

Grappenhall Village

I am contacting you with regard the attached planning proposals for the Grappenhall/Appleton/Stretton/Higher Walton green belt areas of Cheshire surrounding the town of Warrington. I spoke to one of your colleagues in the Executive Committee at the onset a couple of months ago. I have tried to submit our concerns today, but for some reason could not connect and apologise for missing the 5pm deadline.

[REDACTED]

At very relatively short notice residents in these areas were asked to give their opinions by September 12th for the first step of the consultation to be looked at and passed or rejected in relation to the housing – this was then extended to September 29th.

The wealth of opinion and reaction has been one of extreme concern. All these areas are considered areas of outstanding natural beauty and support a great deal of protected wildlife, have medieval and Roman burial sites left untouched below land. There are buildings that have been preserved to ensure future generations are privy to the natural history of the area and we are now considerably concerned that these will be lost. I am absolutely certain the Grappenhall site near Stockport Road, would reflect this historical and natural importance, if searched and investigated and not least that in recent years that particular area has been discovered to be a breeding ground for the great crested newt! I do understand that under National Planning Policy Framework requirements, green belt can only be released under 'very special circumstances' and I would hope our request for you to investigate and hopefully rethink the use of the Trans Pennine Way and any other areas you would care to look at in Grappenhall, where the houses are to be allocated, would continue to secure this area as part of our heritage. Building a bypass either side of the Trans Pennine Way, which I believe has been mooted, makes even less sense with damage done to protected wildlife under the Wildlife Act of 1976 and 1910. There will be fuel emissions very near to residential properties and I would be even willing to get scientific experts to submit their opinions to you. That would prove horrifying for the image of the Council. In addition, Grappenhall village will have an onslaught of additional cars trying to find quicker routes into Warrington and given I know the history of that village and its existence since 900's that is really upsetting. The cobblestones are original and will no doubt sustain irreparable damage.

If you make use of the Trans Pennine Way the outcry UK wide will be horrific and not a very good PR exercise for our area. Even I, an ordinary member of the public, know there are other more reasonable options for this bypass.

I am absolutely certain that part of the protected wildlife mentioned above, also embraces this path and if they chose this as a bypass it would obliterate a large part of the village of Grappenhall and they would have to either consider buying a significant no. of properties enroute in Grappenhall and Latchford, which would defeat the result they are trying to obtain in providing more homes! I would seek you rethinking the use of this public walkway. The path itself is not broad enough; the bridge they are hoping to use is not strong enough and is very old – a former railway bridge used since the 1920's or before for coal runs into Warrington and back to Manchester. They will have to build a new bridge in addition over the Manchester Ship Canal and along the way compulsory buy properties that would block the route into Warrington, again negating the quota of homes already in the area, which obviously does not make any sense whatsoever. Also, it has to be borne in mind that the this part of the Trans Pennine Way is a cycle route and could continue to be used as such for any new urbanisation if it is given permission to go ahead, so would complement any other road option.

Additionally, I have been told that the consultancy employed by Warrington to put together the proposals for this particular part of the urbanisation, put in the blue line on the plans as the one and only suggestion for a bypass to support the Grappenhall section earmarked for housing, without taking into account the furor it could bring upon the Council. The proposal for this road is not yet part of the present consultation with residents and I believe they did not expect people to notice, however when a concerned resident was made aware it ran along the Pennine Way they anonymously alerted residents by pushing flyers through doors. As you can imagine the reaction has been one of very extreme anger and concern, to the point that some elderly people in my Mother's area immediately want to sell and have got extremely concerned that the homes they love so much, would devalue to the point that if they to sell in the future, there would be no resources for their future care. Then this sort of care would fall right back on the Council! Most of them bought their properties for the view of the Trans Pennine Way.

I would ask therefore that you look into all the above, but specifically the use of the Trans Pennine Way and support the community in allowing this treasured part of Grappenhall to be taken off the radar completely and also to consider the option which would work if the development goes ahead, which could possibly be to form another access point onto the M6 from the Grappenhall site already leading into Warrington, which I believe is what you are trying to achieve. The works required to make this viable would be to strengthen that section of the M6 or even widen it so congestion would be almost negligible and updating the existing flyover at Lymm on the motorway. This option has to be considerably less costly, and infinitely more attractive and would affect no existing residents in the area. There has to be a look at the humane side if nothing else in all these proposals and the impact it would have, particularly on people who absolutely love where they live and thought they could enjoy the quality of life they have had, either for life if they were born and brought up in Grappenhall, or for their retirement, of which there is a large aging population.

So in summary can you please expedite the following:

1. Try and stop the Trans Pennine Way being used for a bypass of some sorts, really does not make any sense.
2. Look at the local wildlife that would be affected by this proposed bypass and the urbanization, particularly the great crested newt.
3. Investigate medieval/roman historic sites that may be affected in the area.
4. Investigate any covenants and protected areas in the locality, perhaps listed in Parish records.

I am more than happy to discuss the above with you [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

At the end of the day, I know you are there to represent the people and the environment, so I do so hope that you will support the Community through this very troubling time.

Thank you for your consideration.