

Neil Holly

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 30 January 2024 22:16
To: Local Plan
Subject: Comments on the Review of RBC Local Plan

I have just completed your online consultation and provide the following comments in support of my answers.

(also added at the end are a cut&paste collection of social media posts by various people who have useful things to say and give relevant weight to some issues - please list them under my name if necessary for the Consultation process).

The present numbers of new houses in the RBC Local Plan to both meet Rugby's needs and those being imposed onto Rugby need to be seriously re-assessed. Many commentators and analysts in the field have identified issues with the statistics used in the original calculations.

ALL new buildings allowed in future should be fully self-sustaining and net zero in heating, power, and grey water. Government guidelines for new buildings should be the absolute minimum standard imposed upon developers. Rugby has the opportunity to lead the UK in sustainable buildings and should be brave enough to have stricter conditions for all new buildings in the borough. Requirements should include solar & wind power, highest standard of insulation, ground/air source heat pumps installed at the outset as standard, collection & recycling of rainwater, drainage facilities incorporated at all areas of significant hard standing, retention and improvement of natural drainage, district heating for any high-density housing. New buildings to have EV charging point connections and sufficient off road parking spaces (hard standing, garages, and carports).

A high proportion of any new housing should be one/two-bedroom starter & retirement homes properly affordable (not "Affordable" as defined by the Government!!). A good supply of social rentable homes are required which should not be sold off.

Existing residents need more allotment spaces (there are waiting lists in many areas) so these should be included in any future housing plans. This provision could perhaps be used to justify smaller plot sizes (= more houses) in negotiations with developers.

Provision of green spaces should be included in plans at the outset and not included as an after-thought. Tree planting should consist of the normal mix of deciduous and evergreens for this area but should also include heritage fruit trees and some orchard areas.

Strict conditions should be included in all approvals to ensure that applications are properly thought out and costed at the initial phase with little scope given to later “modifications”, eg heights of buildings (Symmetry) and number of floors (Sainsburys was approved as a single storey!).

Social Media posts responding to the Consultation:

[REDACTED]

Also the number of bungalows being built has ground to a halt which means many people who wish to move to a property without stairs can no longer do so.

[REDACTED]

On the subject of HMOs. I do feel that licences are being given to too many properties that are patently not suitable for the role. I am also seeing too many properties being sold as potential HMOs when they are not actually financially viable. The sale of these properties seem to be targeted toward retired investors, looking to do something with their pension pot, but are badly informed as to the difficulties, responsibilities and financial viability of running an HMO!

[REDACTED]

I'm guessing the site near Cawston Spinney is the area in the current Local Plan shaded as either housing or employment land. With the Tritax warehouses being the only development so far in the main south-west area between Dunchurch, Bilton and Cawston, I wouldn't be surprised to see the pressure on for that to be warehousing (I'd love to think employment meant something else). I guess if we are following the example of Harborough District Council with Magna Park or the former Daventry DC with DIRFT, we should allocate our warehousing on the edge of our patch, which says go for the site by Hinckley as first choice...

[REDACTED]

Why do we need yet more warehousing? All the plans of housing but does anyone on the planning know that all of the GPs and schools are already over capacity where are the plans to build them

[REDACTED]

No more housing we don't even have a full working hospital the infrastructure is at breaking point can they see the wood from the trees

[REDACTED]

I'm sorry but the mixing of social/affordable housing with executive housing simply does not work. I can see the utopian plan clear enough, but just go around Rugby and look with your eyes. It creates division and disharmony all around.

[REDACTED]

It doesn't surprise me that RBC wouldn't think about the water supply for the town, or indeed the sewage treatment either. It also doesn't surprise me that parts of the town go dry in periods of high water demand in the summer. I used to work for STW on the water treatment when they were developing Draycote treatment works, all of us who ran both the old Avon treatment works and Draycote knew and said the new Draycote works was well undersize, and lo and behold the powers that be did what they wanted and built an undersize works, which by the design could not be expanded. Add to that the removal of treated storage - Ashlawn Tower - and you do not have system that is not resilient. Poor planning by STW and RBC.

On the point of Met Office projections, they can't accurately predict tomorrows weather, let alone that in 80 years time.

[REDACTED]

It should be really easy to create a green corridor that drops into the town and back out, then back in again and so on. The canal, the old railway lines and various bridleways/right of ways means the majority of it is already connected. It just needs to be formalised and then managed so that it doesn't become scrub and dominated by one tree or two tree types that are all the same age and height, and rampant aged bramble. The opportunity for community groups to look after different sections would be huge for the loneliness issues out there, and the health benefits of cycling/walking with an actual destination or round trip, rather than a there-and-back walk would do wonders for many different parts of the community.

[REDACTED]

Given Rugby council at best is not capable of implementing change as regards planning decisions and is more likely powerless in the scheme of things, maybe the size and cost of planning department needs to be reviewed - could a much smaller department do the same rubber stamping without the pantomime of all these reviews? That would save Council Tax which is being simply wasted it seems.

Just another step towards the complete concreting over of the remaining land to the south of Rugby.

Gridlock central! I would love to see councils having to publish "Resident Quality of Living" data. Access to green space, medical services, recreation, convenient transport networks etc

RBC only see the money! How about investing in our infrastructure? The northern side of town i. e. Leicester Rd, Mill Rd and lately Boughton Rd are often gridlocked. Some days it takes me 40 minutes to get from Brownsover to Bilton to my sons house! The rail station bridge should have been sorted years ago! Dont get me started on lack of schools in the north or lack of NHS services and exorbitant parking charges in town!

"Rugby's accessibility is one of the key attributes making it a great place to live and work." Actually that should be ammended to "sleep and work" And then only if you dont need accomodation anywhere between a HMO and a luxury executive 4 bed detached house on a bleak and featureless housing estate.

I live midway between rugby and Daventry.. I avoid Rugby now and only shop in Daventry .. free parking just one of many reasons.

One of the most disgusting things I have seen is the complete lack of any consideration in regards to trees. The hedges and trees that are ripped out by developers without planning permission and what's done about it?? Nothing. Why aren't these trees protected as they should be and any damage to trees should be actioned. This council also "plant" trees in the summer but put no effort into watering them so they all die. Waste of time and money even putting them in if you don't water saplings

Dear Santa (c/o Rugby Town Hall)

With a further 4000+ houses planned for us in SW Rugby we send this Christmas request to give us a better future.

Our Mums and Dads will fill our stockings with toys and devices, but only you can give us the freedom to play outside.

PLEASE give us a Country Park, extending lovely Cawston Woods so that we can walk run and play there.

PLEASE provide space and facilities for us to play anytime with our friends, team sports like football, rugby, cricket and net ball.

Lastly if we promise to be really good, could we have a skateboard park and even a BMX track next to those warehouses.

Thanks to you Santa and all your hardworking planning elves.

We believe in you and we know dreams can come true.

Children of the Future

Whilst the bringing of new jobs is great, warehouse employment is generally lower wage income. But the housing locally is ridiculously expensive. So can the locally employed actually afford to live here (and living and working locally is great for environment efforts, not to

mention work life balance.) Or will the housing only be affordable to those commuting to London etc? In addition, so called 'affordable' housing is only so by making it tiny and crowded. And it goes without saying that those new workers will require schools, doctors etc.

The jobs/housing/ community local plan must work in tandem, not isolation from each other.

I dont bother too much. Both Rugby and Warwick Councils seem to regard public consultation (and often even their own advisors) as little more than a box ticking exercise. They go through all the motions and then do what they were thinking of anyway (ie the Parking Permit horror show)

why bother asking the public as everyone knows these consultations are merely box ticking exercises by the council to show 'democracy at work', where the council will do whatever, it wants regardless at our expense?

Having recently been house hunting in the town centre area, we were devastated to view many beautiful Victorian or Edwardian properties on the market that had been turned into HMOs and effectively ruined. Wrecked EPCs, walls ready to crumble and plumbing that makes you weep. Impossible to transform them back into proper homes without huge investment, meaning genuine home buyers are being priced out, needing to look at the massive housing schemes as alternatives, or otherwise beautiful properties will be sitting on the market for years going mouldy. Just as bad were the number of landlord investment properties with shoddy refits and overpriced to make a quick sale for their retirement. We were lucky to have options but very conscious not everyone is in the same position to be picky.

I'm afraid I haven't responded this time. I'm feeling very jaundiced about the whole thing. I put all of my energy into the previous local plan consultation with the Save Dunchurch group - all to no avail! - so I don't have the energy or inclination to fight another lost cause. Good luck and thank you to all those of you who do have the appetite for another fight.