

Notes from the meeting with Cllr Richard Fry and Anne Shorland from East Lindsey District Council on Tuesday 28th March 2017 at Tedder Hall

In attendance: Cllrs David Clarke, Richard Sanderson, Marcus Williams, Spencer Phelan and Amanda Bushell (Parish Clerk)

There had been communication between the Parish Council and District Cllr Fry prior to this meeting, but it was felt that sitting down and discussing the matter would be beneficial in order to reach a joint position so that a public statement could be released.

Cllr Fry was thanked for responding to the Council's letters and providing answers to the 19 questions raised, but further clarification was required on some of the questions; and the Parish Council had come up with 3 statements which it wanted to ensure that ELDC agreed with before any public statement was released.

The following Statements were read out and Cllr Fry and Anne Shorland were asked if they were accurate statements which ELDC would agree with.

1. As Local Plan housing numbers are a minimum and that ELDC have stated that each application is treated on its merits and conformity to material planning considerations, the allocation of 341 houses in Woodhall Spa is a meaningless number as far as assessing the future of the village. ELDC cannot deliver houses only identify land that could be used to provide the allocation for that settlement. Therefore, the number of houses built in the village is a number between 0 and ZZZ where ZZZ is an undefined number limited only by material planning considerations and conformity to policy. Residents should not look at the allocation figure of 341 as being anything other than a statistical figure used to demonstrate that ELDC has identified enough available land that could deliver the housing target identified in the Local Plan; housing numbers over the next 15 years could be more or less than this figure.

ELDC's response: Correct.

2. It is ELDC's position that the Local Plan takes a strategic view of the housing market area and does not drill down into visions for individual settlements. As a result ELDC has no vision of what Woodhall Spa could or should look like over the next 15 years.

ELDC's response: To a degree. ELDC doesn't have the resources to dig down into every settlement. The long term vision for Woodhall Spa would be to develop to the South, so there is a vision for the village it's just not articulated in the Local Plan, and there is fear that including this vision within the plan would open the floodgates to developers.

3. It is up to the relevant statutory consultee to request infrastructure contributions and to determine the appropriate level of that contribution. ELDC's role is to ensure, as far as possible, that there is a response from the statutory consultee and to make adjustments, if necessary, to the levels of the contributions where the developer raises concerns over viability. ELDC does not monitor the growth of the infrastructure in a settlement.

ELDC's response: Correct.

Throughout the meeting the following points were made (Black – Parish Council comment/questions, *Blue – ELDC response*):

- The ELDC Planning Department doesn't appear to consider cumulative impact of multiple developments on the village.
ELDC does consider cumulative impact in relation to landscape impact, but ultimately it has to judge an application on its own merits.
- Developments are being approved outside of the village boundary
The new Local Plan doesn't specify village boundaries. Development won't be approved in isolation, it must be linked on 2 sides by existing or already approved developments. ELDC did consider whether the Local Plan should indicate the preferred direction of development for each parish, but it was decided not to, but it might be right to do this at the 5 year review.
- In a recent press release from the Woodhall Spa District Ward Councillors they refer to Material Harm, but what exactly constitutes Material Harm?
A number of factors, such as landscape, highways issues, drainage. Once the District has a 5 year housing supply then more weight can be put onto harm when considering a planning application for new development. Material Harm is harm that cannot be mitigated by planning conditions and Section 106 agreements.
- If all the recent planning applications are approved and built then the village is going to grow by 50%, which will have a massive impact on the utilities which are already under pressure.
If the relevant authorities state when consulted that the village cannot cope with additional development then the application will be refused. ELDC have met with Anglian Water to discuss issues because they are aware that the water recycling facility in Woodhall Spa is nearing capacity and this is shown in the East Lindsey Infrastructure Delivery Plan document.
- A lot of the sites being proposed for development are not the ones allocated in the Settlement Proposal
This is common throughout the District, a high percentage of windfall sites come forward rather than the allocated sites. ELDC are going to start putting pressure on owners with allocated land to start work to develop them. ELDC can pull allocated sites at the 5 year review when it will determine whether new and proposed development has undermined the allocated sites ability to deliver.
- There is a need to make the community aware that any land can be built on at any time subject to there being no constraints, discounted does not mean that it won't be developed

Correct, developers can overcome reasons for land being discounted, for example with the recent Witham Road application when the land was discounted due to the proposed access being too narrow, but the developer has submitted a planning application with a wider access point, and if this access point had been shown when the land was put forward for allocation, then it is likely that it wouldn't have been discounted.

- There is concern that Section 106 contributions are received too late, and that the development has already started and the impact to the community is already being felt before any money is collected and infrastructure improvements start.

Section 106 money is provided by the developer when triggers are met. ELDC monitors this closely. It is possible on a large scale development to ask for infrastructure to be in place before a development starts. For example on a large housing development elsewhere in the District a Doctors surgery has to be built before any housing starts.

- There is concern that Section 106 money doesn't go to a local project, if the money is set to go to NHS England then it could be spent anywhere and may not benefit Woodhall Spa.

ELDC monitor this tightly to ensure that Section 106 agreements are tied to a local project. ELDC does check that the money is being spent where it should be and as a Collection Authority it can take action if Section 106 money is not being spent as it should be. Anne Shorland would check that this was still happening.

- Could a Section 106 agreement or Planning Condition be varied without the knowledge of the village and Parish Council?

The Parish Council was asked to contact Chris Panton with this enquiry.

- The Doctors surgeries in Woodhall Spa are overstretched. Who determines if a new surgery is required?

NHS England determine if a new Doctors surgery is required.

- Some of the terminology in the Local Plan is confusing. Would it be possible to put a 'Layman's Guide to site allocation' with the adopted plan to explain exactly what Windfall sites, discounted and allocated sites are?

Amendments have been made to the final version of the Local Plan to make it clearer what the terminology means. Once the plan is adopted this can be done as well as putting an article in the E-Messenger magazine as suggested.