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Dr Rosemary Sexton

Cllr Maggie Allen

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Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation Response from Shirley West Green Party Team

14 March 2019

Dear Gary,

We write in response to Solihull Council's Supplementary Consultation on its Draft Local Plan, and would be grateful for the Council's consideration of our comments.

We have particular concern that 38% of the entire borough's housing allocation is in the B90 Shirley postcode, which is a disproportionate allocation when other communities, like Dorridge, are not taking anywhere close to that number of new homes. The vast majority of this land is currently in the Green Belt, and contributes greatly to openness and recreation, improving mental health and wellbeing for our communities.

The revised Draft Local Plan slightly reduces the allocation in the Shirley postcode from 42% to 38%, but this reduction is not enough, and is an unfair position compared to other parts of the borough. The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires adequate compensation for the loss of Green Belt, but the targeting of Shirley with such a high proportion of the total housing fails this requirement.

We are alarmed by the lack of infrastructure proposed to accommodate this colossal increase in housing, with only one new primary school planned in Shirley and inadequate enhancements to the highway network, including public transport, and no indication of additional healthcare facilities to meet the demands of the vastly increased population. This is an unsustainable position for Shirley.

Whilst we welcome the removal of Site 13 (Woodloes Road), there is a doubling of density at Site 11 (TRW); Site 12 (Dog Kennel Lane) has been expanded all the way to The Plough (Creynolds Lane) and the new Site 26 (Whitlocks End Farm) will lead to the following knock-on impacts:

- Added volume of traffic on Bills Lane and Haslucks Green Road;
- Leaves a very narrow gap between Dickens Heath and Shirley;
- Encloses the land at Site 13 on 3 sides.

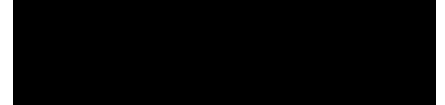
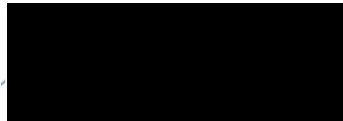
The huge population rise in the Shirley postcode that would result will, without doubt, increase air pollution and therefore run in conflict with the stated policies of the Draft Local Plan to reduce the impacts of Climate Change.

We would like to see more pushback from Solihull Council in challenging the West Midlands Combined Authority to do more, through its Land Remediation approach, to reduce pressure on our Green Belt and redevelop derelict sites on brownfield land across the Housing Market Area.

In spite of the clear concerns we have highlighted in this letter, we completely recognise that Solihull, along with the rest of the country, faces a housing crisis. We are very troubled by the position of our young people, who face great difficulty finding affordable homes. Solihull Council has in recent years encouraged and allowed the construction of housing for the over 55s to the point of having a surplus for this age group while younger people continue to struggle to be housed. We would like to see much stronger policy on addressing affordable homes for our younger residents.

On balance, we conclude that the Draft Local Plan does not meet the needs of the whole population, sacrificing our Green Belt without sufficient compensatory provision demanded from the new NPPF. Shirley is targeted with too high a number of new homes without the infrastructure to sustain this, whereas other parts of the borough are not taking a fair share of the housing targets the government has set.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Rosemary Sexton, Councillor Maggie Allen & Councillor Tim Hodgson
Green Party Team for Shirley West