

Public Inquiry – Independent Person Submission

PINS Appeal: APP/P3040/W/23/3330045

LPA Ref: 22/02241/FUL

Location: Land East of Hawksworth and Northwest of Thoroton, Shelton Road, Thoroton, Nottinghamshire

Representing myself - Jennifer Hollingshead, resident of Hawksworth

I am happy to answer questions.

I object to the Application

My name is Jennifer Hollingshead and I am a resident of Hawksworth.

My husband, James, and I moved to Hawksworth 8 years ago, after several years working in Melbourne in Australia. Upon our return, whilst residing at my in-laws in Lincoln, the A46 was shut due to an accident one evening and James was re-routed through Car Colston, Hawksworth and taken back onto the A46 at Flintham.

That evening over dinner he explained his detour and said "I've found the most beautiful area of countryside, that I never knew existed and I think we should seriously consider looking to live there."

Fast forward 12 months and we had moved into The Old Post Office in Hawksworth, previously a social hub in the community and one which is fondly remembered by many, we've heard great stories from our fellow villagers and also passers by from far and wide who quite often knock on our door to share their memories.

This village and its surrounding countryside is special beyond words, someone at a wedding held in the village last year referred to it as God's Triangle, those who find it and live within it are blessed, and whilst I'm not religious, there is definite truth in this. I think it was evident from the turn out on Monday morning, the community's passion, support and love for our idyllic pocket of countryside.

As a mother to two young children, Jessica aged 7 and Lily aged 4, I have many friends who live in more urbanised areas of Nottingham. Over the years, I have often had comments from said friends asking, "How do you cope living so far out...there's no shop, no pub, no

play area?", and my reply has always been without hesitation, "Yes, I know, isn't it wonderful!"

To have luscious green fields at the end of our garden is an absolute privilege and one which my family embrace on a daily basis, whether this be running, cycling, scootering or family walks enjoying the far reaching countryside views. Only this Sunday were we on a walk with the children through the fields when we had a discussion with our 7 year old about the crop and what said crop would go on to be used for and the impact that the recent heavy rain had on the fields, and their crops. This in situ learning and appreciation for our English countryside, and immediate arable farmland, I feel is so important to children.

We all know the negative impact of the digital screen age and social media is having on our nation's children. But there are positive associations between exposure to nature and children's mental and physical health.

Research cited in the October 2022 report from Natural England, which can be found on the Gov.uk website, also supports this notion, finding that, "Being outside made 85% of children and young people feel 'very happy'."

The report also highlights that, "The strongest evidence is for links between nature exposure and increased levels of physical activity, lower levels of obesity, and improvements in mental health and cognitive performance, attention levels, mood improvement and academic performance."

Conversely, the reports also cites a survey conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, which was carried out on 376 families with young children, which found that "children who experienced a decrease in their connection to nature showed increases in sadness and anxiety."

So, surely it is our responsibility to be embracing and protecting the rural landscape and countryside, to enable it to continue to be a place of escapism and enjoyment for the health and wellness of our children and children's children, rather than cover it with metal industrial equipment?

It's quite possible that like James & I, our girls will choose to experience periods of living in more urbanised areas and cities as they grow in the future, and maybe even venture to other continents, but to balance that out with a foundation, appreciation and love of rural living, I hope will contribute to creating rounded members of society for the future.

In addition, I have to highlight that whilst it has been argued that the impact of the increased traffic will be relatively short, so too is childhood!

My daughters can't wait to get home from school and head down the quiet country lanes for a scooter or bike ride. It is truly where they are at their happiest, without a care in the world, usually singing the latest Disney Princess song at the top of their voices.

These quiet roadways are where my eldest learnt to ride her bike without stabiliser's, which my youngest will also attempt during the next couple of years and doing so whilst there is potentially a significant increase in dangerous HGV traffic, if this application is passed, fills me with fear and dread.

I absolutely agree that we need to protect our children and future generations and find alternative sustainable energy sources, but surely it shouldn't be at the detriment to their health, wellness and safety.

As a result, I strongly object to this application.