

REPRESENTATION

21/12/22

Dear Strategic Planning Team

Please find enclosed the response that the Wednesfield North City Councillors have made

With regards to the SSDC Regulation 19 Consultation document. Would you please note the comments we have made and would urge you and your colleagues to read and deliver. Can you also please confirm receipt.

Best Regards

Councillor Phil Bateman MBE

On Behalf of Cllr Rita Potter

On Behalf of Cllr Mary Bateman

South Staffordshire Local Plan -Regulation 19 Response from Wednesfield North

Strategic Issues

As Wolverhampton City Councillor's representing Wednesfield North we want to set out our views on the development proposals for Land North of Linthouse Lane. We recognise that the Conservative Government continues to deliver confusion in their proposals for increasing England wide housing. The latest developments from Government indicates that the arrangements to reach 300,000 new homes a year in England by the mid 2020's has changed. The Prime Minister said on 7th December "Housing Targets remain, but are a starting point, with new flexibility to reflect local circumstances."

This statement and other Government statements cause confusion and concern. It's still not too late for the SSDC to call for a halt and develop a better understanding of what the Government is meaning to do. There is a need to get 'a clarity' of what is now expected of all the Local Authorities in the West Midlands. We feel that asking for a pause to development proposals is not too much to ask. We along with many in Wednesfield want to understand the real statistics of what is required in housing terms, as the housing targets we now have are clouded in mistrust. A delay by South Staffordshire District Council could be seen to be a useful decision, at this moment in time and we ask during this consultation that this takes place.

There appears to be confusion by Local Authorities in the West Midlands, as some Councils continue to respond to targets set by a Prime Minister, who is now no longer a Prime Minister, and whose target figures are being brought into questions by so many.

We in Wednesfield remain concerned and upset that it appears that proposals for 1,900 homes will continue to appear threateningly on our city boundaries. We are upset that a settlement of this size, alongside our communities' key local highways in Linthouse Lane and Kitchen Lane, will have a big detrimental effect on our own community.

It's a huge concern that the pressure on our local highway network will have impacts also elsewhere in Ashmore Park. We already have severe estate congestion brought about by a 1950's housing Estate being built, which already doesn't have enough kerb space for residents own cars and automobiles, transport or other traffic. Just imagine pouring the vehicles of 1,900 new homes onto our estate's roads 24 hours a day 7 days a week!

Constructing 1,900 homes on Land North of Linthouse Lane will create great hardship for years to come on our diverse and well established Ashmore Park estate, Linthouse Lane and other key estates along highways like Woodend Road and Blackhalve Lane. All of which will throw great stress on our Ward of Wednesfield North and especially Ashmore Park and the wider Wednesfield community. The stress that will be pressed on this estate and the Linthouse Lane estate will be enormous. If these SSDC proposals are allowed go through unchallenged and unchanged.

Throw the scheme out - My plea is that this scheme is thrown out in its current form and SSDC are asked or required to think again. Think about the impact of their development on our established and long time developed communities, on this side of the County boundaries.

Based on the forecast level of new dwellings, Wednesfield North Councillors remain concerned that the highway impact will have grave issues for the City Road and Highway network in Wednesfield North, Wednesfield South and Fallings Park, for at least a decade to come. The SSDC construction traffic and the generation of highway movements will bring misery to local roads and networks for year after year until the construction phase is delivered. That means perhaps as long as ten years. We feel that our local population will then be submerged under congestion and highway delays, increasing

pressure on our local economy in Wednesfield and across the city and the Black Country. It will also affect the 'Climate Crisis' that Wolverhampton as a City is now facing and which it has since declared. More work needs to be addressed around Climate Change.

Transport and Highways –

Other stand out issues are the proposals for ancient Public Footpaths, these ancient footpaths have acted as links between Wednesfield and Essington and other South Staffordshire settlements for decades some even centuries, they need to be protected . The Public transport proposal seems weak and the highway infrastructure the placing of sites relating to housing in Kitchen Lane, Local Transport and Highway impacts. Wednesfield Councillors are most concerned about proposals for public transport. We think there is muddled thinking taking place around the serving of this proposal by public transport. The goals seem less than ambitious. Whilst there is a clear agreement between the West Midlands Combined Authority about the support and the delivery of the Brinsford Parkway project. There are no similar thoughts about how the land North of Linthouse Lane and how it will be supplied by public transport into the next decade and further? Looking for a couple of bus routes just does not seem to be taking the Climate Change crisis we are in seriously at all. Not enough work has gone into planning this site. It's all been about Staffordshire and not enough thought about how this huge development will sit alongside and integrated with the older urban areas, of the City of Wolverhampton. The Boundary Commission should be looking to take all that development land North of Linthouse Lane and perhaps Essington and place them directly into Wolverhampton?

There needs to be a lot more consultation with Wednesfield residents who will be seeking a whole lot of reassurance that there will be much more to the consultation on any transport assessments / planning applications associated with development sites near the Wolverhampton boundary and the linking and importance of Wolverhampton Green Space. Increased highways traffic will increase noise pollution and increase noxious gases. We believe that increased pollution levels will be a travesty to Wednesfield residents. As they at the same time face losing access to the Green Belt they have used for decade after decade, for their own health and mental health,

for the benefits it brings to wellbeing. They also will lose the unique environment

Wednesfield contends that if we are to have these huge numbers of dwellings and support facilities levered into the Green Belt, Local Government and Government should insist that mitigation is delivered. This could be via these following proposals.

Reduce the impact of the development on Wednesfield. That the proposed new Country Park for Essington as part of the SSDC Local Development Plan proposals, should be placed on the Wednesfield side of the former Mineral Railway –the former rail line, splits the development site. The proposed Country Park would do much to provide the ‘green lungs that the current arable farm land and Green Belt, has provided for decades for 30,000 Wednesfield residents and the further number of residents across the North East of Wolverhampton .

I am having conversations here in Wednesfield with the community now that the SSDC plans are public. I am also speaking with City Planners about other points of issues. What is becoming even clearer Residents and the community have major concerns about the role of Policing and Fire and Rescue. Health facilities, the poor planning proposals around for instance Secondary Education..

Primary and Secondary School Places – As Councillors representing Wednesfield North we are horrified that pressure will be built on CoW schools in Wednesfield, and education places, because if these homes are built, without major mitigation before the Education infrastructure required is built. It will throw huge pressure on the current Wednesfield and Wolverhampton North East schools. Already places are at a premium, and new schools just for Wolverhampton’s own requirements are at constant and increasing pressure.

Health Services – As Local Councillors we can only see more issues developing around the already very stretched GP Practice and Dental and hospital services here in the CoW, if these 1,900 homes are built before the health infrastructure is created. It is inevitable that the new residents will spill over in their search for medical aid into our community. We believe that

this is another solid reason for SSDC to halt their proposals to give time for Local Authorities to consult their members, and check what they and Government really wants to do, around target figures. Distortions created not only in the development of surgeries, and access to doctors will also be replicated in Dental and Pharmacy services. None of the efforts to solve these concerns will be delivered by rushed planning decisions. Certainly the already established Wednesfield community will not accept weakened and poorly prepared planning proposals without the investment in these services being made first before the housing is completed.

Public Health requirements -

City of Wolverhampton has been working to a Public Health plan that is designed to ensure people in the City live longer, healthier and have more active lives. That we should be part of a vibrant green city, we can be proud of. This huge housing development on 'Land North of Linthouse Lane' being crushed closely on to the City Boundaries, will do little to create that sort of enhancement. This SSDC development on 'Land North of Linthouse Lane' will cut off the green belt for our established and diverse communities in Wednesfield therefore reducing Green Space. If the planned SSDC Country Parks were established closer to the City Boundaries. Their Public health benefits would help to alleviate the loss of current Green Belt ensuring some facility for our diverse communities and residents in Wednesfield .

Fire & Police – We are concerned that there appears to be little or no thought being given to how the Fire and Police Authority will be planning their support of their services. No plans for a Police Station or how the Staffordshire Fire Authority will protect and service the new dwellings. Will it be West Midlands Police and Fire Services that will be protecting and Servicing these 1,900 properties from highway infrastructure from the West Midlands side? If not how will the services protect and serve?

Green Space & Green Belt – *Wednesfield Councillors believe that the proposed new Country Park for Essington and Playing fields as part of their SSDC Local Development Plan proposals, should be on the 'Wednesfield side' of the former Mineral Railway – that is the former rail line, which currently splits the development site. The proposed Country*

Park would do much to provide the 'green lungs' that the current arable farm land and Green Belt, has provided for decades for 30,000 Wednesfield diverse residents, and the further number of cultural residents across the City of Wolverhampton.

Best Regards

Cllr Phil Bateman MBE

on and behalf of Councillor Rita Potter

Councillor Mary Bateman

Wednesfield North City Councillors.