



SCRUTINY REVIEW PANEL ON THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF AN ECO-TOWN

MEETING WITH IAN DRUMMOND (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR TRANSPORTATION) AND TEAM, LEICESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON 2 OCTOBER 2008

The Panel met with Ian Drummond, Assistant Director for Transportation, who, alongside supporting colleagues, advised on the likely impact the proposed development could have arising from transport modelling work which had been carried out by the County Council.

The Panel NOTED the following points that arose from that meeting:

- The transport modelling that had been conducted, whilst complex had not been able to be as comprehensive as officers would have liked due to the time restraints imposed by the Government led eco-town process. It was to be noted that the results garnered were from modelling undertaken over a period of three months - the time normally taken for modelling of a proposal of this size would be two years;
- The modelling undertaken had suggested the Co-op had an ability to deliver Pennbury without serious traffic impacts but only if it was to successfully deliver its whole transport strategy;
- Furthermore, there were a number of concerns as to whether the strategy was realistically achievable, including the following:
 - The levels of car parking restraint (one space for every two houses) that the Co-op aspired to was unprecedented and was inconsistent with the nature of the population the Co-op sought to attract in order to maintain an independent living and working town;
 - It was questionable as to the extent to which remote car parking solutions were practical and secure and how parking spaces would be allocated and enforced.
 - While significant numbers of the population would want to travel for employment purposes into the city centre via the Bus Rapid Transit corridor link, the modelling suggested that large numbers would also need to travel to surrounding towns such as Oadby, Wigston, Market Harborough and Kibworth and to employment areas such as the Meridian and Hamilton. On current projections, both the BRT and those supplementary required services would not be self funding and would therefore require substantial long term subsidy;

- The provision of a tram system would be very expensive and of marginal benefit. Building a tram system would be difficult as buses would still have to run during the tram construction period;
- Creating an effective transport system would be difficult in the early days of the development because there would be few people living or working in Pennbury;
- There were also concerns as to the effects on local traffic flows as a result of goods and raw materials moving in and out of the site during its construction phase and beyond.
- The proposed 'smarter choice' measures were good but there were questions as to how effective they would be. If they did not work, residents and workers would be likely to seek alternative arrangements for travel and the positive eco effects of the transport strategy would be stymied;
- Pennbury's ability to attract higher end employment opportunities would likely be restricted by the lack of car parking in the town;
- If manufacturing businesses were established then the movement of materials into Pennbury and finished goods from Pennbury could create transport problems.