

DAVENTRY EXPANSION – SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS

1. **Suburban Sprawl** – The two main developments are presented as “Urban” expansion projects. However, neither of them have any real connection with the rest of Daventry. One of them (Croudace – Churchfields) is a ribbon of houses which projects like a destructive finger for 2 Km into the countryside and the other (Danetree Village) is virtually isolated from Daventry by Borough Hill. They are both the worst kind of Suburban sprawl and will damage both Daventry Town and its countryside.
2. **Planners exceeding their powers** – The unelected body set up to push through these plans (WNDC) would be exceeding their powers if they approved either of these plans because they both extend well beyond the geographical limits of their authority. Both developers say they must have the extra land so the planners should turn down their applications outright. They haven’t done this and are preparing to disregard this limitation.
3. **Unemployment** – Since Daventry is relatively isolated the 10,000 houses planned will need the creation of about 23,000 jobs in Daventry. To avoid massive increases in commuting and unemployment 2300 new jobs would therefore need to be created each year for the next 10 years. There are only 30,000 employed in Daventry at present so this would require nearly doubling the number of jobs in this small market town. There is absolutely no evidence that this is remotely possible and nor is there enough employment land to make it so. The Government don’t want developments which cause people to commute to work by car because of the traffic problems this causes and the contribution this makes to “Global Warming”. Using the governments own definition these plans are completely unsustainable.
4. **The Blockade of Borough Hill** – Borough Hill is one of the largest and most important Iron Age hillforts in the country and the entire area is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The views from the top are amongst the best in the midlands with landmarks visible across seven counties and up to 65 miles away. The “Danetree Village” housing estate will effectively surround the monument with houses and destroy all the views and the setting of this important national treasure. The vistas of unspoilt countryside will be replaced by those of 50 foot high houses and factories.
5. **Daventry choked to death** – The proposed developments will double the population of the small market town of Daventry from 20,000 to 40,000. The town centre will not be able to provide sufficient parking spaces to meet demand. (DDC’s own consultants predict a shortfall of thousands of parking spaces). Town centre parking will inevitably then be rationed by charging which will further discourage people from using the shops in town. At the same time the shops on the new estates will be easily accessible and the Flore bypass will bring the Northampton supermarkets within easy reach. Daventry will therefore be choked to death by traffic and marginalised as a local shopping centre. Proposed Monorails and Driverless Pods are desperate and unrealistic attempts to resolve this predicted problem. Most people will simply not shop unless they can park next to their supermarket for the most obvious of practical reasons. Anyone who thinks otherwise has their head in the clouds.
6. **Traffic chaos** – Since sufficient jobs cannot be provided in Daventry to meet the needs of the extra population (see 3) an additional 20,000 cars will hit the road each morning heading for nearby towns. Those from the Croudace “Churchfields” development will mainly travel through country rat runs choking the narrow roads and villages such as Long Buckby, Whilton, Brington, and Nobottle. Others will travel through Weedon and Flore multiplying their traffic problems hugely. The Flore Bypass is being waived about like a carrot to placate these villages but it is unlikely to be built because the government is unsympathetic to traffic problems created by poor planning (locating developments remote from jobs).
7. **Destruction of Hedgerows** - Hedgerows are not only important in their own right as habitats; they form essential corridors for wildlife. Even the interruption of a hedgerow can have significant effects on the local ecology. These developments would result in the destruction of about 15 Km of Ancient Hedgerows and the animals that depend on them. What is the point of having regulations to protect hedgerows when the developers are allowed to bulldoze them without restriction?
8. **Bats** – At least 8 different species of bat have been identified on the land targeted by the developers and some of these are uncommon or rare. The 15 Km of ancient

hedgerow to be destroyed are the commuting highways for the bats and most of their roosting sites will also be destroyed. Combined with the loss of their feeding sites, the effect of light pollution and domestic cat predation these developments will virtually destroy these bat populations forever.

- 9. Badgers** – The Croudace “Churchfields” development will directly or indirectly result in the death of about 60 badgers (17 badger setts at least 12 of which are active). The “Danetree Village” village plans will destroy a larger area of farmland and so the total number of Badgers destroyed could be more than double this. (120 Badgers)
- 10. Birds** – The Croudace Churchfields Development will completely displace and destroy populations of Tree Sparrows, Skylarks and Yellowhammers which are globally threatened RSPB “Red List” species. The “Danetree Village” Development will displace 8 “Red List” species and 11 species with poor conservation status (“Amber List” species). To cap it all three and four storey houses as part of the “Churchfields” Development will be built within yards of Daventry Reservoir which is a County Wildlife site of National and International importance. Within the Country Park 180 species of bird have been recorded. Amongst these 40 are endangered “Schedule 1” species and 19 are “RSPB Red List” species. Human disturbance, including noise and light pollution, and cat predation will devastate the breeding success of these birds.
- 11. Surface water flood risk** – The “Danetree Village” development proposes to build over 5000 houses on the lower slopes of Borough Hill along with shops offices and factories. Borough Hill is a major source of the river Nene supplying streams which run North and East and springs of a permanent and temporary nature exist on its eastern slopes. The springs pose a direct flood risk to the new houses and the development itself will result in a massive increase in surface water run-off multiplying the risk of flooding of the villages downstream including Norton, Dodford and Weedon. Furthermore the development will destroy an extensive network of farm drainage ditches which have been constructed over hundreds of years to prevent the flooding of the surrounding land. This will dramatically increase the risk of surface water flooding.
- 12. Sewage flood risk** – The Daventry sewage system and the sewage treatment works are at maximum capacity now and there are no guarantees that planning permission will be granted for the enlargement of the treatment works. Even if permission was obtained the upgrade would not be completed for 5 years or more. Any further building in Daventry will therefore immediately create a real risk of Sewage flooding and the Environmental Agency have objected to the developments because of this.
- 13. Loss of valuable farmland** – Both developments will result in the permanent loss of huge areas of productive farmland. In the context of the current worldwide shortage of food, which is predicted to become progressively worse, it is unacceptable and irresponsible to allow these developments.