

**Warrington Borough Council
Planning Policy and Programmes
New Town House
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I strongly object to WBC's Preferred Development Option which will result in the loss of a huge area of Green Belt land with the intention of producing a new Garden City Suburb in the South East of Warrington.

I strongly object to WBC's aspirations for a new Ship Canal crossing to the east of the Town Centre which is planned to cut through Weaste Lane and continue down the Trans Pennine Trail. The result will be a devastating effect to the surrounding communities with a huge increase in congestion, noise and further degradation of the town's already extremely bad air quality.

I strongly object to WBC's plan to supposedly safeguard land adjacent to the Garden City Suburb for future development needs. As soon as the housing, roads and infrastructure of the Garden City commence construction, including the proposed new Ship Canal crossing, the result will be an accelerated increase of suburban sprawl.

Roads

A detailed traffic survey has not been included in the Preferred Development Option (PDO). Instead it is proposed to do this at a later stage. Why is this the case? Surely the traffic survey should have been conducted at the same time as the PDO.

Warrington is in a position being "well served by motorways" but these motorways are now not fit for purpose. Journeys on them are unreliable given the high volume of traffic, frequent accidents and blockages. The situation will only deteriorate even further by large proposed/approved logistics/employment sites to the North along the M6. There will also be vehicles coming to Warrington to avoid the two Mersey toll bridges. It is not just the motorways that are congested but our local roads.

The 'Eastern Link Road' from M56 Junction 10 to the north of the Manchester Ship Canal would cut right through the proposed new residential areas. This would provide a new HGV access road to the Barleycastle Trading Estate (which, at the moment, is only accessible from the M6 junction). It would also provide an alternative route for traffic caught up in problems on the M56 / M6 motorways.

The PDO also suggests the use of the old railway embankment and bridge to the west of Latchford Locks as a new strategic transport route. Again, this route would be detrimental to the people currently living in this area.

The “Howshoots Link” from Grappenhall Heys to the M6 junction would effectively become an alternative HGV route for traffic coming to/from Warrington and Runcorn areas, leading to even more traffic flowing through the A49 and A56 in Stockton Heath.

Warrington residents have to pay the tolls to cross the new Mersey bridge crossing. There is concern that the new Link roads through South Warrington will attract traffic that would otherwise have used the Mersey crossings if there was no toll to pay.

Warrington is affected detrimentally whenever there are problems on the motorway network. The addition of these routes will result in the deterioration of the quality of life for current residents who will be subjected to increased noise, air pollution and vibration from the increased traffic flow.

Air Quality

Building the numbers of houses and roads, as described by the PDO, is likely to bring thousands of extra cars in to the town every day.

In Warrington, 4.8% of all deaths are caused by man-made particulate pollution in our air, which is equal to 95 unnecessary deaths a year. This is slightly worse than the average for the north west of 4.6%.

In 2015 WBC measured levels of a harmful air polluting Nitrous Oxide in 47 places around the town. It has an annual mean objective of keeping levels below **40µg/m³**. The Council’s own monitoring showed that in 2015, 28 (60%) of those sites had pollution levels higher than their own objective. In 2014 only 8 (17%) of sites exceeded that level so Warrington’s Air Quality is worsening.

The massive increase in the number of extra cars and lorries using the new roads will result in a greater increase in bad air quality, which will ultimately result in more deaths.

Environmental

A high level environmental impact survey has not been included in the PDO.

A wide variety of animals and birds live in the green belt areas including hares, badgers, water voles, great crested newts and bats.

What will be done to safeguard the many species of wildlife which currently use this area as their habitat.

Green Belt

The PDO will result in significant loss of Green Belt land.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that established Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in "exceptional circumstances".

In the PDO, Warrington Borough Council say that they believe that these are exceptional circumstances. Why is that the case?

Building on Green Belt land affects the whole of Warrington, not just South Warrington. Brownfield sites should be exhausted before any building is permitted on Green Belt Land. This isn't the case with the Local Plan.

The proposal of a Garden City Suburb in South Warrington has horrified many of the residents who currently live in this area. The smaller villages such as Appleton Thorn, Grappenhall, Thelwall, Lymm and Stretton, which are currently separated from one another by fields, will be completely engulfed by the new residential developments. This will completely change the character of the area and destroy its history and heritage.

The ability to access and enjoy green space is an amenity in itself and the loss of such a significant amount of green space will be detrimental to all residents, not just local ones.

City Status

The PDO states that 1113 new homes will be required each year resulting in an additional 24000 houses built over a 20 year period.

These figures appear to be exceptionally high, especially since the UK voted to leave the EU in last years referendum. Future UK population growth will most likely be a lot less than was previously envisaged and as a result the future growth in the population of Warrington will be a lot less, therefore requiring fewer new houses.

There are many references in the PDO to "Warrington New City". Warrington failed a bid for City status earlier this year. The aspirations of WBC to become a city are not shared by the residents of Warrington.

These aspirations appear to be the main factor in the exceptionally unrealistic high number of houses required. Unrealistic and totally unnecessary.

Instead of having aspirations of City Status, maybe a much better idea would be to produce a proper plan of how to regenerate Warrington Town Centre. Apart from a few buildings and places, like the Town Hall and its gates, Warrington Town Centre leaves a lot to be desired.

A proper detailed plan for the regeneration of Warrington Town Centre should be the priority.

Regards

