

Ruyton XI Towns Parish Council

Report from Shropshire Councillor Nick Bardsley

Parish Council Meeting: 1st September 2020 *via Zoom*

1 Yardley

Your Chair and Vice Chair (and I) had what seemed to be a productive discussion with Karen Bradshaw, Director of Children's Services on 19th August and were taken very much by surprise when earlier this week she decided to withdraw the planning application and abandon the proposal to develop Yardley as a residential home for Looked After Children. There is a letter from her to your Clerk which expands somewhat on her decision.

2 Local Plan Review

When Cabinet reviewed progress on the Local Plan Review on July 20th, it was decided to *reopen consultation on the draft Plan under "Regulation 18"*. This is significant because it allows the public, Town and Parish Councils a further period in which to raise issues, suggest additions, deletions and amendments. The more formal Regulation 19 which allows much more limited comment will not now begin until later this year.

This further Regulation 18 consultation lasts until **30th September, 2020**.

The draft Plan is significant for almost every Town and Parish Council in Shropshire because it includes the preferred "additional" sites for future housing development but also because there is clarification of proposed changes to policy, e.g. on exception sites *see below*:

Site Allocations: Community Hubs

I don't think this section of the draft Local Plan contains any great surprises. As far as I can tell the RXIT site is the former Dairy Site we discussed in 2018.

Development Management Policies

I think these deserve far more detailed and careful reading than I have yet been able to undertake. And I'm not sure how far each section of the draft Plan (DP1 to DP8) represents significant change.

One new policy **DP7 (Cross Subsidy Exception Sites)** does concern me. I drew attention to this during the Consultation on Preferred Sites 18 months ago. DP7 expands on the initial short introduction to the suggested new policy in the 2018 document but does not in my view have the safeguards which Parish Councils in rural areas of Shropshire would and should expect.

I'm particularly puzzled by the wording of para b which potentially leaves wide open a door to the sporadic development of housing (up to 10 dwellings) in the open countryside.

Changes to Planning

Earlier this month the Government published:

- a White Paper, "Planning for the Future"
- a Consultation on Changes to the current Planning System
- a call for evidence on data on land control "Transparency and Competition"

Wide ranging and fundamental changes to the existing planning regime are envisaged *in England*.

It remains to be seen how quickly changes will be made. Legislation is required and this may well be delayed if initial reaction to the Government's proposals leads to some reconsideration.

I'm not sure what, if any, impact these will have on the Local Plan Review.