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WDC PLANNING
Ref
Officer
25 JUL 2012
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23rd July 2012

Development Policy Manager
Warwick District Council

Dear Sir

The proposed building of 2700 new homes to the South of Warwick

I understand that you have asked for the public's views about future house building in the Warwick District Area. I write with particular concern about the proposals for the land to the south of Warwick. In my view there is one word that summarises the proposal - crazy. I could stop there and post this letter, but perhaps I could explain why I say this.

1. The traffic along Myton Road is already overloaded. It is home to some 3500 schoolchildren during the school day and the road just can't take any more traffic. I work in Coventry and have to time my departure and arrival times carefully to have any chance of getting to work in good time. In the mornings I have to leave home before 8 a.m. or it can take me a quarter of an hour to just get to the outskirts of the town. The road is jammed between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. every morning during term time.

The same is true in the afternoon. The schools stagger their finishing time in the hope of distributing the traffic. This is fine but the effect is that there are several peaks when even getting to my house (near the canal bridge) from Warwick is impossible without substantial queuing. The first wave is about 3.15 p.m. with further jams about 4 p.m. and the inevitable rush hour jam between 5.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m.

There were at least 10 occasions last year when Myton Road was jammed solid from the Ford's roundabout to Banbury Road island in both directions. Any hiccup on the M40 immediately rebounds onto Warwick's roads. You will no doubt remember the attempt to resurface Princes Drive one morning; the whole of Warwick and Leamington became gridlocked. The resurfacing had to be abandoned and rescheduled for night time working. That's how critical the situation is.

The new houses proposed will inevitably increase the traffic and make a chaotic situation even worse. I don't want to start pointing the finger at other proposals, but the fact is that there is no road in the whole area that has a worse traffic problem than Myton Road.

2. I attended the Public Inquiry into the (then) proposed development of the Aragon Drive estate. Warwick District Council (who were objecting to it) and Warwickshire County Council were very specific about the fact that it was important to keep a green buffer zone between Warwick and Leamington Spa to prevent the 2 towns becoming one big urban sprawl. Indeed, it was stated that the cycle path on the outskirts of the estate was specifically designed to mark the boundary of development and the land behind was to be retained in perpetuity as an area of restraint. The Inspector was no doubt influenced by this when he gave permission for the development.
3. It is not as if this land is ripe for development. On the contrary, it is high grade agricultural land. I can't remember the classifications now but I do recall that this land was some of the finest agricultural land in the Warwick District. The land too is brimming with wildlife - I have seen foxes, deer, pheasants, woodpeckers, bats, rabbits, newts and hedgehogs. We can't build on this sort of environment; it needs to be retained for future generations.
4. I question whether the current infrastructure can cope with this proposal. I understand that there are some improvements planned for the Myton Road / Banbury Road junction, but these are irrelevant. Any casual observer can see that no amount of tinkering can deal with the fundamental problem - the number of residents, shoppers and schoolchildren already using the road. It is surely time to stop adding to the problem.

I understand that the size of Warwick has increased by 1% a year over the last 10 years, double the rate of growth for Warwickshire as a whole and double the national average. We need to reduce this now to help to assimilate the new houses already built within the current structure.

Of course, there are other reasons for not developing the site, but these are my main concerns. I would suggest, at the very least, the area behind Aragon Drive is protected for 10 years, whilst alternatives are found.

