

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 May 2025 12:21
To: Local Plan
Subject: Objection to Local Plan

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in regard to the plan to build circa 500 houses on the land adjacent to the Playing Field adjoining the B4109 and Coventry Road (Site ID 96 in the Rugby Borough Local Plan Preferred Option Consultation Report), along with circa 200 more on other sites in the village.

My name is Jevon Thorpe. I was raised in Wolvey, and am a Trustee of the Wolvey Playing Field Trust. I am writing to you both on my behalf, and on behalf of the Playing Field Trust.

As a bit of background on who we are, the Playing Field Trust was established to oversee the running of the Playing Field when it was first purchased by villagers over 50 years ago. We are a registered charity, and completely run by volunteers, with some funding for the upkeep of the Field coming through grants from the Parish Council, but a large volume from events organised by the Trust. Our annual bonfire night in particular is usually a big hit, with the past 2 events attracting around 2,000 people from the local area. The Pavillion is equipped with a bar and function rooms which have previously hosted weddings, local village events, parties, and village groups like Scouts and Brownies. We provide a safe open space for villagers to exercise, play games, sports, and enjoy being outdoors. We have a popular and well equipped play area which caters to children of all ages (often praised by villagers as one of the best in the area). There is a tennis court area in need of some repair, but still provides a playing surface for ball games when the grass is too wet. We have a football pitch which has hosted many village teams over the years, and is regularly used by families having a kick about. The village Cricket Club has also been using the facilities since it began, and are a big supporter of the Playing Field, with around 100 cricketers making up the various senior teams and assisting with the upkeep of the grounds, and 50 juniors taking part in the ECB backed All Stars and Dynamo programs and other age level teams.

The Playing Field is run with the sole interest of providing facilities for local residents. The Trust members are all local residents, either born, raised, or living in the village. We all had the benefit of enjoying the Playing Field growing up, and we work hard over countless hours to be able to continue providing these facilities for others, hopefully for many years to come.

The announcement of the plan for housing to surround the land owned by the Playing Field (and the other plots) came as a massive shock to us. Not only due to the monstrous scale of the proposal for the size of the current village, but the total lack of consultation or discussion with us or other residents prior to the announcement.

On a personal level I find this plan at best contradictory and irresponsible, but at worst grossly corrupt and a thorough decimation of the principles of sustainable development in this country, and a pointless and irreversible erosion of our greenbelt, farming capability and countryside.

The main objective the plan states to achieve are:

1 Support the diversification and growth in sustainable locations of Rugby Borough's economy in line with the Economic Strategy

Doubling the size of a village is not sustainable growth.

2 Support the revival of Rugby town centre

Not supported by the Wolvey plans.

3 Reduce emissions and adapt to climate change

Stressing transport to rural areas will exacerbate this.

4 Raise design standards

No specific relevance to Wolvey.

5 Deliver infrastructure-led growth

No infrastructure has been developed in Wolvey, so nothing has led this proposed growth.

6 Facilitate a greener, more biodiverse borough and deliver new country parks

These plans will only have a detrimental effect on greenbelt and biodiversity.

I fail to see how ripping up the best part of half a square kilometer of farmland in a small village achieves any of these objectives. Indeed the statements of "New development will be of a scale commensurate with the services and facilities of the settlement in which it is located", and "This policy... restricts development outside of settlement boundaries" appear to not be worth the paper they are written on. It seems the only logic to building in Wolvey is to supplement the commercial aspirations of Mike Ashley and the Ansty development, and the members of the Rugby Borough Council who supported building in Wolvey should be ashamed of this attempted thinly veiled abuse of elected power.

As somebody who has lived in the village most of my life, given other options available, I cannot see how anyone can think it would be acceptable to overnight almost double the size of a village which is already facing major issues with schooling, doctors surgeries, traffic and speeding, flooding and sewage, and other socio-economic issues, other than to sweep the housing demand under the countryside rug and hope it goes away.

Having recently attended the consultation session on 8th May at Wolvey Village Hall, it is evident that nobody from the Borough Council has really put any thought into how this decision will affect Wolvey. The representatives at the meeting had no understanding of the current issues faced by Wolvey residents, or the challenges this development would represent. In regards to Secondary school education, and the challenges faced by having to apply for places across the borough border for schools like Nicolas Chamberline – which are actively turning down places to Wolvey residents due to over subscription, the representatives skirted around the issue as it clearly wasn't something they'd considered. A plan in a slide was flashed up during the presentation to provide a 'green space' to residents in an area around the Kingmaker site that is currently a swamp, and a passing comment was made that land would be offered to the Playing Field on other land that was "difficult for building" for the Playing Field to provide amenities – both clear indications that lip service will be paid to provide outdoor spaces by handing over unwanted areas of land, and 'ticking the box', without actually providing services the Village wants. Traffic concerns are said to be addressed as part of ongoing plans, but nothing was mentioned about over strained single lane access to the motorway junction via Hinckley Road, which can take up to an hour to access at rush hour, or the constant congestion on the A5. Grandiose plans for rail upgrades are proposed, but none of these will benefit Wolvey – the "Nuneaton Parkway" Rail Station on paper (and the map in the Plan) looks beneficial to Wolvey, but in reality it will provide no additional time / cost saving than using the existing Hinckley infrastructure. No plans were presented to provide additional support for the GP surgery which are horrifically oversubscribed, and no mention made to dental practices. The meeting left me with no confidence that Wolvey was going to be treated fairly, highlighted by the fact that Councillor Michael Moran sat playing on his phone not paying attention for the majority of the meeting.

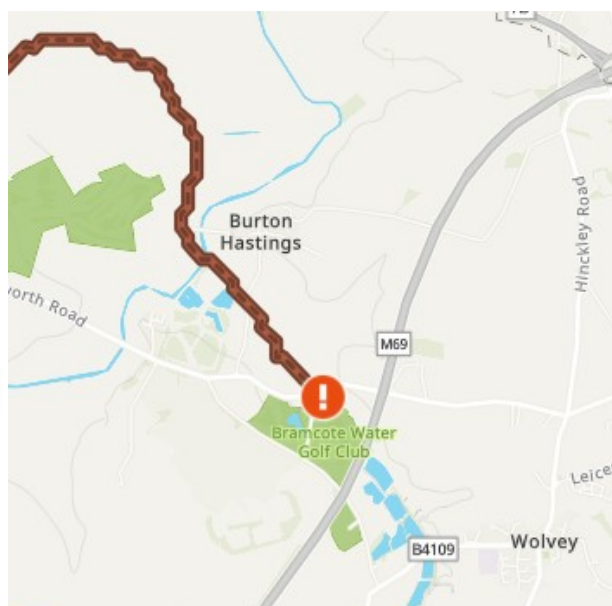
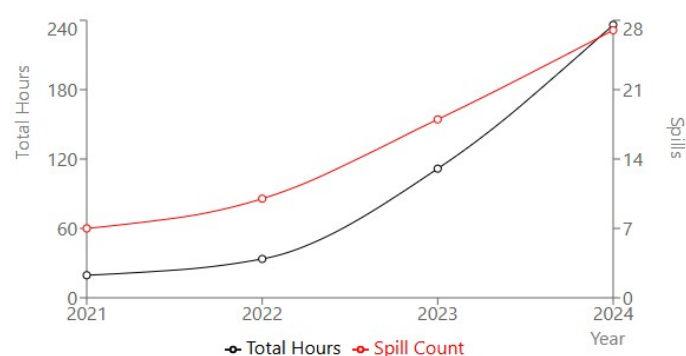
In my official capacity as a member and representative of the Wolvey Playing Fields Trust I would like to highlight certain issues and objections that this development would pose to us, and would like to seek clarification and begin engagement on some other areas. We have seen almost no benefit or improvement to services following the introduction of the near 100 house on the Galifords site over recent years (in some areas the opposite), with minimal financial support being made available to the Playing Field directly. This site was much smaller than the current proposal, so we are gravely concerned about the ramifications of the announcement if this experience were to be repeated and magnified.

The volume of houses (and increase in villagers) being proposed on the land surrounding the Playing Field Presents a number of issues.

Drainage

As per Sections S5 1.14, CL4 A ii and iii, and D5 of the Rugby Borough Preferred Option Consultation Report, the impact of the development on drainage, waste water and flood risk must be assessed, and "the design of green space shall be optimised to ... manage local flood risk and vulnerability of the development to flood risk shall be minimised", so any impact on drainage to the Playing Field must be paramount in these discussions.

The Playing Field and the surrounding field are extremely prone to drainage issues. The Playing Field installed a soakaway system at considerable cost a few years ago, draining into the farming field (with agreement from the owners) west of the Playing Field. Even with this in place drainage remains a massive issue with the Playing Field and the wider village, and seems to have gotten a lot worse since the development at the Galifords site, presumably as the onward water course has struggled to deal with the additional water not being absorbed by the land now concreted over. The field was inaccessible to mowing equipment for 5 months last year due to issues with drainage. The Consultation Report states that "if located in an area known to suffer surface water flooding, the development will contribute to an off-site strategic solution." As detailed by some data (from www.floodmapper.co.uk and www.sewagemap.co.uk) in 2024 the Bramcote - Anker Bridge SPS (Severn Trent Water) sewer storm overflow spilled 27 times for a total of 236.60 hours, discharging into the River Anker. This has exponentially increased from previous years, and unfortunately we can't blame this one on climate change, as rainfall over the past decade has remained roughly the same. The only variable that has changed in this timeframe is housing developments in the village, with the Galiford's site breaking ground in 2022.



The Playing Field Trust has experienced this worsening of drainage first hand, and would like to know what infrastructure investments will be made to make a tangible impact on waste water management and sewage in the village. Removing the best part of half a square kilometer of rainwater absorbing soil cannot be glossed over. I found it bemusing that during the consultation meeting on the 8th May that the representative made statements that drainage and flood data had been analysed and presented no issues. Even a layman on the matter like myself with access to basic public information can provide evidence to show it is very clearly an issue.

Opportunity to expand existing recreation ground

As listed in the development requirements on p114 of the Consultation Report, it is suggested that land will be made available to expand the Playing Field. We would like to be involved in discussions as to what land this will be if the plan for the houses goes ahead, as giving us land in some of the areas adjoining the field would be more of a detriment to the upkeep of the field and future provisions than a benefit. Currently we have not been consulted at all. We would welcome the opportunity to increase the size of the Playing Field. We currently have aspirations for projects to improve the facilities, some of which require additional land and funding, but these will only be feasible in certain locations.

I noted in the consultation meeting on the 8th May that there was a proposed new play area and green space on the Kingmaker site. I believe this would be totally pointless to local residents. We have an excellent play facility currently. We need to upgrade and expand existing sports and leisure facilities, and not be fobbed us with random land that the builders don't want on inaccessible ground with unnecessary play equipment.

Also, access to the Playing Field is currently via a single lane road adjacent to the school off Bulkington Road. With the demand for the Playing Field theoretically set to double in line with the size of the village, this may also be a consideration for what land and access is proposed.

Boundary Issues

Building houses on the proposed land would create an additional 500m of residential boundary to the Playing Field (that's without factoring in additional land being given to the Playing Field). The current fencing around the Playing Field in that area is 5ft high chain link fencing, with gaps in certain areas to allow the Cricket Club members to go into the field to retrieve balls (again as existing agreement with current owners). If housing replaces the field this current arrangement would not work for a few reasons.

Having housing in close proximity to the boundary between the Playing Field and the proposed development creates a potential safety and property risk. Balls going over the current fencing arrangement will almost certainly cause damage to property and potentially people as the Cricket Club regularly hit hard balls over these fences. Other grounds that have faced similar circumstances required that 20ft high netting be installed to stop the potential for balls to go over. This won't stop every ball, but will certainly stop the majority. On behalf of the Cricket Club we would like to know if this type of arrangement has been considered, and if so who will be maintaining the netting? And again, as much as this will stop the majority of balls going over, there will undoubtedly be regular damage to housing and property. Who will be paying for this? It is unreasonable to expect the Cricket Club or Playing field to. I have checked and almost no insurance will cover this sort of thing. If the Cricket Club or Playing Field will be held liable for damage to roof tiles, cars, and other property, or even worse personal injury claims, you are effectively imposing a death sentence on both groups. Both organisations run on fine margins by volunteers, and expenditure of that nature would instantly cripple them. Unless the Council are taking on these expenses, you would leave us with the option of either stopping using the Playing Field for it's intended purpose, or racking up serious financial debt.

The Playing Field currently shares a property border with residential properties (although not in an area that cricket balls could cause an issue), and when the deeds for these properties and the Playing Field were drawn up, a clause was put in that no access or egress would be allowed via gates (or similar structures) between Playing Field property and residents land. Will this arrangement be replicated at the new borders? Again though this will cause a strain on the workload of Playing Field Committee members – we have regular issues with some residents breaching these terms, and have had to take action at our cost to rectify borders. Increasing the volume of our borders with residents will only magnify this.

We also anticipate a growing issue with dogs on the Field. The Playing Field, as per its intended use, does not allow the presence of dogs – due in part to the mess creating an issue for the sports facilities, but mainly as a safety concern for children playing on the field and in the un-fenced play area. We are currently facing an issue with residents bringing dogs on the field. Removing the field adjacent to the Playing Field, and rights of way over other field earmarked for building, will take away space for residents to walk dogs. This will only exacerbate our issues.

What plans if any do you have to combat this and provide additional spaces for dog owners?

Wildlife

We also have an abundance of wildlife that visit the Playing Field. Several types of birds of prey feed on mice and other animals in the adjoining fields, and often rest in our trees. We also have woodpeckers at certain times of the year. We have had issues with badgers trying to get into the field, digging under our boundary fence – we've managed to catch them on our CCTV a few times. There have also been sightings of newts and snakes on occasion. Although we don't necessarily welcome all of these animals, we understand their importance on the local habitat, and would like to know what will be done to protect them?

I understand that these plans are still at an early stage, but aside from the fact the plan is a contradiction of itself by proposing these sites in Wolvey and not at other sites which would support sustainable growth, I find it baffling that basic discussions on the impact these houses will have has not been had yet with the people and organisations it will affect the most. Monumental and untenable growth is being proposed to be made to Wolvey, and I think it's very

clear to anyone that is aware of the plans that this is a clear and gross violation of the conservation of greenbelt in this country at our expense, with the only logical reasoning behind it being it's the cheapest and easiest option.

I urge you reconsider these plans.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)