

# A joint statement from Benefield and Deene & Deenethorpe Parish Councils (August 2018)

We as Parish Councils have representatives on the Tresham Garden Village Board (TGVB) and have been in large happy with what is being proposed and the communities we represent are largely supportive of the plans for the development.

We are very mindful of some issue that have been raised at those meetings, which we feel have been either been ignored, deferred or have perhaps fallen between the cracks.

The two main concerns are footpaths and traffic.

Deene & Deenethorpe have put forward to the Promoters several changes to existing paths and some permissive paths which will offer improved access and safety for both the new and existing communities. We have noted that these have not been included on the master plan.

With regards traffic both Parish Councils have major concerns and Benefield PC wrote to the TGVB about the villagers' concerns. Apart from being told that the traffic through Benefield was not going to increase considerably, nothing has come forth in the Master-plan about their concerns.

Deene and Deenethorpe likewise have expressed concerns about traffic (noise and air pollution as well as safe access onto the main road) on the A43, both north and southbound.

We are advised that Northamptonshire Highways, without any consultation with the community, have rejected proposals to resurface the A43 in the Willow Valley (past Deenethorpe) with noise reducing tarmac and have also rejected proposals to reduce speed limits on the A43 to help reduce noise and air pollution.

The Northamptonshire Roads Strategy 2012 – Strategic Policy 10 requires NCC to “Listen to the views of local people through consultation and work more closely with communities to deliver local priorities and inform strategic decisions” – In this case Northamptonshire Highways as not consulted with the local communities in respect of making decisions regarding the A43.

The Northamptonshire Major Roads Strategy (2012) cites daily traffic forecasts past Deenethorpe-Bulwick rising from 8713 vehicles (20% HGV) per day in 2012 to 22,000 vehicles per day by 2026. However, the TGV traffic modelling suggests the development will contribute very little to this traffic growth. There seems is be a large disconnect between these forecasts that needs to be explained.

Even if the community accepts that TGV will contribute little to the traffic growth on the A43 there is a key noise and pollution issue relating to northbound A43 traffic accelerating to speed after leaving the new traffic island just to the south of Deenethorpe and southbound traffic queueing as it approaches the new island. We do not think that the noise and pollution impact on Deenethorpe of the new traffic island has been considered.

There is a measurable link between traffic noise and speed – a speed limit reduction for northbound A43 traffic to 40mph past Deenethorpe could cut noise by up to 40% and prevent additional noise from accelerating vehicles, which in addition, can account for a further 10% of traffic noise. Noise events caused by aggressive or heavy-footed driving can have a disproportionate effect on the perception of noisiness.

HGV vehicles (already making up 20% of the traffic flow past Deenethorpe) can emit as much noise as 15 cars – worse when these northbound vehicles are accelerating from the new island.

The noise and air pollution from traffic both along the A43 and A427 is going to increase quite considerably over the next 5 to 10 years anyway and when the houses and industry start being developed on TGV we anticipate further negative impact on the communities without a fully developed mitigation plan.

The very narrow road Deenethorpe to Benefield road is currently being used as “Rat Run”, which we feel will be compounded by the development. Currently there are no plans to upgrade or manage traffic on this road.

We understand that the masterplan focuses on the TGV development and many details have yet to be decided but as representatives of our villages we feel that it is important at this stage to high-light to TGV Board and ENC the concerns of our residents that are not covered by the current plan.