

## **COUNCIL – TUESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2024**

### **QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR N SMITH TO COUNCILLOR K MERRIE**

“I am disappointed that the recent decisions made by the Labour Government as stated by Deputy Prime Minister to amend the NPPF will increasing house building figures across NWL.

Our Local Plan review house building figures have gone from a starting point of 357 houses per year to 621 per year as discussed at the last local plan committee. This does not take in to account any extra houses from the Labour Leicester City Council’s unmet needs which the Council may need to provide for.

We could also potentially see an increase in solar panel farms and wind turbine numbers across NWL and this is not what the residents want.

This change in the NPPF appears to be punishing those Councils who have met their previous Local Plan requirements whilst rewarding those who have failed.

Can I ask what actions the portfolio holder and the council intend to take.”

#### **REPOSENSE FROM COUNCILLOR K MERRIE TO COUNCILLOR N SMITH**

“Members will be aware that the matter raised by Cllr Smith was fully debated at Local Plan Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> August last month. At the meeting, a number of members expressed concern about the potential increase in the numbers of houses that this Council would have to provide for per year under the government’s new standard method.

At the meeting, the officer report advised to continue to plan for now for 686 dwellings each year, and a minimum of 13,720 dwellings over the plan period of 2020-2040 as set out in the Statement of Common Ground for the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area agreed in June 2022, but that the matter would be kept under review.

However, Members also resolved that North West Leicestershire District Council condemns the government’s decision to increase the allocation of housing and request the Member of Parliament to make urgent representation to the housing minister expressing our grave concerns. As such, a letter on behalf of the committee, has now been sent to the MPs representing North West Leicestershire residents requesting that they make representations to the government expressing their grave concerns about the significant impacts that this level of growth would have on our local communities.

I’m aware that the Chancellor announced that footnotes 57 and 58 to paragraph 163 of the existing NPPF, which placed additional tests on onshore wind schemes, including demonstrating proven community support, would no longer apply to decisions. The government is of the view that in effect, this created a very high bar for consent to be granted and led to very significant under-delivery of onshore wind schemes. This may result in some proposals in NWL which, if acceptable in planning terms, could help with the climate emergency. However, if the Council is faced with a number of new applications for renewable energy proposals, these will be dealt on their planning merits and the Planning Committee would still have the ability to refuse applications where proposals are not considered appropriate, for example where there might be an unacceptable visual impact or where residents amenity might be affected.”