

BISHOP'S ITCHINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting 27 February 2023 at 7.30pm

Present

Cllr Dugmore (Chairman) Cllr Christian-Carter Cllr Gates Cllr Thomas

Absent

4 Vacant seats

In Attendance

Karen Stevens - Clerk to the Council

Public

0

23/40 Apologies

Cllr Tressler – work commitments

Cllr Kettle – Landowner and therefore a pecuniary interest

23/41 Declarations of Interest

None.

23/42 Dispensations

None.

23/43 Public Forum

Not required due to no members of the public being in attendance.

23/44 South Warwickshire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation

The following observations were made:

- Large document with numerous questions
- A number of the questions are shall we have a blanket thing or something different?
- The justification given in some cases for the blanket approach was that it would make it easier and more predictable for developers. The view is that this policy document should be in the interests of the people living in those regions,
- Developers need keen planning policies so they know what they are doing but these policies need to be upheld,
- Will our response mean anything?
- A high-level look at the document. As this is a parish council response, it should be looked at as to what are the key bits that are more impactful for a village perspective, what is actually probably realistic so the takeaway points are:

- transport and infrastructure being possibly the most critical thing to the village. There is potential housing all around the village and at Deppers Bridge, but it is not immediate. There will be affordable housing in places but it will not be specifically in the village so those who want to live in the village may have a problem. The sheer number of people would result in thousands more people on the roads causing serious congestion particularly at rush hour
- They want to create more businesses in Leamington Spa and Stratford on Avon. There is a mention about transport links, improvements in transport so people on lower incomes in the village have the means to go out and access work through available transport
- How are all these people going to move around. If they want to build somewhere they will build somewhere so you can argue as much as you want but it will probably happen so what is the best alternative solution is mitigate how much impact it will have on people in the village
- The whole document is very annoying and full of soundbites. It was saying all the right things. The main thrust seems to be that they want to keep Warwickshire a green and pleasant land whilst completely covering the area in housing and everywhere needs to be within a ten minute walk of amenities,
- Extremely disappointed to see that Bishop's Itchington once again seems to be singled out to be completely surrounded by call for sites, much more than other villages – it is worth remembering that 'Call for Sites' was issued by Stratford District Council (SDC) and is people who have said or expressed an interest in a site, it is not necessarily a definitive development plan. All the sites identified are outside the built up area boundary (BUAB) therefore it was suggested that we need to say something about the BUAB,
- The plan under discussion concentrates on five options including transport corridors, economic base, sustainable travel etc. This would then set up spatial strategy that CS15 currently does. One of those, for example, was a bit of development everywhere which, you could call an arbitrary 5% on each settlement – this does not sound unreasonable in some respects. They are looking at developments based around rail travel i.e. putting 5,000 plus houses at Deppers Bridge which then creates the issue of the majority wanting to get to get to the M40, Jaguar Land Rover, Ason Martin, Banbury. This would then denigrate that road or if there is an accident/blockage, carnage through the village potentially. The railway would not help in the slightest,
- Where is the proof that they require the number of houses they want including affordable housing – where is the proof. There is no evidence base for this. Exactly how many affordable houses and where?
- Affordability is market driven and on the one hand there is supply and demand, they want to add more houses but also want to boost the economy, boost demand, boost business so you will put a limited number of additional housing stock in, you will also try to attract more businesses but these houses then no longer become affordable once they are sold once, prices shoot up and you are back to 'square one'
- A note of caution, when they talk about affordable housing there is usually a condition attached to them so their values are constrained in a way. It is not 'affordable' as in low price its affordable in that it is shared ownership, rent part buy, rent only etc. Rent part buy, rent only at suppressed rates (lower than market rates but higher than social rates) and social housing make up affordable housing,

- There are a large number of questions and if you are going to respond in a particular direction, you need to know why,
- It was agreed to pull out our main concerns and each of these were discussed in detail:

Q-I3 Please select the option which is most appropriate for South Warwickshire

Prefer Option I3b: Each District Council to produce its own Levy.

CIL should be structures to benefit the communities that the associated development effects. It should not be structured for the convenience of developers.

Q-S5-2 Do you think new settlements should be part of the overall strategy?

No. Having seen the harm done by GLH, We do not support new settlements. Infrastructure projects in Cat 1 LSVs have been shelved on the basis of consolidation at the new settlement and that consolidation either has not happened or it reduces the accessibility of sectors of the community. We either end up with no service or a service that requires a private car to access.

Better to add infrastructure to already sustainable locations.

Q-S7.2: For each growth option, please indicate whether you feel it is an appropriate strategy for South Warwickshire::

Option 1: Rail Corridors

Appropriate strategy | Neutral | **Inappropriate strategy**

Creates dependency on a failing transport system. Post-pandemic working practices reduce need to long commutes by rail.

Option 2: Sustainable Travel

Appropriate strategy | **Neutral** | Inappropriate strategy

Sustainable and active travel options are usually hampered by poor interconnectivity and piecemeal thinking. Lack of safe cycling routes, unreliable and infrequent bus services and the rural nature of the south of the county make such schemes difficult to implement.

A plan dependent on privatised bus/rail operators is at serious risk of being isolated when those services fail or are withdrawn.

Option 3: Economy

Appropriate strategy | **Neutral** | Inappropriate strategy

Seems to better reflect the sustainability considerations, placing residences and employment sites in close proximity.

Option 4: Sustainable Travel and Economy

Appropriate strategy | Neutral | Inappropriate strategy

Growth at existing and likely sustainable sites, benefits the existing residents of those locations, with CIL contributions and additional infrastructure.

Option 5: Dispersed

Appropriate strategy | **Neutral** | Inappropriate strategy

Seems an arbitrary approach, which on the face of it sees all locations pulling some weight. Some of these locations are lacking in facilities and such an approach means that the opportunity for a fully sustainable approach is limited. That said, is it appropriate to burden the larger better served settlements, while some of these other villages remain little more than dormitories?

Q-E2: Please select all options which are appropriate for South Warwickshire

Option E2a: Include a policy which encourages businesses to be low carbon

This approach should be plan wide, not just in pockets, as this can also create an opposing situation where developers reluctant to invest in sustainable developments will concentrate on areas not covered by or excused from this policy.

Q-E4.1: Please select the option which is most appropriate for South Warwickshire

Option E4.1a: Include a policy supporting diversification

Existing CS policy AS.10 has been used cynically to deny diversification efforts, in particular where a highly specialised farming operation has, through deliberate and malicious actions by parties outside of their control, become unviable. Such a policy would be welcome if carefully composed to ensure that the diversification remained in keeping with the character of the environs and had the demonstrable support of the parish/town in which it is situated.

Q-H2-2: Please select the option which is most appropriate for South Warwickshire:

Option H2-2c: A more localised approach with separate affordable housing requirements for different localities across South Warwickshire

Affordable housing requirements should be determined to suit the needs of the regions and the aspirations of the people wishing to move into those regions, however measures will be required to ensure that there are no deliberate manipulations to 'fudge the system'. The consideration of it being more difficult for developers to anticipate their costs is the developer's problem.

Q-H4-1: Do you agree with the approach of contributing to meeting the Birmingham and Black Country HMA shortfall to 2031 on the identified sites in Stratford-on-Avon District?

Yes | **No** | Don't Know

Q-B8.1: Do you agree that the plan should include a policy avoiding development on the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it can be demonstrated that the harm to agricultural land is clearly outweighed by the benefit of development?

Yes | No | Don't Know

Q-B9: Should the plan include a policy requiring the safeguarding of sites of national importance, sites of local importance, and other non-designated sites known to make a positive contribution to biodiversity or geodiversity; unless the benefits of the proposal clearly outweigh the need to protect the site. Where possible conserve and enhance these sites.

Yes | No | Don't Know

- It is surprising that 'Heritage' is absent from part one of the plan so it is assumed it will be in part 2, particularly in that Warwick District Council (WDC) has so many listed building, designated heritage assets, and conservation areas,
- '2017, WDC Local Plan identified which policies were considered strategic. 2016 SDC Core Strategy did not' – they are 'chalk and cheese'. It was expressed that this should be incorporated into our response. There is no hard and fast definition as to what constitutes strategic policy – they should come up with one,
- Page 178 of the document, it is where the two sets of planning policies from the Core Strategy and the Local Plan are listed and this is where CS8 is

'Historic Environment – some elements are within part one': they are not included at all. Even the main regional centres AS1, AS2, AS3 etc.. Are all saved for part two and this is worrying. The reality of asking people to merge into one local plan two separate LPA's that are so far different particularly in their planning policies. At the moment WDC's local plan seems to be taking precedence in part one. Disparity between the two and a concern that the approach that Warwick takes has been given greater weight and significance,

- Green belt. WDC has an excessive amount of green belt which they protected rigorously and there is also confusion generated between something being washed over by the greenbelt as opposed to being actually in the greenbelt. SDC has very little green belt and where it is located in the northwest that bounds the West Midlands and a bit by Snitterfield and the north side of Stratford itself. The view that SDC will have about green belt will be completely different to that of WDC which re-emphasises the disparity/incompatibility,
- Built Up Area Boundaries (BUAB) is concerning as there is a proposal about changing these. If you are going to preserve a community which is of a manageable sustainable size, there is no logic in changing the boundaries. A change in BUAB would affect all the villages,
- Cllr Gates came up with words at the beginning of this item that were of a more general note and Cllr Christian- Carter had expressed that certain items should be incorporated in the parish council's response. They were asked to capture these in an email to the Clerk so they can be used as an introduction and incorporated as appropriate,

It was **RESOLVED** that the question/answer responses supplied by Cllr Dugmore and the observation points articulated by Cllr's Gates and Christian-Carter form the basis for the parish council's response to the South Warwickshire Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation. (Proposed by Cllr Dugmore, seconded by Cllr Gates, all in favour

23/45 Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the parish council will take place on Monday 13 March 2023 at 7.30pm at the Community Centre.

Meeting closed at 20:19

Signed.....Chairman Date.....

