

Dear Sir/Madam,

I object to the Local Plan (2014 draft version) on the grounds of:

- Transport and sustainability
- The reduced population forecasts from the ONS census figures.
- The possibility of land between Stoneleigh and Kenilworth to accommodate some of the housing.

Despite the best efforts of the WDC planning staff in trying to find solutions, significant problems remain with the proposals for 2900 houses around Europa Way and Harbury Lane.

Transport and sustainability: incidents such as gas pipe repairs and problems on the M40 cause serious congestion on the south side of Warwick and Leamington. There are long queues on Europa Way and Gallows Hill. It is hard to say how widening such roads will solve the problem and undermines claims that the south side of the towns is better placed to cope with traffic than the north. The extra 2900 houses proposed for the south of the towns will make this worse on a daily basis as the river crossings will not be improved under the local plan. Estimated transport costs quoted come to more than £30m. If the Local Plan is 'sustainable' in terms of transport, why must so much money be spent on roads?

It is difficult to understand the thoughts behind remarks that a development on the south side of Leamington will be closer to facilities when the route to Warwick Hospital is through congested roads. The connections to both stations are through congested roads with little parking – the distances are too far for most people to walk or cycle. The supermarkets have congested approaches.

Basing development on railway lines with new stations goes a lot further to addressing such access problems and sets up the residents with a fast, convenient, and reliable public transport option from the outset. It will be a good use of keeping 'Green Belt' land 'green' in the most environmental sense. Creating such settlements will not contribute to the coalescence of Leamington with Coventry or Kenilworth. Why cannot settlements be based around sites with new stations such as Hatton Park and between Leek Wootton and Hill Wootton?

I would like to paraphrase the following: 'Expresses thanks that common sense has prevailed and a new town/village will be built near the M40, the station and major supermarkets, this can develop its own sense of community and identity.' It should become: 'I would express thanks that common sense has prevailed that builds a new town/village near the A46 (less congested than the M40), with its own station on the Leamington to Coventry line for access to central Leamington (and elsewhere) and rail travel (perhaps even first class) to central Kenilworth for the major supermarket (Waitrose). This settlement can develop its own sense of community and identity'.

People would be able to use rail to access employment opportunities.

Census and population figures: WDC must take in account the reduced population figures from the census. If it does not, it risks supervising an overbuild. The lack of sufficient housing causes real hardship but this is no justification for overestimating the need. Given the impact of the Local Plan on the edge of Warwick/Leamington/Whitnash and the very high costs of the roads infrastructure proposed (£30m+), scaling back the 2900 dwellings significantly will avoid much of this spend. This is further justification for priority in reducing the numbers on the south side of Warwick/Leamington/Whitnash. With Stratford's proposals for many new houses near Gaydon, why are so many houses needed on the edge of Warwick/Leamington/Whitnash?

Stoneleigh and Kenilworth: WDC must also take into account the recent option of development in the area between Stoneleigh and Kenilworth. It would spread the housing out across the district. It is close to the A46 and within a mile of where the Coventry to Leamington railway crosses Stoneleigh Road at Gibbet Hill. This site could be used for a station that would also serve the university.

In short, the Local Plan needs revisiting on three counts, all of which would result in far fewer houses being needed on the edge of Warwick/Leamington/Whitnash.

Yours faithfully

