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**STRATEGIC PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENTS  
TRAFFORD CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION**

05 SEP 2011

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**COMMENTS ON DOCUMENT CD12.95.**

1. I note that Trafford Council has now decided to reverse its position on Davenport Green, and no longer to propose to return to Green Belt status that portion of Davenport Green which was removed from the Green Belt in 1996.

2. My position remains that I do not wish to see any "non-green belt related" development on any of Davenport Green, and that ideally the Council should instead resume its recently abandoned course of returning this removed land back to Green Belt.

3. This is because that without this reinstatement, the long term viability of the current Green Belt status of Davenport Green and the "Timperley Wedge" could well be in doubt and at risk. Anecdotally, there is from time to time pressure to develop parts of the Timperley Wedge area.

3.1 The Inspector at the 1995-6 UDP Inquiry considered it undesirable for unrestricted sprawl of a large conurbation into an open area such as the Timperley Wedge (1996 report, p.84 para 3.14). He also had regard to some then current problems of vandalism upon agriculture in the Davenport Green area, but he clearly stated that the quality of the rural landscape is not a material factor in the continued protection of green belt. (p.85, para 3.17). I am told by a Newall Green resident that a recent document in this current Inquiry makes much of car torching and other vandalism on Davenport Green (east of Roaring Gate Lane) with the implication that development would prevent this; this did occur from time to time 15 years ago, but is said to be now very rare. I fail to see how a commercial property development would stop such vandalism, which is a police and public order issue.

3.2 The long term plans of Manchester Airport to develop all the land (currently green belt) around the A538 up to Oversley Bank make Davenport Green's role as a buffer between large developed areas even more crucial, as per purpose 1 at Para 1.5 of PPG2.

4. CD12.95's page 7 (top) last bullet point of blue text R4.4 fails to state that this 99ha of land is to remain in the green belt. Similarly, page 10, para 24.13 fails to distinguish between green belt Davenport Green, and non-green belt Davenport Green. There are two paragraphs on pages 6 & 7 numbered R4.4, and one has to re-read this text carefully to be able to identify the respective statuses of the land areas under discussion.

4.1 Para 24.15 (on page 10) reminds us that any development must concurrently provide the rural park. One wonders if pressure will be brought to evade this.

5. Page 16, para 18.6 states that enough employment sites can be provided for the conurbation without using Davenport Green.

6. Para 18.11's specific reference to Manchester Airport Plc is perturbing on four grounds;

6.1 I have not seen any other specifically named trading organizations referred to by the Council in this way in any of the other documents I have consulted.

6.2 In the Davenport Green context, mention of "industrial, commercial, warehousing and storage uses" is clearly unacceptable, given the constant emphasis on highest possible quality of any development on Davenport Green.

6.3 As a council tax payer, I consider it is for my Council to make up its own mind about developments within or without its boundaries, and not be beholden to any other commercial organization, no matter how large or influential it might be. It is also for a Council to enforce environmental and other protection laws on behalf of its residents.

6.4 The Airport's long-term development plan views Davenport Green as part of its Airport Site and Development Corridor. I find this quite unacceptable, given the Airport's long term plans for substantial land-take elsewhere (within the City boundary) and given that airport-related functions would not rate high-end enough to meet the previous Inquiry's stipulations about the quality of any development at Davenport Green. (6.2, above).

7. Appendix C, page 30, EC1 comments are most interesting. RLAM's assertion that Davenport Green is the only site within Trafford which will attract large investment from multi-national business is merely a recycling of the arguments made at the 1994 UDP Inquiry. I agree with the Council's example that Salford Quays proves that old sites can be transformed and become attractive to high grade occupiers. Liverpool's Albert Dock and the quite recent "Liverpool One" retail complex are similar cases. Also since 1994 we have had the phenomenon of many people -- many of them young capable professionals -- now living in Manchester (and Salford) city centres, which makes city centre office locations more desirable than they might previously have been. In the face of this, RLAM's arguments now look to be very last century indeed.

8. Page 33, part of the EC4 comments state that Davenport Green was not suitable for office development in relation to the tests in PPS4, which indicates to me that although developers and others can put up a case for development at Davenport Green, there are nevertheless profound reservations about it when viewed from the truly independent "general public social and economic interest" of looking after town centres, deprived inner city areas, and the need for jobs which are easily accessible to low income people. "Social inclusion and cohesion" surely includes the concept of employment within very easy reach of people on low incomes and who may need to work a variety of hours to suit their individual family responsibilities.

9. Page 37, S5 comments show that a development on Davenport Green would be of little use to those living in Trafford's deprived areas, but that it might be to Wythenshawe, which is not in Trafford. I do not see why Trafford residents should

stand to lose a substantial area of green belt to benefit another Council, especially where that Council has put in place its own employment plans for Wythenshawe, ie: 55ha of employment land which I submit would hopefully be taken up by SME's which would create the very sort of locally based jobs needed there; local traders would then benefit from serving both the SME's and their staffs without lengthy journeys having to be made. It would not just be Trafford residents losing Green Belt, but also Newall Green (Manchester Council) residents, for whom that end of Davenport Green really is a green escape from the solid built mass around them.

9.1 Indeed it could be possible that development at Davenport Green could retard Manchester City Council's own plans for Wythenshawe; I have no notes to prove this, but I have a clear recollection of a City Council senior Planning Officer (a Mr Kaiserman) appearing at the Trafford UDP Inquiry in 1994 to argue against any Davenport Green development, in defence of his city's plans for Wythenshawe.

10. Page 40, E1 road traffic comments are by turns illuminating, optimistic and depressing; illuminating because of the admission of unsustainable travel patterns and increased congestion to be caused at a point already quite congested, optimistic because the traffic reduction plans will not work, given the type and location of this proposed development and the staff who would work there, and depressing because the public purse would be used for motorway junction expansions, in effect amounting to a large public subsidy for a private commercial venture.

11. Page 45, E8's first paragraph accepts that a Davenport Green development could potentially have a detrimental effect on problems with air pollution from road traffic in this geographical area. The proposed mitigation of buses and cycle routes would not offset this because, as has been said earlier, the vast majority of staff at a scheme like Davenport Green would use only cars for their journeys to and from work.

12. Page 49, EC3 notes that "office market demand over the past 15 years has shifted focus towards city centres and larger town centres, and the proposals for Davenport Green could be developed in various locations within Trafford and Manchester". This reinforces the point I have made at my para 8.

13. Conclusion. My wish to see the whole of Davenport Green again become of Green Belt status is reinforced by (1) Trafford Council's earlier intention to return the 36ha of land to the Green Belt, quite justifiably, given the property market "signals" over the past 17 years, and (2) by my view that – provided the 1994 Inspector's restrictions are maintained -- the prospect of development will continue to remain tenuous at best. Given that the Airport has a substantial land area (on "its" side of the M56) into which to expand during its long term plan, I consider that the Davenport Green / Timperley wedge area will become ever more important in its role as green belt protection against the joining together of the built environment. Trafford Council rightly wishes to have a borough with a good quality of life, attractive to high earners and employers; to conserve and consolidate the local green belt will greatly assist this aim.

P. J. Thompson  
31 August 2011.