From: Janet Cannon [redacted]
Sent: 22 August 2021 15:33
To: localplans@charnwood.gov.uk
Subject: Response to Local Plan Consultation
Attachments: Response to CBC Pre-Submission Local Plan.docx

Attached is my response to the Local Plan Consultation. Please acknowledge receipt.

Regards, Janet Cannon.

RESPONSE TO THE CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN

PRE-SUBMISSION DOCUMENT 2021-2037

My response to the Local Plan Pre-Submission Draft as part of the consultation ending 23rd August 2021. These are my main concerns as a resident of East Goscote.

GROWTH

Allocation of housing to the three Other Settlements of East Goscote, Queniborough and Rearsby

425 houses have been allocated to these villages, 223 to East Goscote alone. This appears to be over 50% of the total homes allocated to small villages (815). As Other Settlements these villages facilities are limited to two shops in Queniborough and in East Goscote a small convenience store, chemist and newsagent all with limited opening hours. The information regarding a village GP practice is well out of date, having closed in 2019. I trust that the rest of the research on which these decisions are made is of a higher standard. And yet these three villages appear to be treated as a Service Centre. This will force new and existing residents to predominantly use private transport which directly conflicts with the environmental aims of the plan.

The scale of the allocation in this area also raises concerns about flooding. This is a fairly regular occurrence on Broome Lane and also affects the Queniborough Brook. There are numerous new developments near Melton all of which impact the River Wreake, the cause of Broome Lane flooding and ultimately flooding along the Soar valley where more houses are also planned. All this leads to extra costs on Charnwood Council tax payers in the future.

Areas of Local Separation

The HA64 and HA65 allocations reduce the separation between Queniborough and East Goscote to an even narrower strip than that which resulted in the recent Three Ways Farm development being refused by CBC on the grounds of ALS. A similar situation occurs between East Goscote and Rearsby with regard to HA60 and HA66 which reduces an already limited ALS conflicting with your policy EV3. The separate identity and character of these three villages are highly valued by their residents, voters and Council Tax payers.

The Land Comprising HA 60

I will not repeat my concerns with regard to the previous and current applications from Gladman Land which is the subject of a separate exercise. However, it does disappoint me that, having spent a huge amount of CBC resources and Council Tax payers' money in fighting the previous application through a public enquiry, the same area of land and almost the same number of houses appears in this Local Plan.

The known and suspected contaminants buried in this site should preclude even test boring, the only safe approach being to leave it undisturbed. Developing over or near it or creating any kind of public space such as a children's play park should not be permitted.

Even gravel extraction would not be regarded as viable and practicable this close to occupied property the same would apply to any other kind of remediation. Outline planning permission should not therefore be possible because no viable and practical remediation is apparent so it should not be included in the plan.

Remediation and construction traffic

If despite the above, HA60 does remain within the plan, there is the prospect for the East Goscote community of suffering years of remediation and construction traffic via the narrow single access road to the site. Access off the A607 Rearsby bypass has already been ruled out by the Highway Authority. Of the three 7.5 tonne weight limit roads remaining, only one is practical. Broome Lane crosses two small bridges and the traffic would not be routed unnecessarily through Rearsby so it would all have to pass along Melton Road, through East Goscote to the Queniborough roundabout. (That is until the HGV drivers discovered the rat runs.) Also, as any new development started to become occupied, private transport, pedestrian and cycle traffic would have to be mixed in with that. The plan to build in Queniborough HA64 and HA65 will also add to the problem.

COMMMUNITY

Creating a Cohesive Community in East Goscote

It is probably not reasonable to expect there to be no houses allocated to East Goscote. However, the proposal to allocate 223 houses and worse still the background threat of the 270 houses in the Gladman application, is disproportionate for the reasons given. It is not only the number of houses, it is the lack of any plan for what is needed and how it could be integrated into the existing village.

The three recent developments, Willowbrook, Lilac Way and Rearsby Roses, are all piecemeal additions to what was a well-planned village. A village which was developed as a single entity with wide open spaces and footpaths allowing safe pedestrian access to the school and the centre for most residents. No attempt has been made to integrate the three recent developments with the original village so they stand as an example of what not to do in planning terms.

There is an opportunity in this local plan to put some of that right and join up those three developments in a safe and green way with the core village. There is also the opportunity to meet the real need which is high standard housing for the ageing part of the population enabling them to release family homes and gardens which are now too big for them. Combine that with starter homes for young people and you could create a cohesive community able to care for its elders and its grandchildren.

Eco Villages and Care Communities have been built in other parts of the country. We live in an area which is highly attractive and desirable. Why not here?

Access to Healthcare

The Jubilee and County Practices in Syston are currently at capacity as anyone who lives in East Goscote will verify. When the Mahavir Surgery closed in the village in 2019, the list was almost entirely transferred to the Syston practices and the problem still remains. The same would apply to new residents in Queniborough and Rearsby. The CCG have made it clear that before any new property is occupied, they would need Section 106 funding to be released.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

All of our actions, especially those of local authorities, need now to be viewed through the prism of Climate Change. Every day, week, month and year of delay makes the task of moving to a zero carbon society more challenging, as if it was not challenging enough. This plan covers the development of nearly 18,000 properties over 16 years. The Borough Council can, if it chooses, hide behind the limitations of the planning system as an excuse for enabling more of the same type of housing which we know to be below the standard required to meet our zero carbon targets. Or it can lead the way and be first in requiring ALL housing to be sustainably developed.

All housing to have solar panels, hydrogen ready heating boilers and new house designs that take account of the orientation of the sun, are just some examples. We have a climate emergency here now, we cannot wait another 5yrs, change needs to happen NOW. The plan is weak in this regard and as such fails the people of Charnwood.

Janet Cannon

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22 August, 2021