9. The housing need is said to be 830 to 955 and then figure of 984 appears with no explanation! Later the housing need suddenly jumps to over 1100. Given what the EDER said about brown field sites this will provide some 15 years of house building without the need for green field sites! In para. 2.15 the adopted core strategy mentions a figure of a requirement of 13 hectares per annum for 20 years plus 20%. This gives a figure of 260 hectares plus 20%, a total of 312 hectares over the 20 years. Not as mentioned in para. 2.13 a figure of 381 hectares. Para. 2.20 states that Warrington Borough Council (WBC) has ambitions, but, does the population have the same ambitions. This has not been tested. There are also several mentions of "Warrington City". I have counted 8 so there may be more. The EDER stated at the Park Royal Hotel that there were no intentions of Warrington becoming a city and he was quoted in the Warrington Guardian as saying "the council has not made any reference to becoming a city". Yet, it is mentioned 8 times in the plan. There seems to be the intention of the EDER to deliberately mislead and confuse the [people of Warrington.
7. I believe that the conduct of this consultation has been no less than disgraceful. The villages of Grappenhall, Thelwall and Latchford, the ones most affected by the proposals, were not afforded the opportunity of a consultation. The excuse put out by the planning department was that there was no site with adequate parking. This is total nonsense as there are several possible venues such as Thelwall village hall, Thelwall British Legion and the sports club in Latchford. All of these have better parking facilities than those at the venue used for the Lymm presentation. If an exhibition was to be held at these venues people would walk and not need transport. In the event a consultation display was reluctantly agreed to and it was decided to hold it at the Park Royal in Stretton!!! I am unaware of any public transport links from

these villages to this venue. There are many old senior people in Thelwall and Grappenhall who may not have been able to attend because of the remote location.

8. I have also noted that the consultation period was set at the shortest period allowed, during the school summer break and during the summer recess for the Parish Councils. I note the extension to the consultation period granted due to the intervention by the Warrington South MP is only to the 29 September. The first meeting of the Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council is on the 21 September which hardly gives them time to comment on such a muddled document as this. For your information the publication of the route (with unknown purpose) over the high level railway bridge has already blighted several properties up for sale on either side of it. **I consider this to be totally irresponsible.**
9. The PDO as a document supposedly designed to inform the public it is a manifest failure. I believe that this was intentional so that the PDO would be approved with little or no opposition.
10. In conclusion I think that the whole process of the development of the PDO and the consultation process has been a total disgrace and should be subject to Judicial Review to ensure that the council carries out future consultations in a correct and informative manner.

Yours sincerely

