

## **COUNCIL – 8 NOVEMBER 2016**

### **ITEM 6 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

#### **QUESTION FROM COUNCILLOR A C SAFFELL TO COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

Can I be told why only two of the “Minor Changes” requested by myself and the Castle Donington Parish Council have appeared in the list of changes. I went to see the Planning Policy Team Manager personally to explain why for example the requested addition of Donington Hall to the Country Homes list has been ignored when it was designed and built in the 18th Century by the architect and plasterer William Wilkins, who is recognised nationally for his work. Which I think makes it a more important building than either of the others mentioned. It is also now home to Norton Motorcycles which is a world famous brand. We also pointed out some factual inaccuracies such as the wording concerning the presumption against development that will cause harm to a designated heritage asset. There has been recent case law that has changed the wording in the NPPF which I forwarded on to the Planning Policy Team Manager so that he could see that the wording in the Local Plan needed to agree with the new advice. I spent quite a bit of time and checked all my facts.

I also discussed these items with Councillor Pendleton who said he would support what we were suggesting, so can he tell me why we appear to have been ignored.

#### **RESPONSE FROM COUNCILLOR T J PENDLETON**

All of the representations that people and organisations took the time and trouble to make, to the local plan, were carefully considered. Councillor Saffell rightly points out that not every change that was asked of us, is proposed to be made to the local plan, and with respect that is why we will be holding an Examination in Public. That Examination will largely be a series of informal Hearings, to which key people and organisations are invited to give evidence. That process is run by an independent Inspector, who has access to all of the representations that have been made, including those of Castle Donington Parish Council.

I now hope to address the specific issues that were raised by Castle Donington Parish Council, which principally concern heritage matters. I welcome the implicit support of the Parish Council, for the remainder of the plan, including the housing, jobs and infrastructure that will be delivered between now and 2031.

We take the view that explicit reference to Donington Hall would not usefully improve the local plan, given that an example was already given of a similar asset. It is felt that the addition of Donington Hall could lead to calls for other similar assets to also be added to the list of examples, which would not add useful value to the plan. Given that this concerns supporting text and not policy, it is questionable as to the value of the addition of one asset over any other. Notwithstanding this, the Parish Council has made its case, which has been sent to the Inspector, who will take it into consideration.

The assessment of ‘harm’ to the significance of a heritage asset is not absolute. It is an established principle that any harm that is identified should be weighed against the benefits of the proposed development. It would not, therefore, be appropriate to operate a blanket policy approach to always refuse permission if harm is identified.

We agreed with the Parish Council that Ashby and Castle Donington town centres have broadly similar characteristics, and suggest minor changes to the local plan to reflect that.

The Parish Council put it to us that we should always consider neighbouring buildings and the wider street scene. It would not always be appropriate to consider adjoining buildings or the wider street scene, for instance where the application site is a modern building and neighbouring buildings are of more mature vintage. It would be preferable, in those circumstances, for materials and design appropriate to the building itself to be used.

The Parish Council suggests that the area between the Spittal and Campion Hill be identified as subject to Policy S3: Countryside, as there is no replacement for Policy E1: Sensitive Areas in the new local plan. However, that land is surrounded by existing or planned development so is not countryside.

Similarly, the Parish Council requested that the area between Glover Road, Castle Donington, and Hemington registered as a formal green wedge/area of separation. Policy S3: Countryside affords sufficient protection from inappropriate development. Policy S3 recognises that issues relating to coalescence are relevant considerations in respect of proposals for development in areas identified as countryside.

Finally, the Parish Council asked for more detailed maps of the airport and Donington Park. These can be improved when the local plan is adopted.