

Dear Councillor,

Ref objection to site allocations SH35 and SH36 Rattlechain area in the Sandwell Local Plan.

I write as Chair of The Friends of [Sheepwash Local Nature Reserve](#) and on behalf of residents who signed a petition objecting to the inclusion of this contaminated land for residential setting. We along with many who live on the Temple Way estate have long objected to this area being included in Sandwell Council's housing allocations. I have written to some of you before on this matter, but it should be stated that The Friends of Sheepwash have consistently opposed this scheme in its many guises making representations going right back to the previous public enquiry in 2011, The Black Country Core Strategy, The Dudley Port Supplementary Planning document, The Black Country Plan and now this. The petition that I refer to was spuriously treated by Sandwell Council's planning policy and never considered, though we are now collating a new one which they cannot reject, and this will be brought to the attention of the planning inspector at the future public inquiry next year.

The site allocation plan is unsound, cannot possibly support the delivery of some 500+ houses on an already crammed estate whilst also attempting the ludicrous spin of "garden city". Wildlife habitat that has occurred naturally will be destroyed and lost, and Sheepwash itself and the nature corridors via the canals and tunnel extending to Temple Way will no longer exist. The plans put forward in the call for sites by "Rattlechain Redevelopments Limited" who have zero track record of delivering and remediating sites of this scale and do not have the funds to do so, judging by their Companies House records, includes Rattlechain lagoon which is not in their ownership. They obviously want this land believing that the over-tipped foundry sand on the site they do own can be decanted into the hole. This idea was previously rejected by the BCDC and the site owners (Solvay) previously stated at the last public enquiry that their consultants did not think it technically feasible. They are also still monitoring the site for toxic gases and this will continue for some years due to the nature of the chemicals within the site.

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| SH35 (24.02) | Rattlechain site - land to north of Temple Way, Tinsale | Oldbury | Oldbury | 511 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 36 | 2040 | Land owner in discussions to include neighbouring land. Developable area to be determined. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area |
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SH35 Now claimed that 511 houses could be packed into the areas also including the lagoon!

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| | SH36 (SA-B) | Land between Addington Way and River Tame, Temple Way (Rattlechain) | Oldbury | Oldbury | SH | 0 0 0 | 0 0 | 40 | 2020 | Assessing discussions with neighbouring land owners. Adjacent to Community Open Space and RUNC. SAGH 2 Bridon Hall Water Tapon and Dudley Port Recreation Area |
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SH36 As well as another 36 including land alongside the River Tame!

Rattlechain lagoon

There is a long history to the land to which I allude, and you will have to bear with me in explaining it, as without this background knowledge, one cannot make an informed opinion of how history is being blurred to conjure up and recycle a scheme from the days of the dubious Black Country Development Corporation, (BCDC) some 30 years previously.

Those behind this , including individuals it seems from within SMBC hope that people have forgotten with the passage of time, the fraud and lies that were told with regard to those proposals, but I have put much of it in the public domain with my blog **what lies beneath rattlechain lagoon**.

[What Lies Beneath Rattlechain Lagoon? | For the victims of Industrial Pollution](#)

This website is a chronical of the struggle to prove that birds were being [systemically poisoned by white phosphorus](#), dumped by Oldbury firm Albright and Wilson, later Rhodia, and now Solvay, who still own the site. [This chemical](#) can remain in saturated sediments for thousands of years and has to remain under water as it forms toxic gases when exposed to air. It is a banned rat poison and is persistently used as a war crime [“smokescreen”](#) by numerous military outlets including NATO with semantic weasel definitions of what a “war crime” is.

[Former Duports Tip](#)



N.B Rattlechain lagoon on the Western side.

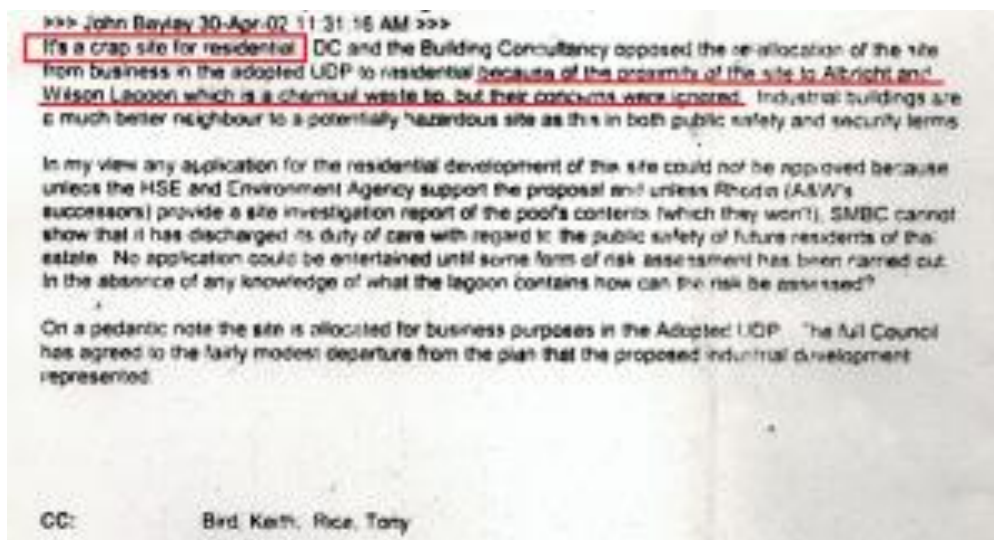
Adjacent to this hazardous waste site is another tip which also formed part of the former Rattlechain brickworks, though most of the land around this area [in Rose Lane](#) was agricultural, and never “brownfield”. This site was a fly tipping unsanctioned abomination by the reckless Duport group, who dumped putrescible waste as well as hazardous packaging waste into the void of the former brickworks marl pit. They also scattered waste around that pit, [which is still there to this day buried beneath tonnes of foundry sand.](#)



The former Rose Lane site was never “brownfield”

The advent of the Black Country Development Corporation saw dubious schemes to “reclaim” the area of the former brickworks and Severn Trent’s Tividale sewage works. It was an ill-conceived idea from the start, principally the adjacency to the then still used liquid landfill site.

John Bayley former planning officer at SMBC even described it in an email to a colleague as “a crap site for residential”, and the Government’s absurd quotas for local authorities only serve to make sites such as this even more unpalatable in that civil servants are quite aware and have to lie through their teeth to justify inclusion in plans like the Sandwell Plan to juggle the figures. Political pressure needs to be out on those imposing targets that want to build houses on still unremediated landfill sites.



A summary of this and the “misery” inflicted on house dwellers as a result of this work can be read below. Please bear the comments of residents living with this nightmare at the time in mind, the failures of SMBC and the development process to protect them and their property, and the

manner in which a public quango appeared to be facilitating the dubious entity behind the scheme without clear direction. The “safeguards” of the planning process were not there then, and they remain not there today, whatever anyone tries to tell me different.

[“Misery” at Temple Way | What Lies Beneath Rattlechain Lagoon?](#)

The proximity of this hazardous waste lake containing tens of tonnes of white phosphorus is crucial to the understanding of the issue, and the abysmal planning situation that has unfolded in this area around that site, BEFORE and probably now impossible to remove this first.



This was the scene in the 1990’s in Gladstone Drive, where foundry sand blighted people’s homes after thousands of lorry loads of sand were allowed to be tipped on here. It would take the same amount of journeys to remove it off there, something which should not be allowed to happen.

Foundry sand also blew across onto Sheepwash covering the pools, and has also substantially blocked drainage channels in Rose Lane tunnel requiring the council to use tax payer's money to put this right. But isn't right is it, that the polluter has not paid!

[Blocked rights of way issues- Rose Lane area - a Freedom of Information request to Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council - WhatDoTheyKnow](#)

The blocked rights of way in this area remain, and the wildlife corridor between Oldbury Ward and Great Bridge Ward through to Tividale Ward is in danger of being lost.

Our alternative vision for this area is that it becomes an extension of the nature reserve, and not another sprawling housing estate. There are rare habitats on the Duport's Tip area including a butterfly protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The council have not considered any assessment of sites of this type and that there is no mitigation for loss of such sites that can be offered.

1 Do you support the building of houses on the piece of land next to a still classified hazardous waste site and built on top of another historic landfill site, or do you back the local residents and campaigners against such a proposal and will speak up on their behalf to remove it from Sandwell's site allocations in the Sandwell Local Plan?

2. Please read again the following post about events which occurred in the 1990's , and in particular the letters of local residents to Sandwell Council planners concerning this site and how regulators failed them and the environment by allowing the blight to continue for years. As a local councillor, what would you have said to council officers in respect of this situation at that time, and do you think it acceptable that such a scheme could occur again?

["Misery" at Temple Way | What Lies Beneath Rattlechain Lagoon?](#)

3 Land titles for the areas in question were registered in Jersey in 2003 for a mere £5,000, yet reportedly sold in 2018 to the company based in Hampton In Arden for £1.5 million. There are a number of such sites in our area registered in tax havens such as this which lie dormant for many years only to appear to magically reregister in the UK with the advent of tax payer funded cash schemes such as those operated by the WMCA to "clean up" abandoned sites where the polluter did not pay to clean them up. What are your thoughts on this? Should the polluter pay, or the tax payer? The sites tipped on with foundry sand by Mintworth have required money from the public purse for their tip at Shidas Lane and also Coneygree in Tipton. This is a third that they soiled through the planning process and for all the talk of big theoretical plans, they appear down the line to be burden on the tax payer and still "crap sites for residential."

Yours sincerely Ian Carroll ,

Chair of The Friends of Sheepwash Local Nature Reserve and environmental campaigner



Would you want this as a view for 10 years every day?