# Northamptonshire residents oppose rapid warehouse expansion overshadowing communities



Residents of Northamptonshire, a county in England now dubbed the "warehouse capital of Britain," have voiced strong discontent over the rapid spread of large-scale warehouse developments, which they describe as turning their daily lives into a "nightmare." The area has more storage and distribution centres than anywhere else in the UK, with huge "mega-sheds" seemingly sprouting up continuously across towns such as Corby.

Locals living near these sprawling industrial units report significant impacts on their environment and quality of life. In particular, residents of Hooke Close spoke to the Daily Star about how the looming presence of a massive 60-foot tall warehouse known as Rockingham 161 has overshadowed their homes and gardens, blocking out sunlight and creating a sense of confinement. This warehouse was constructed on the site of the old Weetabix plant and was built without prior consultation with the local community due to a council error. The council mistakenly consulted residents on a different nearby street, Hubble Road, instead of Hooke Close, which led to confusion and frustration.

Jose Cruz, 65, who settled in Hooke Close in 2011 with his wife Olga, 60, described their experience, stating, "We constantly live in a shadow now – it has blocked out about 80 per cent of our sunlight." He likened living next to the warehouse to "bunking next to the Berlin Wall," observing that not even the Berlin Wall was as imposing as the structure overshadowing their home. Mr Cruz expressed bewilderment over the placement of such massive warehouses close to residential areas in the UK, a country he believes is "not short of space." He added, "Nobody wanted the warehouse here and nobody even consulted us about it, it's been a mad situation from the get-go."

Another anonymous local resident described the experience as "horrifying," stating, "We have been left with this monstrous eyesore towering above us... We feel like we're living by a prison camp." This resident went on to express concerns about the continuous construction of warehouses elsewhere in the town, contributing to the area becoming "a gigantic industrial estate."

Attempts by the community to challenge the developments through legal means have so far been unsuccessful. Locals were recently denied a judicial review against the warehouse construction and were burdened with a £5,000 legal bill. A judge did acknowledge failings by the council, stating it had "fallen well below the standard expected" by failing to properly consult residents. However, subsequent appeals against this decision were also refused as of late March 2024.

North Northamptonshire Council, which oversees planning in the area, issued a statement regarding the ongoing legal matters: "Following the court's decision to refuse the claimant's application for judicial review on this case, the claimant then appealed the decision, and this appeal was then refused by the court in late March 2024. Due to the ongoing legal conversations around costs, it's not possible to comment any further at this stage."

Despite local opposition, some industry representatives defend the growth in warehouse developments. Clare Bottle, chief executive of the UK Warehousing Association, emphasised the role of warehouses as a critical "engine of growth in our supply chains." She pointed out that as supply chains become more complex and volatile due to global events, warehouses play a vital role in storing and distributing goods. Ms Bottle also highlighted that many functions traditionally housed in high street shops and factories are increasingly being shifted into warehouse facilities. These include activities such as processing returns, recycling, and product repairs, which collectively support the circular economy.

The scale of these developments is especially notable around Corby, which hosts the headquarters of Europa and is in the process of constructing a logistics campus for the sportswear giant Nike, further entrenching Northamptonshire's position as a central hub for storage and distribution in the UK. Residents living near these sites continue to express their dissatisfaction with the rapid industrialisation of their communities, underscoring a period of tension between local interests and broader economic development imperatives in the region.

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.northamptonchron.co.uk/news/politics/council/northampton-warehouse-capital-of-the-world-council-defends-influx-of-warehouse-construction-following-7500-job-news-3955734> - This article supports the claim that Northampton is often referred to as the 'warehouse capital of the world' and highlights the council's perspective on the influx of warehouse construction in the area.
2. <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source is mentioned as the origin of the article discussing local dissatisfaction with warehouse developments in Northamptonshire.
3. <https://www.ukwarehouse.org.uk/> - Although not directly mentioned in the search results, the UK Warehousing Association's website can provide context on the role of warehouses in supply chains, aligning with Clare Bottle's statements.
4. <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/> - The Daily Star is mentioned as a source where residents shared their experiences about the impact of warehouse developments on their daily lives.
5. <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/your-council/latest-news-reports/> - This website provides information on North Northamptonshire Council's activities and statements, including their response to legal matters regarding warehouse developments.
6. <https://www.corby.gov.uk/news> - Corby's local news website can provide updates on developments like the logistics campus for Nike and Europa, further entrenching Northamptonshire as a logistics hub.
7. <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/brits-living-warehouse-capital-england-35126204> - Please view link - unable to able to access data