



**HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2024**

**QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 34**

**Question asked by Ms Rachael Wigginton (Better Biking for Blaby District)**

“I write on behalf of Better Biking for Blaby District, a Cycling UK partner group that represents the interests of those in Blaby and many throughout Leicestershire who wish to travel short distances by active means - cycling, walking or using mobility chairs.

We are very worried about the lack of concern for safety in the infrastructure being designed and developed in Leicestershire. We do not yet see safety being at the top of the agenda for the increasing numbers of those wishing to walk, wheel or cycle local journeys being fully addressed in new developments.

I recently visited the new marketplace development in Shepshed and was shocked to see how safety for those on bicycles or eBikes has been completely overlooked. I struggle to understand how this can have happened when these are local shops for local people who mostly live within an easy short walking or cycling distance.

There is zero provision for those shoppers using a bike to access the new marketplace, apart from a few token cycle stands, and no provision for a safe route through the marketplace.

Whilst I was there for a few minutes only, I observed a number of people using their bicycles. I talked to a father and son who highlighted the safety issues for those choosing to ride a bike there. Another cyclist had to use the pedestrian crossing.

This was a fantastic opportunity to create an environment that encourages more local active travel, so why have those people riding bikes been overlooked? It's a huge disappointment and frankly, dangerous.

This is a question for scrutiny regarding how we develop highways infrastructure in Leicestershire. This was a Charnwood led development, but this will have had Leicestershire Highways oversight and therefore the responsibility falls to Leicestershire County Council to scrutinize these developments effectively.

How will you ensure overlooking a key group of highways users never happens again in our county? What measures do you have in place to ensure the safety of all

road users is considered and that we do not continue to consider car users as the only people that travel?

In this era of high vehicle transport costs, congestion, air quality, environmental and health concerns, Leicestershire should be doing everything it can to help people switch local journeys to active ones. I'm afraid this development has fallen far short of what is required in 2024 and beyond."

### **Reply by the Chairman**

The project was designed and implemented by Charnwood Borough Council, working alongside Shepshed Town Council, using funding obtained from various external sources.

The main driver for such projects is town centre regeneration as set out in Charnwood Borough Council's Shepshed Town Centre masterplan -

[https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/shepshed\\_master\\_plan\\_and\\_delivery\\_framework/Shepshed%20Master%20Plan%20and%20Delivery%20Framework.pdf](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/files/documents/shepshed_master_plan_and_delivery_framework/Shepshed%20Master%20Plan%20and%20Delivery%20Framework.pdf)

In order to proceed with the project, Charnwood Borough Council was required to submit its design proposals to Leicestershire County Council for approval as all third parties looking to make amendments to the public highway are required to.

These designs were assessed against the relevant policies and design principles in place at the time the submissions were made. This scheme was developed prior to the LTN 1/20 guidance and was not contrary to the Council's adopted Highways Design Guide at the time of submission. In light of this it was not within the scope of the Leicestershire County Council's role to request additional cycle infrastructure. The proposal was supplemented by independent stage 1 and 2 road safety audits which are required to be provided as part of a design submission. These audits did not highlight any specific concerns regarding safety for cyclists.

When the project is complete and operational, Charnwood Borough Council will be required to undertake a stage 3 road safety audit which will assess the overall safety of the project and highlight any causes for concern. In the event that a serious safety issue is highlighted, the Council will require the works' promotor, Charnwood Borough Council, to address the matter and propose a satisfactory solution.

The Council is in the process of updating its Highways Design Guide to reflect national policy and design guidance. Schemes proposed in future will be assessed against this updated guidance subject to approval by the Cabinet which is scheduled for October 2024.