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City campaigners join national outcry

We say 'no' to garden village

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Lancaster residents have joined other groups across the country in mounting a campaign against proposed "garden villages".

Campaigners in Lancaster opposed to the city's Bailrigg Garden Village scheme have joined other groups in England where garden villages are being proposed to say no to the developments.

The groups – under the umbrella of Smart Growth UK – have set out their objections in a new report.

Mary Breakell, co-founder and communications officer of the Citizens of Lancaster Opposed to Unnecessary Development group, said: "We're fighting to stop Bailrigg Garden Village covering a large area of countryside south of Lancaster with 3,500 - 5,000

houses and extensive road links to the M6. There is little local need for these houses and they would exacerbate local flooding, cause traffic congestion and much of the infrastructure they'd need lacks plans or costings."

Actor Griff Rhys Jones, who is president of the Civic Voice organisation, has added his own voice to the campaign, warning that, "far from being utopias, these are disordered schemes that ignore local communities and would be located on wholly unsuitable sites".

He said: "We encounter proposals that are not going to answer local needs for housing at all, but will waste precious countryside by building low density sprawling estates and creating expensive houses. These are nearly all extensions and not new settlements."

He warns that terms like "housing crisis" and "emergency" are being used to force

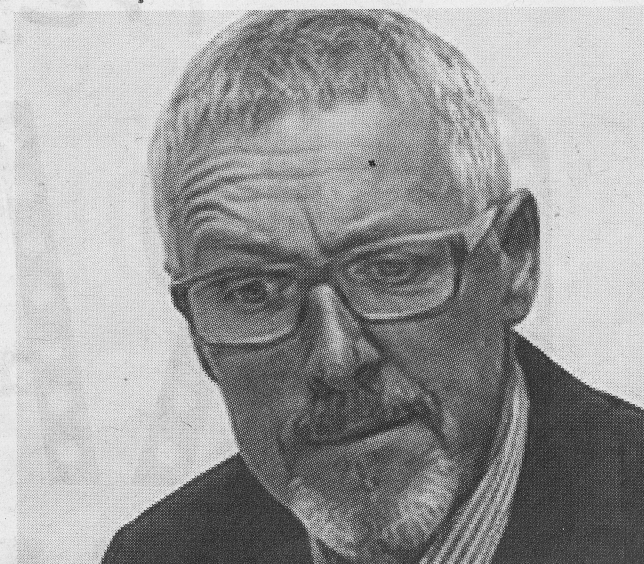
through development of the countryside which enriches landowners but fails to provide the affordable homes needed.

In 2016, the government asked local authorities if they were interested in developing new garden villages.

The city council said yes and in January 2017 the government selected Bailrigg Garden Village as one of 14 garden villages across the country. The vision is for a self-contained new settlement of around 3500 homes in south Lancaster - in conjunction with the expanding Lancaster University.

The village would be built over the next 12/15 years and is to offer a range of housing, community facilities and services, with green spaces close to the University main campus.

A spokesperson for Lancaster City Council said: "Proposals for a Garden Village are in the early stages and throughout the process there



Griff Rhys Jones has added his voice to the campaign.

will be opportunities for people to discuss the available options and the issues they raise. The next consultation is due to take place in June and there will be drop-in events for people to find out more."

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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Incident

M6 lanes closed after car flips over

Two lanes were closed on the M6 after a one-vehicle crash on the south-bound carriageway on Friday.

Two lanes were closed following the incident, which happened during Friday's morning rush hour.

Police say they received a report of the vehicle hitting the central reservation between junctions 35 for Carnforth and 36 for Kirkby Lonsdale.

The car flipped sideways across lanes two and three, and police said that the incident was then moved to the hard shoulder.

Nobody is believed to have been injured in the incident.