

[REDACTED]

**Warrington Borough Council  
Planning Policy and Programmes,  
New Town House,  
Buttermarket Street,  
Warrington  
WA1 2NH**

**Dear sir/madam,**

Following attendance at consultation events I am writing to express my deep concern over the Preferred Development Plan proposed by WBC.

My first concern is the number of houses proposed. I would like more information as to why this is 24,000? This is a 20 year forecast and I am sure that within 10 years there will have been huge changes such as the outcome of Brexit, the creation of HS2, the development of technology and how it affects work, home, travel and leisure demands. Blatently

Houses can only be justified by employment and in the plan there are areas targeted for retail yet it is clear that retail shopping is suffering due the ease of online shopping and that people are preferring 'clicks' to 'bricks' This online presence is continually increasing and changing the way people shop. This again will change hugely over 10 years and the need for additional retail outlets will diminish, growth will be in distribution and logistics.

The plans include an increase in offices despite the fact that we have business such as Talk Talk pulling hundreds of jobs out of Warrington. Predictions assume that in the future more and more employees will be home working as we improve our digital connectivity this will lead to a decrease in office space required.

It is ironic that the employment (albeit not long term) would most likely be provided by construction of all the buildings that would be surplus to requirement and may indeed remain empty.

All these buildings need to be funded and I suspect that finding this funding will be a challenge as the returns on offer are very unattractive to a developer

Much of the economic growth justification is based on the success of Omega but to extrapolate this number would be flawed as this has peaked and will not continue to exponentially increase as projections may suggest. Also the growth expected due to the HS2 is flawed as growth for this is heading towards an Airport City.

There is no legal requirement for a 20 year plan, my understanding is that 15 years is best practice which includes the 2-5 years taken to get the plan created and adopted so the real substance only covers around 10 years post adoption. Therefore I believe a 10 year plan would be more than sufficient and then a review in 10 years would allow for WBC to adapt plans to account for economic and technological changes that I have detailed above.

Why are you choosing green belt land, why not brownfield? Have all the brownfield sites around the town been fully utilised in these plans, have you considered the many empty properties across town. In ten years' time we will also know what has happened to Fiddlers Ferry which is a very large brownfield site requiring an alternative use that isn't in the current land allocation.

It seem abhorrent to sacrifice Green belt, which should be protected for life to create a 'Garden City' when we should be improving the existing town and making it a more appealing 'town' to live in.

I would like more information on why this area of greenbelt has been chosen and the justification for downgrading its green belt status.

Grappenhall village is a picturesque village with historical value and attracts many visitors both old and young. There are very few comparable villages in Warrington and it is an asset to the heritage Warrington.

What do you think the impact of the infrastructure will be on the village?

I believe the village would not be able to cope with the additional through traffic and much the charm would be lost and this would be huge loss for all of Warrington. We need to protect these beautiful assets and look after them not exploit them

What surveys have taken place to show the impact of this additional infrastructure on wildlife and protected species?

What surveys have taken place to take consideration of flooding as it is known that there are many problems with flooding near the A50?

Have studies been performed to look at the impact of the planned infrastructure on air pollution and what the health risks are to the Warrington residents. Warrington is already a heavily polluted town.

Are there studies showing that there are sufficient green spaces in the plans? How is this assessed?

At the meeting I was told that the idea to change Warrington to a city was because it 'sounded better', I imagine the planner meant in order to attract business? But given we are surrounded by two very large cities and potentially an Airport City, it seems absurd to change Warrington's status to a city and you should focus on changing it into an attractive town that people want to live in. You should be looking at building affordable urban living.

If there were 24,000 new homes built this would cause a huge increase in congestion across the town. Both myself and my husband were independently affected in August when the Thelwall Viaduct was closed, we were both stuck in traffic for hours and I had my two young children in the car, this caused them much distress. Your plans for transport links need to be more transparent as at the consultation meeting when challenged on the proposals the replies from your team were fairly contradictory.

WBC needs to be open about all data gathering, I want to know who the data sources are so that I can be assured that the data is reliable and that reliable data is being used to make key decisions.

Finally, I was very disappointed at how poorly the consultation process was communicated. I heard by word of mouth weeks after the first consultation and would have hoped that given the huge impact on my property that I would have been informed directly by WBC, it would have been respectful to send out flyers or even put up local notices. I do not frequent social media, nor do I subscribe to the Warrington Guardian and I do not regularly check the WBC planning website just in case you have decided to sacrifice the green belt where I live to build thousands of houses, offices and retail outlets!

Please can you let me know how you plan to communicate your plans going forward?

Yours sincerely,

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