Please ask for: Peter F Cash
Direct Dial 01455 255687
Direct Fax: 01455 619897
Email: peter.cash@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk
Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: 31st January 2008

Councillor Bill
8a Thornfield Way
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 1BE

Dear Councillor Bill,

Re: 07/00813/COU Motorcycle Track, Cow Lane, Ratby.

I make reference to your letter of the 16th January enclosing the letter of Mr Morris of the 4th January 2008.

As you will be aware the above application was approved on the 3rd September 2007 following the application being heard at the 28th August Planning Committee.

The letter of Mr Morris states that the approval was made before the public participation period had ended. It is common practice for applications to be heard at Committee during the consultation process with a recommendation to delegate authority to determine the application to the Head of Culture and Development. In the case of this application the late items include:

Change recommendation to read:
That subject to no significant additional objections being raised by the 29th August 2007 the Head of Culture and Development be granted delegated powers to issue planning permission subject to the conditions below:-

Therefore the application was not determined at the Committee meeting but under delegated powers following the end of the consultation period. Hence the decision notice is dated the 3rd September 2007.

With regards to the designation of the Charnwood Forest, the enclosed extracts from the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan and the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan show a discrepancy between the boundaries of the forest. Given that the Local Plan proposals map is more detailed and the Structure Plan Key Diagram states that it is only illustrative and does not represent precise land allocations the use of the designation within the Local Plan is considered to have been appropriate in this instance.

Further to this, Policy NE19 – Charnwood Forest of the Local Plan states that planning permission will not be granted for large new recreational facilities or for the expansion of existing facilities or for other proposals that would diminish the unique character and amenity of Charnwood Forest. It is considered that had this policy been applicable to this application then to determine that the unique character had been diminished would be difficult to defend at appeal as the physical alterations were minimal and the site can only be seen from a private road.

The letter states that Cllr O'Shea has been warned off by this Council. I can confirm that the concerns raised by Mr Morris have been raised on more than one occasion by Cllr O'Shea with Planning Officers and the Head of Development Services. Officers consider that all issues raised by Cllr O'Shea have already been addressed and are unable to add anything further. It is therefore considered that Cllr O'Shea acted within the open and honest manner to which Mr Morris refers.

I trust this addresses the concerns raised. Should Mr Morris wish to raise this issue further then please refer him to the Council's formal complaint procedures.

Yours sincerely,

Peter F. Cash
Head of Culture and Development