

Submission relating to oral cases at OFH1, ISH3 agenda items 4 and 8 (not delivered on the day as discussed at previous ISH2).

OFH1

I would like to comment on the developers responses to some of the written submissions.

In relation to LLEP's Economic Plan 2014-2020 delivery of warehousing, often mentioned in the submitted documents, has been met in this area of Leicestershire by the new developments at Hinckley Park and Magna Park North and South with loss of over 1000 acres of farmland. In addition to this we are no longer in the EU and may well be looking in a different direction than Felikstowe for trade. The LLEP's most recent plan 2021- 2030 states the importance of agriculture and food production in Leicestershire - 43900 jobs with GVA of 1.8 million, a further LLEP publication, a profile of agri food and drinks, specifically mentions Woodhouse Farm Tamworth pigs as one of four significant farming businesses in Leicestershire which will be lost. Furthermore it cites NW Leicestershire and East Midlands Modal Park (already on the NIPS) and Toton as being sites for the development of railfreight hubs - in much closer proximity to the automotive industry (Toyota already using Toton to some degree) and part of the Freeport area. This area is the only rural landscape adjoining Burbage Common and Woods a well used recreational space and is the only pedestrian and equestrian access for residents from Elmesthorpe, Stoney Stanton, Sapcote, Barwell, Hinckley and Earl Shilton. Consideration of the effect on physical and mental health of an industrial landscape and associated noise, traffic and pollution on residents of the surrounding area must be given and balanced against a need for any development in this particular area - your quote in response to my submission regarding appeal APP/K2420/W/20/3260227 (I am well aware this was submitted under different planning rules) from the Government publication NPS 4.84 'states development may be required in a countryside location' - the publication does not say a strategic rail freight terminal must be located in such an area. The link road runs between the warehousing and the Common, the container storage area is near the Common and lorry park is sited very close to Elmesthorpe Plantation. I consider this to generate more noise, public safety concerns and public health concerns with increased exposure to air pollution

and the well documented findings of human waste round multiple lorry parks on such developments.

ISH 3 Items 4 and 8

Item 4

In response to the developers comments regarding wildlife and breeding farmland birds specifically skylarks

1. The skylark population density of 0.123/hectare is above the average population density of 0.108/hectare (figures used in similar developments, Donald & Vickery 2000) and not a 'fairly low number'
2. Skylarks are farmland birds and only breed on cultivated land so will not return to the small parcels of land left by the development as you state. A number of other red listed birds are present on the site. The State of Nature Report 2023 has found a 58% decline in farmland birds, particularly skylarks, since 1970. We have a moral responsibility to halt this decline where we can.
3. This farmland has been farmed responsibly over the time I have walked on the footpaths (32 years) with many kms of hedgerows with mature trees and ditches left intact, pig manure is used as fertiliser, there is little spraying and areas of farmland are left uncultivated with ponds and wildflowers such as orchids growing there. Burbage Common and Woods is not an isolated ecosystem and the wildlife there depends on the surrounding farmland for feeding and provision of a wildlife corridor - crossing a link road would not realistically provide a viable replacement corridor. Birds such as owls, red kites and ravens also feed in this area - I see no mention of them in your proposal.
4. Your response to the negative impact on pollinators - 'loss of intensively managed agricultural land is not considered to negatively impact pollinators' is in contradiction to the government publication by the Food and Environmental Research Agency which states that agricultural land with blossom rich hedgerows and trees, uncultivated areas of land, crops such as oil seed rape and field beans are all valuable resources for pollinators and in addition to this hedgerows and ditches provide valuable overwintering shelter for many creatures.

Item 8

Loss of the five footpaths and bridleways in part or total (plus Burbage Common Road) will limit significantly the opportunities currently available for the public to enjoy walking, jogging, cycling and equestrian activities in the area. This is particularly important for people's physical and mental health never more so than in the recent pandemic when we were limited to the local area.

The substitution of these well used spaces with a footpath/bridleway along the railway and under a busy road or a bridleway along the M69 with a road crossing over the link road will reduce access to Burbage Common and Woods and cut short equestrian and pedestrian ability to extend their rides/walks beyond the Common and Woods. Local Walking for Health groups use these paths regularly. I also believe that a large group of people have not been taken into consideration when looking at access and enjoyment of the green spaces on Burbage Common and Woods, namely children, the elderly and disabled - the impact on the play area, cafe and the east side of the Common from the new link road and the safety aspects in Elmesthorpe Plantation and Smenall's Field from the lorry park are worrying. The result of this loss of access coupled with the industrial landscape (I have walked round East Midlands Gateway and Birch Coppice Railfreight terminals to see what it was like and I would not repeat this) means many people from the area will be driving to Fosse Meadows or alternative locations to enjoy the countryside and walk their dogs