

Subject: FW: Pendle Core Strategy - FAO Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI
Attachments: Framework_Issue 31_.pdf

From: Sent: 20 January 2015 13:02
To: ThomasDerek
Cc: enquiries@pins.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: Pendle Core Strategy - FAO Mark Dakeyne BA (Hons) MRTPI

Derek,

Please would you be so kind as to pass on the email below and associated attachment to Mr Dakeyne for his attention.

Regards,

Paul.

Dear Mark,

It is clear that a huge amount of work and effort has gone into the preparation of the Strategic Plan and the Council team should be congratulated. Coming from a similar profession I understand the issues they must have faced while undertaking its compilation.

The Council has amassed information over a period of years from central government, professionals, councillors, community groups and residents and the document makes for interesting reading.

I understand the difficulties of achieving a balance of central government initiatives and targets against the sensitivities and political landscapes presented at local community levels and the clear effects it holds against the day to day lives of local residents and businesses.

We understand the need for growth and how we must make critical decisions which can lead to upset as well as delight. We understand the need for housing and we understand the need for business and employment.

During the compilation of the Strategic Plan there have been a number of public consultations which unfortunately have landed on the side of upset to residents of Pendle. Taking into account the requirement for housing Pendle BC have reviewed an abundance of potential sites, however since 2005 they have been lead by a key land owner in the borough to make full use of its land at Trough Laithe Farm.

As we know, there is a perceived need for circa 2500 houses over the life of the plan, this includes a backlog of underdevelopment. The developer has, throughout the process maintained a deliverable number of 500 houses. This clearly represents a huge figure which PBC would be remiss to overlook and I have sympathy to that.

The unfortunate thing is that PBC has missed an opportunity to look elsewhere as they have placed all efforts into Trough Laithe as their preferred choice of Strategic Housing Site. The issues that this site brings are massive in terms of effects on visual amenity to the whole of the Pendle valley, issue with movement of settlement boundaries, issues with social and physical infrastructure, the giving away of green space, the lack of attention to the representations from local residents; the list is endless

In a meeting with Councillor Joseph Cooney 21 November 2014, he admitted that the developer for Trough Laithe is already in talks with Barratt Homes with a view to constructing executive houses on the site. Whilst I understand the developer is required to make a profit, my understanding was that social housing was favoured? In which case and somewhat sadly, the developer appears to be making use of a loop hole in planning policy to maximise profits rather than critically review and provide what Pendle actually requires?

Equally, in correspondence with Andrew Stephenson MP in November, culminating in a letter received 27 November 2014 he stated "I am firmly opposed to the scale of development suggested at Trough Laithe and made my views clear to the Leader of the Council. Indeed, I have opposed every housing application in Pendle put forward for green field sites since being elected."

This only adds weight to the question of why Trough Laithe was identified in the first instance?

In representations made by my peers and I during the consultation period, we all questioned the relevance of the statistics presented and in turn the actual need for any housing other than social housing at present? For instance there is no analysis for housing demand in the document; which is why there has been an under supply in the area for the past 10 years. There is a test on population figures and the Strategic Plan was updated in May 2014 to reflect ONS projections. These projections depicted a flat line for population growth in Burnley with only a marginal increase in Pendle over the next 20 or so years. However, this resulted in PBC increasing the allocation for Trough Laithe Farm from 481 units to 500.

Attached is the 31st Framework newsletter which seeks to maintain an update of emerging planning policy in Pendle. With the exception of the summaries against SDP2 and Liv1, I am encouraged by the summary as presented in the newsletter as for the first time, it correctly provides the position of residents within Pendle.

Summary of Key Issues

Policy SDP2 – Policy is too prescriptive (or is not prescriptive enough) with regard to favouring development on Brownfield rather than Greenfield sites.

Policy SDP2 / SDP3 – Concerns about the consistency between the settlement hierarchy, the housing distribution by spatial area and the relationship with the strategic housing site (LIV2).

Policy LIV1 – Concerns that the phased approach to delivery will not provide sufficient housing in the early years of the plan period.

Policy LIV1 – The housing requirement figure should be higher and be expressed as a minimum.

Policy LIV2 – Concerns about the location and justification for a strategic housing site at Trough Laithe Farm.

Policy LIV2 – Concerns about the allocation of a single strategic housing site, rather than a range of housing sites throughout the borough.

Policy WRK3 – Concerns about the location and justification for a strategic employment site at Lomeshaye.

The developer has been content to be a silent leader and have been instrumental in the determination of Trough Laithe for future development since the adoption of the incumbent plan in 2005. We therefore might be 'stuck' with the choices that PBC has made on behalf of its constituents? This was made abundantly clear by Councillor James Starkie 10 January 2015 during a social media debate where he was presented a confused argument suggesting that there is nothing that can be done with respect to the

Strategic Development Plan and should only react once a planning application has been submitted by the Developer concerning Trough Laithe Farm

PBC have maintained a stance throughout which has followed process rather than listening to residents. Representations have been collated but responses have carried a blanket nature about them, thus not responding to the critical issues as presented or queried. Conversely, representation as made by professionals employed by the developer have been responded to favourably, even to agreement of increasing from the original 481 houses at Trough Laithe to the now recommended 500 houses.

Should we be stuck with the decision making process and ultimately the development of Trough Laithe Farm, the residents issues must be addressed on both a micro and macro scale. The only way I see this being appropriately addressed would be via the means of say a Neighbourhood Plan? My key concern is the impact on the Valley including from the visual extremities of Colne, Nelson and surrounding areas. On a micro scale, the impact on Barrowford, the movement of settlement boundaries, the reduction of green space in the immediate area and the blending of boundaries between Nelson and Barrowford.

The unique identity of the area will be lost in time for the sake of process.

This is why I now write to you, as a voice of reason and your impartiality, we plead with you to provide sense and offer assistance on how all interested parties will be satisfied with the outcome.

I haven't attached my representations as I'm sure you'll have full access to all representations, but I'm happy to provide should you need.

I appreciate the enormity of the task ahead of you and I'm more than happy to discuss further with you, should you wish.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Kind regards,

Paul.

Paul Henderson
MBA BSc (Hons) MRICS

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