

East-West Link Road: A Phoenix from the Ashes

Autumn 2018

The East-West Link Road in its various forms has been an idea since 1916.

The most recent serious attempt to build a road bridge across Leicester's green lungs of Aylestone Meadows was in the early nineties when Bede Island was being regenerated.

Fortunately, fierce local opposition and ever increasing costs caused councillors at County Hall who were then responsible for building new roads, to abandon the idea.

However, Leicester City Council has been consulting about including it in the next Local Plan. The Local Plan is an attempt by the City Council to meet the needs of its citizens for homes, jobs and leisure for the next 15 years.

Another round of consultation on the next stage of the Local Plan will take place later this year.

The current proposed route is from Narborough Road along Evesham Road, through Aylestone Meadows and Boundary Road to Aylestone Road. It would then cross St. Mary's to join with Saffron Lane.

A local campaign group called "End of the Road LE3" wants the City Council to remove it from any future Local Plan.

They believe that the road will worsen air quality and put local residents at greater risk from it, especially asthma sufferers. It could have a detrimental effect on the green jewel of Aylestone Meadows on local residents, wildlife and the environment. The road could generate more traffic which could create a less safe environment for local children.

There is a lot of evidence which shows that building new roads to relieve congestion only results in temporary relief and causes increased car use. The old congestion levels return.

They would also like to support the City Council to look at alternative transport options.

On 4th October 2018, a demonstration was held on the steps of Leicester's Town Hall to protest against the suggestion of including the Evesham Road-Saffron Lane Link Road in the next Leicester Local Plan.

The Local Plan is an attempt by Leicester City Council to meet the needs of its citizens for homes, jobs and leisure for the next 15 years.

About 200 residents and their supporters attended the demonstration which was covered in the Leicester Mercury (<https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/protest-calls-leicester-council-drop-2079131>).

It was organised by the campaign group, End of the Road/LE3, to show councillors who were attending a meeting of the Full Council that the Link Road was not wanted.

The City Mayor, Sir Peter Soulsby, confirmed there are no plans to build the road because of the lack of money. However, if the money became available, it could be a different story.

The City Council only started "consulting" on the opening of Putney Road at the junction with Aylestone Road and Saffron Lane when it got the money from the government.

The City Mayor proposed and it was agreed to refer the petition of over 1500 signatories against the road to another committee for further consultation with local residents.

For further information, please see their Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/endoftheroadLE3/ or e-mail: endoftheroad3@gmail.com

Aylestone Park Residents' Group has already contacted Leicester City Council opposing the East-West Link Road being included in any future Local Plans.