

Local Plan Committee – Wednesday, 19 November 2025

PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

QUESTION FROM MS G BAKER

100 Treasures of Charnwood Forest

Charnwood Forest Geopark produces the official 100 Treasures of Charnwood Forest. 14 of those treasures are historical sites. The probable Iron Age/Roman monument situated within C47 is listed as one of those treasured sites. It is located close to a current footpath at the top of a hill, commanding stunning views of the local countryside. It is also within easy walking distance of Swannington Incline, the Ivanhoe Way and Meadow Barn café. It has a huge potential as a future tourist attraction and as an asset for the area.

There are numerous planning and legal concerns attached to developing sites of historical significance, which include: Paragraph 194 -208 of the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF), The Ancient monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and the Historic Environment Records (HER).

Proceeding with development on the site of probable national importance may expose the Council, reputational damage and potential judicial review.

Practical and development challenges will include design constraints, substantial delays, uncertainty and additional costs. Promoters and Developers are likely to say that these heritage concerns can easily be accommodated, when the reality is that their priority is to maximize profits.

I accept that many of these concerns would normally be addressed at the planning stage. However, when numerous planning issues emerge at this stage of the process, inclusion within your strategy plan must become untenable. I would therefore ask again why this site remain within the plan, when others with far fewer planning issues have been removed or not included in the plan?

RESPONSE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

The Charnwood Forest Geopark identifies a D-Shaped enclosure near Whitwick as one of 100 Treasures of the Charnwood Forest Geopark. No further details are provided. The County Council's Heritage Team Manager has previously advised that he considered that an appraisal undertaken on behalf of the site promoter was satisfactory and that the need for mitigation could be secured by condition on a planning application, consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework.

In respect of sites where it has previously been decided to not include them in the plan, the reasons are set out in various reports to, and decisions of, this Committee.