

WDC PLANNING
Ref
Officer
29 JUL 2013
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CC CR PD MA
PRE GEN DIS



25th July 2013

Dear Sir,

Revised Development Strategy- Warwick District Council

I am a resident of Bishops Tachbrook and have lived in the village for 13 years and one of the reasons for choosing this location was the rural village setting and believe the number of additional homes proposed will greatly affect this setting.

The actual number of homes required to meet the projected population growth in the district is 5400. This is based on factual information derived from the national census statistics, and allows for migration. Where is the evidence to support WDC claim that 12300 homes are required? 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 12300 WDC claim are needed to meet growth?

Why has the WDC empty home strategy not been included in the 5 year plan? WDC has developed 250 homes back to use under this strategy and further homes have been identified. www.emptyhomes.com identified approximately 1350 empty homes in the Warwick district in 2012, 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 into RDS.

Warwick District currently has a very low unemployment rate, with only 1.6% unemployment (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? 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? I have heard the growth of Jaguar Land rover cited as a employment opportunity which would require homes for employees moving to the area. However, the WDC RDS does not take account for the fact that Stratford District Council are in the process of consulting on a proposed development of 4800 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.

Why have WDC and SDC not communicated about their development plans when they are so close? As a Bishops Tachbrook resident 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.

The visual impact on the view from Bishops Tachbrook, Harbury Lane, Tachbrook Valley, 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?

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 carriage ways 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 to 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 out 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.

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 there car 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.

A lot can also be learnt about sites identified on 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 but huge pressure on surrounding schools and there is still an annual scramble 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.

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 the 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 Heath of the children who use these facilities could be at risk if this goes ahead with out a full assembly of the potential impact of such a large development. I seriously worry about the affect on children's health in the area.

In terms of Bishops Tachbrook, the village is already a cut through for many vehicles on their way to/ from the M40 and there is a disproportionate amount of traffic travelling through the main roads in the village, in comparison to the number of residents. 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 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 wide reaching impact of large scale housing developments on existing infrastructures. If the proposed develop goes ahead it will increase the volume of traffic through Bishops Tachbrook and that will increase the risk to residents of Bishops Tachbrook as there are no proposed improvements.

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 3400 homes are proposed for the Southern Site development? With regards to the visual, environmental and infrastructure issues I echo what I have said in the above paragraphs.

Yours sincerely,



Mr. Christopher Cox