

**Tollerton against Speeding Campaign (TASCforce) response to:
Rushcliffe Local Plan Consultation
Green Belt Review Consultation
Community Infrastructure Levy Consultation**

- TASCforce is responding on behalf of Tollerton village regarding traffic matters that arise from the above consultation document in particular the draft Green Belt Review Consultation.
- We reject the proposed Local Plan (Local Plan Part 2)because of the significant impact increased traffic will have on the village given existing proposals for development East of Gamston / North of Tollerton .
- Local Plan Part 2 will increase existing traffic problems well known to the Highways Authority.
- Our views are unchanged from when we gave evidence to the Government Inspector about the East of Gamston/ North of Tollerton development – Part 1.

Background

Tollerton has a long history of campaigning to secure a safe environment. The Tollerton Against Speeding Campaign – (TASCforce) was established as a sub group of the Parish Council in June 1996. This was in response to growing concerns about traffic issues in the village in particular speeding along Tollerton Lane. The aims of the group were to:

- reduce the excessive speed of some drivers through the village – this remains an issue.
- reduce the number of heavy goods vehicles using our lanes – since the weight restriction this has improved.
- reduce the increasing amount of traffic through the village – this is still relevant.

Specific Comments

All technical documents TASCforce has accessed when considering the East of Gamston / North of Tollerton proposed development and now the Green Belt Review Consultation confirm our view that whilst a range of mitigation measures were included in the Local Plan (Part 1) they are woefully inadequate to address the impact of a significant increase in domestic and commercial traffic going through Tollerton village. The Rushcliffe Local Plan Part 2 – Green Belt Review will add to pre-existing traffic problems and additional problems when the North of Tollerton / East of Gamston development commences. Notably roads in Tollerton are narrow with dangerous bends, for example the double bend on Tollerton Lane and the bend on Cotgrave Road, the site of a number of fatal accidents in recent years.

We have considered the wider implications for Tollerton of the Local Plan Part 2 which does not appear to have recognised or addressed the impact of additional housing on Tollerton village. Whatever “mitigation measures” are adopted either as part of the East of Gamston / North of Tollerton development or the Local Plan traffic will continue to build up in Tollerton at peak

periods and be funnelled into either the Melton Road or Radcliffe Road both of which are single carriageway and residential. In addition the three River Trent crossings are all at capacity during peak periods.

TASCforce has worked on behalf of the village over a considerable period of time to ensure residents and those using our lanes are safe. Our knowledge of local traffic issues leads us to reject the proposed Local Plan Part 2. We accept attempts were considered as part of the Local Plan Part 1 for the East of Gamston / North of Tollerton development but our view remains; these are inadequate to mitigate the impact of increased traffic on key primary roads notably, the A52 and A606 which will be considerable. The additional housing proposed as part of the Local Plan Part 2 will create further severe difficulties for Tollerton residents entering and leaving the Village as well as using key roads through the village in particular the two side roads onto Tollerton Lane - Burnside Grove and Medina Drive.

A traffic count undertaken by residents in 2007 over a 12 hour period 0630-1830 showed 7798 vehicles negotiating the Cotgrave Road / Cotgrave Lane junction and 2029 using Cotgrave Lane.

A further survey undertaken in March 2014 demonstrated traffic volume has increased by 47% (on Cotgrave Lane) to 2982. This suggests about a further 12% increase in traffic negotiating the junction at the Cotgrave Road / Cotgrave Lane Junction. A total of 4585 vehicles travelled through the area proposed for development, in both directions past Nottingham Airport on Tollerton Lane.

The March 2014 survey confirmed an absence of HGVs during the survey hours due to the Environmental Weight Limit and the volunteer Lorry Watch Scheme. Our concerns persist however regarding a likely increase in HGVs to and from the new developments, which will further destroy the environment, create traffic blockages, and create disturbance at night for residents living close to the road. There is no policy proposed to manage acknowledged traffic increases and congestion or prevent heavy goods vehicles using village roads which disrupt village life.

Planning Director's Report

The Inspectors Report supports our view that the proposed 600 houses on the 4 areas of greenbelt close to the village should not be built. The report is clear there should be a defensible boundary between the North of Tollerton / East of Gamston development to ensure the development is visually separate, *“defensible boundaries can be established and the risk of coalescence with Old Tollerton avoided”*. (Paragraph 54) The importance of the defensible space is further clarified in the same paragraph; *“Structural planting could be used to create a strong green edge limiting the visual impact of new development, as the land is relatively flat. The proposed site would be physically and visually separate from Tollerton and Bassingfield villages, providing such measures were taken”*. The proposal in the Local Plan Part 2 to build on greenbelt land would remove the potential for a meaningful defensible barrier.

Obliterating the proposal for a defensible barrier by building 600 additional houses without

significant improvements to access major roads will create an even greater traffic problem to the one that already exists. It also contradicts the Inspector who indicated Tollerton should be a standalone Urban Centre. She acknowledged there are limitations *“in connecting with the rest of Gamston, meaning that it will have to function more as a standalone urban centre than would ordinarily be the case for an urban extension”*.

Further we contest an additional 600 houses to a village of 850 without significant improvement to access major roads, similar to that proposed for the North of Tollerton / East of Gamston is likely to nearly double the existing traffic load and would be intolerable for residents. The Inspectors report highlights the need for additional infrastructure and that there should be a *“reduction in rat running”* through Tollerton (Paragraph 55)

There is also recognition in the Inspectors report of the concern residents have about increasing levels of traffic utilising roads through the village currently. Any significant increase in traffic therefore accessing Tollerton Lane would require radical improvement because it is already at breaking point particularly north of Cotgrave junction. The Inspectors report states *“I recognise the deep concern about any increase in traffic on Tollerton Lane, as it is narrow with bends and undulations which limit forward visibility. It gives access to the local school for pedestrians and motor vehicles and is already badly congested in the peak hour.”* (Paragraph 116)

Current traffic issues of concern to residents in Tollerton –

1. Congestion at exits from the village onto the A606 and A52 at peak traffic periods -
A606 – it is currently extremely difficult to safely turn right onto the A606 from any village exit point, other than Tollerton Lane, during the two daily traffic peak times. The queue at peak times to exit via the lights on Tollerton Lane is usually 300 yards long (6-8 minutes).
A 52 – crossing a dual carriageway during peak traffic periods is both time consuming and unsafe due to restricted visibility.
2. Congestion along Tollerton Lane at the beginning and end of the School day. Cars parked along both Tollerton Lane and Burnside Grove pose a road safety risk especially to young children entering and leaving the play group because of the number of parked cars. This has not been alleviated by the new 20 mph zone.
3. Whilst there is a reasonable public transport service along Melton Road there is a lack of adequate public transport through the village.
4. There are an increasing number of cyclists using the lanes through Tollerton. The lack of illuminated cycle lanes is a safety hazard for both cyclists and drivers. There is no mention of any cycle lanes as part of the proposal
5. The lack of illuminated footpath along the length of Tollerton Lane remains a concern. There is no mention of any footpaths in the Local Plan.
6. No action has been taken to provide an effective traffic calming system in the village, despite

the fact that traffic was highlighted as a serious concern when giving evidence to the Inspector about the East of Gamston / North of Tollerton development.

7. There is still no safe place for children (travelling south along Tollerton Lane) to wait for school buses. They continue to wait on the grass verge opposite Burnside Grove. There is no footpath on this side of the road.

8. Village lanes are unsuitable for high levels of traffic and HGV usage. NB there is still a lack of warning signs on the A52 that Tollerton has an Environmental Weight Limit (EWL)

9. An inherent safety risk due to increased traffic on double bend in Tollerton Lane and sharp bends on both Cotgrave Lane and Cotgrave Road.

10. Considerable difficulty to turn right out of Cotgrave Lane onto Cotgrave Road, due to poor visibility to the left because of the hump in Cotgrave Road, the amount of traffic and the speed of traffic.

11. Increasing Traffic through the village.

Significant traffic Issues arising from the Local Plan – Part 2

Part 2 builds on pre-existing traffic problems in the village identified during the consultation process for Part 1. TASCforce is of the view that both parts of The Plan must be considered together as the land being considered for development in both is coterminous .

1. Heavy Goods / commercial Vehicles - The impact of building on any of the proposed sites for development will once again increase the number of Lorries using narrow lanes designated as secondary access routes. Access to each of the four proposed sites will mean HGVs going through the village. It is difficult to see how a similar scheme to the one currently in place for the Spire Hospital could be adopted.

2. Junction revision - The proposed revised junction at the South end of Tollerton Lane / A606 was in our view wholly inadequate when considering the impact of increased traffic as a result of the East of Gamston/ North of Tollerton development. The impact of additional housing so close to the village will add to the problem which cannot be resolved by altering the junction. In our view this only serves to encourage an increase of vehicles through the village and would do nothing to stop heavy vehicles or the flow of cars using the route as a “rat run”.

3. Congestion - The increase in traffic congestion along the A52 and A606 will result in more “rat run” traffic through Tollerton. There was good evidence of this in the SYSTRA document – Highway Mitigation Ref number 102545. (EX 45 GNCS) states para 3.3.6 under the sub heading Congestion - *“notable increases occur at the following locations:*
A60 / A52 Nottingham Knight signalised approach from Ruddington
A606 / Tollerton Lane Junction

Tollerton Lane/ Cotgrave Lane”

In the Revised Rushcliffe Assumptions document reference number 102545 (EX 44 GNCS) it also stated at paragraph 6.26 that *“significant increases in traffic are also predicted on the ring road and along the A52 to the south of West Bridgford, partly due to the strategic developments at Gamston, Edwalton and the Boots site”*.

We found additional evidence of likely increased traffic congestion in the SYSTRA document – Technical Note Gamston Sensitivity Testing (EX 46 GNCS) at para 3.4.2 *“the increase in congestion associated with the additional Gamston development traffic has pushed the VC/ratio beyond 85% at the following locations:*

*Nottingham Knight junction (A52 eastern approach)
Tollerton lane / Cotgrave Lane”*

We also noted the statement in the Transport Background Paper Addendum – Local Plan Part 1: Rushcliffe Core Strategy (EX 47) paragraphs 6.11 and 6.12 which suggest *“ Smarter choices , Public Transport and highway mitigation measures on the strategic route network only partially mitigate the impacts of the Core Strategies proposals and congestion levels still increase compared to the reference case”*.

In the same document at paragraph 7.6 there is an indication that even with all the suggested mitigation measures there is *“a limited opportunity to address this through further increased capacity with the effect that, even with the highway mitigation schemes currently proposed, traffic demand from the development will not be able to be fully accommodated on the network without significant reassignment of traffic away from the A52 (T) A6011 route”*. Without adding further to the burden of traffic on the secondary roads / lanes through the village it is hard to understand where exactly traffic can be reassigned to.

NB it is accepted at paragraph 7.8 that the A52 (T) is an *“already congested situation”*.

In our view both the East of Gamston/ North of Tollerton Plans and the Local Plan fail to take account of existing traffic problems in Tollerton or of traffic problems on surrounding roads.

4. Peak periods - Significantly in the Revised Rushcliffe Assumptions document (EX 44 GNCS) it states at paragraph 6.2.7 *“In the evening peak, there is an increase in traffic along roads through Cotgrave and Tollerton Lane as traffic seeks to find alternative routes to avoid congestion”*. This will worsen if further development goes ahead without existing problems being recognised and addressed.

The accumulative effect of developments around Tollerton for example; Cotgrave, Edwalton, Newton, Ruddington and Keyworth, will have a considerable impact on residents living in Tollerton using primary feeder roads.

In the SYSTRA Document – Revised Rushcliffe Assumptions Ref Number 102545 (EX 44 GNCS) Paragraph 3.2.5 it was stated that *“commuting times will increase by 5% as a result of the*

additional Rushcliffe developments”, adding further to journeys which have increased in length over recent years due to heavy use of primary and secondary roads.

5. Traffic Flow - The SYSTRA document – Highway Mitigation Ref number 102545 (EX45) concedes there will be *“a small increase in southbound flow on Tollerton Lane in the morning peak only (92 vehicle increase) ”* para 6.2.2. We contested during the consultation re the East of Gamston / North of Tollerton that even a small increase will add to an already overburdened stretch of road. This is still our view.

In the same document at para 6.3.1 it states that local congestion implications include an *“ increase in congestion on Tollerton Lane at the Lings Bar Road / Tollerton Lane junction resulting in this arm being pushed beyond its capacity in both the AM and PM peaks. This is due to the additional development traffic passing through this junction and results in a greater use of the new Gamston access junction to the south for northbound traffic”*.

Over a 12 hour period 6.30 am – 6.30 pm in the 2014 survey conducted by the Tollerton Against Speeding Campaign (TASCforce) at the junction of Cotgrave Lane / Tollerton Lane confirmed a total flow of 4585 vehicles through the area proposed for development (in both directions past the airport) on Tollerton lane.

Summary

TASCforce rejects the proposed developments around Tollerton Village as part of the Local Plan part 2 for all the evidenced reasons above.

Tollerton is a village that has significant and worsening traffic problems. We have experienced some improvement, notably the reduction in HGVs recently due to support gained over a long period of time from NCC Highways Authority.

Once again insufficient safeguards have been incorporated to preserve the integrity of Tollerton as a village, currently only 850 houses. Paragraph 57 of the Inspectors report states, *“A mixed use development including around 2,500 dwellings to 2028 and a further 1,500 homes post 2028 is proposed. This is consistent with paragraph 83 of the NPPF **and securing Green Belt boundaries which will have long term permanence and be capable of enduring beyond the plan period, and I support it. Those with interests in neighbouring land to the south and north argued that additional land should be considered for development extending the East of Gamston/North of Tollerton site. The case was made for including land at Homestead Farm and in the Holme Pierrepont/Adbolton area. However, I consider it unnecessary at this stage to enlarge the urban extension. Although there is merit in the argument that environmental features rather than land ownership should set the boundaries of the Green Belt, I have concerns about the potential effects of bringing development closer to Tollerton. Similarly, development to the north would limit the gap to Bassingfield, and extend into areas where there is a risk of flooding. With provision for 4,000 new homes altogether up to 2034, I see no need for safeguarding additional land and removing it from the Green Belt in this part of the Borough”***.

In short our objections are –

- The likely impact of industrial and commercial vehicles regularly using narrow lanes some of which have no footpaths
- Increased traffic negotiating a number of significant bends in the road including a double bend on Tollerton Lane which is a regular site of accidents
- The level of traffic congestion within Tollerton and surrounding roads
- The increased level of traffic during peak periods in particular
- New junctions on the A52 and A606 will not reduce the level of traffic flow , indeed it is more likely they will simply create bottle necks elsewhere
- Likely damage to the environment due to HGVs using narrow lanes
- Noise levels from heavy traffic particularly at night
- The increased risk to children who access the primary school and play group on a busy corner.
- Failure to provide footpaths, cycle paths and public transport for existing residents.

We do not consider the Local Plan part 2: Land and Planning Policies Further Options to be sound