

8 July 2008

Mr J Guest
Director of Regeneration and Community
Derby City Council

Dear Mr Guest,

Chellaston Business Park

Having examined the current outline proposals for the Business Park, which includes construction of the remaining section of the link road through the commercial development, we wish to express our concerns over the changes in the development proposals since Holmleigh Way was designed and constructed and the development and occupation of the properties along this route in relation to:

- the 30% increase in the planned development area (66h to 86.8h)
- the change of use from B1 and some B2, to B1, more B2 and B8
- the changed traffic profile from predominantly cars and LGV's accessing a Business Park typically 5 days a week, to HGV's and articulated vehicles accessing warehousing and distribution centres 24hrs a day and 7 days a week.

When the Royal Country Park housing estate and Holmleigh Way were constructed and houses were first sold, the DCLP current at that time was the adopted plan of 1998. This considered the development to be 66 hectares of B1 or B2 use. These plans were changed in 2002 and again in 2005, increasing the area to 86.8 hectares, increasing the allowance for B2 use and adding B8 use. Residents of Chellaston West/Royal Country Park Estate were not informed of these changes and believe they were not properly consulted, in line with the City's Statement of Community Involvement document.

We believe that the consequences of these changes will result in an unacceptable reduction in the quality of life for those living along Holmleigh Way and within the West Chellaston Estate. We would therefore firstly request evidence that the changes in the development plans since the adoption of the 1998 Derby City Local Plan have been properly and fully assessed against the latest Planning Legislation and Regulations, using properly obtained and relevant survey/monitoring data, and properly consulted upon.

Our concerns principally relate to the likely impacts of increased traffic accessing the Business Park and other industrial areas, using the local and adjacent infrastructure. This increased traffic, including the higher percentage of Heavy Goods Vehicles associated with the Warehousing and Distribution developments in the Business Park running 24/7, will reduce air quality; increase noise and vibration; create continual disturbance; reduce local amenity and accessibility; and reduce the health and safety of residents and non-motorised users on adjacent footpaths, cycleways and bridlepaths.

By way of comparison, a significant amount of work has been done to decrease the volume of traffic on the A514, including the prohibition of HGV's due to the high risk to pedestrians, properties and residents. It is therefore unacceptable for the alternative route for this traffic to be within West Chellaston – this is not solving the issue, merely moving it and increasing it.

We believe these impacts will be further compounded by the restriction of having only two access roads to the estate, one via the roundabout at the A50 and a second which follows Parkway and up to the A514. Of particular note in relation to the current situation:

- The link via Parkway is not suitable for increased traffic and was never intended to be regarded as a thoroughfare; indeed planning documents indicate that access would be restricted if not prohibited altogether. The route is controlled by traffic calming measures which already cause traffic queues at peak times.
- The road to the A50, even as a dual carriageway, is prone to queues at peak times as the traffic from West Chellaston tries to enter the roundabout. Even a slight increase in the volume of vehicles will cause this to be a huge problem for both the Business Park and residents alike as significant queues will form back into the estate, leading to further traffic issues (we note that Pride Park is gridlocked at peak times despite having four exits).
- We note that there has been a changed traffic plan, known as the Derby Area Traffic Model, produced in late 2005. Due to our concerns over the longer term traffic impacts on the estate roads and residents, we would expect to see that robust traffic modelling and forecasting have been undertaken to properly assess these impacts.

We would expect to see evidence that the Traffic Model used for forecasting traffic has been properly validated using the latest traffic modelling criteria. We would also expect to see that the forecasting has been carried-out against the changed size and use of the Business Park; that the design of the full length of the access to the Business Park, including junction designs and layouts, is suitable for the forecast vehicles and flows; and that full and detailed impact assessments have been undertaken in line with current regulations and legislation against these traffic forecasts.

We note further that we have not seen any Air Quality and Noise Monitoring or suitable traffic surveys being undertaken, which are vital for establishing baselines for use in the Traffic Impact assessments.

A further concern is that connection of the T12 road to the West Chellaston Estate will increase the likelihood of additional traffic “rat-running” through the estate, making their way to the only other alternative exit via Parkway or using the internal estate roads to “jump the queues” at the T12 junctions. To avoid this, the access road should join Holmleigh Way at the present end of the dual-carriageway section.

Other specific concerns relate to access from the T12 onto Sinfin Moor Lane, which is currently closed off to prevent its use as a link for the estate. Although there are no plans to open this road officially, it remains a potential access route or rat run, via Verona way, for unscrupulous drivers looking to avoid traffic on the proposed route at peak times. We would like written reassurance that there are no plans for the far end of Sinfin Moor Lane to be opened up and connected to the T12.

In relation to the standards of provision along and adjacent the residential area, the plans and preliminary drawings draw attention to the inclusion of an **environmental protection zone** either side of the link roads and all supplementary routes through the business park, extended up to the point it meets the existing Holmleigh Way.

This protection zone, also referred in the Derby Local Plan Review as a “buffer protection zone”, is clearly visible on the developer’s ground plan and visualisation, as presented in the Derby Evening Telegraph on Thursday June 24th, where a broad expanse of planted ground is provided, covering an estimated distance of more than 5 metres between the road and the nearest Industrial units.

We are concerned that dual standards are being applied between the proposed development and the existing infrastructure. It would appear that either:

- The Planning Authorities and East Midlands Development agency prescribe a higher degree of environmental protection for industrial development than that to the adjacent residential conurbation - which will be exposed to pollution 24/7, and not just during working hours.
- Or, the plans for the link road now take on board environmental issues not deemed to be important when the first phase of the road construction was planned - reflecting the current concerns as to protection of the environment and road congestion.

It seems to be a reasonable expectation that residents should be offered, at the very least, the same degree of consideration with respect to safety, amenity and protection from noise, air and light pollution, as the employees of those businesses which the City Council hope to attract onto the Park. Therefore it would be expected that as a minimum provision, this Buffer Protection Zone should extend the full length of the T12 route - including that already constructed.

In identification of the potential impacts on residents and neighbouring communities from the Business Park and its access, we would expect to see evidence that in developing these proposals, alternative solutions and options for access to the Business Park have been considered and evaluated and all impact assessments undertaken to allow identification of the optimum proposal in terms of the overall benefits against cost (a Benefit/Cost ratio). This should include consideration and assessment of an alternative route to Holmleigh Way.

We would also request evidence that the proposals fully assess and cater for future development, particularly in relation to identified and further increases in planning provision to the west of Chellaston and for the Business Park.

There is both the time and available space to put this right and our preliminary estimate for appropriate improvements represents less than 2.5% of the probable cost of the Business Park development. This estimate has been arrived at by our own professional team of civil and mechanical engineers and senior project and business managers. It would seem sensible to address the access road now rather than to up-grade it at a later date after it has been found to be inadequate and the developer is no longer willing to share the cost.

We all consider that the Business Park – provided it attracts the type of businesses intended, offers significant benefits to the Chellaston Community with employment opportunities and hopefully further improvement in support services. We ask the planning department and developers to give appropriate consideration to local residents and our very real concerns prior to the submission of the application, and offer all those choosing to make their home here the very best possible living environment.

We are sure that with some minor revisions to the routing and detail of the T12, a suitable solution for all parties could be reached.

Yours sincerely

John Bowden
Chairman