

Dear Sir

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

Since I was made aware of the WBC Local Plan and Preferred Development consultation I have taken time to carefully review the plan/option document. As the online response form is cumbersome and not user friendly I have chosen to raise my objections to the plan via e-mail and would appreciate you taken my views into consideration.

I have the following specific objections to the Preferred Development Option

1. The initial consultation was arranged during the Peak Holiday season in the area and as a result meant that many local residents have not been able to review the plans in detail. There was also insufficient publicity around the plan and I was only made aware of the plan through the actions of local residents. Whilst the deadline was extended I still believe that the consultation process was fundamentally flawed.
2. It is my belief that holding any Public consultations prior to a full Infrastructure feasibility study having been completed and published on all of the options being considered render all current consultations as worthless. Having attended the session in Stretton it was clear to me that the council representatives have been unable to answer whether the feasibility study is taking place on all 5 reported options or just the preferred development option.
3. The material available both online and used at the consultation was of a very poor quality. It was difficult for people to have any clarity over the scale and nature of many of the proposals. WBC have a duty of care in such matters to communicate clearly and concisely to enable all residents to have an opinion on a development of such scale. Many of the Council reps have shown themselves to be, at best, incompetent in this process and raises concerns over their ability to deliver anything like a cohesive plan to deliver even small scale changes.
4. The nature of any communication from the council has been poor. Either deliberately misleading or just amateurish. On a number of occasions responses from the council have been clearly conflicting. This does not help the general public understand the core message.
5. The premise of the plan appears to be on making Warrington a city. For what purpose is this. There appears to be economic reason and feels like a vanity project. Not one person I have spoken to locally is demanding to live in a city.
6. Having read more about the need for housing I believe the whole plan is based on a falsehood. The Government have not set the target but rather it appears to be based on WBC figures. I still have not had an answer from WBC whether the figure is based on real need or driven by false assumptions that fail to take account of recent social and political changes. E.g. Brexit, HS2 plans.
7. My core objection is the threat to Greenfield sites across the south of the Town. The lungs of the town are being threatened and important environment and social areas are being threatened on the whim of the council and their business partners. All of the area is enjoyed by inhabitants of Warrington regardless of their postcode. There is no need to ruin one of the most attractive parts of the town. Even a watered down scheme would threaten existing neighbourhoods and destroy the community feel which attracts and retains residents in the areas around Warrington.
8. It is my belief that the plan does not consider fully the opportunity to use Brownfield sites across the town. Across the country there are many examples of rejuvenation projects that have successfully transformed Brownfield sites and aided economic regeneration of many areas. WBC needs to look around and see what further opportunities there are.
9. Removing the Green fields and lungs of the Town will impact the Air pollution of the Town. Does the council not have a duty of care to reduce Air pollution rather than being determined to add to the Environmental damage and health of future Generations.

10. It may have passed the councils notice but the existing Infrastructure of Warrington is creaking already. Plans for a Western Relief bridge will not resolve the problem but compound it further. The council has shown itself to be incapable of delivering basic services at a reasonable cost and I have no faith that this plan make any difference to the current problems.
11. The plan threatens some key communal amenities namely the Trans Pennine Trail and other walking routes around the south of the Town. Many of these amenities attract visitors from outside of the borough and their removal will impact the public perception of Warrington as a place to visit, live and work.
12. PDO document attempts to justify why Option 1 has been discounted and why Option 2 is the preferred. No mention of options 3, 4 or 5?
13. Representative at the Stretton consultation said that Warrington Hospital is fully involved however they appear to have now been sent away to decide how best to fragment services. Increased population will place a significant burden on an already over-stretched and under-resourced service.

I would ask you to review the plan and consider specifically providing a reduced number of houses across the borough in areas that utilise the existing Brownfield sites and without permanent damage to the Greenfield sites.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted signature block]