

Ailish King

25th November 2020

Solihull Council
LPR Consultation Policy and Delivery
Solihull MBC
Solihull
B91 3QB

Dear Councillors,

I believe the Local Plan is looking at lifting the Green Belt in School Road Hockley Heath. I would appreciate if you could consider my points below.

I am aware that there is both a national and local need for housing. Whilst I have only lived here for three years, there have been several local developments including houses on Aylesbury Road and a large estate in Ilshaw Heath.

However, the village cannot sustain this continual development and the lifting of the Green Belt will have adverse effects on the Village.

1, The Village has a high water table. In 2018, my house was flooded in the side passage due to flash floods. Some of my neighbours were flooded which obviously had devastating consequences. Only a few months ago, a few houses down the road from me were flooded again. Luckily the rain stopped or I too could have been flooded again. Flash floods are a concern of many residents here in Hockley and a housing development would further compound this risk. Even light rain fall creates large pools of water, School Road is no exception to this. The Green Belt in School Road has always been boggy, building more houses is going to create much more surface water and increase the water table resulting in even more flooding. The village is built on a thick clay base, many repairs that have taken place in the village by utilities have been hindered by the clay. A recent repair to a gas leak on the corner of Aylesbury and Stratford Road took many weeks as they could not gain access to the pipes because of the clay. They also commented that the pipework is so old the joints are failing but they will not replace until vital due to the clay. Unfortunately, I was one

2, Schooling. Hockley Heath School and nearby secondary schools (Arden Academy) are already at capacity and do not seem to have the land for further development. The additional families who may move to the houses built on the Green Belt would place pressure on these schools, children would have to look to schools further afield resulting in congestion and pollution on small roads.

3, Sewerage. The sewerage system in the village is extremely poor, there is currently a pump by the canal bridge that pumps it out the village, this pump is

already running to capacity. When there is even just the slightest rainfall there is a stench of sewerage in the village, especially in the pump area and the Aylesbury Rd/Stratford Road junction. Workmen have attended the site many times and stated the system just cannot cope. Any replacement of this for the Village would take months and the disruption would be horrific, especially as the Village is used as a diversion for the motorway for any accidents/roadworks (at least 4 times per month). Any large development would need the replacement of the sewerage.

4, Pollution. Building such a expanse on the Green Belt is going to create much more pollution for the village, persons travelling to and from work, taking children to school etc. This pollution is going to be right next to a school. I have noticed an increase in traffic due to the Co-op opening.

5, Nuisance. If the Green Belt is lifted it will only be a matter of time before house plans are approved. The construction site would be right by the school, noise, pollution, danger of construction vehicles etc will be detrimental to both the school and those living close by the site. The road is extremely narrow with no room to widen for the majority of the road.

6. Transport. Hockley Heath has poor public transport. For many years, the bus service has been unreliable, contracts changed etc. The bus run to Birmingham cease last year after 100's of years running through the Village. I do not believe this would improve for the very few that may need it should the development go ahead thus leaving people almost stranded in the Village.

Please consider the points raised. Hockley Heath continues to be developed, we have developments happening all around the Village on plots that do not come under SMBC, recently we have had the Aylesbury House development, 4 new houses built in Aylesbury Rd and the Webb Grove development, non coming under SMBC. The Village cannot take any more further development on the scale the lifting of the Green Belt would bring as our infrastructure will not cope, allowing the Green Belt to be lifted will be detrimental to the Village.

Kind regards,

Ailish King and Stephen Gannon
Residents of Hockley Heath