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Dear Sir/Madam,

Preferred Development Option Regulation 18 Consultation

Cheshire East Council (CEC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Preferred Option Consultation for Warrington's new Local Plan and provides below comments on four aspects of your proposal:

- 1) **Overall Scale of Development** - CEC notes Warrington Borough Council's (WBC) approach to assessing its development needs and in addition the proposed additional growth derived from Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan. It is likely that Warrington will have to apply the new approach towards setting its housing figure that the government eventually decides upon following its current consultation *Planning for the right homes in the right places*;
- 2) **Spatial Distribution Options** – CEC notes and supports Warrington's objective to maximise development within the existing urban area through regeneration in the town centre, Warrington Waterfront and the wider inner Warrington area. The Council would wish to see a more detailed explanation of why the planning constraints to the north of Warrington are so significant to prevent a more geographically even distribution of the remaining development requirement than that identified in the Preferred Option;
- 3) **Commuting and Migration information** – CEC would wish to have more information on the potential changes to commuting and migration flows, particularly as they relate to Cheshire East, from the preferred development option and greater clarity on their likely consequences for the transport infrastructure and networks within Cheshire East;
- 4) **Cross Border Transport Impacts & Modelling** – CEC considers there is a need for wider highway modelling to understand strategic cross border impacts. This could require a potential Memorandum of Understanding to agree how this will be undertaken and how the findings can be delivered. Further detailed comments on this aspect are provided below.

The Council shares a boundary with Warrington along the A50 corridor, which includes the parishes of High Legh / Millington, and the A56 corridor through Little Bollington. The Council has reviewed the

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transport evidence base that supports the proposals, namely the report entitled 'Warrington Transport Summary 2017'.

This report is described as providing 'An initial overview of transport in Warrington to identify existing problems and opportunities for improvement'. The report does little to quantify the impact of development proposals on the transport network especially in regard to areas outside of Warrington Borough; it is essentially an inward looking document.

To meet on-going Duty to Co-operate requirements, the Council will require a more detailed assessment of the cross boundary impacts resulting from WBC spatial options and proposals. A strategic assignment tool such as SATURN should be used to determine the predicted impact of new developments and the results used to influence policy choices – such as investment in cross boundary public transport services.

Without this evidence, it is considered that the Preferred Development Option may have significant cross boundary transport impacts, particularly on the A50 corridor and surrounding country lanes. These impacts could be mitigated through policies to support the provision of new and improved public transport services and measures to review the need for traffic management measures on cross boundary minor roads – such as Swineyard Lane.

However, as the supporting transport information to quantify that impact is not currently available, we reserve our position on this issue at this stage.

It is considered that the following actions are required to address CEC's transport concerns:

- A Strategic Transport Model is used to determine the predicted impact of Warrington's Preferred Development Option on cross boundary routes;
- Subject to the outcome of this modelling work, to include relevant criteria in the policy framework supporting the Garden City Suburb proposal that requires appropriate future enhancement of cross boundary transport;
- To include policies that ensure the future review and funding of traffic management measures on minor cross boundary routes; and
- To explore the need for an MOU.

Please get in touch if you would like to discuss any of the above prior to our next Duty to Co-operate meeting.

Yours sincerely,

