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Hearing Matter Statement: Matter 10 - Luton & Cockernhoe - North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031

RURAL BEAUTY OF EAST OF LUTON WOULD BE DESTROYED

Without mentioning even once about New Century Park, the Airport Enterprise Zone and Phase 2 of Airport Expansion, North Herts has written as its main “Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy” that the majority of the District’s development will be located within JUST SIX PLACES.

With Luton & Adjoining Cockernhoe being one of the afflicted. It additionally asserts “General development will also be allowed within the defined settlement boundaries of the Category A villages of: Cockernhoe, etcetera).

This vision, consisting of empty rhetoric, runs as follows; *“The District’s important natural and historic areas and buildings that help to create the distinctive identity of the District in both urban and rural areas will have been protected and enhanced where possible. The quality and attractiveness of the landscape of North Hertfordshire, which contributes to its distinctive character, will have been conserved and enhanced where possible. New green infrastructure will have enhanced the network of green corridors linking settlements to the open countryside, providing greater opportunities for healthy lifestyles.”*

Plan’s Spatial Vision:

“North Hertfordshire will have a range of community, leisure, cultural and recreational facilities in locations that are accessible to the local population, creating cohesive communities that recognise the needs of the older population; and enhance the opportunities for children and young people.”

FINAL CRITICISM: The Plan *presumes* superior desirability of manmade constructions over the raw virgin fields already there. No one is generally attracted the echoing noise of being trapped inside these oversized cargo containers called “sports facilities”.

They wrongly imagine they can improve upon basic intrinsic nature of the great outdoors! This presumption especially ignores the needs and preferences of older people, and younger eco enthusiasts. For them direct access to green space, with a dispersed presence of other people, is a lifeline. The standard sports facility – to them is a horrible ordeal in a ginormous echoing aluminium box with a funny smell; wherein lots of sweaty people gyrating in leotards, desperately try to undo years of damage to jungle music in step-aerobics classes. Why would they want one of those in the area, instead of the openness of Green Belt fields and peaceful bluebell woods that are already there? The notion is frankly insane. We are being asked to trade platinum for polystyrene, oxygen for sarin.

In a way it would make it less hateful if they just came clean and said, “Look the truth is that the Council’s broke, our coffers are empty and we are therefore ransacking the Green Belt in service to the New Homes Bonus, to get us out of this sticky situation.”

This is what everyone is thinking; it is the worst kept secret in town. Though not really speculative since the reports directly themselves say it:

The thing that comes out time and time again, is that the developers of the Plan are missing the point of why people have chosen this area to live in.