

Development Policy Manager,
Development Services,
Warwick District Council,
Riverside House,
Milverton Hill,
Leamington Spa,
CV32 5HQ

25-Jul-13

Dear Sirs

LETTER OF OBJECTION to the Local Plan – Revised Development Strategy Document June 2013

Proposed Erection of 3,600 Homes on Sites South of Warwick and Whitnash by Warwick District Council

I write in connection with the above planning application. I have examined the plans and I know the sites well having been a resident of both Warwick and Leamington Spa and now currently residing in Bishops Tachbrook. I wish to object strongly to the development of these houses in these locations, especially on land to the South of Harbury Lane.

Number of Houses

I query the number of homes required in the revised local plan and also the number proposed for the sites south of Warwick and Whitnash

Section 4.2 - I have to question the total number of new homes required for the entire district proposed under the plan (12,300).

Bishops Tachbrook Parish Counsellor – Ray Bullen issued a paper in July 2012 based on 2011 Census data. Using this data a projection for natural growth figure of 5400 new homes was reached.

Warwick DCs own consultants G.L. Hearn gave an Economic and Demographic Forecast Study in December 2012. In their option PROJ 5 arrived at only 4405 new homes required.

Section 4.4 - I query the need for 100-150 new homes in Bishops Tachbrook. The Parish Council have done a housing need survey and this identified a need for only 14 homes (10 affordable and 4 market homes). A mixed development of 25-30 Homes could provide the 10 affordable homes required.

Coalescence and Visual Aesthetics

Section 3.5 of the plan states that the plan should avoid Coalescence but the plan proposes to extend the Urban area towards Bishops Tachbrook.

Warwick Gates is already viewable from the North of Bishops Tachbrook and sits on land on the top of the Tachbrook Valley. The proposals in the plan would mean that houses would fill the northern side of the Tachbrook Valley.

Section 4.3.7 mentions 'It concludes that the perceptions of urban sprawl, and coalescence of Bishop's Tachbrook with the urban areas, could be overcome by establishing a network of green infrastructure corridors'. Where are the other 'Green Infrastructure Corridors'?

Section 5.1.10 - There are proposals for a Green Park but the view from the southern approaches to this would be dominated by the new houses. I must object on the grounds that the visual aesthetics that we enjoy as a rural community would be severely harmed.

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WDC PLANNING
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Officer
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PRE GEN DIS

Section 5.1.10 of the plan does state the green park will be the permanent boundary of the urban area but how will this be guaranteed?

The planning inspector who reviewed the current local plan in 2006 stated that stated that Woodside Farm should not be built on now or in the future.

In the Landscape Area Statement in 2009 Warwick District Councils landscape consultant Richard Morrish referred to the land South of Gallows Hill. His conclusion was *'This Study Area should not be considered for urban extension and the rural character should be safeguarded from development'*. So why has the district gone against that recommendation?

Employment

In section 4.1.6 of the plan it is stated that without inward migration, economic growth cannot be achieved in line with National Forecasts

The proposals for employment land seem to encourage 2000 local jobs however how are we going to attract businesses here? It is well known that there are units in the Spa Park that are currently empty Morrison's Supermarket have been unable to sell off their additional land for office development.

It appears that some developers have been hoarding land in response to the absence / lateness of the publication of the local plan and this has led to an increase in prices which are not encouraging to Business.

As the plan allows for far more homes than are required for 2000 local jobs I have to ask where are the other people from all the houses going to work?

If the intention was to supply homes for workers of JLR at Gaydon then this surely is going to be met by the Stratford local plan which includes a plan for a new town near Lighthorne. This will initially be for 1500 homes but may eventually be 4000 + homes.

In Section 4.1.7 of the plan it states that there are plans for a Technology and Business Park at Coventry Airport. The question needs to be asked why the houses cannot be built close to this area (as they are doing at Lighthorne) rather than in a neighbouring district. I know the plan quotes numerous times the restrictions of greenbelt land but Government allow local councils to review what should be classed as Greenbelt. Surely the need to build homes for businesses in a neighbouring area is a perfect example of an exceptional circumstance.

Transport

I have always worked in the Technology Park on Gallows Hill and I have used various means of transport over the last 7 years to commute from Warwick, South Leamington and now Bishops Tachbrook. These methods include Car, Bus, Bicycle and walking.

Section 5.6 - The plan will increase car traffic to an unrealistic level and the mitigations proposed are simply not adequate.

The current situation I find at the moment is that In the morning rush hour we have tailbacks on Harbury Lane from Europa Way into Warwick Gates itself. There tailbacks on the M40 for the slip road for Junction 14. These tailbacks extend onto the motorway itself and are very dangerous.

In the evening rush-hour there are tailbacks along the length of Europa Way and heading onto the M40 itself.

The roads themselves are very potholed and cannot cope with the volume of traffic currently.

The traffic mitigation suggested in the plan involve many junction improvements with very little road improvements. We have bridges over rivers/ Canals and single carriageway roads through Warwick and Leamington. All of the traffic will have to funnel through these bottlenecks thus making the traffic mitigation proposed ineffectual.

The local plan has no mention of how the mitigation measures will be funded. There is no evidence that this can be funded by the Developer Contributions through Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The Air Quality in the area will be severely affected by slow moving traffic. Business will be impacted by the constant Jams as deadlines will not be met.

In Section 5.6.4 of the plan it seems that almost all of the improvements to the cycle network are to the North of the district but they are taking the least of the burden in new homes. This seems to be an unjustified allocation of resources.

Also Bishops Tachbrook already suffers with far too much through traffic and this will only increase under the plan. I can see no measures to mitigate this which is unacceptable.

Health

Section 5.1.23 mentions "contributions towards improved capacity at Warwick Hospital will also be required." What does this entail? Warwick Hospital is already at capacity and the size of land it occupies does not allow further expansion. Its simply would not cope with such an increase in the number of people in the Warwick District not to mention the people in the new town at Lighthorne that the hospital are required to service.

Possible Alternatives

A more rational approach would be to spread the housing around the district and put houses closer to where the jobs will be.

I have noted that WDC state that there are no exceptional circumstances to build on Greenbelt land but at the same time our Neighbours in Stratford District have clearly stated that there are exceptional circumstances that require greenbelt land to be considered for development.

Also the Government allows Local Government to review allocations of Greenbelt land and we feel that the land to the south of Warwick and Leamington should be considered for this to

- i. Prevent Coalescence of Warwick Gates and BT and Warwick and Leamington
- ii. Preserve the character of the village of BT
- iii. Protect the prime agricultural land in the area

Summary


Please register my objection to the PLAN for reasons stated above

Please also register my suggested alternatives listed above.

Please also acknowledge by return receipt of my letter, confirm that the objections and the suggested alternatives I have raised are valid and will be considered in your consultation process and keep me informed of developments on this matter.

Please may I also ask that my views on this matter are passed on to my Local Councillors as I wish for them to contact to me to discuss the matter further.

Yours sincerely


Christopher Braithwaite
26 Commander Close
Bishops Tachbrook
CV33 9RS