

PARAGRAPHS 7.3 to 7.8 - GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

OBJECTION 260/7792 GO-EM

PC: 161

Objection to PC: 5608/131668 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.1 ■ The link between PPG13, TPP's and development plans, and the need for consistency should be specifically referred to. PPG13 was issued jointly by the Department of the Environment and the Department of Transport, asking authorities to carry out their land use and transport programmes in ways that help reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys.
- PC 161 - the change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.2 Whereas PC 161 would introduce modifications to paragraph 7.6 of the Plan, it would not address the content of paragraph 7.5 to which GO-EM also objected, that is, the absence of an explanation about the relationship between PPG13, TPPs and development plans. I believe an understanding of the relationship is important. Some explanation might have assisted objectors in their appreciation and understanding of the Plan and could have assisted the Council in its responses. I recommend a suitable modification to paragraph 7.5 to make good the omission.

7.3 As to GO-EM's other concerns, PC 161 would make a specific reference to the departmental authors of PPG13, which the deposit Plan fails to do. It would also provide a reference to the key aim of that document in quoting the objective to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys by encouraging appropriate development patterns; the latter being an especially important element of Government policy.

7.4 However, Government policy extends beyond that single objective and recognises that complementary traffic measures are also needed. It would be unrealistic to expect the public's travel habits to change simply by relying on the slow process of locational changes in development. Alternative and attractive means of transport are also required. The Plan and PC 161 omit any reference to complementary traffic measures and to that extent it does not wholly reflect the guidance in PPG13. I think it fails in that respect and I therefore recommend a further modification to PC 161, insofar as it relates to paragraph 7.6.

7.5 The Council will, no doubt, make the necessary modification to paragraph 7.8 of the Plan to reflect the extant TPP when the Plan is finally adopted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.6 I recommend that:

- (i) **paragraph 7.5 of the Plan be modified by the addition of the following sentences after the words "railway projects":**

"This guidance is outlined broadly in the approved Structure Plan,

developed in more detail in this Local Plan and given practicable application through the annual submission of Transport Policies and Programmes (TPPs) to Government. TPPs enable Government to assess proposals for investment and to make appropriate settlements for capital and other expenditure”.

- (ii) paragraph 7.6 of the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 161 and by the insertion of the words, “and introduce complementary transport measures thereby...”, after the words “patterns of development” in the first sentence.

PARAGRAPHS 7.12 and 7.13 - THE ROLE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OBJECTIONS	260/7793 5820/7794	GO-EM Highways Agency, Mr JA Faulkner
PC:	162	
Objections to PC:	7320/74120 608/131669	Ruth Youngs Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
FPC:	162A	

KEY ISSUES

- 7.7
- The roles of the various highway authorities should be clarified at paragraph 7.12. The Highway Authority for trunk roads (including most motorways) is the Secretary of State for Transport. The Highways Agency provides management of trunk roads and motorways, and comments about development proposals in Plans. The County Council is the Highway Authority for local roads.
 - Use of the word “can” in paragraph 7.12, line 10 implies discretion in even considering whether to look at the matter fully. It should be replaced by “will”. Discretion has its place after the full extent of the matter has been considered properly and its impacts known.
 - PC 162 - the change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.8 PC 162 and FPC 162A would meet the objections to paragraph 7.12 by reflecting more accurately the different roles of the highway authorities and the determination of the Council to control development in accordance with the aims outlined in paragraph 7.6, as proposed to be modified. I recognise no inconsistency with PPG13 resulting from these changes and I recommend accordingly. However, I suggest a slight rearrangement in the references to trunk roads and motorways in the interests of textual coherence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.9 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 162 and FPC 162A except that in the third sentence of paragraph 7.12 the words “trunk roads” and “motorways” be interchanged.**

PARAGRAPHS 7.14 to 7.18 - TRANSPORT ISSUES IN CHARNWOOD

OBJECTIONS	4824/25841	BAD, Mrs E M Allen - See H/1(r)
	5635/7174	Birstall Parish Council, Mrs D Wilson - See H/1(r)
	5682/7795	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5781/7797	LCC-Department of Planning & Transportation, Dr A Simmonds
	5838/7796	CBC Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr AW Stott

PC: 163

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

KEY ISSUES

- 7.10 ■ The last part of 7.15(iii) is incorrect given that flood free routes are now available following the opening of the A46 Leicester Western Bypass and improvements between Barrow and Quorn. Weight restrictions in villages have removed many HGV problems. Recent traffic calming, especially in Quorn, has tended to redirect traffic on to quiet side roads creating new problems.

- Object to the assessment in sub paragraph 7.15(v). This minimises the traffic problems experienced in Birstall and Wanlip, is significantly different from the Consultation Draft reference, and the assessments of the traffic problems in this area contained in Technical Reports 4/4a. The paragraph should be redrafted to reflect the Consultation Draft. Sub paragraph (vi) refers to traffic problems on the A6006 in Wymeswold. However, the Plan does not provide for development related traffic calming seen as essential by many villagers.

- Paragraph 7.16 should be amended to reflect the current situation. Declining rural bus services are not able to match people’s rising expectations of the higher mobility available with the car. Commercial services focus on urban and inter urban routes but almost always operate throughout the main day period.

Issues in respect of PC 163:

- The change makes no reference to the inadequacies of the unimproved section of the A6 between Greengate Lane and the Red Hill roundabout. A more detailed statement of the traffic problems in Birstall is required.
- There is incompatibility between the recognition of Birstall’s very significant traffic congestion in paragraph 7.15, and the proposed development proposals for Harrowgate Drive.

- The proposed change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.11 The objections by BPC and BAD are dealt with under Policy H/1(r). It seems to me that the other objections largely relate to matters of fact, degree or to omissions that objectors consider to be significant. It should not be forgotten that the intention of the introduction to Chapter 7 is simply to set the scene for the Aims and the Policies for Transport and Traffic Management. The introduction, therefore, should be factual and relate to the problems that those aims, objectives and policies seek to address. I judge the substantive objections and the Council's proposed change on that basis.

7.12 Given the general thrust of guidance in PPG13, and the non-controversial content of paragraphs 7.14 to 7.18, I consider it would be premature to draw the conclusion that anything in this section is contrary to that document, as Mr Long appears to do. I appreciate the interest that this objector has shown in the Plan and his well-meaning objections, based on his interpretation of PPG13. I have to say from the outset that I do not always share his views and that, sometimes, I find the constant repetition of the same objection does little to advance the Local Plan process. Where the objection is not based on factual evidence, nor on an argument to which I can reasonably respond I may be able to do no more than refer Mr Long to this paragraph. It seems right that I should take the first opportunity in this report to make that clear.

7.13 BAD and BPC consider the traffic problems in Birstall are seriously underestimated and my own observations confirm that they are not inconsiderable. I am sure the Highway Authority has continued to monitor the effects of recently completed road schemes on Birstall and elsewhere. Insofar as they are relevant, and I emphasise that qualification, any changes in conditions should be reflected in the adopted Plan. But whereas I believe that PC 163 would reflect the traffic situation in the Soar Valley villages and Birstall more accurately, (sub paragraphs 7.15(iii) and (v)), the proposed change is now nearly 2 years out of date. References to "early indications", for example, are no longer appropriate when there has been considerable experience of the effect of the new major bypasses. I recommend PC 163 as a modification, but add the rider that the Council should update its references to reflect the passage of time. It is for the Council to decide whether the inadequacies of the unimproved section of A6 between Greengate Lane and the Red Hill roundabout are deserving of mention.

7.14 However, I should caution against the practice of using the Plan as a vehicle for reporting of the current state of affairs. Such references can soon become dated and unless they pass the test I outline in paragraph 7.11, (ie, factually accurate and relating to the problems addressed in the Plan), they have no place in it. In response to Mr Dobson's objection, I draw attention to PC 184 and its relevance to development related traffic calming measures and management. PC 163 would also modify paragraph 7.16. I note the Council is content, as am I, to adopt the LCC's assessment of the state of the rural bus services.

7.15 I note also the concern about heavy goods vehicles diverting to minor roads. PC 184 would alter radically the Policy originally entitled "Weight Restriction Order", where protection is promised in conjunction with the Highway Authority. I do not think these changes lessen the authorities concern for minor roads. Nor would the changes weaken their resolve to direct heavy goods vehicles to the most appropriate routes. I deal with that subject more at paragraph 7.157.

RECOMMENDATION

7.16 Having regard to my conclusions at paragraph 7.13, I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 163, updated to reflect the most recent situation.

PARAGRAPHS 7.19 to 7.21 - AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

OBJECTION 5682/7798 Shire

KEY ISSUE

7.17 ■ Whilst care has been taken to provide development in support of transport choice it is important that artificial barriers are not created to the free flow of vehicles as opposed to encouraging public transport use.

CONCLUSIONS

7.18 I note the support of Shire for paragraph 7.19 of the Plan and the absence of any objection from those who had previously found some conflict with PPG13. I am content that the Aims and Objectives of this Plan conform to Government guidance.

RECOMMENDATION

7.19 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.

POLICY TR/1 - THE SPECIFIED ROAD NETWORK (SRN)

OBJECTIONS	3811/7800	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	3817/25730	A W Stott - See H/1 (r)
	4824/25842	BAD, Mrs E M Allen - See H/1 (r)
	5635/7801	Birstall Parish Council, Mrs D Wilson - See H/1 (r)
	5838/25492	CBC Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr A W Stott - See H/1 (r)

KEY ISSUES

7.20 † The A6006 should be deleted from sub paragraph (ii) of the policy. All but local traffic could be directed via A607, the A46 Leicester Western Bypass, the A50, the A606 and the A52 as alternative routes. The road could then be redesignated the B5324 between Hathern and its junction with the B676 (the remainder eastward being designated as the B676). Such changes would eliminate the need for Wymeswold and Rempstone Bypasses so protecting countryside and sensitive landscapes.

CONCLUSIONS

7.21 I deal only with the objection to the SRN by the CPRE - Charnwood District in this section of my report, the other objections are considered under Policy H/1(r). In its response to this objection, the Council points out that it has no authority to vary the Specified Road Network. Designation is a matter for the LCC in its role as Highway Authority. I have no

reason to doubt that LCC takes account of the standard and the capacity of different routes and their strategic importance to the County and to the Region when making its classifications.

7.22 My inspection of the A6006 confirmed its importance as an east west route, (with a relatively high percentage of commercial vehicles using it), and its capacity to perform that function with some significant exceptions. Wymeswold lies on the route and a bypass of that village would undoubtedly improve the standard of the road and bring much needed environmental improvements. I make no further comment about the desirability of that scheme except to say that neither of those benefits could possibly flow from ignoring the importance of the route, or by its declassification.

RECOMMENDATION

7.23 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.

POLICY TR/2 - SAFEGUARDING AREAS FOR PROGRAMMED ROAD SCHEMES

OBJECTIONS	260/7802	GO-EM
	3720/7804	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	5705/25676	Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd, Mr N Hainsworth - See H/34
	5837/25645	Allied Domecq Inns Ltd - See H/93

PCs 164, 165 and 166

KEY ISSUES

- 7.24 ■ TPP proposals should flow directly from development plan policies and be cross referenced to them, (PPG13). The A6004 EpinalWay extension and A607 Rearsby Bypass are the only schemes in the Borough listed in the current TPP.
- ‡ Greater emphasis should be placed on road traffic reduction as part of a move to more sensible and sustainable transport options.

CONCLUSIONS

7.25 The objections by Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd and Allied Domecq Inns Ltd are dealt with under the respective Housing policies. GO-EM's objection and its subsequent objection to Policy TR/3, and others, refer to the relationship between schemes listed in TPPs and those contained in the Development Plan (ie, the Structure Plan and this Local Plan). GO-EM finds the inclusion of the A6006 Wymeswold Bypass and the Loughborough Inner Relief Road in Policy TR/2 anomalous as those schemes did not appear in the TPP. However, I realise this objection and others would have been made prior to the 1998-1999 TPP submission. It seems to me that the objection immediately begs the question as to the definition of "programmed road schemes", the heading under which Policy TR/2 is introduced. Are they schemes programmed in the TPP or elsewhere?

7.26 The Council's response is that all schemes identified in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3 come into that category; and that seems a reasonable response in the circumstances.

The TPP is the vehicle for making bids for immediate, transportation related expenditure and for outlining longer term plans. TPPs need not include all the schemes in the Local Plan or Structure Plan, especially if they were long term projects or dependent on related development. I feel therefore that the Local Plan should not be judged on the content of one year's TPP submission. A Plan's policies should be drafted in terms which reflect current strategic guidance, the "prospects" of funding schemes, and/or a time scale in which they would be operative or influential. I find the basis of Policy TR/2 to be sound and GO-EM's objection slightly puzzling.

7.27 But objection 260/7802 does show that the distinction the Council makes between "programmed schemes" and the "strategically important highway improvement schemes" of Policy TR/3 is also puzzling. The Structure Plan is the strategic Plan and the one having the hierarchical link with the Local Plan. It is, by far, the link of most importance, whereas the TPP is a product of the two.

7.28 That being so, it seems to me that for a scheme to be included in Policy TR/2 (or TR/3), it should be examined by the same three tests; those being:

- i) *Is it included in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3?*
- ii) *If so, is there a likelihood of it being constructed within the Plan period?*
- iii) *If not, is it of such long-term strategic importance that land should be reserved?*

As both policies relate to the reservation of land, and both would seem to rely on the same criteria, there is only need for one policy. The distinction the Council draws between the two is too fine and a composite policy would serve as well. I recommend suitable wording.

7.29 It therefore remains to apply the tests I outline above to the schemes included in Policies TR/2 (and TR/3), and I deal with them in more detail below. But what is already clear from the Council's response is that although the Wymeswold Bypass is listed in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3, it does not have the degree of preparation required for it to be constructed within the Plan period. More importantly, land can not reasonably be reserved at the moment given that lack of preparation. PC 166 would remove it from Policy TR/2 and make good that anomaly. I recommend that change under Policy TR/2(iv), and I anticipate that modification in my recommendation below.

7.30 The objection by the Green Party raises the fundamental issue of whether there is a place in the Plan for safeguarding policies such as Policy TR/3 (and Policy TR/2). I have no doubt that there is. PPG13 sets out realistic objectives for reducing the growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, for encouraging alternative means of travel to the motor car and thereby seeking to lessen the environmental impact of modern day traffic. Reducing road traffic levels is a longer term aim that this Plan cannot encompass. Infrastructure improvements will continue to be needed in some shape or form, and land reservations are a first step towards ensuring an adequate and appropriate provision of construction space. They are no more than that; the practice of restricting development to safeguard sites and routes is commonplace in other Local Plans and it is an appropriate policy for this one, even in the context of the Council's holistic approach to transportation issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.31 Having regard to my conclusions at paragraph 7.28, I recommend that Policy TR/2 of the Plan be modified to read:-

“Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the construction of new roads or the improvement of the existing highway infrastructure within the reservations shown on the Proposals Map and listed below:

- (i) A6004 Epinal Way Extension to the A6 south of Loughborough;**
- (ii) A6 Loughborough Inner Relief Road between Bridge Street and Barron Street; and**
- (iii) A607 Rearsby Bypass”**

(See also Recommendation at paragraph 7.68 of this report relating to schemes listed under Policy TR/3).

POLICY TR/2(i) - A6004 EPINAL WAY EXTENSION TO THE A6 SOUTH OF LOUGHBOROUGH

OBJECTIONS	332/7805	Cllr A Tampion
	1164/7806	Mr G M Neal
	2990/7807	Mr J E Buckland
	3184/7808	Mr J R Catt
	3720/7809	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	3811/7810	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5653/7811	Loughborough University of Technology
	5727/7814	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	5741/7815	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5749/7816	Mrs C Neal
	6404/7817	Mr R W Hill
	1163/26014	J Davis & M Taylor
	2370/26018	Mr G Sharpe
	2732/26019	Mr Trosper
PC:	164	
Objections to PC:	332/71669	Cllr A Tampion
	3811/71634	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5608/131671	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
	5705/71484	Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd Mr N Hainsworth
	5727/73905	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	5741/70021	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Planning), Dr A Simmonds

KEY ISSUES

- 7.32 ■ Paragraph 7.29 is misleading. It should not infer that the allocation of land at Policy H/1(g) would secure construction of the EWE. Private contributions are insufficient to fund the scheme. Statutory procedures involving CPO and side road orders still need to be completed, there is no guaranteed time span.
- A dual carriageway scheme will be obtrusive and dangerous. It is not compatible with objectives to encourage use of more sustainable travel modes than the car. The final sentence of paragraph 7.29 should be changed to refer to a single carriageway road.
 - The case for the EWE is not proven. It imposes on green belt and is not a sustainable development as it will further encourage car usage.
 - Relieving congestion on Shelthorpe Road should not generate new traffic. Increased road capacity tends to generate new traffic. The EWE should be single carriageway.
 - Duplicating an existing dual carriageway section of the A6 between One Ash and Bull-in-the-Hollow is not an economical use of land, and is an intrusion into green wedge land. Questions whether an environmental appraisal of the various options has been undertaken.
 - Concerned about the timing of the works. If EWE is built prior to improvement of Epinal Way near the University campus main entrance existing difficulties entering and leaving the campus especially at peak hours are likely to be made worse.
 - The proposed road will bring more traffic and congestion to residential areas with nuisance, noise and pollution. Congestion will be transferred from the A6/Shelthorpe Road to Park Road roundabout and motorists will use Beacon Road and Park Road as short cuts. The development may lead to the conversion of Epinal Way to a dual carriageway.
 - The proposed road will destroy the character of the peaceful hamlet of Woodthorpe. Noise and sodium lighting will change the lives of villagers. The road should be realigned to join the A6 at Bull-in-the-Hollow Farm.
 - Epinal Way Extension should be re-routed to a roundabout at the Loughborough end of the existing dual carriageway with the provision of land for building next to the cemetery if necessary.
 - Epinal Way is unsuitable as a bypass. It crosses too many side roads and is already congested. A bypass is needed on the outskirts of the town;
 - The effect on Shelthorpe, local shops, schools, the university, residential areas of traffic noise and air pollution are unacceptable;
 - The EWE would remove green spaces;
 - A dual carriageway will encourage high traffic speeds and the proposed joint cycleway/footways will slow cyclists and create danger for pedestrians;

- Providing the EWE will increase pressures to dual EW through the town;
- The extra road capacity provided by the EWE will increase car dependency;
- The EWE will sever villages to the south of Loughborough from the A6 route to the town centre by foot or by cycle. Delays could be reduced by providing a bridge or underpass;
- Non-local traffic should be diverted via the A46 Leicester Western Bypass and the A50 and M1 to avoid the need to travel through Loughborough;
- Separate foot and cycleways should be provided alongside the EWE.

Issues in respect of PC 164:

- A single carriageway could be acceptable if steps were taken to minimise its intrusive effect into the countryside.
- The proposal should either be single carriageway or deleted altogether.
- The fact that the proposed housing allocation cannot fund the EWE in full is justification for withdrawing the housing proposal.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.33 The proposal to extend the A6004, Epinal Way, has attracted a variety of objections which can be summarised as follows:

- (a) The references to funding are misleading in the absence of any agreement.
- (b) The extension would be intrusive and environmentally damaging in a number of ways, especially if the extension is constructed to dual carriageway standards. The proposals fail to include separate provisions for pedestrians and cyclists.
- (c) The need is not proven. Its construction could be counter productive by generating more traffic and therefore be contrary to the guidance in PPG13.
- (d) The construction programme could cause local traffic difficulties, especially at the entrance to the University campus.
- (e) Alternative routes are available.

I deal with them in the above order but I draw the attention of objectors to my complementary assessment under Policy H/1(g), which should be read in conjunction with the following. I have tried to avoid unnecessary repetition of the points previously made but for the sake of completeness some points are reiterated.

Funding.

7.34 As I have observed at paragraph 4.189, events have overtaken the draft Plan in its references to the provision of the funding and construction of the EWE. The Plan expresses

the hope that private funding would secure the dual carriageway extension within a reasonable time span, a hope that prompted the County Council's original objection on the basis that there could be no guarantee of such an arrangement. In September 1997, when the Council produced its first statement of Proposed Changes, PC 164 reflected the new situation. Then it was hoped that the proposed dual carriageway scheme might be funded by a combination of Government grant and developers' contributions. In March 1998, following negotiations with the prospective developers of Grange Park (allocated in Policy H/1(g)), the Council was able to reconsider an amended design and proposals for its total funding by the developers which did not involve Government finance in any way. The gist of those negotiations is now incorporated in FPC 88A.

7.35 It is planned that the extension would comprise a single carriageway design from the end of the Quorn/Mountsorrel Bypass to a roundabout junction with the distributor road serving the development, and a dual carriageway design from that roundabout to the existing Park Road/Shelthorpe Road roundabout. The LCC has indicated that the detailed design and specification would still have to be approved, but that the capacity of the extension would be sufficient to meet its transportation objectives. The firm commitment to funding of the scheme by the developers overcomes the County Council's original objection and PC 164 is no longer appropriate. I recommend an alternative wording which broadly reflects FPC 88A to Policy H/1(g).

Design Standards and Environmental Considerations.

7.36 The design of the EWE and the administrative procedures necessary for its construction have now reached an advanced stage. Needless to say, the requirement to provide the infrastructure for housing proposals and to make reasonable provision for traffic movements in Loughborough has produced a conflict of interests which major road proposals often expose. In this case, some objectors consider the effects would be detrimental and outweigh any benefits claimed for it. Some consider the provision to be inadequate as far as cyclists and pedestrians are concerned. Others, that the standards are too high and that the road should be constructed as a single carriageway throughout its length. Meeting objections to its "inadequacy" by providing separate facilities would increase the impact of the scheme, if only marginally, and would further alienate those who oppose it. There is little scope for compromise in this situation, but combining the facilities for pedestrians and cyclists would seem the better solution if safety for both can be ensured. I leave that matter for the detailed consideration of the Highway Authority.

7.37 As to the decision to design the extension as a dual carriageway through the urban section, I am confident that this is the right standard to adopt. As Cllr Tampion will see I deal with this at paragraph 4.228 onwards of this report. But it is true to say that the Highway Authority has demonstrated the justification for the standards to be adopted in a number of ways, not least in terms of capacity and on safety grounds. I am mindful that the Highway Authority is ultimately responsible for the safety of all road users, motorists and pedestrians alike. That must remain a primary consideration for the Authority in my view and, insofar that it leads to a dual carriageway standard from the Park Road/Shelthorpe Road roundabout to the housing distributor road, the Council should support that decision.

7.38 While there can be no escaping the economics of adopting this design (as Cllr Tampion points out), there is no evidence that the design is driven simply by considerations of cost. The Highway Authority would be failing in its duty if it were to approve the design of inadequate and potentially dangerous roads simply to save money; and the Council would be wrong to condone such an approach simply to meet objections. I am satisfied that the Highway Authority has reached its decisions on practical and engineering considerations,

and they will have noted Cllr Tampion's detailed suggestions in evidence under the heading "A More Appropriate Modified Scheme". Such detail would be out of place in the Plan which should aim to be precise and concise in all its details.

7.39 It cannot be denied that there would be some environmental consequences of the EWE, but I take the view that not all the effects would be damaging. Whereas the intrusion into the Loughborough/Quorn Green Wedge would be the most obvious, the reduction in standard to a single carriageway is a significant concession to those who oppose the building of the road. Those same objectors would be wrong to ignore the less obvious, but measurable relief the new road would bring to the residents of the area. For those living on Shelthorpe Road and those residents of the A6 south of that road, the improvement in their environment and amenity would be significant. The fact that the former is regarded as a potential new cycle route can be regarded as one measure of the relief and of its improved safety. I make a similar point under Policy H/1(g).

7.40 The potential for re routing traffic from Loughborough town centre is also large and, with it, promises an improved town centre environment. I am sure the Highway Authority is not oblivious to the need to landscape the new road and to integrate it into the existing townscape and countryside. In that way I am quite satisfied the environmental impact of the EWE can be made acceptable.

Need and PPG13.

7.41 That there is a need for the extension is not in doubt. Policy H/1(g) provides for the development of one of the major housing sites in the Plan. Access to it is required and the amount of traffic the site would generate would be substantial. But it is also right that the opportunity should be taken to improve and rationalise the western distributor road network of Loughborough (see also Policy H/1(g) of this report). I should add that I see no conflict with these proposals and the aims of PPG13. The authors of that document acknowledged the inevitability of traffic growth in the medium term. The key aim of the guidance is to reduce it. Nothing changes the need to provide for future traffic and to introduce new traffic measures. Development generated traffic and managed traffic flows must still be provided for by the most appropriate infrastructure and design standards.

Programming and Local Difficulties.

7.42 I appreciate the concern of the University authorities about the effect the proposed housing development and extension of Epinal Way could have on access to the campus. As they point out in their evidence, the increase in traffic on Epinal Way from development at Grange Park and Fairmeadow will be significant, and could be as high as 18% above present levels. If present users of the main access to the University campus experience difficulties in entering, I have no doubt these difficulties would get worse with increased traffic.

7.43 However, the University is not objecting to the principle of the proposals. I therefore recognise no substantive objection that would warrant a modification to the Plan. The Highway Authority has addressed the question of access and egress to the campus and, as I understand the situation, the problems are considered not to be so great as to require improvements. With no evidence to refute that conclusion, and with the Council's assurance that the existing improvement lines would allow measures to be taken if they were found to be necessary, I shall not recommend any modification. This is a matter best pursued with the Highway Authority at the appropriate time.

Alternative Routes.

7.44 The short answer to those who seek an alternative bypass on the outskirts of the town, or see the regional road network as providing a means to ease Loughborough's internal traffic problems, is that neither would be feasible. Given the lead time required to bring about infrastructural change, (never less than about seven years and sometimes much longer), I consider that the Council and the Highway Authority have no alternative but to adapt and to improve the existing network. I am content that their proposals for Epinal Way represent the most sensible solution available to them in the short and medium term. That is not to deny some of the shortcomings of this route which objectors have been quick to point out. It does have many side roads and access from these will continue to cause difficulties. Nevertheless, Epinal Way represents the best of a very limited range of alternatives, in my considered view.

7.45 I have attempted to deal with these objections quite fully, while not repeating my previous comments and whilst also recognising that the policy does no more than protect land from inappropriate development. No objection has given me cause to reconsider the appropriateness of the policy. I am satisfied that the A6004 Epinal Way Extension meets the tests I outline above, especially as the scheme received the endorsement of the Department of Environment and Transport in the 1998-1999 Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement as part of the Shepshed-Loughborough package.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.46 I recommend that the Plan be not modified in accordance with PC 164 but that paragraph 7.29 be updated to reflect the current design standards for the Epinal Way Extension, approved by the County Council, and the funding arrangements agreed with developers, in accordance with my recommendations for Policy H/1(g).

POLICY TR/2(ii) - A6 LOUGHBOROUGH INNER RELIEF ROAD BETWEEN BRIDGE STREET AND BARROW STREET

OBJECTIONS	260/7818	GO-EM
	301/7819	Del Rosa Developments Ltd, Mr M Smallman
	2796/7820	Cllr R Shields
	3720/7821	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	3818/7822	ATS Ltd, Mr R J Williamson
	3859/7823	Mr K R Kaiser
	5633/7824	David Wilson Estates Ltd, Mr FW Graves
	5693/7825	National Grid plc
	5741/7826	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5774/7827	Bryant Homes East Midlands Ltd
	6095/7828	Loughborough Echo, Mr J Rippin
	6096/7829	Mr R Curtis
	6097/7830	Mr R Deakin
PC:	165	
Objections to PC:	5608/131672	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
	7113/74147	Sefton Metalwork Display
	7370/131697	Mr L Hulme

7390/74735 Mr N Paget
7391/74736 Save the Historic Wharf Campaign, Mr M S Clowes
7392/74737 Mr L B Hinsley

KEY ISSUES

- 7.47 ■ Questions whether it is realistic for this scheme to be constructed in the plan period given reductions in public funding and the non-listing of the scheme in the current TPP.
- Figure 5 of the Deposit Draft Plan is misleading as details of the scheme have not yet been determined. It should be deleted.
 - The scheme will not be constructed in the Plan period, has already blighted property/development along its route and has no useful purpose in the town. Some buildings on the route are now of local interest, such as the school on Pinfold Gate. The scheme should be deleted but modifications should be to some junctions and existing road lines.
 - The IRR would destroy the wharf area. This is part of the town's heritage and offers great potential for development as a marina with associated business boosting tourism and enhancing the appeal of this part of the town.
 - The case for an IRR is not proven. It merely displaces traffic sideways. It would sever one part of the town from the centre, destroy the Wharf, is too close to important conservation areas around the Parish Church and affects too many architecturally interesting buildings such as Warners Corner, Unity House and other buildings along Fennel Street.
 - The scale of the IRR is excessive and inappropriate so close to the town centre. It will encourage faster traffic and hamper access to ATS and other properties along Bridge Street. ATS Ltd would object to any loss of land in their ownership and it could lead to a claim against the local authority. It is requested that Bridge Street is declassified from 'A' status to accommodate a considerably scaled down IRR, and any alterations to roads outside the objector's premises are removed.
 - Properties in this area will be blighted by the IRR and the area has been designated as an 'Opportunity Site' without consultation. The result is serious harm to the financial viability of the Opportunity Site site, and creation of an eyesore with reduced prospects for redevelopment. Redevelopment will be thwarted by excessive planning gain demands. The A6 should be re-routed via the EWE to enable a traffic free pedestrianised town centre without the IRR.
 - Delete the scheme. There appears no realistic prospect of it being built. It is not acceptable to require contributions for its construction from the adjacent Opportunity Sites.
 - The IRR will not relieve the town centre of extraneous traffic and secure environmental and public transport benefits. It should be abandoned. The benefits and means of implementation of the scheme are not clear. The scheme could have a devastating effect on the town's urban fabric.

Issues in respect of PC 165

- The amended route still affects the Wharf area. There are implications in terms of noise; screening; loss of relics of an historic tramway and also the old buildings fronting Derby Road.
- The amended route encroaches on the Wharf site.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.48 I set out at paragraph 7.28 the three tests that I apply in my consideration of schemes included in this Plan;

- i) *Is it included in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3?*
- ii) *If so, is there a likelihood of it being constructed within the Plan period?*
- iii) *If not, is it of such long term strategic importance that land should be reserved?*

7.49 The proposals for Loughborough Inner Relief Road require careful scrutiny within that framework. However, it seems to me that the three questions quickly devolve into the third as this is not a scheme that is likely to be constructed within the Plan period. Whether it should be included in the Plan depends on evaluating its relevance and long term strategic importance (at a time when the Council is reshaping its transport policies), and measuring these considerations against the interests of those most affected by the uncertainty surrounding its construction.

7.50 Any assessment that I make will be complementary to the 1992 conclusions of the Inspector dealing with objections to the Loughborough Local Plan, and to the comments by the Highways Agency in 1997, both of which addressed the principle and future of the Inner Relief Road. I shall bear in mind that the Council now adopts a more holistic approach to transport planning, an approach that may not have been evident in 1992, and which had still to find financial support in 1997.

7.51 A somewhat mixed message came from the Highways Agency in 1997. Then, it seemed intent on keeping its trunk road options open. It hardly moved the debate forwards by advocating trunk road standards for the Inner Relief Road whilst holding out the prospect of the trunking of Epinal Way. But it did acknowledge that the future route of the A6 trunk road did not necessarily run through the town centre of Loughborough. This was an important concession, I believe. But a more important pointer to the future of the trunk road lies, perhaps, in the 1998-1999 Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement with the implied invitation to the Council to submit its proposals for the extension of Epinal Way. Clearly, the options for re-routing traffic remain open. With the prospect of its improvement, the pendulum would seem to have swung marginally towards the trunking of Epinal Way sometime in the future, although I should quickly acknowledge that the EWE is not being promoted as an alternative trunk road at the moment.

7.52 In making those points it is not my intention to anticipate or even speculate on a policy decision yet to be made by a Government department. My purpose is simply to consider whether the Inner Relief Road could have a future other than as a trunk road. In my view it would be possible. The acknowledged benefits of diverted traffic would remain; those being an expansion of the town centre with the viability of opportunity sites improved,

an enhanced and safer environment for town centre visitors, and a broader canvas of opportunity to implement significant transport measures. In whatever guise the IRR was eventually constructed, it could have a lasting and beneficial influence on the way the town centre developed.

7.53 If, indeed, it were to be constructed simply for traffic management purposes, with environmental and commercial improvements, in my opinion it would be justified on those scores alone, and still be fully in accord with the principles of PPG13. Additional advantages would be a less demanding specification and a possible reduction in land requirements. The experience of redesigning the wharf area junction is evidence of where such compromises can lead. I accept the Council's evidence that the loss of some land at the Wharf site would, at worst, be modest and would not detract from its heritage value, or its potential for a high quality redevelopment. The blight that may now seem apparent may be less real as plans evolve. I do not subscribe to the view that the land take would be excessive or out of all proportion to the benefits of the scheme.

7.54 While I recognise the difficulties of funding such an ambitious scheme, the prospects for the Inner Relief Road seem to have been improved rather than damaged by recent events. My sole concern with this policy is to judge whether it would be right to continue with land reservations to ensure that unrelated development should not prove an obstacle to future construction. I am with the Council and the previous Inspector in that respect. I feel on even firmer ground than he was in finding the concept of protecting the safeguarded corridor worthy of support. He did not propose any modification. I shall, simply to reflect the work done to modify the land reservations at the Wharf Basin as set out in PC 165. I should add that the historical and functional importance of the Wharf and the Canal Basin has been recognised by the Council in other respects. This concern is reflected in Policy RT/17 (Grand Union Canal Opportunity Site) and in PC 228. I have supported that policy and PC 228; my conclusions on these are in paragraphs 9.114 to 9.116 of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

7.55 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 165.

POLICY TR/2 (iii) - A607 REARSBY BYPASS

OBJECTIONS	65/7831	The Moakes Family Group, Mr R Moakes
	3816/7832	Environment Agency, Midlands Region
	5741/7834	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5655/24832	Rearsby Ltd, Mr J Vaughan (see Policy E/5(e))

KEY ISSUES

- 7.56 ■ Concerned that should the scheme may not attract 1997/98 TPP funding [which it did not] the LCC will need to consider whether to make a further bid.
- Object to any new roads and highway improvements within washland unless it has been demonstrated by modelling techniques to the Environment Agency's satisfaction that any new works would provide adequate openings at river crossings and far flood flows, and that any variation in flood levels would be negligible.

- The scheme should be given low priority when compared with the need for fire stations, railway extensions, cycle paths, youth facilities etc.

CONCLUSIONS

7.57 As I have reported under a number of housing proposals, the Highway Authority regards the timing of the Bypass as uncertain. So far, the scheme has failed to attract Government funds and, until very recently, the Government's lack of commitment to major transport schemes was another discouraging factor. However, the fact that the scheme appears in the Structure Plan guarantees its continuing consideration by the LCC. More recently, the Government has sounded a more positive note about infrastructure expenditure, especially when linked with environmental improvements. I should also make the point that developer funding in whole or in part may be a possibility. It seems to me that it would seem premature, therefore, to write off a scheme that meets at least three of the criteria outlined in the Structure Plan's Transport Policy 2, and passes some of the tests outlined above.

7.58 Where that leaves it in the scale of the LCC's priorities is less clear, but the Highway Authority's reservations about the timing of the scheme do not extend to ruling the scheme out of contention altogether. On that basis I see no reason to recommend its deletion from what is, after all, a protective policy. To remove the protection of land that this policy would otherwise provide would be wrong. Eventually it may be the willingness or otherwise of Government to fund the scheme which will be the determinant. Its value will be weighed against other candidates for grant aid and it would be wrong for me to even attempt to anticipate the outcome, or to make the judgements urged by Mr Moakes. The Environment Agency's concerns will be known to the LCC. I think a reasonable conclusion for me to draw in that respect is that an adequate design that satisfied that Agency would surely be a prerequisite in any circumstance.

RECOMMENDATION

7.59 I recommend that no modification be made in response to these objections.

POLICY TR/2 (iv) - A6006 WYMESWOLD BYPASS

OBJECTIONS	58/7835	Mr & Mrs M Prockter
	258/7836	R G Perry
	260/7837	GO-EM
	296/7838	R L Wilford
	3811/7839	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5650/7840	Mr A Birkle
	5682/7841	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5741/7842	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams

PC: 166

Objections to PC: 5608/131673 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.60 ■ Questions whether it is realistic for this scheme to be constructed in the plan period given reductions in public funding and the fact that the scheme is not

listed in the current TPP.

- No assessments have been undertaken and the defined corridor has not been approved by the LCC.
- The present traffic situation in Wymeswold is best remedied by traffic calming rather than building a section of new road through an area of small fields and tall hedges of considerable landscape value.
- Delete the scheme as there appears to be no commitment by the LCC. Prospects of achieving the scheme might be improved if land between the safeguarded area and the village was allocated for housing to help fund the road.
- The scheme is not programmed to be built, is unlikely within 25 years to attract public funding, and could not be funded from development without implications for the village. The route shown in the Local Plan does not conform with that outlined in the Structure Plan. The safeguarded area is excessive and appears to be drawn to restrict development proposals.
- Object on the following grounds:
 - The reservation is excessive;
 - The road is not programmed and is unlikely to be built within the plan period;
 - The reservation should be deleted or amended so as not to rule out the prospect of development off Wysall Lane;
 - Instead of building a bypass there should be traffic calming through the village;
 - The road would have an unacceptable environmental impact. As shown it would be too close to the village and likely to result to pressures for development within it. Any corridor should be widened, moved further north and only chosen on the basis of a thorough appraisal.
- PC 166 - the change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.61 I deal with the proposed Wymeswold Bypass at paragraph 7.29 above. There is no reasonable prospect of it being constructed within the Plan period. Neither the LCC nor Government holds out any hope of the scheme being prepared or funded within that time scale. Its relative importance is not an issue if land to be protected cannot be identified. The Council acknowledges the fact with PC 166, which would delete the scheme from the policy, and I have recommended accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

7.62 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 166.

POLICY TR/3 - SAFEGUARDING STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES

OBJECTIONS	260/7844	GO-EM
	260/7843	GO-EM
	332/7845	Cllr A Tampion
	3720/7846	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	5741/7848	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5682/7847	Shire

PC: 170

KEY ISSUES

- 7.63 ■ Object to the County road schemes listed in the policy as they are not specifically referred to in the current TPP and some are not listed in the Structure Plan. The schemes are not likely to start within the Plan period and to avoid blight they should not be included.
- The A60 Cotes Bridge improvement and Meadow Lane footbridge are not considered to be strategically important and reference to them should be deleted.
- Increasing road capacity has been conclusively demonstrated to encourage more motor traffic. This results in increased danger and environmental degradation of people's environments. The aim should be to reduce traffic and encourage more efficient and environmentally benign modes. The policy should be deleted with the possible exception of the Greenclose Lane scheme.
- The policy does not encourage sustainable transport but adds to the problems of unsustainable growth in vehicle use.
- The Plan should seek to provide for long approved schemes which await major government funding, especially those designed to carry forward further communications improvements at the key points around Loughborough which act against its vitality and growth.

CONCLUSIONS

7.64 I have already recommended the combining of Policy TR/2 and Policy TR/3 in the form outlined at paragraph 7.31 above. In that section I addressed the objection of the Green Party as they raised the fundamental issue of whether there is a place in the Plan for safeguarding policies such as TR/3, (and TR/2). They will have noted my conclusions. For Cllr Tampion's benefit I repeat that I have no doubt that there is. PPG13 sets out realistic objectives for reducing the growth in the length and number of motorised journeys, for encouraging alternative means of travel to the motor car and thereby seeking to lessen the environmental impact of modern day traffic. Infrastructure improvements will continue to be needed in some shape or form and for some time to come.

7.65 The guidance brings together the Government's complementary objectives of sustainable development and environmental improvement. Government policy does not seek

to reverse or even slow economic growth. The former is a primary objective Government expects to achieve in substantial terms over the next few years. An efficient transportation system goes hand in hand with an expanding economy.

7.66 It is unrealistic, therefore, to argue that all road building and improvements should stop. Some routes lack the capacity to carry the traffic they presently attract. Environmental degradation continues because of the lack of alternatives. In my view, it must be prudent to prepare for the day when improvements could be undertaken. I therefore approach my consideration of the schemes in Policy TR/3 with that in mind, and the tests I outlined above.

7.67 I consider that the references to the A60 Cotes Bridge and Meadow Lane footbridge in Policy TR/3 are not appropriate. Neither is included in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3 nor could they be regarded as strategically important, despite the claim in the Deposit Plan. There can be little prospect of their construction during the Plan period and they have no place in this Plan as PC 170 now makes clear.

RECOMMENDATION

7.68 I recommend that Policy TR/3 be deleted from the Plan except that schemes (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) be included in Policy TR/2, as proposed to be modified, and the RJ be modified in accordance with PC 170.

POLICY TR/3(i) - M1 WIDENING

OBJECTION 3720/26041 The Loughborough Green Party

PC: 167

Objections to PC: 5608/131674 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.69 ■ Motorway widening symbolises all that is wrong with transport policy.
- PC 167 - the change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.70 Objectors point out, and the Council acknowledges that changes have occurred in the trunk road programme that would exclude the scheme to widen the M1 Motorway between junctions 21A and 23A. The provision for hill climbing lanes on sections of the motorway remains in the trunk road programme, as described in PC 167, and land reservations are still required. I refer Mr Long to my paragraph 7.12.

RECOMMENDATION

7.71 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 167.

POLICY TR/3 (ii) - A512 ASHBY ROAD, LOUGHBOROUGH

OBJECTIONS	260/7818	GO-EM
	1350/7849	J D Brinklow
	3720/26042	Loughborough Green Party
	3811/7850	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	6875/7851	BP Oil UK Ltd

PC: 168

Objections to PC:	3811/71636	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5727/73907	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	5608/131675	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.72 ■ The scheme is not referred to in the TPP. It is unlikely to attract public funding within the plan period. Inclusion could lead to blight.
- The scheme will result in the destruction of an unacceptable number of mature trees.
- The scheme could not be achieved without considerable environmental damage. Dualled roads lead to high vehicle speeds regardless of the speed limits imposed. The “bottleneck” single carriageway section of the A512 immediately west of the Epinal Way roundabout performs a useful function in slowing traffic down. The scheme should be deleted.
- Object to the scheme as it is not listed in the TPP as a project to be undertaken by 2001 and no funding is available. The scheme is unlikely to take place within the plan period. The safeguarded area includes a considerable part of the BP service station site that does not meet current safety standards and is in need of redevelopment. This cannot take place due to uncertainty of whether the widening will ever happen. The Local Plan should make adequate alternative provision for a replacement, larger site for modern roadside facilities to the south of the reservation.
- The scheme will promote car culture, and increase traffic thereby defeating the objective of the widening. The scheme is considered a waste of time as other than at peak times traffic is free flowing. Waiting times at peak periods are not unreasonable.

Issues in respect of PC 168

- Concerned that environmental damage as a consequence of any improvement work on the A512 west of the Epinal Way roundabout is not addressed.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG1

CONCLUSIONS

7.73 The objections concern inconsistency with Government policies, doubts about the

likelihood of funding and warnings about environmental damage occurring if an improvement scheme were to proceed. I have dealt at some length with what I shall refer to as the “fundamental” objections to Policy TR/3 and I shall not repeat myself here. As to funding, I think it is true to say that the 1998-99 Local Transport Capital Expenditure Settlement, with its acceptance of the Loughborough and Shepshed package bid, (albeit for only £250,000 and in non-specific terms), casts a more favourable light on the prospects for improving Ashby Road.

7.74 Within the developing transportation strategy for Loughborough and Shepshed the emphasis is clearly shifting towards a more holistic approach in which an increasing use of efficient and less polluting transport is the main aim. Ashby Road provides the main link between Shepshed and Loughborough, it is a key element in the local infrastructure and offers an ideal opportunity to provide for alternative transport modes. Such modes, whether it be cycles or buses, needs capacity to be effective. For much of its length, Ashby Road has the capacity to provide for new measures, but these would have to be curtailed unless improvements were made to its western end and the approaches to Epinal Way where the road width narrows.

7.75 I sympathise with the dilemma of BP and the uncertainty surrounding its petrol filling station at the western end of Ashby Road. However, the Plan provides for the building of roadside service areas under Policy TR/33, albeit with restrictions relating to countryside designations. If there is a need, and it is for BP to demonstrate that there is, the Council may surely entertain a proposal that seeks to replace the existing station. Again, that is a matter for BP to pursue, and not an outcome for me to anticipate. I am quite sure, however, that it should not be sufficient reason to modify a policy intended to reserve land for road improvements. The option to improve a short length of Ashby Road west of the Epinal Way roundabout should also be retained. These land reservations and the consequential effects are justified in PC 168 and I recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

7.76 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 168.

POLICY TR/3 (iii) - A6004 EPINAL WAY/WARWICK WAY, LOUGHBOROUGH

OBJECTIONS	260/7844	GO-EM
	3811/7853	CPRE
	5653/7854	Stansgate Planning for Loughborough University of Technology
	1350/7852	J Brinklow

KEY ISSUES

- 7.77
- The scheme is not referred to in the TPP or the Structure Plan. It is unlikely to attract public funding within the plan period. Inclusion could lead to blight.
 - The A6004 should only function as a distributor road. If dualled the extra capacity may induce more long distance traffic to pass through the town and encourage higher vehicle speeds.
 - Wish to see the scheme implemented as soon as possible in order to improve

safety and traffic flows at the main university campus entrance. Completion of the EWE in advance of improvements at the campus entrance will make the existing situation even more unsatisfactory.

- The scheme will promote car culture and increase traffic. It is unnecessary, as other than at peak times traffic is free flowing. Waiting times at peak periods are not unreasonable and the scheme will mainly benefit through traffic. Widening of Epinal Way will increase the barrier effect of the road and remove trees, grass verges, and flower borders which are attractive features now they are maturing.

CONCLUSIONS

7.78 I find nothing new in these objections to justify a revision of my conclusions under Policy TR/2(i)

RECOMMENDATION

7.79 I recommend that no modification be made to the Plan in response to these objections.

POLICY TR/3(iv) - GREENCLOSE LANE, LOUGHBOROUGH

OBJECTION	3720/7846	The Loughborough Green Party
PC:	169	
Objections to PC:	5608/131676	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
	7320/74121	Ruth Youngs

KEY ISSUES

7.80 ■ Concerned the scheme affects a complementary health centre, the loss of which would be unacceptable given its central location. Relocation would be prejudiced by the policies for the Town Centre/Outer Area in the Plan.

Issues in respect of PC 169

- Object to the change and to the inclusion of the phrase “could enable improved traffic circulation...”. Improved traffic circulation would only serve to encourage more traffic journeys and does nothing for demand management.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.81 Greenclose Lane provides an obvious traffic link between Ashby Road and the A6 that the alignment of Ashby Square cannot provide. The alternative, via Broad Street, is unsuitable for a number of reasons, not least because of the housing on the eastern side and the lack of opportunity for improvement. Greenclose Lane also provides a direct link with Frederick Street and is rightly regarded by the Council as an important element of any future gyratory system. It would therefore be prudent for its potential to be protected,

notwithstanding the blight such a reservation might inflict. PC 169 is designed to add a little more information to the Plan; I recommend a slightly revised version.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.82 I recommend that PC 169 be not implemented but that paragraph 7.38 of the Plan be modified to read:-

- (i) **“The improvement of Greenclose Lane would enable traffic circulation to be improved and permit the implementation of priority measures for buses and cyclists as part of wider measures to improve the town centre. The reservation is intended to facilitate such improvement”.**

POLICY TR/4 - SOUTHFIELDS ROAD, LOUGHBOROUGH – HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

OBJECTIONS	260/7855	GO-EM
	3720/7856	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	5705/25677	Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd, Mr N Hainsworth - See H/34
	5741/7857	LCC- Highways, Ms V Adams

PC: 171

Objections to PC: 5608/131678 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

7.83 ■ The scheme is not listed in the Structure Plan or TPP. It could be inferred that a significant amount of road improvement is expected in the Plan period. Government resources allocated to major road schemes have been much reduced. If the scheme is to be constructed with the assistance of private contributions it should still need to be included (PPG13). It is unlikely all schemes in Policies TR/4, TR/5 and TR/6 could be constructed in the Plan period.

- There is a lack of clarity with regard to blight liability. The policy should be deleted and the scheme included in Policy TR/5

- The stretch of road is already conducive to speeding and is dangerous for cyclists. Speeding traffic is a hazard to pedestrians. The Tap and Spile Public House is in a Conservation Area and should be protected.

Issues in respect of PC 171

- The original objection by LCC is maintained.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSION

7.84 It seems to me that Southfields Road also forms an essential part of the town centre’s

gyratory system and it is right that it be improved to a standard suitable to perform that function. Insofar as development might prejudice the standard the Council wishes to achieve, the reservation is justifiable, even if problems of blight may result. Criticism of the way the road is presently used may well be warranted, but if Southfields Road is to perform a function within a wider traffic scheme it must be equal to the task. The problems of traffic management and speeding are for the appropriate authorities to deal with and are not matters for the Plan.

7.85 I acknowledge GO-EM's objection about the status of this proposal. It is not included in Structure Plan Transport Policy 3 and would therefore fail the first of the tests I set out at paragraph 7.28. But I also accept that it should be regarded in the light of the Loughborough/Shepshed Package strategy, which has found Government acceptance and which will evolve over the Plan period. It is clearly a scheme which would pass my third test, albeit in the context of that package.

7.86 Whether the scheme is deserving of a separate policy in the Plan is another matter. It seems that the acceptance of the package now offers the opportunity to replace Policies TR/4 and TR/5 with one more obviously related to package proposals. GO-EM is concerned about the level of expectation raised by a number of policies in the Plan. One policy, based on the package, would represent a more realistic statement of the likely extent of *local* road improvements which would be largely confined to the Loughborough and Shepshed area. Such a policy would seem to be the most appropriate home for the Southfields Road proposal and any others that might emerge in the light of the package's development.

7.87 At the time of this report, the 1998-1999 TPP illustrates the importance of various local links in Figures 11.2 and 11.3. It will be for the Council to identify and list the most important of these in a new Policy TR/4. In the light of GO-EM's objection, I suggest it would then be unrealistic to look beyond that list during this Plan period. PC 171 would explain the role of Southfields Road in the Loughborough/Shepshed Package.

7.88 The objection by Persimmon Homes North Midland Ltd is considered under Policy H/34.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.89 I recommend that the existing title "Southfields Road, Loughborough - Highway Improvement Scheme" be deleted and replaced by the following:-

"Local Highway Improvement Schemes in Loughborough and Shepshed", and modified to read:

"Policy TR/4

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the improvement of roads identified in the Loughborough/Shepshed Package of local traffic measures and listed below".

[To be completed as appropriate].

and that the RJ be modified in accordance with PC 171.

improvements within the washlands/flood plain of the River Soar unless it has been demonstrated using hydrological modelling techniques that new works have been designed to provide adequate openings at river crossings and for flood flows, and that any variation in flood level is negligible.

- Implementation of sub paragraph (v) will result in the unnecessary loss of green farmland, leaving the present alignment as a sterile strip of tarmac. The proposed distributor road should link into the present A6.
- Object to the Policy in general.
- The proposed flood free link at sub paragraph (vii) would cause great damage to sites of ecological interest along the existing highway margins which owe much of their character to regular flooding.
- The flood prevention scheme on the B675 between Barrow upon Soar and Quorn has been successful in the provision of a flood free cross valley route. An additional route is no longer required. HGVs can still use Slash Lane in all but the most exceptional cases of flooding. The statement in sub paragraph 7.15(iii) should be deleted along with sub paragraph (vii) of the policy.
- General support for Policy TR/6 but objection to sub paragraph (vii) for a flood free link across the Soar Valley in relation to the proposed employment allocation at Rothley Lodge (Policy E/5(f)). It is considered that such a flood free link may no longer be justified or necessary given flood alleviation measures, and that improvement of Slash Lane would benefit only existing industry and lorries. The scheme might not be feasible and would noticeably impact upon the Soar valley.
- If the schemes are wholly developer funded the need for them arises as a result of the development proposals concerned. If the development proposals do not proceed there will be no need for the schemes. There can be no compelling requirement in the public interest to restrict other development proposals which may prejudice those schemes. The Policy should be deleted.

Issues in respect of PC 172:

- The change does not alter the principle of development on agricultural land.
- Object to the change in relation to the distributor road.
- The distributor road will still be flawed in terms of access/egress.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.94 I have dealt with the question of reasonable expectations raised by this Plan in preceding conclusions, and with the objection to sub paragraph 7.15(iii) of the Plan (see PC 163). Policy TR/6 is required to safeguard access to development proposed under the Housing and Employment chapters in this Plan, and to establish the principle of development funded access schemes. The Plan will be reviewed, in time, and provide the opportunity for the concerns of Objector No.5680 to be addressed. Until then, it is right that planning

permission be refused for proposals that might prejudice the modified list of highway improvements.

7.95 A number of objections challenge the inclusion of the schemes at sub paragraphs (ii) and (vii) in the Deposit Draft on the basis of their relationship with the proposed developments. The Council acknowledges that their inclusion would be inappropriate and I have made my own assessment of paragraph (ii) in the context of Policy H/1(r), where I concur. I am content, therefore, to recommend PC 172 which would delete those proposals. PC 163 above meets the concerns of Objector Nos. 3811 and 5727 regarding sub paragraph 7.15(iii) of the Plan. The Environment Agency's concerns about roads in the washlands/flood plain of the River Soar will be known to the LCC. As I point out above, I think a reasonable conclusion for me to draw is that an adequate design would surely be a prerequisite of approval and construction.

7.96 FPC 172A would add protection for a new local distributor road shown on FPC MAP No.4. I agree with this. However, the wording of FPC 172A is ambiguous. It should refer to the **deletion** of sub paragraph (iv) in the Deposit Draft and it's **replacement** with the text at sub paragraph (iv) in FPC 172A. Paragraph 7.46 remains unchanged except for the reference to FPC 172A.

7.97 It seems to me that the Revisions Document (CD/53) incorrectly shows the effect of PC 172 and PC 172A.

7.98 There are objections which refer directly to the environmental costs of the diversion and realignment, and the prospect of a "sterile strip of tarmac" remaining. My understanding of the process of trunk road realignment is that bypassed sections are detrunked and reinstated to their former land use, unless needed for access or other purposes. The process provides a quid pro quo, in effect, and the overall environmental effect of a trunk road diversion could be at best minimal, and at worst purely functional.

7.99 On that basis, I do not consider those objections warrant any further changes. I am also not convinced that this quite extensive new network of distributor roads and a trunk road diversion would necessarily fall to be developer funded, not wholly at any rate. Paragraph 7.45 should, therefore, include a suitable acknowledgement of the rules which determine planning obligations, it should not be assumed that developer funding can be guaranteed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.100 I recommend that:

- (i) Having regard to my conclusions at paragraph 7.96, the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 172 and FPC 172A.**
- (ii) the last sentence of paragraph 7.45 be deleted and replaced by:
"It is expected that the Borough Council will seek to negotiate reasonably related contributions from developers to fund these improvements, secured through planning agreements and in accordance with the rules governing planning obligations".**
- (iii) references to schemes in paragraph 7.46 be modified to be consistent with the above recommendations.**

POLICY TR/7 - TRANSPORT STANDARDS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIONS	259/7862	GO-EM Mr M Gorman
	3817/25731	A W Stott - See H/1(r)
	5680/7864	George Wimpey Plc (formerly McLean Homes Ltd), Mr Gough
	5741/7865	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5781/7866	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Planning), Dr A Simmonds
	5838/25493	CBC Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr A W Stott - See H/1(r)

PC: 173

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

KEY ISSUES

- 7.101 ■ The term “will take into account, amongst other requirements” is vague and needs to be clarified. The reference to the County Council’s highway requirements in sub paragraph vi) should be removed or clarified; or the standards should be incorporated into the plan provided that they are not unduly detailed.
- The reference to the County Council’s “Highway Requirements for Development” should not refer to 1991 as these are likely to be revised within the plan period; or insert “or any superseding documents”.
 - In sub paragraph (ii) the phrase “close to land uses with a similar trip generation pattern” could result in intensification of problems. It is better to use the word “complementary” or wording that better reflects the policy aims.
 - Sub paragraphs (iii) to (iv) should all be essential requirements of all new developments and not just factors to be taken into account. The policy should be modified or a new policy created to differentiate essential requirements and other factors.
 - Although 400 metres should be regarded as an absolute distance for walking to a bus route, a more acceptable maximum would be 200 metres.
 - Delete the policy. A developer is not able to ensure that efficient and commercially viable public transport connections exist between housing sites and key destinations. It is unreasonable to require residential developments to provide for buses and cycle ways within sites, and cycle ways and footway links to networks outside them. Such links may involve third party land and may not be achievable. This could deny the development costs and could make some sites uneconomic or increase housing costs and reduce the level of access to the housing market.

Issues in respect of PC 173:

- The Policy should read: “..planning permission may be granted”.

- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.102 I deal with Mr Stott's related objections under Policy H/1(r). Regarding the other objections, I should say that I expect the setting of the standards for the infrastructure of development proposals to be an integral part of any Local Plan which aims to provide direction and guidance to developers. Policy TR/7 seeks to do both these things, but it seems to me to exceed the limits of reasonable expectations in a number of criteria and requires further modification to that proposed by PC 173.

7.103 I am mindful that all of the major housing and employment locations have been determined by the Council and that further major proposals for those uses would not be in accordance with this Plan. The Policy would therefore seem to have a limited application outside the sites which the Council has designated. If that be the case, I am with the objector who considers the requirement that housing should be serviced by, "efficient and commercially viable public transport" is something a developer could not provide or guarantee.

7.104 The objector could have added that public transport connections were a primary consideration of the Council in its site selection. If the Council had failed to locate major housing and employment sites where public transport can operate, it could hardly expect a developer to make good that omission. Criterion (i) is over demanding in requiring developers of designated sites to judge the viability of public transport operations, and would be even more so of those with lesser proposals. The criterion should be modified to omit that qualification.

7.105 PC 173 would meet many of the other objections and it removes the reference to now dated highway requirements. I am with the Council in resisting more stringent requirements for the walking distance to bus routes, and in expressing the policy in positive terms such as "planning permission will be granted". However, I believe that criterion (ii) would better reflect the RJ if, in addition to the proposed change, the word, "compatible", were used to describe any neighbouring land uses and activities. Social and economic harmony has always been at the root of urban planning, and finding an acceptable balance between competing interests has an added importance with the publication of PPG13. The recommended modifications would still concentrate the thrust of this policy on ensuring an infrastructure best suited to the Council's transport aims and objectives. The proposed modifications would remove those objectives which clearly lie outside the control of developers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.106 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 173 and be further modified by the deletion of the words, "efficient and commercially viable" in criterion (i) and by the insertion of the word, "compatible" before the word, "land-uses" in criterion (ii).

POLICY TR/8 - TRAFFIC GENERATION FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIONS	259/7867	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	287/26012	Dr D McNeil
	2407/7868	Leicestershire Bridleways Association, Mrs V Allen
	3817/25732	A W Stott - See H/1(r)

4824/25843	BAD, Mrs E M Allen - See H/1(r)
5635/7869	Birstall Parish Council, Mrs D Wilson
5680/7870	George Wimpey Plc (formerly McLean Homes Ltd), Mr R Gough
5682/7871	Shire
5741/7872	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
5838/7873	CBC Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr A W Stott

PC: 174

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

FPC: 174A

KEY ISSUES

- 7.107 ■ The phrase “planning gain” in the second paragraph has no statutory significance (Circular 16/91, paragraph B2). The third paragraph requiring a Traffic Impact Assessment is an administrative action. The final paragraph is worded as an administrative action. These aspects should be deleted from the policy.
- The policy gives no standards for junctions with the existing road network.
 - The policy needs to be strengthened to place greater emphasis on the need to manage traffic generation. The policy should be amended to refer to commuter plans, where appropriate, and other measures to reduce traffic generation and maximise the use of other modes. In sub paragraph ii) the words “unreasonable pressure” could be misinterpreted. It would be better to reflect Structure Plan policy.
 - At the local level in paragraph (iii) it may not be necessary to relate just to main roads and main road junctions. The reference should be deleted to make the policy less strategic. The policy should be modified to accord with Structure Plan Transport Policy 4.
 - The reference in paragraph (iv) to “unless satisfactory and environmentally acceptable improvements to the transport network with a reasonable design life are provided to overcome such harmful effects” should refer to the whole policy.
 - Delete “unacceptable” from sub paragraph (i). Any additional “planned in” danger is not acceptable when added to the overall traffic growth likely over the plan period. The evidence is that in the past ‘Traffic Impact Assessments’ do not adequately reflect the usage by and effect on equestrians/cyclists.
 - New development proposals should be in locations that will not generate traffic problems or exacerbate existing ones. Any off site highway works designed to mitigate the traffic generated by development should take account of projected traffic levels to the end of the plan period.
 - Amend the Policy to ensure that consideration of development

proposals within the Borough takes account of the traffic generated by the developments outside, but neighbouring the Borough.

- Amend the Policy to make clear it does not apply to residential development. It is unreasonable to require that any necessary improvements contribute to “genuine long term transport choice facilities”. TIA’s should not apply to residential proposals. The release of large parcels for housing is likely to be restricted to allocated sites. If traffic generation from such sites was considered unacceptable they should not be allocated.
- Problems are envisaged in isolating the infrastructure relevant to a development as one moves away from the site where impacts may be caused by a multiplicity of sources. TIA’s can produce pessimistic results because of their use of large growth factors. Care is needed in considering their findings, especially when contributions covering any distant impacts are sought.

Issues in respect of PC 174:

- Original objection by LCC is maintained. The supporting text should be modified to include guidance relating to the traffic threshold above which a TIA is required.
- Original objection by Charnwood Liberal Democrat Group is maintained.
- Object to the change as it includes the words: “ ..a large proportion of the additional vehicles as heavy goods traffic..”. This invites challenges to proposals which have a minimal effect on existing traffic patterns. It could have detrimental economic impact. The intensity of HGV movements relative to existing traffic patterns is a more useful measure..” and the quantitative criteria as given in the preceding two clauses is the only acceptable form of qualification. The qualifications in paragraph 7.54 are, perhaps, a more relevant criterion for the assessment of HGV impact.
- The Policy should be deleted. It is inappropriate to require commuter plans to be submitted with planning applications.
- The provisions of the Policy are unreasonable and unduly onerous.
- The Policy is extremely broad and lacking in explanation of what is meant by “large scale developments” in the clause relating to Traffic Impact assessments. All proposals of a commercial, employment or industrial nature should be required to limit the amount of car parking and implement “Green Commuter Plans”.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.
- Support the change if it is limited to that proposed to paragraph 7.54.

CONCLUSIONS

7.108 I deal with Mr Stott’s, BPC’s and BAD’s related objections under Policy H/1(r) where the effect of generated traffic is taken into account. I have no need to repeat my conclusions here. The Council’s obvious desire is to minimise the impact of traffic generated by new

development and my understanding of CD/8, “Technical Report on the Assessment of Potential Development Sites”, is that this consideration featured large in its deliberations when making housing, employment and other land use designations. It is reasonable to presume, therefore, that the Council considers that development of all its designated sites can be undertaken without unreasonable pressure on the existing highway system, or an unacceptable increase in its dangers. That being the case, it seems to me that this policy should only have direct application to non-designated development sites, and should be thus conditioned; I shall proceed on that basis.

7.109 If my premise were wrong, and this Policy had a more general application, it would be unacceptable on a number of important counts. It is negative in tone, it provides no measurable criteria and leaves the responsibility for meeting intangible targets to the developer. Even with a more limited application, this Policy would in my opinion be unworkable as a measure of control. The extensive changes proposed for Policy TR/8 are some indication of its weaknesses in this respect, but PC 174 and FPC 174A go some way to meeting the many objections by expressing the qualifications in more objective terms. I am content to recommend them as modifications with a couple of exceptions.

7.110 Criterion (i) is selective in not including motorised traffic, and somewhat nebulous as to what could constitute an increased risk. Just a few extra traffic movements would represent an “increased risk” of accidents and “people with disabilities” covers such a wide field of incapacity as to be virtually meaningless. Clause (i) is virtually inoperable, in my opinion. Given contemporary traffic levels, most of the highway system is operating above its theoretical capacity; if not, it soon will be given the expected growth of traffic. Criterion (ii) is therefore unlikely to be achievable. In any event, both criteria are encapsulated in criterion (iii) and in my view are better expressed in that form. It would leave the onus for judging the effect of proposals on the highway system with the Council and Highway Authority, which is where it should be. After all, the object of the policy is to minimise the effect of development on the highway system and the environment. Criteria (iii) and (iv) require as much, and no more. I recommend accordingly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.111 I recommend that:-

- (i) **the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 174 and FPC 174A, except that:**
 - (a) **criteria (i) and (ii) be deleted from PC 174, and**
 - (b) **the words, “on non-designated sites”, be inserted in the first line of the main clause of the policy after the word “development”.**

POLICY TR/9 - IMPROVING BUS SERVICES AND FACILITIES

OBJECTIONS	259/7874	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	3817/25733	A W Stott - See H/1(r)
	3866/7876	SVPS, Mr C D Clarke
	5635/7877	Birstall Parish Council, Mrs D Wilson
	5682/7878	Shire
	5781/7879	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Planning), Dr Simmonds

5838/7880 CBC Liberal Democrat Group,
Cllr A W Stott - See H/1(r)

PC: 175

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

KEY ISSUES

- 7.112 ■ The policy does not relate to land use. It should be inserted in the text.
- The text mis-states the transport choice concept. There are four sets of transport choice locations in the Borough. The quality bus initiative operating in Central Leicestershire is to be launched in Loughborough/Shepshed. It is the intention to extend this to the A6 corridor but such a move is not imminent, in contrast to the implication in the text.
 - The policy places too much emphasis on the A6 corridor to the detriment of other potential routes such as Cotes where a high level of accessibility could be achieved. It conflicts with other policies for promotion of public transport such as TR/11. The Plan fails to demonstrate how improvements in bus services can or will be implemented other than through physical measures such as bus lanes.
 - The Plan is not able to secure high quality services as bus companies have to be profit making.
 - Inherent in the policy should be a proposal (at Birstall) to restrict non-bus capacity in places by 50% to try and increase congestion and force people on to buses. This is social engineering. The catchment population is not 100,000. People in Loughborough going to Leicester will use the train. Villages along the A6 (Mountsorrel, Quorn, Rothley) total less than 14,000 in population, and Birstall 11,770. Problems arise from through traffic not local traffic.
 - No targets are given to monitor the effectiveness of the “virtuous circle” of encouraging greater use of buses. This local plan goes for compulsion rather than choice which could lead to environmental consequences without effective gains. The Borough Council is failing to implement complementary requirements such as high density economic land use strategies and policies.
 - Whilst development contributions sought towards start up services are attractive to bus companies, they would add to development costs which will feed through to the price of properties with potentially adverse effects on local economic health etc.

Issues in respect of PC 175:

- The change makes no reference to the inadequacies of the unimproved section of the A6 between Greengate Lane and the Red Hill roundabout. A more detailed statement of the traffic problems in Birstall is required.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.117 PC 176 would appear to meet the objections and leave the question of developer funding to negotiation by the interested parties. I am content to recommend the proposed change. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.118 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 176.

POLICY TR/11 - BUS/RAIL INTERCHANGE NEXT TO LOUGHBOROUGH STATION

OBJECTION 3491/7883 The Railway Development Society

KEY ISSUE

7.119 ■ Implementation of this scheme will be given the highest priority, and the Borough Council will be proactive in encouraging local bus companies to provide a level of service to make bus/rail an attractive travel mode.

CONCLUSIONS

7.120 I note the support for this policy and I consider that no change to the Plan is necessary.

RECOMMENDATION

7.121 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.

POLICY TR/12 - SAFEGUARDING AREAS FOR NEW RAILWAY STATIONS

OBJECTIONS See list of Objectors in Appendix 3

PCs: 177, 178

Objections to PCs: 2590/70001 T E Clarke (PC 177)
 3491/71699 Dr A Kay (PC 177)
 3491/74654 Dr A Kay (PC 177)
 5741/70027 LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Planning),
 Dr A Simmonds (PC 177)
 7215/74453 R J Clay on behalf of the Cyclists Touring Club
 2297/72555 Mr R Jenkins (PC 178)
 2590/70002 T E Clarke (PC 178)
 3624/71722 Miss R J Arnott (PC 178)
 3637/71736 B Jones (PC 178)
 3638/71730 Mr B Fox (PC 178)
 3764/72587 J Maples (PC 178)
 3787/71725 Mr K C D Creasey (PC 178)
 5608/131656 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

5781/73664	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams (PC 178)
7270/74074	Mrs J May (PC 178)
7320/74124	R Young (PC 178)
7367/74727	Mr R Garner (PC 178)
7398/74743	East Goscote Parish Council, Mrs L Pizer (PC 178)

FPC: 177A

KEY ISSUES

Issues in respect of Thurmaston Station

- 7.122 ■ At paragraph 7.73 the reference to off street parking with regard to Thurmaston station should be deleted. This was intended to be a walk and ride facility and there is no provision for parking.

Issues in respect of East Goscote Station

- Amend the Proposals Map so that the Melton bound platform on the north side of the line is on the Melton side of the crossing, and the Leicester bound platform is on the village side of the crossing. The proposals map shows no location for a station car park. The text should mention that some parking will be needed and that this might be achieved by narrow strips of parking behind each platform, or by a single larger park elsewhere in the vicinity with the exact location to be resolved at a later date.
- The station should be located in the pavilion area with good parking and easy access. The proposed location near the level crossing would be detrimental to residents houses and gardens, and have no parking.
- The “red rectangle” on the Proposals Map includes land which is used as an operational golf course and driving range. There is no surplus land which could accommodate park and ride. The previous location east of the railway line would have greater potential for parking facilities related to a station. Clarification is sought about parking related to the station as it is not clear whether it is for park and ride or general parking, and where it would be located.
- There are 36 objections from **local residents** living on Broome Lane, Badgers Corner, Huntsmans Dale, The Covert, Tinkers Dell and Wayfarer Drive at **East Goscote**. The main concerns are:
- Adverse environmental impact. The increased activity at the level crossing on Broome Lane would add to disturbance for nearby residents; the station would be too near existing houses; there would be extra noise, air and light pollution; the amenity of nearby residents would be reduced; it would be more dangerous for children; less secure with crime and vandalism more likely; property values would fall; there would be a greater traffic hazard on Broome Lane; and more on street parking on residential streets;
- The station should be sited nearer the industrial estate/pavilion as proposed in the Consultation Draft Plan where there would be more space in a location

away from houses, easier to access and provide parking in a more central location. Three alternatives are canvassed: (1) to the rear of the factories off Long Furrow served by a bridge/underpass; (2) to the rear of the village playing field served by a bridge/underpass; (3) next to the Syston Northern Bypass embankment served via the embankment.

- A station is not needed as it will duplicate the facility at Syston; East Goscote is served by good bus services; the station should be located on the Rearsby side of Broome Lane where there is more space and is where the old Station Master's house used to be; provision of a station would increase the likelihood of East Goscote become a suburb of Leicester; stray balls from the golf course could be hazardous for trains and passengers waiting at the station.

Issues in respect of PC 177:

- The large catchment area of Thurmaston station should qualify it as a walk or cycle and ride facility.
- Cycle parking should be provided at Thurmaston station.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

Issues in respect of PC 178:

- Seek an extension of the "area of search".
- The "area of search" leaves the debate wide open. The Parish's preferred location is to the rear of the recreation ground.
- A new station near Broome Lane would generate more car journeys and prejudice those without access to a car. A location near to the village is preferred. An alternative location at Frisby, where car parking would be unnecessary is suggested.
- The Council should identify a preferred site.
- Maintain original objections on the grounds of blight and lack of security.
- There are more suitable sites elsewhere.
- The proposal is not needed and would be less disruptive if moved to a rural location between East Goscote and Rearsby.
- The station at Syston is sufficient and there would be a loss of residents' gardens.
- Object to the change insofar as it relates to the statement of the LCC regarding barrier times.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.123 I note the many objections to this Policy which centre around the possible effect on the interests of individuals and land in the area. Few, if any, of the objectors take issue with the principle of new stations. Additional stations would clearly complement the Council's aims and objectives in promoting an alternative transport mode to the car. In supporting the principle, I am content to recommend PC 177 and FPC 177A as modifications which meet some of the more detailed objections. These proposed changes would widen the facility of the Thurmaston Station by introducing the concept of "cycle and ride", with provision for the secure parking of cycles, and would remove the rather discriminatory description of "walk and ride". However, the construction of this station is largely dependent on proposed enabling housing development which I deal with under Policy H/88, and on the County Council's review of its appropriateness in the context of the CALTRANS study.

7.124 The Council's preferred location for the proposed station at East Goscote was shown on the Consultation Draft Proposals Map as being next to the industrial estate/recreation ground. A station here would be centrally located, it would have relatively little effect on the amenity of residents in the area, and there would be the potential to provide parking facilities for the users of the station. It would seem to be the best location in environmental terms. However, following advice from the LCC about possible operational difficulties with this site, it was changed in the Deposit Draft of the Plan to one closer to Broome Lane and local housing. The provision of parking space to provide a park and ride facility being left to be resolved at a later date. I note the strong opposition from Jelsons to any infringement of land in that company's ownership and the opinion that no surplus land would be available to even accommodate operational parking requirements.

7.125 As a result of the many objections to the Deposit Draft which revolved around the environmental impact of a station in close proximity to housing, PC 178 was introduced which would extend the area of reservation to include both locations. While changes to the RJ would make clear the Council's preference for the original site, I note that the LCC would wish to see an even greater degree of flexibility through a further extension of the proposed reservation in PC 178. The difference of opinion leaves the matter of location unresolved.

7.126 In my view, it cannot be right that at this stage of the Local Plan process no firm decision has been made about the siting of the station at East Goscote. The objectors rightly regard the device of showing an area of search on the Proposals Map as an act of obfuscation by the Council, notwithstanding its stated preference in PC 178. Whilst there would be operational difficulties in siting the station nearer to the industrial estate/recreation area, these could be overcome, but at a cost. I think the Council must now take a view about the relative benefits and disbenefits of the different locations, including the County Council's proposal that the station platforms be located either side of the Broome Lane crossing. Only by making a value judgement can the present dilemma be resolved. The wording of PC 178 suggests that the Council may lack the courage of its convictions but, more importantly, it has the effect of denying objectors the opportunity of making further detailed representations. PC 178 leaves the important matter of location open and in limbo. Indeed, if the modifications were to be published in their proposed form, objectors may well press their objections on that basis.

7.127 I cannot emphasise too strongly that the Local Plan system is designed to provide certainty and guidance, not only to developers, but also to the public who could be affected by development proposals. PC 178 moves the process backwards, to the detriment of the Plan and to the disadvantage of those with an interest in the outcome. I cannot recommend textual changes and Proposal Map modifications based on PC 178, which fail to address the

basic objections to this policy, and I must press for a resolution of the siting of the East Goscote station. As I have done so on a number of other occasions, I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.128 I recommend that:-

- (i) the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 177 and FPC 177A,
- (ii) the Plan be not modified in accordance with PC 178, and
- (iii) the Proposals Map be further modified by the reservation of land for the development of the East Goscote railway station, and the RJ of Policy TR/12 be modified appropriately.

POLICY TR/15 - OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL RAIL FACILITIES ALONG THE MIDLAND MAINLINE AND LEICESTER TO PETERBOROUGH RAILWAY CORRIDORS

OBJECTIONS	259/7896	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	5682/7897	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5770/7898	Prof M Patterson

PC: 179

Objection to PC: 7320/74125 R Young

KEY ISSUES

- 7.129 ■ Delete sub paragraph (i) as the operation of rail services is not a planning matter. Sub paragraph (ii) needs to be made clearer as the term “adequate” is vague.
- The policy is inappropriately worded to resist situations where rail halts of any kind could justify development.
 - Reference should be made to the potential for a station on the site of the former Rearsby station to cater for the public transport needs of Rearsby, Thrussington and Gaddesby.
- Issue in respect of PC 179:
- The change does not indicate how environmental impact is to be assessed. Car parking should be strictly limited in order to minimise environmental damage and avoid traffic generation

CONCLUSIONS

7.130 It would seem that PC 179 would meet the objections of GO-EM, but I am doubtful whether the resulting changes warrant a policy statement. The Council wishes to establish its support for rail based travel and it is anxious that the full potential of the existing rail network

be utilised. This is right, given the thrust of its transport policies, but it could do this without Policy TR/15. The policy has been drafted more as a statement of support and lacks the preciseness and clarity that would be required for a specific site allocation. The references in PC 179 to “problems” and “environmental impact” simply perpetuate the vagueness of the draft policy. It lacks any degree of certainty or sense of place, ingredients necessary in what should be site related policies. I leave the Council to judge the potential of the former Rearsby station in the light of its support for rail based travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.131 I recommend that Policy TR/15 be deleted, (with subsequent policies renumbered accordingly), and replaced with a statement of support for additional rail based facilities on the Midland Mainline and Leicester to Peterborough railway corridors which conform to the policies of this Plan.

POLICY TR/16 - ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS

OBJECTIONS	259/7899	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	1548/7900	Hawker Siddeley Switchgear Ltd, Mr R A Woolmer
	2406/7901	Brush Electrical Machines, Mr D N Wells
	3151/7902	Mr C C Walls
	3184/7903	Mr J R Catt
	5680/7906	George Wimpey Plc (formerly McLean Homes Ltd), Mr R Gough
	5741/7907	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
PCs:	180, 181	
Objections to PCs:	4730/73749	Mrs J A Kinton (PC 180)
	4741/74565	Mr P Geary, Wanlip Parish Meeting (PC 180)
	5608/131654	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
	5680/71539	George Wimpey Plc formerly McLean Homes Ltd), Mr R Gough (PC 180)
	5857/73800	Mr P Geary (PC 180)
	4741/74566	Mr P Geary (PC 181)
	5857/73801	Mr P Geary (PC 181)
FPA:	180B, 181A	

KEY ISSUES

- 7.132 ■ The first two paragraphs of the policy are statements of intent and not worded as development control criteria or proposals for the management of traffic. The third paragraph does not include development control criteria. The first two paragraphs should be included as text and the third reworded.
- Strengthen the policy to include contributions towards off site footway improvements and new footways where the existing network is deficient in the vicinity of proposals.
 - Request a footpath across Meadow Lane railway bridge to the Meadow Lane

entrance of the Falcon Works. This bridge is very busy and carries a large volume of HGVs. The carriageway is considered too narrow for the traffic carried.

- Delete the third paragraph. The policy is unreasonable and unduly onerous. It is objectionable to make the granting of permission for housing conditional upon the provision of footpath routes through sites, and their connection with the wider footpath network.
- Consideration should be given to a pedestrian crossing of the A6 at Hathern.
- Journey time is critical if benign transport modes are to be used. Provision of facilities alongside roads is insufficient. The aim must be to make walking and cycling quicker than using the car for all journeys below three miles. The policy should refer to the need for direct routes.

Issues in respect of PC 180:

- The Policy is negatively worded.
- Alternative existing cycle route (along the A46 to the Wanlip Countryside Park) put forward in preference to the proposed footway and cycleway, is not referred to in the change.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.133 I note the extensive changes proposed for this policy and for the complementary Policy TR/17, together with the proposal that the two should be combined. Combination would be a sensible rationalisation of two very similar policies and would avoid the repetition of the draft Plan. Combination on its own, however, would not meet the objections which seem to fall into two categories. First, the wording of the policies and the absence of meaningful criteria; second, the omission of particular routes which objectors regard as worthy of inclusion. I deal with them in that order.

7.134 GO-EM's objections are entirely warranted. The draft policy is little more than a statement of intent with vaguely worded targets, eg, frequent and safe crossings of roads, safer walking, more attractive routes. These are comparative but non-measurable standards which convey little in the way of practical guidance.

7.135 At least, PC 180 would direct the policy firmly at developers and would invoke the ultimate sanction that planning permission would be refused if certain conditions were not met. In that respect, the Council has moved some way to meeting GO-EM's objection. But the four criteria of PC 180 fall into the same textual trap of the original policy; they leave much to the discretion and judgement of the Council and provide little in the way of useful guidance to the developer. I shall recommend they be replaced.

7.136 I am sure the Council has better guidance available and could improve on its current advice. It has a well developed cycling and walking strategy which features large in its 1998-1999 TPP bid. There is certainly no shortage of advice in the Government's Design Bulletin 32. The TPP bid has attracted the approval of the Department of Environment and Transport so it should be safe to presume that the strategy will continue to be supported and

that it is being put into effect to the Council's standards.

7.137 PC 180 alludes to the strategy in making reference to the wider networks of footways and cycle routes. I feel this could be more explicit but not to the extent suggested by Mr Catt; the rationale behind every feature of the network does not need to be detailed in the Plan. The illustration Fig.11.3 in the 1998-1999 TPP, which shows the existing and future cycle routes, might be a useful addition to the Plan's appendices in addition to the Proposals Map. If the Council does have a companion illustration of its footway network it too could be added as an appendix. In any event, the Council should be prepared to advise developers about the implications for their sites, either by way of development briefs, or some other means, in which the Council's requirements for the construction or improvement of footways and cycle routes are set out in accordance with its strategy of developing the wider networks.

7.138 Reference is made in paragraph 7.95 to the adopted and *necessary* standards of cycle ways and foot ways respectively; the former being included in the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance. If footway standards have not been published, it should not be difficult to remedy the omission. The components of a more specific policy than Policies TR/16, TR/17 or the proposed change are available to the Council. I am aware of the pitfalls in making references to Supplementary Planning Guidance in policies. But in this case, where the Guidance is unlikely to be controversial and is readily available, an exception might be made to the general rule that such Guidance should be included in the Plan. The alternative would be to include the Guidance as an appendix. It will be for the Council to consider the practicalities of that action, bearing in mind the need to keep the Plan concise. My recommendations for rewording the policy are based on the former premise, but they are flexible and the decision must be the Council's.

7.139 I note the Council's amendments to the list of routes for cycle measures and the additions, together with the promise that more could be identified and added during the life of the Plan. I think this is a notable concession to those who have pressed for additional routes. It indicates not only that the Council has an open mind, but also that it is mindful of the costs of expanding the programme beyond its present limits. I hesitate to advise the Council on the minutiae of the Plan, especially where there are financial consequences, although I make comparative judgements on the merits or otherwise of the routes which objectors have commended for consideration. This I do below under Policy TR/17 with the qualification that the Council will know better than I the present usage and merits of different routes and their potential; it is far better placed to make these judgements. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.140 I draw attention to my conclusions at paragraph 7.135 and my recommendations at paragraph 7.148, and recommend that:-

(i) the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 180 except that the main clause of Policy TR/16 should read:

“The Borough Council will seek to develop its strategy for a network of pedestrian and cycle routes by direct funding and through development proposals in this Plan. The Borough Council will also seek to negotiate contributions to secure off site connections into and improvements to the wider networks of footways and cycle routes where this is practicable and directly related to development schemes. Planning permission will not be granted for development schemes that fail to comply with briefs designed to develop the

strategy or to meet the standards for footway and cycle routes contained in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Routes along which measures will be encouraged to make cycling safer and more attractive and which will be protected from development proposals likely to prejudice their use for cycling are shown on the Proposals Map.

The proposed routes for cycle measures are: [as listed in PC 180].”

(ii) that the RJ and Appendices to the Plan be modified as may be appropriate in accordance with paragraph 7.138 above.

POLICY TR/17 - ACCESS FOR CYCLISTS

OBJECTIONS See list of Objectors in Appendix 3

PC: 181 (See also PC 180)

Objections to PC: 5857/73801 Mr P Geary
7318/74118 Stansgate Planning Consultants on behalf of
Loughborough University
4741/74566 Mr P Geary on behalf of Wanlip Parish Meeting
5608/131654 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.141 ■ Delete the first and second paragraphs and include as text. They are statements of intent and not development control criteria or proposals to manage traffic. The third paragraph should be reworded to include development control criteria.
- Strengthen the policy to allow for contributions towards off site cycle way improvements and new cycle ways where the existing network is deficient in the vicinity of the proposals.
 - If commuter cycling is to be encouraged then more direct cycle routes need to be provided. The proposed development of land north of Birstall should contribute to provision. The scope for more footpath/cycle recreation links from Castle Hill Country Park to Anstey and Thurcaston should be explored.
 - All off road cycle facilities should be accessible to all types of cyclist. Action to exclude motor cyclists often results in barriers which exclude vulnerable users. The policy should ensure cycle facilities will be accessible to tandems, conventional and hand cranked tricycles, tandem tricycles, cycles with wheelchair attachments and cycles towing all common types of child or luggage trailer.
 - Concerned about the effects of the cycle route alongside the river Soar between Mountsorrel and Wanlip on wildlife, especially breeding birds. There could be conflict between users, and a safety hazard for youngsters. Routes for cyclists should make provision for horse riders.

- Objections are made to the details of the proposed routes. Some can be met by amendments to the Proposals Map, others require the addition of new routes which are considered to merit explicit inclusion in the policy. Changes sought are as follows:

(i) A cycle route should be shown along the dual carriageway section of Forest Road, Loughborough to connect the two parts of Woodbrook Way and provide a continuous route;

(vii) The Shelthorpe Road route should be alongside the A6 as far as Wheatland Drive, Loughborough to provide a continuous route. This would involve a short section between the Shelthorpe Road traffic lights and Wheatland Drive to allow southbound cyclists on the A6 to join the cycle path at the traffic lights rather than make a hazardous right turn across the A6;

(ix) The A512 Ashby Road cycle route should be continued to the Leicester Road junction in Shepshed or else removed, apart from the section east of the Old Ashby Road junction in Loughborough. A cycle path that ends at a major roundabout is worse than useless, giving cyclists a false sense of security. Provision must be made for cyclists to negotiate the roundabout if this is to go forward;

(xiii) Part of the Burton Walk cycle route has been omitted from Inset No.1 of the Proposals Map;

(xiv) The Loughborough-Shepshed cycle route should be extended along Butthole Lane, Loughborough Road and Belton Street in Shepshed, then along Hallamford Road and the Harboro Pit Lane to the Borough boundary. The reference to “Between Shepshed and Syston” for the Millennium Route should be changed to “via Shepshed, Loughborough and the Soar Valley”;

(xv) A link should be provided from the South of Loughborough development area (H/1(g)) to the Woodthorpe to Woodhouse route, especially as H/1(g) (xi) (b) seeks a developer contribution to the path;

(xvi) A link should be added from the north side of the proposed north of Birstall development across the A46 to the end of the existing A6 cycle path. This link is essential to provide a continuous route down the A6 corridor to link into the Leicester City cycle route network;

The following additional routes are suggested:

(xvii) The cycle route along Alan Moss Road and Belton Road then to the Midland Railway station in Loughborough is shown on the Proposals Map but not mentioned in the policy;

(xviii) A link is needed along the A6 corridor through Hathern or through the village centre to fill a gap in the cycle path through the village;

(xix) A link is needed from Kirkstone Drive to Ashby Road in Loughborough via the recreation ground and the University playing fields to the end of the existing cycle path at the roundabout. This would link residential areas to a major employment allocation (British Gas) and to

schools and housing north of Ashby Road.

- A safe route is not identified from the north east of Loughborough into the town centre along Meadow Lane.
- Support the proposal for a route between Woodthorpe and Woodhouse (xv) in principle, although an objection is registered on operational/security grounds while the Communications and Security Group (and possibly any other M.o.D user) occupies the site. This would apply to the section of the route to the west of Mucklin Wood .
- Object to the proposal to establish a cycle route from the south of Loughborough housing development to the town centre via Burton Walks (xiii). There is only a public right of way along the footpath. A cycle route could only be established along a public footpath, which would be unsafe, or along a road which is private property. Object also on safety grounds. The Department of Education and Employment has recently published its report on security in schools. A recommendation of this report is that in order to improve security in schools, public rights of way through grounds should be restricted or closed. A far more appropriate cycle route would pass along Castledine Street, Stanley Street and Burton Street thence to the town centre via Victoria Street.
- Lack of specific provision for a dedicated cycle lane over Meadow Lane railway bridge in Loughborough. This is essential for use by many employees.
- The policy is unreasonable and unduly onerous. The third paragraph should be deleted as it is objectionable to make the granting of planning permission for housing conditional upon the provision of cycle ways through sites, and their connection with the wider cycle way network.
- Lack of definition for a “cycle way” and the expectation for developers to contribute to potentially distant off site connections into the cycle way network. In (xiii) provision of a distributor road and cycle way within the site has been required but the policy seems to suggest contributions will be sought in respect of cycle ways of considerable length, eventually reaching Beacon Road.
- Any cycle link between the proposed north of Birstall development and the River Soar via Wanlip (xvi) should be routed to avoid the village. A cycle way through Wanlip would be a hazard, harm the privacy of Wanlip residents, and attract groups of unruly youths. Widening paths would harm trees, verges, ancient woodland and farmed crops. An alternative route is suggested continuing from the A6/A46 roundabout down the eastern slip road towards Wanlip, through the tunnel under the road and along the A46/Wanlip slip road to the old Fillingate Road to the main north entrance of Wanlip Country Park. Similar concerns are expressed in representations received from fifteen residents of Wanlip village, and one from Leicester.
- More facilities for cyclists at Anstey should be provided in the form of dedicated cycle ways or bridleways.

- Walking or cycling should be made quicker than using the car for all journeys under 3 miles. The policy should refer to the need for direct routes.

Issues in respect of PC 181:

- The alternative existing cycle route (along the A46 to the Wanlip Countryside Park) put forward in preference to the proposed footway and cycle way is not included in the change. The proposed cycle way across the fields from the A6 to Wanlip should be deleted.
- Object to the change in relation to the proposed cycle way between Kirkstone Drive and Ashby Road. There is an inference that the route would cross the Campus. This is unacceptable on the grounds of safety and security and is opposed by the landowner.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.142 Given the recommendation above to combine Policies TR/16 and TR/17, I need not address the objections to the form and wording of the latter. Neither do I intend to dwell on the objections relating to the range of facilities which might be appropriate when the Policy is implemented, nor on the effects on the environment and on users by routing decisions. I am content to leave the minutiae of design details to the Council. I am confident that the additions and amendments included in the proposed change represent the practical and financial limits of the Council's programme which will be pursued with due regard to the other policies in this Plan.

7.143 The majority of objections to this policy relate to the proposed routes and seek additions and amendments. The Council's response has been to accommodate as many objections as practical by proposing to amend and extend some routes and to add others.

7.144 An amendment to (i), Woodbrook Way, by the inclusion of a route along Forest Road would provide the continuity it presently lacks. An extension to Wheatlands Drive would lengthen the route of (vii), Shelthorpe Road, Loughborough and improve that facility. The whole route between Shepshed and Loughborough would be incorporated by the amendment to (ix), A512 Ashby Road. In contrast the Council would remove Burton Walks from (xi) Fairmeadow to the Town Centre; I appreciate the problems that would occur in the use of this route and the need to concentrate resources on the alternative route via Park Road. The omission of the Sustrans route in Loughborough is made good by the proposed change to the Proposals Map in Loughborough to indicate the National Cycle Network Millennium Route(xii).

7.145 A new link from the proposed housing development to (xiii), Woodthorpe to Woodhouse would be a logical addition, as would linkages to the former A6 corridor through Rothley from within Birstall along the A6, (xiv). The Council's proposed additions of routes from (xvi), Castle Hill Country Park in Leicester to Anstey and Thurcaston and Charnwood Forest; from (xvii), Alan Moss Road/Belton Road to Loughborough railway station; from (xviii), Kirkstone Drive to Ashby Road to Gorse Covert, Loughborough and from (xix), Meadow Lane to Town Centre, Loughborough would provide additional facilities and I am content to recommend their inclusion under Policy TR/16, leaving the details of design to the Council.

7.146 I use the numerals of the Revisions Document (CD/53) above and draw attention to the errors in numbering of the draft Plan which have been carried over into the Statement of Proposed Changes, September 1997. The Appendix to those changes compounds those errors by continuing the reference to Policy TR/17 that is superseded by the PC 180. My recommendations therefore include one to rationalise and regularise the numbering of the routes and their references on the Proposals Map rather than the modifications of PC 181.

7.147 There are few objections to the routes proposed, but a number of residents of Wanlip would prefer that the route from north of Birstall avoided the village. I think their fears of being invaded by unruly youths and damage to the village are exaggerated. The route has been chosen because it represents a safe segregated route clear of the A46. Safety must be a prime consideration in the selection of any cycle way and I am with the Council in preferring the route chosen.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.148 I recommend that:

- (i) **Policy TR/17 be modified in accordance with PC 180,**
- (ii) **the Proposals Map be modified to reflect the changes to the routes of cycle ways proposed and their numbering therein, and**
- (iii) **the Plan be not modified in accordance with PC 181.**

POLICY TR/19 - PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

OBJECTIONS	3500/7940	M Buckley
	5680/7942	George Wimpey Plc (formerly McLean Homes Ltd), Mr R Gough
	5741/7943	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5770/7944	Prof M Patterson

PC: 182

Objections to PC: 5608/131686 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
5680/71540 George Wimpey Plc (formerly McLean Homes Ltd),
Mr R Gough

KEY ISSUES

- 7.149 ■ The text should accord with the County Council's "Development and Public Rights of Way" document and clarify matters.
- Object to paragraph 7.106. Where a public right of way crosses development land and permission may have been granted this does not include any obstruction or variation of the right of way until agreement as to the future right of way has been agreed.
 - Any diversion of a right of way must respect the character and function of the original route. The character of a route is determined by its setting. If a route

has to be diverted to enable development to proceed the character which provides the setting must change.

- The Council should commit itself more forcefully to maintaining existing rights of way. Particular attention is drawn to the rights of way between Thrussington and Ragdale, Thrussington and Hoby, Hoby and Ragdale, Rearsby Mill and Ratcliffe Mill, and Seagrave and the Fosse Way (A46).

Issues in respect of PC 182:

- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.150 PC 182 would meet the objections by drawing attention to the legal requirements affecting changes to public rights of way and committing the Council to a policy of seeking their improvement and coordination. However, the proposed changes do not meet the objections of George Wimpey plc. That company is concerned that “character” should be a criterion in judging the suitability of an alternative route when a diversion of a right of way becomes a consequence of development. The objector is right in the view that the chances of replicating the character of the original route are slim, and that criterion (ii) is therefore too onerous.

7.151 I note that the condition is qualified, but I take the view that it is more likely to be honoured in the breach than in the observance. There seems little point in such a requirement when the law requires that other considerations be taken into account in the confirming of diversion orders. “Convenience” and “public enjoyment” are considered to be more important. I accordingly borrow from the Highways Act 1980 S119 in making my recommendations, and I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.152 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 182 except that criterion (ii) should be deleted and be replaced with the following:-

(ii) “an alternative route can be provided which will not be substantially less convenient to the public nor substantially detract from the public’s enjoyment of the path or way, which is safe and which protects the continuity of the wider route”.

POLICY TR/20 - TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIONS	259/7945	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	1989/7946	National Farmers Union, Mr L Gibbon
	2684/7947	Mr Ridges
	5682/7950	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5741/7951	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams

PC: 183

Objections to PC: 5608/131687 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
7320/74128 R Young

KEY ISSUES

- 7.153 ■ The policy is an administrative action and clarification should be provided where traffic management measures would apply.
- The main thrust of the policy and the text relates to “traffic calming” and not “traffic management”. The term, “traffic management”, is inappropriate. The NFU should be consulted about any traffic calming proposals in rural areas. Where consultation has not taken place in the past, some schemes have prevented access for certain agricultural vehicles.
 - Current schemes with raised ramps can cause problems. Full public consultation is needed and priority should not be based on accident records. Contributions to local traffic management measures could be added to the requirements of new development.
 - The policy does not address the broader issue of ensuring efficient traffic flow. Traffic control systems must be designed to be efficient in the control of traffic and pedestrians, leading to environmental improvements.

Issues in respect of PC 183:

- The Policy seems to accept that new developments inevitably and invariably mean that more traffic would be generated. The most effective means of traffic calming is a limitation on car parking spaces, consistent with PPG13, and to insist on the implementation of a commuter plan as a condition of planning permission being granted.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.154 I am content to recommend PC 183 which substantially meets the objections. The policy would now relate to development proposals, its title would reflect the thrust of the policy and public consultation on proposals is promised. Public car parking provision is considered elsewhere in this report, (see Policies TR/21, TR/22, TR/23 and TR/24). I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.155 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 183.

PARAGRAPHS 7.113 and 7.114 - WEIGHT RESTRICTION ORDER (WROs)

OBJECTION 5741/7952 LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways),
Ms V Adams

PC: 184

Objections to PC: 1989/71468 National Farmers Union, Mr L Gibson
5608/131688 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

7.156 ■ LCC Planning and Transportation considers the text in relation to WRO's to be factually incorrect, potentially misleading and not necessary. A new policy is suggested to protect rural roads and communities from the problems caused by HGV's.

Issues in respect of PC 184:

- The controls discriminate against farms and rural businesses and, in particular, farms require HGVs for the operation of their business.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.157 The proposed policy would meet the County Council's objection but there is concern about the impact that this policy could have on the development of established rural activities. Not least, amongst the farming community where economies of scale seem to have dictated that farm machinery and goods vehicles become ever larger. This trend is largely outside the community's control and it would be wrong if this policy were to act against the farming industry's legitimate interests. I must assume that the Council would not wish to increase its difficulties in any way when it appears to be under particular stress. PC 184 refers to a significant change in the amount of traffic and, given the nature of agricultural development, it is unlikely that any agricultural type proposals would fall under the aegis of this policy. I am content for development proposals relating to farming and forestry activities to be judged on their merits in the context of this policy and I recommend accordingly. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.158 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 184.

POLICY TR/21 - PARKING PROVISION IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIONS	259/7953	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	260/7954	GO-EM
	3709/7955	Beazer Homes Bedford Ltd, Mr M J Flatman
	3811/7956	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5670/7957	Astra Charnwood
	5712/7959	Nationwide Building Society
	5733/7960	House Builders' Federation, Ms J Gardner
	5741/7961	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
	5680/7958	McLean Homes

PC: 185

Objections to PC: 260/74627 GO-EM
5733/73953 House Builders' Federation, Ms J Gardner
5608/131689 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long
321/131913 William Davis Ltd, Mr E Maclean

FPC: 185A, 185B

KEY ISSUES

- 7.159 ■ The reference to standards should be removed or clarified, or the standards should be incorporated into the plan to enable consultations, provided that they are not too detailed.
- Object to the parking standards as there were no maximum values given. No reference to cycle parking. The standards should be in the Plan rather than in SPG. The Policy and supporting text should be amended as follows;
- “**[POLICY]** The quantity of parking within new development will be determined in a feasible manner by negotiation to reflect the proposed use, the location and the availability of or potential for access other than by the private car.
- [TEXT]** Car parking policies should support the overall locational policies in the development plan. PPG13, paragraph 4.5 indicates that standards of provision in local plans should be set as a range of maximum and operational minimum amounts of parking for broad classes of development and location. The local planning authority in conjunction with the highway authority are reviewing the current parking standards set out in the appendix to ensure that they accord with the advice in PPG13. In the interim the level of provision sought in each case will be based on the above policy. The current standards will be revised in line with PPG13 brought forward for public comment and subsequently proposed as an alteration to the local plan at the earliest possible date”.
- The policy needs to be modified to reflect the transport choice objectives and current government guidance, whilst protecting against the highway safety and obstruction problems caused by unregulated under provision.
- Car parking sterilises large areas of land in towns, villages and the countryside. The policy should encourage developments designed so as not to need the full provision specified in the SPG, rather than merely allow reduced amounts in “special circumstances”. The policy should be amended to show a strong preference for developments in locations where reduced standards are applicable. It should be stated that over provision will not be allowed, and the standards should be seen as the maximum.
- Object to the non-inclusion of the parking standards in the plan. The exclusion is considered contrary to PPG13 and PPG12. There is a danger that the status of the guidance will be enhanced commensurate to that of local plan policies by virtue of Section 54A if reference to SPG is retained in the policy.
- Object to paragraph 7.118. PPG13 allows developers to provide a reduced amount of parking if they make commuted payments or arrangements for

alternative transport.

- The Policy is not sufficiently flexible and fails to acknowledge the special circumstances of certain occupiers where parking requirements do not conform to the rigid use class categories set out in the standards. Amend the policy to allow for such special circumstances.
- The policy is contrary to PPG12 in that it implies development which does not fully meet SPG will be refused. Clarification is requested as to why the standards for Class A1 and Class A2 uses are different. The policy fails to take account of PPG13 guidance that parking requirements should be kept to the operational minimum, and that developers should not be required to provide more spaces than they themselves wish unless this would lead to significant road safety or traffic management implications. There could be no reasonable requirement for a change of use from Class A1 to A2 to provide additional parking as both are complementary town centre uses with similar staffing levels and are equally necessary for the vitality and viability of the town.

Issues in respect of PC 185:

- The adopted standards should be within the Policy rather than the text.
- The change conflicts with the County Council's approved parking standards. The objection by LCC is maintained.
- The change does not reflect guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.160 The HBF, in particular, together with the national house building firms object to the exclusion of parking standards from the Plan. I am with those parties in being mindful of the obligation of planning authorities to provide the opportunity for the public scrutiny of policies and proposals on which planning decisions could be based. Parking standards have always been regarded as falling into that category, and the Plan's relegation of these to Supplementary Planning Guidance would be in breach of that long standing convention. However, events and changes in Government guidance have overtaken some parts of the Transport and Traffic Management chapter of this draft Plan and no more so, perhaps, than Policy TR/21. A new PPG13 may even widen the gap. From a relatively recent position, where the emphasis was on ensuring a generous sufficiency of parking provision for new development, the pendulum of change has swung. This significant shift from rigid parking standards towards a more flexible approach now admits a consideration of function, location and alternative modes of transport in the determination of the standard of provision. Rigid parking standards, whether as part of the Plan or as Supplementary Planning Guidance, are no longer necessary or acceptable.

7.161 An operational minimum is now the only standard that planning authorities should seek to secure, unless there are significant road safety or traffic management implications. Government also advises that planning authorities should not require developers to provide more parking spaces than they themselves wish. The advice is eminently sensible as it leaves the responsibility for road safety and management firmly with the Council and Highway Authority. On the other hand, no one knows the property market better than the developer; no one is better able to judge the requirements of occupiers or has a greater interest in

realising the maximum potential of a development site. Reconciling those sometimes conflicting, but often complementary interests is obviously best done by negotiation within a framework of standards for which the Council should be responsible.

7.162 The Council accepts that the principal objections of the HBF and others, should be met, i.e. it accepts that the standards in the Supplementary Planning Guidance are no longer wholly applicable and that whatever standards are adopted should form part of the Plan. Unfortunately, the Council is not in a position to provide a framework based on the advice in paragraph 4.5 of PPG13 and which could be applied throughout the Plan area. Indeed, the task of reviewing the standards is acknowledged as a major undertaking involving study and wide consultation. It would be a task well beyond the scope of this Plan. The Council's compromise solution is to accept the minimum standards of the previously adopted standards as the maximum level of provision for the purposes of negotiation, but to leave the actual provision to be determined by that process.

7.163 Government advice and the compromise framework are incorporated in PC 185 and FPC 185A. FPC 185B would place the framework as an appendix to the Plan. I can suggest no better way of framing the policy and I recommend accordingly. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.164 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 185, FPC 185A and FPC 185B.

POLICY TR/22 - CAR PARKING PROVISION IN LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE

OBJECTIONS	259/7964	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	260/7965	GO-EM
	2796/7967	Cllr R Shields
	1340/7966	Boots the Chemist Ltd
	3720/7968	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	3740/7969	LARA, C Garfield
	3811/7972	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5647/7973	John German Chartered Surveyors, Mr A J Thomas
	5727/7974	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	5741/7962	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
PC:	186	
Objections to PC:	3811/71641	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	5727/73912	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	7320/74129	R Young
	5608/131690	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

7.165 ■ The policy is a statement of intent and not a development control policy

related to the management of traffic. It should be included as text.

- The policy does not comply with 4.7 and 4.8 of PPG13 because paragraphs 7.120 to 7.127 do not give any assessment of future off street parking provision, which it is assumed will be directed to short stay provision. More details are needed of future charging policy together with the Borough Council's intention regarding the control of on street parking to illustrate how this has influenced land use.
- The policy needs to be modified to reflect the transport choice objectives and current government guidance, whilst protecting against the highway safety and obstruction problems caused by unregulated under provision.
- Delete the policy and reinstate the Consultation Draft policy requiring greater off street parking provision.
- There should be generous parking for shoppers, and that any restrictions apply only to commuter parking. There should be a reasonable supply of on street parking to enable "pop in" shopping trips which may otherwise go to out of town locations.
- If private car use is encouraged, people will need somewhere to park. The emphasis should be on road traffic reduction. If this was vigorously pursued then it is envisaged an extra 530 spaces would not be required.
- All reference to "car parking" should be amended in Policies TR/22, TR/23 and TR/24 to refer to "vehicle parking" in order that vehicles such as motorcycles are not omitted
- Car parking sterilises large areas of land in towns. Economic land use would require parking to be provided in multi storey facilities or underground where there would be less harm to the townscape.
- The policy should be amended by the addition of policy guidance to encourage the continued use of small scale (less than 10 spaces) privately owned off street areas in terms of restricted use related to the town centre and particular residents/users, not creating unacceptable congestion or conflict between pedestrian and vehicles, have appropriate signing and lighting, and would not be harmful to the amenities of adjoining properties and land uses.

Issues in respect of PC 186:

- There is a contradiction between safeguarding the Town Centre and providing additional short term parking. To reduce car dependency it would be more appropriate to keep off street parking at the current level; to enforce residents only parking and improve public transport.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.166 I am of the opinion that the extensive changes proposed by the Council would largely meet all the substantive objections save those of the CPRE and other Environmental Groups.

Unfortunately, I understand that work has still to be done in the context of the Council's Parking Study which may preclude providing all the information GO-EM suggests is obligatory, according to PPG13. Notwithstanding, the Plan should reflect the latest position, given that the proposed change is now more than 2 years old and work has continued in the interim. The Environmental Groups are right to point out an apparent contradiction between this policy and those aimed at reducing car dependency and traffic levels. But there are more important considerations and other policy initiatives to be taken into account in this case. The Council's transportation aims must be reconciled with the interests of the retailing, professional and commercial occupants of the town centre. Their continued presence and viability is essential for the vitality of the central area, and in maintaining its attractiveness to the public on whom they depend.

7.167 Easy and flexible accessibility is therefore essential for the central area's continued well being. The Council would be remiss in its duty if it failed to recognise that, for many shoppers and others who use the centre's range of services, there is no alternative to private transport. Adequate car parking will continue for the foreseeable future to be an essential element of town centre development.

7.168 I see nothing in PC 186 which runs counter to the Council's holistic approach to transport planning. There is nothing to suggest that its main planks of Policy have been cast aside. Wholesale increases in parking provision are not proposed. Rather, the emphasis is on maintaining the status quo and reducing the element of commuting traffic that occupies parking spaces for the whole of the working day. The approach is to be commended and I recommend accordingly. With regard to the objection by LARA, the adopted standards currently cover car and cycle parking. Motor cycles are not specifically provided for. A review of the parking standards would be the appropriate place to assess the parking needs of motor cycles. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.169 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 186, brought up to date to reflect relevant progress on the review of public car park management and pricing policies and the Council's Parking Study.

POLICY TR/23 - CAR PARKING PROVISION OUTSIDE LOUGHBOROUGH TOWN CENTRE

OBJECTIONS	259/7975	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	1396/26017	J Norton
	2448/7976	Syston Town Council, Mr I MacDonald
	3046/25448	Mr A Collier - See H/1(r)
	3047/25454	Mr K Collier - See H/1(r)
	3048/25457	Mr A Collier - See H/1(r)
	3740/7970	LARA, C Garfield - See TR/22
	4724/26024	Mr FMH Toone
	4739/24864	Mr B Grocock - See H/1(r)
	5682/7978	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5741/7963	LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
PC:	187	
Objection to PC:	5608/131691	Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.170 ■ The reference to the parking standards should be removed or clarified, or the standards should be incorporated in the plan providing they are not too detailed. Paragraph (c) should be deleted as it is for the local planning authority and not the developer to demonstrate that access by bus etc cannot provide for the needs of the development.
- Provision for an additional 35 car parking spaces at Birstall will not be sufficient to serve traffic related to the Hallam Fields Development (Policy H/1(r)).
 - People will find it too far to walk from Hallam Fields to shops in Birstall and the extra 35 parking spaces are desperately needed at Birstall before any more houses are built.
 - The policy needs to be modified to reflect the transport choice objectives and current government guidance, whilst protecting against the highway safety and obstruction problems caused by unregulated under provision.
 - Many more than 24 car parking spaces are required in Syston especially with regard to disabled parking. Long term parking for those working in Syston and possible creation of a park and ride (already happening on an informal basis) is making parking even more difficult in the town.
 - As traffic from developments distant from centres impacts on village centres, it is suggested that reasonably related developer contributions should be sought to help assist with parking provision in such circumstances.
 - PC 187 - The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.171 I deal with the objections from Messrs Collier and Mr Grocock under Policy H/1(r) and that from LARA under Policy TR/22. The Council proposes a similar approach to the provision of parking in District Centres as in Loughborough town centre, except in one respect. It seems to me that the forewarning that new parking levels might be reduced where access by non-car modes is judged to be “good” would do little to bolster confidence in, or maintain the viability of sometimes hard pressed District and Local Centres. As the threatened reduction has no measurable basis for implementation, in my view it is probably redundant and better omitted.

7.172 I make no comment about the absolute level requested for Syston as I have no evidence which suggests an appropriate level. The concerns about parking provision at Birstall are considered under Policy H/1(r). In the circumstances, I am content to recommend PC 187 with the exception of that part of the RJ referred to above. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.173 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 187 except that the sentence, “Where such access is good a lower level of new parking will be justified” be deleted.

is not accessible and the inconvenience outweighs any advantages.

- The site is remote from the A6 Loughborough Road.
- The site will only appeal to certain people and not bulk shoppers, workers outside the City Centre and Birstall residents. It will have a limited effect on peak hour traffic. It will add to congestion.
- There is inadequate supporting evidence on the feasibility/viability of the site and related services.
- The site will be prominent and visible across the Soar and Wreake Valleys and Charnwood Forest. Light pollution will be significant. Landscaping is unlikely to mitigate the impact. There will be harm to archaeological, wildlife and ecological interests, and extra traffic congestion in the vicinity of the A6/A46 junction. Unclear how it will be implemented. More suitable and less environmentally damaging sites should be found.
- The Council should be flexible in showing the site either east or west of the A6.
- Park and ride is an inferior solution to urban transport problems as compared to the use of public transport for the entire journey. Park and ride swallows up substantial areas of land in urban fringe or rural locations whereas town centre car parking can be provided efficiently in multi storey facilities on brown field sites. The first priority should be to improve bus and train services and cycle access along the two corridors accompanied by some requirement such as road pricing in Central Leicester. Only if these policies fail to relieve traffic congestion on the northern approach to Leicester should park and ride be considered.
- The Council's commitment to transport choice along the A6 does not appear to apply to park and ride as the site is part of the north of Birstall proposal and would not be permitted in isolation as an element of a transport strategy. PPG13 notes that a scheme can be enhanced by public transport priority measures. The Council is prepared to encourage major road works to provide bus priority along the A6. The lack of a policy to provide the Hallam Fields park and ride has no logic other than that the Borough Council is not confident of the potential to help achieve transport choice. If park and ride at Hallam Fields is important it should be proposed, irrespective of the rest of the proposed development.
- Amongst the representations from local residents in Birstall, Wanlip and Rothley on the "North of Birstall" proposal concerns are expressed about the park and ride proposal in terms of:-
 - congestion and parking problems in the City are not so serious as to warrant bus lanes and park and ride;
 - the City Council will not introduce measures to make the site viable;
 - people can't be forced to use park and ride;

- people will not use sites unless they are secure;
- the site could be lost to development in the future;
- the site will not benefit Birstall people. A site previously failed at Redhills - now a MacDonalds site;
- park and ride should be on the route into Leicester;
- drivers use the free car park at Sainsbury's as an informal park and ride. They will not use one at Birstall;
- if city centre car parks are not closed this site will not work;
- no information is available on who will use the site. People in Syston/Sileby should use the railway, and Rothley/Mountsorrel/Quorn have bus services;
- the site is on a prominent skyline. The environmental impact will be unacceptable with more pollution from traffic and additional buses.
- the site should be relocated at Leicester North station, or the A46/A607/Wanlip Road triangle at Syston, or south east of the A46 Bypass junction.

Issues in respect of PC 189:

- The change does not address serious reservations about park and ride as a damaging land use in an urban fringe location, however well designed in terms of layout, landscaping and screening.
- The new site would result in a greater loss of countryside. Moving the park and ride would not lead to residents on the estate using a car to ride to the park and ride to catch a bus. People would use their cars to travel to wherever they need to travel.
- Wish to see a traffic survey before a final site is chosen; it may well emerge that another site away from the A6/A46 roundabout would be acceptable.
- Wanlip Parish Meeting submitted objections from a number of parishioners on the following grounds:
 - it is a great intrusion into open countryside.
 - it would result in high pollution levels close to a large school and housing.
 - it will leave land open to future speculation; builders will reapply to build a hotel, petrol station, lorry park.
 - it would cause more congestion as outward (Loughborough) traffic will not be able to exit on to the northbound carriageway

- being adjacent to school playing fields poses real problems of vandalism.
 - should be sited nearer Syston to take commuters from that part of Soar Valley as well.
 - still concentrates on road transport instead of rail.
- The development violates rules of countryside preservation.
 - The new location for the park and ride will introduce development east of the A6 and will be intrusive in the landscape; it will have an adverse effect on the amenities of Stonehill School; and will introduce added pollution onto the school playing fields.
 - The specific location and design details of the proposal should be set out in the Development Brief rather than the Local Plan.
 - The site in Policy CT/3 could be considered as an alternative for the park and ride. It could be the centre of a web of buses into many parts of Leicester along a high speed dual carriageway. The site east of the A6 should be deleted from the Plan.

CONCLUSIONS

7.178 I deal with the objections to Policy TR/25 under Policy H/1(r) and refer objectors to my conclusions under that Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

7.179 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 189.

POLICY TR/26 - PLANNING CRITERIA FOR PARK AND RIDE SCHEMES TO SERVE LOUGHBOROUGH AND LEICESTER

OBJECTIONS	259/7984 1460/24795 3811/7985 3866/7986 3866/7987 5705/25681 5741/7988	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman Jelsons Ltd - See H/1(r) CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon SVPS, Mr C D Clarke - See TR/25 SVPS, Mr C D Clarke Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd, Mr N Hainsworth - See H/34 LCC-Dept of Planning & Transportation (Highways), Ms V Adams
PC:	190	
Objections to PC:	3811/71643 3866/73651 5705/71485 5727/73914	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon SVPS, Mr C D Clarke Persimmon Homes North Midlands Ltd, Mr N Hainsworth Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups Ms L Diggle

5608/131694 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

- 7.180 ■ The reference to current highway standards in sub paragraph (ii) should be removed or clarified. The standards the authority wishes to use in development control decisions should be incorporated in the Plan provided that they are not unduly detailed.
- Paragraph 7.148 should be modified. The references to the use of cars and increasing the capacity of the road network could be misinterpreted.
 - Park and ride is an inferior solution to urban transport problems as compared to the use of public transport for the entire journey. Park and ride swallows up substantial areas of land in urban fringe or rural locations whereas town centre car parking can be provided efficiently in multi storey facilities on brown field sites. The first priority should be to improve bus and train services and cycle access along the two corridors accompanied by some requirement such as road pricing in Central Leicester. Only if these policies fail to relieve traffic congestion on the northern approach to Leicester should park and ride be considered.

Issues in respect of PC 190:

- Park and ride is a damaging land use in an urban fringe location, however well designed in terms of design, layout, landscaping and screening. Alternative solutions to Leicester's traffic congestion should be considered.
- The additional landscaping will aid criminal activities and inhibit the safe use of the site. This view is consistent with previous advice from the Police.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.181 Park and ride schemes continue to have a place in most transport strategies but their success is most commonly measured in terms of security, accessibility and viability. These usually require that they be of sufficient size, well placed to the strategic road network, well managed and served by an efficient and attractive public transport system. The suitability of the designated site (Policy TR/25) is considered above under Policy H/1(r). This Policy is concerned only with the planning considerations of a suitably located site.

7.182 The objections by the CPRE and Charnwood Environmental Groups relate to the specific proposal contained in Policy TR/25. They are substantially the same as those they made to that policy and have been dealt with above. I do not intend to repeat myself. Objections by Jelsons Ltd and Persimmon Homes Ltd are dealt with under Policies H/1(r) and H/34 respectively. As to the others, PC 190 would meet the objections by the removal of references to highway standards and changes to paragraph 7.148. I am content to recommend accordingly. The threat of criminal damage to property is not only associated with new development, but is a fact of life and should be guarded against in any scheme. Security would be a matter for the managers of the site, but their proposals should be approved by the Council and included as a requirement for planning permission. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.183 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 190 except that the word, “security”, be inserted before the word, “information”, in clause (iv).

POLICY TR/28 - HEAVY GOODS VEHICLE OPERATIONS

OBJECTION 259/7989 GO-EM, Mr M Gorman

PC: 191

Objections to PC: 5608/131695 Mr A Long on behalf of Mr CJM Long

KEY ISSUES

7.184 ■ The reference to current highway standards at (i) should be removed or clarified. Any standards for use in development control decisions should be incorporated in the Plan provided that they are not unduly detailed.

Issue in respect of PC 191:

- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.185 PC 191 would meet the objection of GO-EM by removal of the reference to highway standards and, as in previous policies, and I am content to recommend accordingly. I refer Mr Long to paragraph 7.12 above.

RECOMMENDATION

7.186 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 191.

POLICY TR/32 - ROADSIDE SERVICE AREA ON LAND ADJACENT TO THE A46/A6 JUNCTION, WANLIP

OBJECTIONS See list of Objectors in Appendix 3

PC: 192

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

KEY ISSUES

7.187 ■ The proposed roadside service area may contravene Strategy Policies 1 and 4 of the adopted Structure Plan.

- Concerned at the adverse effect of traffic generation on the A6/A46 junction.

- The proposal is contrary to recent refusals. The site is poorly located to attract trunk road users as it is likely to be relocated east of the A6. Questions the

commercial viability. The proposal does not accord with PPG13.

- The site is prominent and visible from many viewpoints. Roadside services need to be visible adding to harm, farm buildings, lights, signs. Viability is questioned. The site is considered inappropriate as part of the overall development proposed north of Birstall or as a separate scheme. Concerned the site is favoured because of the prospect of “planning gain” to fund transport choice proposals. There will be harm to archaeological, wildlife and ecological interests, and traffic congestion. Landscaping could not mitigate the impact.
- Sufficient roadside service facilities are already available and the proposed scheme is not needed.
- Whilst supporting this proposal, to be in line with PPG13 consider it would be acceptable as part of a separate scheme and this should be reflected in the Plan.
- An access road is required to enable the north of Birstall site to be released. If the adjoining north of Birstall scheme is deleted this proposal should be replaced by a site at One Ash, Quorn adjacent to the roundabout junction of the A6 Bypass and A6 Loughborough Road.
- Amongst representations from local residents of Birstall, Wanlip and Rothley concerns have been expressed about this proposal in terms of:
 - roadside services should be accessed off the A46;
 - development will generate more traffic adding to congestion;
 - it will be impossible to adequately screen the roadside service area; it will be very prominent;
 - the need for roadside services has been rejected in the past;
 - services should be located north of the bypass next to Wanlip WRW, or north east of the A46 junction, or at Rothley Lodge.

Issues in respect of PC 192:

- The change makes the policy worse by increasing the area of land allocated.
- The change still violates the rules of countryside preservation.

CONCLUSIONS

7.188 My consideration of Policy TR/32 must be in the context of the wider development proposals of Policies H/1(r) and E/5(g) both of which are considered in this report and have been recommended for acceptance. I therefore approach these objections on the premise that housing and development for employment will occupy adjacent sites, and that the proposal site is quite small by comparison.

7.189 The Council would agree that if this proposal were to be judged in isolation,

development of a roadside service area would probably be regarded as inappropriate and in contravention of many of the Plan's policies to protect the countryside and the environment. But that would not be the case here. The decision having been made to extend the urban boundaries of Birstall to the A46, the objection site now represents an opportunity for development that would not otherwise have presented itself. I think it would be a somewhat pointless gesture if it were left undeveloped, especially if the need for roadside services were established. Even if it were left undeveloped, I have little doubt that it would be the subject of constant development proposals which might not be as appropriate as those in Policy TR/32.

7.190 The need for a service area would seem to be disputed largely because other such proposals have been rejected in the past. However, the reasons for past refusals were on the basis of unsuitable locations and because they were not in accordance with national and strategic policy guidance. The objection site is well placed to provide a facility that would be of benefit to both A46 and A6 trunk road users. Shell UK Ltd argues that the site would provide the first facility for 20 miles on the western side, and a more comprehensive one than is available northwards on the A46. This point was recognised by a previous Inspector who, in recommending the dismissal of an appeal against one of them, suggested that a site which served both routes might be more favourably considered. While he did not go so far as to identify the proposal site, it is clear that in preferring, "a site closer to or at the junction with the A6", he would have regarded this as being a far better site than the proposal he was considering.

7.191 As I anticipate the development proposals of the Plan, I have to be mindful that there have been significant changes in the road network over the last 8 or 9 years, and that the pressure to release land for roadside services along the A6 and A46 has been considerable. This fact is illustrated by the Council's record of refusals in Appendix 1 of CP/44/2.

7.192 Despite the LCC's reservations, the Borough Council is right to find support for Policy TR/32 in the adopted Structure Plan and, indeed, with the LCC's previous advice on this issue, although I should add that this support is no longer sustained. The LSP endorses the key sites approach and looks to these to provide fuel, telephones, overnight accommodation, picnic areas, coach parking and a 24 hour service. National guidance in PPG13 places the same emphasis on key sites developed to provide a range of facilities. Together, that guidance provides a strong pointer to the proposal site as being, perhaps, the only site in the area with the capacity and location to match all of those requirements. In the event, whether development proceeds will be a commercial judgement, but there is support for the policy from at least one national company. It views the site favourably and this would seem to answer those objectors who question the commercial viability of the proposal.

7.193 The proposal site is not regarded as greatly important in either ecological or archaeological terms, and it does not contain a significant area of versatile agricultural land. Although there is evidence of Neolithic flint scatters along its margins and of a settlement site of minor importance, the Council would be content with a record of findings and recovery of any artefacts found during development. It would condition any consent for that purpose. I regard as a significant concession MAFF's acceptance of the need for development in this part of the Plan area involving, as it does, the loss of a considerable area of good quality land.

7.194 That is not to deny that objectors to development, who regard it as intrusive and a violation of countryside policies, have a point. The site is elevated and notwithstanding the present urbanising effect of road works, street furniture and the paraphernalia of lighting columns, the overall sense is still one of rurality. But that is not the backcloth by which to judge this proposal. It has to be considered against adjoining development and landscaping

designed to provide strong visual and acoustic screening, and careful attention to design features. I do not pretend that it would be possible to disguise or screen the development, indeed some obvious presence would be a commercial necessity. But the Council's intentions to make this as acceptable as possible promises a sympathetic approach to the landscaping of the site and to the protection of the amenity of others.

7.195 While I recognise the traffic implications of development at this busy junction of the A46 and A6, the Highway Authorities have stopped short of an outright objection. They would seem content to accept that improvements may be necessary and that they are feasible, with the cost falling on developers in accordance with the obligations they assume. I am reassured also by the fact that the Council would expect to receive a favourable traffic impact assessment before planning permission were granted. I do not subscribe to the view that the proposal would generate traffic to any noticeable degree. The provision of the service area is aimed at the travelling public which has come to favour and expect this kind of facility on cross country routes. The proposed service station might attract some traffic from the urban area, but only if it were to offer significant benefits from the more local stations. My experience of roadside service areas are of pricing policies in which discounted fuel prices are a rarity.

7.196 The success or otherwise of development on this site will depend on there being sufficient land for the services and facilities deemed necessary. Other proposed changes to the Plan, notably the change in location of the park and ride facilities, offers the opportunity to increase the objection site by 0.7ha. This would seem justified in the light of representations. I am content to recommend the increase in the site area as the one modification to the policy.

RECOMMENDATION

7.197 I recommend that the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 192.

POLICY TR/33 - PLANNING CRITERIA TO ASSESS PROPOSALS FOR ROADSIDE SERVICE AREAS

OBJECTIONS	259/7991	GO-EM, Mr M Gorman
	3811/7993	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon
	4741/26029	Wanlip Parish Meeting
	5620/7994	Messrs Bowler of Woodthorpe
	5635/7995	Birstall Parish Council, Mrs D Wilson
	5727/7996	Consortium of Charnwood Environment Groups, Ms L Diggle
	5838/7997	CBC Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr A W Stott

PC: 193

Objections to PC: See list of Objectors in Appendix 4

FPC: 193A

7.198 ■ Sub paragraph (i) should include the distances between existing facilities to provide adequate guidance for developers. In sub paragraph (iii) the reference to highway requirements should be removed or clarified. Any standards to be used in development control decisions should be included in the Plan provided

that they are not too detailed.

- The policy fails to provide sufficient protection for the “local landscape”. Sub paragraph (v) should be replaced by sub paragraph (vi) included in the Consultative Draft Plan.
- The policy should encourage the use of existing facilities in settlements rather than provide facilities on green field sites. Motorists requiring refreshment can be directed to villages while the bulk of traffic continues on the bypass. The policy should be deleted.
- A roadside service facility should be provided for motorists south of Loughborough to serve the A6/Quorn-Mountsorrel Bypass. The Green Wedge designation prevents the most suitable site coming forward for development next to One Ash, Quorn.
- Any illumination should be low level and low wattage while advertising signs should not be back lit with intense fluorescent lights. These are matters relating to lighting standards and policies to which the Parish Meeting also has duly made objections and are addressed under Policy EV/50 above.

Issues in respect of PC 193:

- The change to sub paragraph (i) weakens the policy.
- Sub paragraph (i) should include the words as set out in Government Guidelines to avoid a flexible interpretation of the words “need in terms of spacing”.
- Paragraph 7.169 should be within the Policy, rather than the supporting text
- There is no need for new roadside service areas anywhere in the Borough.
- The change to paragraph 7.169 should be within the Policy, rather than the supporting text.
- The proposal still involves development on agricultural land.
- The proposal fails the criteria of Government guidelines and is not needed.
- The change does not reflect the guidance in PPG13.

CONCLUSIONS

7.199 The proposed changes to the policy would substantially meet the original objections of GO-EM by the deletion of references in the policy to the distances between existing facilities, and a more detailed explanation in the RJ. The policy would be too formulated in the original wording, it seems, and it could be better expressed to permit each proposal to be judged on its merits. The question of need would be largely a commercial judgement, as I observe above, but one which would be made within the framework of Government guidance.

7.200 Deletion of the reference to the requirements of the Highway Authorities would not

lessen their involvement, as some objectors suggest. Sub paragraph (iii) is redundant given the statutory requirement to consult with and accept directions from those bodies. By the same token, some reference to their role should appear in the RJ lest their important function be overlooked. In another context, the inclusion of a further qualification requested by the Parish Council and the Liberal Democrats is justified, given the countryside policies of this Plan. I am content to recommend PC 193 which embraces all of those points. I see, too, that the Council now considers the RJ should set the range of facilities that it would be reasonable to expect in a development of this size. I agree, and I recommend FPC 193A accordingly.

7.201 The CPRE and the Charnwood Environmental Groups would seem to be ready to accept traffic pollution in villages and to reduce the level of highway safety in the interest of maintaining what would be an undeveloped site adjacent to a significant development. While I understand the motive behind their objections, I am sure their approach is misguided or they have not understood the implication and the intent of Policy TR/32. Many roadside service stations have disappeared in recent times because of motorists' changing habits. Smaller stations have become unviable in the face of competition from larger and more comprehensive service areas, such as planned with Policy TR/32. The environmental groups should surely acknowledge that the disappearance of these smaller stations represents a small gain in countryside terms and that there is little chance of their return. I believe that motorists are unlikely to miss them. Nor are they likely to change their preference for large service areas to seeking out unfamiliar and sometimes non-existent facilities in communities they have been encouraged to by pass. In many respects the environment groups' proposals would be a retrograde step in terms of countryside preservation

7.202 The objection by Messrs Bowler relates more to a suitable location for a service area and that is considered above. Nothing in this policy would prevent any site coming forward as a proposal for planning permission. This policy simply sets out the conditions it would have to meet for permission to be granted. I have considered the objections to the changes but they do not raise any fresh arguments. I have set out my reasons for recommending the changes and the additional matters to be included.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.203 I recommend that:-

- (i) **the Plan be modified in accordance with PC 193 and FPC 193A,**
- (ii) **having regard to my conclusion at paragraph 7.200, paragraph 7.169 of the Plan be further modified by the inclusion of the following sentence to follow the first sentence:-**

“In addition, the means of access to and egress from the site and the internal road network will be based on the standards of the Highway Authorities and subject to their approval.”

POLICY TR/34 - TRAFFIC IN ROTHLEY AND MOUNTSORREL

OBJECTIONS	299/7998	William Davis Ltd/Rolls Royce plc
	2707/8002	E Whittington
	1991/8000	Mrs P Taylor
	1361/7999	Mr R Mason
	2710/8001	Mountsorrel Parish Council, Mrs J Broughton

2853/8003	Mrs K Brown
3397/8004	Ms J Ford
5682/8006	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson

KEY ISSUES

- 7.204 ■ No mention is made of the increasing problems brought about by housing developments at Mountsorrel highlighting the need for a properly designed link road extending Walton Way across to the Hilltop junction.
- Include a link road between Mountsorrel Lane and Loughborough Road in conjunction with development of land at Rothley. The provision of cross valley routes as identified at paragraph 2.69 is a key aim to maximise transport choice for existing and future residents of the Soar Valley. The need for the route is supported by the identified need for traffic management measures along Leicester Road. The proposed Rothley Lodge allocation emphasises the need for improved links from the western side of Mountsorrel/Rothley to the new A6(T). This, plus a new bus service, will bolster efforts to increase transport choice in line with PPG13 and the Development Plan.
 - The ALS should have regard to the need for a development funded extension of Walton Way to the A6.
 - Existing roads were never designed to take the volume of traffic now likely after the redevelopment of housing and the redevelopment of the former Rolls Royce site for housing as traffic tries to reach the A6.

CONCLUSIONS

7.205 The Parish and Borough Councils set out the background to these objections in some considerable detail in the evidence they presented to the inquiry. The latter does so in the context of this objection, and in connection with housing omission site H/65. There is no need, therefore, to rehearse those details, but I should observe that whilst the Councils have a slightly different approach to the perceived problems of traffic in Mountsorrel, both are agreed on the need to maintain the spatial distinction between that settlement and Rothley. Their appreciation of the need to maintain the integrity of the area of local separation stems from the extensive consideration given to the area by the previous Inspector to the Soar Valley Local Plan in his report, and in the Borough Council's Technical Report 4/4A (CD/8) - Site R4.

7.206 In essence, the conclusions drawn were that while there may be some local support for the road and the relief it might bring, the advantages claimed were outweighed by the physical and visual impact of development at this location including the effect on the prominent ridge line, the loss of good quality agricultural land and other matters of acknowledged importance. It is this land which now separates the two communities of Mountsorrel and Rothley and which is so highly regarded. The Council is right to point out that since the Soar Valley Local Plan report was delivered, there have been changes in the nature of national, strategic and local transport and other policies. These put a higher premium on the protection of the countryside and the promotion of alternative transport modes.

7.207 The Plan cannot be used as a "wish list" for road schemes. Before one can be included in the Plan it requires the authenticity of inclusion in the Structure Plan and the

prospect of funding within the Plan period. At paragraph 7.28 above I make the proviso that, exceptionally, if a scheme should fail that latter test it may still warrant inclusion if it were of such long term strategic importance that land should be reserved for its construction. The schemes promoted by the objectors fail all of those tests, and they look to development related schemes as an alternative. But development in this area for the purpose of facilitating extra traffic movements would run counter to all the policies the Council is now pursuing.

7.208 I would not deny that the promoted road scheme would represent some additional facility for the present and would-be residents of Montsorrel and Rothley, although it could add to the problems experienced elsewhere on the road network. But the A6 and A46 Bypasses have already brought considerable benefit to the two communities. Although the inexorable increase in traffic volumes may have eroded the environmental improvement they rendered, there are other communities which have fared worse and where investment is more obviously justified.

7.209 As I understand it, the Parish Council accepts that the construction of a new road could not be reconciled with the other policies that it supports in this Plan. Its objection seeks to maintain the commitment to the reassessment of traffic conditions in Mountsorrel following the A6 Bypass, as set out in the adopted Soar Valley Local Plan. I am not convinced that the Plan is the right medium to restate that intention or that it would have any special significance. It seems to me that to include such a statement would be to imply some individual consideration being given to this settlement. I believe the Council should be applying its policies universally and that it would be wrong to suggest otherwise. Traffic conditions in Mountsorrel will continue to be a matter of concern to the Council and to the Highway Authority. But they will want to approach them in the light of the new policies of this Plan and not be bound by the promises in what would be a superseded Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

7.210 I recommend that no modification be made in response to these objections.

POLICY TR/35 - ROAD TRAFFIC REDUCTION

OBJECTION 3720/8005 Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester

KEY ISSUES

- 7.211 ■ Concerned about the contradictions in the Plan between promoting use of the private car and sustainability objectives. A policy of road traffic reduction via a “Road Traffic Reduction Plan” would include a range of measures to encourage non-car modes, encourage car sharing, time working, and parish and town councils to investigate local traffic reduction. The Plan would include financial implications of measures, implementation arrangements, likely effect on traffic reduction, reductions in pollution. There should be specific targets for traffic reduction over a time scale of several years and an aim to achieve stabilisation at 1990 levels of traffic in five years.
- As written, whilst the Plan covers many of the aspects indicated, it also contains many proposals designed to cater for predicted increases in road traffic.

CONCLUSIONS

7.212 In its response to the objection the Council outlines the progress made in putting into effect the Road Traffic Reduction Act and rightly draws the conclusion that it would be premature to anticipate its requirements for the Plan area. Whilst I understand the impatience of some objectors on the slow progress of the legislature, the enormity of the task ahead should not be underestimated. Not every road user shares the views of the Green Party. Changing the attitude of the majority will require careful planning and preparation. This is a task beyond the scope and time scale of this Plan which should, at least, shift the balance of expectation firmly towards more sustainable transport policies. In my opinion it would be unrealistic to attempt a more radical movement.

RECOMMENDATION

7.213 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.

POLICY TR/36 - PROTECTION OF COUNTRY LANES

OBJECTIONS	3491/8007	Dr A Kay
	3811/8008	CPRE-Charnwood District, Mrs J Noon

KEY ISSUES

- 7.214 ■ Include a new policy to protect country lanes, entirely consistent with other countryside protection policies and help to meet the transport aims of the Plan by discouraging increased car travel on country lanes and protecting their use by non-motorised travel modes.
- Country lanes often fail to meet modern highway design standards in terms of narrowness, bends and sudden changes in gradient. But this gives them their charm and character. They should not be upgraded to meet the needs of modern traffic. Measures to reduce vehicle speeds and to divert unnecessary traffic should be introduced. Protection should extend to verges and hedgerows alongside the lanes. A policy is suggested to avoid any change that would damage the character of lanes. Problems caused by a lane would be resolved by traffic management measures designed to reduce vehicle speed and/or the density of traffic.

CONCLUSIONS

7.215 Readers of this report, and those familiar with the objections of the Department of Environment and Transport, will be aware that the prospects for major or minor road works in the Plan area have been greatly reduced by recent changes in Government policy. In reality, there is no prospect of a programme of rural road improvements. Moreover, other policies in this Plan would provide a further element of protection for rural roads. Policy TR/8, as proposed to be changed, is specifically aimed at preventing environmental damage by development. Policy TR/** “The Impact of Traffic on Minor Roads”, (as modified), would also protect against an unreasonable increase in the number of vehicles and the impact of traffic on rural roads.

7.216 I am with the Council in believing another policy would be redundant. I have been content to recommend the proposed changes to the text contained in FPC 174A which,

together with the proposed changes to the above policies, meet the objections.

RECOMMENDATION

7.217 I recommend that no modification be made in response to these objections.

POLICY TR/37 - CAR FREE DEVELOPMENTS

OBJECTION 3184/8009 Mr JR Catt

KEY ISSUE

7.218 ■ Concerned that as written the Plan does not appear to allow for “car-free” developments. Guidance should be included setting a positive context for such developments.

CONCLUSIONS

7.219 I am also with the Council in regarding the recommended Policy TR/21 as providing an opportunity for car free development. I make the point in my conclusions there that the only parking provision the Plan should require is the minimum for operational efficiency. Mr Catt will surely acknowledge that new development must be allowed to function. If it could do so with zero parking, there is nothing in this Plan which would require a developer to provide more.

RECOMMENDATION

7.220 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.

POLICY TR/38 - LOUGHBOROUGH EASTERN BYPASS

OBJECTIONS	301/26043	Del Rosa Developments Ltd, Mr M Smallman
	2796/8010	Cllr R Shields
	3710/8012	Conservative Group Spokesman for Planning, Cllr A M Kershaw
	3720/8013	Loughborough Green Party, Mr P Leicester
	5682/8014	Various Companies, Mr L Dobson
	5633/26009	Marron Dodds for D Wilson Estates Ltd
	5774/26010	Marron Dodds for Bryant Homes Ltd
	5664/26011	A Granger for the Prestwold Estate

KEY ISSUES

- 7.221 ■ The road is greatly needed for the prosperity of the town as agreed in the adopted Loughborough Local Plan. The proposal of the Consultation Draft Borough wide Plan should be reinstated.
- Support provision of an A60-A6 leg of an eastern bypass sponsored by a new settlement at Cotes, an A6 to Bishop Meadow Road link sponsored by the Dishley Grange proposal (Policy E/5(c)), and a new village west of Hathern sponsoring a western bypass of Hathern. These three strategic proposals could

be implemented over a suitable time scale. They would free the old A6 through Loughborough and Hathern to provide a good, safe and quick route for buses and cycles.

- Any threat to the Loughborough Big Meadow would be totally unacceptable. An eastern bypass would contribute to unsustainable traffic growth. Only 6% of traffic on the A6 is through traffic and there is no proven need for an eastern bypass.
- The Eastern Relief Road should improve access, economic development, and lead to better public transport.
- It is unfortunate the Plan is not able to discuss weighty issues surrounding a distributor road serving heavy movements across Loughborough between housing and employment areas.
- Object to the Plan's failure to address the highway infrastructure needs of Loughborough necessary to reduce congestion and enable improvements to public transport.

CONCLUSIONS

7.222 I have already commented on the failure of objectors to persuade the Council to include rather more modest road schemes in the Plan which would afford some relief to the communities of Mountsorrel and Rothley. The objection that the Plan fails to provide for an Eastern Relief Road for Loughborough, and is seriously deficient in not setting out a coherent transport strategy, goes well beyond the scope of those objections and questions the whole basis of the Plan. I do not intend to address the more detailed points made in elaboration of these objections. The exercise would be redundant in the light of my recommendations in this and other chapters, (see especially paragraphs 2.120 to 2.124 of this report). I have already commented that the Plan cannot be used as a "wish list" for road schemes. Before one can be included in the Plan it requires the authenticity of inclusion in the Structure Plan and the prospect of funding within the Plan period. This scheme has neither.

7.223 In its response the Council elaborates on the administrative and practical obstacles to an eastern bypass of Loughborough at this stage. In the first instance, Government support for the scheme was withdrawn in 1994 and with it any reasonable chance of funding in the near future. (Its inclusion in the Structure Plan Transport Policy 3 is now of no significance). Given the withdrawal of that support, the difficulties of acquiring land for its construction would be almost insurmountable and the likelihood of funding by developer contributions negligible. There can be no question of including an eastern bypass in this Plan.

7.224 At paragraph 7.28 above I make the proviso that if a scheme should fail the tests I outline, it may still warrant inclusion if it were of such long term strategic importance that land should be reserved for its construction; this has been done in some cases. But the Council and objectors will know that the work involved in a fundamental review, such as outlined by Bryant Homes Ltd, would be well outside the scope and time scale of this Plan. Indeed, Bryant Homes Ltd see such work taking place in the next review or alteration to the Plan. The Council agree that this would be a more realistic approach to establishing the need or otherwise for an eastern bypass.

7.225 Since 1994, PPG13 has changed the whole direction of transportation and land use planning which this Local Plan seeks to reflect. Both the Council and the objectors recognise

the need for a review, given the time taken to prepare the Plan and what will be a limited life. Where they part company is the latter consider that the Plan should carry a commitment to an immediate review of land use and transportation matters relating to Loughborough. The Council, while accepting that an early review is inevitable, see it as wide ranging and taking place in the context of strategic developments and initiatives for closer land use/transportation integration. The emerging Replacement Structure Plan and Regional Planning Guidance would provide the guiding principles in this early review with the emphasis on the integration of transportation modes. The Shepshed-Loughborough Package is an example of the integrating measures which can be taken and which, significantly, have found Government financial support.

7.226 Whilst I recognise the elements of a common approach, it seems to me that some objections are driven more by the prospects of further development on the eastern side of Loughborough than would seem appropriate. This would not be the right engine to drive the next review. I have made the point before, and I am with the Council in believing that statements in this Plan that particular prospects will be revisited are unnecessary. What is more to the point, they would be potentially prejudicial, especially when it is the intention of the Council to consider “all” options. The Council’s approach is set out in FPC 233 to Chapter 1 of the Plan, which I recommend. I see no need for further modifications in this Chapter, especially as nothing in this Plan would affect the line of the proposed eastern bypass or justify the immediacy of a review. For completeness, I have dealt elsewhere with the need and other arguments for an Eastern Bypass under several of the housing omission sites, including Cotes.

RECOMMENDATION

7.227 I recommend that no modification be made in response to these objections.

POLICY TR/39 - ROAD ACCESS INTO EASTERN LOUGHBOROUGH

OBJECTION 3208/8011 Walton on the Wolds Parish Council,
Mrs D M Wright

KEY ISSUES

- 7.228 ■ The density of traffic on the A60 between Cotes and Queens Road in Loughborough is of concern. There are now proposals for 590 houses (H/1(b), (d), (l), (m), (n), (o) and (s)) situated to the east of Loughborough resulting in an unquantified number of additional traffic movements onto the A60 over and above present traffic flow, but with no additional road provision.
- A total reassessment of the eastern road approach into Loughborough is needed.

CONCLUSIONS

7.229 The objection seeks no change to the Plan. The Council has, no doubt, taken note of the Parish Council’s concerns and will respond appropriately. In the circumstances, I make no recommendation for any modification to the Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

7.230 I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection.