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To whom it may concern,

I write in response to the Warrington Local Development Plan 2017 and wish to comment as follows.

There has been a complete lack of publicity. 78 responses to an earlier 'consultation' from a TOWN with a population in excess of 200,000 merely supports a belief that the intention was to keep this proposed development under the radar of the residents. 0.00039% of the population is not representative.

There has been an almost complete lack of communication and engagement with residents until residents took it upon themselves to make the information more public.

Public consultation has been totally inadequate in the areas most affected by the proposals with lack of consultation events, until forced into holding one at Stretton, together with very limited consideration to those people who do not use the internet or were not physically able to attend a consultation event. Given the huge scale of the proposal, the limited time period and other factors was appalling and hopefully will be subject to a successful legal challenge on grounds of breach of process.

A complicated and lengthy form has been provided with no details of when to post or email the completed form.

It would appear WBC has also allowed the developers to dictate with regard to the types of development being considered. For example, 'Port Warrington' allows for considerable commercial development in the centre of town. This would bring large volumes of traffic (commercial/Heavy Goods and private) onto the centre's road. The roads cannot cope with current traffic flows and this will be made worse when the Mersey Gateway Bridge opens next month as Warrington will be the first un-tolled crossing of the River Mersey.

As is well known, areas of the town close to the M6 motorway become completely clogged up when there is an incident on the motorway. The plan does not take any account of this, nor does it offer any solution.

Likewise, if the proposed development of the Ship Canal goes ahead, this will mean more swing bridge openings causing further traffic chaos. New electronic signs for Latchford Swing Bridge to indicate when the bridge is closed to road traffic have already failed or are not in use for some reason. Also, any 'voluntary' agreement with the Ship Canal not to swing the bridges at 'rush hour' is not worth the paper it is written on.

The proposed road structure on the Trans Pennine Trail in Grappenhall through to Latchford would affect a much-loved local amenity. In practice, there is barely room for a single-carriageway road in each direction, let alone anything wider. Therefore, its contribution to assisting with traffic flow would be minimal.

I would suggest consideration is given to a single-track light rail / tram scheme where rail and footpath can co-exist. A route from Altrincham to Warrington Bank Quay Low Level and Liverpool. There are already successful examples of this. This would also relieve overcrowding on existing trains from Warrington to Manchester.

In terms of planning, the development of this town over the last 40 years has been pitiful. There is no coherent road strategy, e.g. ring road, or attractive town centre. The plan to connect Junction 11 and Junction 8 of the M62 came to a sudden halt at Orford Road close to Orford Park. Coincidence? The town centre is ¼ shopping mall and ¾ derelict / other minor shops. Warrington Borough Council has allowed the night time economy to develop that does nothing for the image of the town and profits are made by out of town businesses, with increased costs and impact on the Police and NHS.

There appears to be a lack of supporting information on WHY such a huge number of houses are needed in Warrington. Houses built on the green belt land between the Bridgewater Canal and the M56 motorway will clearly attract people wanting to commute to the well-established cities of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester.

No 'exceptional circumstances' have been given to justify the scale of development, both housing and industrial, that is being proposed. Moreover, the public inspector's report in 2014 noted at paragraph 96 that there was no need to develop on the Green Belt and no substantive arguments have been produced to rebut this.

Warrington Borough Council appears to want the destruction of the Green Belt at all costs and in contradiction of its own Local Plan Core Strategy published as recently as 2014, particularly paragraph W2 which relates to the Green Belt and the vastly different proposals for housing to the south of Warrington (Figure 9.1 in the Core Strategy shows very little need for housing to the south).

What a difference three years makes.

A 'Garden City Suburb', or whatever name is given to it, completely alters the character and nature of the areas to the south of the Bridgewater Canal. The villages cease to be individual and separated by fields, but become one large conglomeration of housing and industrial units between Partington and Runcorn.

The plan does not appear to take account of government and car manufactures thinking of there being less cars on the road by 2040, thus clearly reducing the need for further large road building programs.

Any funds that Warrington Borough Council have or receive from Government, would be much better spent improving the existing road infrastructure and the town centre.

The plan does appear to take account of, even driven by, an unhealthy collaboration with large business rather than being of benefit to the local residents who pay the council tax and elect the councillors. There is no evidence to support a contention that the residents want to be part of a 'new city', but they do want a vibrant and usable town centre.

I call on Warrington Borough Council to withdraw the PDO in its entirety in favour of a full and proper process in the future.

Yours faithfully,

