



The Civil Parish of

Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe

20th April 2016

Dave Barber
Development Policy Manager
Development Services
Warwick District Council
Riverside House
Milverton Hill
LEAMINGTON SPA
CV32 5QH

Dear Mr Barber,

Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan 2016 – Representation Re. DS NEW3 and H37 Leek Wootton

- The decision by the Warwickshire Police Force to vacate the Woodcote HQ site has brought a new dimension to the planning proposals for the Parish. The additional availability of potential housing land at Woodcote has significantly changed the parameters for new development in the village of Leek Wootton and raises again many of the issues that surfaced during the consultation conducted in 2013.
- Of course the pressure on WDC to increase overall housing numbers, following the suspension of the Local Plan submission by the Inspector, is well recognised. But the Parish Council contends that it is essential that the scale and character of new development in the village should be commensurate and preserve the unique nature of Leek Wootton, even when surrounded by its much larger urban neighbours, Kenilworth, Warwick and now also Leamington.
- As a point of reference, the proposed numbers for new housing have progressed from 85 in the '*Village Housing Options and Settlement Boundaries Consultation*' in November 2013 to 45 in the '*Local Plan Publication Draft*' in April 2014, subsequently revised to 26 in the submission, and now back to 120. This represents an increase of more than a third in the current housing stock. As noted in our previous representation in 2013, we believe this is excessive and will bring other pressures to bear on the village, the Parish in general and the environment.

Helen Eldridge | Clerk to the Parish Council

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- It is therefore important to consider the mix of development between *DS NEW3*, *Woodcote* and the other site at *H37 'Land at the entrance to the Warwickshire Golf Club'* in terms of both scale and type of housing.
- For this reason the Parish Council proposes that the overall number of potential new properties should be lower in total at 103, but distributed as follows:
 - The Warwickshire Car Park 15
 - Woodcote 88

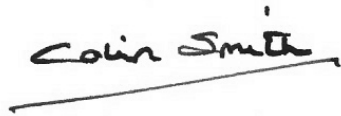
This is not significantly different from the District Council's proposal, but it is based upon detailed technical evaluation and conceptual layouts prepared for the Parish Council by AECOM as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation.

- Our Neighbourhood Development Plan is an important and defining document for our community and we have not arrived at these housing numbers lightly. Whilst we will continue to look at the allocation of dwellings between the different parts of the Woodcote site, our guiding principle is to ensure that the scale of future development is commensurate with the layout and character of the rest of the village. Within this we also have a one time opportunity and responsibility to create a proper setting for the Woodcote manor house that preserves and enhances its status both now and into the future.
- Even at these levels it would represent almost 30% increase in the housing stock. However, with suitable attention to mix of properties and design criteria, this could be acceptable in the circumstances of the required increases across the District.
- In addition to a reduction in the scale of the overall development, the Parish Council also believes that the proposed revision to the inset boundary, in order to take in the majority of the Police HQ site, is inappropriate. We believe that to remove such a large tract of land from the Green Belt is not necessary and the inset boundary should follow the earlier proposal made in the 2013 '*Settlement Boundary*' which leaves the playing fields and registered park and garden areas of the Woodcote site under Green Belt protection. Close attention also needs to be paid to the number of protected trees and hedgerows as a fundamental part of the Master planning exercise.
- The increase in dwellings at Woodcote will present issues for future traffic management, particularly at 'The Anchor' junction. These will also need to be addressed as part of a Master plan for the development of the site.
- An increase in the population of the village by a minimum of 300 – and potentially more than double that figure – will require substantial improvements to footpaths and cycle-ways to the north and south of Leek Wootton. The current footpaths are inadequate and potentially dangerous, especially at the northern exit along Warwick Road. Improvements will

require the purchase of additional land, which must also feature in any master planning exercise for the redevelopment of Woodcote.

We hope that all of these comments can be given due consideration in the Council's process of modification to the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Colin Smith
Chairman
Leek Wootton & Guy's Cliffe
Parish Council