

Matter 1 – Legal Compliance and the Duty to Cooperate – Matter 1

(We will be attending and would like to participate at the Hearing on this Matter)

Question 2

WDC did not engage actively and on an on-going basis with Bucks County Council Highways Authority or Highways England on strategic infrastructure issues e.g. on the Relief Road proposals for Princes Risborough, and the wider strategic transport implications.

The implications of the proposed developments in Princes Risborough and neighbouring towns and villages on the strategic road network have not been fully considered. For example in the Highways England representation (respondent ID 0391) it is stated *'The issues around the deficiencies with the countrywide transport modelling identified in the previous Local Plan review are still present. Highways England concerns regarding the transport evidence base not sufficiently considering the impacts of the WDC Local Plan on the SRN therefore still remain'*.

When we asked WDC how they were going to address current congestion on the A4010 from Princes Risborough at West Wycombe, they told us there was no solution.

Suggestions:

- Restrict proposed development in Princes Risborough to a more sustainable number of new homes – a number of approximately 1000 to include current developments would appear acceptable, and review the infrastructure requirement accordingly. Make better use of existing transport infrastructure as outlined in our representation section 4.1

Question 6

We expected and wanted to see genuine public engagement to ensure we have a plan that the local community is proud of and a plan that is in the best public interest. However we consider that it fails on legal compliance in particular with regard to public engagement and community involvement. We believe it has not met WDC's own Statement of Community Involvement. We feel we have been informed and dictated to, not properly consulted.

Some examples taken from our representation submission:

- Our petition submitted to WDC as part of the August 2016 Local Plan consultation and signed by 293 people (including 24 visitors to the District) sought to prevent a new relief road destroying AONB and Green Belt land and the recreational facility that is Picts Lane, Princes Risborough (Reference Appendix 6.1 of our Representation). This was ignored by WDC.

On 16th May 2017 and some nine months after the petition submission, and following various reminders to WDC we were granted an audience with the Cabinet member for planning Cllr David Johncock (Appendix 6.2 of our Representation refers). We went along hoping to hear of the tangible steps that were being taken to accommodate the views of the local community. 'You

have been granted this meeting' and 'your issues have been logged', was the stark message in response. No action was taken.

Cllr Johncock appeared more interested in defending his conflict of interest issue with consulting engineer DRF Consulting Ltd. who was brought in to replace Jacobs as the consulting engineer for the controversial relief road project. (Cllr Johncock's son is employed by DRF).

- No consultation took place with local residents affected by the proposed Poppy Road Development. When this was raised at a meeting in Princes Risborough in November 2017 as part of the overall consultation process, WDC officials blamed the postal service for not delivering the 'necessary letters'. When one of our members subsequently asked for a copy of the letter they were told by a WDC official that the letter couldn't be found! This ignores NPPF Core Planning Principles (NPPF Para 17).
- The community has lost all trust in WDC and our local elected WDC councillors. *'There is no point talking to them they won't listen'* is the message we get from our community.
- The much talked about Steering Group is widely recognised by everyone – except those with close connections to WDC, as a sham. A number of members past and present have voiced their concern.
- The Local Town Council is made up largely of unelected members, and the Mayor is neither elected nor a resident. It is not in touch with resident's views and appears to have been used by its WDC members as a compliance ticking body for WDC.

We feel the legal duty to engage with the community has fallen well below what it should have been. We are more optimistic however that the wishes of the community will be taken on board by the Planning Inspectorate.

Suggestions:

- When the Plan has been reviewed by the Planning Inspector and areas for change identified we look forward to it coming back out to the public again for proper consultation.

Question 10

With regard to climate change, the Plan ignores the flood risk in large areas of Princes Risborough proposed for residential development and for the new relief road development. Unlike in Marlow where the flood risk is used as a reason for virtually no development. No solutions have been provided to overcome this flood risk.

Suggestions:

- Undertake a sustainable drainage strategy to mitigate against climate change and risks of flooding, in particular with regard to Princes Risborough. Identify

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the solutions required to overcome this issue or preferably avoid new development in these areas.

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