

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Modifications of Wealden District Council Core Strategy

Wealden District Council received the Planning Inspector's interim findings by way of a letter dated the 5 March 2012 and a schedule of recommended main modifications. It is now a requirement that Wealden District Council and the National Park will consult on all the proposed modifications to the Core Strategy.

Arrangements were made to start the consultation on 26 March and a Public Notice placed in some local newspapers on 23 March. However, the consultation on the Proposed Modifications was put back, due to Wealden District Council's opposition group disagree that council had inserted the word "around" in to the amended document.

Looking at the proposed Modifications of the Core Strategy, it appears to be a simple and straightforward task of changing a few words to the proposal. However, these important few words put by the Council in the current proposal do not have the same meaning as those suggested by the Inspector to the Secretary of State for examination, and which were repeatedly mentioned at the public examination hearing. Our can't understand why Cllr Roy Galley cannot agree with us to include the word "Maximum" instead of his preferred word of "around" in relation to the number houses to be built, perhaps he has a different number of houses he wants to propose in SD4 and other areas.

Most importantly, why is it that the document cannot clarify what the community facilities are and whether it includes primary and secondary school provisions?

As it is not clearly stated in the Modifications of the Core Strategy, this can and will be open to challenge in the future, which I believe will not be in the best interests of this Council and incur unnecessary costs too.

It is obvious that the additional word of "around" is added to Modifications of the Core Strategy by the Council, not from the Inspector who is independent of the Council. If Cllr Roy Galley is committed to what he submitted in the LDF submission and the precise number of houses to proposed in SD4 with the leisure, recreation and community facilities including primary and secondary School provisions then there is no need to added the word of "around" from the original LDF submission in January 2012.

Our group has tried hard to reach the agreement with Cllr Galley to change the word "around" to "maximum" without success. As a consequence, we have had no choice but to call-in these changes for debate in committee. we had hoped that the Councillors of this committee would have a better understanding of this matter and support a proposal of simply clarifying the Council's plans.

At the call-in meeting, all the Conservatives Councillors on the Committee voted against the proposal and only one Independent opposition Councillor for the amendment. As stated in the Modifications in the Core Strategy, it is very worrying that the proposals for Hindslands /Morning Mill Farm is not just a proposal to build 700 new houses and 8600sqm of office space. No doubt that with such ambiguity, the final figures could be much higher.

I have no objections to building more new houses in the Wealden District, the most important issue is to only build at locations which are appropriate. The Council's proposals

for Hindslands /Morning Mill Farm with the access road to and from Eastbourne Road is simply not suitable in accommodating the traffic volumes and it seems that no authority wants to listen our residents' concerns.

Our residents have already been let down now that funding for a medical centre at Towermill Place is no longer available. Within the proposed LDF report at full council in December 2011, it was clearly indicated that there would be a new medical centre in Townmill Place despite the unavailable funding, as everyone now knows, Wealden District Council is now going to build council houses at that site. There is no alternative plan for a replacement of medical centre in Polegate and Willingdon.

Wealden District Councillor Oi Lin Shing 23rd April 2012

Bus Services 126 and 143

The contact between East Sussex County Council and Renown is expiring in May. I am pleased to confirm that East Sussex County Council have now completed the retendering arrangements and awarded a replacement contract to continue with a new bus provider.

Bus Services 51 update

I write further to our last "Feedback" report about the bus extension to Hellingly Hospital. I can confirm that the new service commences on Sunday 6th May. Route 51 will cover the journeys that you have listed in your newsletter. New timetables will be due out soon, also can find these online at - www.stagecoachbus.com/eastsussex/serviceupdates.

Daniel Shing
Wealden District Councillor for Polegate South