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

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

Dear Sirs

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

I am writing to express my disappointment and frustration in the way in which the PDO has been conducted, and the lack of foresight that it contains. The initially proposed consultation period scheduled over the school holiday period gave the impression that there was something to hide. I also believe that the proposal is a knee-jerk reaction to fit in as many houses as possible, without considering the issues with our current housing stock and how to alleviate these. I believe we need to find a solution that enables the older generations to free up 4 bedroom houses whilst allowing them access to well built houses in a community that can support and look after them. Only when these are freed up does the housing market enable the younger generations to get onto the property ladder. Any proposal must harness local companies, and help to train up local people with new skills. It must

build community and be mindful of the local environment. It must be well built to stand the test of time, and have architecture of interest – our generation is leaving no architecture of beauty or significance to be remembered for – harness our colleges and further education establishments to give young people an opportunity to invest in their future. Equally, we should provide opportunities for local people to gain skills / contribute to the development. One massive DIY SOS project, Young Offenders being trained in new skills working alongside local building firms, children's nurseries built as part of old people's communities where they can support one another. Investment in community provisions and school. And a serious, significant study into improving the road network to accommodate this sustainable growth. The PDO does not feel like a thought-through option for the next 20 years.

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

- Public consultation without adequate advertising and held throughout peak holiday season.
- Public consultations being held prior to the infrastructure feasibility study results being completed and published. 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.
- Use of outdated and unclear maps when presenting plans at the public consultations.
- Conflicting answers have been given to the same questions asked at the Lymm and Stretton public consultation meetings. If representatives are unable to get the councils message across consistently, what hope does the public have to digest and comprehend the limited information being supplied?
- Misleading of the council to let the public to believe that the volume of housing required is something set by Government when it is WBC who have calculated the volume requirement.
- Unreasonable of the council to base calculation of the housing requirement on figures produced:

- pre Brexit announcement
  - when it was believed that the HS2 line would require a stop in Warrington
  - recent Government announcement of revised housing requirement calculation methodology.
- There is enough Brownfield land in the area to build 15,000 houses. Potentially enough to meet a reduced housing requirement. Therefore allowing the council to protect and preserve existing green belt land.
  - Majority of the proposed housing to be located in the least densely populated and more expensive areas of the town. Unaffordability but high council tax implications.
  - 2016 study by the World Health Organisation Warrington was recorded as having the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest air pollution levels in the North West. Impact on health and mortality. Why would the Council wish to increase this further?
  - While it may appear convenient for the council to repurpose the railway embankment considerations:
    - state of disrepair of the high level bridge
    - integrity, form and strength of the embankment
    - destruction of wildlife/protected species habitats
    - Heritage and preservation of local history e.g Knutsford Road bridge cited in the Unitary Development plan as being of significant local, architectural and historical interest.
    - Destruction of TPT amenity which is currently a well-used nature path utilised by walkers, runners and cyclists and part of the National Cycle Route Network
  - Considerable blight to surrounding houses and neighbourhoods and destroy the community feel which attracts and retains residents in the areas around Warrington.
  - The consultation and online documents do not adequately explain what happens with the 'strategic transport route' once it reaches the bridge at Wash Lane.

- The 'strategic bus route' over Cantilever Bridge does not consider inadequate weight limit of that bridge. Who will pay for the essential upgrading, ongoing maintenance and basic caretaking of this bridge?
- 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?
- 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.
- What about secondary care? National shortage of general practitioners. Community carers..... Hospital prevention teams..... mental health practitioners etc?

Yours faithfully

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