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Dear Sir

Warrington Borough Council Local Plan. Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation

Whilst understanding there is a clear need for a Local Plan, and subsequently some development is inevitable, I wish to object to the current Preferred Development Option for the following reasons:

- There is a lack of demonstration that exhausting development on all brownfield sites, before any building is allowed on green belt land, has been proposed or forecasted.
- Building 9,000 new homes on green belt land will have a significant detrimental effect to the Warrington area. Building on green belt land will completely change the character of many villages around Warrington. The Garden City Suburb will mean villages such as Grappenhall, Appleton and Stretton will be lost in one large urban area.
- Green belt land isn't unused land. It is vitally important as agricultural land, a habitat for wildlife, a place for outdoor leisure activities and it improves air quality. It is particularly important to the residents of Warrington, an urban area, so that they have access to open space which brings many benefits.
- Paragraph 83 of The National Planning Policy Framework indicates that established green belt boundaries should only be altered in "exceptional circumstances". What are the exceptional circumstances around Warrington?
- Building on green belt land around and within Lymm will mean Lymm, Thelwall and Oughtrington will become one large urban area. One of the purposes of green belt is to prevent neighbouring settlements from merging into each other. It is important to retain open spaces between Lymm and Oughtrington, and Lymm and Thelwall. Lymm thrives off tourism based on its quaint historic character. In particular from those arriving via a narrowboat into the village. This would be lost through an introduction of proposed bland housing developments corridor

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along the canal, as opposed to existing natural environment, if it was to become a large housing mass.

- The PDO states the green belt release in outlying settlements can be accommodated by the existing infrastructure.
 - Where is the demonstration that Lymm has existing infrastructure that can accommodate this additional 500 houses?
 - The schools in Lymm are full, as are doctors' surgeries. A supermarket was recently introduced on Rushgreen Road based on a smaller population.
 - Additional traffic in the area from new houses will have a detrimental effect on the air quality. There are traffic issues in Lymm already and cars from an additional 500 houses will only have a detrimental and unsafe effect
 - The existing Rushgreen Road has a restriction which means large vehicles have to wait until coming traffic has cleared before it can proceed. This issue would only become worse with an increased volume of housing
 - Waiting times at Warburton Bridge resulting from car volumes already leads to excessive delays at peak travelling times. An increase in housing to the east of Lymm's centre would lead to a greater volume of waiting traffic for commuters. There is a risk the queues will go as far as Bent Lane and have safety risks to those using Bent Lane (cyclist and vehicle users). Has this been considered from a Health & Safety perspective?
 - Increased car volumes using the bridge and subsequent increased waiting times will lead to a detriment in air quality in the area
- Whilst recognising Lymm as an outlying settlement should contribute some of the housing needs (albeit significantly less than proposed), developments should be undertaken on the outskirts of the village which would encourage efficient access from the main transport arteries eg M6 (B5158) or A56 (Higher Lane) to reduce the volume of cross-Lymm travelling.
- Where is the demonstration that other outlying settlements have been considered and that they are unable to accommodate additional housing based on their existing infrastructure? Lymm and Cultcheth unacceptably appear to be taking the brunt of the proposed Local Plan on behalf of the Outlying Settlements. If green belt land has to be used, this should be spread across several outlying settlements such the likelihood of impact on the character of individual villages would be significantly lessened.
- The requirement for an additional 24,000 homes over the next 20 years appears to be founded on some significant housing growth assumptions compared with population projections. This figure was calculated some time ago. Based on the current economic climate, economists are claiming growth will be far less than envisaged pre-Brexit and therefore any future plans should be recalculated based on appropriate updated post-Brexit assumptions.
- The south of Warrington appears to take the brunt of the preferred development. There is a lack of demonstration that an appropriate balance has been considered with development in other areas. Of particular concern is planned increase in cross-Warrington traffic leading to increased travel congestions, beyond those suffered today. As for example people from the

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proposed South Warrington development would seek employment and subsequent travel to the commercial development which is growing in the Great Sankey area (eg Omega).

- Achieve a higher housing density in the town centre (such as apartments) of up to 40 dwellings per hectare meaning that a lower density could be achieved elsewhere in the PDO. This would have the advantage of requiring less greenbelt land or enabling a different type of housing mix to be built (such as bungalows for elderly residents). A higher density in the town centre would match the desire 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.
- The Preferred Development proposal has a feel of being developed by a group of Developers which a commercial benefit being put ahead of actual needs. Has the proposal been developed with appropriate independence from those developers likely to profit from such an expansive plan?
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment considered the overlap between significant construction from the proposed housing development and construction works from HS2 ?

Finally, I think the consultation process has been inadequate and poorly communicated, and unacceptable. The consultation period of 6 weeks was short and held over a period of time when many people were likely to be on holiday. This resulted in residents missing consultation meetings and having less time to formulate a response. I attended a meeting at the Park Royal Hotel, Stretton and found it hard to find the information I was looking for. There were no displays showing the proposed developments in the Outlying Settlement of Lymm area. It was not until I asked one of the representatives from the Council for information was I shared information on Lymm. The Council representative took me over to a rolled up drawing on the floor. Therefore, these wider plans for the outlying settlements were not in the public view. This is unacceptable and has not allowed the public to have a fair and considered opinion on the proposal against the wider context. The proposal appears to be following a 'divide and conquer' approach to obtaining approval.

Yours Faithfully

