

I set out my core objections to this application, in my Relevant Representation. Since that submission, I have not heard or read any further information which would change my view and set out further details on the following points:

- * - Highway Impacts

The problems I see with the highway assessment are twofold:

o Firstly, the highways authorities at the Preliminary Meeting made it clear that whilst they have been working with TrS and have agreed some details of the modelling, the full set of inputs, modelling and outputs have certainly not been agreed and therefore the initial traffic forecasts in the application cannot be considered sufficiently robust, for the ExA or the public to understand the true impact of this development.

o Secondly, the communication of the initial traffic forecasts have been so poorly communicated with the public that even the basic knowledge of the impact has not communicated or understood.

In terms of the communication, I have already indicated that during the consultation phase I asked verbally and followed up by email, for clarity, that higher resolution maps be provided to support the understanding. I received an email reply stating that the systems they were using did not allow them to provide the details at a higher resolution. This was supported by a statement that the figures were all contained in tables which supported the maps, a statement which I do not believe reflects the situation, either in the consultation or application materials.

I have compared the level and clarity of information given in housing applications within Burbage to those in this application and it falls so far short. The reply I received claimed their difficulty, in part, was due to the wide scale nature of the area to be covered. It should be self evident that a development of this scale, now estimated to cost approximately £800m to implement, will require commensurate effort and explanation across the whole area, compared to a village housing scheme. Whatever village or town a resident is from, they should expect to be able to answer the question, what impact will this development have on the traffic in the streets of my village or town? I'm convinced that from the poor detail provided it is difficult to be sure which road or street, in which village or town, the traffic tables relate.

The highway impacts of this proposal have not been clearly established and communicated and have not addressed key concerns relating to the impact of the local road network in the event of a closure of the M69 motorway.

The development would seek to open south facing slip roads on the M69 junction 2. This will effectively introduce an HGV Eastern bypass of the village of Burbage, between Junctions 1 & 2 of the M69. In order to mitigate the effects of the development on Burbage, the proposals should include an associated HGV ban on Church Street, Burbage. This street runs through the Village conservation area and is very difficult for HGV traffic.

- - Site Selection

The work carried out to support the choice of site was basic and did not establish direct need, it drew upon the National Policy Objective of more SRFIs in the UK, rather than demonstrating the need for Leicestershire and hence this site. The application for a new SRFI should make the specific case on the merits of the location being proposed. As the number of SRFI are approved or are in the pipeline of potential schemes this is even more important. The increase in nearby rail freight terminals provides an obligation on the application to be justified by specific, referenced need.

- * - Social Amenity Impact

An article in the 'Leicester Mercury' of 1847 stated "The road down Stocking Lane leads to Burbage Common and Wood. It is one of the most sequestered, the most romantic and enchanting in the Midlands Counties."

In 1929 'The Leicester Mail' ran the headline "Hinckley Beauty Spot Saved". The background to this headline was a proposal to build a sewage treatment farm on land adjacent to Burbage Woods early in the decade. Following effective lobbying, a revised scheme was implemented by means of a pumping station being installed the other side of Sapcote Road. However, to protect the woods for future generations, the Rotary Club purchased 21 acres of woods to be saved for the public. This was followed in 1937 when the club handed over a further area of land 'as a Coronation Gift to Hinckley, to mark the Coronation of King George VI'.

Burbage Common & Woods is a long standing, significant local amenity which has been demonstrated over the years by public support against threats to the area. The area will be reduced by its setting, namely an edge of urban settlement leading to farm land, giving a sense of nature and countryside to visitors. Whilst this area of land has not achieved national recognition, such as National Park designation; to the residents of our area this is our treasured park,

It is essential, in my view, that planning considerations given the appropriate weight to the harm to this outstanding local amenity which this proposal would have on the well being of local residents.