

This is the original letter that I sent to my local councillor – Hans Mundry

Dear Sir/madam,

Re: Proposed Main Road along Railway Embankment in Grappenhall and Latchford.

I was very alarmed to have posted through my door, a 'to the occupier' type of letter, explaining that there was a proposed redevelopment of the former Arpley to Skelton Junction (Warrington and Altrincham Junction Railway) to place a road atop of it. This is alarming from several perspectives: -

(a) This is the very first we know of this – there has been no communication and I have little idea who's tipped us off here. I understand plans have been afoot for a long while yet this is the first we know. This isn't good!

(b) Why is this necessary? The only time there is congestion is when the M6 is closed. I have lived in Thelwall, Grappenhall and Latchford all my life. The roads are adequate but there are no doubt improvements that would be more effective, cheaper and have less impact than what is being proposed. The local roads aren't a problem: the M6 is!

(c) Congestion from the swing bridges being turned in favour of shipping is hardly frequent, the ship canal's lower reaches being busier than anything east of Runcorn. I know. Stuff goes up there, but not much: containers (daily), occasional scrap from Eccles, occasional cement from Weaste, occasional grain to Cargill; and the odd oil tanker or LNG tanker to Partington. That is it! Nothing like it was in the 70s and it's never going to be like that again. The road lobby is always on the prey.

(d) Where I live [REDACTED] to get a road up there, the embankment will have to be lowered considerably, the top of it being approximately the width of two trains, plus a couple of feet clearance between them and at each edge – say 25 feet wide, max! Despite a train being marginally wider than a road vehicle, roads have to be a lot wider, as one cannot rely on the assured clearances of a rail-guided vehicle compared to that given by the skill and judgement of a driver. So assuming the embankment is about 30 feet high, to get a suitable width for a road – say 50 feet – then the embankment with, perhaps, 45 degree sides will have to be dropped to around 15 feet. Completely horrendous! If it decided to maintain the height it will have to be widened and this will mean taking land and possibly houses!

(e) We do not want to encourage more road usage: we need to encourage less. We need buses, bus lanes, rail, light rail, coastal shipping. Not roads.

(f) I know that there was a proposal to remove the embankment and build houses – this is and always was a better option. When I heard rumours of this, I personally had no issues. It will somewhat lift the area, and let's be frank, we need houses!

Can you advise of what you know of the above, please?

Really, really concerned.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]