

Please accept the following comments on the Pendle Borough Council Local Plan, grouped under general topic headings.

### **Green Belt and Open Spaces**

The general purpose of Green Belts was to stop the merging of towns and villages through the erosion of dividing land. For example, twenty years ago I resided in Sawbridgeworth in Essex, a village between Harlow and Bishops Stortford with a clear delineation between each settlement. A recent visit to attend a wedding shocked us. It seems that uncontrolled urban sprawl building in both Harlow and, more notably Bishops Stortford are encroaching on these green spaces with the result that the area is on the way to becoming one large conurbation with all the unique features and character lost to landscape of identical boxes.

I therefore support the policy set out in SP05. It is vitally important that unique features of the villages that surround the main built-up areas of Nelson and Colne are preserved by Green Belts.

In respect of AL01, Pendle Council should be congratulated that it has not allocated any housing on any wholly Greenfield sites in Colne, especially the Upper Rough which would have caused immeasurable harm to the local area in many aspects.

It was surprising to note that in respect of Wind Turbines/Wind Farms the reference to consulting of local communities to gain their backing had been removed. Reading between the lines this amounts to Pendle Council being able to impose such developments on the community. Besides their inappropriate appearance on a largely rural landscape (they are unlikely to be sited in urban areas), the disruption and destruction of the environment whilst being built from which the area may not recover. It is also clear that such sites have a detrimental effect on local wildlife, with some species being on endangered lists.

Democracy means that local communities must be consulted on such matters.

Designations for Local Green Spaces are so important to Colne, given the high number of dense terraced housing in the area. Local Green Spaces provide a welcome respite for those living in this area, spaces to wind down, relax and take in the clean air, so important for the local population's health and wellbeing, so vital when health services are under extreme pressure.

### **Natural Environment**

We are all custodians of our natural environment and have responsibility to ensure it passed onto future generations and not give future generations the opportunity to pose the question 'why did they do that?' As retailers say 'when its gone its gone', only with the environment you can't make any replacements.

Protected Environmental Sites should be just that with no excuses to allow development of such sites. Pendle Borough Council will be responsible for seeing this through.

### **Development Levies**

In respect of SP12 developers should make contributions for, inter alia, Open Space, Biodiversity Net Gain, Sustainable Drainage Solutions and Travel Plans where appropriate. These levies should not be one off events but should include future monitoring and management in the longer term. Where these longer-term responsibilities are unfunded, they

will no doubt fall on back to the Council and eventually its tax payers when the developers are long gone having trousered their profits.

### **Potential Developments**

Whilst there is little doubt that there is a need for additional housing in the Council's boundaries, such developments should be local needs driven and not by profit driven developer needs. This includes:

*Locations* where properties should be located in a considered, planned manner driven by the Council taking into account transport, schooling and other community needs, such as doctors, dentists, etc.

*Property Types* to be built, ensuring that community needs are considered, such as starter homes, home for the aging population, etc. Whilst four bedroom detached houses for the multi-car commuting family may be the best solution for the profit driven developers, they may not best meet the needs of the local community who may prefer the more land efficient and affordable terraced properties aligned the majority of the existing local housing stock.

*Planning Variations* should be addressed somewhere in these policies. Far too often there are cases of developers submitting planning applications with a property mix including affordable homes. Once Planning Permission is granted, the developer then comes crying to Planning stating that the affordable homes are not viable and should be varied out of the submitted plans, which invariably Planning agree to.

Unless the developer is ineffective in carrying out its initial costings, one can only conclude that permission is obtained under false representation and the developer had no intention of honouring these commitments.

There should be a policy that states when such variations are submitted, the previously granted approval be withheld and the Planning Application is reviewed as a whole. These variations should be considered by the Council members and not lie solely with the Planning Department.

W J Reynolds