

Shepshed Public Meeting

Workshop notes

Glenmore Community Centre 31st October 2008

(Attendance 74)

This report provides a summary of the key issues raised by members of the public at Glenmore Community Centre as part of the further consultation on the Core Strategy. The report also provides an analysis of the participant's response to the workshop exercise. The views expressed are those of the participants and are not necessarily shared by the Council. Finally, a summary of the question and answer session held is provided.

Table 1 (10 participants)

- How has proposal been through Committee process?
- Concern about the 19,000 houses, can we resist?
- Concern about accessibility to Garendon Park – Shepshed residents will have to cross M1 and new road;
- Concern about transport impact on the West Loughborough;
- Why are we not going to Wymeswold?
- Concern about the need to protect the forest;
- Homes are for the future, how have you involved young people?
- A6 – A512 Will be gridlocked – unable to access Loughborough (Garendon related);

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	9		
Protect settlement identity	8	2	
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	6	2	1
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	4	2	
Reduce flood risk	7	1	
Protect good quality agricultural land	9		
Access to services and jobs	3	2	
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	4	2	
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	6	1	
Attractiveness to investors	2	4	3

Table 2 (12 Participants)

- It was suggested that building housing estates next to the motorway will encourage people to use their cars more to commute up and down the M1.

- It was discussed that at Wymeswold people will need to get in their cars to get anywhere unless facilities are provided for new residents.
- It was highlighted that it is important that jobs are created as well as new homes.
- It was asked how much land between Shepshed, Dishley and Hathern would be needed for housing and industry.
- There were concerns that the A512 is very congested and building new development will make it worse.
- There was a feeling that the proposed location west of Loughborough is the cheapest option.
- There were questions about how seriously the Council has taken the option at Cotes.
- It was suggested that there is deprivation towards Wymeswold as well as west of Loughborough.
- It was highlighted that access to the countryside for Shepshed residents will be reduced if Garendon estate is built on.
- There were concerns that Shepshed will become attached to Loughborough and be no longer Shepshed.
- The flood risks associated with development east of Loughborough were discussed and it was highlighted that the Black Brook also floods west of Loughborough.
- There were concerns about the loss of agricultural land when food is getting more expensive and importing more and more. It was highlighted that the land is needed to feed ourselves and that on this basis a brownfield sites like Wymeswold Airfield should be the preferred location for new development.

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	7	1	
Protect settlement identity	9		
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	6	7	
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	5	2	3
Reduce flood risk	3	4	
Protect good quality agricultural land	5		
Access to services and jobs	3	2	3
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	1	4	3
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	6	1	
Attractiveness to investors			9

Table 3 (9 Participants)

- It was discussed that the County Council has concerns about the transport proposals of the Core Strategy. Concern was expressed that the County Council's view had not been included in the Core Strategy proposals.
- There was a discussion about how wildlife had been taken into account in the proposed location and concern expressed about the loss of countryside and

wildlife that the development would cause.

- It was raised that the Regional Plan was not finalised so figures may change. It was explained that there was very little chance that the figures will change dramatically due to the late stage in the preparation of the Regional Plan.
- There was concern raised about the impact of development on flooding and the landscape. In particular issues were raised in relation to local knowledge of flooding, the Nanpanton Reservoir and the Black Brook. It was highlighted that the Dishley Grange development had been reduced because of flooding issues.
- The question was asked why Wymeswold Airfield has not been proposed as it is a brownfield site. It was suggested that the development was needed to support the Wolds villages and that this opportunity had not been taken into account.
- There was concern that the Garendon option has issues with flooding and transport. It was suggested that people will use their cars and no matter what is proposed for bus routes, there will be traffic problems.
- It was discussed that Loughborough is located on the narrowness part in the M1 in the country. There was concern that people will use the new road to get to junction 24 and a feeling that there should be restrictions on new road to stop this.
- There were concerns about Gypsy & Travellers site and a feeling that there are already a lot of sites in Leicestershire.
- It was asked whether the Golf Academy will become houses.
- There was a high value placed on settlement identity and the historic identity of Shepshed.
- There were concerns about the future of Shepshed town centre and a feeling that the proposed development will not benefit Shepshed.

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	5	1	
Protect settlement identity	5	2	
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	7	2	
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	6	2	
Reduce flood risk	4	5	
Protect good quality agricultural land	7		1
Access to services and jobs	1	4	
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	2	2	1
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	4	1	
Attractiveness to investors		4	2

Table 4 (4 Participants)

No discussion was recorded from this table.

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	3		

Protect settlement identity	2		1
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	2		
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	3		
Reduce flood risk	2		
Protect good quality agricultural land	3		
Access to services and jobs	3		
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	1		
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	3		
Attractiveness to investors	1		3

Table 5 (11 Participants)

- Trees landscape, fresh air, flora, fauna. Give Life to Protect open space’;
- Important to protect settlement identity and prevent encroachment – applies to all scale of settlements;
- Protect landscape setting of Garendon Park & Garden Valley, not just the already protected part;
- Focusing too much on buses and not enough on trains, too much focus on J23, roads A512 too congested; East of Loughborough best as that is where the station is;
- Surface water run off will be an added pressure to existing water courses;
- Important to safeguard agricultural land to avoid being reliant on imports and reduce carbon footprint;
- Employment areas should be just that - job focused and not warehousing;
- No comments made on 8th issue
- Protect and expand;
- Job creation is important to encourage investment;

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	10		
Protect settlement identity	9	2	
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	10		1
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	2	6	
Reduce flood risk	4	3	
Protect good quality agricultural land	10	1	
Access to services and jobs	3	5	
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	2	3	1
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	9	2	

Attractiveness to investors	4	3	1
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Table 6 (13 Participants)

- Very important to work to maintain biodiversity and diverse landscapes. Using Wymeswold Airfield for development could help safeguard more important areas such as west of Loughborough
- Developing the airfield would help bring benefits to the Wolds villages
- Wherever the development goes there must be adequate green wedges to safeguard the identity of nearby settlements. Shepshed people are proud of Shepshed's identity and do not want to be part of Loughborough.
- Providing one new town somewhere in the East Midlands to meet the needs of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire would avoid all the local upset caused by the SUE proposals - wherever they go
- Proper speed reduction measures are needed in Shepshed. Traffic lights are needed on Anson Road
- Development must be located where it can help reduce travel.
- The A512 is heavily congested already and the road network currently suggested to serve the west Loughborough option would be inadequate.
- Public transport needs a lot of improvement. Fares are too high and services not frequent enough. Making bus travel free might attract more people to use buses
- There should be absolutely no development in areas of flood risk
- Agricultural land must be safeguarded as land will be needed for food production. Farmers must make full use of their land and more diversification is needed
- Shepshed has lost most of its employment sites and people have to travel to work. Better balance needed between homes and local jobs for the town
- People want to be close to the countryside. Leave things as they are now.
- Better public transport is needed to recreational areas such as Bradgate Park.

FACTOR	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
Protect wildlife and landscape	9	1	
Protect settlement identity	7	1	
Protect the historic environment and archaeological interests	5	3	2
Managing travel demand and improving transport choice	11		
Reduce flood risk	4	3	1
Protect good quality agricultural land	7	4	
Access to services and jobs	7		
Enhance the standards of living of deprived households	4	5	2
Access to the countryside and leisure facilities	5	6	
Attractiveness to investors	1	5	2

Notes from the Question and Answer Session

- Q How can Shepshed's identity be protected if West Loughborough goes ahead? And how would Shepshed benefit from the development?**
- A *The development would be designed to ensure Loughborough, Shepshed and Hathern remain separate. Shepshed would always have the motorway corridor as a strong feature that will provide a physical barrier and increase the feeling of separation.*
- The new development would create opportunities for significant investment that would benefit Shepshed and could help address local issues of lack of jobs, underutilised town centre, poor access to education and training An Action Area Plan could help develop initiatives in consultation with the community.*
- Q How much green space would be left if west Loughborough went ahead?**
- A *There would be significant green infrastructure focussed on a restored Garendon Park (over 50ha), the Blackbrook corridor and land alongside the motorway.*
- Q Why should anyone go to Shepshed from the west Loughborough development? Schools would suffer, Shepshed would be cut off, and it would be harder for Shepshed people to drive into Loughborough.**
- A *Although no details are available people living in the development would be expected to use Hind Leys, and utilise local services and facilities. There would be excellent walking and cycling links and bus links could be developed. The A512, A6 link road should help mitigate the traffic impact.*
- Q Who would anyone bother to try and get to Loughborough? Coalville is 10 minutes away by car and has good shops.**
- A *Loughborough has a much better range of shops and services on offer than Shepshed. The intention is to implement a package of transport measures that will provide people with a good choice of travel modes into Loughborough.*
- Q What consideration has been given to using brownfield sites such as the Eastern Gateway in Loughborough?**
- A *The aim is to maximise use of brownfield sites including the redevelopment scheme outside Loughborough rail station. However in order to accommodate new housing needs it is inevitable that significant amounts of Greenfield land will be developed; although the amount will be kept to a minimum by developing at higher densities.*
- Q Have the noise problems caused by the M1 been taken into account?**

A *The development has been located to provide separation from the motorway corridor. There will be opportunities for landscaping and screening complementary to any provided as part of the planned M1 improvements.*

Q Why not put the traveller's site somewhere else? Concerns that it will lead to increased crime and safety of local residents.

A *The RSS requires adequate provision be made in the Borough for 10 permanent and 11 temporary pitches for gypsies and travellers and 5 plots for showpeople. They are proposed here as part of two properly planned sustainable new communities in the north and south of the Borough rather than trying to add them onto existing communities. Properly managed sites such as the site at Hinckley can be successful and they do reduce incidences of illegal camping.*

Q The West Loughborough option is the smallest area of the options between settlements already too near to each other. Roads are congested. Shepshed already has a number of large developments at Newhurst Quarry/ waste site, the lorry park. The Wolds might benefit from significant new development and related facilities, that area is nearer the rail station and has less congested roads. The County Council supports an eastern bypass of Loughborough.

A *It is the officers' view that West Loughborough performs better than the east Loughborough options on the basis of the planning criteria used and that it is in the round the most sustainable option. A new development area can be accommodated between existing settlements.*

Locations east of Loughborough are likely to result in more car based developments. There are significant congestion issues on the A60 the only route into town. The eastern bypass option involves building a road through floodplain that would be liable to flood. There are significant concerns as to whether this road is affordable or deliverable, or that the perceived benefits justify very high costs

Q Although Wymeswold Airfield is not currently being promoted by any developer it is the only brownfield option. If it were the preferred option would developers become interested?

A *Developers have to second guess where development might be located. Promoting a site is very expensive. The airfield is probably not being promoted because developers think it unlikely to survive the process. There is evidence from appeal decisions that brownfield sites will not be acceptable for development unless they are in suitable and sustainable locations. The officers' view is that Wymeswold airfield does not pass these tests or a number of other planning criteria.*

Q Shepshed needs help now and help this should not be reliant on development. Too much development has already taken place in Shepshed without supporting benefits. The town is in danger of dying due to a lack of shops, no jobs etc.

A *The reality is that public funds are very limited and that it has proved difficult to attract funding to the town given higher priorities elsewhere. Development brings opportunities to generate funds and negotiate benefits for communities. The benefits are greater from larger developments. Hallam Fields at Birstall provided a £10m package of benefits from about 900 houses, employment land and service facilities. This is a good example of where local residents opposed a development but also sought benefits if it went ahead.*

Q What would happen to the existing Civic Amenity site off Hathern Road?

A *If the development were to proceed the County council would need to decide whether to improve or relocate the facility.*

Q Is there any leeway to renegotiate the overall level of new housing?

A *No. 19,300 is the minimum number of new houses to be provided 2001-2026 in the Borough. This number is handed down by the Regional Spatial Strategy and is not negotiable. If the Borough Council fails to deliver then the houses could be imposed on the area by an Inspector/ GOEM.*

Q The setting of Garendon Park is as important as the park itself. The Park is of national importance. Can we afford to lose it?

A *The officers' judgement is that west Loughborough is the best performing option in overall terms. There is a unique opportunity to provide a real community asset in the form of a publicly accessible park with properly restored historic character. Garendon Park is currently private. Public access is not realistically achievable by any other means. We will consider the views of English Heritage on the Core Strategy.*