

Ely, Stacey 20-10-23

[External Email]

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Many thanks, i have ammended my previous comments as i noticed an error. So if you could use the below instead i would be most grateful.

Regards,
Stacey

To whom it may concern,

I greatly oppose the revised local authority Plan to allocate of 642 new houses to Downham Market at this moment in time.

Paragraph 82 of the NPPF specifies that planning policies must seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as the woefully inadequate infrastructure.

The allocation of a further 642 houses to the town will further stress the already poor infrastructure of this small market town. The local authority previously recognised the need to slow growth in the town to let it catch up. There in no evidence that the infrastructure has caught up in any meaningful way. Without evidence of improvements it is impossible for the local authority to comply with the NPPF. The Plan itself will hinder much needed investment in a town. It is not justified or consistent with national policy.

The town has doubled in size in recent years without sufficient investment in infrastructure. There is now a significant shortfall. 600 houses are currently under construction at the moment. Matters will only get worse. Money accrued though contributions towards infrastructure from corporate developers was not spent on the town. It went cross border to other authorities, whih is in itself disgracefully when the town is so desperately in need.

Local authority arrangements with the largest corporate developer in the area means that they will not be charged a Community Infrastructure Levy on nearly 300 houses they are building now. That corporation also owns the majority of land enveloping the town. Matters can only get worse. The Plan is not positively prepared.

There are shortfalls in electricity and water supplies. Regular power outages, burst water mains and low pressure.

The Sewage Treatment Works cannot cope and there are regular odour problems as lorries are required to carry effluents away. Regular seeding of water locally with 'fresheners' is required. This is bad for the environment. The works cannot physically expand due to border constraints.

Doctors and dentists have seen the ratio of residents to practitioners rise year on year, added pressure on Gp's, their teams & those in need of treatment. Most recently residents have been advised that the nearest available NHS dentist are Ely or even Spalding. Travelling 12 - 37 of miles for such treatment is just NOT acceptable in this day and age. This is not consistent with national policy.

The town has only one aging secondary school. It is one of the largest in the county. There are no

longer enough secondary school places. Children are transported for miles out of town to be educated. This is not sustainable. The NPPF states; "It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education". The Plan is not consistent with national policy.

New employment opportunities have not kept pace with growth. The increased drain on our infrastructure caused by further housing development will stifle significant investment in the local economy. This is not consistent with national policy.

Without new investment in employment & making the heart of the town a place that people from the town & beyond will visit, spend money & provide meaningful employment, the new houses proposed will be beyond the reach of local people as with many countryside towns. The town will be populated by people travelling to work and spend elsewhere. This is not sustainable. Failing infrastructure deters investment. Failure to address this is against national policy. This is not sustainable.

National policy requires the local authority seek 'reasonable alternatives'.

During working hours parking in the town is difficult. The car parks are full. The town centre has reached its full capacity. Residents already travel to King's Lynn and other towns to access facilities. More housing will make matters worse. Far from being a hub the town no longer has a Post Office, just a counter in a newsagents. The last bank is about to close. Social clubs, pubs and venues have closed. There is now a net movement out of the town. This is not sustainable and against national policy.

It has been argued that Downham Market can absorb 642 more houses because it has a railway station. And yet the rail service is PART of the failing infrastructure. This service is infrequent and very unreliable with standing room only at key times. It's waiting room and cafe have closed. The ticket office is under threat. It is on the very outskirts of town and inaccessible. The new housing will not be within a reasonable distance. Parking is very limited and affects local streets. Rather than bringing a benefit the railway service now has a net negative impact. It contributes to the 'dormitory' status of the town. People do not travel from Kings Lynn or Ely to access local shops or facilities.

The towns roads are already under great pressure & dealing with far more traffic than they were originally designed to. The by pass was built to alleviate traffic going along Bexwell Rd/London Road & Lynn Road, all of which have seen a massive rise in traffic flow including HGV's & other larger vehicles. The pathing is inadequate to keep walking residents safe & as the speed limits in place are regularly ignored it is only a matter of time before someone is killed.

Our green spaces are becoming few & far between and we should be fighting to protect these habitats not concreting over them. When studies prove time & time again that time in nature is vital for mental health it is with great disbelief that this keeps being ignored.

Without investment in the rail service, local infrastructure, the environment and employment nothing will change.

In light of the above the Plan fails on the following;

a) Positive preparation – The plan does not meet objectively assessed needs. Previously objectively assessed infrastructure shortfalls are now ignored. There is no evidence that deficits have or will be met in the Plan period.

b) Justified – This is not an appropriate strategy as it is not based on proportionate evidence.

c) Effective – There is no evidence that the problems of the town can be overcome in the short term. The allocation is unlikely to be deliverable within the Plan period. Cross-boundary strategic matters that have been avoided. Infrastructure monies raised have disappeared ‘cross boundary’ to other authorities leading to shortfalls. The local authorities are required to co-operate.

d) Consistent with national policy – The plan cannot deliver sustainable development for Downham Market in accordance with national planning policies. For the reasons highlighted above it fails to adhere to policy.

In 2013 local residents voiced their concerns during a local consultation. Their concerns regarding the destruction of specific sites were heard and those sites dropped from the Local Plan. This latest revision does not protect the areas previously considered important to the community. There are provisions within the NPPF designed to address this. The policy states; ‘Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements’.

Regards,
Stacey Ely
PE38 9LJ
Downham Resident
Sent from my Galaxy

Sent from my Galaxy

----- Original message -----

From: Michael Burton <Michael.Burton@West-Norfolk.gov.uk>

Date: 20/10/2023 12:31 (GMT+00:00)

To: Stacey Ely <staceyely1@msn.com>

Cc: Local Plan Review <lpr@west-norfolk.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Consultation of 642 homes for Downham Market

Dear Stacey

Representation received, with thanks. We will process this and send onto the Local Plan Inspectors in due course.

Regards and best wishes

Michael Burton, Principal Planner

Tel: 01553 616573 | Mob: 07873 702116



From: Stacey Ely <staceyely1@msn.com>
Sent: 20 October 2023 12:25
To: Local Plan Review <lpr@west-norfolk.gov.uk>
Subject: Consultation of 642 homes for Downham Market

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Regards,
Stacey Ely
PE38 9LJ
Downham Resident
Sent from my Galaxy

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender.

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