

Linda Altoft



Dear Planning Department

I am writing to formally object to the proposed development 0923/0024 adjacent to Spondon Woods.

### **Greenbelt/environmental/Ecology/wildlife**

**The land is classified as Greenbelt.** It should be protected and as stated in the National Planning Policy Framework should only be used in **exceptional circumstances ie when brown field sites are exhausted and maximum density has been achieved.** These exceptional circumstances do not apply.

Environmental studies show that the fields surrounding Spondon Woods are part of the Spondon wood **Ecosystem**, and this is **essential to biodiversity**. The **buffer zones planned for the new development are at the absolute minimum recommended by Natural England** and are much narrower than other studies recommend.

Spondon Wood is classed as **Ancient Woodland** which means that it has been there for hundreds of years and will have developed its own ecosystem. This includes the field around it. A **new housing development in this area will cause disturbance to this in terms of human activity, light, noise and pollution**. In addition, the presence of domestic pets would have an impact on wildlife and non-native plants in gardens would change the ecosystem.

A vast variety of wildlife use the field adjacent to Spondon wood; these include

#### **Birds:**

Jay, Greenfinch, partridge (red and grey), pheasant, tawny owls, little owls, buzzards, red kite. Some birds are on the declining list, house martens, Starlings, yellow hammer, woodpeckers (green and greater spotted).

#### **Animals:**

Foxes, brown hares, great crested newts, fallow deer, rabbits, bats, hedgehogs.

The edge of the site also contains **category A trees** which would be removed to provide access to the site. Older trees such as these have been proven to contribute significantly more carbon dioxide removal from the atmosphere than young trees and are therefore **more beneficial to slow down global warming**.

There is also a **national shortage of farmland** which this development would contribute to.

The **Conservative manifesto (2010)** stressed that Green belt would not be encroached on unless there were **exceptional circumstances and these have not been met**. Many sites already built upon have political motivations. The **mandatory target for new housing has now been removed** so there is no necessity to proceed with this proposed development. It will not benefit Erewash council and

will add considerably to the Derby City conurbation. This is not required and therefore there is **no justification to build on GreenBelt adjacent to ancient woodland.**

In January 2024 the planning law will change to implement **Bio-Diversity Net Gain** ensuring that developers mitigate their impact on the environment. Submitting plans prior to this date will negate Bio-diversity net Gain.

**Pollution** will be increased and the plan for the entrance/exit will exacerbate this and the traffic concerns in the village of Spondon. **Traffic modelling** around Spondon village was only performed on one day and the impact extrapolated from that data. This is obviously **inadequate and not representative of the full impact.**

The planned development would also **reduce open space for wildlife.** There are farms on two sides of the wood and a main road on one side. Hemming the wood in on another side would be detrimental to the wildlife.

There would also be more risk of damage to the ancient woodland (danger to wildlife and the environment) and other effects of humans being so close to the wood eg, anti social behaviour, fires, noise, litter, light, pets.

### **Mental Health**

Open spaces within nature have been **proven to improve mental health** and this would be another consideration. Residents of Spondon have enjoyed the fields and woods at its boundary and have expressed the beneficial effects of this on their mental health. We chose our house for its close proximity to nature, taking into account that it was GreenBelt and would not be built on! The position of our house being close to nature and wildlife has significantly increased our quality of life. The new development would significantly reduce our quality of life and have a **deleterious effect on our mental health and the mental health of our local community.**

### **City Boundary**

The proposed site is **nowhere near other Erewash conurbations** and will therefore become an **expansion of Derby City boundaries.** This will affect access to secondary schools and healthcare which is already oversubscribed. Many of the residents of Spondon have to attend GP appointments in other areas and wait for 2 weeks for an appointment as it stands. **This development would add between 800-1200 addition residents to already stretched services.**

### **Services/amenities**

**The sewers in Spondon already struggle to deal with the current burden of waste.** There have been burst pipes in several areas and raw sewage has been poured into the Derwent on many occasions due to lack of capacity. This plan would be an environmental and health disaster.

**Spondon has had its bus service reduced significantly** in recent years and is now mainly served by the Ilkeston Flyer, which is regularly at capacity before it reaches Spondon. The new development would only exacerbate this issue and the new residents would not have a bus stop close enough to encourage use of public transport.

The development would **increase numbers of cars to Spondon by approximately 750** and this will increase air pollution levels. It will also exacerbate **difficulties crossing Dale Road and traffic congestion throughout Spondon village.** The new houses will be around 1.5 miles from amenities in

Spondon or Ockbrook which will encourage residents to travel by car reducing air/noise quality. **Car parking in Spondon is already limited and this will make the situation worse.**

I sincerely hope that this planning application will be rejected on the grounds stated above. Our Greenbelt land is precious to us, to the local community, the country and the global community.

Yours Sincerely

Linda Altoft