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Development Control  
North West Leicestershire District Council

Via Email  
[development.control@nwleicestershire.gov.uk](mailto:development.control@nwleicestershire.gov.uk)

Date: 7.4.2016  
My ref:  
Your ref:  
Contact: TK  
Phone: County Hall 0116 305 7086  
Fax:  
Email: [accessforum@leics.gov.uk](mailto:accessforum@leics.gov.uk)

## Planning Application Forest Road, Coalville15/00032/FULM

I am writing on behalf of the Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LAF) which is an independent statutory body, set up as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000, and exists to represent the interests of everyone concerned with access to the countryside and the public rights of way network including footpaths. Section 94 of the CROW act makes it a statutory function of the forum to give advice to a range of bodies, including local authorities, on access issues in respect of land use planning matters. The Secretary of State advised that in particular forums were asked to focus on the impact and options for minimising possible adverse effects, of planning policies and development proposals in respect of future public access to land and identifying and expressing support for opportunities to improve public access, or associated infrastructure, which might be delivered through planning policies or new development.

Whilst we rarely actually object to an application on this occasion we feel that we must. With all the new homes planned to the North of Grange Road footpath N85 will provide an ideal safe short cut for pupils walking to Newbridge School and would be of increasing benefit in the future.

The cost of upgrading this when all the equipment is on site to create roads should be minimal and we cannot accept that the costs would make the project non-viable.

The benefits of the footpath network are many but primarily the paths are an essential mechanism for linking communities to facilities including schools if we are to reduce the use of motorised transport and the carbon emissions that ensue.

The planning application was granted on the basis of this path and the planning system is designed to enable some planning gain in exchange for the loss of green space and we feel this path should be upgraded as originally agreed.

Terry Kirby

Chairman, Leicestershire Local Access Forum

C/o Room 700, County Hall, Leicester, LE3 8RJ

[Leicestershire Local Access Forum, c/o Travel Choice & Access Team, Leicestershire County Council, Environment and Transport Department, Room 700, County Hall, Glenfield, Leicestershire LE3 8RJ](http://www.leics.gov.uk/laf)  
Telephone: 0116 305 7086  
Email: [accessforum@leics.gov.uk](mailto:accessforum@leics.gov.uk)

[Chairman of the Access Forum](http://www.leics.gov.uk/laf)

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