FDOG Update -November

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As we reach the end of 2026, there is not a great deal of news to report on the Furtho Pit campaign, but that is not necessarily a bad thing.

First and foremost, we would like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to West Northamptonshire Council's Local Plan consultation and support the removal of the Furtho Pit allocation from the emerging Local Plan. Following the refusal of the warehouse application in June, the Council removed the former allocation (AL5/EC8) from the draft Local Plan, recognising the significant environmental, flood risk, access and landscape constraints affecting the site. While this is a very positive step, there are still a number of stages to go before the Local Plan is formally adopted. The Council will now consider consultation responses before moving towards the next stage of the Plan's examination and adoption process.

At the time of writing, the impact on residents living close to large warehouse developments has once again been featured in the news. People in Astley, Wigan, have spoken publicly about the negative effects of noise, lighting and round-the-clock HGV movements on their daily lives. This has reinforced concerns that were raised throughout the Furtho Pit application process. They reflected genuine worries about quality of life, loss of tranquillity and the effect of introducing major industrial activity into an area currently valued for its countryside setting.

For now, all we can do is wait. The next milestone will be confirmation that the Local Plan has been submitted for independent examination. The Government has directed West Northamptonshire Council to submit the Plan by the end of December, after which it will be examined by an independent Planning Inspector before it can be adopted. The second, and more concerning, question is whether the applicant decides to appeal against June's refusal. The deadline for lodging an appeal is 2 January 2027. Until that date has passed, there remains a degree of uncertainty about what happens next. By the time the next edition of the Old Mail is published, we hope to be able to report on both of these issues and provide a clearer picture of the future of the site.

In the meantime, perhaps the best reminder of why so many people became involved in this campaign is to spend some time enjoying the area itself. The old Grand Union Canal, the River Great Ouse and the wider Furtho landscape remain largely untouched and are particularly beautiful at this time of year. If you're out walking over the Christmas period, take a moment to appreciate the peace, wildlife and open countryside that make this corner of Milton Keynes/Northamptonshire such a lovely place to live.

Thank you once again for your continued support throughout 2026. We wish all our supporters, residents and neighbours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. As for us, we'll be spending the festive season keeping everything crossed and hoping that 2027 finally brings the certainty that Furtho Pit deserves