

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

24<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Representation on Revised Development Strategy**

Please find attached a representation from the Steering Group for the Lapworth Parish Plan on Warwick District Council's Revised Development Strategy published in June of this year.

These comments are taken from an analysis of responses from 350 Lapworth households to the Housing section of a detailed survey sent out in April this year. I apologise for not using the suggested response format, but this did not work well in the context of our comments. The full survey report will be available in August and will be sent to the District Council at that time.

Please note that the statistical information from the survey has not yet been independently verified, although it has been checked by members of the Steering Group. It is not expected that the final report will contain any material changes.

Contact details are provided in the representation. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to let me know.

With kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Deryk I King  
Chairman  
Lapworth Parish Plan Steering Group



**WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN****Response to Warwick District Council's Revised Development Strategy, June 2013**Representation

This submission is made by the Lapworth Parish Plan Steering Group on behalf of the residents of Lapworth Parish, and relates principally to sections 4.3 and 4.4 of the Revised Development Strategy. It is based on information and opinions gathered in a number of public meetings held in 2012 and 2013, together with the results of a comprehensive survey of all Lapworth residents and businesses carried out during May and June 2013. The survey was completed by 350 households, or 45% of all occupied households in the Parish, and is therefore judged by the Steering Group to fairly represent the views of residents in the Parish. By area, 51% of the 323 households situated within the village envelope and 40% of the 461 households outside completed the survey.

Introduction

The purpose of the Lapworth Parish Plan is to set out a 5-10 year strategy for the development and improvement of the village<sup>1</sup>. It encompasses all aspects of village life, not just housing, although housing development and its associated consequences are a significant element of the Plan. The data collected in the Parish Plan process will be a valuable foundation for Lapworth's Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing development is, of course, a major issue for villages such as Lapworth in Warwick District that have been identified as Primary Service Villages, capable of absorbing 100-150 new homes in the 2011-2029 Local Plan period. This proposal has aroused deep hostility in some parts of the village and a Kingswood Residents' Group has been formed to oppose concentrated, large-scale developments in the Kingswood area. Please note that any submission from the Residents' Group is quite separate and independent from the Parish Plan process.

Our intention in this submission is to try and present a fair and balanced perspective that represents insofar as possible the views of the whole Parish of Lapworth. On many issues there is no unanimous community view, but it has nevertheless been possible to extract from the data what can be regarded as the majority view of residents.

The following response distils those views that are most relevant to the Local Plan. The final survey report, which will also contain relevant information on education, public transport, traffic issues and community infrastructure, will be sent separately to the Council but will not be ready until August, after the current consultation closes.

Submission

1. From views expressed at various public meetings, residents do not feel that there was adequate, sufficiently well publicised consultation on the Local Plan in the early stages. Warwick District Council should not, therefore, assume that the relatively low level of response to previous consultations implied tacit acceptance of their proposals.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this document, "village" and "Parish" are used interchangeably.

2. At the consultation meeting held on 17 June 2013, residents were surprised to see that the status of Lapworth had changed from that of a Category 1 village suitable for the construction of 100 new homes to that of a "Primary Service Village" capable of supporting 100-150 new homes. Justification was subsequently given for this change in a Draft Settlement Hierarchy Report published by the District Council in June, but it is not possible to understand how Kingswood scores the 53 points that are claimed in this report.
3. 86% of respondents to the Parish Plan survey supported the need for some new housing development in Lapworth, but almost 70% opposed building any more than 50 homes between now and 2029: 10% of respondents opposed any construction whatsoever, 26% supported no more than 20 new homes and a further 33% no more than 50.
4. Construction of 130 new homes (ie 150 less the Aylesbury House site) in or adjacent to the current village envelope would result in an increase of 35-40% in the number of homes in this already congested area. This would fundamentally alter the rural nature of the village, as well as exacerbating traffic, parking and road safety problems that are already apparent.
5. Also important to residents is the size of individual developments. Only 12% of survey respondents supported large-scale developments of more than 10 homes. The remainder expressed various preferences, from single homes to developments of up to 10 new homes.
6. The survey did not address the pace of new development, but it is noted that the Revised Development Strategy suggests that development in Lapworth will take place over the whole 18-year period of the new Local Plan ("Plan Phases 1, 2 & 3"). However, residents who attended the consultation meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013 were unable to get comfort on this from Council officials. Residents strongly oppose mass building of new homes in the early years of the Plan and clarification on timing is sought from the District Council.
7. Regarding the types of housing that should be allowed, 59% of responses supported giving priority to private homes that can be sold on the open market. However, there is recognition that relatively high prices in Lapworth are a problem for young and less advantaged local people, and so there was also significant support for prioritising starter homes (49%) and homes for people with local roots (33%). Sheltered housing, especially for Lapworth's older residents, enjoyed support from 30% of respondents.
8. Almost one quarter of returned surveys supported giving priority to some construction of affordable housing. However, residents who attended public meetings strongly opposed potential imposition in Lapworth of WDC's benchmark proportion of 40% affordable homes. The village is widely felt to be an inappropriate location for large-scale development of affordable housing, as the paucity of local jobs and poor public transport links mean that a car is an essential pre-requisite for living in the village.
9. There is overwhelming support (82%) for construction of the detached and semi-detached properties that currently account for the majority of housing in the village. There was also support for construction of more modestly priced housing, with 43% of respondents supporting some terraced or mews-style housing and 17% flats or maisonettes.

10. Location of new housing is a contentious issue, which is not illuminated with precision by the survey results, in part owing to the highly specific impact development would have on individual residents. However, taking the survey results together with comments at public meetings, a summary would be:
- a. Any developments that fundamentally alter the essentially rural nature of Lapworth are opposed by a large majority of residents;
  - b. Focusing new housing on infill locations was supported by 59% of survey respondents;
  - c. Large housing developments are opposed by a large majority of residents;
  - d. 54% of respondents favoured new houses being spread throughout the Parish;
  - e. There is more scope than suggested in the Revised Development Strategy for accommodating new housing either by changing use of or replacing existing buildings (supported by 46% of survey respondents) or building on land/gardens adjacent to existing properties (24%); and
  - f. Only 19% of respondents supported building on green belt, most residents believing that green belt should be strongly protected and only sacrificed for housing development in exceptional cases.
11. Other parts of the Parish Plan survey speak to other aspects of community infrastructure. The overall impression gained from responses is of a community that is not in any position to manage a large influx of new residents in a short period of time. Major concerns relate *inter alia* to the primary school, lack of recreational infrastructure for young people, poor and deteriorating public transport links, traffic and parking issues, healthcare, flooding and utility services.
12. **In view of the above analysis and comments, the majority of Lapworth residents oppose the proposals affecting the village as set out in the Revised Development Strategy.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

On behalf of the Lapworth Parish Plan Steering Group:

Deryk King (Chairman)  
Martyn Atkinson  
Jonathan Child  
David Clark  
Janet King  
Arthur Prescott  
David Wood