

Dickens Heath Parish Council

Public Meeting held on Tuesday February 21st 2012 at 7pm to discuss

Solihull MBC's Draft Local Plan – Sites for Future Development in Dickens Heath

Present:

Parish Councillors: Philip Brandum, Alyson Glenn and Richard Holt (Chairman)

Rachel Best (Stansgate Planning)

Clerk: Helen Marczak

26 members of the public

The Parish Council Chairman, Richard Holt, welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that the Parish Council wished to put forward the views of residents in its response to the Solihull MBC Draft Local Plan. He said that sites 17 (Braggs Farm/Brickiln Lane) and 18 (Griffin Lane) were not a surprise, they have been discussed in previous rounds of consultation. Site 20 (Cleobury Lane) however has been a surprise.

Rachel Best stated that the plan is quite advanced, it is at the final stage before the final examination, and comments can only be made based on soundness or legality. Site 20 is currently in the Green Belt, and there has been very little consultation. Solihull MBC have looked at the suitability of sites and they recognise infrastructure problems.

Residents commented that development needs to be sustainable, the infrastructure cannot cope with these additional houses. The local roads will not cope, the traffic is already horrendous at rush hour. It was suggested that an independent company should carry out a traffic survey as evidence. Residents feel that they have lived on a building site for 12 years already, and this will mean doing so for years to come. There were also comments about the area being a flood risk, and that there are bats around Wrens Nest Road.

Rachel Best's advice was that we need to be saying that the plan is unsound. Sites 17 and 18 are already out of the Green Belt, and too far advanced. But the evidence doesn't justify Site 20. Rachel suggested that the legal process should be challenged, and whether it has been followed properly – ie. There has been inadequate consultation. Solihull MBC hasn't engaged with the community, there has been no consultation since the production of the previous version of the plan and therefore they have not fulfilled the community involvement requirement.

The timescale of the development of Sites 17 and 18 has been brought forward. Residents felt that this should not happen when much of the village is still incomplete.

It was agreed that details of what points should be included in responses, and where the responses should be sent, would be put on the noticeboards and website. A copy of the parish council response would also be made available on the website.

