Matter 3 – Dr Peter King

Q3.1a We generally support the balance of allocations between settlements, but believe there is further scope for housing within Kidderminster town centre, in some cases replacing redundant retail space, as well as above it.

Q3.1b Nothing further to add.

Q3.1c The landscape impact of the expansion of Lea Castle village beyond brownfield area has been ignored. Dr Peter King provided a detailed assessment of this in 2018 at the final objection phase. See objection by CPRE to Policy 31 and annex to that. There is clearly a balancing issue between damage to the landscape and the need for housing. The westward extension of Lea Castle village is incapable of being hidden. However if (contrary to our wish) the eastern extension is to be developed, the planting anticipated in a WFDC drawing [SD01-App.B p.81] should be undertaken at least 10 years before development is commenced to enable trees to reach a suitable height to hide the development. This should be as thick than shown there, rather like the plantations along the south-eastern boundary of the old hospital site.

Q3.1d-f Nothing further to add.

Q3.1g

1. We do not believe so. Hagley Parish Council's objection to more overloading on A456 is relevant here. Specifically, Hagley suffers from a major congestion issue on the A456, A450 and A491 roads that run through Hagley. The A456 and A491 have been proposed for inclusion in the government's proposed Major Road Network which is aimed to complement the Strategic Road Network as roads which carry a high proportion of traffic with a national economic significance. These roads through Hagley are already running close to (or at certain junctions above) capacity with consequent problems of congestion, air quality, and safety. In particular, the A456/A450 junction at Cross Keys, the A456/B4187/Western Road/Summervale Road junction, and the A456/A491 junctions at the Cala Development and at the Cattle Market are severely congested in both the morning and evening peaks. Outside of Hagley the Hayley Green Roundabout and the Grange Roundabout in Halesowen, both on the A456 towards Birmingham, show similar congestion. The local highway network is shown in the Transport Demand in the Hagley Area report (TDHA) – Para 1.3.[1]

2. The A456 carried 31,852 vehicles in a day in 2011 (Annual Average Daily Traffic – AADT, taken from TDHA) and this can only be expected to have increased since then.

3. The WFLP proposes major developments at Lea Castle and the Kidderminster Eastern Extension and many of the new residents can be expected to commute to Birmingham or the Black Country generating more traffic on these roads (and the A456 and A450 in particular) making the existing problems worse.

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[1]

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12238/transport_demand_in_the_hagley_area_january_2020.pdf

4. Furthermore, these developments are part of an overall Plan which proposes a housing target in excess of the Objectively Assessed need (see our responses to Matter 2 and 3).

5. BDC has raised these issues with WFDC and despite considerable discussion there has been no resolution. The Statement of Common Ground between WFDC and BDC sets out specific areas of disagreement (Document SD-10b). Hagley supports BDC in its stance. Hagley has sought to engage with WFDC and has, on various occasions, sought meetings; these approaches have not had any positive response from WFDC.

6. Much more detail on our objections on the matter of Transport infrastructure is contained in our response to Matter 11, and that is relevant here.

Q3.2-4 Nothing further to add.

Q3.5 It is our view that it is not reasonable to expect a Neighbourhood Plan Team to determine the Objectively Assessed Need of a village. This needs to be determined as a strategic matter in the District's Local Plan. It is of course then open to the village to adopt a higher target. The Planning Committee should refuse applications in Neighbourhood Plan areas, for sites not allocated under an adopted Neighbourhood Plan (or WFLP); and the WFLP should say so.