# Megasheds reshape UK communities, sparking property losses and environmental fears



The landscape of the UK is undergoing a significant transformation, with enormous warehouses, colloquially known as "megasheds," proliferating in residential areas. These vast structures, often seen as eyesores, are reshaping communities by overshadowing homes and depreciating property values. Their impact is starkly illustrated in areas such as Corby, Northamptonshire, where local residents express dismay over the rise of these enormous storage facilities. As these developments continue to emerge—some over 160,000 square feet in size—homeowners are left feeling powerless, as local councils appear to wield the final decision-making authority on planning permissions.

According to property experts, the demand for warehousing is expected to escalate dramatically. Projections indicate that over the next decade, the UK will require an additional 150 million square feet of warehouse space, a figure that equates to around 2,000 football pitches. The relentless growth is fuelled by escalating online shopping trends and ambitious house-building targets mandated by the government, which aims to construct 1.5 million homes within five years. Coupled with the existing infrastructure challenges, particularly in areas already burdened by development, the implications of this "megashed" boom are profound.

Residents like Ken Lungley from Suffolk lament the drastic changes to their previously idyllic environments. Once able to enjoy expansive views of farmland, Lungley now finds his land overshadowed by a 1.17 million square foot warehouse, dramatically reducing his property value from £1.5 million to £900,000. Such losses resonate with many, as they confront the reality of diminished sunlight, noise pollution, and potential health risks associated with increased traffic from heavy-duty vehicles servicing these sites.

Local councils, often facing pressure to approve developments for economic reasons, may overlook the community's concerns during the planning process. Architectural experts such as Danny Campbell suggest that while homeowners can lodge objections, their success is often limited, especially if the land is designated for commercial use. The situation is exacerbated by instances where councils mishandle public consultations, as seen in Corby, where consultations targeted incorrect households, leading to concerns of transparency and fairness.

In recent months, Coventry residents have experienced a similar plight. The construction of a dramatically elevated warehouse prompted the local council's apologies for the distress it caused. While compensation of up to £150 was offered for the emotional toll on residents, critics argue that monetary relief hardly addresses the underlying issues of community disruption and loss of quality of life.

Environmental considerations serve as additional layers to this emerging narrative. Reports indicate that these mega warehouses exacerbate air and noise pollution and contribute to urban heat effects, further complicating the health and well-being of local communities. The movement of large freight vehicles increases local emissions, posing a risk not just to the environment but to residents' health as well, creating an unsustainable urban landscape.

Moreover, the ever-increasing reliance on warehouses invites concerns over fire safety, particularly as the rapid growth of e-commerce has seen a corresponding spike in warehouse fires. Findings suggest that many newly built warehouses lack adequate fire safety measures, raising alarms about the potential for catastrophic incidents.

As the horizon fills with these monolithic structures, residents fear that their communities might be irreversibly changed, resembling industrial landscapes rather than welcoming neighbourhoods. They grapple with a profound sense of loss—loss of peace, loss of property, and a perceived loss of agency over their living spaces. Engaging with local councils and voicing concerns through planning portals remain critical actions for homeowners, but the road ahead appears steep as the UK navigates its urgent warehouse expansion amid the relentless pressures of modern commerce.

The voices of those affected are crucial in this ongoing discourse, urging a re-evaluation of how local planning processes engage with community welfare to ensure that development serves not just economic growth but also the well-being of all residents involved.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14753017/Rise-megasheds-property-value-homeowner-rights.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/content-hub/news-details/the-rise-of-distribution-mega-warehousing-leading-to-mega-environmental-concerns)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14753017/Rise-megasheds-property-value-homeowner-rights.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-55340447), [[6]](https://www.beyondcorporate.co.uk/newsroom/the-rise-and-popularity-in-sheds/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.paragonbankinggroup.co.uk/news/news-releases/amazon-effect-house-prices), [[5]](https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/pandemic-led-ecommerce-boom-could-spark-rise-in-warehouse-blazes)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-55340447), [[6]](https://www.beyondcorporate.co.uk/newsroom/the-rise-and-popularity-in-sheds/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/content-hub/news-details/the-rise-of-distribution-mega-warehousing-leading-to-mega-environmental-concerns), [[6]](https://www.beyondcorporate.co.uk/newsroom/the-rise-and-popularity-in-sheds/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[5]](https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/pandemic-led-ecommerce-boom-could-spark-rise-in-warehouse-blazes), [[7]](https://ifpmag.com/the-rise-of-the-warehouse-heightened-fire-risk-and-severity/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14753017/Rise-megasheds-property-value-homeowner-rights.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-beds-bucks-herts-55340447> - Residents in Blakelands, Milton Keynes, are set to receive compensation for the 'unnecessary stress and anxiety' caused by a warehouse that was permitted to double in height. The 18-metre-high warehouse, constructed in 2018, was described by the Blakelands Residents' Association as a 'huge, enormous monstrosity' and is said to dwarf nearby homes. Milton Keynes Council leader Pete Marland apologised for the issues surrounding the granting of planning permission, which had been legally made. Residents are expected to receive up to £150 in compensation. A council-commissioned review found that the decision to grant permission was 'bona fide and proper'.
3. <https://www.paragonbankinggroup.co.uk/news/news-releases/amazon-effect-house-prices> - Research by Paragon Bank indicates that the opening of an Amazon Fulfilment Centre in the UK leads to a significant increase in house prices, business creation, and job opportunities in the surrounding area. The study found that, on average, house prices rose by 11% in the year following the centre's opening. Additionally, the number of businesses increased by 11%, and job numbers rose by 3%. The research highlights the substantial impact that large-scale warehouse developments can have on local economies and property values.
4. <https://www.greatamericaninsurancegroup.com/content-hub/news-details/the-rise-of-distribution-mega-warehousing-leading-to-mega-environmental-concerns> - The rapid expansion of mega warehouses in urban areas has raised significant environmental and social justice concerns. These large facilities contribute to increased air pollution, noise pollution, and the urban heat island effect. The proliferation of heavy-duty trucks associated with these warehouses leads to higher emissions of pollutants, degrading air quality and posing health risks to nearby residents. Additionally, the constant movement of trucks causes substantial wear and tear on local roadways, leading to increased maintenance costs and congestion. The development of these warehouses also contributes to the heat island effect, raising local temperatures and exacerbating the impact of heat waves in densely populated urban areas.
5. <https://www.zurich.co.uk/media-centre/pandemic-led-ecommerce-boom-could-spark-rise-in-warehouse-blazes> - Zurich UK has warned of a potential rise in warehouse fires due to the surge in demand for storage and distribution space driven by the pandemic-induced e-commerce boom. The number of warehouses destroyed by fire increased by 42% in the year 2019/20. Despite this, only 6% of warehouses are fitted with sprinklers, raising concerns about the adequacy of fire safety measures. Zurich has called for compulsory sprinklers in all new warehouses over 2,000 square metres to mitigate the risk of devastating fires.
6. <https://www.beyondcorporate.co.uk/newsroom/the-rise-and-popularity-in-sheds/> - The rise in online shopping has led to a significant increase in the construction of large-scale warehouses, often referred to as 'mega sheds'. This trend has been particularly evident in the UK, where transport and storage businesses are increasingly concentrated in areas like the 'Golden Logistics Triangle'. However, this rapid expansion faces challenges, including planning objections from local communities concerned about the impact on their living standards and increased traffic. Additionally, rising interest rates and inflation in the cost of labour and building materials pose further challenges to the development of these warehouses.
7. <https://ifpmag.com/the-rise-of-the-warehouse-heightened-fire-risk-and-severity/> - The rapid expansion of large-scale warehouses has heightened concerns about fire risks and severity. A notable example is a warehouse over 35,000 square metres that lacked active protection systems like sprinklers and was destroyed by fire six months after opening, leading to £30 million in rebuild costs. Implementing sprinkler systems in warehouses can significantly reduce damage and operational disruption, highlighting the importance of robust fire safety measures in these large facilities.