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BANES council is rightly interested in promoting tourism in Bath. It is a major part of our local economy. Our World Heritage Status is something that we are justifiably proud of, and this status is not only awarded for the more obvious attractions of the Georgian terraces and the Roman Baths.

Bath has a distinctive garden feel. The surrounding countryside is drawn into the city visually and sometimes physically. This is a result of the Georgian architectural idea of planting buildings and cities in the landscape to achieve picturesque views and forms.

Government guidance on protecting the Historic Environment and World Heritage is set out in National Planning Policy Framework. Policies to protect, promote, conserve and enhance World Heritage properties, their settings and buffer zones are also found in statutory planning documents.

According to the core policy found in The Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan, any developments which would harm the qualities justifying the status of the World Heritage property, or its setting, will not be permitted.

Bath is an attractive destination and we are all incredibly lucky to call the city our home. Moreover, The 'Destination Marketing Strategy' for Bath aims to promote growth in the value of tourism rather than in volume. The green setting of Bath adds to the quality of the experience.

I attended a Visit Bath meeting at the Hilton Hotel on the 1st of September. In talking to other delegates I was heartened to note that more than half of the tourism businesses in Bath, were of the same opinion as myself, namely that a huge car park on the meadows is in fact an extremely bad idea for tourism in Bath. Given that the reason tourists come here is to see and experience our cultural assets, it is short sighted and blinkered to think that a monstrosity of this scale is the answer in so sensitive a site.

This huge blight is not something that the residents of the east want, or should 'take for the team'. This countryside/ city divide is a nonsense and we are not diametrically opposed parties, but neighbours and friends. We all visit and enjoy both the city and the countryside.

Just think of fun days out that tourists and residents alike enjoy...boating from the Boat Station on Forester Rd out to the Bathampton Mill, enjoying the peace and quiet of the river, and this will be spoilt. Think of cycling out to The George, Bathampton on a sunny day, think of walking the Skyline Walk or Little Solsbury or Brown's Folly. All these activities, promoted by the Tourist Information Office in Bath, will be spoilt by a giant car park, one that BANES council now know will not provide the reduction in traffic and air pollution that were their original aims.

I found out at the tourism meeting that the Park and Ride is now being promoted as a strategy to alleviate FUTURE traffic problems as the council acknowledge that it will not cure the current ones. It was acknowledged that people's shopping habits have changed, since more people are shopping on the internet. Cllr Tim Warren said that shopping is not the main activity that people come to Bath for.

I put it to you, they come to Bath for their leisure time, to enjoy its beauty and that means both the city and the countryside. They bring economic gain to Bath and we mess with the setting of our rare jewel of a city at our peril.