

I am the Chair of Appleby Environment, a community group. Our case is supported by CPRE Leicestershire.

The Local Plan makes provision for different land uses employment, housing, agriculture as well as protecting countryside.

It says additional employment sites should only get permission if their location is **appropriate** to that use – as determined by a **range of environmental conditions**. This is my focus today.

There is no rail link to the site for goods and no plans for one. The applicants accept that most employees will come by car – and from considerable distances. This means the environmental requirement for **sustainable transport is NOT and WILL NOT be met**. It will worsen the climate impact of transport in NWLeicestershire.

Your countryside policy says that any acceptable development needs to **safeguard and enhance** the appearance and character of the landscape.

The site is currently agricultural land – around 60% of it the Best and Most Versatile Land. The *applicants* themselves say this scale of loss constitutes a “**major adverse**” effect. Your local plan says such land should be retained for agriculture.

The site is in the Mease / Sence Lowlands landscape which is recognised as a “gentle rolling agricultural landscape” ... “a rural, remote character, with small villages”. The *applicants* say that the development will have a “**major adverse**” effect on Landscape character. Your consultant says that there would be “some **very significant and permanent adverse effects** on local landscape character” and that “the scale of buildings would appear incongruous in the local landscape setting”.

So, NO ONE argues that this proposal will **safeguard or enhance** the landscape. 15 Parish Councils from 5 different district Councils across the landscape area have objected to the proposal - an unprecedented number.

This Permanent Major Adverse impact is not about a few neighbours having their view spoiled. This huge development will be visible from all the nearby villages and from the surrounding higher countryside.

It will change people’s sense of place, the way they experience villages and country lanes and one village in relation to another.

Policy says that isolated developments must not undermine the open character of land between settlements. The character of the land between the villages of Appleby, Chilcote, No Man's Heath and Stretton would be overwhelmed.

The footpaths and country lanes in this area are well used by walkers and cyclists. It is the gateway to the National Forest – a core part of the District's strategy.

This development will *permanently* destroy the sense of place of this part of the District. New footpaths and cycleways within a huge industrial site are no substitute for the footpaths that currently exist. Huge buildings will dwarf small villages and lanes. Countryside will disappear.

I ask you to defend your Local Plan which took you years to develop and get passed. Protect our Environment. Reject this application.