

Impact on Aylestone Meadows wildlife

According to the Council's own management plan, Aylestone Meadows provides a rich and complex mosaic of habitats:

- Including species-rich and semi-improved natural grassland, woodland, scrub, tall herbs, marshland, reedbeds, orchard, water and hedgerows
- "...valuable habitat for many invertebrates and nesting birds..."
- "...an important haven for pollinating species such as the bees, wasps, hoverflies and butterflies."
- "The habitats are capable of supporting species that are nationally or locally rare, providing them with full or partial protection by wildlife legislation."

Impacts on wildlife if a new road was built alongside or through Aylestone Meadows:

- It would disturb the movement, feeding, breeding and habitats of the bats, otters and badgers on the meadows. All of these are protected under UK law and we are incredibly lucky to have them on the Meadows.
 - It is an offence to harm bats or to damage their habitats, which includes removing 'commuting habitats' like hedgerows, watercourses or woodland. Clearly building this road would damage such habitat.
 - Badgers would be put at risk by this road, not only by habitat loss but also by being run over.
 - Otters are just making a come-back in the UK and it is an offence to disturb or injure them or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to their resting, sheltering and breeding places. A road running over the River Soar would inevitably do all these things.
- The light pollution both from street lamps and headlights would disrupt the natural cycle of day and night, thus causing disrupted breeding patterns, particularly in birds.
- Increased air pollution would reduce insect populations, which in its turn would be a problem for the protected bats and birds which feed on them.
- The land along the canal, Great Central Way and between them is an established wildlife corridor and losing this green corridor would disrupt food supply and established foraging and migratory routes. Some species might die out of the area completely.

Should the road be built, the meadows would be completely hemmed in by major roads (Narborough Road, Aylestone Road, the Soar Valley Way and the new road). This would isolate the area and restrict movement along the wildlife corridor as well as destroying important habitat.

There are solutions: car use can be managed instead of catered for. Public and active transport can be prioritised resulting in a happier, healthier and cleaner Leicester.

