

WESTON PARISH COUNCIL

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13th November 2017

Louise St John Howe
Programme Officer
P O Services
P O Box 10965
Sudbury
Suffolk
CO10 3BF

Dear Ms St John Howe,

NHDC LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION - MATTER 16: WESTON

The following is the response from Weston Parish Council

BACKGROUND:

This development was not included on the first draft of the Local Plan because NHDC did not realise they owned the land. Weston Parish Council, aware of local pressure for affordable housing lobbied NHDC to include it in Draft 2. The Council supported the proposal for 25 homes, 14 of which would be affordable, on the land owned by NHDC. At the final consultation stage NHDC added 15 houses on an adjoining piece of land offered by a local landowner. The Parish Council opposed this extension on the grounds that it is an unnecessary additional incursion into the Green Belt and that it provided no more affordable housing on the basis of the NHDC aim of 33% affordable (SP8). The Council are also concerned that the current parking provision standards (Policy T2 Appendix 4) are inadequate for developments in Weston. There is no bus service and as a result reliance on a car is high. Properties of more than two bedrooms in Weston commonly have more than two cars. The result of an under provision of parking spaces could result in cars parking on the access road to the village and create a safety hazard.

The following are comments in response to the questions raised by the Inspector:-

11.75 No comment, this is proper to NHDC

11.76 A housing needs survey identified the need for 14 units. The PC accepted at the time that 11 market rate houses would be built to make the scheme financially viable. The site has expanded to 40 units with no new assessment of affordable vs market homes.

11.77 All land around Weston is Green Belt. 66% of the proposed site was planned for housing development by Hitchin Rural District Council before the creation of NHDC. It is in a hollow surrounded by hedging and housing there will not be significantly obtrusive from nearby roads or footpaths or jeopardise the open aspect of the surrounding Green Belt.

11.78

a) There is a need for 14 affordable homes and no non-green belt land elsewhere to build them.

b) It is poor quality land that has not been maintained for agricultural purposes. There are no footpaths across the land.

c) Development will not materially affect the five purposes of the Green Belt.

d) as c) above

e) Weston Parish Council as currently constituted would oppose any change to the boundary in the future. The Council considers that the planned development will satisfy the need for affordable housing beyond the Local Plan period.

f) No comment. Proper to NHDC.

g) Yes. The borders that are not a road or the existing housing development are large ancient hedgerows.

11.79

a) Yes.

b) Yes.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Tim Moody
Chairman
Weston Parish Council

Councillors: Tim Moody (Chairman), John Cherry (Vice-Chairman), Wayne Dumbleton, Judith Evans
Matthew Hale, Steve Ludbrook, Claire Mason & Alistair Schofield

Clerk: Lorraine Ellis