

LATEST NEWS

THE LOCAL PLAN

The Local Plan? Yes still the Local Plan: it grinds on!

Those developers pushing to increase house building in North Mymms have not given up their efforts.

If they were all to get their way it would add 899 new houses to the 609 already in the Draft Plan for our Parish.

Last March, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council approved the Draft Plan on which it had been consulting for several years and sent it for examination by the Planning Inspector. The Council had received nearly 3,000 comments from the public on the draft, and effectively rejected all of them. About 90% of the comments asserted (but often for contradictory reasons) that the Draft Plan was “unsound”.

The Public Examination by Mr Mel Middleton, the Inspector appointed to examine the Draft, began in September with Hearings into “Strategic Matters”. In concluding remarks to the Council after these Hearings, the Inspector said he did not consider the development strategy put forward by the Council, to be “sound”.

It was not, he said, his job to “correct” the Draft, but rather than finding it “unsound” at this stage (which would require the Council to start again as has happened with St Alban’s Council) he said he would work with officials to try to remedy the problems and come to a final view having heard all the evidence.

Before Christmas, the Inspector wrote to the Council offering them his thoughts on what the Council needed to do to be able to argue successfully that it could not meet its housing target because of Green Belt restrictions.

The implication is that much greater areas of Green Belt than is currently proposed will need to be given over for development.

Since the Draft Plan was published the latest assessment of housing need for the borough has been increased from 12,000 new homes to 15,200.

Not surprisingly, promoters of sites that were not included in the Draft Plan are pressing hard, making significant effort and expense, to argue that their sites should be included in a revised Plan.

Furthermore, a Statement of Common Ground has been signed by HCC, WHBC and the promoters of Southway HS11 for provision of a new Primary School. Also a Statement of Common Ground has been signed by HCC and WHBC for provision of New Barnfield for a secondary school. There is a danger that this could, together with suggestions for a new primary school in North Mymms, open the floodgates to yet more development on Green Belt in our Parish.

Within our Parish these sites include:

<u>Sites</u>	<u>No of houses</u>
Bell Bar (BrP1)	100
Brookmans Park	
Peplins Wood (BrP12)	110
Bluebridge Rd (BrP6)	234
Welham Green	
Skimpans (WeG6)	70
Potterells (WeG15)	140
Dixons Hill Road (WeG10)	120
South of Welham Manor (WeG3)	55
Pooleys Lane (WeG12)	70
New Barnfield (WeG8) secondary school and unknown quantity of dwellings.	

We believe that if the Council has to make significant changes to the Draft Plan for it to be declared “sound”, then they must carry out another full public consultation. As of now they appear to have no plans to do this.

There will be an opportunity to discuss the up to date position with Jed Griffiths at our meeting and site maps can be viewed on our website at www.greenbeltsociety.org.uk

As a reminder those sites included in the Draft Plan are:

<u>Sites</u>	<u>No of houses</u>
Brookmans Park	
Land west of Golf Club Road HS21 (BrP13)	14
Land east of Golf Club Road HS23 (BrP14)	10
Land west of railway station HS22 (BrP4)	250
Little Heath	
Land south of Hawkshead Road HS24 (BrP7)	100
Land north of Hawkshead Road HS25 (LHe1)	35
Welham Green	
Marshmoor Employment/houses SDS7 (WeG4b)	80
Foxes Lane HS35 (GTLAA01) 12 pitches for gypsy and traveller use	
South Way HS11 (Hat11) houses and primary school	120

We appreciate your membership and your donations that enable us to engage our planning consultant. Thank you. We would like to strengthen our Committee. If you would like to know more (without commitment) please email us on greenbeltnorthmymms@hotmail.co.uk

Please come to the AGM to show your support. (NOTE the change of venue this year)