From: Robert Comber [redacted]
Sent: 18 August 2021 15:10
To: Cllr. James Poland
Cc: [redacted] localplans@charnwood.gov.uk
Subject: The Proposed 90 New Houses in Thrussington
Attachments: August 2021.docx

To whom it may concern,

Please find attached my feedback letter to voice my personal concerns over this proposal.

Please keep me updated on any developments and in particular the reports submitted before this proposal can proceed, by the Highways, Environmental and Emergency Services.

Kind regards

Rob Comber

August 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

Proposed Developments in Thrussington – HA67 and HA68

I wish to raise strong objections about the Charnwood Borough Council Draft Local Plan, which proposes to develop areas HA67 and HA68 in Thrussington leading to the construction of 90 new houses, a near 40% increase in the number of dwellings. My objections are:

Sustainability
There is no bus service in Thrussington, which is a key element of Charnwood's Sustainability Assessment.

Thrussington fails to meet other requirements including proximity to a convenience store and a GP surgery, which are both miles away. The village utility infrastructure will not cope with an additional 90 houses.

The ever needed internet connection and connections for mobile phones also leaves a lot to be desired and with homes consisting of possible occupants working from home, children requiring broadband access this is also unsustainable.

Character
Thrussington is recognized for its historic nucleated form. Our forebears have maintained the cherished character of our village over centuries. The developments would adversely affect this and change the appearance of the village both internally and when approaching from either north or east. Planning applications for the area of HA68 have failed for this reason before.

Traffic
There will be at least 180 additional cars, possibly more as some occupants will have cars for teenagers and young adults. There will also be additional service vehicles accessing the new developments. The roads are narrow and in the case of HA68, Old Gate Road is a single track, vehicles already having to use verges to pass each other. The village is a farming village with a number of working farms and already have large farming vehicles and tractors often with trailers driving along the narrow roads and in particular the single track Old Gate Road.

The new policy of cutting verges in short bursts and allowing swathes of our verges to grow and provide habitats for wildlife is to be admired but with extra traffic all using the verges this totally negates this new policy.

The village junction with Old Gate Road turns back on its self from Seagrave Road and has an adverse camber which is dangerous and cannot be maneuvered by larger vehicles, such as delivery wagons, emergency vehicles and waste disposal (dust carts) lorries. The other junction with the A46 has no slip road to enter A46 and no slip road to exit onto Old Gate Road from A46. This is an extremely fast and dangerous road to access or exit the A46.

The additional cars (180 or more) wanting to access the A46 from the Seagrave Road will also make this junction even more dangerous. A round-a-bout was suggested for this junction and I have heard that the Leicester City Football Club were willing to pay for a round-a-bout to be constructed to ensure safety for those using the junction going towards Seagrave and the new Leicester City Football Training Ground. This has not happened, just 'improvements' to allow coaches easier maneuverability in that direction which, in reality, has not made the junction any safer at all particularly when leaving or entering Seagrave Road on the Thrussington side . With the additional traffic from this proposed development a round-a-bout here is of paramount importance and perhaps should have been implemented whilst the LCF training ground was being constructed?

To exit the village in the other direction towards Syston or Melton Mowbray entails negotiating a very narrow bridge over the Wreake allowing only a single car over at any one time and where visibility as to oncoming traffic is impossible whichever direction you are travelling in.

To exit the village via the Hoby Road entails a route to Hoby village which is also extremely difficult and dangerous to navigate with its twisting roads and parking problems or out to Brooksby via a single track road again very difficult to pass as the verges are not wide.

Parking

Parking in the village is already a major problem for drivers, as you drive through the village only one car can drive through at a time, leaving other cars having to pull in, give way and wait. The problem of parking often means that as you drive through the village towards Old Gate Road parked cars obscure your view of Seagrave Road and oncoming cars often mount the pavement to avoid collisions there. Cars are often parked from the junction of Old Gate Road and Seagrave Road up Old Gate Road again your vision of cars turning into Old Gate Road is obscured as you come down the road on the wrong side passing the parked cars and as you turn into Old Gate Road from Seagrave Road you cannot see the cars coming down, as I said on your side of the road passing the parked cars. This is even worse when you meet a large vehicle, e.g. a farm tractor etc.

As with all village schools, parking at drop off and pick up times is dangerous and chaotic. Not only are parents and carers parking but children are also trying to cross roads. This can only be made more dangerous with the additional cars coming and going from the new development HA 67.

With the parking difficulties experienced in the village it makes it difficult for emergency vehicles to negotiate their way through the village and with the number of houses being proposed on each site and the usual problems of new housing estates, garages too narrow to accommodate modern cars, not enough drive space to park cars on, emergency vehicle access to the proposed new houses could be compromised.

Environment

The proposed developments take no notice of the wildlife corridors identified in the Village Neighbourhood Plan and the draft Charnwood Local Plan does not take this into account, even though it was adopted by the Borough Council in 2018. Green space will be built upon, traffic pollution will be worse and our verges and hedgerows will be damaged. Why have a policy that limits the cutting of grass verges leaving swathes of

verges uncut to promote the habitats of wild life which will then be negated by vehicles having to use the verges to pass each other.

The village has no recreational spaces for children, with this additional number of houses recreational space for the increased number of children is essential. One of the basic requirements for a child's healthy growth and development (Maslow's Hierarchy) is to have the space to exercise safely and socialize with others. The nearest play space is in Rearsby, an often full and over used play space.

There is a serious issue with flooding both in the village, closing the access to Rearsby countless times during the past decade. One diverted route to Syston would be via Ratcliffe on the Wreake and East Goscote but that road also floods. The frequency of road closures is increasing year on year.

In rainy weather water cascades down Old Gate Road and escapes down existing driveways and the gutters and culverts cut into the verges. These gutters or culverts are up to 300mm deep and the number is in excess of 100 along Old Gate Road. They are more obvious in winter when vegetation and verges die back but in summer they are obscured by vegetation and long grass and can significantly damage your car if you drive over or into one to avoid another car which is going to happen frequently with the additional traffic expected.

Our environment is to be severely disrupted if this proposal should go ahead during construction. All my objections to the buildings being built there will be even more exaggerated during the construction with the materials arriving, the actual building workers coming and parking for weeks, months and the general noise and disruption it inevitably will generate as all building sites do. Once the houses are built and residents moved in this will increase the noise and pollution levels of our village. Both to me unacceptable.

Previous Policies

This proposal totally goes against the Village Neighbourhood Plan and the Charnwood Local Plan adopted by the Borough Council in 2018. Why the sudden change? This is a ten year policy and the council members should be strong enough to defend their previous decisions and stick to their commitments.

Other applications have been made around the village and been rejected. They certainly make sore sense than this proposal. Policy CT/1 relates to 'General Principles for Areas of Countryside' and advises that development should be in the interest of the long term operation of agricultural, horticultural or forestry. These proposed houses do not fit into this category and yet a planning application for one farm dwelling along Old Gate Road has been refused. The policy indicates that new dwellings in rural areas will only be permitted where there is a real justification, this is usually one based on agricultural need.

There is also the Housing Act of 2004 – Empty Homes Strategy, where by the council are 'committed' to ensuring that all empty houses are re-occupied, yet planning permission is normally refused to convert unused farm buildings into quality residential homes.

Finally

I assume that the council has contacted other professional and outside agencies such as, the Leicestershire County Council Highways Authority and the Environment Agency also Emergency Reports regarding access for emergency vehicles. In the interests of clarity and impartiality these reports should be made available for the residents of the village to peruse before any decision. Is the council that transparent?

Summary

For the reasons outlined above I consider the draft Charnwood Local Plan proposing developments on the sites HA67 and HA68 is **UNSOUND** and wish my objections to be heard at the Public Inquiry.

Yours Faithfully,

Robert Comber (Mr)

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