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27th July 2013

RE: Objection to proposed Gypsy & Traveller site GT02

I would like to register my objection to the proposed Gypsy & Traveller site near the junction of the Fosse Way (B4455) and Southam Road (A425), referred to as GT02. I feel this site is inappropriate for a variety of reasons and I'm concerned that the site appraisal by Enfusion is inaccurate and misleading.

Below are the reasons I feel this development would be inappropriate:

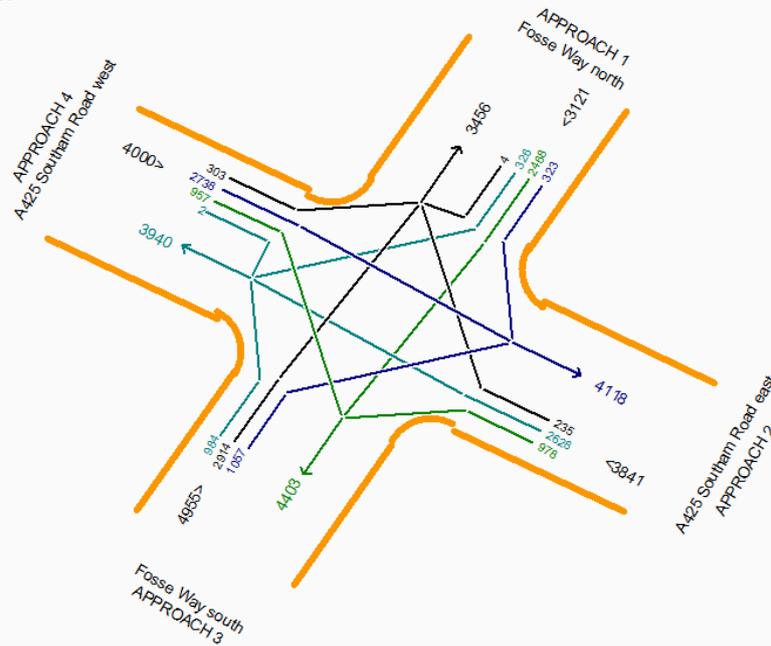
Economy

The Enfusion report has a question mark next to the economy metric. Chris Deith, owner of the Exhibition Centre, whose land makes up much of the proposed site has stated that if the proposal were to go ahead, it would put him out of business. You will have already seen the economic impact assessment that's been handed to the Council in respect of the Exhibition Centre and will be aware that the loss of the Exhibition Centre would have a severe impact on the local economy, resulting in loss of income not only from the Exhibition Centre itself and the 40 or so people employed there during exhibitions, but also from lost trade from local hotels, pubs, shops and petrol stations.

Transport

The Enfusion report scores GT02 as positive on the metrics of *sustainable transport* and *reduce need to travel*. The report fails to take into account that access from either the Fosse Way (B4455) or Southam Road (A425) would be dangerous, due to the volume and speed of the traffic on those roads and the proximity of the site to the roundabout at the junction of those two roads. The volume of traffic at that location would make it difficult to create an appropriate site access, as can be seen in the recent 12-hour traffic survey below:

Siteno A425031050
For Vehicle Class MTRVEH
From 0700 to 1900



The Fosse Way is a notorious accident black-spot, demonstrated quite clearly by the abundance of warning signs along the section of road that goes right through the middle of the area of search. Clearly, in addition to issues of site access, this would pose a danger to any children that may inhabit any proposed site.

The Enfusion report cites the adjacent bus stop as the driver for GT02's positive score in the transport metrics. Although there is a bus stop, it is unmarked, so nobody would know it was there without prior knowledge. There is no footpath by which to access it, meaning the only way to get to it is to risk life & limb walking in the road along busy, dangerous roads. Once there, there is nowhere to wait for the infrequent buses other than standing in the road, or on the wild grass verge next to it. I really don't see how this can possibly be seen as encouraging people to use public transport.

Given the lack of a footpath to any nearby village or town on the proposed site, the only option for residents to get anywhere would be to drive. This, in my view should score a negative on the *reduce need to travel* metric, not a positive. Combined with the public transport issues, it should also score a negative on the *sustainable transport* metric.

Prudent use of land and natural resources

The land making up the area of search for GT02 comprises of a mixture of:

- Privately owned domestic residences
- Commercial property (the Exhibition Centre including its car park)
- High quality agricultural land

None of the land in the area of search has been volunteered to the Council and would have to be purchased compulsorily. Evicting families from their homes, destroying businesses and removing good quality agricultural land are not prudent use, therefore this metric should score a negative.

Environment and landscape

The Enfusion report acknowledges that a Gypsy & Traveller site would not fit into the local landscape and recommends that hedgerows and screening are used to mask it from view. The area of search is in a dip, with elevated approaches from the North, East and South. There is no way that the site could be screened effectively, given the low level of the site in comparison with the surrounding land.

The report also states that effects on the historical environment are uncertain. It acknowledges that the site is adjacent to a Roman road and could therefore be affected by archaeological finds during any construction work. Additionally, the roundabout is the site of a medieval toll, registered on the Warwickshire County Council archaeological register. Any archaeological finds during the development of a site at this location could cause significant delays to the building work.

With regard to the natural environment, the Enfusion report states that the presence of protected species and the ecological value of the site is unknown. A Forestry Commission report from January 2013 of the woodland adjacent to the area of search (Site survey 42856) reported the presence of a badger set in the woodland, along with a Honey Buzzard nest containing a breeding pair. It also found bats, owls, sparrow hawks, woodpeckers and a variety of deer. Two pond areas were also included in the report, one close to the woodland, the other near the road, adjacent to the proposed site. Those ponds were found to contain adders, grass snakes, frogs, toads and newts. Clearly with such a variety of local wildlife, including protected species, the impact on the natural environment would be significant and GT02 should score a strong negative in this area.

Local services & community facilities

The Enfusion report states that there is a Doctor's surgery and a school within 1.5 miles of the proposed site. This is incorrect. The closest surgery is actually closer to five miles away, as is the nearest school, both of which are already at or near capacity. There is no access to shops or any other facilities by pavement or cycleway, the only way of accessing any such services being by vehicle.

The area of search for GT02 is in a rural location, with no access to mains gas and with a limited rural electricity supply. Additionally, there is no mains sewerage available. Planning applications in the area have been refused in recent years due to the unsuitability of the area, specifically with regard to locality of services & community facilities.

Land ownership

None of the land in the area of search has been volunteered by the landowners and so would have to be purchased compulsorily, potentially from multiple landowners. Given the impact this would have on the Exhibition Centre, any compulsory purchase would likely be defended vigorously. It would not be appropriate use of tax payer's money to pursue such a potentially lengthy legal case and it would be unlikely that the proposed development would be able to meet the required timescales.

It's clear to me that taking the above into account, the GT02 area of search is not suitable for a Gypsy & Traveller site.

Yours Sincerely

Mr. Neil Brown