

## Response to Preferred Development Option – Consultation (July 2017)

By [REDACTED]

Declared interest – [REDACTED]

### Western link

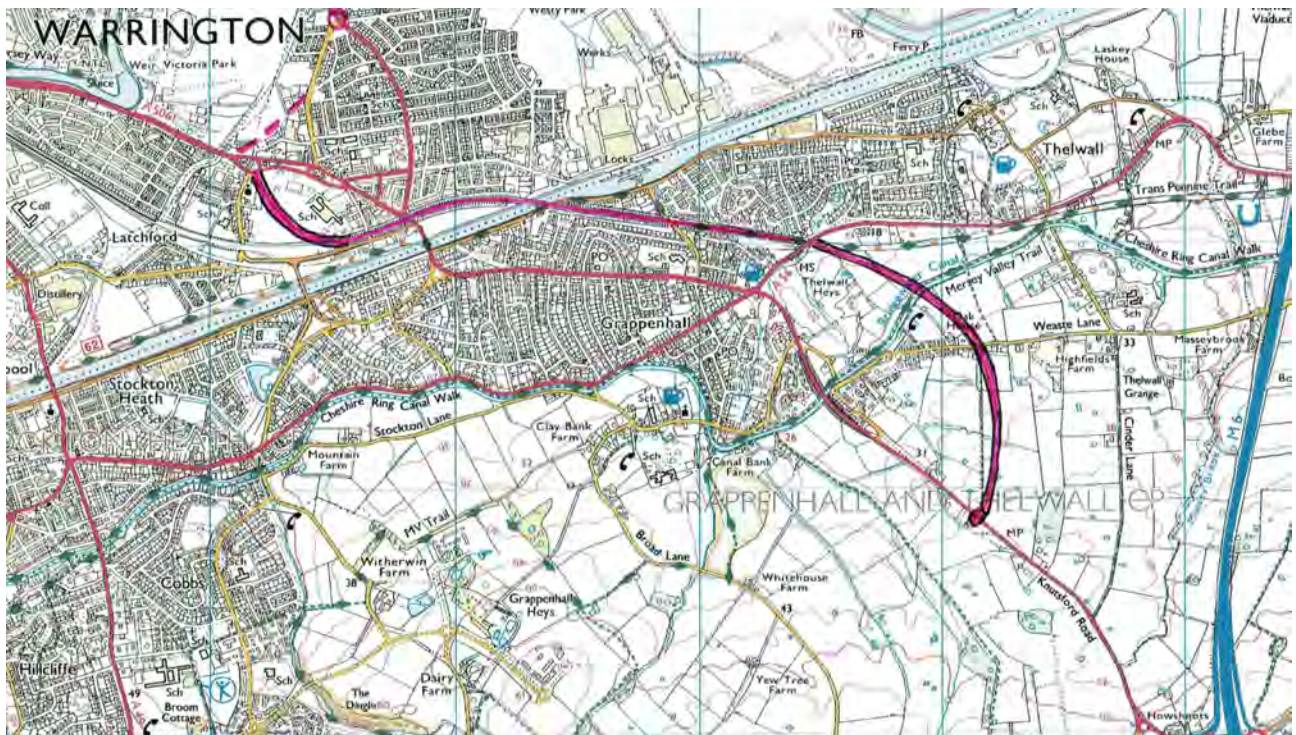
The advent of the Mersey Gateway bridge and its 'Toll' may well make traffic worse with some minimum wage residents seeing their travel to work costs rise by nearly 10% if they use it.

The temptation is therefore to divert or continue using the route through bridge foot.

Driving through Warrington should be discouraged and all through traffic should be slowed to make such practices less favourable compared to the motorways and toll bridges. All roads within Warringtons boundaries irrespective of classification should be restricted to a maximum of 30 mph.

### South Eastern Link (as represented on Fig. 7 - Local Plan PDO)

Very poorly described within the plan exacerbated by blurred background maps giving an impression of obfuscation, I have taken the trouble to interpret the solution below.



Re-use existing historic bridge for cars and light goods vehicles (<7.5te) only, retaining iconic bridge and its steel and engineering brick structure by replacing the deck provides a memorable landmark entry point to the town centre from the SE. The existing rail loading gauge due to its historic use would provide a convenient way of enforcing the traffic restriction similar to cantilever bridge. This would be a width restriction somewhere in the order of 9'6" and a barriered height restriction of 13'6" at entry and exit points of the road. This single carriageway road with no intermediate entries and exits other than the two ends would have similar capacity to Birchwood Way west which flows quite adequately because of this. Very few homes would need to be destroyed with this option.

Safety can be managed via average speed cameras installed at both ends and sat-nav geo-fencing.

Acoustic screening through the residential areas of Latchford and Grappenhall will also reduce the hazard of high wind speeds over the exposed section. Zero backcast street-lighting should be used to prevent light pollution.

### Manchester Ship Canal

Unfortunately Warrington is historically bisected by the Manchester Ship Canal. The only tangible benefit Warrington gets from the Manchester Ship Canal and Peel Holdings is the flood control of the river and this is funded by central government.

Peel Holdings claims of increases in container traffic from 8000 in 2010 to 100,000 in 2030 and the consequential traffic increase are again highly dubious when only smaller ships can navigate the upper reaches beyond Latchford.

Swing Bridges should remain for the use of local traffic within the town, Peel Holdings should not be let off the hook for their lack of maintenance or ultimate replacement.

### Environmental

If Environmental charges are introduced for Manchester, Warrington should follow suit and make the centre of Warrington a zero emission zone to prevent an influx of displaced high-emission vehicles. Warrington should not become a shopping destination simply because you have an old high emission vehicle.

Warrington should actively discourage the use of its bridges as a rival route to the M6 or the Mersey Gateway Bridge, the new Gateway Bridge has been wind-proofed so closure of both is highly unlikely.

The town centre should not be bypassed or express-wayed as this would contradict the purpose of town centre re-purposing or redevelopment.

### Boundaries

In the pursuit of continuous ever increasing growth what does Warrington do when it eventually fills every acre of land within its boundaries. At some point growth for growths sake becomes unsustainable. Sustainability is long-term and sustainable development should surely mean development with existing urban boundaries, anything else is finite and an oxymoron.

### Economic

Huge social and economic changes are occurring within the U.K., Europe and across the developed world. The rise of automation and autonomous technology (e.g. [dark warehousing](#)) and the power of large corporations means that an entire swathe of jobs will disappear in the medium term over the duration of this plan, many of these jobs will be lost in Warrington.

Warrington highly relies on office/retail/warehousing jobs, all these will be extensively automated in the next 20 years along with many driving/distribution jobs. Warrington needs to take the difficult decision of rethinking what it does rather than pinning its hopes on attracting more residents, their mortgage money and hoping for the best.

Basing a development plan on historic norms (distorted by the 'New Town') as has been stated within the plan is similar to assuming that a straight line graph is a sound basis on which to predict the future will be proved to be false.

Warrington has become a dormitory town to Liverpool and Manchester with the building of the M6, M56 and M62, these workers spend their working days outside Warrington and preferentially use stores in the two big cities and mail order. Workers from the two cities work in the businesses located outside Warrington Centre and do not spend money or socialise in Warrington. Many people move to Warrington just to obtain easy access to the motorway network and a 'Garden City' will just increase that trend and provide little economic benefit for the centre of town.

Warrington town centre relies on the spending habits of daytime occupants, pensioners and locals on a tight budget.

Increasing the number of residents will not have a disproportionate effect on the prosperity of the town centre.

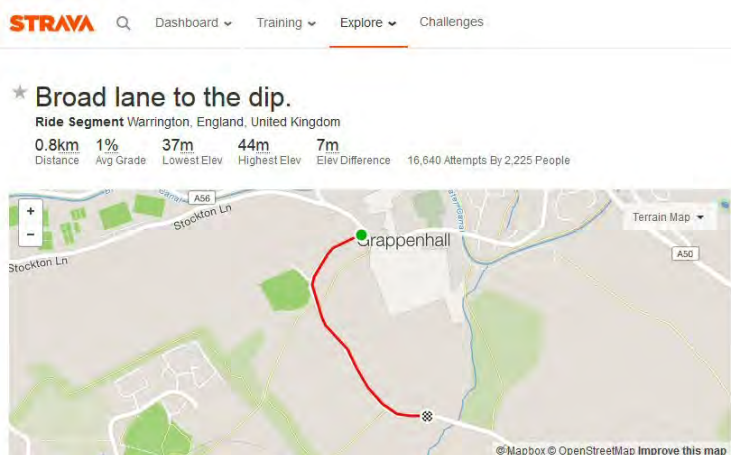
This plan has been conceived during a 10 year period of rock bottom interest rates, any future rate rises will undoubtedly produce a severe downturn in spending within the town especially if travelling the costs of travelling to and from the town for work also rise.

### Cyclists

Cyclists are much more prevalent on the roads of South Warrington as it is generally more Cyclist Friendly than North Warrington.

The following table of data taken from Strava illustrates this

Road	Number of Journeys	Number of Cyclists	Trips per Cyclist	Percieved Safety
A49N (Newton Rd)	9704	2653	3.65	Bad
Clay Lane (Westbrook)	5339	1085	4.92	Medium
Delph Lane (Houghton Green)	10663	1489	7.16	Good
Chester Rd (Walton)	26667	3573	7.46	Good
A49S (London Rd)	10377	2891	3.59	Bad
Lumb Brook Rd (Appleton)	12221	1862	6.56	Good
Broad Lane (Grappenhall)	16640	2225	7.47	Good
A50 Knutsford Rd (A56 to Grappenhall Lane)	5452	1588	3.43	Bad



Sample of Data used in above table taken from [www.strava.com](http://www.strava.com)

Cycling application Strava logs data from a solid 5-10% of all cycling journeys, examining the main routes used by cyclists to the North and South of the town as shown in the above table.

It should be noted as quoted from the Guardian that the users of Strava are “not trying to race across

the city, they are trying to get there in one piece”.

Accordingly the column to the right is an indication of how popular or how safe certain roads are. Broad lane in Grappenhall is therefore perceived by cyclists to be overall one of the safest roads into and out of South Warrington. Any increase in motorised traffic would therefore reduce this perception, discourage its use and possibly force cyclists to take other more hazardous alternatives.

The eight routes shown above do not include east-west journeys but total 97063 trips which if taken as representative of 7.5% of all journeys as verified by planners elsewhere who have used it would mean somewhere in the order of 1.3 million trips.

Under the Transport Act 2000, local authorities are able to designate minor rural roads for which they are responsible as Quiet Lanes. Quiet Lanes are designed to pay special attention to the needs of walkers, cyclists and horse riders and reduce the problems caused by the volume or speed of traffic.

#### References

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/may/09/city-planners-cycling-data-strava-tracking-app>

<https://www.strava.com> & <http://metro.strava.com/>

<https://planninghelp.cpre.org.uk>

#### Broad Lane

From the above Broad Lane is heavily used by cyclists, in fact just as heavily used as Chester Rd with its dedicated cycle lanes.

Broad Lane is currently viewed as Safe by cyclist irrespective of its disgraceful national speed limit and use as a rush hour rat run.

Broad Lane should be granted 'quiet lane status' along CPRE guidelines, any future developments should not have vehicular access to or from it along its full length up to Cartridge Lane.

The lane should be calmed via a full 30mph speed limit, squeeze points and quiet lane signage especially if a 'country park' is established.

#### Summary

- Through traffic should be actively discouraged and pro-actively prevented.
- Any southeast 'strategic' link should be single carriageway with no intermediate entries and exits.
- Broad Lane should be designated a Quiet Lane in accordance with the Transport Act 2000 and CPRE guidelines.

Final thought:- If the residents of Warrington were actually asked if they wanted to live in a city the resounding answer would be no.