

Claybrooke Magna Parish Council:

**Harborough District Local Plan Examination Submission in Respect Of Matters and Issues Item 5 –
Meeting Employment Needs**

Strategic Distribution BE2

HDC Officers contend the provision in the Local Plan is criteria based rather than specifically focussing on Magna Park. This is clearly a nonsense when the allocation in the draft plan equates to the area sought by Magna Park to develop. It is an opportunist approach to plan making with no genuine robust evidence of need – quite the contrary. This is totally unacceptable for a major development of this scale and impact.

There is overwhelming local opposition to expansion at Magna Park, with full support of our MP, for sound reason and the full Council has already rejected the development application. There is an absence of Duty to Co-operate and any such development would fly in the face of the Government's draft Clean Air Strategy which, accepting the real need actively to manage the air we breathe, focusses on the shift to rail freight for the logistics sector. This aspect of the Plan is clearly hugely flawed, way out of step with Government policy and not wanted by the community - yet Officers still drive it. Sadly, another example of undemocratic and unaccountable decision making. The Plan should make clear no further extension of Magna Park will be allowed.

The text of the Parish Council representation to Harborough Full Council, which, notably, rejected the recent application to extend Magna Park, is appended to provide detail of the real impacts on the local community; impacts that are being effectively disregarded in the race for revenue from business rates.

Appendix A:

Claybrooke Magna Representation to Harborough Full Council Meeting Objecting to Magna Park Extension

Claybrooke Magna Parish Council has been approached by a number of very distressed residents who tell us that they currently feel blockaded in their own village, so dangerous they feel are Claybrooke's two A5 junctions - some were close to tears. As parish councillors, we are powerless to help them..... as district councillors, with the same calling to serve your local communities and residents to the fullest extent possible, **you are not**.

We understand that in a time of ever-reducing budgets there is an almost irresistible temptation to find justifications which allow short-term financial gain to trump inevitable long-term negative impacts.... BUT....

Some considerations are not created equal. The extra income accruing from any expansion will surely be welcomed by HDC, but is it fair that the burden of this extra money be disproportionately borne by a relatively small number of residents who are unlucky enough to live at this end of the district?

Is it **fair** to foist yet more warehousing on an area whose roads are already choked, indeed that terrify an increasingly large number of locals? Is it **reasonable** to agree to twice the identified warehousing need **for the entire county** to be concentrated mere yards from Europe's largest dedicated distribution centre in a locality which has itself seen recent planning approval for two large warehousing sites? Is it **logical** for this warehousing to be located in an area of very low unemployment – necessitating large amounts of extra out-commute or even larger local housing projects – rather than in more economically disadvantaged parts of the district or county? The answers, clear to anyone who is free to think about it and not bound by other issues, are no, no, and no.

Alberto Costa, our MP, is quoted as saying “These applications *do not appear to impact positively in my constituency*”. Government and its MPs' duty is to consider the country as a whole; this committee's duty is to consider the impact on the locality, specifically Lutterworth and the surrounding areas.

We at this end of the District are used to being told to take one for the team – we have Magna Park, currently Europe's largest dedicated distribution centre, we will soon have the DHL mega-warehouse and in the last couple of months a completely new logistics complex – DB Symmetry – has been approved. We simply cannot take any more.

The quality of the air we breathe has long been recognised as a vital factor in both our general health and our mortality, but it has recently been given an even higher profile by pronouncements by the WHO., our Prime Minister, DEFRA, Public Health England and Leicestershire's own Director of Public Health.

The consensus is this: “Air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK” (DPH), “removing fine particulates would have a bigger impact on life expectancy in England & Wales than eliminating all Road Traffic Accidents or Passive Smoking” (DEFRA)”.

The numbers are stark: according to Public Health England and using 2014 figures, the failure to tackle air pollution directly caused in excess of 300 deaths in our **county** alone. This is the equivalent of 4 Grenfell Towers every year, or a 9/11 every decade.

The exact measure of where we in Lutterworth rank in air quality is open to debate, but some facts are incontrovertible -

1) Despite there being statutory maximum acceptable levels, it is undisputed that there is no level of NO₂ or particulates which is completely safe. To put it another way, **any** increase in either of these types of pollution is going to have an adverse effect on some people. That the increases will occur as a result of warehousing which is demonstrably **not required** leads to the conclusion that lives and quality-of-life would be recklessly endangered by pursuit of short-term financial goals.

2) Deaths or adverse outcomes caused by air pollution are **not** averagely distributed. This again means that Lutterworth and its satellite villages – not the rest of the district - will bear the brunt of the increased mortality and worsening life-outcomes. Indeed, if this application is approved, given that there has never been more effort by public health bodies to track these indicators, it will in future be trivially easy to determine how many more people will have died early or how many more people suffer with asthma and COPD as a result of it.

HDC’s constituents have long recognised that with great authority comes great responsibility. They invest in committees like yours the authority to make fateful decisions in the hope and trust that the decision will be taken sincerely and honourably.

Please don’t let them down.