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Development Services  
Warwick District Council  
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10021

Dear Sirs

We are writing to express our concerns about and opposition to the proposed plans for:

1. Revised Development Strategy, and
2. Plans for Traveller sites

I have lived in Bishops Tachbrook since approximately 2000, moving here due to the location and nature of the village, being close to but far enough away from the centre of Leamington. Recently married, my wife also enjoys the Community spirit in the Village and especially in the Close where we live, which is something of which we are all justifiably proud.

The plans for redevelopment concern me (us) on many levels, not least of which will be the undeniable affect that the redevelopment will have on the already stretched highway network and local amenities.

Having read the proposed plans for both the redevelopment AND the proposed Traveller sites, I (we) wish to make the following points, in no particular order of importance, as they all carry equal weight and concern.

1. Apparently the addition of 12,300 homes will serve to make Warwick District a great place to live and work. It already is, and we fail to see how the addition of this huge and unnecessary number of houses serves to improve things.
2. The actual number of homes required to meet the projected population growth in the district is only 5,400. This is based on factual information derived from the national census statistics, and allows for migration. Where is the evidence to support WDC's claim that 12,300 homes are required?
3. The WDC presentation states that; in order to provide for growth of the local population (RDS 3.5), sites for 550 new homes per annum would need to be identified. Over an 18 year period this totals 9900 homes. Where does this number fit in with the 12,300 that WDC claim are needed to meet growth?

4. Why has the WDC empty home strategy not been included in the 5 year plan? WDC has redeveloped 250 homes back to use under this strategy and further homes have been identified. In 2012 [www.emptyhomes.com](http://www.emptyhomes.com) identified approximately 1350 empty homes in the Warwick district. Why isn't more work being done around this type of development of existing homes, rather than proposing large scale new developments. There does not appear to be any mention of empty homes in the RDS.
5. Warwick District currently has a very low unemployment rate, with only 1.6% of the population claiming JSA. If some of the proposed development is about economic growth where is the evidence to show that people moving into the area will be able to find work?
6. Much of the employment land in the district has not been fulfilled and may subsequently become land for housing, but where are the jobs for the people moving into the area?
7. I have heard the growth of Jaguar Land Rover cited as an employment opportunity, which would require homes for employees moving to the area. However, WDC's RDS does not take account of the fact that Stratford District Council are in the process of consulting on a proposed development of 4,800 homes in the Gaydon and Lighthorne area. This would be closer to the JLR than any of the Warwick District developments in terms of homes for JLR employees.
8. Why have WDC and SDC not communicated about their development plans when they are so close? As Bishops Tachbrook residents we will also be affected by the SDC plans, as any commuters and/or visitors to Warwick and Leamington from the new developments will increase the traffic and associated problems, noise/ air pollution etc.
9. The visual impact on the view from Bishops Tachbrook, Harbury Lane, Tachbrook Valley and Gallows Hill will be hugely significant for existing residents but also visitors to the area. No amount of 'country park' can make up for the loss of beautiful countryside and open fields, which would be lost to thousands of homes and the associated environmental impacts such as noise and light (from houses, cars and street lighting). The planning inspector who reviewed the current plan in 2006 said that Woodside Farm should not be built on then or in the future. The WDC's own landscape consultant, Richard Morrish, said in the Landscape Area Statement (2009) referring to the land south of Gallows Hill - "this study area should not be considered for urban extension and the rural character should be safeguarded from development". The RDS goes against this recommendation, why?
10. The local infrastructure cannot support such a significant number of houses in one area. The Southern Site already has significant issues in terms of volume and flow of traffic. The RDS does not contain any evidence to show that the proposed infrastructure improvements would alleviate any of the problems that would come with such a large development. No number of dual carriageways will improve the flow of traffic through the 'pinch points' such as crossings of canals, rivers and railways and the RDS does not provide any realistically deliverable solutions to these problems.

Appendix E of the Warwick Strategic Transport Phase 3 Assessment shows traffic speeds of only 0-10 mph in large parts of Warwick. Any increase in traffic, never mind the exceptionally large numbers proposed in the RDS, will make this situation worse.

Rather than increasing trade in the town centre it is likely that people would be put off visiting the shops because of the volume of traffic. This view was supported by the Chairperson of the Warwick Chamber of Trade, who echoed this point at the public meeting I attended.

11. A lot can be learnt from previous developments in terms of the volume of traffics. The Warwick Gates and Chase Meadow developments prove that the people who move onto these developments will use their cars to commute to/from work and to/from shops and town centres. The bus services serving these developments are not self funding and rely on subsidies to run. It would be naive and idealistic to think that this would be any different on new developments. Most houses have more than one car and most people will drive to work. The location of the Southern Site development would require most residents to commute to work.
12. A lot can also be learnt about sites identified on development plans for facilities such as schools and play areas, which are not followed through. The Warwick Gates plans contained a site for a school, which was never built. This subsequently put huge pressure on surrounding schools and there is still an annual scrabble for places amongst the Warwick Gates residents, who have a nervous wait to see if their child will get their preferred option. Therefore, I have no faith that if the proposed plans go ahead the schools will come to fruition. Similarly, the Chase Meadow development had a playground site on the plans and again this was not built.
13. One of my main concerns is the health implications. I have read the Local Air Quality Progress Report (2011) and the areas already identified in this report as 'Air Quality Management Areas' will be affected by an increase in traffic volume as a result of the proposed developments. As Air Quality is covered by the Air Quality Regulations 2000 (amended 2002) and the Environment Act 1995, as well as various other legislation, I cannot understand why a full Health Impact Survey has not been commissioned. How does WDC know that the proposed developments will not take air pollution levels above the legal limits? It is not acceptable to just go ahead and worry retrospectively when we are talking about serious health implications. Many schools, nurseries and parks are in the vicinity of the Southern Site and the health of the children who use these facilities could be at risk if this goes ahead without a full assessment of the potential impact of such a large development. I seriously worry about the effect on my children's health and other children in the area. In my opinion this issue should take priority over everything else and I am extremely disappointed that WDC are not giving due consideration to this aspect of the impact on local residents.
14. In terms of Bishops Tachbrook, the village is already a cut through for many vehicles on their way to/ from the M40. At peak hours, there are a disproportionate number of vehicles travelling through the village when considered alongside the population of the village. Speeding along these roads has always been an issue and the speed reduction measures are ineffective. There have been no improvements made to the road systems or pavements in Bishops Tachbrook since the development of Warwick Gates and I see no acknowledgement of this need in the RDS. This is yet another example of WDC failing to recognise and consider the wider reaching impact of large scale housing developments on existing infrastructures. If the proposed development goes ahead it will increase the volume of traffic through Bishops Tachbrook and that will increase the risk to the residents of Bishops Tachbrook, as there are no proposed improvements.

In addition to this, any proposed development will increase traffic flow along the Banbury Road (especially if the intention is to house JLR employees) and at peak hours it is already practically impossible to exit the village from Mallory Road onto the Banbury Road due to the existing volume of traffic.

15. The housing proposed for village settlements has categorised Bishops Tachbrook as the largest type (100-150 homes). The Bishops Tachbrook housing needs survey identified a need for only 14 homes. Again, where is the evidence to support the need for 100-150 homes? Why would this many houses be needed in the village when 3,400 homes are proposed for the Southern Site development? With regards to the visual, environmental health and infrastructure issues I echo what I have said in the above paragraphs.

#### Traveller Sites

16. I have also read the criteria for the sites for Gypsy and Travellers from the consultation document. I do not think that the proposed sites are distributed evenly around the district and again the south contains a disproportionate number. All of the above points I have raised would also apply to the development of a Gypsy and Traveller site in this area.

In terms of the relevant criteria I do not consider the following sites to be suitable:

Site 3: this site is very remote and does not have easy access to facilities, access, and pedestrian access.

Site 4: as above.

Site 5: The access is onto a very busy road and there is no pedestrian access. There would be a visual impact on the approach to Warwick and there is a listed building on the site. There would be undue pressure on the local infrastructure and services of such a small village.

Site 6: has no pedestrian access and is very remote in relation to distance from main centres and services.

Site 9: there would be a visual impact on the approach into Warwick and there are listed buildings on the site. The access is onto a busy road and there is no pedestrian access. This is especially true during peak hours, when it is almost impossible to exit the village at this point due to the already high traffic volume.

This visual impairment to approaches to the County Town is a moot point as we are of course dealing with the organisation who gave permission to build Barrack Street Car park all those years ago to house the Council and Library with the result that half of the view to St Mary's Church is cut off from view via the Saltisford approach.

Site 10: Too close to the Guide Dogs for the Blind National Breeding Centre.

Site 15: This site is located on the banks of the Tachbrook. As the proposed site may be used as a place of work there could be a risk of contamination.



17. The school in Bishops Tachbrook has one class of approximately 30 children per intake. A GT site of 5, 10 or 15 could be home to 10, 20 or 30 children. As Bishops Tachbrook is a small school already at capacity is could not support the needs of the site. There are other schools in the district that are not at capacity that could support the need.
18. The sites around Bishops Tachbrook are too remote to support the development and the village and its facilities are not big enough to support such an increase in population, in terms of infrastructure and facilities.
19. I understand the requirement for WDC to provide 31 pitches but I strongly feel that a larger number of smaller sites evenly distributed across the district in areas where the existing facilities can accommodate the need are the most appropriate way to meet the requirements.

In short conclusion, it is the current infrastructure and danger to moving traffic that holds the strongest arguments against both these developments and proposals.

The road network cannot support the current level of traffic and as mentioned above, there are too many pinch points around rivers and canals around the area to make dual carriageways a viable alternative, even if they could be built without severe disruption (Morrisons' development being a notable recent issue).

In addition to this, the current network of schools and other amenities falls very, very short of current requirements, and the addition of 'child numbers' from any proposed Traveller site in the immediate vicinity of Bishops Tachbrook, or Warwick for that matter will bring additional strain to these amenities.

In addition to this and worthy of consideration is the affect that might be seen on Warwick Hospital, which has an over-stretched work load as it is and nowhere else to be developed.

We trust that our elected representatives in the Council listen to the public in these matters. All too often, National and Local Government fail to appreciate and reflect the views of the electorate, and as we are living in a supposed democracy, this is often hard to swallow.

We trust that WDC is not part of that faction.



Simon and Julie Mills