

Item 7.A

LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM – 2 JULY 2015

PLANNING & TRAVEL REPORT

Things remain fairly quiet on the planning front. We are aware that authorities are to work on Local Plans this autumn and will want to have an input. If I have the opportunity we will submit our standard generic advice to such plans. If anything specific needs addressing I will consult with members.

We continue to monitor the Network rail crossings situation and await developments regarding HS2. Everything seems to have been put on hold but now that the election is out of the way I expect developments. HS2 company did say they would engage with us but as yet we have not heard anything. The committee did suggest trying to invite them to a future meeting.

The government is tabling a bill to give HS2 more powers which may actually allow them to plan the right of way network changes from further out which is to be welcomed.

I am to speak at a hearing for the East Midlands Freight Gateway shortly and will be arguing part of our original submission that a Right of Way should not be replaced by a permissive route.

Nothing concrete has come our way but the LCC seem to be trying to build a case that HS2 should fund the Ivanhoe line as a means of allowing Leicester people to link into it. Ideally this should end up in Derby as major rail hub but divert along the way to link up with any HS2 station.

On June 10th Stan Warren and I represented the Forum at a hearing in front of the Planning Inspectorate at Kegworth in regards to the East Midlands Freight Gateway. We exercised our right to speak to the Forums original written submission and argued the 'in-principle' case that a Right of Way should not be replaced by a permissive route. We also took the opportunity to argue for better options for Right of Ways across the railtrack.

There was still considerable opposition to the whole scheme but we argued on the basis that the Inspectorate may be minded to recommend approval to the Secretary of State and for conditions and variations to the plans on the table.

Further issues have arisen in June.

Firstly Bardon Quarry Rights of Way diversions etc.– members have time to make suggestions to the Committee Chair who would hope to be able to offer a consensus response for approval at the Forum meeting.

Next the Castle Acres Shopping Park planning application has been submitted for a new £150 million retail development (planning application reference: 15/0577/FUL). It is expected to generate up to 1,100 full-time equivalent jobs for local people, along with hundreds of new jobs during the construction period. The site will also provide the funds for Everards to invest in a new food and drink park, called Everards Meadows, south of Soar Valley Way. Everards Meadows will include an Everards craft brewery as well as offices, a pub, restaurants, and an open area with a bridge across the river. Again if members wish the Forum to respond please send comments to the Committee Chair who will bring the matter up at Forum if there is a feeling we should respond.

Roy Denney
Committee Chairman