

LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE – WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2024

QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION

QUESTION FROM MR C TAYLOR

'I refer to the inclusion of West Whitwick Valley being a broad location in the draft local plan. The sites earmarked are beautiful, working, rolling countryside with intrinsic character and are all part of the National Forest and, part of them, Charnwood Forest. It is highly rated in your sensitivity study which also states that this can't be mitigated for.

Councillor Merrie states in the forward that the local plan (and I quote) "protects and seeks to improve the things that are important to people like the Charnwood and National Forests, parks and green spaces"

Neighboring Thornborough Road (C48) is a continuation and was refused planning permission for 300 houses in 2016/17 due to 3 reasons namely:

- It was felt the development would not protect and enhance the natural environment
- sustainability
- contrary to historic environment aims.

These issues still exist so what has changed that West Whitwick is a broad location in the current draft local plan?'

REPOSENSE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE

'Whilst the site at Thornborough Road was refused planning permission in 2017, at that time the Council's current Local Plan was in its final stages of moving to adoption. That plan identified sufficient land elsewhere up to 2031 such that the site was not needed. The new Local Plan is looking ahead to at least 2040. The Council is under an obligation to identify sufficient land to meet the housing needs of the district. Furthermore, the requirement for new housing has increased significantly in recent years.

The Landscape Sensitivity Study is part of the evidence base that has informed recommendations, but it is not the sole determinant. In landscape terms the site is judged to be both more and less sensitive than some other sites. The study also identifies potential mitigation measures which can be incorporated into the design of sites.

Other policies in the plan seek to ensure that future development takes account of both the Charnwood Forest and the National Forest in any design; they do not seek to restrict the principle of development.'