

26.03.15

Representation to the Inspector for Pendle Strategic Development Plan - Hearing

Session 4.

The 'Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment' is heavily flawed with no scientific evidence to back up findings.

The above statement still stands from my representations made 17 February 2014 and 24 November 2014.

Pendle Council has reacted to the requirements of Central Government by undertaking the assessment to find *'suitable' land to ensure a five year delivery programme*; this land bank is to be reviewed year on year to ensure constant supply of land.

However, this is very much lead by spreadsheet analysis in terms of numbers of houses, average house price receipts in particular areas and readiness to deliver by land owners and developers.

The report is immature in its direction and Pendle Council has allowed recommended findings to be influenced by developers.

Pendle Council has taken advice from land owners at Trough Laithe in terms of deliverability. In the case of the Strategic Housing Site, the developer has suggested a delivery rate of 50 houses per year from 2015 to an uplifted maximum from 481 to 500 houses based on 12.96ha of land.

Furthermore, in a meeting with Councillor Joseph Cooney 21.11.14, he suggested that Barratt Homes had been provisionally approached by the land owner at Trough Laithe and that executive houses were preferred by the developer.

This gives cause for concern, as surely it is Pendle Council who should be influencing the type of development? ie. Are we not in need of affordable and social housing?

This is a significant parcel of land which should be considered extremely carefully for inclusion within the plan.

During an exchange of communication with Andrew Stephenson MP via social media w/c 17 November 2014, Mr Stephenson said "...Sadly Peel who own the land want housing rather than employment, so the council have had to put this down as a possible strategic housing site."

Does the Council not have a choice of what to develop? By his very own admission Mr Stephenson MP admits the council have been led by the developer to allocate the land as a strategic housing site.

The significant issue is the lack of scientific approach from Pendle Council to identify suitable land for housing. More so there is evidence within the strategy of a naïve panic to secure land in response to the Central Government edit.

The Council is ignoring the large number of potential sites put forwards during the previous consultations. Responses from the Council to the vast majority (if not all) of objecting respondents in the previous consultation depict a blanket response which does not respond directly to queries.

For example; in the Councils 'call for sites', Page 113 – Respondent Reference Number - 818033– Owners of land North of Wheatley Lane Road – The Council admits that the Trough Laithe site has been chosen to due its ease of delivery and does not counter the proposal put forwards by 'Owners of Land North of Wheatley Lane Road' other than by stating that the development of a single Local Plan would take time.

Surely, time is what we have got?

The decision to build 500 plus houses on a green field site should not be taken lightly and we should take as much time as is required to be completely satisfied that sufficient research has been undertaken. At this time, satisfactory detail has not been provided nor communicated.

Most importantly the ONS stated in their paper dated May 2014 that the projected population growth in the Pendle area will increase only marginally during the plan period.

There has been very little house building over the past 10 years due to lack of demand.

There is a clear dichotomy between Pendle Councils perceived 'under supply' of housing and the actual demand for housing. Therefore how can the Council justify the release of such a sizeable parcel of land to housing developers?

The Office of National Statistics numbers depict only a modest increase over the duration of the plan period and flat lining for Burnley and immediate surrounding areas. Given the numbers of sites put forwards during the 'call for further sites' at 300 plus sites, surely there is not even the need for strategic housing at all?

Section 3.33 in PBCs document 'Our Spatial Issues: Pendle Today', suggests a projected population increase from now to 2037 of 89600 to 98300. In the ONS spreadsheet '2012 SNPP Population Persons' year 2037 for 'all ages' states 94191. This is a variance of 4109.

Please explain?

Current house building rates for Pendle show that only 7 houses per annum are constructed, this suggests there is a distinct lack of demand for the type of houses on offer i.e. detached 'executive' properties.

Mix this assumption of detached executive houses with a large site of 12.96 ha and the council will have a failed development on their hands with little or no take up for the new homes as people in that type of market prefer smaller more exclusive developments.

First of all, we must understand the typology of housing unit? Is this number made up of; Affordable housing, social housing, retirement housing, assisted living, apartments, detached 'executive' houses, bungalows, semi-detached, terraced housing etc?

Section 3.34 to 3.49 in PBCs document 'Our Spatial Issues: Pendle Today', you major on the deprivation and overcrowded housing and the need for more affordable housing, yet you clearly contradict yourselves as Councillor Joseph Cooney admitted (meeting 21.11.14) that Peel have a preference for high yield Executive housing for Trough Laithe.

Kind regards,

Paul Henderson