



HFDAG - Hanwell Fields Development Action Group

Our voice is heard

A hugely supported meeting of HFDAG with Cherwell District Councillors and local MP Sir Tony Bladry on Saturday 6th October showed the wide gap in views about the proposed new Local Plan 2012 in consultation (consultation ended on the 10th of October).

The main point made by Hanwell Field residents about the naming of local sites for development at North Hanwell and Southam Road was the gross error the Council have made in calculating the numbers of houses to be built on sites around Banbury.

The council have ignored the requirements of the new Government National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requiring plans to be on a 5 year rolling basis together with a market-based forecast for years 6-11 and 11-15. The Council insist that they will use the revoked South East Plan of the cancelled Regional Spatial Strategy of the previous Government which calls for 16750 houses in Cherwell, a fixed plan for the next 25 years!

Councillor Barry Wood acknowledged that their 25 year plan meant 4100 new houses in Banbury, but went on to insist this meant naming new sites at West Bretch Hill (400), North Hanwell (400) and Southam Road (800) was needed to meet the plan. As Antony Watts of HFDAG pointed out, the correct 5 year plan, even if you accept the revoked SE Plan top-down number, is for 164 houses per year! And this means a 5 year firm plan of 820 houses - a figure in line with the Office of National Statistics population growth forecast. In the years 6-11 and 11-15 a similar number of houses was planned giving a total of 2460 over 15 years.

But sites already approved or close to approval at Bankside Phase 1 and Canalside will provide 2142 houses and then, taking into account the expected building of windfall houses (houses on sites not in the plan with less than 10 houses/plot), the whole need is met by just these sites. *And no others are needed!*

The councils figures are simply wrong.

Illegal

HFDAG believe that to ignore the NPPF is illegal and, what is worse, their lack of consultation of the community required by the new Localism Act means the whole plan must be thrown out and remade. Councillor Wood insisted that they must go ahead with the wrong plan "because if we don't developers will walk all over our land", a claim that HFDAG believe is just a panic measure and not a reason to act unlawfully.

Unsound

Many other objections that the Local Plan 2012 is unsound - notably the disconnection to previous plans, the misleading of the public, the non-respect of previous plans giving residents the right that Duke Meadow Drive would be the Norther Boundary of Banbury, the lack of infrastructure planning for schools, transport, employment, health, water, policing, and telecoms - condemn the plan to be remade. And as was pointed out, if possible, to make it more readable with with less 'planning piffle'.

Many residents doubt that environment and natural habitats would be respected by building 1200 houses over green field sites. The current Local Plan calls for over 75% of new housing to be built on green fields ties, compered to Government guide lines of no more that 25%.

The detailed objections to the Local Plan which over 90 residents have signed up to are attached. These have been lodged with CDC in Bodicote. Manby residents have in addition made their own objections known.

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Details of the CDC Local Plan May 2012 can be found on their web site.