

Charnwood Local Plan – Post Hearing Consultation Response

Clive & Jane Tranter

Re: Draft Transport Strategies to Enable Growth in the Borough of Charnwood.

The Haddon Way Residents Association [HWRA] has brought my attention to Charnwood Borough Council's draft transport strategy.

[[https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/exam_75_draft_transport_strategy/E_XAM_75 - Draft Transport Strategy.pdf](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/exam_75_draft_transport_strategy/E_XAM_75_-_Draft_Transport_Strategy.pdf)].

Whilst I am pleased with much of the plan I do have grave concerns regarding paragraph 3.1.4 which states:

3.1.4. The (Transport) Strategies are not intended to deal with more localised impacts of a particular development site. There will continue to be a requirement for developers to assess and determine their site-specific impacts and mitigation requirements. The onus will be on developers to demonstrate this through their transport assessments developed in support of planning applications, whilst the Plan-led mitigation strategy will provide the overarching framework of prioritised and phased measures which mitigate the cumulative and cross boundary impacts of Plan-level growth.

To my mind it is nothing less than irresponsible to place the onus on developers to assess the transport needs and impacts of their own developments. Furthermore, I am concerned that if this approach is followed, each new development will be considered in isolation by that developer without any independent assessment of the impacts across the locality nor taking into account other areas identified for development. There surely needs to be a joined up approach with the Council having the role of ensuring that the best transport solutions are implemented - which may not of course be the simplest and cheapest for a developer.

An example of how my concerns would surface in practice is the proposed development in Loughborough of 422 houses [HA16] by Bloor Homes. Access to the new site is proposed through two existing roads [Laburnum Road and Corydalis Close]. It is clear from an examination of these streets that neither have the capacity to absorb the traffic generated by 422 homes. These are small residential roads not designed as feeder roads into a substantial housing estate.

In addition, traffic using these roads access them via Haddon Way in Loughborough. Haddon Way is a feeder road into the existing estate but already provides major challenges to road users because one side of the road is taken up by a string of parked cars on a blind bend leaving just one side of the road for vehicles travelling in both directions to use.

Bloor Homes made a similar planning application in 2014. Amongst the reasons for refusing planning permission were:

- The remoteness of the site from local services and facilities
- Lack of good access to existing public transport systems which would help to reduce car use
- Failure to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the landscape
- Taken together, the proposal would cause cumulative impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefit of the development.

Those four reasons have not changed, substantial car ownership by future residents is a fact, and should the transport strategy be finalised as it is currently drafted, there will be no impartial consideration of the application as regards the suitability of the proposed transport plan. My concerns are exacerbated because the existing roads cannot be improved to absorb the additional traffic.

The Local Plan as drafted also identifies two additional areas for development [HA15 & HA17] which are adjacent to the Bloor Homes application which, if developed, will place additional pressure on the local road system. It is imperative that the Council have responsibility to ensure that an area wide cohesive transport strategy is delivered across all these developments, not a piecemeal developer-led approach. Residents need the council to find coordinated solutions to the traffic issues those developments will collectively create. It is not appropriate for each development to just tap into the existing infrastructure.

I would, therefore, like to see the Council's transport strategy amended to ensure that the onus is clearly on the Council to consider the impact of each new development on the existing infrastructure and to dictate the required solutions. That is what I pay my council tax for.

Clive and Jane Tranter