



Comments on the PDO

I object to the continual use of the term 'city' used in the PDO - Warrington is a town, not a city; It is ridiculous for WBC to claim the 'new city' is just the name for a project and not to do with pursuing city status. WBC should consult with its residents before continuing to pursue this goal of city status – this PDO appears to be all about the 'city' aspirations of WBC and the commercial interests of developers and nothing to do with the aspirations and needs of the residents of Warrington.

To the lay person it seems unbelievable that the Satnam legal challenge to the previously adopted Local Development Plan (c 500 dpa) now requires a PDO figure of 1100+ dpa.

The scale of this proposed development in the green belt is wholly unjustified.

The PDO does not make a convincing argument for 'exceptional circumstances' for reclassifying the green belt. The methodology used for the assessment of parcels of land in respect to their contribution to the green belt (weak, moderate, strong) makes no sense at all and appears to be a wholly subjective desk top exercise and should not be given any credence.

It seems fundamentally flawed to me that the whole PDO is predicated on a 'call for sites' i.e. where would developers like to build, rather than any objective assessment of where dwellings should be built. It is obvious that building in the green belt is a much more attractive proposition for developers, but that should not be a green light to let this happen.

There is no statutory requirement for WBC to produce a 20 year plan; it is not clear why it has chosen to do so. Any predictions on what might happen in terms of housing and employment needs over such a long period at best can only be highly speculative.

The predicted housing need associated with economic growth seems particularly

over optimistic.

In reference to the recent credit rating downgrading by credit rating agency Moody's, deputy council leader Cllr Russ Bowden has reported in the Warrington Guardian today (29 Sept 17) supports the view of economic uncertainty:

"Moody's believe that the UK Government's decision to leave the EU single market and customs union will have a negative impact on the country's economy in the medium term.

Therefore, the decision to downgrade Warrington is partly a reflection of tough and uncertain economic conditions ahead."

The proposed 'garden city suburb' has new road infrastructure within it, but all of the increased traffic will still end up at the existing pinch points – Stockton heath, M56 J10, M6 J20 and Bridgefoot.

I understand Warrington already has 2 failed Air Quality management Areas – the PDO fails to address this.

The focus of the PDO should be on the vibrancy of the town centre and provision of housing closer to the transport hubs (rail & bus) thus reducing the requirement for car journeys across the borough.

The PDO should include the regeneration of all available brown field sites before green belt is considered. The soon to be decommissioned Fiddlers Ferry site, for example. The problem as I see it is that such sites are less attractive to developers – cost of dealing with contamination etc. and lower selling price and therefore less profit for them.

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