

CASE REF: APP/M0655/V/22/331187 PUBLIC INQUIRY May 2023

- My name is Ian Marks
 - I have been a Parish Councillor in Lymm since 1979
 - I was first elected to represent Lymm on Warrington Borough Council in 1983 and my ward is Lymm North and Thelwall
 - I was Leader of Warrington Council for 5 years
 - I am now Deputy Chair of the South Warrington Parish Councils' Planning Working Group
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- When we first saw the list of people down to appear at this Inquiry, one of my colleagues described it as a 'David against Goliath' battle
 - Our Group does not have the public money to spend on a vast array of experts, who make up the Goliath
 - But I believe that it is really us who are the real Goliath because we are here on behalf of a huge numbers of residents of South Warrington who bitterly oppose this development
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- As is being made abundantly clear in this Inquiry, our over-riding contention is that we agree with the Local Plan Inspectors that this land should not be released from the Green Belt
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- In no uncertain terms they make it quite clear that it would result in a significant encroachment into the countryside undermining one of the purposes of the Green Belt, causing severe harm to the openness of the Green Belt and causing major visual intrusion
 - Any economic benefits do not provide very exceptional circumstances to override this loss
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- There is no strategic need for this extra allocation because Fiddlers Ferry has the potential to accommodate largescale logistics development for the reduced amount of employment land the Local Plan Inspectors say is required
 - It also has the potential for a rail connection which this site does not
 - And remember the Secretary of State has previously rejected a proposal to build a national distribution centre on land nearby
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- Residents have a number of other concerns which I will mention briefly
 - Firstly air quality
 - The number of extra vehicular movements generated will have a significant impact on air quality
 - There are now 60,000 studies addressing the impact of air pollution on health and the World Health Organisation has described air pollution as a global health emergency

- Secondly the congestion caused due to the lack of infrastructure
- This has major implications for my residents who will find increased difficulty gaining access to the motorway network
- We already have a large truck-stop next to the motorway roundabout and a Truckwash which is or aspires to be Europe's biggest
- Another important reason for opposing this application is the prematurity argument
- I realise that this carries less weight than it might have done several months ago because the Local Plan is progressing through the stages
- However it has not yet been approved so the prematurity argument still stands
- Finally, I am disappointed that Warrington Council is not here giving evidence and I have accused them of 'sitting on the fence'
- Their absence means that no-one is here to answer questions on their reasons for recommending approval of the original planning application
- We sincerely hope that you will turn down this application in the interests of the public good
- It is important to listen to what ordinary people are saying
- Warrington is a highly successful town and it doesn't need this development
- Especially one which is in direct conflict with the Council's climate change aspirations

Councillor Ian Marks MBE

8 May 2023

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