Ref: Solihull MBC Local Plan Publication Stage Representa-(For offition Form cial use only) 0072020 Name of the Local Plan to which this representation relates: SOLIHULL DRAFT SUBMISSION Please return to psp@solihull.gov.uk or Policy and Engagement, Solihull MBC, Solihull, B91 30B BY Monday 14th December 23:59 Our Privacy Notice can be found at https://www.solihull.gov.uk/About-the-Council/Data-protection-FOI/Solihull-Council-Statement/Economy-and-Infrastructure/Policy-Engagement This form has two parts -Part A - Personal Details: need only be completed once. Part B - Your representation(s). Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make. Part A 2. Agent's Details (if applicable) 1. Personal Details* *If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation (if applicable) boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2. Me Title DAVID First Name ROBERTS Last Name Job Title (where relevant) Organisation (where relevant) Address Line 1

Line 2

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Post Code		
Telephone Number		
E-mail Address		
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representation

Name or Organisation:				
3. To which part of the Loca	l Plan does this	representation	relate?	
1	ALL OF	<u>IT.</u>		
Paragraph	Policy	Policies M	lap	
4. Do you consider the Loca	l Plan is :			
4.(1) Legally compliant	Yes		No	
4.(2) Sound	Yes IN FARTS		No	
4 (3) Complies with the Duty to co-operate	Yes In Part		No	
Please tick as appropriate				

5. Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. SEE TEXT END P2 + P.3

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

CEK TEXT (Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary) 6. Please set out the modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified at 5 above. (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why each modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible. SEE TEXT (Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary) Please note In your representation you should provide succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions. After this stage, further submissions may only be made if invited by the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he or she identifies for examination.

7. If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in examination hearing session(s)?

> No. I do not wish to participate in hearing session(s)

Yes, I wish to participate in hearing session(s)

Please note that while this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in hearing session(s), you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

8. If you wish to participate in the hearing session(s), please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

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SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN

The Plan document is a very comprehensive read along with all the supporting documents, most of which are a formidable study for any member of Solihull public to digest and comprehend. Much of the document is composed of "planning speak" and certainly the explanatory videos hosted by the officers displayed a very "governmental tone" to a viewing member of the public. The content was one of control. There was an attitude of we are in control and the public will get what we think they need instead of we are here to serve the public rather than to govern them. Sadly this attitude pervades the document.

The local area has to some extent lost overall control of many areas of the services that it needs.

Transport - the policy comes from WMCA.

Policing - The law enforcement and police services come from WM Police at Lloyd House in Birmingham from where the Labour Police Commissioner seeks to close Solihull Police station and already most of the operational staff have been removed from Solihull town centre and are now based at Chelmsley Wood with policing in the south of the borough suffering as a result (increasing crime is evidence of this).

Public Health - Solihull Hospital is not open for general use by Silhillians and the service provided by Birmingham and Solihull Hospital Trust is at hospitals in Birmingham and only minor injuries and emergencies are serviced from a small unit in Chelmsley Wood, which is difficult to access from south and central Solihull and controlled by the CCG.

Land - The provision of land is overseen by WMCA who at this stage are not controlling the Housing Policy but they do have ambitions to control the regional policy. (See further comment in Supplementary Evidence.)

Roads - The main roads are controlled by Highways England (again not in Solihull) and the strategic potential overloads of traffic imposed by proposed developments in the Local Plan seem to have been ignored. The A3400 (Stratford Road) will be expected to cope with immense increases in traffic when all the developments envisaged are completed (Blythe Valley, Dickens Heath, Dog Kennel Lane, Pruprim/Village Hotel) and impacted by traffic to employment areas off this road at Monkspath, Highlands Road, Blythe Valley, HHI. Little thought appears to have been given to traffic flow inputs. The same story appertains to the A4100 (Warwick Road, south of Knowle) with schools' traffic and 600 homes on KN2 and the KN1 site in Hampton Road.

On November 16, the video audience was authoritatively told that "The traffic outputs are mitigated by plan modelling" and "a high level approach has been applied where highways' measures have evolved". I doubt this and whether this "planning speak" means anything.

The M42 and all that is, and will be expected of it when the immense amount of extra traffic that will use it when the HS2 terminal Arden Cross is complete, is questionable and is not considered. The impact of this extra traffic in South East Solihull will be enormous. It appears that the local traffic increase impacts have not been fully explored.

Health and Wellbeing - Activities outside and exercise are contained in the all encompassing Health and Wellbeing "Golden Thread" that accompanies this document but the open spaces that will be sacrificed on the altar of housing, are going to be protected in the "Playing Pitch Mitigation Strategy" (whatever that means to the average member of the public). This is another piece of planning speak that those of us who are interested are suspicious of. Despite the Health and Wellbeing "Golden Thread", which is supposed to be the important outcome of this plan, its real objective is HOUSING.

On p15/22 the objectives are commendable and can not be challenged although a better understanding of attracting new productive employment would help. Developing **new** industries and technologies e.g. Life Sciences, are not covered.

Challenge E contradicts all that later comes in the plan because the damage to the locality of 570 hectares of Green Belt reduction to allow housing for HMA needs is exceedingly questionable. I will expand later on the miscalculation of Housing Numbers required.

In **Challenge O** it is clear from what I have touched on earlier, that work must be done with other stakeholders - TFWM, CCG, NHS Estates, Utility Providers, Neighbouring Authorities - all these have some outside control over what Solihull plans to do and then lastly securing developers financial commitment to the provision of the Delivery of Infrastructure. This model is very fragile.

The **Spatial Strategy** relies on developments attached to existing urban areas. In many cases in the Plan the impact on existing infrastructure is ignored! The prospective developers who are expected to come forward to undertake this envisaged growth will not stand for the infrastructure levy the planners expect - the provision of social housing content, the expectation of planting trees, the payment of C.I.L to pay for schools, doctors, dentists, playgrounds, public transport facilities - the money is just not there! Thus the limitations on (already in many cases now pre-expansion) local services will be bought to breaking point. For example of 19000 residents in Knowle and Dorridge 12000 are registered patients at Dorridge Surgery where 5 GPs operate and the service provision is already stretched. The plan overburdens many aspects of current life in the localities where expansion is envisaged. Health and Wellbeing - the "Golden Thread" - is certainly challenged when reasoned argument about local doctor surgery provision is tackled. Spatial Strategy p.56 refers to earlier housing count in 2013 and references the HMA again and again.

There is reference to the obligation to provide extra housing for other neighbouring local authorities. The Birmingham Housing Market Area stretches from south of Stafford in the north to the Gloucestershire Border south of Stratford-on-Avon in the south to Wyre Forest in the west and the east of Coventry in the east, with Birmingham and its Black Country neighbours sitting in the middle. The Birmingham requirement for homes is a questionable figure (too high - largely because of double counting of people registered and wanting Council housing in Birmingham or Sandwell or Walsall or wherever and being registered on a number of Local Authorities Housing Wanted lists). Bromsgrove has avoided - for sometime - its fair share of imposed Duty to Co-operate new housing examine their figures? Coventry have admitted the population growth figure there results from counting all the incoming students at 3 local universities where students come, study and three years or so later mainly move away. Coventry was counting each intake as an annual population growth for the city thus the figures are exaggerated. Much of this exaggeration is contained in a report by CPRE and authored by the well-respected planner Alan Wenban Smith but as the evidence is so much of what the regions leaders don't want t hear it is glossed over. The recent Housing Report by Stratford-on-Avon Council commenting on its obligations to co-operate and provide extra neighbouring housing is a revelation but they are stuck with the legal duty to co-operate even if demand figures are inaccurate. The Plan states that locally households will increase from 91000 to 103.5 thousand by 2036 which is 12500 more households. There are 2.5 people per household in Solihull but the housing numbers required computation is dubious. Policy B5 suggests a minimum of 15017 homes are needed up to 2036 or 13000 up to 2030. Are these figures accurate? On page 68 where Justification of the plan is discussed, the number of households (of 2.5 people?) increases from 90937 in 2020 to 97259 in 2030 - 6322 extra households in 10 years for local housing need. The

Government's methodology currently demands 13000 for Solihull and your plan suggests 15000 are wanted! Yet on paragraph 232 the demand is proposed to be 938 houses per year Again, **are these figures accurate** for the 14 Authorities that make up the Birmingham HMA recognising that 37900 homes are needed which Solihull is expected to shoulder the responsibility of 2105 or 5.5% of the total? Clearly the Plan thinks that sacrificing 570 hectares of Green Belt to enable this obligation of providing other local neighbouring authorities housing shortfall is acceptable.

But it's not just all about the housing number. What about the Health provisions, the Road and Transport impacts, the School numbers, the Law and Order implications? These peripheral concerns are not deeply examined in the Plan, which is Housing numbers obsessed. Certain communities are heavily impacted by the proposals in the Concept Master Plan document. I am very sorry to see such expansion as envisaged in Balsall Common, Dog Kennel Lane Shirley, additions to Dickens Heath (which for those who remember the original plan was planned to have only 850 total dwellings). But then Blythe Valley Business Park was also promised to have "the merest glimpses of low rise office developments built in traditional Warwickshire red brickwork! Such are the promises of yesteryear!

However I will concentrate on the area I know best where I have lived for 40+ years. The areas are sites KN1, KN2, H1,BL2,S0.1 on Plan proposal p.82. Ease of Access Policy p. 7 considers the expectation of fulfilment of the developments to be within 800m of a rail station providing high frequency services. Provision of a bus service to new housing developments with a 30 minute service frequency. These transport policies are not in fact occurring on recent developments. No rail station within 800m of the new houses on Blythe Valley and a spasmodic bus service. The car parking capacity to service Dorridge rail station is inadequate now and the talk of a multi deck car park on the overflow carpark has been in the air for many years. This needs to happen now before any new developments on KN2, H1, KN1 as the impact of parking on local roads of station traffic is already a problem. This will be exacerbated if future housing developments occur requiring space for 800 cars. Paragraph 272 of the Plan p.85 does not sound convincing. Policy p.8 para 278 refers to developments creating road congestion. It is clear that KN2, BU2&3, KN1 will all have congestion creating capability. Traffic congestion studies on "Transport Topic Papers" mitigating the impacts of the plan modelling are clear. "The high level approach where highways measures have been evolved are contained in our plan" (Video Mon. 16 Nov) quote by Solihull Transport Planner. Sorry, but as a local motorist and cyclist and often pedestrian the impacts of the extra traffic created by developments will be immense and should be re-thought. You can wait for hours in Dog Kennel Lane in the morning to get out on to the A3400. The capacity of this road is laughingly overstated. The planners don't appear to use the traffic jammed areas they are planning for and the M42 is not capable of taking the max 9000 cars per day expected when HS2 is fully operational and why with the Department of Transport projection of 9000 cars a day are there only 6000 surface car parking spaces planned for Arden Cross?

The traffic is one aspect of loading out the locality in areas H1,KN2,KN1,BL2,SO.1. What about the Health and Wellbeing? The idyllic place for us in Solihull "where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier happier, safer and more prosperous through growth that creates opportunities for all" in Para 39 of the Plan on p.23 of the Draft Plan. I like this, applaud its sentiment but question the Health piece as some existing residents in Knowle and Dorridge have to wait at least 2-3 weeks to see a doctor even in non-Covid times. The officer who was questioned (on the video presentation) whether a doctor facility would arrive in Hockley Heath when the developments were commenced (there is no GP service operating there and Knowle, Dorridge and Lapworth shoulder the responsibility)

told the audience that the CGC had been engaged and had given information in this regard (i.e Provision of a Service) which will be contained in the "Infrastructure Delivery Plan" which we will look at specifically. What does this promise? The Healthcare provisions are currently overstretched, inadequate and don't sound like they will be improving any time soon.

We can all sleep easy in the knowledge that Climate Changes are being addressed and that Economic Growth will be sustainable, that Inequality is being dealt with, that Sustainable Travel - bike and electric car - is encouraged and that our Health and Wellbeing is being thoroughly considered and improvements are coming. But above all we'll be getting lots more houses on Green Belt with inadequate infrastructure. Infrastructure follows development in Solihull not infrastructure first. New homes will have electric charging points Para 310, the UK Electricity Generation is presently insufficient to cope with an explosion of charging point numbers and local cabling is insufficiently robust to allow only a small number of charging point per locality and whilst I applaud the moves to accommodate the 'Greening' hoped for, some of the Plan content displays a very light knowledge on the subject.

I have no comments on pp. 9-17 except to add yet again that the removal of such a large area of Green Belt (with the exception of HS2 developments which are nationally necessary) is not to be applauded and is based on faulty housing requirement figures.

So to Housing numbers on p.199 site KN2. It is clearly stated that the site has 600 dwellings together with the ambitious development of Arden Academy and Social Usable Peripheral Facilities which have been promised to local people to encourage support. Indeed a very inviting selection of visuals has been give to the public by the Academy of a Performing Arts Centre open for local public use. Possible swimming pool facilities, a gymnasium and all weather pitches have been mentioned as well. The Academy will include new sixth form accommodation included in the provision of places for 1850 pupils which is the same number as the existing development. It is envisaged that this number of spaces will be sufficient to accommodate pupils from all new housing developments. We will see?

The land on which Arden Academy is presently situated is owned by the local authority so presumably this will be sold to help fund the new Academy and also a new Junior and Infant School. A local landowner has agreed to land swap to enable the re-siting of the school nearer to the Warwick Road where the school entrance will be on a busy main A road rather than in Station Road as at present. From the concept Master plan, the Developer Proposals and Engagement state clearly that 648 houses will be built on the available site. You say 600 in the Plan so what is the real number of houses on KN2 and are the other sites on KN2 - Grove Road site behind the Mind Garden yet to be considered? This needs clarity. Also how will the rebuilt Academy receive funding as a developer would need a generous CIL allowance to fund such an ambitious project? A further Traffic point in relation to the relocation of the Academy access off Warwick Road A4100 is the narrow pavement up Stripes Hill into Knowle village. This could be more hazardous than the existing narrow pavements on the current access to the school on Station Road. Para 724 of the Plan refers to reduction of congestion by moving the access to Warwick Road but surely this is just being exported to a more major highway. The reduction in car use in this part of Knowle village is a bold and hopeful statement when eventually a high density development is expected to replace the existing school some of whose buildings were fairly recently funded by the local authority before Arden School became an Academy and their demolition is wasteful of public monies. Clearly

the original early 1960s parts of the school need rebuilding or remodelling and has this possibility been closely examined?

I have no comment to make about Meriden or North of the Borough as I am unfamiliar with those areas.

To close, I think that the release for public comment on the Town Centre Plan just a couple of weeks after release of the Local Plan Draft was confusing. Surely it wasn't meant to be so?

However some of the Town Centre Plan issues are worthy of some thought. The new Aldi store on Homer Road looks like a piece of neo Soviet architecture when compared with the graceful quality building it was allowed to replace. It is very poor design and does nothing to blend in with the other Homer Road buildings including Solihull Library and Theatre. Design quality is often mentioned in the plan as essential but has also been ignored when one considers the appalling structure that has replaced the old Powergen HQ in Shirley and featured in a photo of this building on p.21 of the draft Plan. At one time Solihull had a Conservation Architect who presided over good tasteful designs of buildings that applied for planning consent in the Borough. Why is he not there now to arbitrate some of the fanciful proposals such as the office block proposed on Homer Road next to Waitrose? Its design would challenge any tasteful architectural audience. Look also at the fortress-like Aged Persons Development that has appeared next to the pListed Lucas (now ZF) building on Stratford Road Monkspath. McCarthy and Stone next door is not much better!

Sorry to be so critical but there was a time when Solihull proudly called itself 'Urbs in Rure' and really did have some cache and it can again. You've some great architecture at Arden Cross Station so lets make a point of raising the bar elsewhere. Good Design costs no more than Bad Design.

I have been assured that the public's views will be fully considered and as such would you be kind enough to acknowledge receipt of this comprehensive representation under Section 19 consultations. I have no grounds to doubt the legal compliance of the Plan. I wish to submit my views and representations and highlight some points on the soundness of the plan which is questioned in the foregoing.



SUPPLEMENTARY ISSUES

Housing

The revisions of the HMA contained in the Plan relate to a report by Peter Brett Associates and this was not for a Strategic Housing Market Assessment but was for the LEP area. The LEP are unelected and unaccountable!

The recent article in The Times of 4/12/20 in which Andy Street, West Midlands Mayor, claimed "Botched population survey figures and data used to justify building"; implausible population forecasts and population forecasts by the ONS have needed to be reviewed by the UK Statistics Authority as they erroneously stated that Coventry's population (a neighbouring Authority who could ask Solihull to help under "duty to cooperate") would rise by 32% which is twice the rise of Birmingham in the period 2011-2031 and as a result of these population projections Coventry needed to Plan for 40,000 new homes!

Despite having a formal position to deal only with Land, the WMCA are appearing to get more interested in Housing Control under their Housing and Land Delivery Board. Solihull Council's Leader is a member of this Board that also has ambitions to promote Factory Built Homes (in which he has shown a deep interest recently visiting a sub-component manufacturer, in a neighbouring Authority, where metal sections are produced using steel from China)! It is also noted that Solihull's Chair of Planning has also been to WMCA in this regard. The WMCA Housing Deal reports on 2/11/20 Local Plans Update and gives a very explicit Number of Houses Required which bears on Solihull to cooperate in reaching these housing targets.

In the Solihull Plan Review SA Report by AECOM Sept. 2020 commissioned (and presumably paid for) by Solihull, the author Ishaq Khan reports in 5.2.5 that the GBHMA proposes in emerging plans that the minimum Housing Shortfall to 2031 for the Area is 28,150 but spectacularly rises 5 years later in 2036 to 60,900! To illustrate the likelihood of further incorrect statistics - why has the GPHMA demand up to 2031 been 2,559 per year and then jumps in 2036 to 6,550 per year? In 2017 Councillor Sambrook in Birmingham was at pains to admit their counting was faulty in as much that voided empty properties on the housing available list were not counted and at that time it was reported that there are 17,040 on the housing wanted list. This number was revised downwards to 5,876. Evidence of incorrect statistics AGAIN.

Comment on Plan Audit by Local Authority

Lastly and more worrying for the Democracy that the public expects, why is Solihull MBC in the Cabinet Meeting Agenda 1/10/20 wanting to "mark its own homework"? It says - "Following a review of representations" (of which this is one) "that are subsequently received delegate authority to the Director for Economy and Infrastructure in Consultation with the Leader of the Council, and the Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Planning & Housing, to take full account of the received representations, propose minor amendments to the Local Plan (where necessary correcting errors and aiding clarity) and submit the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for a period of Public Examination". In other words, they will filter views and only submit what they want. Why is there no greater scrutiny to this Public Engagement?

I enclose a copy of what I sent to Cllr. Mackiewicz about the consultations that are alleged to have taken place in the run up to this Plan. I question, as someone who is locally interested, that these 'events' took place to aid the public's understanding of the Plan. This is probably why so few people know about the Plan and interest numbers are so low.

From: Councilior Andrew Macklewicz (Solihuli MBC)

Subject: Re: Local councillor questions Date: 2 December 2020 at 09:16

To: David Roberts



Hello Mr Roberts

Can I call you and can I have your number. I have to say that there have been 5 years of consultation and there public views. This is the final draft taking into account the comments and submissions made. I have put in a the focus on environment and climate change.

To your point I will get a full list of engagment.

The key point is that once the period of representation closes then the plan will be subject to examination in public. If you have any concerns then please make them and they will be considered.

At the moment we do not have a 5 year housing supply and are not meeting our need. Legally This means that our control of development is reduced. In a way local democratic control is reduced. If I don't get this plan through then the a new housing need calculation will come into place and the first draft of the calculation would mean a lot more housing.

Andy

From: David Roberts

Date: 1 December 2020 at 17:51:52 GMT

To: Councillor Andrew Mackiewicz (Solihull MBC) -

Subject: Local councillor questions

Dear Mr Mackiewcz.

I note your enthusiastic participation video in the issue of the Solihull Local Plan Draft submission Plan October 2020.

I live local to you in and ca'nt remember that at any time you have canvassed or made it

your business to make my acquaintance

That's fine I expect you are very busy, but I wanted to question some of the statements

made in the Plan relating to the Consultation Methodology and its DEMOCRACY.

The documents state "that for the purposes of consultation with the interested public that a range of different

approaches have been undertaken ".

Clearly this is not accurate .

I am unaware of Stakeholder meetings and briefings , Seminars and presentations

,Conferences and workshops,Drop in sessions .questionnaires,Direct Mailings ,Leaflets and posters ,and question what press releases media interviews and E mail alerts took place . non of these methods have occurred to me although I

track these things ,and more worrying the public are largely unaware of what this plan is all about ,and how

it affects local community throughout Solihull, despite assurances that theCouncil has made use of links with local

communities through its neighbourhood managers -whoever they are ?These statements are untrue!

There is a question which I would like you to address, and come back to me on please ,that the public -your customers,

have not been fully engaged as stated in the document and democracy is at risk here .

Naturally the Covid /

issues/complications have got in the way and clearly confuse and don't help the situation .

I thought that the

amateur Gary Palmer hosted videos were a public relations disaster when the dominant theme was

"this is what we are doing we have worked really hard on this Plan and this is what you're getting" came over so loud and clear that they were worthy of dictatorship camouflaged with planning speak ,sorry to say . I remain convinced that the process should be given more communication/ publicity/exposeure to enable full and proper public participation.

Perhaps some delay to the December closeure date could be considered to allow wider local public interest?when your public understands more of the Plan and how, if approved by The Inspector their, lives will be affected.

With" the Golden Thread being improving the heath and well being of Solihull "I wonder how it will be imposed.

Kind Regards .

DH ROBERTS

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