




Dear Sirs,

Further to the publication of the Preferred Development Option (PDO) document, I would like to submit my concerns and comments for your review and consideration, with regard to the future development plans for Warrington, specifically the WA4 area.

 I am distressed to discover the extent of the proposed development, especially the disproportionate level of development in the South Warrington area, and the implication that this will have upon both the environment and consequently the long-term health of my children.

I have lived in South Warrington for the majority of my life and have chosen to live here with my partner to raise our children, however if the recent proposals contained in the PDO come to fruition, we would be forced to question that decision.

While we understand that some development in the area is substantiated, the extent of the proposals is alarming not least because of the lack of equality in terms of the location of the areas earmarked for development and the resulting devastation of the existing local communities, particularly in South Warrington.

South Warrington is defined by distinct villages, defined and separated by areas of greenbelt yet the plan to annihilate the green spaces over the next 20 years will obliterate the area's history, with serious consequences for the residents who have, at best, been given minimal information about the proposals prior to the apparent decisions being made.

My concerns cover a number of specific areas which I have included below and I urge you to take these concerns on board and review the proposals as a matter of urgency:

Poor Consultation

Plans already appear to have been put in place already – existing communities and the environment appear to have been disregarded and ignored, with the prime purpose being the desire to simply grow, without proper consultation with the residents who are the ratepayers!

The consultation period and its timing, coinciding with the summer holiday period, has been particularly unsatisfactory.

In addition, the PDO appears to have been written with the input of only a select few "residents" of Warrington and give the impression that they are set in stone, so as a consequence I feel forced to object to the plans, rather than have had the opportunity to contribute to the proposals at the outset.

Desire for City Status

Warrington has already tried for City status and failed.

The aspirations of WBC to become a city are not necessarily shared by the residents – I certainly haven't been consulted on this!!! If we wanted to live in a City we could move to Manchester, Liverpool, etc. Warrington is a town that is comprised of numerous villages, distinguished by the green space around them – the plans to build on these green spaces would decimate the villages that have existed for hundreds of years in some cases, creating a single large built-up residential space.

Disproportionate Development in South Warrington

The proposals in the PDO disproportionately affect South Warrington, with North and East Warrington being hardly touched - Can you please provide evidence of the decision process, which has been undertaken to back this up?

The proposal of a Garden City Suburb in South Warrington will completely destroy the character and consequently the attractiveness of the area.

The destruction of the majority of green spaces in the area would mean that the current individual villages (currently separated by fields) would be consumed by the new residential developments, devastating the history and heritage of these villages, which is so highly regarded and valued by the existing residents.

Volume of New Residential & Commercial Properties

The plan within the PDO seems to be about quantity not quality.

The figures appear to be taken from a report produced in 2012, which does not take into consideration the impact of economic changes over the last five years. For example, Brexit is likely to have an impact on the predicted growth.

Urbanisation of Greenbelt Land

The majority of proposed building work is to be carried out on greenbelt land, when there is an abundance of brownfield sites currently available that don't appear to have been considered or quickly disregarded.

Greenbelt land should only be built upon in "exceptional circumstances", however, these exceptional circumstances have not been clearly stated in the PDO.

The availability of brownfield sites will also increase over the 20 year period of the development, for example the Fiddlers Ferry site is due to be decommissioned, businesses move / close, etc.

Brownfield sites should be exhausted before ANY greenbelt land is even considered for development. Once the greenbelt land has been built on there is no going back!

An additional concern that has been highlighted is the existing, long-term commercial relationship between Peel Holdings and Arup. Arup has been chosen to assess the land to decide if it should be removed from greenbelt status, with the resulting land potentially being developed by Peel Holdings? Please can you provide evidence of how Arup have been able to make an impartial decision.

Environmental Impact

There is very limited information regarding Environmental Impact Analysis in the PDO.

The greenbelt land surrounding the local villages in WA4 is home to a wide variety of wildlife – the loss of ancient woodland and green spaces will have a huge negative impact on local wildlife.

Air pollution – Warrington is rated badly in NW already, so removal of green space and addition of more vehicles on the already congested roads and rural lanes will only add to this issue.

Transport / Logistics

The PDO identifies limited plans to improve the existing road network to support the building plans – the plans appear to direct traffic through the already busy routes that are currently running at capacity, only adding to the congestion.

Warrington ideally located to M6, M56 and M62 motorway network, however any issues on these roads currently has an immediate and paralysing impact of the traffic flow through the town and villages, so to add the traffic associated with additional businesses and residential homes into the mix would ultimately have a detrimental effect on the area.

There are currently no rail links in WA4 area to support the additional commercial properties or commuters from the new residential properties.

Healthcare

The existing health facilities are currently running at or near capacity and while the PDO mentions the provision of new health facilities in the Garden City Suburbs and South West Extension, there is no mention of increasing the capacity at Warrington or Halton hospitals, which are both currently running at or near to capacity. We need to ensure these facilities and any required improvements to existing facilities will be in place prior to any residential developments to ensure the health and safety of the existing residents.

I trust that the above concerns will receive your full attention and I look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

