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18 September 2017

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

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Dear Sir

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

I wish to object to the current Preferred Development Option for the following reasons:-

- Very unhappy that the consultation period was held over the school summer holidays, when residents were most likely to be away. I also do not think there were enough Consultation Events, nor do I feel the Council made adequate efforts to publicise the PDO Consultation. I can't help but wonder if these were deliberate ploys, to reduce opposition to the plans.
- With regard to the way the Council publicised the PDO Consultation, can somebody please explain to me why the Reg 18 Notice was published in the Westmoreland Gazette? What possible reason could the Council have to use such an obscure and remote newspaper? I cannot imagine that the readership of the Westmoreland Gazette would have any interest whatsoever in WBC's plans for Warrington. I can only conclude that WBC wished to limit the chances of the population of Warrington realising the full horror of the Council's plans, thereby reducing any opposition.
- The maps used at the Consultation Events were out of focus and out of date, which made it very difficult to fully understand the plans – road names were illegible. Again, I rather suspect that this was another deliberate ploy to bamboozle residents.
- I feel that the amount of houses proposed by WBC 24,000 is far too many, and am concerned that the effects of BREXIT have not been taken into account. In addition, HS2 will not now be stopping at Warrington, plus the Government has just announced a revised method of calculating housing requirements. This should mean WBC needs to drastically reduce the number of houses it proposes to build, and there should be no need to build on the Green Belt.

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- I believe there is enough Brownfield sites in Warrington to accommodate 15,000 new homes, and with a reduced housing requirement, which would allow the Council to protect our very precious Green Belt areas.
- The PDO indicates that the Council plans to build most of the 24,000 houses proposed, in the most expensive and least populated areas of Warrington, and utilise the Green Belt. I do not believe there is any real necessity to do this. Indeed, I feel this is a cynical move on the part of WBC to maximise council tax, and so that the developers can generate maximum profits. I realise a percentage of the new homes would have to be “affordable”, but let’s face it, most will be 4/5 bedroom executive homes, and I really do not see how this will help the housing situation. Any homes built in this area will be at least £100,000 more to buy, than similar properties in other areas of Warrington.
- I am horrified at the idea of this so called “Garden City”. Grappenhall Village is a conservation area, and to build houses all along Broad Lane and Stockton Lane, would swamp this beautiful village, and totally destroy it’s character. I bet there isn’t a single person living in Grappenhall Village, or the surrounding areas, who would be happy to see the area destroyed in this way.
- Warrington already has the 2nd highest pollution levels in the North West, so adding another 24,000 houses is certainly not going to improve matters. Say each new home has two cars, which wouldn’t be that unusual, you’ve just added 50,000 extra cars to the roads of the town.
- I am greatly concerned that the Council’s plans/maps indicate that the disused railway line which runs through Latchford may be utilised. By marking this out on the map, the Council has caused much distress and anxiety to the residents whose homes back onto the railway embankment. At the Consultation Events, the Council’s representatives were heard to tell residents, that their fears for their homes were unfounded, as there were no firm plans to utilise the railway line. It was said by the Council’s representatives that some residents’ groups had been “scaremongering”. The fact of the matter is, that without the residents’ groups, the majority of those who would be most affected, would have had no knowledge at all of the Council’s plans. By designating the disused railway line as a possible road route, the Council has blighted the area. Some residents have lost their house sale because of this, and the rest will have seen their homes become unsaleable overnight!
- The proposal to utilise the disused railway line through Latchford, would also involve destroying part of the Trans Pennine Trail. This is a very popular, and much used walking/cycling route, as well as being a haven for wildlife. It would be completely unacceptable to lose this.

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- The PDO attempts to justify why the Council prefers Option 2. It does not explain why Option 1 has been discounted, and completely ignores Options 3, 4 and 5.
- The loss of such a huge amount of Green Belt land is obviously going to have a detrimental effect on local wildlife populations, and I do not feel this is justified at all.
- The level of Peel Holdings' involvement in the Council's plans is of some concern to me. Having done some research, I have found that since at least 2008, Peel Holdings, under its Ocean Gateway Concept, has been planning to develop the entire length of the Manchester Ship Canal. Indeed, ██████████ of Peel Holdings, when launching his Ocean Gateway Concept said that he wanted it to "it's own planning regime...so we can overcome each authority objecting...and speed up the planning process". Given that much of the land along MSC is Green Belt, I can certainly see why ██████████ would want his little project to have its own "planning regime". It seems to me that all the roads/bridges proposed in the PDO would greatly assist Peel Holdings in realising their ambitions for the MSC, so I would like to know how much influence Peel Holdings have on WBC's decision making for this? How much pressure are they exerting on WBC?
- I object in the strongest terms to the destruction of Moore Nature Reserve, in order that Peel Holdings can building the "Port of Warrington" in its place. Obviously, this development would not be possible without the new roads/bridges proposed in the PDO, so again this leads me to believe that Peel Holdings probably have a huge amount of influence over the adoption or not of the PDO.
- During my research, I also discovered that Mr Steven Broomhead was Chief Executive Officer of the NWDA. I assume that this is the same Steven Broomhead who is currently Interim Chief Executive of Warrington Borough Council? From what I've read, it would seem that Peel Holdings had a very close relationship with NWDA, with some people having held executive positions in both organisations at one time or another. This all seems rather cosy, and doesn't give me much confidence that the wishes of the Warrington public will be taken on board, if they do not match the ambitions of Peel Holdings. Let's face it, Peel Holdings stand to gain massively if the PDO is adopted, and are unlikely to care very much about the destruction of the Green Belt or the feelings and views of local residents.

Yours faithfully

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