

By email to:

localplan@telford.gov.uk

programme.officer@telford.gov.uk



19th September 2017

Dear Sir / Madam,

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 to 2031: Response from Church Aston PC to the Public Consultation on Proposed Major Modifications.

Proposed Major Modification MM92 / page 171 / Appendix D Table 21

We appreciate the strenuous efforts made by the Inspector both during and post the Examination of the eLP as regards the very serious and significant issues caused by the inability of T&WC ('the Council') to provide the requested evidence in relation to their overall approach to the housing site identification process.

In light of this we are extremely disappointed that the Council have by stealth over recent months in effect loaded back into the eLP sites identified in -MM92/ page 171/ Appendix D Table 21. This action came to the fore in August 2017, when the Council allowed its development partner, St. Modwen, to bring forward an application, first submitted and verified in January 2015, to build 120 homes on site H13 with a recommendation from the Council's planning officer that the application should be approved. The report from the planning officer quoted only part of what the Inspector had included in the introduction to L1 such that it could be read that the Inspector actually supported development on site H13.

When attending various of the public sessions of the Examination, it was clear that the representatives of many private landowners repeatedly expressed grave concerns both as to the absence of the fourth phase site allocation evidence (the sift) and subsequently when the Inspector allowed the Council additional time after the Examination hearing to provide the evidence (i.e. the representatives questioned whether the evidence actually existed and feared that the Council would simply go through an 'after the event' exercise to produce evidence to justify the site selection). The fact that the Council (even outside the extended timescales) had to ultimately confess that the evidence did not exist and so warranted a finding of 'unsound'.

It was obvious to everyone, with the now apparent exception of the Council, that the proposals from the Inspector to deal with the situation was an 'all or nothing'



M11 - Church Aston Parish Council

offer i.e. if you cannot agree to what the Inspector proposed then the Inspector was left with no other option than to find the eLP 'unsound'.

We realise that if we request the Inspector to reach a finding of 'unsound' in view of the total contempt that the Council have demonstrated to all parties involved in the eLP process, would mean that all sites would be open for development under the NPPF etc., so we would ask the Inspector to have one last attempt to persuade the Council to remove from the site allocation process all the sites listed in Table 21. While this may open the Council to costs from applicants involved in bringing forward applications the responsibility for this risk lies squarely with the Council resulting from their behaviour as briefly described above. As regards these costs, taking site H13 as an example, St. Modwen are the Council's development partner and incurred minimal costs on this site to date.

A risk of failing to act may bring forward a legal challenge by way of judicial review of the site selection process and relevant matters arising from the Examination as is the case currently in Cheshire East.

As stated above, we realise the consequences of calling for the eLP to be found 'unsound' but can only assume that the Council in bringing forward the planning application regarding H13 at this time have decided to take this risk.

However, if the Inspector cannot persuade the Council as to the folly of ignoring his proposals then we feel there is no other option than to find the eLP as currently presented to be '**unsound**'.

Yours sincerely

Mike Atherton (electronic)

Mike Atherton
Clerk to Church Aston Parish Council