New Cheshire East Local Plan – Scoping Consultation

Comments of Weston & Crewe Green Parish Council

The Parish Council's comments are set out below in relation to the broad issues raised under the respective consultation headings.

Creating a vision and objectives. Total synergy is required between this new Local Plan and the Spatial Development Strategy under preparation by the shadow Mayoral Authority for Cheshire East, West and Warrington. This is not referred to in the consultation, along with the plan making process and timescale.

Identifying and assessing sites.

Residential – the choice of sites must avoid the coalescence of existing communities along with the creation of urban sprawl and retain a meaningful separation to protect the character of existing settlements along with the quality of life of their residents.

The new Neighbourhood Plan for Weston & Crewe Green (awaiting Referendum early next month) has one of its cornerstones the protection of the individual communities which make up the plan area. A rolling forward of this plan post 2030 will retain this key objective.

Employment – particular attention needs to be paid to the provision of satisfactory access arrangements from new employment sites onto the primary road network to avoid the issues currently being experienced on the Basford East Strategic Site where heavy industrial traffic has to traverse through a new housing development off a single access point off the main road network.

Green Belt – an additional bullet point needs adding to 5.17: **the consideration of additional areas of Green Belt**

Strategic Green Gap – this needs to be re-assessed around the southern edge of Crewe and made much more meaningful and effective. It's currently being eroded by the approval of applications following Central Governments edict of more housing at any cost. This is resulting in the coalescence of existing settlements and is beginning to form a characterless extension of the built-up area of Crewe.

Settlement Hierarchy – new large housing allocations along with Local Service Centres must contain provision for adequate local services including small convenience shops and community facilities such as pubs and community halls etc...

This is sadly lacking in the new housing within the Weston & Crewe Green Parish and is resulting in unsustainable development, contrary to sound planning principles.

Housing – it's considered critical that a comprehensive up to date housing needs study is undertaken Borough wide.

We had one undertaken as part of the preparation of our new Neighbourhood Plan This illustrates a need to provide housing to cater specifically for an ageing population.

Housing Standards – the adequacy of off-street parking standards within new housing areas needs to be reviewed to ensure that resident's vehicles can be parked in easily accessible locations clear of the highway.

On-street residential parking is a major issue in relation to our parish in so far as new housing developments are concerned. This results in pavement parking creating issues for pedestrians and Emergency vehicles.

Adequate space needs to be provided within individual property curtilages to cater for domestic vehicles which are constantly increasing in size.

The impact of climate change is also a significant issue here in relation to the design buildings, use of materials and consumption of energy.

Transport and Infrastructure – thought needs to be given as to how a broad range of infrastructure can be provided to support local communities. This includes schools, health care facilities, community halls, local convenience shopping provision and pubs etc.

In so far as transport provision is concerned the plan needs to look at the wider infrastructure provision -: connectivity, with the Primary and National network, rail and airport hubs etc.

It is considered that the road infrastructure within our area is already overloaded resulting from new development and will struggle to accommodate additional large schemes without heavy infrastructure investment.

Local Plan Evidence Base – the Weston & Crewe Green Neighbourhood Plan currently awaiting referendum includes a current housing needs appraisal of the Plan Area, ecological studies, and a detailed design guide.

Additional Points –

- We would request that the CIL provisions are reviewed. The level of CIL monies to provide much wanted infrastructure and facilities, particularly in the south of the Borough. Also, the eligibility of CIL monies – only a very small area bordering Crewe is eligible within our patch.
- Finally, the preparation of new Neighbourhood Plans should be encouraged to support the Local Plan policies and strategies.

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