

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE held in the Forest Room, Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on WEDNESDAY, 21 MAY 2025

Present: Councillor J G Simmons (Chair)

Councillors P Lees, M Ball, D Bigby, S Lambeth, J Legrys, R L Morris, P Moulton, C A Sewell, L Windram and M B Wyatt

In Attendance: Councillors

Officers: Mr I Nelson, Mr C Elston, Mr J Arnold, Ms B Leonard and Mrs R Wallace

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members declared the following interests:

All members disclosed that they were lobbied on item 5 without influence and attended the meeting with an open mind.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were two questions; addressed by the Chair of the Committee.

QUESTION FROM MRS G BAKER

'In response to a question about access to the site in August 2024, you responded that several options were being considered but could not be clear where that would be at that stage. However, the Team Manager did comment that access onto Church Lane, where a primary school is located, would not be acceptable. However, an email I received recently suggested that access for West Whitwick was now likely be from C81 on Church Lane. I have also been informed that the owners of site C78 are selling their house and land with an option agreement, because they had previously believed that access would be through their 2.5 acres. They now also understand that access to the site will now be further along Church Lane. Could you now clarify for me please if access to West Whitwick Broad Location will be through C81, despite access to Church Lane being strongly rejected by the Highways authority when planning permission for C48 was rejected in 2017?'

RESPONSE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

'To date there is no agreement regarding the access arrangements for the West of Whitwick site. It is understood that the promoters have been, and are, investigating this issue in consultation with the County Highway Authority. In response to comments from the County Highway Authority to the draft Local Plan, the Local Plan Committee of 16 December 2024 agreed to add in an additional requirement in respect of this site to co-ordinate development with land north of Church Lane (C48), particularly in respect of vehicular access and design and layout.'

In response to a supplementary question, the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager explained that traffic activity will be based on traffic modelling work to be undertaken and which will inform the next stage of the plan. The work required includes the Highway Authority and is based on assumptions, but traffic would ultimately depend

Chair's initials

on the development's population and their travelling activity.

QUESTION FROM MR C TAYLOR

'With regard to the West Whitwick Valley site, currently all of the closest Primary schools to the development have a total available capacity of 10 pupils and the closest secondary schools are currently over capacity by 93 pupils. These figures also include for schools that fall outside of the catchment area for Whitwick. I cannot see anything within the plan for any construction of additional Primary and Secondary schools to accommodate the additional demand created by the extra 550 houses to be constructed on the West Whitwick Valley site - also other close development sites will require additional places in schools. Can you tell me what plans are in place to start construction of these schools prior to any houses being built?'

RESPONSE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

'An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) identifies what additional infrastructure will be required to support new development and is informed by advice from infrastructure providers. In terms of education, that is Leicestershire County Council. In terms of primary education, it identifies that, at this time, it is anticipated that demand from development in the Coalville Urban Area (which includes the west of Whitwick site) can be met from spare capacity at existing or two new schools in the Coalville Urban Area. In terms of secondary education, the County Council will look at options to accommodate demand in the Coalville Urban Area through the expansion or reconfiguration of Castle Rock or Newbridge schools. The developer of this site would be required to make a financial contribution to any additional accommodation that is required, commensurate to their impact as required under the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations.'

In response to a supplementary question, the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager explained that the County Council are the education authority for the district, the decisions they make will depend on when planning applications are submitted and how to deal with the impact on schools at that point in time. Officers will be maintaining communication with the authority.

4 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor M Ball and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2025 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

5 EAST MIDLANDS AIRPORT – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSULTATION

Prior to the report presentation, the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager referred the Committee to the Update Sheet, which addressed concerns raised by a member and included additional points to be forwarded to the East Midlands Airport.

Chair's initials

The report was presented by the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager.

A discussion was had, beginning with a member expressing disappointment that linking the East Midlands Parkway to the airport was only briefly mentioned as it was a valuable tool that could be utilised as a reliable source of transport to the airport. A lack of connectivity to the airport was supported by another member, who emphasised that an increase in an extra 20,000 jobs being generated by the airport without reliable public transport, was not a sustainable action. Nor was the increase in jobs before allocation of additional sites to the Local Plan.

Members highlighted the need for the airport to have tighter and more accountable sustainability monitoring and oversight to manage issues such as noise pollution and its impact on residents and public transport. The Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager agreed to obtain more information from the airport to feed back to the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor M Ball and

RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) East Midlands Airport be thanked for consulting the Council.
- 2) The comments set out in this report be forwarded to East Midlands Airport as this Council's response.

6 GOOD DESIGN GUIDE FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE

The report was presented by the Head of Planning and Infrastructure.

A discussion followed. Members welcomed and commended the Good Design Guide, and commented that it was a step forward from an already good guide and looked forward to its publication which would support stronger development in the district.

A discussion was had about the requirement to include chimneys on all new housing, as some members commented it was unnecessary with others liking them and think they improve the street scene. It was explained that chimneys make a development look stronger and have a positive impact on streetscape but the Head of Planning and Infrastructure would explore this further.

It was suggested by a member that sustainable and energy efficiency could be included more in the report with more recommendations. This included encouraging a fabric first approach to energy efficiency and encouraging developers to put the management of open spaces back to local authorities.

The comments were taken on board by the Head of Planning and Infrastructure as they welcomed any feedback and informed the Committee that there was the opportunity to make amendments to the document.

A member expressed disappointment that the guide wasn't submitted to a Scrutiny Committee and commented that all members of the Council should have the opportunity to provide input to the guide.

At the end of the discussion, a member commented that they had requested for the Committee to discuss whether a policy could be developed in relation to the management of public open space. The chair agreed that this could be looked into.

Chair's initials

It was moved by Councillor J Legrys, seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

The draft Good Design Guide for North West Leicestershire Supplementary Planning document be approved for public consultation.

The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm

The Chairman closed the meeting at 6.30 pm