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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my objection of the Proposed Development Option, concerning the future of Warrington. As a resident of Grappenhall for the past [REDACTED] years, I am extremely wary of the proposed local plan, and can only derive that a complete lack of consideration and common sense was present when such was drafted. There are a number of issues that have been completely disregarded, many concerning the welfare of the existing residents of Warrington. Given one would assume that the wellbeing of Warringtonians would be the upmost priority of our council, I would like to raise these issues as a matter of urgency, given the mass impending (damaging) impact that would ensue following the current proposed plan.

I would first like to object the PDO on the grounds that a ridiculous amount of greenbelt is being taken with a complete lack of justification. "Exceptional circumstances" are required to be present in order to build on greenbelt, however there is no evidence of the kind set forth in the proposed plan. The reasoning given is based solely on the massive number of houses that are planned to be built (24,000), in a bid to gain city status for Warrington. Such status is dependent on "economic growth," with no actual evidence that this would deliver the supposed social advantages, e.g. job growth. On top of this, no proper environmental analysis of the proposed plan has been carried out in any shape or form. This is highly important when considering the ecology/ wildlife, pollution (WHO rates Warrington 2nd worst air pollution in North West) and flooding risk. It is clear to see here that whoever is pushing this plan forward is blind to all disadvantages and is obsessed with the idea of Warrington as a city, whilst bearing no solicitude for Warringtonians themselves.

Indeed, the PDO would totally devastate the character of communities across South Warrington, inevitably obliterating wildlife havens and recreational amenities (i.e.

Transpennine Trail, Moore Nature Reserve). One must also consider the fact that the proposed plan would cause massive chronic upheaval in communities while it is being put in place, with many residents being distressed by compulsory purchase, relocation, demolition, blight/ property devaluation, noise, traffic jams and the encroachment of peaceful suburbs by concrete monstrosities. What is more, a proper transport assessment has not even been carried out in order to pinpoint current traffic flow problems in the area. The said assessment is vital considering the nature of the plan, as it would assess a) as to whether the intended new " infrastructure" would actually solve these problems, and b) as to whether the massive number of new houses would worsen them and create further mayhem. One can only assume that such assessment has not taken place due to a complete lack of organisation and responsibility. This is shown again clearly by the fact that insufficient attention/ analysis has been given in this plan with regards to the provision of health care services. The fate of Warrington General Hospital has been (and remains) questionable, the services provided obviously not even coping with Warrington's current needs. Planning for so many additional residents on top of current numbers would be a foolish leap in the dark from this point of view, when considering the health and well-being of Warringtonians (if that is even a consideration.)

Adding to this, the aforementioned housing likely to be built in South Warrington is inappropriate for the actual needs of Warrington. It is proposed that 4-5 bedroom houses (£500,000) should be built at lower density (20/ha). This would be incredibly pleasant if the buyers of such would actually want to live in and be part of the community of Warrington, however it is more likely that these houses will be taken by external immigrants of Warrington, commuting to and from work in Manchester/ Liverpool via the motorways. This therefore will not be in provision of affordable/ social housing for current Warringtonians and their descendants, the reasoning for this type of housing/ location being chosen rather for the profit for the developers, and more council tax for the Warrington Borough Council. Why again is there no consideration being taken for the existing residents of Warrington? What's more, the number of houses planned should also be a lot less. The proposed number has been based on out of date predictions, ignoring a report that came in in May 2017 calling for a more conservative estimate, and a recent government directive by Sajid Javid. This directive aimed to standardise the method for calculating housing need countrywide- in which the specific recommendations for Warrington were mysteriously missing(?). Again, why does it seem that so little (if any) thought has gone into composing this plan?

The development proposed is also unfairly concentrated in South Warrington. 1/3+ (8,000) of houses are designated to be built as part of the proposed "garden city suburb," totally engulfing Grappenhall, with 2000 more in the "South Western urban extension," and 500 in Lymm. Taken in hand with the proposed HCA development (outside of this plan) in Appleton, this will effectively create a conurbation across the whole of South Warrington. It baffles me as to why this is the case, considering that existing brownfield sites (i.e. derelict areas/ disused industrial sites) have not been sufficiently explored/ exhausted. Fiddlers Ferry (a coal fired power station) is soon to close, and will definitely become available within the time of plan for development. This site covers a huge area, and if used would avoid use of greenbelt land entirely. There are also other areas to be considered, such as Appleton Airfield, and the current hospital site (once it is decided where to move it). If such vast areas of developable space are indeed available, why is it that these new houses are being concentrated into what is already a peaceful, thriving community?

With regards to the structure of the proposed plan, its full course doesn't actually have to run for 20 years, whilst the government requirement for councils is that they have a plan for only 5 years. Carrying out a 20 year plan from the present moment allows taking of quadruple the amount of greenbelt, no matter what the actual need for such transpires to be in future years. Once unprotected, this will inevitably be eradicated and built on anyway. The plan needs to be of a shorter term, with much review in light of the many national changes happening at the moment (e.g. Brexit, HS2/3). Why is our town charging into this plan of two decades, when it is crystal clear that it has not been thought through with any level of intelligence?

I believe what has been the most upsetting issue concerning this whole debacle however, is the manner of Warrington Borough Council's interaction with its citizens on this major issue. To put things lightly, it has been utterly shameful. The data on which the plan was formulated was gathered in an earlier consultation in late 2016, in which the respondents/commentators would mostly be developers. Members of the general public are unlikely to even know this process has occurred, unless they have read belatedly its admission by WBC, when reading the PDO completed document, which is based on its "evidence." This evidence/opinion of course (unsurprisingly given its skewed sources) largely agreed with WBC's overinflated housing targets and greenbelt coveting, and WBC cite this in the PDO as good reason to charge ahead with their aspirations and a sound basis for the plan (again, how surprising.)

Subsequently the present 'consultation' has been given the minimum time span, staged over the Summer break, and advertised in the Westmorland Gazette (Warrington is in Cheshire not Cumbria, should we really allow this plan to go forward if you are oblivious to which county you're operating in?!), resulting in total lack of awareness on the public's part. This has been clearly demonstrated by the limited numbers attending the first few 'consultation' events, put in contrast with the vast queues of residents swarming to similar events following the set up of the informative Facebook objection group on August 19th. Warrington Borough Council only agreed (reluctantly) to give 2 extra weeks response time and 1 extra consultation event after persistent campaigning by Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council and MP Faisal Rashid (how kind.)

In addition, they have refused to give any further concessions despite Mr Rashid's further petitions, citing his direct observations that the degree of informing and opportunity for response has been democratically insufficient. There has been no consultation in Grappenhall and Thelwall, where most of the disturbance from the plan is likely to be caused (I wonder why.) The people of Latchford, who must in some way be affected by the continuation strategic transport route along the old railway embankment, (although there is no indication as to exactly how on the maps), have been unable to obtain useful advice/support from their elected councillors, who appear to be in a compromised position and avoiding engagement on the issue. It is particularly infuriating that the Parish Council has had to spend £1000 of our devolved local funds, simply to do WBC's job of meeting residents rights to be properly informed of this process, and will be giving another far higher sum for specialist professionals to hold WBC to acknowledging their mistaken conclusions and unjustified methods in this process.

It is evident from the issues listed above that Warrington Borough Council has become set on a plan to push for city status, based solely on supposed economic considerations formulated with its business promoting associates, and influenced by the lobby of powerful investors/ land owners. This is the main focus of the plan, and there is no convincing evidence forwarded that this would achieve its aims or bring benefits for the average Warringtonian . Outrageously this has been used as the linchpin of the plan, without any consultation of the public's feelings on the matter. A recent survey by Warrington Guardian showed 80+ % of readers did not want Warrington to become a City.

For this reason I would ask that this plan is seriously rethought through, including a discussion as to whether it should even go ahead at all. If you have any concern for the quality of life for the inhabitants of this town, you will stop thinking from a materialistic perspective and act for the people, who are what really makes this town/ city/ whatever the hell you want to call it.

I hope that my points are clear and that you do seriously re-evaluate this plan.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.